

*Full Length Research Paper*

# A study of the role of Non-Governmental Organizations on poverty alleviation in Kabale District: A Case study of Buhara Sub-County

Mategeko Kaguta, James Ssekandi and Festo Kyomya

<sup>1</sup>Department of Development Studies, Kabale University Uganda.

<sup>2</sup>Department of Social and Social Administration, Kabale University Uganda.

Accepted 3 August, 2015

This study is set out to investigate the contribution of nongovernmental organizations on poverty reduction in Kabale District: A case study of Buhara Sub-county. The sample population is both males and females of Buhara Sub-county in all the parishes. The researcher employed survey methods based on questionnaire method of data collection. The questionnaire was administered to beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries both males and females of Buhara Sub-county in all the parishes. Focus group discussions also employed, the researcher interview key informants like LCs youth representatives, women representatives, church leaders and extension workers in Buhara Sub-county. The research questions focused on what is the contribution of NGOs on poverty reduction in Buhara Sub-county; what are the major causes of poverty in Buhara Sub-county; what are the indicators of poverty in Buhara Sub County; what are the possible solutions to the identified causes of poverty?. The findings of the study are on the contribution of non governmental organizations on poverty reduction. The study established that the interventionists NGO's are to perceive the communities in self- help development project to reduce the poverty. It is when this notion is firmly rooted in them that they can use their interventions in form of technical, financial and material aids to stimulate the benefiting communities to participate actively in promotion of poverty reduction in the district. This study is try to assess the contribution of nongovernmental organization in poverty reduction in Buhara of Kabale.

**Keywords:** Contribution, Investigation, Non-governmental, Organization, Poverty.

## INTRODUCTION

Poverty is the most fundamental social problem in Uganda because the need to survive and means to survive is a major concern to all development workers. It is difficult to determine who is poor and who is not because poverty is. Using total expenditure as the measure of welfare, and poverty line measure, 55% of Ugandans are considered to be poor and the poorest are found in rural areas. 57% (fifty seven percent) of rural population is poor compared to about 35% of urban areas (World Bank study 1997). The poverty profile of Uganda indicates that with per capita income of under US \$ 170 Uganda is one of the poorest countries in the world.

According to (UNDP, 2001), out of 4.6 billion people in developing countries, more than 859 are illiterate, nearly a billion lack access to improved water sources and 2.4 billion lack access to the basic sanitation.

Nearly 325 million boys and girls are out of school and 11 million children under the age of five, die each year from preventable illness. 1.2 billion People live on less than one dollar a day and 2.8 billion on less than 2 dollars a day (UNDP, 2001).

In another development, according to vision 2025, Uganda's infrastructure is poor and inadequate. For example, only 2300km (3.8%) of the country's road network of about 6000km is tarred (VISION 2025; p.38). George Kinot (1998 p.586) says that "one out of every three Africans do not get enough food to eat". He revealed that 168 million people are victims of chronic hunger and among these 10 million African children suffer from malnutrition. In the new vision of Wednesday,

October 2003, His excellence Yoweri Museveni Kaguta, President of the Republic of Uganda said:

"Africa has remained poor because it has not industrialised it continues to export low value commodities and is denied access to lucrative markets in America, Europe, Japan and China"

In Uganda the poor, fall into the category of children, orphans, widows, old people and landless peasants.

Poverty in Uganda was accelerated by economic mismanagement accompanied by Civil wars during the 1970's. Amini's regime radically reversed the economic and social progress that was attained since independence (1962). Uganda's gross domestic product declined by 25% exports by 60 % and imports by close to 50% (poverty assessment report, 2002).

## Literature Review

Poverty is related to low ownership of physical assets and human assets. Ill-health affects incomes of many people in that diseases like malaria, HIV/AIDS, and chronic headache reduce available time for labour.

Poverty is also directly or indirectly linked to perversion of justice, that is, injustice against the poor masses and against their environment (Chambers, 1993).

In addition, "Poverty is caused by physical factors such as poor health, physical handicapped ness, shortage of land and inadequate education".

Furthermore, he points out that, moral factors such as laziness, drunkenness and home background, remoteness, inadequate resources contribute to the problem of poverty. Sustained exposure of pesticides and chemicals has caused sterility and soil exhaustion, skin problems and general sickness like cancer, which cause people fail to work, hence poverty (Vision 2025; 1999:126).

Poverty is much more pronounced in developing countries. The situation is pathetic in sub-Saharan Africa where nearly half of the population lives on less than a dollar a day. Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have Gross National Product per capita of US dollars 460, yet living standards have fallen dramatically over the last 10 years (Vision 2025, 1999). Another cause of poverty is dependency agriculture. The population of Uganda is made up of 81.0 percent of the people involved in agriculture, in occupation there are 7.6%, government personnel 4.6%, crafts 3.4%, people with employment are 8.2%, trade 0.7%, and remittances 3%. These percentages illustrate the extent of rural poverty. Worse still, crops from agriculture lack ready market for sale, and most of them are perishable crops. This implies that majority of the rural population depend on agriculture yet it has a lot of problems. For example what is produced is not enough, yet sales are made to meet other requirements like clothing's and medical care (Vision

2025; 1999; 120)

Causes of poverty is continued deterioration in the economy during the last two decades, which resulted from devastating effects of war and civil strife. As a result there was diminishing production in all sectors, worsening terms of trade, growing of public debt, and the declining of the Uganda shilling over other currencies, which led to a decline in education. Chambers (1983) emphasized that disability increases the prevalence of poverty; children with disability have difficulty in getting to and from school. They use crutches and wheel chairs, walking sticks and specs all that leave them more vulnerable, weak and poor.

Similarly, cause of poverty is high ratio of able-bodied adult to dependants. The dependants include children, elderly, the sick, handicapped, and widows (UNDP, 2001:331). In agreement with UNDP 2001 Report, (Chambers 1983:339), says "the effect of high dependence is that children cannot go to school, there is not enough food, people do not go to hospitals due to long distances, cultural beliefs, and die of poverty". In contribution to the analysis of the cause of poverty, (UNDP 2001) indicates that poverty is loosened by HIV/AIDS. AIDS is responsible for up to 12% deaths and is the leading killer of adults aged 15-49 in Uganda. Estimates of 1.9 million people have been infected in Uganda.

Based on UNDP (2002) human poverty index in Uganda was estimated to be 37.5% in 2001, which is high. This index reflects a high proportion of the population not expected to survive to the age of 42. Forty two percent are illiterate, 37.0% lack health facilities 43.0% lack access to clean water and malnourished children make 22.8%

Further, Vision 2025 (1999) explains unemployment as the major cause of poverty. The pilot labour survey of 1997, found that 7.4% of economically active people, a total of 668,000 people, had worked even for an hour, in Kampala the proportion was 31.1% (178,000 people). Burkey (1993), taking the economic perspective with regard to gender inequality contributes that "House hold gender and economic relations are inter-connected in wider economic sphere" thus, this plainly explains that gender inequality contributes to the occurrence of poverty in Uganda. According to Blamber (1999), many of the poor people are victims of natural disasters, famine, illiteracy and diseases.

Edwards (2002) noted that "one out of every three Africans do not get enough to eat". His study covering the period of 1988-1990 revealed that 168 million people are victims of chronic hunger. Among these, ten million African suffer from malnutrition.

In the New Vision of Wednesday, October, 15<sup>th</sup> 2003, His Excellency Yoweri Museveni President of the Republic of Uganda, said "Africa has remained poor because it has not industrialized it continues to export low value commo-

**Table 1:** Indicators of poverty

Indicators OF Poverty	Frequency	Percentage
Shortage of land	90	66.7
Diseases	20	14.7
Malnutrition	4	2.9
Unemployment	10	7.3
Poor soil management	12	8.8
Total	136	100

Source: Researcher's work

dities and is denied access to lucrative markets in America, Europe, Japan and China”.

Chambers summarized the causes of poverty by illustrating the situation in rural areas into a deprivation trap or clusters of disadvantage. Rural people are deprived of basic resources, clean water, employment, electricity, information and knowledge hence; they remain poor, isolated and vulnerable, physically weak and powerless. Therefore, this study set out to look into activities of Non-governmental organizations in alleviate the peoples problem.

### Research Question

1. What are the indicators of poverty in rural areas?
2. What are the causes of poverty in rural areas?
3. What are the contributions of NGOs to poverty reduction?
4. What challenges are met by NGOs in their struggle to fight poverty?
5. What strategies can be adopted to ensure that NGOs contribute towards poverty reduction in rural areas?

### METHODOLOGY

#### Research Design

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The researcher used both qualitative and quantitative methods for data collection.

#### Population and Sample

The population comprises of men and women and youth of ten years and above in Buhara Sub- county. The sampling techniques used were stratified and simple random. Purposive sampling was also used to capture some key informants.

#### Research Instrument

The research instrument is based on open and close ended questionnaire for the beneficiary and non- beneficiary including

males and females of Buhara Sub-county. Oral interview, focus group discussion, observations were used to gather information for this study.

The instrument was tested for validity and reliability before it was finally administered. Consequently, the researcher ensured that the items were closely related to the objective of the study and supported by available primary and secondary information.

#### Research Procedure

The questionnaire was distributed to the students with the assistance of one research assistant. 136 questionnaire which in line interview and observations were administered and returned for statistical analysis.

#### Method of Statistical Analysis

The researcher was use frequency counts, percentages and inferential statistics.

### RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### Research question one: Indicators of poverty

This section is directly concerned with the first research objective or research question. The researcher was interested in establishing the indicators of poverty in Buhara sub-county. This was believed to be a basis of establishing the contribution of NGOs or poverty reduction in Buhara Sub-County.

The study therefore found out that of the 136 respondents interviewed, 90(66.1) pointed out lack of or inadequate land as the major indicator of poverty and 12(8.8%) indicated that poor soil management was also an indicator

Ten respondents (7.4%) pointed out unemployment and 4 (2.9%) pointed out malnutrition and 20(14.7%) pointed out diseases are common due to poverty (table 1).

Malnutrition was pointed out as an indicator of poverty through very few respondents 4(2.0%) pointed it out. Due to poverty, many people feed poorly, others get one meal a day and do not have enough to eat (table1)

#### Families Mostly Affected by Poverty

The researcher was interested in finding out the type of families mostly affected by poverty. The study findings revealed that all types of families were affected by poverty in one way or another.

Statistics show that out of 136 respondents interviewed, 57(41.9%) indicated that widow/widowed families were the most affected by poverty. Those that indicated parent families, as the most affected by poverty were 42(30.8%) those indicated single parent families, were 26(19.1%) those who indicated polygamous families were 11(8.0%).

Single parent families were seen to be greatly affected

**Table 2:** Families Mostly Affected by Poverty.

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single parent family	42	30.9
Child headed family	26	19.1
Widowed	57	41.9
Polygamous family	11	8.1
Total	136	100

Source: Researcher’s work

**Table 3:** Causes of poverty According to the Beneficiaries

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Nature of occupation	03	3.1
Land shortage	70	73
Level of education	20	20.3
Family background	03	3.1
Total	96	100

Source: Researcher’s work

by poverty. This was because of a bigger burden that is carried by one/single parent.

Child –headed families are also vulnerable because of lack of a breadwinner in a home. However, the study findings revealed that they were 5(26%) respondents who indicated that a child headed family was vulnerable to poverty. This might be due to the fact that there are few child head families in Buhara Sub County.

Polygamous families are vulnerable to poverty because of a bigger burden by the head to care for many people, division of plots of land to different wives and children and the problem of competition among wives. The tallies with findings of Buhara Sub County local government development plan (Table 2)

**Research questions two: Causes of poverty**

The researcher’s interest was to establish the causes of poverty in Buhara Sub- County. This was because it is practically hard to see a solution to the problem whose root causes is not known. The researcher asked respondents whether they were of the causes of poverty and whether they perceived them in the same way so that they could seek a common solution.

**Causes of poverty according to the beneficiaries: (N=96)**

The findings revealed that 70 (73%) of the 96 respondents pointed to the shortage of land as the greatest cause of poverty. Twenty respondents (20.8%) pointed out low educational level and 3 (3.1%) pointed out

**Table 4:** Causes of poverty According to the key informants: N=30

Causes OF Poverty	Frequency	Percentage
Shortage of land	28	93
Low incomes	20	66.7
Poor roads	14	46.7
Low education	16	53.3

Source: Researcher’s work

pointed out that the nature of occupation while 3 (3.1%) pointed out family background.

The study findings revealed that land shortage was the greatest cause of poverty (73%). According to some respondents, this was due to the fact that land is the major resource used by over 90% yet many people do not have enough of it. The findings tally with the findings of Buhara sub county local government development plan, which indicate land as the major resource in Buhara sub-county.

Level of education was ranked second, because it determines the type of job a person does. Hence low level of education matches with low paying jobs. It also influences a person’s ability to change and accept new changes. Educated parents are clean, understanding and take their children to school, while illiterate ones remove their children from school.

The nature of occupation and family background were sold considered as a cause of poverty though they not seen causes in Buhara Sub- county (Table 3).

**Causes of poverty According to the key informants**

The study findings revealed that the nature of occupation also contributed to poverty. It was identified by respondents that people in better jobs remain with higher incomes while those in low paying jobs remain poor.

In addition, findings from the study revealed that family contributes greatly to a person’s well-being. People from a poor background tend to remain poor and those from a good background are helped to jump out of poverty. The researcher discovered that key informants indicated shortage of land as the major problem 28 (93%) followed by poor roads 14 (46.7%), low incomes 20 (66.7%) and low levels of education 16(53.3%) (Table 4). Basing on the findings of the research especially through focus group discussions, land was pointed out as a major resource yet people share small plots, which are exhausted or have lost soil fertility.

Poor rural roads affect incomes because they contribute to the inaccessibility of firm produce. Some respondents in Rwene parish pointed out that poor road network affect prizes, hence goods are sold at low prices. Low levels of education were pointed out because educa-

**Table 5:** Causes of poverty According to NGO Staff (N=10)

Causes OF Poverty	Frequency	Percentage
Nature of occupation	05	50
Land shortage	09	90
Poor soils	08	80
Level of education	06	60

Source: Researcher's work

**Table 6:** Contribution of NGOs to Poverty reduction according to the beneficiaries. N=96

NGOs	Frequency	Percentage
ICRAF	52	54.2
AMREF	60	62.5
KIGEZI DIOCESE	85	88.5
KABALE DIOCESE	81	84.4

Source: Researcher's work

education influences a person's well being and determine the type of job he/she does.

### Causes of poverty According to NGO staff

According to 11, nine respondents (90%) revealed that land shortage is the major cause of poverty, eight respondents (80%) pointed out poor soils as a major cause of poverty, five respondents pointed out nature of occupation (50%) and six respondents identified low level of education as a cause of poverty (Table 5).

Many of these factors were identified by most of the respondents. Therefore, the study findings from all respondents (136) indicate that land shortage is a major cause of poverty in Buhara Sub County. Data from questionnaires agrees well with data from interviews, observation and focus group discussions that land shortage is a major cause of poverty in Buhara sub County.

The findings indicate that the major effects of poverty are diseases and illiteracy. However, some respondents pointed out malnutrition and deaths.

However, NGO staff attributed poverty to inability of local communities to participate in development projects. One staff commented that even when the date for the meeting is agreed upon, very few people turn up.

It is also important to note that in a focus group discussion, the Sub county chief commented that gender inequalities, geographical inequalities and environmental degradation contributed greatly to poverty in Buhara Sub County.

Findings of the study agree with the findings of local government development plan manual, that poverty is mainly caused by shortage of land, low incomes, illite-

racy, poor health and poor roads.

### Research Question 3: Contribution of NGOs to Poverty reduction

This was the core of the study. The researcher's interest was to find out the contribution of NGOs to poverty reduction. The researcher wanted to find out whether working NGOs had any influence on reducing poverty. The researcher also wanted to know whether NGOs work with people, and distribute benefits to them (Table 6).

The findings through methods of data collection like focus group discussions, questionnaires and interviews show that 88.5% of the respondents admitted that Kigezi Diocese had tried greatly to improve the welfare of people in Buhara. It helped people to acquire gravity water like in Rwere Parish in Ntarabana parish.

The findings also revealed that Kigezi Diocese had helped people to build cemented small tanks commonly known as 'Ebinyungu' to collect and store rainwater. Some farmers have also benefited from these NGOs by heifers. Example is Mr. Butamanya Francis and Zikangumaho Stephen of Rwene Parish.

In a focus group discussion conducted, the findings revealed that people had improved their standards of living through the work of Kigezi Diocese, for example, access to clean water and getting milk from heifers. Kabale Diocese also visible results since they established a dispensary in the Sub-county. This NGO gives counselling and guidance services on family planning.

It provides vocational education to the elderly and the needy. Eighty-one respondents (84.4%) pointed out that Kabale Diocese greatly contributed to poverty reduction (Table 6).

The study findings indicated that many people had heard about AMREF and many youth benefited from it especially through plays and radio programmes that sensitize on HIV/aids. The contribution of AMREF in Buhara Sub-County significantly felt and realized by many people. For example, the youth of Kyase B village formed a group that was aimed at teaching, sensitization of youth about HIV/Aids through conducting plays.

### Contributions of NGOs according to Key informants

Thirteen respondents (43.3%) pointed out that ICRAF contributed greatly towards the conservation of the environment. This was done through provision of tree seedlings to the people. The major aim was to improve on the climate and conserve soils in the long run. These trees would also be sold to earn people incomes, would be used as firewood and building structures.

The contribution done by Kigezi Diocese was tapping rainwater and provision of heifers. Twenty six respondents (86.7%) mentioned Kigezi Diocese as a very helpful project. However, they noted that very few people

**Table 7:** Contributions of NGOs according to Key informants ( N = 30)

NGOs	Frequency	Percentage
ICRAF	13	43.3
AMREF	12	40
KIGEZI DIOCESE	26	86.7
KABALE DIOCESE	24	80

Source: Researcher's work

**Table 8:** Contribution of NGOs according to NGO staff: N=10

NGOs	Frequency	Percentage
ICRAF	4	40
AMREF	6	60
KIGEZI DIOCESE	8	80
KABALE DIOCESE	7	70

Source: Researcher's work

Benefited from the project since it operates in limited parishes.

The researcher discovered that NGO's work in very few places and with very few people. However, some respondents commented that NGOs staff have benefited greatly since they get a salary and other benefits, but even then, they do not reach the intended beneficiaries.

The study findings show that all NGO staff greatly believed that their work in Buhara Sub-county contributed to poverty reduction. However, all NGO staff confessed that most of the benefits may not be visible, but simply are indirect benefits.

In a focus group discussion conducted by the researcher, some NGO staff noted that some beneficiaries only value monetary benefits but do not value other benefits like water, trees and provision of education. They noted that results of their work are realized after long time but strongly confessed that they contribute greatly to poverty reduction.

It was also noted that NGOs have a very short life span and a small coverage. A woman in Rwene noted "NGOs come and go after attaining their goals but they leave us in suspense, others come and go. Even these current NGOs will soon go" (Table 7).

#### Contribution of NGOs according to the staff

The study findings indicted that most of the NGOs staff greatly approved of their work and its contribution towards poverty reduction. The study findings revealed that most of the staff of NGOs supported their work towards poverty reduction. Some NGOs work had visible results like KIGEZI Diocese (90%), followed by Kabale Diocese (70%). Others had invisible results though; they

were anticipated to produce better results in future. These were AMREF (60%) and ICRAF (40%). A staff of NGO commented that; "I strongly say that our goal is to reduce poverty, though, what we do may not produce visible results on ground; but in future you will appreciate our work" (Table 8).

#### Research question four: Challenges met by NGOs in their struggle to reduce poverty

The study findings from beneficiaries and other respondents indicted that inadequate finance, diseases, lack of cooperation, poverty, shortage of land, illiteracy, government interference, shortage of time span, short coverage, poor roads, inadequate NGO staff, terrain and unfavourable weather were the major challenges met by NGOs in their efforts to reduce poverty in rural areas, Buhara in particular.

Many respondents identified various responses and pointed out more than one challenge. The study findings revealed 107 (78.7%) respondents identified shortage of land as the major challenge that hindered effective work of NGOs. Most of the people depend on agriculture for a livelihood, but land remains inadequate. A respondent in Kihanga village, Rwene Parish, had this to say:

" I have two small plots of land, that is where I get food for children, clothings, paraffin and necessities of life; we have always remained in need."

Ninety eight respondents (72.1%) identified poor soil management as a major challenge. The study findings revealed that even those who had land faced a problem of soil exhaustion, or loss of fertility. A lot of time, money and other resources were used to cultivate but yields remained very low because of poor soils. A staff of NGO noted that: "peoples living standards have remained poor because of low productivity caused by poor soils, despite of our effort to poverty" (Source: NGO staff questionnaire) (Table 9).

Eighty nine respondents (65.4%) pointed at diseases. The findings revealed that many people remained sick due to poor feeding, living in poor hygienic conditions and lack of inadequate medical care. Diseases retard economic development and affect work and children's education. A respondent in Muyebe village commented that: "Many children drop out of school because of their parents' sickness or their own illnesses." (Source: Beneficiaries questionnaire). Another respondent noted that: "We try to help people come out of poverty but constant diseases especially HIV/AIDS and malaria have been a greater constraints." (Source NGO staff questionnaire).

Seventy eight respondents (57.4%) identified the challenge of small coverage of NGOs. Most of the NGOs were found to be working in a few parishes and villages. Despite the effort of NGOs, many people were left behind due to a small coverage.

**Table 9:** Showing challenges faced by NGOs according to all respondents N=136

Challenges	Frequency	Percentage
Inadequate sensitization	61	44.8
Inadequate finance	27	19.9
Illiteracy	56	41.2
Diseases	89	65.4
Unfavourable weather	19	14
Short coverage	78	57.4
Terrain	50	36.8
Poor soils	98	72.1
Government interference	22	16.2
Conflicts between staff and beneficiaries	09	6.6
Expectation for benefits like money by beneficiaries	08	5.9
Shortage of land	107	78.7
Inadequate staff	32	23.5
Short time of operation	28	20.6
Dictation by sponsors	10	7.4

Source: Researcher's work

Further, inadequate sensitization was a hindrance to effective work of NGOs. Sixty one respondents (44.8%) pointed at this problem. Many people had not heard about the existence of some NGOs, and their purpose, goals objectives and the intended beneficiaries of these NGOs.

It was found that many people did not have incomes, hence faced a problem of inadequate finance (19.9%). This was mainly due to the problem of inadequate land and poor soils.

Another challenge faced by NGOs was illiteracy (41%). Many people were found not to be educated at higher levels. As a result they could not access better paying jobs, lived in poor hygiene, and remained in poverty due to constant sicknesses and low incomes.

Unfavourable weather also posed a problem among the people of Buhara and NGO staff (14%) This included heavy rains that cause serious soil erosion which result into loss of fertility. Heavy drought and winds spoil crops and other plants. Unfavourable weather interferes with agricultural products, which are affected by weather and climate.

The study findings also indicted that government interference became a major hindrance to NGO work (16.2%). A staff of NGO noted that "Government directs us where to go, what to do and when to do it. Conflicts between staff and beneficiaries were also identified as a challenge (6.6%).

Expectation for money and other benefits by local people create rigidity and resistance to work. Eight respondents (5.9%) revealed that some NGOs failed to perform well because of resistance from people, due to

**Table 10:** Proposed strategies that could improve the work of NGOs towards poverty reduction (N=136)

Challenges	Frequency	Percentage
Economic diversification	83	61.0
Needs assessment	78	57.4
Involving the community in project activities	61	44.9
Conservation of soil	122	89.7
Creation of self help projects	38	28
Improvement of infrastructure	93	68.4
Rural electrification	36	26.5
Widen NGOs coverage	71	52.2
Increase in life span of NGOs	62	45.6
Add on more staff	49	36
Government support	28	20.6
Collaboration with other stakeholders	24	17.6
Sensitization	120	88.2
Improve on hygiene to reduce diseases	89	65.4

Source: Researchers work

expectation for money. A respondent from Kyase B village noted that: "The staff of NGOs call us for meetings for hours and hours yet they do not give us money or lunch."

The findings also revealed that inadequate NGO staff was a problem. Thirty two respondents (23.5%) noted that NGO staff was very few compared to the beneficiaries. This meant that services could not be delivered to the intended beneficiaries as required.

A short life span was also a hindrance to the work of NGOs. Most NGOs work for a short period of two – five years. Due to low sensitization and inadequate community participation, many projects die off when NGO staff go away. As a result, there is not sustainability of the project activities they live behind.

Ten respondents mentioned the challenge of dictation by NGO sponsors. Sponsors determine terms of work, life span, type of project, and the beneficiaries. A staff of NGO noted that: "Our sponsors determine the projects we implement and the people to benefit from them" (Table 10).

#### **Research question five: Strategies that were proposed to improve the work of NGOs towards poverty reduction.**

It was found out that sensitization was proposed by the majority (88.2%) and thus found to be a major strategy

that could improve the performance of NGOs. This came out because most of the respondents claimed that they had heard about these NGOs but did not exactly know what they were doing in Buhara. Others confessed that it was their wish to cooperate and work with these NGOs but did not know how to join them or even whether it was possible to work with them (NGOs).

Another strategy identified by all respondents (44.9%) was involving the community in all activities of the NGOs (Community participation). This would increase awareness on the NGO activities in the area. One member in Rwene village had this to comment: "These NGOs work with well-to-do people, educated, with land, smart and outstanding but they ignore us the poor."

Lack of conservation of soils was also identified as a major source of poverty and the work of NGOs. Land shortage was identified as a major challenge; hence conservation of available small land was proposed to be a good strategy. A respondent from Kyase B noted; Even if NGOs come, we shall remain with poverty because our only source of income is agriculture yet soil has lost fertility; may be if these NGOs could improve on our soils."

Another strategy was economic diversification (61%). This was believed to supplement people's incomes. Widening NGO coverage to other parishes and villages was also emphasized (52.2%).

The findings indicted that many people did not know about these NGOs and the few that knew about them had not benefited because of their (NGO) small coverage. However, according to Buhara LC III chairman, "NGOs are good, they are in Buhara but people are slow in welcoming them." Therefore, he recommended that people should be sensitized in order to accept and collaborate with NGOs.

Thirty eight respondents (28%) suggested that self-help projects among the people would reduce on poverty. These projects included, among others, poultry, piggery, fishponds and provision of small loan scheme to allow people borrow money on a small interest.

Seventy eight (57.4%) respondents believed that needs assessment was a better strategy. It was believed that before an NGO operates in a parish or village, it was important to carry out participatory needs assessment. This would ensure that most serious problems are solved. However, one NGO staff commented that "it is still a problem for us to deal with problems considered more serious, mainly because donors dictate our coverage and the type of services to be offered."

Forty nine (36%) respondents proposed the addition of more staff. It was argued that NGO staff was too thin to reach the whole sub county. However some respondents added that improvement of infrastructure (68.4%) like roads would ease accessibility and improve on the markets.

Thirty six (26.5%) respondents suggested rural electrification. Others suggested that electricity would

help in promoting small-scale industries. However, others looked at it as a very long-term strategy and expensive.

Twenty eight (20.6%) respondents suggested that government support and collaboration with NGOs would support NGOs in their struggle to reduce on poverty. Government support involved reduced government interference in NGO activities and desisting from politics in their work. It also included reduced taxes and subsidizing NGO projects where necessary.

The findings of the study also indicted that improved hygiene among the people would reduce the problem of diseases. Money that would be spent on medical care would be directed to improve the standards of living of the people. For example, eating good food and using clean water were suggested.

Twenty four (17%) respondents proposed that NGOs should work with other stakeholders like government and community based organizations, private individuals and other available NGOs. This would reduce duplication of services in similar parishes. Many NGOs were operating in Buhara parish and Rwene, yet in other parishes they were few or not there, at all.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of the study indicated that a combination of all the above mentioned strategies would improve the work of NGOs towards poverty reduction. One strategy may not be successful in isolation but a combination of several strategies would lead to NGOs success in their struggle to reduce poverty, in Buhara sub-county and other places of Uganda with the problem of poverty.

## REFERENCES

- Appleton S (1996). Women headed households and house hold welfare. An empirical destruction world development, Volume 24, no 12: 1811-1827.
- Arrellano L, Petras (1994) NGOs and poverty alleviation in Bolivia: Development and change, Vol. 25: 3
- Barnet B, Blackie A (Eds) (1992). AIDS in Africa Makerere University MSC Thesis, Blackwell.
- Brown H (1986). Introduction to social Administration. Great Britain Buhara sub-county, Local government, three-year development plan prepared by the sub country councils, May 2004 Kabale.
- Brown H (1989). Deepening the understanding of poverty: Macmillan, Kampala.
- Burkey S (1993). People first A guide to self reliant participatory rural development New York inc.
- Caroline (2002). Can the poor influence policy? Participatory poverty Assessment in the developing World. The world Bank International Monetary Fund Washington DC.
- Chambers R (1983). Rural Development, putting the last first. Prentice Hall, New Jersey.
- Chambers R (1988). Rural Development, Putting the last first, British library, published in United States, with John Wiley and son's Inc, New York.
- Chambers R (1992). Spreading and self -improving; a strategy for scaling up; in M Edwards and Dhulm; OP.
- Clarks E (1991). Democratizing development. The role of voluntary organizations, Earth scan, London.



Colclough C, Manor L (1991). *States or Markets? Neo – Liberalism and Development policy*. Debates, clarendon Press. Oxford.

Deepa N (2000). *Voices of the poor*, World Bank, Oxford University press  
*Developing community social work in teams. Manual for practice* by Barbara hears and Brian Thomas, National institute for social work, London.