

**Community-based Organizations in Socio-economic
Development: The Experience of Kasungu District in Malawi**

By

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I)	TABLES	iv
II)	FIGURES	iv
III)	ACRONYMS	iv
IV)	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
	ABSTRACT.....	viii
	CHAPTER 1: RESEARCH DESIGN.....	1
1.1	BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE	1
1.2	PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW	5
1.2.1	Introduction.....	5
1.2.2	Definition of community-based organizations.....	5
1.2.3	Categories of community-based organizations.....	8
1.2.4	Success determining factors for community-based organizations.....	9
1.2.5	Limitations of community-based organizations.....	10
1.2.6	Community-Based Organisations in Kasungu district.....	10
1.3	RESEARCH PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVES	12
1.3.1	Research problem.....	12
1.3.2	Research objectives.....	15
1.4	RESEARCH DESIGN	16
1.4.1	Literature review	16
1.4.2	Primary data collection	17
1.4.3	Data collection	17
1.4.3.1	<i>Sampling</i>	17
1.4.3.2	<i>Data Collection Techniques</i>	18
1.4.4	Data analysis and interpretation.....	18
1.4.5	Report writing	18
1.5	CONCLUSION.....	19
	CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW ON COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS	20
2.1	INTRODUCTION	20
2.2	ORGANIZATIONAL THEORIES.....	21
2.3	TYPES OF COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANISATIONS.....	22
2.4	WHY COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANISATIONS?.....	25
2.4.1	History.....	28
2.4.2	Community participation and its objectives	31
2.4.3	Views against community participation.....	35
2.4.4	Strengths of CBOs	37
2.4.5	Potentials for community-based organizations.....	40
2.4.6	Factors affecting success of community-based organizations	42
2.4.7	Limitations of community-based organizations.....	46
2.5	COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS IN MALAWI.....	49

2.5.1	History of community-based organizations	49
2.5.2	Institutional and legal framework of community-based organizations in Malawi	49
2.5.3	Community-based organisations in Kasungu district	51
2.6	CONCLUSION	52
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY		54
3.1	INTRODUCTION	54
3.2	RESEARCH DESIGN	55
3.3	RESEARCH METHODS	56
3.4	SAMPLING	57
3.4.1	Sampling techniques	59
3.4.2	Sample size	60
3.5	DATA COLLECTION METHODS	61
3.5.1	Key informant interviews	61
3.5.2	Focus group discussions	62
3.5.3	Individual interviews	64
3.6	FIELD WORK	65
3.7	DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTATION	68
3.8	DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION	69
3.9	CONCLUSION	71
CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS		72
4.1	INTRODUCTION	72
4.2	SAMPLE PROFILES	72
4.3	PRESENTATION OF SURVEY FINDINGS	74
4.3.1	CBOs and the development in Kasungu district	74
4.3.1.1	<i>CBO major areas of focus</i>	74
4.3.1.2	<i>Care and support</i>	76
4.3.1.3	<i>Awareness</i>	79
4.3.1.4	<i>Advocacy</i>	80
4.3.2	Challenges being faced by CBOs in Kasungu District	82
4.3.2.1	<i>Financial capacity</i>	82
4.3.2.2	<i>Technical capacity</i>	84
4.3.2.3	<i>Governance</i>	87
4.3.2.4	<i>Accountability and mismanagement of resources</i>	88
4.3.2.5	<i>Equipment</i>	89
4.3.2.6	<i>Poor monitoring</i>	91
4.3.2.7	<i>Sustainability</i>	93
4.3.2.8	<i>Policy context</i>	95
4.3.2.9	<i>Adequate incentives</i>	96
4.3.2.10	<i>Effective linkages and inter-organizational relationships</i>	96
4.4	CONCLUSION	97
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS		99
5.1	INTRODUCTION	99
5.2	SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION ON SALIENT POINTS	99

5.2.1	Findings related to roles of CBOs.....	100
5.2.2	Findings related to challenges being faced by CBOs	103
5.3	INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS IN TERMS OF LITERATURE OR THEORY ..	109
5.4	MAKE LARGER SIGNIFICANCE OF RESULTS EXPLICIT	114
5.4.1	Significance to the sampled and other existing CBOs.....	115
5.4.2	Government and its development partners	115
5.5	POLICY AND OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS	117
5.7	CONCLUSION.....	121
6.0	BIBLIOGRAPHY	122
7.0	APPENDICES.....	128

I) TABLES

Table I:	Summary of Advantages and Disadvantages of focus Group Discussions.....	64
Table II:	Field Work Time table	66
Table III:	Summary of training some members received	78
Table IV:	Skill Levels and Gaps.....	84
Table V:	List of Equipment	90
Table VI:	Summary of issues facing CBOs.....	94

II) FIGURES

Figure 1:	Roles being played by sampled CBOs	75
Figure II:	Actual versus what is claimed to have been done	89
Figure III:	Monitoring Methods	91
Figure IV:	How CBOs are faring in terms of monitoring.....	92

III) ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CBO	Community-based Organisation
NASFAM	National Association of Smallholder Farmers in Malawi
LO	Local Organisations
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NAC	National AIDS Commission
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
UNISA	University of South Africa

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ABSTRACT

Community-based organizations are considered as one of the major institutions involved in community development apart from the state and non-governmental organizations. The idea of local participation is the one that has resulted into their emergence as participation is considered to be an essential part of human growth.

With the advent of democracy in 1994, and the coming in of the HIV and AIDS pandemic in Malawi, there has been a mushrooming of community-based organizations in the country.

Now that its over fourteen years since their emergence in Malawi, its high time a study was conducted to establish contributions the community-based organizations are making in the development if the country, identify the challenges they are facing and find possible solutions that can help improve their effectiveness.

This thesis presents findings of such a study done in Kasungu district in Malawi.

CHAPTER 1: RESEARCH DESIGN

1.1 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

For a long time, the state has been the key player in the social and economic development of a country. Over time, non-governmental organizations came in to play a role in development after noting that there were gaps in the way government was conducting its development. Over a long period of time, efforts have been made to bring about change on the lives of the poor and oppressed. Projects have often been designed from the capital cities or from donor countries with little or no involvement of the intended beneficiaries in the rural areas. In cases where communities were involved, it was for an already agreed purpose. This has often resulted into failures of projects. Despite the tremendous input made, the problem of poverty still exists among the people. This is partly because the people concerned have been sidelined in the crucial stages of projects that have been designed. They have often been told what they must do instead of being asked about their opinion on what needs to be done to deal with their poverty and how they can go about sorting out the problems on their own. This scenario is what has led others to start thinking about participation. Participation is considered to be an essential part of human growth. Participation leads to the development of self-confidence, pride, initiative, creativity, responsibility and cooperation. It is argued that without such development within the people themselves, all efforts to alleviate their poverty will be difficult if not impossible (Burkey1993: 56).

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Development is about change. This work involves the business of liberating people from the chains of poverty that have kept them bound for a long period of time. This process of liberation cannot be done successfully by anyone else but the poor people themselves. Genuine change can only take place when the local people are participating in all stages of development process. As Paulo Freire has written:

Attempting to liberate the oppressed without their reflective participation in the act of liberation is to treat them as objects which must be saved from a burning building; it is to lead them into the populist pitfall and transform them into masses which can be manipulated (in Burkey 1993: 57).

The idea of local participation is the one that has resulted into the coming or birth of community-based organization as another institution for development. Community-based organizations are critical players in community development, apart from the state and non-governmental organizations. It's argued that real community participation take place in community-based organizations because these institutions are locally based and are run and managed by the community itself. Since they are 'less structured, participation of the people is more intensive and more authentic. Their smaller size enhances the learning process that is important. Members of such groups accept new ideas more readily and tend to achieve more than most people who work alone. Introduced changes are likely to be maintained in a group situation and members are motivated to be more

productive in the presence of others in problem-solving situations. Community-based organizations also have the important task of acting as channels for government and non-governmental organizations attempts at development' (De Beer and Swanepoel 1998: 41).

Malawi received her independence from Britain in 1964. Before independence, there were community-based organizations operating in the country addressing social as well as economic aspects of peoples lives. After independence their activities were curtailed by the government of the day because they were considered as a threat to political stability. Those that were allowed to operate did so under the close supervision of government. With the advent of democracy in 1994, and the coming in of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, many things have changed, including the position and role of community-based organizations. Once more, such grassroots' organizations were allowed to operate in the country without any restrictions. This has resulted into the mushrooming of many community-based organizations involved in socio-economic development. Like any other district in Malawi, Kasungu district has witnessed the establishment of many community-based organizations who are carrying out various activities in areas such as agriculture, small and medium enterprises, natural resources management and HIV and AIDS.

It is now over fourteen years since the situation concerning community-based organizations changed. It is high time an exercise was conducted in Kasungu district to identify and distinguish the different types of community-based

organizations operating in the district. It would also be good to find out the roles these organizations are playing in the development of the district. Further to these, it would also be good to identify the challenges these organizations face that hinder them from being efficient, effective and sustainable. This research was conducted to address the above-mentioned concerns.

Findings from the research would be helpful in a number of ways to a number of interested parties. For example, there is growing interest by the state and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on community-based-organizations. Lessons from this exercise would help them see how they can go about facilitating the formation and support of community-based organizations. In addition to NGOs, a number of people from various communities have realized that there is power in working as a group. As such, they are getting organized into groups. These emerging community-based organizations would benefit a lot from the findings of this research. Lastly, findings from this research would also be beneficial to the existing community-based organizations. This would help them see where they are doing well and what they need to do to improve on their effectiveness and efficiency.

1.2 PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW

1.2.1 Introduction

Community-based organizations are considered as one of the major institutions involved in community development apart from the state and non-governmental organizations. As rightly implied by their name, these are institutions that are found at community level involved in the development that is taking place. They are often small and cover smaller areas. They tend to be less structured, and they are focused on few critical areas that are considered to be important at that time.

Community-based organizations are said to be better placed than the other players in community development. As such participation of people is more intensive and more authentic because they are based right at the community. Since they are less structured, they are very flexible and can easily adapt to changes (De Beer and Swanepoel 1998: 41).

1.2.2 Definition of community-based organizations

Chechetto-Salles and Geyer (2006: 4) define community-based organization (CBO) as an organization that provides social services at a local level. It is a non-profit organization whose activities are based primarily on volunteer efforts. This means that CBOs depend heavily on voluntary contributions for labour and financial support. According to Chechetto-Salles and Geyer (2006:4), a CBO is characterised by the following:

- It is non profit
- It relies on voluntary contributions
- It acts at local level and
- It is service oriented

Sarma, Vicary and Holdrege (2004:21) defined community-based organisations as “grassroots organizations managed by members on behalf of members”. According to Sarma, Vicary and Holdrege, the community-based organizations are identified by 4 characteristics which are local ownership (the organization is owned by the community and serves its priorities and aspirations), local accountability (the organization is accountable to the community and not to a higher level), local control (the members have control over the direction and activities of the organization), and local membership (the organization is made up of members of the community).

Hasenfeld & Gidron (1993:218) defined a community-based organization as “a group of individuals who experience a common problem, who share their personal stories and knowledge to help one another cope with their situation and who simultaneously help and are helped. In addition, the group emphasizes face-to-face interactions and informal and interchangeable roles”.

Noting the struggles and challenges of coming up with a definition of what community-based organizations are, David Bargal (1992) developed a

comprehensive working definition for self help groups by looking at five important aspects which characterize them. The aspects are as follows:

- Primary purpose is to provide help and support for its members in dealing with their problems and in improving their psychological functioning and effectiveness.
- Its origin and sanction for existence rest with the members of the group themselves rather than with some external agency or authority.
- It relies on its source of knowledge and concern as its primary source of help, with the structure of the relationship between members being one of peers, so far as helping, giving and support are concerned.
- It is generally composed of members who share common core of life experience and problems.
- Its source and mode of operation are under the control of its members although they may, in turn, draw upon professional guidance and various theoretical and philosophical frameworks” (Bargal 1992: 83).

According to Cornwell (2006: 45), all community and voluntary organizations are referred to as nongovernmental organizations since they include a wide variety of organizations and associations. Borrowing from De Graaf, Cornwell defines the

“nongovernmental” organizations as noncommercial, locally based, participative organizations which serve as instruments for groups of people to present interest publicly, and which organise the attempts of their members to improve and stabilize their lives.

What can be said from the above discussion is that it is not very easy to come up with a definition on community-based organizations that can be accepted by all people. However, what is common is the issue of people coming together, putting their resources together to deal with problems that affect their lives.

1.2.3 Categories of community-based organizations

Community-based organizations may be divided into three categories. These are local development associations, cooperatives and interest associations. Local development associations are defined by geographic boundaries. They bring people together in a community, area or region to promote development through self-help and/or by lobbying the government or other institutions for assistance. Benefits accrued in local associations are for the whole community. These associations are more inclusive and multi-functional than other institutions for development (Monaheng 1998: 7).

Local organizations are further divided into standard and participatory organizations. Standard organizations are those that are often formed and controlled by outside agencies. The elite dominate them and most of the benefits

are accrued to the group members. Participatory organizations are often started and managed by the people themselves, they are more informal and flexible in objectives. Their establishment is related to and inspired by the day-to-day needs of the people (Monaheng 1998: 7).

Cooperatives are defined by their economic functions whereby members pool their resources together in the form of labor, capital, land, purchasing power or products. Unlike the situation in local associations, benefits in cooperatives accrue privately to members. Cooperatives tend to focus on economic issues only (Monaheng 1998: 7).

Interest associations have their defining characteristic of the common features or interests of their membership. This type of associations is less encompassing than the local development associations, but they are broader than cooperatives because they are concerned with social as well as economic interests and with private as well as public goods (Monaheng 1998: 7).

1.2.4 Success determining factors for community-based organizations

There are factors that determine the success of community-based organizations. Experience with internationally funded projects (especially water projects) in developing countries have identified adequate incentives, sufficient skills and resources, appropriate processes, effective inter-organizational relationships,

appropriate technology and effective system of monitoring, evaluation and feedback as factors that can determine success of community-based organizations (Rondinelli 1991: 419).

1.2.5 Limitations of community-based organizations

Though there is much talk about community-based organizations as institutions for meaningful development, they also have their limitations. They include limited self-sustaining and technical capacity, lack of broad programming, limited ability to scale up successful projects, lack of strategic perspective and linkages with other role players, and limited managerial and organizational capacities (De Beer&Swanepoel 1998:41).

1.2.6 Community-Based Organisations in Kasungu district

Kasungu is one of the 28 districts in Malawi. It is 120km away north of the capital city, Lilongwe. The district lies in the Lilongwe-Kasungu plain which happens to be one of the agriculture production areas. The district has a total population of 476,018 people and a population density of 60 persons per square kilometer as per 1998 population census (Mwamadi 2001: 2).

Kasungu district has 2 cooperatives, 4 interest associations and 30 community-based organizations. As stated above, the cooperatives focus much of their attention on economic development. Their aim is to improve the economic status

of participating members. Major activities carried out include buying and selling of various products, capacity building of members in business management skills, and provision of loans to members for them to expand their businesses. The products may be agricultural or manufactured ones.

The interest associations are groups that are interested in social as well as economic interests of members. In the case of Kasungu district, most of these associations are involved in agricultural production. Their main aim is to help farmers to realize maximum proceeds from their farm produce. To achieve this, procurement of farm inputs is done together. This helps them to access the inputs at reasonable prices. They also sell their farm produce together. In this way, they are able to bargain for better prices at the market. In some cases, they are able to sell their products to markets outside the country at much better prices than it would have been the case locally. Capacity building is also one of the activities whereby participating members are given training in various areas related to their work. As associations, they advocate for better policies and terms for farmers such as better prices for farm inputs and farm produce, and removal of some of the taxes that are charged on farm produce by government. For example, in 2003, the National Association of Smallholder Farmers of Malawi asked government to remove some of the taxes that are levied on tobacco at the auction flows and this has happened.

As stated above, the local development organizations involve people staying in the same geographic position, and their aim is to deal with problems that affect

their daily lives. Benefits realized are for the whole community and not necessarily for individual members. Local organizations are inclusive and multifunction in their activities. Notable and fast growing in terms of numbers are local organizations involved in HIV/AIDS activities. These organizations aim at reducing the suffering experienced by the infected and affected people. Activities done include caring of the chronically sick and orphaned, awareness creation on the dangers of HIV/AIDS and advocacy.

This research focused on community-based organisations involved in HIV and AIDS activities. This was done in order to have a detailed study of this category of community-based organizations. It is expected that lessons drawn during this research will go a long way in shaping the direction of existing and future community-based organizations.

1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVES

1.3.1 Research problem

For a long time the state has been the sole player in the development of a country. With the passing of time, non-governmental organizations came in to play a role in the development process after gaps were noted in the way government was doing its development work.

It is argued that this process of bringing about change in peoples lives liberation can not be done successfully by anyone else but the poor people themselves.

Genuine change can only take place when the local people are participating in all the stages of development process. By any measure, local participation is a critical success factor for transformational development (Myers 1999:147).

The ideas of local participation are the ones that have led to the birth of community-based organization as another institution for development. Community-based organizations (CBOs) are critical players in the work of community development apart from the state and non-governmental organizations. Real community participation takes place in community-based organizations because these institutions are locally based and are run and managed by the community itself. Their location puts them at an advantageous position that they are able to identify and address real peoples felt needs as opposed to the state and government (De Beer and Swanepoel 1998: 41).

Malawi received her independence from her colonial master in 1964. Before independence, there were community-based organizations operating in the country. However, their operations were curtailed by government after independence because they were looked at as a threat to political stability. The coming in of plural politics in 1994 and the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic have resulted into a number of changes including the perception and involvement of community-based organizations. Participation of grassroots organizations in the fight against poverty and HIV/AIDS was considered to be pivotal and as such community-based organizations were allowed and encouraged to take part in the

development process. This has resulted into the birth of a number of community-based organizations focusing on a number of areas including HIV and AIDS.

Like any other district in Malawi, Kasungu has also witnessed the establishment of many community-based organizations that are carrying out various development activities. It's now over fourteen years with community-based organizations working in Kasungu district. Questions people may have about them may be as follows:

- What benefits are communities benefiting with the coming of community-based organizations or what positive changes/benefits have come as a result of the presence of the community-based organizations?
- What hindrances or are the community-based organizations facing that are affecting their performance and delivery of services?
- What enabling factors need to be in place for the community-based organizations to perform well?

It is high time an exercise was conducted to assess the role community-based organizations are playing in the development of the district. It would also be good to ascertain the challenges they are facing and find ways of minimizing their effect on the work of community-based organizations. The research study was conducted to address the above mentioned concerns.

For purposes of this study, research focused on local organizations that are involved in HIV/AIDS activities. This decision was reached at firstly, in order to have a detailed and thorough study of this category of community-based organizations. Secondly, In Malawi and in Kasungu in particular, CBOs are often associated with HIV and AIDS activities. As it might have been mentioned elsewhere, the re-emergence of CBOs in Malawi came at a time when the country was struggling with the impact of HIV and AIDS. Government initiatives to solicit support from the community resulted into the birth of more CBOs involved in HIV and AIDS than any other sector of development.

It is expected that lessons drawn during this research will go a long way in informing and shaping the direction of existing and future community-based organizations involved in HIV and AIDS activities as well as those involved in other sectors of Kasungu society as well as the country of Malawi and beyond. In addition, there is a growing interest by the state and non-governmental organizations on how they can collaborate with them in the development process. Lessons drawn from this study would help them to see how they can go about in their partnership with the community-based organizations.

1.3.2 Research objectives

Based on what has been said above, the research study was conducted to achieve the following objectives:

- To find out the roles CBOs are playing in the development of the district/their areas.
- To establish the challenges these organizations face that prevent them from contributing to socio-economic development.

1.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

1.4.1 Literature review

This involved reading of literature on the subject and other related issues and consultation of other sources of information that is relevant to the subject under discussion. This was be done in order to have a thorough understanding on what others have written on what community-based organisations are, their role in development, challenges and limitations they have and their potential in development

Various sources were consulted such as books, journals, and any documentation that is available at district and national level. Information was sourced from places such as UNISA Library, University of Malawi Library and relevant government departments in Kasungu District.

1.4.2 Primary data collection

This constituted the second phase of the research. Work at this level involved the collection of information from primary sources. The primary sources include community-based organizations at grassroots level and district level officials that are closely working with community-based organizations. The district level officials include key Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and government staff. NGOs that were contacted include Plan Malawi and World Vision. Government departments included were Ministry of Agriculture and Departments of Social Welfare and Community Services. The mentioned NGOs and Government departments were chosen because they are working in close collaboration with community-based organisations in Kasungu District.

1.4.3 Data collection

1.4.3.1 *Sampling*

For purposes of this research, focus was on CBOs that are involved in HIV/AIDS activities. As at the time when this research study was being conducted, there were 30 community-based organizations involved in HIV/AIDS activities in Kasungu. 50% of the CBOs were sampled for this study. Simple random sampling was used in the selection of the organizations.

For each community-based organization selected, data was collected from key members who are involved in the day-to-day running of the community-based

organization. On average, each organization has 10 members that are charged with the responsibility of overseeing smooth operation of the entity. Most of the data was collected from these people.

1.4.3.2 *Data collection techniques*

Key informant interviews, focus group discussions and individual interviews were used as techniques for the collection of primary data. A semi-structured questionnaire was used during the interviews. Literature review was used for the collection of secondary data. (Roche 1999: 199, Randel 2006:58).

1.4.4 Data analysis and interpretation

Tables and graphs were used to analyze data collected. This simplified the work of analyzing information. Analysis was done in line with the research problem and objectives.

1.4.5 Report writing

Presentation of findings was in narrative form supported by tables, graphs and bars.

1.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, discussions centered on the design of the research exercise which was done in Kasungu District on community-based organization's contributions in the socio-economic development that is going on in the district. Apart from providing background information and rationale for the research study, the chapter has also provided information on preliminary literature reviews, research problem and objectives and an outline on how the research study was conducted.

The following chapter is on literature review. Discussion in the chapter is on the various views by various authorities on community-based organizations as one of the institutions for development. The chapter also provides information on the history and work of community-based organizations in Malawi.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW ON COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is a literature review on community-based organizations (CBOs). It explores various ideas from a number of people on CBOs. This chapter has two major sections. The first section looks at the origin of CBOs and reasons for their emergence. It also looks in brief community participation-its objectives and criticisms/weaknesses. It also explores factors that affect the success of community-based organizations and it ends by looking at limitations of Community-based organizations. The second section looks at community-based organizations in Malawi and Kasungu in particular. Apart from looking at history of CBOs in Malawi, this section discusses the legal framework of CBOs in Malawi, and the work of CBOs in Kasungu District.

For any activity to go on well there is need for some sort of structure or organization. The same is the case with community development; it cannot go on well without some sort of structure on the ground for successful management of development. Literature on development management divides structure into three large segments namely, government organizations, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations (De Beer & Swanepoel 1998: 34).

2.2 ORGANIZATIONAL THEORIES

In order to have an intellectual framework for the subject under discussion, it is important to have a look at some of the theories that have relevance to community-based organizations. These are theories that deal with issues of organization and they include the Marxist, Liberationist, Technocratic, Structural-Reformist and the Exchange Model theories (Chiwaula 2002: 7).

The Marxist Theory considers struggle for power as an ingredient of most of organizations. This agrees with a comment by Stewart (2006: 53) that self help is inherently political: it is a struggle to control the future. The Liberationists see the state as irremediably exploitative, incompetent and corrupt in its relation with the poor. As such, the poor should de-link themselves from the state and instead promote their strength through collective action. The Technocratic notion advocates individual rather than collective action and perceive institutional and structural changes as disruptive and costly. Structural-Reformist theory is an integration of elements from Marxist, Liberationists, and Technocratic theories and it combines self-advancement with state interventions for any meaningful change to take place (Chiwaula 2002:7).

The Exchange Model theory advocates that individuals or organizations attempt to gain some benefit from another by exchanging or giving something in return.

This model implies that organizational membership is determined by anticipated positive return (Chiwaula 2002:25)

Instead of looking at the emergence of CBOs from a theoretical point of view, Stewart (2006: 8-9) is of the view that the evolution of a new generation of community and grassroots groups has been driven by “a shifting constellation of forces, including stagnant or deteriorating economic and environmental conditions for the poor, the failure of governments to respond to basic needs, the spread in some regions of new social ideologies and religious doctrines and political space opened in some countries as tight fist dictatorships give way to nascent democracies. In contrast to traditional organizations and mass political movements, this rising tide of community groups is generally pragmatic, and concerned above all with self-help”.

In conclusion, whatever the reason for organization might be, the bottom line is that for things to go on well there is need for some sort of organization. For CBOs, elements of all these views apply. The following section looks at views of different people on categorization of community-based organizations.

2.3 TYPES OF COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANISATIONS

This section is a discussion on how various people categorize community-based organization.

According to Monaheng (1998: 7), community-based organizations may be divided into three categories. These are local development associations, cooperatives and interest associations. Local development associations are

defined by geographic boundaries. They bring people together in a community, area or region to promote development through self-help and/or by lobbying the government or other institutions for assistance. Benefits accrued in local associations are for the whole community. These associations are more inclusive and multi-functional (Monaheng 1998: 7).

Local organizations are further divided into standard and participatory organizations. Standard organizations are those that are often formed and controlled by outside agencies. The elite dominate them and most of the benefits are accrued to the group members. Participatory organizations are often started and managed by the people themselves, they are more informal and flexible in objectives. Their establishment is related to and inspired by the day-to-day needs of the people (Monaheng 1998: 7).

Cooperatives are defined by their economic functions whereby members pool their resources in the form of labor, capital, land, purchasing power or products. Benefits in cooperatives accrue privately to members unlike a situation in local associations. Cooperatives tend to focus on economic issues only.

Interest associations have as their defining characteristics the common features or interests of their membership. This type of associations are less encompassing than Local development associations but are broader than cooperatives because they are concerned with social as well as economic interests and with private as well as public goods (Monaheng 1998: 7).

Cornwell and De Beer (2004) have a different categorization of community-based organizations. In their classification, they consider all community level organizations as local non-governmental organizations (NGOs). These are further subdivided into three groups which include cooperatives, credit groups and local organizations for development (LOs) also referred to as community-based organizations (Cornwell and De Beer 2004: 121-125). Examples of local organizations include farmers associations, afforestation groups, orphan care groups, faith based organizations and many others that are found at the grassroots level. The most crucial function of these organizations is empowerment- that is, “to achieve an improved position in relation to government, the bureaucracy and the local elites” (Cornwell and De Beer 2004: 125).

Cornwell and De Beer (2004:125) assert that local organizations for development have three basic functions namely, the provision of public service, activating mutual assistance and resource mobilization and enabling rural people to communicate information, needs, demands and opportunities to government.

A conclusion that can be made from the above discussion is that various people have different views on how community-based organizations can be categorized. What is common to all is the fact that these organizations are community-based and managed by the local people and are for the benefit of all community members. For purposes of this study, the name community-based organization (CBO) shall be used instead of other names like local organizations (LOs).

The following section gives a background/rationale for the emergence of community-based organizations. The section discusses some of the issues that have influenced other development practitioners and community people to start thinking of community-based organization as alternative institutions that can be used to achieve desired changes in communities.

2.4 WHY COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANISATIONS?

Development is about change. This work involves the business of liberating people from the chains of poverty that have kept them bound for a long period of time. This process of liberation cannot be done successfully by anyone else but the poor people themselves. This is so because the local people are more knowledgeable about themselves and their communities than outsiders. This implies that seeking local participation is the only safeguard for outsiders against doing unwitting damage to local communities (Myers 1999:147). The point of emphasis here is the need for active participation of the people that are being helped by any development facilitator/agency if any meaningful change is to be achieved.

Cornwell (2006: 45) argues that people are directly or indirectly affected by any development planning that is going on in a particular area/country. As such it is imperative that the people should have a say in the shaping of events that will affect their lives. The local population should play a greater part in the decision

making and formulation of plans to ensure that the envisaged change will suit local conditions.

Kent in Cornwell (2006: 43) raises critical point on the need for involvement of community-based organization. It is argued that community-based planning will always lead to greater equity and fairness, since oppression and other forms of injustice usually stem from situations where one group makes decisions for another. When people plan for themselves, they may make mistakes and they may harm themselves, but they will not normally be unjust to themselves.

Korten in Stewart (2005: 165) argues that authentic people-centered development cannot be achieved by governments on behalf of the people. It must be achieved by the people themselves. He further argues that leadership for societal transformation must necessarily come from individual citizen volunteers whose values and sense of their own empowerment free them from dependence on conventional economic and political rewards. Raising the consciousness of the global citizenry and mobilising people's inherent capacity for voluntary action in the cause of transformation may be the single most important task of the professional development worker. Releasing traps of fatalism and division usually requires a catalyzing influence from outside the community-some experience dispelling isolation and mutual distrust (Stewart 2006: 19).

Spreading today's grassroots mobilization to a larger share of the world's communities is an indispensable step towards putting an end to the global scourges of poverty and environmental degradation. Indeed while national development in the orthodox model places primacy on accumulating capital and

improving technology, sustainable development is built first on the mobilization of people (Stewart 2006: 50-51).

The coming in of CBOs does not mean doing away with governments. Stewart observes that the largest challenge in reversing global deterioration is to forge an alliance between local groups and national governments. This is so because its only governments that have the resources and authority to create conditions for full-scale grassroots mobilization. As grassroots development theorist Sheldon Annis writes: It may well be that wildflowers grow by themselves. But grassroots organizations do not. They are cultivated in large measure by just policies and competent government agencies that do their job (Stewart 2006: 51).

CBOs are the most ideal structures for driving socio-economic development. They are initiated by members of the community, and are thus embedded within the neighbourhoods they serve. They also know about the real needs of their immediate environment. They understand the dynamics of their community and are often directly affected by the injustices they strive to eradicate. Strengthening CBOs is therefore an important task, if transformation leading to sustainable development is to be achieved (Community Connections 2007: 1).

This section has looked at a wide range of views on why community-based organizations. What has come out is the fact that any meaningful change in the lives of people can only take place when the concerned people take part. The war against poverty can not be won without the involvement of the poor themselves.

The following section is a discussion on the history and reasons for the emergence of community-based organisations. An attempt has also been made to look at community participation as it has very strong bearing on the subject under

discussion. This section concludes by looking at the criticisms that are leveled at community participation. It is my view that these criticisms also apply to CBOs since they have community participation as their roots.

2.4.1 History

The idea of community-based organizations has its roots from the concept of community participation. While the idea of participation is an old one, contemporary notions of community participation are of comparatively recent origin. The ideal that the poor and oppressed should be mobilized and encouraged to participate in decision-making for social development has been formalized and popularized in the 1970s. This noble idea is being championed by the United Nations and a lot of literature has been generated on the subject. Efforts have to be made to establish and strengthen institutions for the mobilization of popular participation. By doing so efforts to promote economic and social development can be accelerated (Chiwaula 2002: 17).

Holmen and Jirstrom (1994: 27) trace the emergence of CBOs as far back as during the re-building process after the Second World War. During this period, development aid was seen to be costly, ineffective and created dependency. Besides, aid was not reaching the intended, the poorest of the poor. There were claims that development had to come from “below” and be based on the principle of self-help. LOs were to replace large-scale and centralized development schemes and parastatal organizations with nationwide coverage (ibid). This view

is equally held by the Bretton Wood Institutions while imposing Structural Adjustment Programs in developing countries, that the role of the state should be reduced in the economy (Ellis 2000: 161) and those at the local level be mandated to take charge of planning and implementation of their development initiatives.

Blunt and Warren (1996: 56) have also observed that development planners and policy makers have realized that it is cost effective to work with and through CBOs for the success of any development program. This implies that Development Agencies should strive to promote the use of CBOs in any development issue.

Other scholars and practitioners have observed that some CBOs are entirely indigenous, emerging as local people's response to local problems (Dilts 1998; Keengwe et al.1998: 5). Example of such CBOs are Village Development Committees in Botswana, Tanzania and Zambia, Local Development Associations in Yemen, Forest User Groups in Nepal, Cooperatives, Farmers Associations, among others, in many developing countries (Dilts 1998; Keengwe et al.1998: 5).

Bender in Mazibuko (2008:70) is of the view that CBOs have come as a result of government failures to meet the ever increasing/growing needs of the masses. For a long time the state has been responsible for the provision of services and facilities to the people. This has proved to be an uphill task that has resulted into government's failure to meet its obligations. As a result of this, "disappointment and frustration have grown among the people as such expectations are not met

due to the steady erosion of funding and the ensuing program curtailment of government and voluntary agencies alike. No doubt many citizens have resigned themselves to this state of affairs and have “rediscovered” their traditional affinity for mutual assistance, self-reliance, and personalized help” (Mazibuko 2008: 68). He further argues that “what seems to be clear is the desire of ordinary citizens to assume more effective control over the social provisions/social utilities and influence the goals therein” (Mazibuko 2008: 68).

From an economic point of view, community-based organizations are “a needed community support to economic development, ...an expanded community service delivery role in which organizations explore opportunities to take over some of the services presently being delivered by local governments” (Mgawanyemba 2000:5).

This section has looked at the history and reasons for the emergence of community-based organizations. The idea that local people should take part in the development going on in their areas is what has made governments and development agencies to reconsider their approaches to development. Factors internal to communities have also played a part in encouraging development players to consider involvement of local communities in the development of their areas.

For anybody to have a deeper appreciation of the role of community-based organization, it may be necessary to have a look at what community participation and its objectives are. The following discussion is on this crucial subject.

2.4.2 Community participation and its objectives

Community participation refers to an active process whereby beneficiaries influence the direction and execution of development projects rather than merely receiving a share of project benefits. It is where men and women, boy and girls actively participate in all aspects of their development (Sarma, Vicary & Holdrege 2004:1). In general, development specialists consider empowerment, beneficiary capacity building, increasing effectiveness and improving project efficiency as the main objectives of community participation (Sarma, Vicary & Holdrege 2004:15). The following section looks at each of these in some detail.

a) Empowerment

Empowerment refers to “the expansion of asserts and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence control and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives” (World Bank 2002 XVIII). Empowerment is considered the major objective for community participation. It has four key elements and these include access to information, inclusion/participation, accountability and local organizational capacity where people can work together, organize themselves, and mobilize resources to solve problems of common interest (World Bank 2002 XX).

For a long time the poor and powerless have been excluded from full participation in the social, economic and political life of their communities. This has made them powerless. Through community-based organizations, the poor and oppressed can be empowered to meaningfully encounter, cope with and sometimes change the structures and systems that oppress them. Community-based organizations are built on the assumption that “united we stand divided we fall”. The poor and oppressed can be empowered to participate fully in their society when they act collectively. There might be times when the poor and oppressed may assume power but if they assume it individually they will not be successful in changing their community significantly. The power of the poor emerges from collective action (Njoki 2008:6).

It is not strange for people to participate in development as individuals. One can make individual efforts to change his/her own area and can reap the benefits from community development efforts individually. However, participatory development entails group action that is working together with other members of the community to achieve common goals. Achievement of empowerment and capacity building for sustained development would be difficult without group action (Monaheng 1998: 6).

Empowerment of the local people ensures sustainability of development activities. Over a long period of time, efforts have been made by governments, various development agents and individuals to bring about change on the lives of poor

and oppressed people. Instead of involving the local people, projects have often been designed from the capital cities or from donor countries with no or minimum involvement of the intended beneficiaries in the rural areas. This has often resulted into failures of projects and immediate collapse of projects after phase-out. Despite the tremendous input made, the problem of poverty still exists among the people. This is partly because the people concerned have been sidelined in the crucial stages of projects that have been designed. Community-based organizations can provide an answer to this daunting challenge of project sustainability. (Sarma, Vicary & Holdrege 2004:10).

b) Capacity building

Participation is considered to be an essential part of human capacity building. Participation leads to the development of self-confidence, pride, initiative, creativity, responsibility and cooperation. Without such development within the people themselves, all efforts to alleviate their poverty will be difficult if not impossible (Burkey 1993: 56). "... without such underlying self-help component, social development is fundamentally incomplete, diluted, or ineffective. Bender in Mazibuko (2008:50) looks at self-help is a key mechanism by which overall social development can be invoked to provide more solid economic infrastructure".

c) *Efficiency*

Efficiency has to do with capacity to do what is required. It is argued that it's only those who are affected that can best deal with the problems surrounding their lives and do it far much better than an outsider. "Only the poor and powerless of a particular community who can assume responsibility for solving their own predicaments" (Linthicum 1991: 37). The poor and oppressed are faced with so many problems daily. The poor and the powerless are the very same people who are capable of solving those problems which they and their community are facing. This is so because the "local people have a good understanding of the community's needs..." (World Bank 2002 XX). Since Community-based organizations comprise of people from the same community, they are better placed to deal with problems being faced by the community and are the ones who can represent the interests of the local people they are serving better through guidance from local residents.

d) *Effectiveness*

Effectiveness implies having power to cause something, to effect or successful in producing a result or effect (Cobuild 2005:215). Since the local people have a good understanding of the challenges facing their community, they are in a better position to come up with projects that effectively address people's felt needs and this can be done with minimum resources than would have been the case if external expertise were utilized.

Community-based organizations, as an alternative institution for development, can provide an answer to this problem. This is so because they comprise of members from the same community. If well equipped, they can help to see to it that local people continue to derive benefits from the project even after phase out

2.4.3 Views against community participation

While a lot has been said on the importance of community participation, criticisms against this concept abound. The discussion below looks at some of the criticisms that are leveled against community participation. It is my opinion that these criticisms also apply to community-based organizations because they derive their existence from the concept of community participation.

Firstly, one of the criticisms leveled against it is that “the concept of community participation has popularity without clarity and is subject to growing faddishness and a lot of lip service” (Chiwaula 2002: 35).

Secondly it is argued that the concept gives an impression that small communities are a cohesive and integrated entity fighting for justice against powerful external forces yet the truth on the ground is that even deprived communities are differentiated in terms of status, income and power. In addition, the poor people do not always behave in the nicest way towards each other. As observed by Elliot in Chiwaula (2002: 35) ‘the exploiters in many poor communities are comparatively small fish who are themselves poor and exploited in turn by

others'. Instead of recognizing these differences, proponents of community participation evoke a crude image that needs a more refined analysis.

Thirdly is the issue of interpersonal relationships. It is argued that the concept of community participation has failed to adequately deal with problems of interpersonal relationships that arise in all communities. Even the most deprived community suffers from conflicts, rivalries and factionalism. This may affect achievement of desired outcomes.

Fourthly, the concept of community participation advocates bottom-up approach yet the approach itself is riddled with paternalism. The very act of introducing community workers into a community is an external imposition- a top down move. This is against what the approach advocates (Chiwaula 2002: 40).

The fifth criticism is that the concept equates people participation with total continuous commitment to activism. This is hardly possible. The truth is that rural people have many other commitments and it is not feasible to think that the poor have excess free time. So it is unrealistic to hope for a permanent activism or to conceive of community participation as an endless and hectic round of mass meetings, rallies, protests and other activities (Chiwaula 2002: 40).

The sixth criticism is that it is not possible to achieve real improvement in social conditions through community participation. The argument is that profound social structural changes at both domestic and international levels are necessary if

community participation is to be effective. Otherwise, community participation programs can only contribute to social improvement in a small way. What is needed for a meaningful change to happen is a wider social and economic change in society. This is so because conditions at macro level have an effect on what is happening at micro level.

This section has looked at community participation and its objectives. It has also been shown that although there is much positive talk about the concept, it has shortfalls that every development practitioner has to bear in mind.

The following section looks at the strengths, potentials and limitations of CBOs. It goes further to explore some of the factors that affect the success of CBOs.

2.4.4 Strengths of CBOs

This section looks at the strengths or advantages of community-based organizations. These include their size, structure and their location.

Community-based organizations have unique advantages as institutions for development that may not be found in the others. Firstly, it has to do with their size and structure. Since they are smaller, less structured organizations, this makes them be suitable for community development. Participation of the people is more intensive and more authentic. Small size enhances the learning process among its members. New ideas and technologies are more readily accepted and changes

introduced are maintained. Members tend to achieve more collectively than most people who work alone. Community-based organizations have better access to information and group members are motivated to be more productive in the presence of others in problem-solving situations (De Beer and Swanepoel 1998: 41). This is a characteristic that can not be achieved easily by government or large NGOs.

Second advantage has to do with their position/location in society. Since they are locally positioned, community-based organizations play the important task of acting as channels for government and non-government attempts at development. They act as a link between the community and outside organizations to enable flow of input into the community. When funds come, they mobilize the local people so that they can properly play their role in community development (De Beer and Swanepoel 1998: 41).

Thirdly, community-based organizations provide basis for development in so far as they are building an organization and bringing the community together around mutual concern and needs (De Beer and Swanepoel 1998: 41).

De Graaf in Cornwell (2006) listed the following as advantages of working with CBOs:

- CBOs are closer to the grassroots and are therefore able to keep up with the needs and views of the “beneficiaries” of the development.

- Most of the leaders of these organizations are volunteers who show great dedication to the development task.
- CBOs operate at low cost and can adapt quickly then complex governmental organizations and needs. Therefore they operate more efficiently and cost-effectively.
- CBOs are directly accountable to their members- a factor which forces them to be receptive and responsive to the desires and needs of their members. This is in direct contrast to government bodies where staff members are accountable to their departmental heads rather than their clients.
- CBOs are much smaller than governmental organizations. And since they do not have an extensive bureaucratic structure and are not subject to political strife, they tend to be more flexible.
- CBOs are characterised by upward flow of information and is therefore easier to experiment within these organizations, to try new ideas and make regular adjustments, and this makes them ideal instruments of learning process planning (Cornwell 2006: 45).

It is worthy noting that being small and locally based alone does not guarantee success for any CBO. Other factors are also necessary as discussed in section 2.4.6.

It is worthy pointing out that community-based organizations have weaknesses as well. These have been discussed in detail in section 2.4.7.

All other factors being equal, there is much that can be achieved through community-based organizations. The following section looks at the potential of community-based organizations - things that are possible if CBOs have all they need to effectively conduct their business.

2.4.5 Potentials for community-based organizations

General agreement appears to exist among social development theorists that citizen participation in voluntary activities creates a potential for the realization of six development objectives: 1) individual empowerment, 2) group empowerment, 3) institutional building and community change, 4) nation building, 5) region building, and 6) global social development (Njoki 2008: 10).

1) Individual empowerment

Aside from finding solutions to their members' common problems, self-help groups can provide an arena for individuals to consolidate an identity, develop a feeling of belonging, and develop coping and action skills. Self-help groups thus strengthen the individual and give the individual both permission and power to act on his or her own behalf as well as on behalf of the group. Feelings of helplessness are supplanted by feelings of power and control over one's destiny (Njoki 2008:10).

II) Group empowerment

When the poor and oppressed work alone, it is not easy for them to influence any change in their community. When they come together they are able to encourage each other to speak with one voice. As they work together, they are able to share skills and knowledge among themselves and this in a way builds the capacity and ability of the group to carry out its activities. Individuals as well as the group develop self-confidence, pride, initiative, creativity, responsibility and cooperation.

III) Institutional building and community change

Community-based organizations are in the category of institutions that are involved in community development. They have the potential of acting as capacity building centers where individuals and groups can acquire various skills and knowledge for the running of their institutions. Through orientations and capacity building training, members would be equipped to effectively and efficiently carry out activities of their organizations and be able to meet their planned goals. This would in turn result into meaningful community changes because the CBOs are doing their work well. The more capable institutions are, the better placed they are to influence significant positive changes in their communities

IV) Nation building, V) Region building and VI) Global social development

All other factors being equal, the good development that is taking place at community level should spill over at national, regional and global level. If community-based organizations are doing well at community level, this in turn may positively affect community development at national, regional as well as at global levels. “The level of social development and level of self-help activity may well stand in dialectical relationship to one another” (Mgawanyemba 2000:7).

2.4.6 Factors affecting success of community-based organizations

As it is the case with other things, there are factors that determine the success of community-based organizations. Experience with internationally funded projects (especially water projects) in developing countries have identified adequate incentives, sufficient skills and resources, appropriate processes, effective inter-organizational relationships, appropriate technology and effective system of monitoring, evaluation and feedback as factors that can affect success of community-based organizations (Rondinelli 1991: 419).

The six factors reinforce each other in creating conditions that are conducive to efficient community-based organizations. Projects and programs designed to promote community-based organizations must give careful attention to each of these factors and their relationship between them (Rondinelli 1991: 429).

1 Adequate incentives

This is one of the issues that is often forgotten in the design and implementation of most of projects. Individuals participating in community-based organizations have their own personal needs and aspirations. For them to continue participating in community self-help there is need for incentives that are strong enough to overcome individual and family costs. The incentives may be in the form of costs saved in terms of money and time, sense of control and ownership of projects being implemented, recognition and appreciation by government and people of the role being played and bureaucratic rewards for government officials to provide support for community management (Rondinelli 1991: 429).

2 Sufficient skills and resources

For community-based organizations to be successful, there is also need for its members to attain the basic skills and resources. For example, in Tanzania (Keengwe 1998: 5), community-based organizations failed because government failed to provide manuals or train community residents in basic principles of repair and maintenance of water systems. In contrast, farmers in Philippines succeeded in their activities because they had their capacities enhanced through training. The training also helped others to develop their leadership skills. This helped them later on because they ended assuming leadership positions in community associations.

The process of ensuring that communities have sufficient skills and resources can take place through provision of training to community-based organizations members on topics like financial management, leadership and the like. Members can also be attached to field agents and extension workers whom they can understudy as they work together daily. Government or NGOs can also help CBOs by providing them with resources and management assistance (Rondinelli 1991: 420; Keengwe 1998: 5).

3 *Appropriate processes*

Developing capacity for community-based organizations also requires formulation and institutionalization of effective processes that have to be followed when carrying out activities. Procedures must be put in place for carrying out activities like involvement of the members in project planning and design, positioning of facilities, and committee management.

There is also need to have a well-outlined procedure for allocating responsibilities and ownership transfer of projects from NGO or government to the local people (Rondinelli 1991: 420).

4 *Effective inter-organizational relationships*

Cooperation among organizations within communities is essential to effective running of community-based organizations. The cooperation can be between

CBOs and national government agencies and ministries, among community-based organizations at local level, with non-governmental organizations and between CBOs and local government officials (Rondinelli 1991: 420). “Successful community management depends in a large part on finding ways of reconciling the interests and forging effective and mutual beneficial linkages among participating organizations” (Rondinelli 1991: 426).

5 *Appropriate technology*

When carrying out projects, various technologies are introduced. Over the years, the challenge that has existed is the introduction of equipment from western industrial countries that are difficult or impossible to run and maintain in the third world conditions. Spare parts were difficult to obtain in a timely manner, and repairs and replacement were costly. Often maintenance required specialized knowledge of the equipment.

For things to go on well with community-based organizations, technologies being introduced must be those that are suitable and appropriate for the local area in order to raise prospects for sustainability. An efficient and reliable system of spare parts must be developed so that community members can easily access them (Rondinelli 1991: 426-427).

6 *Effective system of monitoring, evaluation and feedback*

Two major advantages of community-based organizations is first, the increased willingness of local residents to contribute labor and financial resources for the project implementation and, second, the superior capacity of local residents to monitor the operations and to take expeditious action to repair equipment. For the CBOs to be effective there is need to have in place a well developed monitoring, evaluation and feedback procedures that can be used by members. These can ensure efficient operation and maintenance of projects (Rondinelli 1991: 427).

2.4.7 Limitations of community-based organizations

Though a lot of good is said about community-based organizations, they have their own limitations. Following paragraphs discuss some of the limitations that are unique to community-based organizations.

i) Limited self-sustaining and technical capacity

Most community-based organizations are not self-sustaining in terms of funding for the running of planned activities. They often depend on funding that comes from outside sources to support service delivery efforts. Dependence on outside funding may result in changes which jeopardize the organization's responsiveness to the wishes of the community. It's very common that when donors or outside institutions come in with their financial support, they also bring in their own

standards and requirements. This could result in replacing citizen participation with bureaucracy. It may also result in movement away from services requiring community input toward more standardized services that are delivered by non-community-based social service agencies (Sarma, Vicary & Holdrege 2004: 8).

Most community-based organizations are deficient in terms of technical capacity. Not all services delivered by these organizations, however, are of an innovative, internally developed design. Often technical personnel from outside the organizations do them. For example, programs such as youth education or drug and alcohol abuse require trained professionals who are associated with social service bureaucracy ((Sarma, Vicary & Holdrege 2004:14). Dependence on outside assistance for both financial and technical assistance has led to poor performance of some community-based organizations when such assistance is not available.

ii) Limited ability to scale up successful projects

In many cases, community-based organizations appear to be doing very good work. There are so many good things that have come out from their work. Though the situation is like that, it's a bit misleading to the observer. Coverage by community-based organizations is usually patchy and small compared with that of government and non-governmental organizations. Lessons from successful projects are not used to expand existing projects or transferred to other new projects. This may be so because of limited financial and human resources.

iii) Lack of strategic perspective and linkage with other important role-players

Community-based organizations often lack focus in terms of their work. They have problems with planning of their work. Such being the case, they end up doing so many things that may not bring out significant impact on people's lives. They also have a problem of linkage with other development players. Exchange of information and coordination among themselves is inadequate. This at times leads to competition for resources among themselves. Cross-fertilization of ideas and best practices do not take place.

iv) Limited managerial and organizational capabilities

Community-based organizations are well known for harnessing voluntary energy and resources. However, the volunteers often leave in search of work and better careers in other areas. Above all, they recruit and put in managerial positions people who are not qualified in such fields because they can not afford to have qualified staff. This means that the staff levels are often low and not very experienced in the work. With low staff level, the organizations can not achieve much. The inexperienced members of staff can not lead the CBOs to higher levels of performance and success.

2.5 COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS IN MALAWI

2.5.1 History of community-based organizations

There is very little documentation on community-based organizations in Malawi. History has it that before independence in 1964, there were cooperatives operating in Malawi. After independence, those in power suppressed their activities because they were considered to be a threat to the government of the day. Some of the viable cooperatives, like Small Holder Coffee Authority of Malawi, were taken over by government. The situation stayed like this until in 1994 when multiparty system of government was introduced in Malawi.

From 1994 to date, emphasis on community-based organizations has been growing by day. Deepening levels of poverty and impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic are what has made people in positions of authority realize the importance and the need for community-based organizations. As a result, many community-based organizations have been established and majority of them focus on alleviating the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

2.5.2 Institutional and legal framework of community-based organizations in Malawi

In Malawi, there are two ministries that are entrusted with the responsibility of overseeing the work of community-based organizations. There is the Department of Trade and Industry under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Ministry

of Gender and Community Services. Trade and industry oversees the operations of cooperatives while Ministry of Gender oversees the work of the other community-based organizations whose work is developmental in nature (Ministry of Commerce and Industry 1999; Ministry of Gender and Community Services 2000).

In terms of legal framework, the laws of Malawi are clear on cooperatives more than on community-based organizations. This is so because of the history of this country. In the past, it was only cooperative societies that were considered to be a vehicle for economic growth. Section six of the Laws of Malawi provides clear guidelines on what cooperatives are, their categories, administration, registration, rights and duties of members and registered cooperative societies, and how they can be dissolved (Ministry of Commerce and Industry 1999).

However, there is no clear legal framework for community-based organizations that are developmental in nature. National HIV/AIDS Policy, National Policy on Early Childhood and Development, National Gender Policy and National Policy on Orphans and other Vulnerable Children make cognizance of the fact that community-based organizations are critical role players in development (Ministry of Commerce and Industry 1999; Ministry of Gender and Community Services. 2000; Office of the President and Cabinet, National AIDS Commission 2003). As of now, efforts are being made to have guidelines for the establishment and operations of community-based organizations and have them incorporated in the Laws of Malawi (Kasungu Social Welfare Office Report 2004).

2.5.3 Community-based organisations in Kasungu district

Kasungu, like any other district in Malawi, has witnessed a sprouting of a number of community-based organizations within a short period of time. Their establishment has come as a result of external as well as internal facilitation. As of now, there are 14 registered community-based organizations involved in HIV/AIDS activities of which three are faith based. There are also 20 non-registered CBOs involved in the same area of HIV/AIDS (Kasungu Social Welfare Office 2004). In addition, there are two cooperatives and four associations whose main area of focus is agricultural production (National Association of Farmers in Malawi 2004).

The community-based organizations involved in HIV/AIDS are involved in areas of prevention, care and support of HIV/AIDS infected and affected people. Apart from raising their money and materials locally, they get financial and material support from non-governmental organizations, government departments and churches. Most of the people involved work as volunteers (Kasungu Social Welfare Office Report 2004; Kasungu District Aids Coordinating Committee Report 2004).

The cooperatives and associations are involved in agricultural production. They look at agriculture production from an economic point of view. Tobacco is the crop that is grown by majority of the members. Through their cooperatives and

associations, club members are able to get farm inputs on loan. Selling of farm produce is done through their associations or cooperatives (National Association of Farmers in Malawi (Kasungu 2004).

2.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter on literature review has explored the complexity in defining community-based organizations which attributed to CBOs' different labels, functions, rules and procedures. History and reasons behind CBOs emergence have also been captured. The emergency of CBOs has been prompted by factors that are internal as well as external, the former being due to the members own initiative to meet their desired goal, while the latter is due to influence from outsiders namely, development aid agencies, governments and donors. It has also been discussed that CBOs have their advantages and potentials that if properly positioned and equipped, can lead to significant changes in the communities they operate. Apart from looking at criticisms against community participation, also discussed are weaknesses of CBOs and challenges that impede CBOs' performance. Despite this, their role and position in development cannot be ignored or considered as wishful thinking.

In this chapter, a review of literature on Malawi and Kasungu District in particular was also done. The exercise has shown that there is little literature on the ground on community-based organizations. However, there is a big CBO boom now due

to the new political dispensation that is accommodative to various ideas and new ways of carrying out development.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter was on literature review on the subject of community-based organizations. The chapter looked at various definitions of what community-based organizations are as well as the origins and reasons for their emergence. It further explored factors that affect the success of community-based organizations and their limitations.

At the local scene, the previous chapter looked at the history of community-based organizations in Malawi and Kasungu in particular. Legal framework of CBOs in Malawi and their work in Kasungu was also discussed.

This chapter is a discussion on research design and methodology. On design, the chapter outlines how the study was be carried out. On research methodology the discussion centers on the various methods that were used to collect the needed information in relation to the research topic. The discussion further centers on how the collected information was captured analyzed and interpreted. It concludes by looking at limiting factors to the validity of the research findings.

A research design is defined as a “set of guidelines and instructions to be followed in addressing the research problem” (Mouton 1996: 107). It is a plan or blue print of how one intends to conduct the research (Mouton 2001: 55). The rationale for a research design is to help the researcher “to plan and structure a research project in such a way that the eventual validity of the research findings is maximized through either minimizing or, where possible, eliminating potential error” (Mouton 1996: 108).

Research methodology refers to the measuring instrument(s) by means of which accurate data about specific phenomena can be obtained (Mouton 1996: 125). It is a systematic, methodical and accurate execution of the design (Mouton 2001: 55).

The following section is a discussion on research design and research methodologies that will be used during the study

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research had been designed in two phases namely, literature review and field research.

On literature review, the process involved the reading of various books and articles others have written on the subject of community-based organizations. This was done to ensure that duplication of previous studies is avoided. It helped in the discovery of most recent and authoritative theorizing about the subject and

what the most widely accepted definitions on the subject of community-based organizations are. Above all, the exercise helped in the identification of available instrumentation and applicable empirical findings in the study of community-based organizations (Mouton 2001: 87).

Field work, also known as empirical research, included the collection of primary data at the grassroots level. Activities on this level involved conduction of focus group discussions with the leadership and members of community-based organizations, meetings with district level stakeholders' key informants, discussions with community leaders and community-based stakeholders and interviews with beneficiaries at community level. The methods were chosen because they are cost effective; they provided a conducive environment for generation of new insights. Above all, questioning and cross checking of opinions could easily be done through these methods.

Discussion in this section was on research design. The following section looks at the research methods that will be made use of during the research study.

3.3 RESEARCH METHODS

As stated above, research methods refer to the measuring instrument(s) by means of which accurate data about specific phenomena can be obtained. There are a number of methods that are used for data collection. These include surveys, interviews, group discussions, direct observation and RRA and PRA/PLA tools

(Roche 1999; Mouton 1996 & 2001). For purposes of this study, a number of instruments were used. The methods include key informants interviews, focus group discussions and individual interviews. These were done using semi-structured questionnaires. These methods have been chosen because they are cost-effective; they provide an easy and quick way of eliciting several people's views within a short period of time. Above all they provide forum for generating new insights and questioning and cross-checking of individual opinions (Roche 1999: 116).

Details of each of the measuring instruments have been provided under data collection methods section.

The just ending section was on the research methods that were used. The following section is on sampling. The section discusses what sampling is, sample design and sampling techniques and criteria that was used to come up with a sample size.

3.4 SAMPLING

Sampling is the process of selecting a few (sample) from a bigger group (the sampling population) to become the basis for estimating or predicting a fact, situation or outcome regarding the bigger group. It is a known fact that time and resources may not allow us to do research that covers everyone, that is why sampling is chosen as a way of doing research (Kumar 1999: 148). Though

opponents of sampling argue that the process does not offer us an opportunity to find out the facts about the population, it saves money as well as financial and human resources.

There are a number of sampling designs and some of them include random sampling, non-random sampling and mixed sampling designs. This study will use random/probability sampling designs. It is a procedure in which every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected (Mouton 1996: 138). Random/probability sampling is good because it helps to remove the possibility of investigator bias in the selection of cases. As observed by Mouton (1996: 36), “it is often our only route to unbiasedness”. Through the process of random selection, independence is guaranteed and the principles of probability theory may be applied to estimate the accuracy of samples (Mouton 1996: 139).

The key concept in sampling is representativeness. Representativeness may be affected by factors such as the selection criteria and sample size. To ensure that the sampled CBOs are representative enough, this study involved CBOs that have been functioning for more than four years and are involved with HIV and AIDS issues. In addition, representativeness was ensured by having a large sample size. It is generally true that as the size of the sample increases, the less likely it becomes to obtain inaccurate results (Mouton 1996: 136,138).

Random/probability sampling method is applicable to this research study because the elements to be studied are not many and come from different parts of Kasungu District.

3.4.1 Sampling techniques

As mentioned above, this study used random sampling designs. In this category, there are a number of techniques that fall under it and they include methods like random walk, staged sampling, cluster sampling, simple random sampling and stratified or systematic random sampling. This research study employed simple random sampling and stratified or systematic random sampling methods (Kumar 1999 and Roche 1999).

The drawing of the random sample was done using the fishbowl draw method. In this method, each of the elements was assigned a number on separate slips of paper. The paper slips were put in a box and then picked out of the box without looking until the number of slips equal the sample size. This method was been chosen because it is simple and easy to do (Kumar 1999: 155). To ensure representativeness, the paper slips had similar sizes and were folded in the same way.

It was felt that this method is applicable to this research since the number (population) of CBOs from which the sample was be drawn was not very big (Sapsford and Abbott 1992: 90).

3.4.2 Sample size

Sample size refers to the number of electors from whom the required information can be obtained. Size of sample has a bearing on research results. It is generally true that as the size of the sample increases, degree of error or bias reduces and the opposite is true (Mouton 1996: 139). In order to reduce level bias or error, efforts were made to use a sample size that is big in relation to the size of elements under study.

To reduce error that comes about due to problems that are associated with sample size, a number of statistical formulas have been designed. This research study made use of a statistical formula for calculating sample size.

To ensure representativeness, the sample size was large. As rightly indicated above, as the size of the sample increases, the less likely it becomes to obtain inaccurate results (Mouton 1996: 136,138).

This section was on sampling. The following section is a discussion on data collection methods. It outlines the data collection methods that were used during the study.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Data can be collected using a variety of data collection instruments. These include surveys, interviews, group discussions, direct observation and RRA and PRA/PLA tools (Roche 1999; Mouton 1996 & 2001). A general principle in data collection is that the inclusion of multiple sources of data collection is likely to increase the reliability of the observation. Each type of method has specific limitations. By employing different methods of data collection in a project we are, to some extent, able to compensate for the limitations of each (Mouton 1996: 156,157).

Data collection methods were used in this research study include key informant interviews, focus group discussions and individual interviews. The following is a detailed account on how, where and when each of these instruments was be used.

3.5.1 Key informant interviews

Key informant interviews were conducted with stakeholders at district and community levels. Areas of interest were to find out from them what they think are the contributions community-based organizations are making in the development that is taking place in their areas. In addition, their views were solicited as regards the challenges the community-based organizations are faced with and how these can be dealt with. Key informants that were interviewed were as follows: 15 village headmen from areas where the CBOs are operating, 5

government personnel working at district as well as grassroots levels from the departments of Gender and Community Services, Social Welfare and Ministry of Health. 2 members of staff for non-governmental organizations were also included in this category. A semi structured questionnaire was used to guide the discussions (Randel 2006:58).

Key informant interviews were chosen as a method to collect data because one can get independent views about the performance of CBOs. It also helps to triangulate some of the information collected from sources like focus group discussions. Since it's a one to one exercise, respondents are free to give information without fear of reprisals (Roche 1999: 119).

3.5.2 Focus group discussions

This was used when interacting with committee members from the sampled community-based organization. 15 focus group discussions were conducted and each group comprised of ten members on average. Apart from meeting them as a group, efforts were made to segregate people according to gender and age. Information collected from this group includes activities being done, successes, and challenges their CBOs are facing. A semi-structured questionnaire was used as a guide for the discussions. Participatory techniques such as worthy ranking and mapping were used during the data collection exercise with committee members (Randel 2006:58).

This methodology was chosen because it is cost effective in terms of time and resources, it brings a sum of knowledge greater than any individual insight and it provides opportunity for peer checking and verification (Roche 1999: 199, (Randel 2006:58).

Table II below summarizes advantages and disadvantages of focus-group discussions as a method.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Brings a sum of knowledge greater than any individual insight, generating new insights and mutual learning.	Can allow dominant voices to be further legitimized and voices of the less powerful to be ignored or undermined.
Provides opportunity for group or peer checking and verification.	Can make the marginal and less powerful seem to consent through silence or presence.
Can raise problems not hitherto recognized as common and lead to discussions of quite sensitive issues.	Can drive sensitive issues underground.
Can lead to consensus-building and conflict resolution as differences are explored and discussed.	May produce unprioritised shopping lists. May expose but not deal with conflicts or further polarize people.

May take less time than undertaking individual interviews and then cross-checking results.	May waste people's time even if it saves that of the interviewer or facilitator.
Can create synergy and new ideas through debate and dialogue.	may simply recycle entrenched views.
Can be fun.	Can be boring and frustrating. Methods can dominate over content.
Can cost less than individual interviews.	May be seen as a necessary ritual that must be gone through in order to get aid or support.

Table I: Summary of Advantages and Disadvantages of focus Group

Discussions (Roche 1999: 119).

3.5.3 Individual interviews

Thirty people (30) were involved in individual interviews comprising of 10 men and 20 women. This was a sample of people drawn from a list of those who have benefited from the activities being carried out by the CBOs under study. Two people were sampled from each CBO.

Key informant interviews and focus group discussion as methods of data collection both involve people coming together to discuss certain issues. As such they do not provide ideal environment for discussion of very sensitive issues. In addition, they may not give chance to the marginal and powerless to voice out

their ideas or concerns (Roche 1999: 119). Writing in relation to same ideas, Mouton (1996: 157) hinted that when discussions are on sensitive issues, one is bound to encounter considerable response variability. Sensitive issues may include issues that have to do with sex, HIV/AIDS status and even finances and their sources.

It is against this background it was felt that individual interviews be included as one of the data collection methods in this study. Through this method more reliable and in-depth information was collected.

Apart from collecting information on certain sensitive issues, individual interviews were conducted to cross-check reliability of the information collected during focus group discussions with leaders and members of community-based organizations. In addition, this was done to find out if indeed there is change taking place in the lives of people and communities where the community-based organizations are working.

The following section is a discussion on step-by-step process of field work. It outlines the activities and time when they will be done.

3.6 FIELD WORK

The field exercise was conducted to collect data. The exercise is better explained in Table III below:

Table II: Field Work Time table

DATE/PERIOD	ACTIVITY	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Day 1-3	Develop data collection tools: semi structured questionnaire for meeting with stakeholders at district level and key informant interviews, focus group discussions and individual interviews	Team leader
Day 4-5	Identification of enumerators	Team leader
	Training of enumerators	Team leader
	Pre-testing of data collection tools	Team leader, supervisor and enumerators
Day 6-7	Correction of data collection tools	Team leader and supervisor
	Visit CBO leaders to book meetings with them	Team leader
	Visit community leaders	Team leader

	and grassroots level stakeholders to make appointments with them	
	Visit district level heads of government departments and non- governmental organizations to make appointments for meetings	Team leader
Day 8- 17	Conduct meetings with heads of government departments and NGOs at district level	Team leader
	Conduct key informant interviews	Supervisor & enumerators
	Conduct focus group discussions	Supervisor & enumerators
	Conduct group discussion with beneficiaries	Supervisor& enumerators
Day 18-22	Data capturing	
	Data analysis and interpretation	
	Field visit for information validation/error correction	Enumerators/myself

Day 22-35	Report writing	
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The exercise was conducted with the help of enumerators that were recruited. A total of five enumerators and one supervisor were engaged for the exercise. They conducted key informant interviews, focus group discussions with CBO members and interviews with beneficiaries. Meetings with district level stakeholders were done by me as the team leader.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTATION

New instrument in the form of a semi-structured questionnaire was developed instead of using already existing ones. This is so due to budgetary limitations as the existing ones may require payment of some money. And as stated by Mouton (2001: 102), “most of the existing questionnaires, scales and tests that one would have access to, were probably developed in the highly industrialized countries of Europe and North America. Such instruments usually cannot be applied in the South African context without some adaptation especially in multicultural and multi-ethnic studies.” The same argument can be said at Africa or Southern Africa level. Data collection instruments that can be suitable for Malawian context may not be applicable at Southern Africa or Africa level without being modified.

To ensure validity and reliability of the newly constructed instruments, efforts were made to have the instruments pre-tested and reviewed/revised before they were put to use during field work. It was also expected that the use of more than

one method of data collection would help to reduce error level. As Mouton (1996: 156) stated, “by employing different methods of data collection in a single project we are, to some extent, able to compensate for the limitation of each.” The process, called triangulation, in a way ensures reliability of the empirical findings. As rightly observed by Mouton (1996: 156), the inclusion of multiple sources of data collection in a research is likely to increase the reliability of the observation.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Data analysis is the process of identifying patterns and themes in data and drawing certain conclusions from them (Mouton 1996: 110). It involves the breaking up of data into manageable themes, patterns trends and relationships. The aim is to have an understanding of the various constitutive elements of the data through an inspection of the relationships between concepts, constructs or variables and to see whether there are patterns or trends that can be identified, isolated or to establish themes in the data (Mouton 2001: 108).

Preliminary data analysis began while data collection is in process. This helped the team to assess the effectiveness of the research instruments. Identified gaps with the instruments assisted in their redesigned and the research exercise continued (Mouton 2001: 108).

A more detailed data analysis was done after the field exercise. Information that spoke of one theme or idea was put into one category. Comparisons were made

within categories as well as across categories in order to establish linkages between themes or ideas (Mouton 1996 and Roche 1999).

In addition to the above processes, the process was assisted with the use of available computer-aided software for the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data. The software was used is called Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The SPSS package was been chosen because it is a package that was designed for use in the analysis of social science data. It can be used to analyse both qualitative and quantitative data (Phiri 2003).

Discussion in this section was on data analysis and data interpretation. It provided insight on how data was analyzed and interpreted. The following is a section on limitations that may have an effect on the study.

The following are the factors that may limit the validity of the research findings:

Research instruments: Design of the data collection instruments might not have been done well. There might also have been problems with the people administering the instruments that they might not have done their work well because of biases.

Time factor: Enough time might not have been allocated for literature review and field work due to time limitations.

Respondents factor: Respondents might have deliberately responded by giving wrong information due to reasons of their own.

Researcher bias: The people conducting the exercise like enumerators and team leader might have their biases and weaknesses that might have affected the quality of the research findings.

Despite these limitations, it is still believed that the findings from this research are still valid and reliable.

3.9 CONCLUSION

Discussion in this chapter was on design and methodologies that were used in the research. On research design, an outline of how the study was carried out has been presented. On research methodology, discussion centered on various methods that were used to collect the needed information in relation to the research topic. The processes of data capturing, analysis and interpretation have been discussed. Further to this, limiting factors to the validity of the research findings have also been discussed.

The following chapter is a presentation of findings of this research study.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The last chapter's discussions were on research design and methodology. On design, the chapter outlined how the study would be carried out. Discussions on research methodology centered on the various methods that were going to be used to collect the needed information in relation to the research topic. The discussions further centered on how the collected information would be captured, analyzed and interpreted. It also looked at the limiting factors to the validity of the research findings.

This chapter is a discussion of the research findings. The ensuing discussion will center on what has been uncovered during the survey exercise. The chapter has been subdivided into three major sections and they include a discussion on roles being played by CBOs, challenges they are facing and it finishes with a conclusion of the chapter.

4.2 SAMPLE PROFILES

A total of 202 people were involved in this research exercise. The number comprised of people who are CBO members and stakeholders. 150 were members of the various CBOs sampled in the exercise, 30 were beneficiaries 15 were village headmen for the areas where the CBOs are working. 5 were stakeholders

from various government departments and 2 were stakeholders from non-governmental organizations. The sample comprised of 127 women and 75 men.

Selection of the sampled population to be studied was done using random sampling and stratified or systematic sampling methods (Kumar 1999 and Roche, 1999). This was done at a number of occasions. First it was when selecting the CBOs to be studied. As mentioned above, there were 30 CBOs involved in HIV and AIDS issues during the time when the study was being conducted. A total of 1 CBOs were sampled representing 50% of CBOs. Secondly, random sampling was done when selecting CBO members for focus group discussions using semi-structured interviews. On average, each CBO has a membership of 50 people. A total of 10 people were sampled from each CBO representing 20% of the members. Thirdly it was done when selecting beneficiaries for semi-structured interviews. On average, each CBO was supporting 50 people and 2 benefiting people were randomly sampled representing 4% of the people in this category.

To ensure representativeness, the sample size in all stages was made to be large. As rightly indicated in chapter 3 above, as the sample increases, the less likely it becomes to obtain inaccurate results (Mouton 1996: 136, 138).

The drawing of the random sample was done using the fishbowl draw method. In this method each of the elements was assigned a number on separate slips of paper. The paper slips were put in a box and then picked out of the box without

looking until the number of slips equal the sample size. This method was chosen because it is simple and easy to do (Kumar 1999: 155). To ensure representativeness, the paper slips had similar sizes and were folded the same way.

4.3 PRESENTATION OF SURVEY FINDINGS

This section is a description and summary of the findings that have been uncovered during the survey. These will be presented based on the list of objectives that were set as outlined above. There are three major sections which include presentation on the roles CBOs are playing in their areas of impact, challenges that CBOs are facing and finally the factors that are affecting their performance.

4.3.1 CBOs and the development in Kasungu district

This section discusses the roles being played by CBOs in the development that is going on in Kasungu district particularly in the area of HIV and AIDS. The presentation of findings will first of all be on major areas of focus before moving on to specific areas of development where CBOs have made contributions.

4.3.1.1 CBO major areas of focus

As indicated above, this research focused on community-based organizations that are involved in HIV / AIDS. Research findings from focus group discussions

conducted revealed that sampled CBOs in Kasungu were involved in awareness, care and support of the affected and infected and advocacy activities that are related to HIV/AIDS. Data collected from interviews with key informants and secondary sources like reports is also in agreement with this finding.

This is in line with the guidelines set by government and the National AIDS Commission in Malawi. Figure I below shows the distribution in terms of percentages.

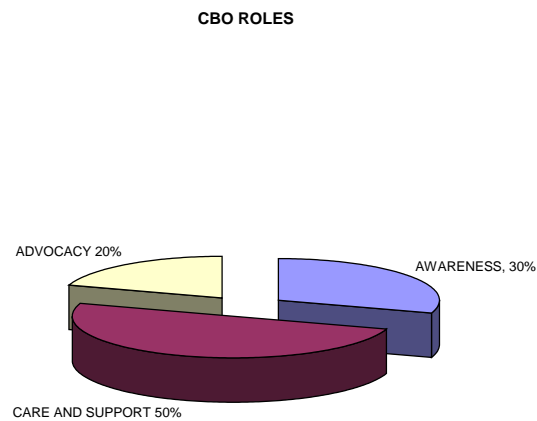


Figure 1: Roles being played by sampled CBOs involved in HIV/AIDS in Kasungu District

From Figure I above, it can be observed that the sample of CBOs involved in HIV and AIDS activities spend 50% of their time and resources on care and support activities, while 30% of it is spent on awareness and 20% of their time and resources is directed towards work on advocacy activities.

4.3.1.2 *Care and support*

According to the government of Malawi, HIV and AIDS policy care and support activities is supposed to focus on areas such as treatment of HIV and related illnesses, support of affected and infected persons, post exposure prophylaxis, universal infection control precautions, sexually transmitted infections (STI) and reproductive health services among others (National AIDS Commission 2002: 16).

However, analysis and interpretation of primary collected during focus group discussions and secondary data collected from records and reports of the sampled CBOs, the research study has established that 100% of CBOs involved in care and treatment mainly spend their time and energy on support of affected and infected persons followed by treatment of HIV and related illnesses. This explains why there are so many groups involved in orphan care and home based care for the chronically ill people in Malawi and Kasungu in particular.

As for sexually transmitted infections and reproductive health, 93% of the sampled CBOs indicated that they encourage their clients to use condoms to

protect themselves from infections. Cases that require clinical attention were referred to health centers or Kasungu District hospital.

Realising the hard fact that they may not have resources to provide support for ever, some of the CBOs in the sample were working towards building the economic capacity of the affected and infected. Through review of secondary data like reports and other documentation kept by the sampled CBOs, the research study revealed that 53% of the CBOs were supporting the affected and infected economically. Apart from providing business management training, opportunities for small scale loans were being offered to group members. Through the knowledge acquired, some individuals managed to open small scale businesses and proceeds realized have helped the individuals to be empowered economically. Consequently, they were able to support their families and others who were in need.

Being HIV positive does not mean one is dead. Those who are affected can still be useful citizens to their communities in one way or another. Realizing this potential, the sampled CBOs also offered capacity building training to the affected as well as the infected.

The research study has further established that all the sampled CBOs conducted capacity building training for their clients. Areas covered include HIV and AIDS, leadership, business management and positive living. The knowledge and skills acquired during the training helped the people to know how they could go about

on certain issues in life. For example, knowledge acquired on HIV and AIDS has enabled those living with HIV/AIDS to still have the courage to continue participating in daily life activities after knowing that being positive does not mean that you are dead. Some of them were in leadership positions and as such they were able to carry out their roles properly.

Table V below shows the types of training organized by CBOs for its members.

Table III: Summary of training some members received

Training for CBO Members	Comment/remark
HIV/AIDS	Done for both CBO members and some beneficiaries
Care and support	Done for CBO members and some beneficiaries
Leadership and conflict resolution	Done for CBO leadership
Medium enterprise development	Done for CBO Members and beneficiaries
Home based care	Done for home based care givers
Report writing and communication	Done for CBO leaders and those who prepare reports
Advocacy	Was organized for CBO leaders
Financial record keeping and reporting	Those involved in accounting for CBO funds were involved

As it can be observed from Table V above, the types of training done were what any human being could attend. This simply emphasized the fact that HIV/AIDS affected people could make vital contributions to their families and communities just as those who were not affected. This was further supported by the survey findings that at least 60% of those involved in the running and management of the sampled CBOs were those who were HIV positive.

4.3.1.3 *Awareness*

Awareness activities were done with an intention of reducing/preventing new infections on HIV and were carried out through information, education and communication (IEC), voluntary counseling and testing, prevention of mother to child transmission, training of traditional birth attendants and use of clean injecting materials and blood and tissue safety (National AIDS Commission 2002: 16).

According to data collected for records of the sampled CBOs and what transpired from focus group discussions, the research study established that all sampled CBOs use information education and communication (IEC) as a means of creating awareness and preventing new infections. None (0%) has targeted Traditional Birth Attendants (TBA). 93% of the sampled CBOs encouraged people to use condoms. The 7% has reservations on condoms mainly because of their religious background.

4.3.1.4 *Advocacy*

Advocacy is done to protect the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS so that they are treated as full citizens. This is in recognition that people living with HIV/AIDS are discriminated against and marginalized leading to lack of well being, development and human security compared to that of other citizens (National AIDS Commission 2002: 28).

The survey findings show that all sampled CBOs are involved in advocacy activities. This finding is based on what was collected during key informant interviews, focus group discussions and even during review of some of documentation the sampled CBOs under have. However their efforts are being affected by lack of skill and technical know-how as this happens to be a new area for many people.

The existence of CBOs in parts of the country and Kasungu in particular is seen as an opportunity to further mobilize support and advocacy against discrimination and for community-based services to people living with HIV/AIDS (National AIDS Commission 2002: 17).

As per documentation of the sampled CBOs and according to data that was gathered during focus group discussions, the CBOs championed calls for change on some of the cultural practices that encourage the spread of HIV. This was being done taking cognizance of the fact that the Malawian society was deeply

rooted in its culture and religious values and that these influence practices, lifestyle, and choices made. Practices and religious norms which enhance the response to HIV/AIDS were the ones that were been promoted and nurtured. On the contrary, those practices and values that hinder or weaken the response to HIV/AIDS were being challenged and community leaders were asked to change them (National AIDS Commission 2002: 14).

According to data collected during focus group discussions the sampled CBOs use drama and open discussions with children, parents and traditional leaders to advocate for change in such areas as early marriages, wife inheritance, property grabbing and rituals that are done after a husband or wife has died.

The research study has established that levels of stigmatization are reducing in communities where the sampled CBOs are operating. 73% of village headmen contacted during key informant interviews testified that HIV positive persons were being treated better than before. Each sampled CBO has on average five people who can openly declare their status - an indicator that stigmatization levels are going down. This was as a result of the activities of CBOs who had been advocating for the infected as well as affected people.

This section has been a discussion on findings on the roles CBOs are playing in Kasungu District in the area of HIV and AIDS. The following section looks at the challenges CBOs are facing.

4.3.2 Challenges being faced by CBOs in Kasungu District

The section above was a discussion on the major findings on the roles CBOs involved in HIV and AIDS sector are playing in Kasungu District. It has been indicated that the CBOs have made contributions in the society by empowering people at individual, community and institutional levels in addition to making contributions to national, regional and global development.

This section focuses on findings made on the challenges CBOs in Kasungu are facing. These in summary include financial, human, technical and organizational challenges.

4.3.2.1 *Financial capacity*

One of the challenges the sampled CBOs are faced with in Kasungu has to do with the issue of financial resources. All the 15 focus group discussions lack of adequate and consistent financial resources as one of the critical challenges they have. This limits their work greatly. The financial resources are not adequate to meet the needs they have. The sources of funds are not reliable as well.

Key informant interviews with stakeholders at community as well as at district level made similar remarks. Key informants went further to observe that the situation is compounded by lack of financial managerial capacity which if present

could have helped the sampled CBOs to use the resources for the most critical areas of need.

As it can be seen in figure II, major source of funds for the sampled CBOs is the donor community (45%) followed by contributions from the faith community (20%), community contributions (15%) and lastly is CBO members contributions (10%) and income generating activities (10%).

The survey has revealed that the CBOs involved in this research study do not have well established and viable sources of generating their own income. According to data collected from key informant interviews and focus group discussion, they sampled CBOs mainly rely on financial support from donors and well wishers like the church. The major donor for majority of the sampled CBOs is the National AIDS Commission (97%). Other sources of include contributions from the faith community, contributions from community and CBO members.

When funds are not forthcoming from donors like National AIDS Commission, the sampled CBOs indicated that they face critical challenges in terms of implementing their plans. Such being the case, their level of activity is very dependent on availability of funds from donors. If there is no funding, little or no activities are done. This makes them fail to attend to issues and peoples' needs timely. For example, one beneficiary a certain CBO was supporting with fees failed to write her examinations one particular year because the CBO failed to pay

her examination fees. This happened because the CBO had not yet received funding the time when the examination body was receiving examination fees.

4.3.2.2 *Technical capacity*

Another challenge facing the sampled community-based organizations has to do with technical capacity. Stakeholders from government and NGOs made this observation during key informant interviews. This observation was also made by 73% of the focus group discussion sessions.

The sampled CBOs do not have staff that has the technical know-how on how to carry out certain functions. For example, capacity to properly account for the money, capacity to train beneficiaries and fellow members, leadership and managerial capacity to lead the CBOs to success. Table V below illustrates the gaps that were identified in the sampled CBOs.

Table IV: Skill Levels and Gaps

SKILL	LEVEL OF QUALIFICATION	
	BASIC	PROFESSIONAL
Financial skills	5	0
Communication skills	2	0
Leadership skills	7	0
Facilitation skills	4	0

Source: CBO staff records and interviews with
concerned members

The table above shows some areas that CBOs have gaps especially in terms of technical capacity. From the table it can clearly be seen that CBOs involved in this study have serious challenges technically. There is none in all CBOs who is technically qualified in any of the listed areas of expertise. The few that are available only have some basic qualifications in these areas.

This situation has proved costly to the CBOs under study. It was pointed out by the key informants and during focus group discussions that since they do not have qualified people among the members, the sampled CBOs tend to outsource services for most of their activities at a fee. This has proved management of CBOs costly. For example, there is a case of one CBO which got funding from National ADIS Commission. 75% of the funding was spent on payment of allowances and fees to external service providers.

Apart from spending a lot of resources paying for external service providers, progress of business is very much affected. None of the sampled CBOs was on its course in terms of project implementation because in some cases, they have to keep on postponing certain activities due to non-availability of people who could help them conduct a certain activity. Instead of being considered effective and efficient as is usually claimed to be for CBOs, donors like the National AIDS Commission and well seasoned NGOs tempted to begin looking at them as

ineffective and inefficient. This may in the end possibly affect their chances of getting funding from other donors who might be contemplating of sub-granting some of their funding to CBOs as the National AIDS commission is doing.

Proper accounting of finances received has remained one of the long standing challenges for CBOs in Malawi and Kasungu in particular. This is so because the majority of the people involved are not very conversant with financial management issues. For example, in 2006, the National AIDS Commission suspended funding to 250 CBOs national-wide because of failure to properly account for the funds they had received.

As rightly observed elsewhere, CBOs rely on voluntary services which tend to be unreliable. None of the CBOs sampled had an employed staff. Review of records for the sampled CBOs revealed this and the observation was confirmed during focus group discussion.

People that are supporting the CBOs with work that is technical in nature are government or NGO staff members. In other cases, these are school leavers who are not yet employed. Implementation of planned activities was seriously affected when such people moved out of the communities. For example, Tithandizane Orphan Care depended on one civil servant who used to assist it in the preparation of proposals and financial statements. When the civil servant got transferred, the CBO failed to prepare financial reports for presentation to its supporting partners.

Sourcing of funds through proposals proved difficult. The situation which the CBO face is a common experience to the CBOs in the sample.

4.3.2.3 Governance

The research exercise also uncovered that some of the sampled CBOs were faced with challenges that are associated with governance. Review of secondary data showed that from the sampled CBOs, only 7% had current constitutions available to guide them in their daily operations. Only 13% of the sampled CBOs had fully functioning committees that meet regularly. None of them had a board of directors that would act as overall supervisors for their work.

Governance and institutional structures for service delivery and management at community level are critical ingredients for satisfying sustainability of rural development projects after phase out of external input by development agents, in particular Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs). Governance enables public organisations like the sampled CBOs under study to provide public services to its clients in an effective, efficient, transparent and accountable manner under the rule of law that results in capable and effective administration and functioning institutions (Mule 2001: 73).

In the case of the CBOs under study, these values of transparency, efficiency and effectiveness were not guaranteed as the committees are not regularly meeting, and their constitutions are not up-to-date.

4.3.2.4 *Accountability and mismanagement of resources*

The research revealed that mismanagement of resources was the number one killer challenge facing sampled CBOs in Kasungu. 100% of the people involved during key informant interviews raised this as one of their major concerns and challenge facing the sampled CBOs. Interestingly, only 33% of the focus group discussions raised this as a challenge

It must be understood that the CBOs raise most of their resources from donors on the understanding that the financial and material resources will be used to support various categories of people like orphans and the chronically ill. Such being the case there is need for accountability of the resources received from donors

Review of secondary data in possession of the sampled CBOs does agree to this finding. Stock records for 80% of the sampled CBOs were not up-to- date. 47% of the sampled CBOs had financial transactions and records that were not very well done making it difficult to follow their expenditures. There was no systematic way of doing business. Records of resources received and claimed to have been distributed did not agree with what was actually distributed to beneficiaries as evidenced by the table below.

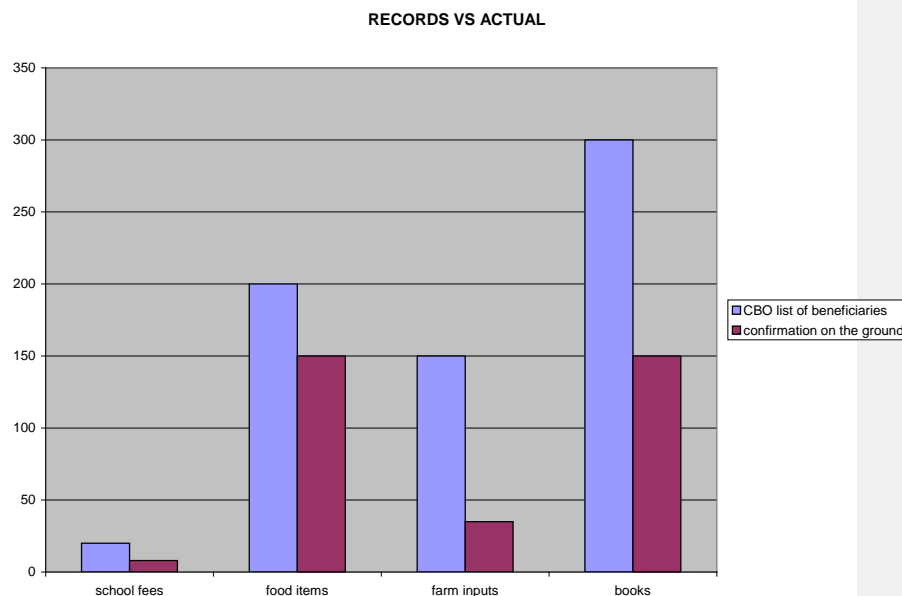


Figure II: Actual versus what is claimed to have been done

4.3.2.5 *Equipment*

The survey revealed that all the CBOs have challenges with equipment. None of the CBOs owned any modern equipment that would help them in carrying out their activities. Stock records for all the CBOs involved in this survey did not contain records of equipments like computers, tractors or ridgers. 90% of the focus group discussions conducted members expressed that their work was being delayed because of lack of modern equipment. For example, the sampled CBOs involved in orphan care have hardens for crop production. They relied on the use of implements like hoes to work in their gardens instead of ridgers and ploughs or tractors. This took a lot of their time and energy to do. Documentation and report

writing was done by hand by all the sampled CBOs as they do not have computers for writing and information storage. None of them owned a vehicle to facilitate mobility. Table VI below illustrates these issues.

Table V: List of Equipment

ITEM	NUMBER AVAILABLE
Bicycle	5
Motor cycles	None
Vehicle	None
Computer	None
Plough	None
Rigger/plough	None
Tractor	None

As illustrated in Table VI above, a bicycle is the only equipment that is available for use in CBOs. And as it can be observed, they are few in number. Equipment like computers tractors or motor cycles are not available for use by CBOs.

This state of affairs affects performance of the CBOs under study. It is not easy to track information as one has to go through a pile of papers to get certain information. The sampled CBOs spend time and money to have their documents typed as they have to access some of these services from commercial service providers. Since most of them are allocated in rural areas, communication is

always a problem as they do not have any telephones. Postal services are not readily available.

4.3.2.6 *Poor monitoring*

Monitoring involves following up work being done to ensure that it is being done according to plans. The exercise is supposed to be periodic and outcomes from such work are meant to help the entity involved to further improve on its performance

Review of CBO documentation revealed that the sampled CBOs had the following common monitoring practices expressed as percentages.

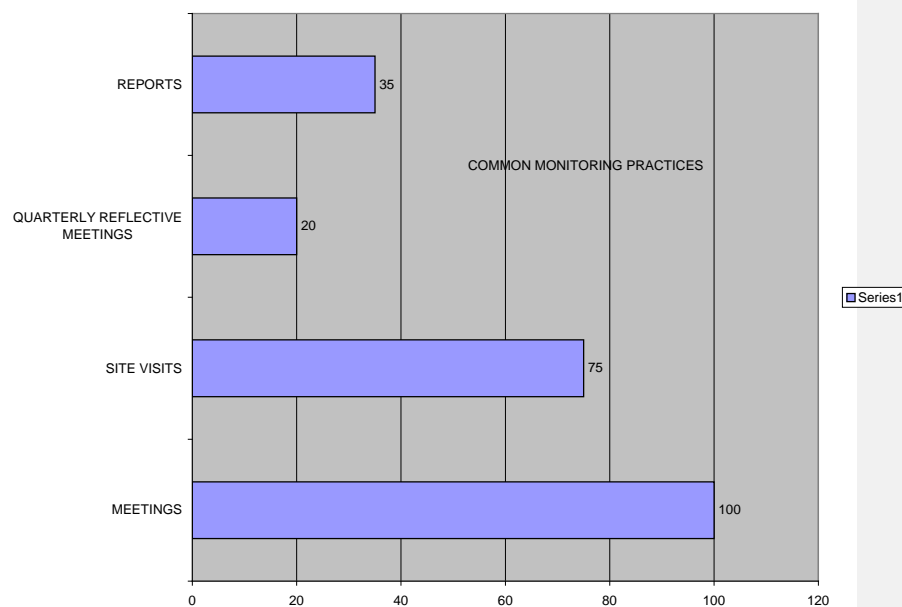


Figure III: Monitoring Methods

From the table above, it can be said that majority of the CBOs used meetings followed by site visits as some of the ways of monitoring work progress. It was not established why review meetings are not common among the CBOs. Though reporting is very important, it did not feature highly as one of the ways of progress monitoring.

The figure below shows how the CBOs are actually fairing in terms of actual exercise of progress monitoring. This data was sourced from CBO records and during focus group discussions.

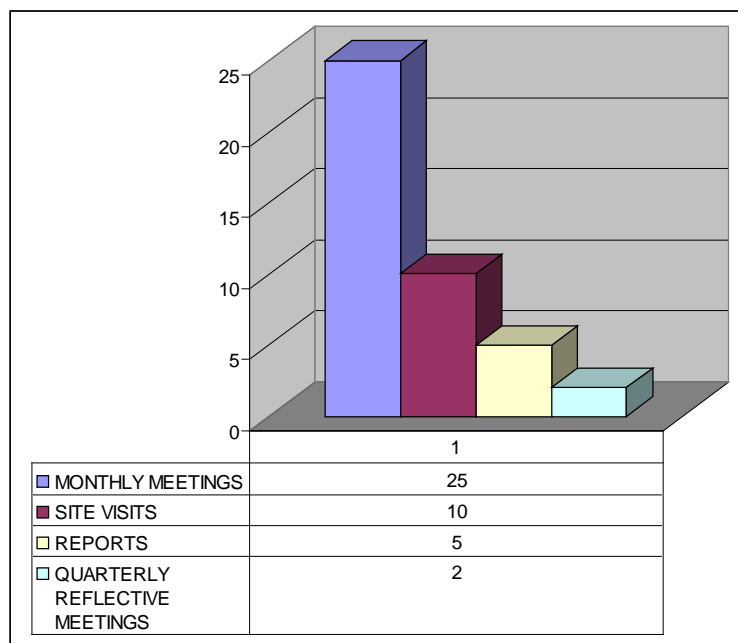


Figure IV: How CBOs are faring in terms of monitoring

From the table above, it can be seen that only 25% of the sampled CBOs managed to conduct monthly progress review meetings to check progress against plans. Only 2% of them had quarterly progress reviews. One of the major reasons for this poor state of affairs is that most of them do not have fully functioning committees that would be doing what is required.

This survey has also established that all the CBOs sampled have been running for over five years but none of them has undergone any evaluation exercise. The monitoring systems that CBOs claim to have are not adequately made use of. This means that the CBOs do not have a chance to correct some of the mistakes that they have been making over time. They are also missing on best practices and lessons that could have been multiplied or shared with other CBOs.

4.3.2.7 *Sustainability*

The future of most of the CBOs under study is not very certain. This concern was raised mainly by members from government departments and NGOs who were involved in key informant interviews. Secondary data sourced from the CBOs and literature reviews also confirms that this challenge does exist among the CBOs. The following Table VII summarizes issues that are working against the CBOs:

Table VI: Summary of issues facing CBOs

ISSUE	SITUATION ON THE GROUND
Source of funds	External, rely on donor funds, have no steady source of income.
Technical capacity	CBO members do not have qualified staff, Rely on government and NGO staff.
Technology	Own no modern equipment, rely on hired services.
Accountability	Very poor, questionable transactions.
Governance	Committees not functioning or not existing. CBOs Managed by an individual

The facts presented in Table VII above paints a bleak picture of the future of the CBOs. Unless something is done to save the current situation, the future of the sampled CBOs in Kasungu is at risk.

From the sample under study, it is becoming clear that the running of community-based organizations is not going on smoothly. The survey findings presented above do indicate that indeed the CBOs are faced by a number of challenges that if not well managed can lead to the death of majority of them and thwart down the ground that has already been covered on people participation.

4.3.2.8 *Policy context*

The advent of community-based associations is fairly new in Malawi and at large. As stated above, involvement of community-based organizations were outlawed in Malawi a few years after Malawi had attained her independence. They have come back on the scene after the introduction of multiparty politics in 1994. Their importance in the development of this country was very much felt when the effects and impact of HIV and AIDS became very visible in the late 1990s. Government has been calling upon communities to get organized and join the fight against HIV and AIDS and poverty.

However, despite these calls from government, there is no policy from government that gives CBOs mandate and guidelines on how to conduct business. 90% of the people involved in key informant interviews mentioned the issue of policy as one of the long outstanding assignments requiring attention from government. This has resulted into some sort of confusion. For example, CBOs dealing with HIV and AIDS find themselves in a fix as regards where to get assistance. Currently HIV and AIDS issues are being handled by a department in Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC) yet some of the issues being handled would better be handled by the Ministry of Health. This leaves CBOs as to where to go for guidance and support especially at local level or even at district level. It takes time and effort for them to get what they need. Above all, in the absence of policy they find themselves answerable to more than one government ministry.

4.3.2.9 *Adequate incentives*

The survey revealed that CBOs rely on volunteers to conduct their activities. This means that members involved have to split their time to attend to household issues as well as those of CBOs. There were 15 focus group discussions which were conducted and 60% of these raised this as one of their challenges. This challenge is also evidenced by their failure to meet regularly for progress reviews. When checked, minutes books for most of the CBOs had gaps in terms of dates for committee meetings.

As is often the case, the household demands receive more time and attention than CBO business. This in a way affects quality and speed at which business could have been done if the people involved were being paid by the CBOs.

4.3.2.10 *Effective linkages and inter-organizational relationships*

The survey established that at Kasungu District level, there is no coordinating body for all CBOs in the district. Interaction with CBO members during focus group discussions and with members from government and non-governmental sectors during key informant interviews revealed this. There was a general agreement by all key informants that at district level, there is a District AIDS Coordinating Committee comprised of members from various NGOs and

government departments. However, no efforts are being made by this team to establish an umbrella association for CBOs in the district.

At community level, members from the sampled CBOs indicated that CBOs are running independently. In the past two years, none of the CBOs made efforts to establish working relationship with another. None organized a trip to visit another CBO on a learning tour.

4.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter's discussions centered on analyzing the findings this research survey has uncovered. The discussion centered on three main areas and they include, the roles CBOs are taking in the development of Malawi and in particular, that of Kasungu District with special emphasis on the work of HIV and AIDS, challenges that are affecting their performance and factors that are affecting performance of CBOs.

The survey has revealed that CBOs are making some contributions in the development that is going on in Kasungu District in the area of HIV and AIDS. Among other things, the CBOs are building people's capacities for them to face the challenges of this world better. They are also dealing with issues of stigma that are often associated with HIV and AIDS.

On challenges, it has been observed that CBOs are faced by a number of things that are threatening their existence. Top on the list is the issue of resources both financial and material. They are also dogged by issues of fraud/theft, governance, monitoring and accountability among others.

Their performance could have been outstanding if these CBOs had reliable and adequate sources of income, if the policy context was well defined and guidelines well in place and if appropriate technologies were available for use by CBOs.

The findings of this survey have implications to the existing as well as those CBOs that are yet to be established. If the idea of participation is to be entrenched in people's minds and operations of CBOs in Malawi, there is need for lasting solutions to the issues that are hampering success of CBOs. Deliberate efforts should be made by government and its cooperating partners to help CBOs become more established and active participants in the development that is taking place in Malawi and Kasungu in particular. Without this, their dreams will remain dreams.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The last chapter was a presentation on findings this survey managed to uncover. It was found that sampled community-based organizations in Kasungu are making some contributions in the socio-economic development that is going on in Kasungu District. It was further observed that in the course of carrying out their agendas, CBOs are faced with a number of challenges such as inadequate funds, unavailability of skilled and committed technical staff and poor organizational and managerial capacity.

This chapter aims at putting together some of the major findings obtained in this study. It will also try to relate the findings of the survey to what is in the literature review, discuss any anomalies, show relevance of the study and finally draw some recommendations for future studies and for policy formulation in Malawi in addition to making recommendations on how performance of the existing CBOs can be enhanced.

5.2 SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION ON SALIENT POINTS

The section is a discussion on main findings that have been obtained in this study. These have been drawn from literature studied as well as from the survey

findings. For smooth presentation and flow of information, presentation of findings are going to be presented according to the following order: findings that are related to roles CBOs are playing in Kasungu District and challenges that CBOs are facing which in the end are affecting their performance.

5.2.1 Findings related to roles of CBOs

Firstly, one of the main findings drawn from this study has to do with the roles the sampled community-based organizations are playing in the development that is going on in rural communities. As discussed in chapter 2 of this research study, community-based organizations have three basic functions. The functions include facilitating the provision of public service, activating mutual assistance and resource mobilization and enabling rural people to communicate information, needs, demands and opportunities to government (Cornwell and de Beer 1997: 125). The survey findings have confirmed that these functions are what the CBOs are doing as they fight against HIV/AIDS.

On public service, they are the ones that go around creating awareness among the people on HIV and AIDS, advocating for equal treatment among the people and even challenging certain practices, the work that could have been done by government.

The CBOs have been mobilizing resources from well wishers from within and outside the community. These resources are used for the mutual benefit of all

members affected and infected by HIV and AIDS. The CBOs have at times acted on behalf of the community people informing government and other development players on the needs that people have in their areas. This is evidenced by the funding support the CBOs manage to get from funding agencies like the National AIDS Commission after communicating needs their communities have.

The other finding related to the roles CBOs are playing has to do with what in chapter 2 was highlighted as the main objectives of community participation. These include empowerment, beneficiary capacity building, increasing effectiveness and improving project efficiency. From the sample under study it has been revealed that CBOs working on HIV and AIDS in Kasungu are generally fulfilling these objectives. On empowerment, the CBOs have managed to enlist the support of the community people to join the fight against the pandemic. For example, community awareness campaigns are organized and carried out by members of the CBOs and people from the community. Even those who are infected and affected are taking leading roles.

The CBOs are also carrying out various activities with the purpose of building capacity of their institutions, that of the people involved in the management of the CBOs and the people who are being assisted by the CBOs. For example, the beneficiaries have been trained on how to do small and medium enterprises, how to be effective leaders and how to account for the resources they have or whatever they have received. Communities have been mobilized to a level where they are

even ready to make financial and material contributions in the fight against HIV and AIDS.

However, from the sample under study, it has been found out that the CBOs have challenges with project efficiency and effectiveness. This is partly due to issues that have to do with availability of qualified staff to support their work and adequate resources for the running of their activities. For example, at the time when this research study was being done none of the sampled CBOs had a computer or vehicle or any improved mode of mobility for them to carry out their activities with ease and desired speed. In some cases they missed targets because of non-availability of qualified personnel to help them implement certain activities as planned.

Secondly, the research survey has found that apart from the change of political system in Malawi, the urge for the establishment of CBOs came as a result of an increase in demand from people for services coming up as a result of HIV/AIDS. The coming in of HIV/AIDS created pressure on the limited number of staff and health facilities available in Kasungu as well as Malawi. On one side it could be said that government saw the need to involve the community to provide care and support to the infected and affected. As a result, government went flat out encouraging communities to come up with CBOs and support the established CBOs with money. On the other side, it might be said that people might have decided to come in and support after observing that government's financial and human resources were not being helpful enough to meet the ever increasing

demands for support. For example, the concept of community-based care for infected and chronically sick patients might have come due to inadequate availability of beds and human resources in the health facilities.

5.2.2 Findings related to challenges being faced by CBOs

The first finding related to challenges being faced by CBOs has to do with availability of technical back-up support. All the sampled Community-based organizations in Kasungu were deficient in terms of technical capacity. Not all services being delivered were of an innovative, internally developed design. Instead they were often done by technical personnel from outside the organizations. This finding is much related to what was discussed in chapter 2 on limitations that CBOs have.

Though government and NGOs encouraged communities to come up with CBOs, they did not do much ground work in readiness for the coming in of the desired CBOs. Levels of human and material resources both at district and community level remained almost the same. Their members of staff had not gone for specialized training in the running and management of CBOs. Such being the case, government or nongovernmental organizations were not rightly positioned to provide an adequate response to the emerging and ongoing CBOs technically.

The second finding in relation to challenges is the issue of formation of CBOs. While acknowledging the fact that some of the sampled CBOs evolved on their

own in response to the needs of the people on the grassroots, a good number of them come into existence due to external influence and especially from government. In response to the burgeoning need for public services, government, through various avenues, called upon communities to establish CBOs as one of the ways in the fight against HIV and AIDS. This led to the establishment of CBOs some of which lacked proper information and foundation. This explains why some of them are battling with problems of accountability, governance and ownership. Some of the participating members do not see the CBOs as their own therefore no need to be very accountable, no need to make higher levels of commitment and make sure that the CBO is sustainable.

Related to the point of establishment of CBOs is the issue of understanding what a CBO is all about and how they can contribute to the development of the communities in general and families in particular. The people involved in the running of the sampled CBOs in Kasungu do not have a deeper understanding of the work of CBOs and what they can manage to achieve through the work of their groupings. For example, for some CBOs, their ultimate goal was to get funding from the National AIDS Commission, use the money for whatever activities they had on their plan of action. Once this is done, that's the end of business. The onus lies now on government and nongovernmental organizations to help the CBOs to move to higher levels of operation. This calls for capacity building of the CBO leadership and re-organization. There is also need for government and NGOs to train and place CBO specialists in communities who can be working with the CBOs to help them maximize their potentials.

Thirdly, the issue of Human and financial resources is one of the major challenges facing CBOs in Kasungu. As already observed above, there is limited availability of qualified personnel at district as well as community level that can provide technical support to the running of CBOs. The sampled CBOs do not have the capacity yet to engage technical personnel that can readily attend to their needs. As a result, some of the work done by CBOs is based on intuition or what members might have seen or heard somewhere. Work progress has been delayed because CBOs have to wait on a queue for someone to come and give them the technical know-how on how to do certain things.

Financially, this research study has established that National AIDS Commission is the major funding source for about 95% of the CBOs. When there is delay, things stop functioning. The other sources of funding are very minimal. The sampled CBOs are not seriously thinking of expanding their income sources and very few of them have ventured into income generating activities that can sustain their activities even when external funding ceases. Unless helped otherwise, the future of majority of the sampled CBOs currently operating in Kasungu is uncertain.

Fourthly is the issue of accountability. The survey has established that sampled CBOs are faced with the challenge of accountability of financial and material resources received from donors. This is partly as a result of lack of knowledge and skills in accounting and partly due to the fact that the financial and material resources are misused.

The fifth finding is the problem of equipment. The survey has revealed that sampled CBOs in Kasungu did not have the needed/required equipment for them to carry out their work. Normally they used traditional ways of doing things like hand written reports, use of hoes for cultivating in communal gardens and the like. This costed them time and resources. At times they missed deadlines because of this. Tracking and storage of information was not easy.

The sixth finding has to do with monitoring and evaluation. The research survey has revealed that monitoring of CBO activities is poorly done. Though sampled CBOs had clearly spelt out monitoring tools, they were not adequately made use of.

The seventh finding related to challenges is the issue of sustainability. Under literature review in Chapter 2, it was mentioned that most community-based organizations were not self-sustaining in terms of funding for the running of planned activities. They often depended on funding that comes from outside sources to support service delivery efforts. The survey established the same. Sustainability of most of the sampled CBOs is not guaranteed. This is so because apart from having a limited source of funding, they solely depended on external financial support for the running of their CBOs. In addition, they lacked technical capacity and they were faced with accountability and governance challenges.

The eighth finding has to do with the issue of policies and operating systems and procedures. Policies determine the direction of development of a particular government. CBOs have been operating in Kasungu district for some time, and some of their contributions in the society are evident. However, up to the time when the research study was being done, government had not yet come up with a clear policy for the operations of community-based organizations. This is related to what has been discussed on literature review in chapter 2. This makes the situation for the sampled CBOs very tricky. Agencies funding them did so at their own risk. There is need to speed up the process so as to ensure that there is a conducive environment for the running of CBOs.

The issue of lack of clear policy for operation of CBOs was also true with NGOs. Though they had been advocating for CBOs and had been encouraging communities to come up with CBOs, the NGOs themselves did not sit down to review their policies to accommodate CBOs.

Apart from policies, government and NGOs have not taken time to review their systems and procedures of doing business now that there are CBOs working on development issues. For example, government or NGO members of staff were busy implementing development projects even when they were working with CBOs instead of being facilitators. Control of funds still remained in the hands of NGOs or government departments and CBOs kept on receiving consignments of goods they had or had not requested. As rightly observed by Stewart (2006:50), development institutions need to dramatically decentralize their decision making

and integrate new participatory methods in their operations if they are to fulfill their potentials as supporters of and complements to local efforts.

Technical back-up support was not readily available partly because both government and NGOs did not do the necessary preparations in readiness for the coming in of CBOs. Some of the struggles the CBOs were faced with could not have been there if there was adequate technical back-up when the CBOs were being established.

Ninth is the finding that has to do with incentives. The survey has established that the sampled CBOs rely on volunteers for the implementation of their activities. Since the volunteers are not paid anything, they tend to split their time to attend to household activities. This in a way affects quality and speed of work being done.

The finding on incentives is much related to one of the criticisms that are leveled against community participation discussed in Chapter 2. It is said that the concept equates people participation with total continuous commitment to activism. This is hardly possible. The truth is that rural people have many other commitments and it is not feasible to think that the poor have excess free time. So it is unrealistic to hope for a permanent activism or to conceive of community participation as an endless and hectic round of mass meetings, rallies, protests and other activities (Chiwaula 2004:40).

The tenth finding has to do with linkages and inter-organizational relationships among the sampled CBOs in Kasungu. The study has established that there is no coordination among the sampled CBOs in the district. They do not have their own grouping with powers to regulate their performance and speak on their behalf to government and NGOs. Exchange of information and coordination among themselves is inadequate.

Lastly, this research study has revealed that the sampled community-based organizations in Kasungu do not have the necessary equipment that can help them do their work well. Apart from problems of technology, their systems of monitoring and evaluation are not effective.

The discussion above has been on the findings the survey has managed to establish in relation to the work of CBOs in Kasungu. The research study findings are related very much to what was discussed under literature review in Chapter 2. This is what the following section will endeavor to establish.

5.3 INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS IN TERMS OF LITERATURE OR THEORY

The following section is a discussion of the research results in terms of literature review and theory. The section aims at showing how the results and conclusions of the research study are related to the literature and theory of this domain. This will be done by showing connections between the findings of this study and the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. For purposes of clarity and organization,

interpretation of findings in relation to literature review will be done according to the three objectives of this survey.

The first objective of this research study was to establish the roles CBOs are playing in the development taking place in Kasungu district. In relation to this objective, the survey has established that sampled CBOs are doing commendable work in the development taking place in Kasungu District. What they are doing is very good and is in line with what community participation advocates as per literature review in chapter 2. It is argued in chapter 2 that the local people must take part in any development activity taking place. Failure to do so is like “...treating them as objects which must be saved from a burning building; it is to lead them into the populist pitfall and transform them into masses which can be manipulated” (Burkey 1993: 57).

The survey has further revealed that what the sampled CBOs are doing is helping individuals and communities to take control of their situations. This is in line and related to what is said under literature review as the objective of community participation. As previously mentioned in Chapter 2, development specialists consider empowerment, beneficiary capacity building, increasing effectiveness and improving project efficiency as the main objectives of community participation (Sarma, Vicary and Holdrege 2004:9). This is exactly what the sampled CBOs involved in HIV and AIDS in Kasungu are doing as revealed by the survey. The sampled CBOs are empowering individuals and institutions by involving benefiting communities to plan, implement and monitor their own

work, Their capacities are being enhanced through formal and informal training in various aspects of life. Issues of effectiveness and efficiency are being addressed as the CBOs are dealing with issues that are people's real felt needs.

And as regards their involvement in HIV and AIDS activities, the survey has revealed that, beside government and NGO influence, communities decided to get involved in the fight against AIDS after noting that Government was failing to meet the ever increasing demand for services. This is in line with what was discussed under literature review as regards reasons for CBO involvement. As mentioned by Sarma, Vicary & Holdrege (2004), community-based organizations have come as a result of government failure to meet the ever increasing/growing needs of the masses. No doubt many citizens have resigned themselves to this state of affairs and have "rediscovered their traditional affinity for mutual assistance, self-reliance, and personalized help" (Sarma, Vicary & Holdrege 2004:8). He further argues that "what seems to be clear is the desire of ordinary citizens to assume more effective control over the social provisions/social utilities and influence the goals therein (Sarma, Vicary & Holdrege 2004:8). This is what the survey has established. Due to an increase in the number of people suffering from HIV and AIDS, communities started getting organized for joint efforts to deal with the problem.

Study findings in relation to the second objective of this research are also related to what was discussed under literature review in chapter two. The findings on challenges being faced by the sampled CBOs are very much related to some of the

issues discussed under section 2.4.7 as limitations of CBOs. They also find their resonance on some of the issues discussed under section 2.4.6 where there is a discussion on factors that affect success of community-based organizations.

The findings on the second objective are also very much related to what has been discussed under section 2.4.6 of Chapter 2. It is indicated under this section that experience with internationally funded projects (especially water projects) in developing countries have identified adequate incentives, sufficient skills and resources, appropriate processes, effective inter-organizational relationships, appropriate technology and effective system of monitoring, evaluation and feedback as factors that can affect success of community-based organizations (Rondinelli 1991: 419).

There is also some connection to some of the issues under section 2.4.3 where views against community participation have been discussed. Worthy mentioning here is the criticism that the concept of community participation equates people participation with total continuous commitment to activism. This is hardly possible. The truth is that rural people have many other commitments and it is not feasible to think that the poor have excess free time. So it is unrealistic to hope for a permanent activism or to conceive of community participation as an endless and hectic round of mass meetings, rallies, protests and other activities (Chiwaula 2004:36). What is being said here against community participation is what the survey also established as one of the factors affecting the success of work for the sampled CBOs.

One of the findings felt to be surprising or deviant from the expected has to do with how CBOs came on the scene in the fight against HIV and AIDS. As previously observed above, some community-based organizations came about in response to the growing challenge which government and non-governmental organizations were struggling with. However, the survey has revealed that the majority of CBOs came into existence following government's call for communities to get organized, form CBOs and access funding from the National AIDS Commission. This resulted into the emergence of CBOs which had no proper understanding of what they want to get involved in. That is why some of them are struggling with issues of governance and ownership because they do not have proper origins. While participation is considered a bottom-up approach, it is clear that in certain instances, things came from the top to the bottom level.

The other finding that seems to be contra to what has been said under literature review has to do with the issue of efficiency and cost effectiveness. It is argued that involvement of CBOs in development activities is cost effective and guarantees effectiveness. As observed by Blunt and Warren (1996: 56), development planners and policy makers had realized that it is cost effective to work with and through CBOs for the success of any development program. This implies that Development Agencies should strive to promote the use of CBOs in any development issue.

However, this claim is likely to remain a claim if certain factors are not available on the ground. It is feared that sampled CBOs are likely to prove ineffective

because of lack of qualified skilled personnel that could provide technical support to the CBOs. Their reliance on old methods or tools for doing business is likely to make them expensive and inefficient as well. Other issues that are affecting efficiency and effectiveness include poor managerial skills, and poor monitoring of activities being implemented. From the look of things, there are a lot of things that are not just right for CBOs to be successful. Unless something is done, the current excitement about CBOs may eventually become something of the past once more in Malawi and Kasungu in particular.

Another issue has to do with policy environment. To date there is no policy guiding operations and legalizing existence of CBOs in Malawi. This is not good and is counterproductive for CBOs. Related to the issue of policy is the fact that, up to now, government and even NGOs have not done much to review their operating systems and procedures to accommodate operations of CBOs. Coupled with this is the fact that they do not have adequate trained specialist staff in management of community-based organizations.

5.4 MAKE LARGER SIGNIFICANCE OF RESULTS EXPLICIT

The survey findings have significance in a number of areas. These have to do with CBOs themselves, government as well as nongovernmental organizations. In the following discussion, the significance of the survey results has been expounded.

5.4.1 Significance to the sampled and other existing CBOs

The survey has ably outlined the contributions the sampled CBOs are making in their impact areas. It has also highlighted the areas where the CBOs are facing some challenges. These findings will help them to make the necessary corrections in those areas where they are not doing well and strengthen those areas they are already doing well. An example is the issue of funding. Most, if not all, CBOs are struggling to get funding. This is so partly because they do not raise their own money for project activities. In addition to this, they have only one reliable source of funding.

On the issue of governance and ownership, some of the sampled CBOs have problems because they were started by an individual, or people involved were asked to do so without having a clear understanding on the goals and objectives of their grouping. New CBOs will definitely learn from this mistake and do it the right way. Old ones are likely going to be challenged to reflect on their origins and do the necessary corrections for them to attain improved performance.

5.4.2 Government and its development partners

The survey has shown that Government and its development partners were not well prepared to facilitate development using CBOs. This is evidenced in the fact that there is no policy at government level supporting the operations of CBOs. Policies of other development partners as well do not provide room for CBOs’

existence. Though Government and its development partners might have talked about and championed the cause of CBOs, this has not been done at policy level. Their operating systems and procedures still remain the same even after the advent of CBOs.

The findings from this survey will help Government and its development partners to have a critical look at their work once more and do the necessary work in terms of policies and operating systems and procedures to accommodate their working with CBOs. For example, the issue of policy for CBOs has been there and a number of people have raised this concern with government. Draft policy is in place and all what is needed is to have it ratified by parliament. Its high time parliament looked at this issue of policy as critical if development is to flourish in the country.

For NGOs, participation is considered to be a guiding principle of their operations. It is argued that meaningful development can not take place in the absence of participation. Community-based organizations are seen as one way through which community transformation can take place. Such being the case, they can no longer continue paying lip service to an issue they consider to be pivotal in their operations. Time for talking is over, now is time for action. What Government and its development partners believe in should be put into action by revising their policies and operating procedures to allow working with CBOs at higher levels.

5.5 POLICY AND OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

This section is about recommendations. These are being made against the findings that have been established in this research study. The recommendations focus on the work of CBOs and how it can be enhanced. They also focus on what needs to be done by government, NGOs and even supporting agencies so as to ensure improved performance of CBOs in Kasungu District and Malawi as a country.

The study has revealed that currently, it is only those CBOs involved in activities that are economic in nature that have well outlined policies and operating procedures. They have the Ministry of Trade and Industry as their mother ministry and when registered, officers from this ministry supervise their work and audit their financial records. The ministry has powers to deregister them in the event of non-compliance. However, CBOs involved in social development do not have a well outline policy to guide their operations and though they have a mother ministry to work with, the ministry does not have mandate that goes beyond supervising their work and provide them with technical advice. It can not audit their financial reports, demand for monthly reports or deregister them in the event of non-compliance. It is therefore recommended that government should hasten the process of coming up with a policy and guidelines for the operations of CBOs that are not economic in nature. This will legalize their operations and provide guidelines that must be met by any CBO operating in the country. It is further recommended that government should have or should establish one ministry responsible for all categories of community-based organization. Within this

ministry, there might be departments, some responsible for those CBOs whose work is economic in nature while others can be responsible for those CBOs whose work is more focused on social development. This set up could provide more coordinated work than a scenario where CBOs have to work with different parent ministries.

As observed above, up to now government and its development partners have not yet reviewed their operating systems and procedures to accommodate community-based organizations. It is therefore being recommended that government and NGOs review their operating systems and procedures so as to accommodate the running of community-based organizations.

As already mentioned above, CBOs are doing very commendable work of providing public service to the people in communities where they are working. However, in some cases CBOs are not achieving what they could have done if their capacities were properly built. It is therefore recommended that government and its cooperating partners in Kasungu intensify capacity building efforts for CBOs so as to ensure their continued existence and quality contributions in the development that is already going on in the district.

It is also being recommended that government and its development partners recruit and train adequate staff in the management of CBOs to ensure that required technical support is available to CBOs. As is the case now in Kasungu District, there are very few members of staff in government that are trained in the

establishment and management of community-based organizations. The same is the case with NGOs and churches. In such cases it becomes difficult to provide support to such organizations.

All sampled CBOs rely on external funding for them to carry out their planned activities. However, external funding has problems in the sense that it can not be guaranteed that it will always be there. It is recommended, therefore, that CBOs should embark on activities that can help them generate their own income for the smooth running of their operations. It is also recommended that government or NGOs have deliberate policies that would allow them to invest in CBOs by supporting them with larger amounts of funds and equipment like vehicles and computers with the sole purpose of helping the CBOs to get established and operate viably.

It has been observed that at some point in the history of Malawi, government went out public encouraging/advising communities to establish community-based organizations to help in the fight against HIV and AIDS. This resulted into formation of CBOs in Kasungu district that did not have a clear understanding of what the work of a CBO is all about. Now there are problems of poor performance, non-compliance to standards, and mismanagement of CBO funds. It is against this background that it is being recommended that Government or NGOs should desist from the temptation of asking people to form groups and later on call them CBOs. Instead focus should be on educating communities on community-based organizations, and roles they can play in the development of

their communities. It should be up to the communities themselves to get organized and come up with CBOs. This will ensure Kasungu to have CBOs that have evolved on their own and are well established, with goals and objectives that are clear to all members.

It has also been noted on the list of findings that there is little or no interaction among the sampled CBOs in Kasungu district. Each CBO is working on its own. It is being recommended that with the facilitation of government and NGOs, CBOs in Kasungu district should come up with a network at district level where they can meet, share experiences and learn from each other. It is also through the same network that they can be in a position to speak with a strong and united voice to government and NGOs on certain things they feel need to be done to them or to the people they are serving.

It is also being recommended that partners supporting the work of CBOs in Kasungu district should allow them to invest in modern technology. This will help CBOs to do certain activities quickly and thus save time for other activities. For example, instead of spending a week working in a communal garden, CBOs could spend a day or two if they were going to use a tractor or a plough. Where electricity is a problem, solar panels can be installed and CBOs can use that to run computers and this could speed their work.

Lastly, it is being recommended that another study on the work of CBOs involved in the fight against HIV and AIDS be conducted in the near future to assess any positive progress and impact that is being made by CBOs in Kasungu District.

5.7 CONCLUSION

The discussion above has been on the conclusions and recommendations from the research study. Apart from discussing some salient points, there was also some discussion on the interpretation of the survey findings, making larger significance of the results and policy and other recommendations. One of the recommendations clearly coming out is on the need for government to come up with a policy guiding the operations and activities of CBOs. Government departments and NGOs need to reposition themselves properly if they are to work well with community- based organizations.

Though the work of the sampled CBOs was faced with a number of challenges, it does not mean that there is no hope of survival for them.

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7.0 APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

1 Background information

Name of CBO.....year started.....

Location.....Traditional Authority.....

2 Goal of CBO

.....
.....
.....

3 Objectives

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

4 Target group

.....
.....

5 Main sources of income

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| i) external donor..... | ii) local donor..... |
| iii)membership fee..... | iv)faith based support..... |
| v) others..... | |

6 Staffing

No. of paid staff.....No. of volunteers.....

Qualification:

.....

.....

.....

.....

7 Why did you decide to come up with a CBO?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

8 Potential:

What contributions has your CBO made in the development going on in your area?

Individual	
Group empowerment	
Institutional building	
National building	
Regional/global building	

9 What are the factors that are affecting the success of your CBO?

Adequate incentives	
Skills and resources	
Appropriate processes	
Technology	

Relationships with other organizations	
Monitoring and evaluation	

10 What limitations do you face as a CBO?

Limited self-sustaining technical capacity	
Lack of broad programming context	
Limited ability to scale up successful project	
Lack of strategic perspective and linkage with other	
Limited managerial & organizational capabilities	

11 CBO Management

Do you have board members?.....

If yes, how many.....

If Yes, what role do they play in the management of the CBO?

Number of CBO committee members

Do you have a constitution for your CBO? yes.....no_____

(If yes) can I have a look at it

How often do you meet to review work progress?

12 Capacity building and support

What kind of training have you received as a CBO and members?

What kind of support do you receive from government and other development partners?

What are the challenges you are facing working with government and other development partners?

APPENDIX II

QUESTIONNAIRE 2

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

Name of person being interviewed.....Date.....

1 Which community-based organizations are working with you

2 What roles are they playing in the development that is taking place in their areas?

3 What are their sources of resources:

A] human -----

B] financial-----

4 what do you consider to be their major strengths

5 What would you consider as their major weaknesses

6 What challenges are limiting the successful growth and operation of CBOs?

7 How do you look at their sustainability

8 Do you think CBOs still have a place in the development of this country's/community's? Please explain

9 What should be done to improve their effectiveness?

10 To what extent is your organization /department ready to work with CBOs?

Interview done by.....date.....

APPENDIX III

QUESTIONNAIRE 3

INTERVIEWS WITH BENEFICIARIES

Name of person being interviewed.....Sex.....Date.....

Which CBO is working in your area

What role is the CBO playing in your area?

.....
.....
.....
.....

How have you benefited from the activities of the above mentioned CBO?

.....
.....
.....
.....

How has the support you received from CBO helped to improve your life?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Do you think the kind of support you received was adequate to address your needs?

.....
.....
.....
.....

What do you think are the challenges the CBO is faced with?

.....
.....
.....
What areas would you like the CBO to improve?

.....
.....
.....

Interview done by.....Date.....

APPENDIX IV

LIST OF DATA COLLECTORS

Shadreck Kwendanyama

Essau Mazibuko Supervisor

Frasconsco Zimba

George Kafa

Gloria Sandifolo

Christina Banda

Dalitso Mgawanyemba Team Leader

APPENDIX X

LIST OF CBOS THAT WERE SAMPLED

	NAME
1	Kaomba Orphan Care Committee
2	Planning for the Good Future Youth Organization
3	Kasungu AIDS Support Group
4	Miracle Youth Organisation
5	Chiyanjano Orphan Group
6	Lodjwa AIDS Education and Home Based Care
7	Chisinga Orphan Voice 2000
8	Mndewe Home Based Care
9	Nyaza Home based Orphan Care
10	Tasunge Orphan Care and Aged Support Group
11	Kaluluma Orphan Care
12	St Joseph Home Based Care
13	Chiphaso Home Based Care
14	Misozi Home Based Care