

## **The roles of faith-based organizations (fbos) in community development: a study of Awka South Local Government Area Anambra State**

**Gladys Amaechi Ohazulike**

Department of Sociology/Anthropology

Faculty of Social Sciences

Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

E-mail: [ga.ohazulike@unizik.edu.ng](mailto:ga.ohazulike@unizik.edu.ng)

### **Abstract**

*Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) are ideally expected to contribute to the development of their host communities and wellbeing of members of such communities. This study assessed the roles that Faith Based Organization has played towards Community Development (CD) in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra state, Southeast Nigeria, The study also examined challenges that confront them and identified some strategies to be adopted in order to ensure smooth administration of these organizations in providing community development. The sample size for the study was 200 respondents. The questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. The data collected were analyzed using the descriptive method of qualitative data analysis. The roles of FBOs include education, medical care provision, emergency relief, housing care of the elderly, training, shelter homeless, care of the widows, hospice care, food pantries, welfare-to-work, job training refuge services, child care, and preschool, etc. However, these roles of the FBOs are not really felt so much in society. It was recommended that FBOs should partner with the government, donors, other faith-based groups, and technical organizations as a way of leveraging FBOs assets and scaling up current efforts to be more effective in the community. They should plan effectively, this includes developing an understanding of community assets and needs that inform a strategic vision for change. Their internal planning should match their resources, programs, and applicable requirements for successful implementation of their vision.*

**Keywords:** Roles, Faith-Based Organizations, Organizations, Community, Community development

### **Introduction**

The totality of citizen-initiated activities aimed at enhancing many facets of local communities could be simply referred to as "community development" or "community building" (Grogan, Paul and Tony, 2002). Community building initiatives aim to empower people and groups by giving them the knowledge and abilities necessary to bring about change in their neighborhoods. Community development entails the community experiencing improvements



in its infrastructure, social life, health, education, economy, and government, all of which contribute to the community's overall well-being (Egbue, 2010).

Therefore, community development refers to a group of principles and methods that are particularly important in eradicating poverty and disadvantage and tying democracy and the grassroots together (Wikipedia, 2010).

For a long time, faith-based organizations (FBOs) have played important roles in society by providing a variety of services to the populace, such as tending to their spiritual needs, providing welfare assistance, fighting for the rights of the oppressed, and playing a significant role as NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) in humanitarian aid and under the national development efforts, caring for the elderly, providing for their educational needs, providing for their health care needs, etc. (Wikipedia, 2010). In order to distinguish religious organizations from governmental, public, or private secular groups, the term "faith-based" is used to designate religious organizations. It can also be considered to be charitable and organized as a charity or non-profit (Vidal, 2001).

By contributing money to care for the sick and elderly, faith-based organizations have made significant contributions to the growth of society and the community. These organizations also support nurseries, primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions. Additionally, they work in the church as administrators, accountants, etc.; in schools as teachers, lecturers, and other non-academic employees; and in other businesses they founded. The availability of education through the school system has boosted literacy and decreased the number of illiterates. Creating independent, separately incorporated organizations with benefits on-site to create housing.

Additionally, FBOs have aided community companies, particularly cooperatives, adult literacy programs, alternative technology dissemination, village nutrition advancement, permaculture projects, and youth development initiatives. The faith-based organizations were able to contact many young people. The young and the community at large are the focus of the initiatives. People with HIV/AIDS benefit greatly from FBOs since they are at the forefront of care and assistance. a continuum that covers treatment from hospitals to private residences regardless of the illness's origin. The treatment included clinical management and care, as well as counseling, palliative care, education, prevention, and social support (Vidda, 2001). Last but not least, in order for FBOs to contribute to the development of communities, spiritual participation is



essential since "transformation" results through "repentance." Establishing a connection and creating a foundation for political and economic power are useless without spiritual participation in the society since change is not just material but also spiritual.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the roles of Faith-Based Organizations in community development in Awka South Local Government Area?
2. What are the challenges facing Faith-Based Organizations in Awka South Local Government Area?
3. What are the measures to improve the contributions of the Faith-Based Organizations in community development in Awka South Local Government Area?

### **Brief Literature Review**

According to Madler (2010), a faith-based organization is any group, project, or organization that offers human services and incorporates a religious component into it. FBOs include churches and other congregations or houses of worship, non-profit organizations affiliated with the church's congregation, and religious and local non-profit organizations affiliated with an umbrella or national faith-based network (Urban Institute Research, 2010). FBOs also include organizations that hold religious or worship services or are affiliated with a religious denomination or house of worship.

According to Nishimuko (2008), faith-based organizations strive to play a key part in fostering social development and social services. According to Warren (2010), faith-based organizations are non-profits that provide medical care, emergency relief, housing for the elderly, training, shelter for the homeless, care for widows, hospice care, food pantries, welfare-to-work programs, refuge services for job training, child care, and preschool, among other services.

Faith-Based organizations are nothing new, according to the latest news in science, theology, and related topics. Since the second great awakening, which began in the late 18th century, there have been various voluntary civic associations that are tangentially related to religious organizations. They belong to both the 1798-founded missionary society and the 1826-founded American home missionary group in New York. The Catholics created missions across America in the sixteenth century, carrying out both charitable and evangelistic activities.



As a shorthand for the Faith-Based program, the phrase has recently entered common usage in the United States of America. Then, recently, it made its way into Nigeria during the Colonial Masters' 19th century.

### **Theoretical framework**

According to the structural-functionalism paradigm, society is viewed as a complex system whose components cooperate to produce stability and solidarity (Macionis, 2001). French sociologist Emile Durkheim viewed functions as a part's contribution to the overall harmony of the whole. Malinowski, for example, viewed functionalism as the maintenance of equilibrium in society through the synthesis of cultural elements (Okeibunor&Anugwom, 2003). According to Okeibunor and Anugwom (2003) and Radcliffe-Brown (1952), a phenomenon's functions are determined by the contribution it provides to overall social functioning. This indicates that a social system functions with a suitable level of harmony or internal consistency.

Therefore, faith-based organizations are institutions or components that cooperate to ensure the survival of society. The roles they play in delivering family planning services, quality healthcare, housing for the elderly, economic development, and other services are crucial to improving the quality of life for society's citizens as well as fostering development in other societal sectors.

### **Materials and Methods**

The study employed the survey research design. The area of the study was located in Awka South Local Government Area. The sample size for the study was 200 respondents. A simple random sampling technique of balloting was used to select respondents. A questionnaire schedule was the main instrument used for data collection and it was both open-ended and closed-ended format The data collected were analyzed using the descriptive method of qualitative data analysis.

### **Results/Findings**

A total of 200 copies of questionnaire were distributed, but only 192 which were properly filled

were used for analysis. The respondents aged 18 years and above were drawn from all the social strata of Awka South Local Government Area. Deliberate effort was sustained during administration of instruments to ensure that both genders were represented in the sample of the population of study.

### Analysis of Research Questions

**Research Question One:** What are the roles of Faith-Based organizations (FBOs) in Community Development in Awka South Local Government Area?

**Table 1:** Percentage Distribution of respondents on the Community Development Contributions of FBOs

<b>Respondents on project FBOs embark on</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Education	54	28.13
Housing development	18	9.38
Health care	30	15.63
Financial services	12	6.25
Provision of services to the homeless	11	5.73
Economic development	8	4.17
care of the elderly	12	6.25
Family planning	11	5.73
Prison visitation	21	10.94
Visitation of motherless baby's home	15	7.81
<b>Total</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 1: shows that 28-13% of the respondents mentioned that FBOs contribute to education, 9.38 of the respondents housing development, 15.63% of the respondents indicated health care, 6.25% of respondents financial services, 5.73% of the respondents provision services to the homeless, 4.17% of the respondents economic development, 6.25% of the respondents care of the elderly, 5.73% of the respondents family planning, 10.94% of the respondents' prison visitation, 7.81% of the respondent's visitation to motherless babies home. This shows that FBOs provide more education than others.



### **Research Question Two**

What are the challenges facing FBOs in community development in Awka South Local Government Area?

In the responses regarding the problems facing FBOs in community developments about 40% of the respondents believed that insufficiency of finance which means that there is not much finance available for the FBOs to carry out as many projects as they want because of finance. 20% were of the opinion that it is a lack of adequate cooperation between the members, leaders, and the community. 15% also agree that mismanagement and misappropriation of funds by some delegated leaders over the developmental projects. 10% of the respondents affirm that it is dishonesty and no support and financial assistance from the government lastly having corrupt individuals as leaders of the FBOs who are not sincere, these groups can be a stumbling block to the project thereby constituting problems for the progress and smooth running of the projects. This shows that there are challenges confronting FBOs in discharging these roles in Awka South Local Government Area.

### **Research Question Three**

What are the measures to improve the contributions of the Faith-Based Organizations in Awka South Local Government Area?

Regarding the measures to improve the contributions of the FBOs, about 45% of the respondents agree that members should generate finance through donations to carry out their development projects, 25% of the respondents said there should be a cordial relationship among the members, mass literacy, and enlightenment. 15% of the respondents put that there should be good leadership and accountability and also that the government should render some degree of assistance financially to the FBOs to ensure that they accomplish their goals, 10% of the respondents affirm that there should be removal of corrupt leaders and members in the leadership position in other to ensure smooth administration in providing community development, 5% of the respondents have their view that there should be proper orientation to the host communities because if there is proper orientation people who did not understand will



be able to comprehend and co-operate maximally. With the adoption of these strategies, the problems of FBOs should be solved.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The development projects are education 28.3% by building schools, to ensure that there is a reduction in mass illiteracy and make sure that education is accessible for all, and also improvement; health care 15.63% housing development 9.38%, financial services 6.25%, provision of services to the homeless 5.73%, economic development 4.17%, care of the elderly 6.25%, family planning 5.73%, visitation of prisons 10.94%, and motherless baby's homes 7.81%. The FBOs raise the fund for these activities through donations from the members of the organizations. It was discovered that FBOs face challenges by 88.54%. The challenges of insufficiency of funds to provide adequate facilities as expected which sometimes engender delay, lack of adequate co-operation from some members and illiteracy, which makes the work dormant, mismanagement and misappropriation of finance from some delegated leaders, lack of government support and dishonesty, corruption of leadership and members which can be resolved through discipline and change of leadership.

Members should generate finance through donations to meet up the demand, cordial relationship between the members of the FBOs and the community, mass literacy, good management of available resources, appropriation of finance from the leaders, accountability government support, honesty, and removal of bad leaders to ensure that the community development by the FBO's runs smoothly. Initially, the level of development was low but has increased, signifying that FBO is one of the instruments of development in the community because they play vital roles in providing development to the community.

### **Conclusion**

The roles of faith-based organizations at the International, national, and local level has not been in vain and has contributed to the development to some extent.

The contributions of FBOs have not really contributed to community development tremendously and sometimes their presence is not being felt in society as regards development because the governments do not reorganize or support them to make these services effective or a reality. The indispensable factors are proper orientation to the people and generating



sustainable finance for the projects to proffer development to the community, cooperation of members and the community to overcome the challenges confronting the roles of FBOs in community development.

### **Recommendations**

- Partnership with government, donors, other faith groups, and technical organizations as a way to leverage FBOs assets and scale up current efforts to be more effective.
- There is a need to highlight the importance of measurement and evaluation and urged FBOs to partner with technical organizations that can provide that expertise.
- Plain effectively: This includes developing an understanding of community assets and needs that inform a strategic vision for change and internal planning to match its resources, programs, etc. to the requirement of implementing that vision.
- Secure resources FBOs should acquire grants, loans, contracts, fees, or earning and technical assistance.
- Developing strong internal management and governance or leadership. FBOs should establish good working relationships between members, staff, and representation of the community on the board.
- The FBOs should be able to plan appropriate programs and execute them.

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