

# THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS IN POVERTY ERADICATION AND RECOVERY FROM MULTIPLE CRISES.

**PRESENTED BY**

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# INTRODUCTION.

- **What is Poverty? As we know, poverty has been defined and measured in various ways across the world.**
- **Some have defined poverty in the economic sense to portray lack of the necessities of life, such as food, shelter, clothing, lack of or in ability to access opportunities or afford social services.**
- **To others, poverty can be seen in the form of lack of income or sustainable livelihoods, hunger, malnutrition, ill health, limited or lack of access to education, homelessness or lack of inadequate housing, social discrimination, and exclusion.**
- **Going by the World Bank description, poverty is hunger, lack of shelter, being sick and not being able to see a doctor, not having access to school and not knowing how to read.**
- **Poverty has also been linked to lack of control over resources, such as land and habitat, skills, knowledge, capital, and social connections.**

# WHAT THEN IS POVERTY?

- According to our Aide-Mémoire, there is no unique definition of poverty as there are many aspects and dimensions of poverty.
- Therefore, no matter how we define or describe poverty, it is a situation that most people will not want to be in or experience in their lifetime
- Not being able to meet or afford one's basic needs is a critical and painful situation, which many people in the world are facing today.
- Families living below \$1.90 per day, that is poverty.
- Statistics have shown that more than half of the world's population are living in situations or circumstances that can be described as poverty.
- According to Secretary General's report (August 2018), poverty rates are still high in many countries in Africa and the least developed countries.

# WHAT THEN IS POVERTY?..

- **Out of 783 million people living in extreme poverty in 2013, more than half were in sub-Saharan Africa and close to a third lived in Southern Asia, though there are also pockets of poverty in middle and high-income countries.**
- **The situation is even worse now in 2023.**
- **It is notable that, the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 72/233, proclaimed the period 2018-2027 as the Third United Nations Decade for the eradication of poverty with the theme, “Accelerating global actions for a world without poverty” which is in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.**
- **This theme calls for urgent actions from everyone to tackle and eradicate poverty in all countries to achieve sustainable development.**

# POVERTY ERADICATION STRATEGIES.

- **Different strategies and policies are being proposed or implemented by various countries to ensure that everyone, no matter where they live is free from poverty, thereby eradicating poverty.**
- **However, poverty eradication in all its forms and dimensions today remains one of the greatest problems facing all countries in the world, and particularly for those in the global south.**
- **The SDGs Goal 1 says: End poverty in all its forms everywhere, while 1.1 says that by 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$1.25 a day.**
- **Going by the diversity among developed, developing and the least developed countries, there should be diverse strategies for eradicating poverty if we must achieve sustainable development and leave no one behind.**

# POVERTY ERADICATION STRATEGIES..

- **In some developing countries, while the governments and their agencies have focused their efforts on designing winning policies and programmes to eradicate poverty, nevertheless about half of their population still live in poverty.**
- **Poverty eradication strategies should include concrete measures to dismantle those structural barriers that prevent people from escaping poverty, as well as expand opportunities to enable them to enhance their capacities and improve their economic and social conditions.**
- **We need to pursue policies that will ensure that everyone has access to adequate economic and social protection programmes no matter their gender.**
- **Gender inequality in Africa and some other countries in the global south has contributed to the large number of women and girls living in poverty, particularly the female headed households.**
- **This should be addressed squarely in our strategies.**

# WHO ARE THE KEY PLAYERS IN POVERTY ERADICATION?

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- **The question is: who have we included and recognized as a key player and who have we neglected and excluded in poverty eradication strategies?**
- **What can they bring to the table to tackle and fight poverty, and other global crisis such as the impact of COVID -19, climate change and political conflicts and wars going on in some countries, which has pushed a lot more people into poverty today?**
- **What is the role of civil society organizations, community leaders, traditional and religious institutions, and other gate keepers in poverty eradication policies and programs?**
- **We must note that these groups are key stakeholders who should be engaged, but have we fully engaged with them in the process?**

# WHY CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS?

- **Civil Society Organizations have originated in various countries in response to various political, social, economic, and cultural conditions and challenges, such as unemployment, natural disasters, health, education, social injustices like poverty, marginalization, abuses, inequality, and gender relations.**
- **The inability of governments to provide basic services to their people and alleviate some of the socio-economic and cultural conditions has prepared a fertile ground for CSOs to thrive.**
- **Most CSOs started as a small group due to their desire to do something useful for the benefit of those in need.**



# WHY CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS?

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- **The role of civil society organizations in development has been laudably recognized particularly by the international development partners and the United Nations.**
- **I recall the meeting we had in February this year, with the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly which was convened in order to provide an opportunity for Member States and Representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations in consultative status with the UN ECOSOC, to share thoughts on the outcomes of the 77th session of the Third Committee as well as provide insights into how to ensure the effective engagement and contributions from civil society stakeholders in the areas under discussion in the Third Committee.**

# WHY PARTNER WITH CSOS?

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- **In his keynote address, the President of the General Assembly said it was necessary to deepen the engagement with CSOs, because they are on the ground and have local knowledge of issues on the ground.**
- **He said CSOs bring the voices of the marginalized to the global space, and encouraged CSOs to bring forward proposals that are concrete, justifiable, and workable.**
- **Many Member states agreed with the Chair and also highlighted the services and expertise that civil society organizations bring to the work of the United Nations and supported the call and move for a closer working relationship between civil society organizations and the Third committee.**
- **That is exactly the point we CSOs have been making.**

# **ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS IN POVERTY ERADICATION AND RECOVERY FROM MULTIPLE CRISIS.**

# GLOBAL ADVOCACY OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS AT THE UNITED NATIONS.





## ADVOCACY AND POLICY INFLUENCING.

- Civil Society Organizations engage in advocacy and policy influencing with policy makers, decision makers and traditional institutions on various issues affecting the poor and marginalized sections of the population.
- Many CSOs have also engaged in poverty eradication programs, sourcing funds and delivering on projects aimed at eradicating poverty in communities.
- A good number of CSOs are professionals in their own right and are knowledgeable on the implementation of guidelines and provisions of the United Nations Conventions, International Treaties and Protocols.
- They are able to bring their knowledge and expertise when they are included in processes, programs and schemes aimed at eradicating poverty and recovery from crisis.





## SENSITIZATION AND AWARENESS RAISING

- **CSOs are versed in sensitization and raising awareness amongst groups and particularly with gatekeepers, opinion leaders, women groups, and youths on key issues, to achieve behavioral change or secure their support and participation in any developmental process.**
- **Civil society organizations should be carried along in any poverty eradication or crisis mitigation program for it to succeed.**
- **There were cases of poverty eradication interventions mounted by some agencies of government, without adequate inclusion of civil society and leaders of communities in the designs and the outcomes were not successful.**
- **Someone may be poor but he or she has their dignity, and this must be respected in designing poverty eradication programs. CSOs understand and practice the principle of respect and personal dignity; hence they work very well with the marginalized and community members**



## COMMUNITY SERVICE DELIVERY.

- CSOs have carried out community services ranging from construction of VIP toilets, refuse disposals / composting pits, smokeless cooking stoves, boreholes for drinking water, to training and equipping livelihood skill development centers.
- CSOs have carried out various capacity building and skill development trainings for many grassroots women, community leaders, youths on various issues towards economic empowerment and poverty eradication.
- Civil society organizations have also established non- formal education centers for out of school youths and children in hard-to-reach communities.
- They have also developed IEC materials and promotional leaflets and distributed them towards economic empowerment and eradication of poverty in communities.





Data gathering, monitoring and evaluation of programs and projects are key roles performed by CSOs.

- Our organization have been involved in data gathering, monitoring and the evaluation of many donor- funded projects including the MDGs programmes and projects in Nigeria.
- CSOs are well positioned to gather and analyze data on various issues which can support effective policy design and program interventions for eradicating poverty.
- As the voice of the voiceless, CSOs serve and protect the interest of the marginalized groups, including women and youths.
- CSOs have their ears close to the ground, act as watchdogs and whistle blowers, once they hear or see any action or inaction that will derail the move towards development.





# CONCLUSIONS.

- **CSOs should not be excluded from poverty eradication and recovery from crisis processes, because they are closer to the people and do speak up on their behalf.**
- **CSOs are professionals who should be recognized as partners in development.**
- **We must build multi stakeholder partnerships, which allow all aspects of our society to effectively contribute to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.**
- **Many CSOs task themselves to attend and participate in many United Nations Commission meetings in New York and other UN stations, at their own expense.**
- **They do not want to be included in any process as an “after thought”.**
- **The UN charter says, “we the people of the United Nations” and CSOs are part of “we the people”.**
- **I really commend the UN for recognizing the work of the NGO Committee on Social Development, and for including us in some spaces, including the Expert Group Meeting.**
- **Working together with all the partners, including civil society, will guarantee our ability to accelerate global actions for a world without poverty.**

# THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

