

INFLUENCE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS ON INNOVATIVE ACTIVITIES IN SIERRA LEONE

So many times there is this question of whether the presence of too many nongovernmental organizations (NGO's) in a country could be good or bad for that country. One can argue that NGO's play significant roles in helping to ease the sufferings of people in any country. Other schools of thought could say inasmuch as they play such roles they also take away so much more from any country. These organizations do a lot of good work, and almost as importantly, they create a lot of jobs. It has been said that the NGO community makes up 60% of the Sierra Leonean economy. They employ large numbers of both foreign and local staff, and have varying mandates that dictate their long term plans concerning their time in the country.

The number of NGO's in Sierra Leone range in the hundreds. These NGO's are divided into local and international. NGO's are legally constituted organizations created by natural or legal persons that operate independently from any form of government.

NGO's are organizations that work in many different fields, but the term is generally associated with those seeking social transformation and improvements in quality of life. NGO's vary in their methods. Some act primarily as lobbyists, while others primarily conduct programs and activities. For instance, an NGO such as Oxfam, concerned with poverty alleviation, might provide needy people with the equipment and skills to find food and clean drinking water whereas an NGO like the FFDA helps through investigation and documentation of human rights violations and provides legal assistance to victims of human rights abuses.

In Sierra Leone most innovative projects are being funded either partly or entirely by NGO's. Most of the innovative ideas are from the local people although sometimes these NGO's can come up with innovative ideas as well.

In the area of innovative activities for economic development the NGO AFFORD-SL (African foundation for development in Sierra Leone) creates jobs for underrepresented individuals and offers coaching and mentoring services.

NGOs basically listen to innovative projects from people across Sierra Leone and at the end of the day twelve (12) winners receive \$23000 to help jumpstart his or her innovative project.

NGOs helped fund the development of the much highly popular MORVIGOR TEA which is a home grown variety from the moringa plant and it's now widely available in West Africa. In innovative activities in the health sector NGO's such as concern worldwide play a major role as well.

Newly innovative projects for infant and maternal mortalities to projects concerning traditional birth attendants are widely documented.

This NGO aims at identifying and field testing innovative ways of increasing access to high-impact, low-cost health interventions known to save the lives of women, infants and children.

The influence of NGO's on agriculture has also been immense.

The influence of these NGO's on innovative projects have been so enormous that sometimes we become extremely too reliant on them.

As to whether having so much NGO's in Sierra Leone is a good or bad thing is yet to be seen.

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