# The Role of Civil Society in Poverty Reduction in Africa: A Case Study of Nigeria and South Africa

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**Abstract**

Civil Societies have existed for as long as there have been governments. This is more so in Africa, where they were responsible for fighting colonialism and have continued to hold the governments to account in post-colonial Africa. However, scholars have noted that for Africa to defeat its number one problem which is poverty, civil society groups in Africa have roles to play. The study, therefor, sought to examine the concept of civil society and its role in reducing poverty in Africa using Nigeria and South Africa as case studies. The study's methodology is qualitative. It used existing literature on civil society in Africa as its data. The study found that there are several factors hampering the efforts of civil society in reducing poverty in Nigeria and South Africa they are colonial legacy, governance and corruption, conflict and instability, population growth, limited access to education and healthcare. Furthermore, the study found that civil society has had a significant impact on socio-economic development in both South Africa and Nigeria, democracy and human rights, social justice and equality, service delivery and community development, socio-economic empowerment and peace building, as well as conflict resolution. The study concludes that as long as these issues continue to be present in African economies civil societies will continue to play a role in reduction of poverty in Africa.

**Keywords: Civil Society, Poverty Reduction, Nigeria, South Africa, Africa**

## Introduction

For any given society or country to be regarded as successful and developed, the people who lead it need to ensure that every citizen has the opportunity to live in a safe and stable society, where a good quality, dignifying life is guaranteed and they enjoy welfare services like good health, quality education, gainful employment etc. according to Payne (2011) and Truell (2017), when these provisions are made for the citizens, they can achieve their desires within the framework of societal laws. It is noted that the reason some countries are more developed than others is because their leaders are better able to implement these welfare policies, Werlin (2003) Given the limited number of people in the leadership of a country (regardless of the system of government that the country operates) at any given time, and the fact that resources are limited, it is impossible for the government to be able to satisfy all the varying interests of its citizens. For Nwakama (2019) to ensure that all citizens benefit from the government's distribution of resources, there is a need for citizens, especially groups that are likely to be marginalized in society due to factors like age, gender, race, physical attributes to band into strong networks.

Unfortunately, Africa, despite being one of the most resource rich continents in the world has failed to provide the good life for most of the citizens of its various countries. Nigeria, more specifically has similarly being unable to provide the required enabling environment for its citizens despite being among the twenty (20) richest countries in the world. The country is still mired in poverty and is in fact now regarded as the country with the highest population of people in poverty in the world Nwachukwu and Chukwuemeka, (2019). This has resulted in several groups of citizens coming together to challenge the government and advocate that it makes policies that favour its citizens. These groups of are what is regarded as CSOs.

The question that this then prompts us to ask is How successful have these CSOs been in poverty reduction in Sub-Sahara Africa with special reference to South Africa and Nigeria. To achieve these, aim the study will break it down into three specific objectives. The specific objectives are to i. Explore the barriers or challenges

confronting Civil Societies in South Africa and Nigeria, ii. Evaluate the contributions of Civil Society Organizations in South Africa and Nigeria and to determine the extent the civil liberties organization has influenced the socio-economic and political development of South Africa and Nigeria. To be able to gain further insights on the subject, the study looked at the following research questions and answered them.

  i. What are the challenges confronting Civil Societies in South Africa and Nigeria?

  ii. What are the contributions of Civil Society Organizations to development in South Africa and Nigeria?

  iii. To what extent has the civil society organization influenced the socio-economic and political development in South Africa and Nigeria?

The study believes that the findings of this paper can give a better insight into the work that civil society at various levels are doing in terms of poverty reduction in Africa with reference to South Africa and Nigeria. Most of the time, civil society's discussions are limited towards the difficulties they face in performing their roles. Such discussions have been maintained for a long time as far as the literature of civil society is concerned but there are few scholars who discuss or research on the roles of civil society in poverty reduction. Even when poverty reduction gained a wider attention recently, civil society was still not discussed that much in relation to that aspect. This study would also contribute to policymaking decisions in Nigeria and South Africa because it contains certain suggestions or recommendations that might be very useful. Similarly, Sub-Sahara Africa stands to benefit from the product of the research, and it nevertheless will be of value to the international community.

**Definition of Concepts**
Having provided a background on what the study hopes to achieves. The paper needs to define a number of concepts that will prove crucial to its findings understanding the concept of civil society organizations.

**Civil Society Organisations**
 Since a basic explanation has been provided previously this section will expatiate on the structure and function of CSOs especially as they operate in the two case study countries, Nigeria and South Africa. A common definition of Civil Society Organizations as aggregated from definitions by individual researchers and organizations defines CSOs as non-state actors whose aims are neither to generate profits nor to seek governing power. CSOs unite people to advance shared goals and interests. According to the Asian Development Bank, (2009), They have a presence in public life, expressing the interests and values of their members or others, and are based on ethical, cultural, scientific, religious, or philanthropic considerations.

With this kind of definition, it can be seen that non-government organizations (NGOs) who perform the functions of a CSO can be professional associations, charity foundations, independent research institutes, community-based organizations (CBOs), faith-based organizations, people's organizations, social movements, and labor unions.

To understand the uniqueness of CSOs and the roles they perform in a society, it is necessary to understand that every nation/state function in three parts according to Van Rooy (1998 ) the first part is the  State or the Government which makes, implements and enforces laws and whose primary method of operation is legitimate coercion  of the citizens, the market which functions in the area of market exchange and the third is Civil society which functions in the area of private choice for public good.

Therefore based on the above definition of the concept definition of the concept, the work can posit that that for an organization to be regarded as a  Civil Society Group, it must be self-initiating, i.e. not created by an act of parliament on anyway by which a government can create an agency, it must be self regulating, i.e. it must not be controlled by either a main arm of the government or any of its agencies ( Since being under the control of government means their neutrality in advocating on behalf of individuals or groups who are marginalized by the government is questionable) , and it must have a goal or goals. Depending on the demographics that the CSO

caters for its goals can be specific, i.e., based on the common interests of the group of people who come together to create it (The Academic Staff Union of Universities for example is a CSO based on furthering the interests of Academics in Nigerian Universities) or general, based on the needs of the citizens within the wider society that it is based in. Finally, according to McNicoll (1995) CSOs also advocate a common cause, and respect the right of others to do the same.

Another way by which the concept of Civil Society Organizations can be understood is defining them according to the processes by which they achieve their aims. There are two main types of CSOs, Asian Development Bank, 2009 they are Operational CSOs and Advocacy CSOS.

Operational CSOs directly deliver, or contribute to the delivery of, welfare services such as emergency relief or environmental protection and management. Organizations like the Red Cross, Habitat for Humanity and World Wildlife Fund are examples in this category Their mode of operations involve a wide range structures, approaches, and areas of operation, both programs related and geographic. Operational CSOs work at the community, local, district, national, regional, and international levels, Williamson and Rodd (2016).

Advocacy CSOs, on the other hand do not deliver welfare service, their goals are usually to highlight issues that align with their goals, especially when they feel would those issues will not be articulated via established social, economic, or political processes. and attempt to influence the policies, practices, and views of government concerning those issues. Examples of advocacy CSOs include organizations like the Asian development Bank, the African Development Bank, Amnesty International as well as other actors in the development arena, the media, and the public at large. From the mid-1990s onward, advocacy CSOs have used modern communication technologies to strengthen national and international networks and consortia that link groups representing common, parallel, or convergent interests.

**Civil Society Organizations in Nigeria and South Africa**
The role of Civil Society Organization in Nigeria and South Africa becomes pertinent for intellectual discourse and problem solving. Nigeria and South Africa are the two biggest economies in Africa.

Civil society have existed in Nigeria since the country was under British rule. According to Alokpa (2015), at Nigeria's independence it was the Civil Society Organizations which had been created to fight for independence that became political parties. However, it was during the military regimes from the 1970s to the 1990s that civil became entrenched and vociferous in their operations and advocacy. The military regimes of Generals Muhammadu Buhari, Ibrahim Babangida and Sani Abacha, which cumulatively lasted from 1983- 1999 were noteworthy for not just creating economic policies that crushed the Nigerian Economy and increased poverty levels in the country, but also for decrees that stifled human rights and justice for the masses, Aborisade and Mundt, 2002. This led to several new civil societies being created to fight for justice, human rights and a return to democratic rule.

Similarly in South Africa, due to the above-mentioned Apartheid policies, many civil society organizations were created to fight for equal treatment for black South Africans and independence for the Republic of South Africa. Today while South Africa is an independent nation the effects of segregation can still be seen in the economic, political and social fabric of the country. Poverty levels are still high, and thus civil societies still have a big role to play in that sense.

**Poverty**
Aborisade and Mundt, (2002) contend that the oldest and the most resilient virus that causes a fatal malady in the developing world or third-world states is poverty. Its mortality rate is unmatched by any sickness dating back to the dawn of humanity. It is even more deadly than Covid-19, EBOLA and also dangerous than HIV/AIDS and

malaria, which are considered to be the two most lethal infections. Although, poverty reduction has been reaffirmed for the past two decades and beyond as the primary goal of international development agendas and programs, progress in this direction has been dismal. This is especially clear in how far behind schedule the world is in terms of achieving the majority of the Millennium Development Goals, both internationally and in the majority of sub-regions, states, and countries.

Critical questions concerning the techniques and policies that have been implemented to reduce poverty as well as significant international challenges like trade, debt and aid are raised by this insufficient progress. Despite having the greatest natural reserve wealth, Africa remains the poorest continent with the slowest rate in term of development. In other words, Africa is considered the world poorest continent.

Poverty in Africa is a complex issue with multiple causes. While it's important to note that Africa is a diverse continent with significant regional variations, some common factors contribute to poverty in many African countries. Here are some key causes:

### i. Colonial Legacy

According to Bayeh (2015), Africa's history of colonization has had long-lasting effects on its economic and social structures. In Nigeria for example the colonials disrupted traditional economies, exploited resources, and often left the country with limited infrastructure and inadequate institutions. Till today Nigeria exports its resources at cheap sums while importing the finished products made from those same resources at expensive rates. Furthermore, this dependence on importation has ensured that the country not been able to build sufficient infrastructure to realize its enormous manufacturing potential.

Similarly South Africa's apartheid period saw many black South Africans being denied not just access to resources and social Amenities, but also opportunities for Educational and life advancement. This lack of advancement means that they are also not able to provide a good life for their children and this perpetuates the cycle of poverty which affects the country even more.

### ii. Governance and Corruption

Weak governance, political instability, and corruption undermine development efforts. In Nigeria for example, the long history of military rule from the 1970s to the 1990s caused a rise in poverty levels in Nigeria. Twenty-four years after the transition to Democracy, it has still not brought the attainment of the ideals of good governance to the country. According to Nwachukwu (2020,) mismanagement of public resources, lack of transparency, and electoral fraud is still high, and the agents of the government responsible for enforcing laws such as the police and the judiciary have not been sufficiently empowered. Nwachukwu (2020) further argues that when the institutions in a country are ineffective as can be seen in the case of Nigeria and South Africa, individuals can divert funds meant for poverty reduction and essential services with impunity, and the agencies of state responsible for enforcing laws and upholding justice will be helpless to stop them. This ensures that resources that the society needs to develop are placed in the hands of a few and it exacerbates poverty among the masses.

The severity of political instability and lack of strong institutions brings various economic challenges. With a lack of trust in the country by international institutions (due to the weak institutions) the country has limited access to credit, inadequate infrastructure, high levels of unemployment and underemployment, and limited economic diversification. These factors contribute even more to low productivity and income inequality, perpetuating poverty.

### iii. Conflict and Instability

Armed conflicts, civil wars, and political instability disrupt economic activities, displace populations, and hinder investments in vital sectors like education and healthcare. Nigeria for example is fighting an insurgency from

various Islamic militant groups in its Northwest and Northeastern region. It is also currently facing armed bandits in it North Central and south east regions. The citizens in the affected have struggled with poverty due to the destruction of their property as well as the government's infrastructure. They have also witnessed disruption of livelihoods, and economic activities, with the resultant results of hunger, lack of education and unemployment. South Africa has not witnessed a war in recent years but increasing ethnic tensions have led to a number of xenophobic attacks where lives have been lost and properties and livelihood have been disrupted. This has also contributed to the increasing poverty rate in the country.

Environmental Factors: Africa is susceptible to natural disasters, climate change, and environmental degradation. These factors can result in reduced agricultural productivity, water scarcity, and food insecurity, affecting rural populations heavily reliant on agriculture for their livelihoods.

### iv. Population Growth

Africa is projected to be the most populous continent in the world within this century. However, while rapid population growth is good news for the workforce set to appear in Africa, it however poses a significant challenge in Africa, as it outpaces economic development and strains already limited resources. Insufficient access to family planning, coupled with high fertility rates, can hinder attempts by both governmental and non-government organizations in order to remove poverty reduction efforts.

### v. Limited Access to Education and Healthcare

Inadequate access to quality education and healthcare perpetuates poverty. Education is crucial for acquiring skills and increasing employment opportunities, while healthcare is essential for productivity and overall well-being.

### Barriers that CSOs Face in Poverty Alleviation in Nigeria and South Africa

CSOs in Nigeria and South Africa face various barriers that can hinder their operations and impact. Here are some common challenges faced by CSOs in these countries:

### i. Regulatory Environment

CSOs in Nigeria often face complex and restrictive legal and regulatory frameworks. The government may impose stringent registration requirements, excessive bureaucracy, and arbitrary restrictions on CSOs' activities, limiting their ability to operate effectively. Similarly, the relationship between CSOs and the government in South Africa has been found to be extremely complex. While the country has a strong civil society tradition, there can be tensions between CSOs and government agencies, particularly if CSOs are critical of government policies or practices.

### ii. Policy Environment

CSOs in South Africa may face difficulties in influencing policy and legislative processes. Engaging with government structures and accessing decision-making spaces can be complex and require strategic advocacy approaches.

### iii. Funding Constraints

According to Osaghae (1998), Many CSOs in Nigeria struggle with limited financial resources. They often rely on donor funding, which can be inconsistent and subject to external influences. Because of limited funding many civil societies are forced to rely on government patronage. This affects their ability to fight for members who are marginalized by the government, Boadi (1995). Boadi (1995) further advances that funding constraints in the Nigerian CSO space also ensures the proliferation of government funded organizations pretending to be civil societies. More often these fronts are often used by people in the government to commit fraud or other crimes, or to discredit legitimate civil society organizations that threaten the government. Additionally, researchers argue that many local based civil society organizations and NGOs find it challenging to access local funding sources as there is limited philanthropic culture in Africa and the over centralization of Nigeria's political and economic power means there is a concentration of wealth in certain sectors. For example, A lot of wealthy Africans are crony capitalists who made their wealth from connections to certain people within the government. These

philanthropists are unlikely to support CSOs that certain individuals feel are threatening and are likely to be disruptive to the status quo.

Similarly in South Africa, Many CSOs in South Africa, particularly smaller organizations, struggle with limited financial and human resources. Securing sustainable funding, managing operational costs, and attracting skilled staff and volunteers can be significant challenges.

### iv. Security Concerns

CSOs operating in Nigeria face security risks, particularly in areas affected by conflicts or insurgency. They may encounter threats, harassment, and intimidation from various actors, which can impede their work and put staff and beneficiaries at risk.

Limited Civic Space: Freedom of expression, assembly, and association can face restrictions in Nigeria. CSOs advocating for social and political change may face opposition and even legal challenges, constraining their ability to engage in advocacy and policy reform.

Capacity Building: CSOs often face capacity gaps in areas such as project management, monitoring and evaluation, and strategic planning. Limited access to training and organizational development resources can hinder their effectiveness and sustainability.

Inequality and Social Divisions: South Africa's history of apartheid and ongoing socio-economic disparities present challenges for CSOs working to address inequality and promote social justice. Engaging diverse communities, bridging divides, and addressing deep-rooted social issues require sustained efforts and collaboration.

Similarly, scholars note that Nigerian civil society, like the country itself are often split along ethnic and regional lines. With such petty concerns it is unsurprising that many CSOs can be prejudicial to disadvantaged groups whom they do not have ethnic or religious kinship with. This prejudice will surely affect their decision-making and unity of purpose. This is why an issue that most government organizations and even international donors such as the African development bank for example have complained about CSOs in the African space have complained about is the internal contradictions within the membership make it difficult to agree on common positions during engagements. Furthermore, such inherent divisiveness weakens efficiency and makes the associations vulnerable to penetration by government agents.

**What are the contributions of Civil Society Organizations to alleviation of poverty in South Africa and Nigeria?**

i. Capacity Building

As has been discussed earlier, one of the causes of poverty is lack of capacity on the part of members of the affected society. In order to improve the earning power of the population that they have focused on, often engage in capacity-building initiatives to empower individuals and communities. They offer training, skill development programs, and educational opportunities to enhance people's abilities and improve their livelihoods. Project Implementation: These organizations are involved in the design, planning, and execution of development projects. CSOs help source for funds, mobilize resources, and manage the implementation of initiatives aimed at achieving specific goals or objectives, Buire, (2011)

Operational CSOs play a vital role in addressing societal challenges and complementing the work of governments and other stakeholders. By directly engaging with communities and implementing tangible solutions, CSOs help make the work of the government more effective and sustainable. It is not uncommon to see CSOs helping the government to monitor projects especially in rural areas with low government presence, Morkel. (2015).

ii. Service Delivery
These organizations provide essential services and assistance directly to communities or target groups. This can include areas such as education, healthcare, poverty alleviation, disaster relief, environmental conservation, human rights, gender equality, and more. According to Asante (2020), CSOs are often closer to the communities than the government and are more equipped (especially if they ae local) to work closely with local communities to identify their needs and implement initiatives that foster sustainable development. They may facilitate community organizing, promote participatory decision-making processes, and support grassroots initiatives.

iii. Research and Monitoring
Operational CSOs conduct research and gather data to better understand social issues and inform their programmes. They may also monitor and evaluate the impact of their projects to ensure effectiveness and accountability. To achieve maximum return on value, CSOs often collaborate with other stakeholders, including government agencies, international organizations, and other civil society groups. According to Anazodo (2014), They actively participate in partnerships and networks to leverage resources, share knowledge, and coordinate efforts for maximum impact.

**To what Extent Has Civil Society Impacted on Poverty Alleviation in South Africa and Nigeria?**
Civil society has had a significant impact on socio-economic development in both South Africa and Nigeria. While the extent of this impact can vary depending on the specific context and initiatives undertaken by civil society organizations (CSOs), here are some key areas where civil society has made notable contributions.

**South Africa**
   i.   Democracy and Human Rights
 Civil society played a crucial role in the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. CSOs, such as the African National Congress (ANC), trade unions, and human rights organizations, advocated for political freedom, equality, and human rights. Their efforts helped shape the democratic transition and the establishment of a constitutional framework that guarantees civil liberties and human rights.
   ii.  Social Justice and Equality
 CSOs have been at the forefront of addressing social inequalities and advocating for marginalized communities in South Africa. Organizations like the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) have been instrumental in the fight against HIV/AIDS, while others focus on issues such as land reform, gender equality, education access, and poverty alleviation. These initiatives have helped advance social justice and improve the lives of many disadvantaged individuals.
   iii. Service Delivery and Community Development
Civil society organizations often fill gaps in service delivery where the government falls short. They provide essential services in areas such as healthcare, education, housing, and community development. CSOs work closely with communities to identify needs, implement programs, and empower individuals to become agents of change.

**Nigeria**
As the study has established, good governance is a prerequisite for poverty alleviation and socioeconomic development, Nwachukwu et al (2019).  By continuously breaking up decrepit structures and challenging outmoded governance norms and constantly articulating the concerns of disadvantaged citizens: Civil society in Nigeria has played a critical role in promoting human rights, good governance, and accountability. Organizations like the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), the Civil Liberties Organization (CLO), and the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) not only advocate for the protection of civil liberties, the rule of law, and transparency in governance, they also promote political participation, which help solve social conflicts and monitor the government actions to see that the beneficial policies are implemented, Windfuhr (1998).  For example, the opposition against the third term agenda of former Nigerian president, Olusegun Obasanjo in 2007,

and the passage of the Freedom of Information Bill were championed by CSOs according to Alokpa, (2015). As a further example, during the #EndSARS protests of 2020 it was CSOS like the feminist Coalition (FEMCO), SERAP, and International CSOs like Amnesty International that stood at the forefront of the protests, supporting the youths against police brutality with funds and logistics, advocating for the scrapping of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad of the Nigerian Police Force, as well as documenting the protests for the world to see.

Similarly, through Policy Advocacy and advocating for the right of citizens Civil society in South Africa actively engages in policy advocacy, monitoring, and holding the government accountable. The CSOs rely on tools and modes of advocacy like policy research, public awareness campaigns, and lobbying efforts to try and improve the economic fortunes, CSOs influence policy development and implementation, ensuring that government decisions align with the needs and aspirations of citizens.

ii. Socio-Economic Empowerment
CSOs in Nigeria have contributed tremendously to socio-economic development and poverty alleviation through initiatives in education, healthcare, poverty reduction, entrepreneurship, and job creation. For example, In Udukpani, a rural community in Cross-River state of Nigeria, Civil Society Organizations have helped empowered the people with relevant training in the areas to make them more self-sufficient, especially in the areas of education and Healthcare outcomes, Nkpoyen et al (2019). Organizations like LEAP Africa, and the Tony Elumelu Foundation support youth empowerment and entrepreneurship, fostering economic opportunities and sustainable development. Similarly, a study conducted in a rural South African area by Ngumbela& Mle (2019) shows that CSOs have proved themselves indispensable to the welfare of the communities in which they work. The study notes that the CSOs have played a tremendous role in not only executing interventions on issues like gender-based violence, community or home-based care, health awareness campaigns and education, and income generation, but also constantly advocating for the needs of the rural communities to various agencies and arms of government at local, regional, and Federal levels. Among the many other successful achievements of the Civil society organizations were creating opportunities for self-employment, addressing food security issues and raising awareness regarding health and safety issues.

According to Ngumbela and Mle (2019), the contribution of Civil Society Organizations to the welfare of the communities in which they work is indispensable. It was discovered that CSOs in South Africa intervenes in issues of gender-based violence, community or home-based care, health awareness campaigns and education, and income generation. They also contribute to poverty alleviation by creating opportunities for self-employment, addressing food security issues and raising awareness regarding health and safety issues. Civil society organizations also have an essential role to play with regard to mitigating the challenge of poverty in communities by creating employment opportunities and providing food security for impoverished communities.

iii. Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution
In a country marked by various ethnic, religious, and communal tensions, civil society organizations actively engage in peacebuilding efforts. They promote dialogue, mediation, and reconciliation among different groups, working towards sustainable peace and stability.

Civic Engagement and Advocacy
Civil society plays a vital role in advocating for policy reforms, social justice, and citizens' rights. Organizations such as Enough is Enough Nigeria (EiE) and BudgIT mobilize citizens, raise awareness, and drive civic engagement, influencing policy decisions and fostering an active and informed citizenry.

**Conclusion**
As noted in the work, this study discovered that while Civil Societies have always existed in form of trade unions, cultural awareness groups, faith-based groups and mutual aid benefit groups when the country was under British

rule, it was after independence that they became vociferous in their advocacy for better governance. South Africa on the other hand due to its struggle during apartheid and segregation had a more radicalized Civil Society Structure under colonization.

To improve civil society's performance in the domain of policy change, it is important to build the capacity of civil society organizations. They need to understand policy processes better, access information more effectively and improve their advocacy, monitoring and evaluation skills. To effectively lobby the government for policy reforms, it is also necessary that civil society organizations build partnerships and bridge the gaps between their staff, local communities and policymakers. Strengthening such networks enhances the success of NGOs to push for pro-poor policy changes. Civil society organizations can thus succeed in inducing pro-poor policies by realizing their strengths and weaknesses, enhancing their understanding of poverty and poverty-reduction, creating a sense of government accountability, building their own capacities and forming alliances with other civil society organizations (Hughes and Atampugre, 2005, 19).

They need to effectively use the space that they have to empower their citizens and to push for new policies that benefit the most marginalized amongst them.

From the Analysis it is can be seen that while CSOs can help the government in creating achieving sustainable development goals and bringing it closer to the people, they are limited by several factors in terms of what they can do for the people. In other words, CSOs are not meant to be agencies of the government and thus they cannot perform the functions of government agencies. It is the governments, both of Nigeria and South Africa that have the responsibility of strengthening its institutions. Through their Executive, Legislature and Judicial arms, and through their federal, regional and local governments, governments must bring social amenities such as good roads, healthcare and education to the people and also ensure that every citizen of their respective countries enjoy good governance, and sustainable development.

It is also important that the government not see CSOs as threats to its existence but as partners in bringing good governance to its citizens. Thus, it must cease it attempt at creating shadow fronts to discredit CSOs or dictatorial regulations designed to stifle their growth. Civil Society Organizations have contributed a lot to Poverty alleviation in Nigeria and South Africa and with the right support and boost, they can contribute even more.

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