

# NGDO Professionalization in Likasi: Problems and Prospects

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**Abstract:** *There are several obstacles to the professionalization of NGDO in developing countries. These include lack of resources, culture, structural features, and the risks of professionalization for NGDO. However, we believe that this is one of the ways that can enable their effectiveness and thus improve their impact on the development process. To ignore it completely would be a big mistake on the part of the NGDO, but it will have to be taken into account as much as possible and made permanent.*

**Keywords:** Professionalization

## 1. Introduction

In this text we address the issue of management of Non-Governmental Development Organizations, which appear as an answer to the problems that arise in the development of many countries in the world, and we try to propose some solutions for the future to enable them to achieve the goals they pursue.

This reflection examines the management problems of NGDOs, by highlighting the difficulties related to the particular contingency of one of them. Indeed, our systematic and in-depth study concerns a Likasi NGDO, the Association Source de Vie (ASVIE), to explain its failure or its success, taking into account the impact of the specificity of its missions.

We start from the concern about the level of reconciliation of the logic of values and efficiency to ASVIE and the solution to it. And we orient our research by supposing that this conciliation is insufficient to the ASVIE, the solution being the professionalization.

In this text we will first discuss some generalities before presenting the management problems of ASVIE and the perspectives envisaged.

### 1.1 Background

We would have liked to clarify certain notions before deepening our reflection.

#### 1) NGDO Management

For the understanding of this concept we refer to D. Lewis, for whom the management of NGOs is "the flexible combination of theories and practices from other fields of management, on the one hand in order to capture the contributions of these other fields, on the other hand to take into account the specific management challenges that NGOs face. It is based on the assumption that NGOs are separate organizations for two reasons: they are dedicated to development tasks and belong to the third sector. [Lewis D. cited by Rijpens J., Structure and HRM of development NGOs: When mission and organizational viability coexist / theory and practice, <http://www.google.cd/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=>

web & cd = 5 &ved = 0CFcQFjAE &url = http% 3A% 2F% 2Fwww.ces.ulg.ac.be% 2Fuploads% 2FRijpens \_ \_"]"

#### 2) Professionalization

Professionalism is the professional nature of an activity, a sport; competence, know-how in a trade, technicality, seriousness, experience, skill. According to C. Davister, professionalization can be considered in three ways: such as the complexification of trades and the need for higher levels of training, such as improved management practices or the use of wage labor rather than volunteer work for some people functions. [Davister C. cited by Rijpens J., Idem]. But the scope of professionalization in NGOs is fourfold: financial management to increase transparency, the management of human resources to optimize the essential factor that is people, governance mechanisms with the concern to preserve the values of participation and democracy, and marketing with a need to mediate between ethics, efficiency and profitability. [Davister C. cited by Rijpens J., op. cit]

#### 3) The Professionalization of NGDOs

##### a) Need for professionalization

The professionalization of NGOs is a big debate today. It acts internally and externally:

*Internally:*

- Faced with the requirements of the donors, NGOs are forced to make their management rigorous in order to access funding: example, application of the logical framework, strict protocols for project cycle management. But often this rigor is achieved only within the framework of these projects, apart from that the NGO keeps its regular management.
- The change in human resources: to meet the demands (marketing, declining volunteerism, planarization, etc.), NGOs are obliged to recruit experts and experienced men who are employees.
- But in all this the NGO must be careful that the budget reserved for the actions is superior to the running costs.

*Externally:*

For one-off missions, NGOs use external experts. This may be less expensive, but they face the difficulty of experts already in post.

**b) Specificities of NGDOs**

The management practices and theories that exist most concern for-profit organizations. But NGDOs are non-profit organizations whose management is mostly based on volunteering. This is why it is a problem for NGDOs to adapt existing management practices to create their own management model. But faced with the heterogeneity (in terms of origin, structure, intervention logic, sector of activities, etc.) of NGOs, it is difficult to arrive at the generalization of a management model for all NGDOs, like other management fields.

**c) NGDO management**

What management for development NGOs? They can be inspired by management practices in different areas already existing: traditional sector management, public management, third-sector management and development management. It is a base on which NGDO leaders can rely to invent their own practices.

It is true that research has not yet given everything to practitioners who sometimes lack management skills, but it is the only frame of reflection to accompany them in the process of professionalization.

**d) Brakes to professionalization**

We want to examine here the obstacles inherent to the implementation of a professionalization process in development NGOs. The obstacles are numerous and mainly concern:

- The lack of resources: all the authors agree that NGDOs evolve in a scarcity of resources, be they financial, human or skills. Hence several questions may arise: "What resources to mobilize? How to mobilize resources to carry out this professionalization? Is it relevant, desirable or even acceptable to devote scarce resources to the management or professionalization of its management practices when the means available in equity are often limited? How to justify it vis-à-vis the donors or beneficiaries?" [Rijpens J., Structure and HRM of development NGOs: When mission and organizational viability coexist / theory and practice, [http://www.google.com/cd/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=5&ved=0CFcQFjAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ces.ulg.ac.be%2Fuploads%2FRijpens\\_-\\_Structure\\_and\\_GRH\\_of\\_OONGD.pdf&ei=zR\\_9UpeFI-ev7QbC7oGgAQ&usq=&AFQjCNHdulnzuFBlsdAmv0bdsSREbT\\_khQg&bvm=bv.61190604,d.bGQ](http://www.google.com/cd/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=5&ved=0CFcQFjAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ces.ulg.ac.be%2Fuploads%2FRijpens_-_Structure_and_GRH_of_OONGD.pdf&ei=zR_9UpeFI-ev7QbC7oGgAQ&usq=&AFQjCNHdulnzuFBlsdAmv0bdsSREbT_khQg&bvm=bv.61190604,d.bGQ) accessed 13/02/2014 at 21h55']
- Culture: The cultural values of the NGDO are specific; they are based on the values of action, commitment and solidarity linked to the mission of the organization.

The activism of NGDOs is based on the different values of professionalism:

**Table 1:** Values of ONGD and Professionalism

Militantism (ONGD)	Professionnalisme
Philanthropy	Qualification
Disinterestedness	Standardization
Citizen hip	Service
Responsibility	Neutrality of action

These values of NGDOs can act as an obstacle to professionalization.

**The Structural Characteristics**

NGDOs are different according to their structures: size of the organization, its origin, its governance mechanisms in place, the multiplicity of stakeholders, the heterogeneous composition of staff, etc. This raises the problem of the NGO SOUTH and NORTH NGDO reports. From there arise several questions: "This movement of professionalization is not it, or more initiated, by the North? While Northern NGOs expect the same professionalization effort from their partners, would it not be necessary to impose a North management model again than to encourage or encourage Southern NGOs to follow this wave? Professionalization? How to take into account the specific aspects of Southern NGOs? How can we give the means to the more modest structures, perhaps closer to the realities on the ground, to equip themselves with the necessary tools to face these new requirements and stay in the race? What can be done so that professionalization does not disconnect southern NGOs from their public authorities?" [Rijpens J., OP. CIT]

When we want to achieve professionalization, we must take all these obstacles into account and try to overcome them. However these obstacles also lead to the following questions: What to professionalize? In which area, between human resources management, financial management, marketing and governance, prioritize and devote resources? Can we see a link between these specific characteristics and the degree of professionalization that is desirable?

**e) The risks of professionalization**

Quéinnec and Haddad point out four main risks for development NGOs to embark on professionalization:

- The risk of misuse of the mission,
- The risk of associative bureaucracy,
- The risk of abusive
- The risk of destabilization of the social and organizational order. [Queinnec and Haddad cited by Rijpens J., OP. CIT]

Professionalization leads to the following paradoxes:

- Professionalization leads NGDOs to produce results no longer in relation to their beneficiaries, but in relation to themselves. The concern to improve management risks diverting the NGDO from its mission in favor of sustainability. However, for the actions of the NGDO to be sustainable, it must ensure its sustainability and viability.
- The solution is to strike a balance between organizational viability and mission accomplishment.
- Professionalization means improving management, it also involves: centralizing certain support functions, integrating management tools (IT, job descriptions, organizational charts, formalized decision-making processes, etc.), reorganizing the structure of organization (formalize or rigidify it). In short, it's about bureaucratizing management. However, the NGDO defends itself from the bureaucracy and wants to keep its flexibility and flexibility.
- The solution is to choose the appropriate management tools, to adapt them correctly to the specific context of the

organization, so that professionalization does not mean loss of independence, autonomy or flexibility. The configuration profile of NGOs is therefore hybrid (bureaucracy while retaining flexibility, flexibility, inter personality).

- Professionalization leads to the existence of two different profiles in the NGDO: some are more likely to be carried by the mission (activists or volunteers) and others more oriented towards organizational viability (professionals). It can create tension, power struggles, power games and conflict.
- The solution is to find the right balance between the resources allocated to the project and those allocated to management (HRM, financial management, marketing, governance) taking into account the heterogeneous context.
- Individuals with a "technical" profile may not join the project and thus weaken "philanthropic capital" or "altruistic".
- The solution is to hire someone for their skills and then instill in them the values of the organization. This seems easier and less expensive than working on the acquisition of values.

## 2. The Management of ASVIA: Problems and Prospects

ASVIE is a Non-Governmental Organization born November 18, 2001, from the members of a church, first as a cooperative, then as NGDO in 2004. Its objective is "to carry out development activities in the fields: agriculture, fish farming, breeding, food industry, medical, school, habitat, transport, etc. with the aim of contributing to the social progress of the basic communities it supervises and to social and economic, regional and national development ". [Statutes of ASVIE, p. 2]. For the moment, it is the medical activity (polyclinic and pharmacy) that makes talk about the ASVIE, which is visible.

### 1) Issues in Managing ASVIA

This NGDO seems to have a lot of potential legal (legal personality), social (its center is one of the best in the city), financial (it can reach 30 000 USD per month), economic (its medical production tool is well stocked Unfortunately, she cannot get funding, she is not well known and does not make herself known, she does not seem to hold the place she deserves and enter circuits that would allow her to develop even more.

It is in this way that we situate its difficulties at the level of management because the potentialities that can be developed to foster growth are met. For this below are some of the problems we have identified.

#### a) The objectives of the NGDO

ASVIE has noble goals that it would like to achieve as an NGO. But if we examine all that has been achieved in this NGDO, we are not ready to conclude that it has achieved all its objectives: since its creation, it has carried out some activities in the fields of agropastoral and health. All other areas have not been the subject of any project or activity to date, including fish farming, the food industry, education,

housing, transport, etc. At one point, a literacy activity was carried out within the MAP framework.

- The agropastoral activity was not so specific for the ASVIE; it was only intermediary of the other organisms to reach the beneficiaries. But it itself has no permanent activity of its own in agriculture. As for contributing to the social progress of the grassroots communities it oversees and to regional and national social and economic development, we know that much remains to be done. It is difficult to assess the impact of agricultural activity, especially with regard to lasting effects. Apparently people have received donations for a while, and after donations things go on as usual, with no technician follow-up, no coaching. Activities are done according to and for donations from aid agencies.
- The only permanent activity of the ASVIE is the health activity (Polyclinic and Pharmacy) which seems to even succeed. Indeed, the activities of the health services seem to have a positive impact, because by comparing the prices we understand that it is indeed a NGDO, they are generally inferior (the consultation of the doctor is 4,500 fc, less only in state hospitals that sometimes require more than 5,000 fc). In addition, the Medical Center really seems to privilege care expenses because patients are treated and receive products, even if they have no money, the payment is done after.

It therefore appears that the activity that generates revenue manages to resist, but outside there is no other activity that NGDO realizes nonprofit, an area where it spends money in order to contribute to any development.

#### b) Human resources

Lack of permanent staff

All the organs have periodicities of the meetings which engage their operation:

- The General Assembly meets the first fortnight of March of each year according to the statutes but the average of the meetings is of a meeting for two years and half and the dates are never respected.
- The Board of Directors: must meet once every two months: but the average of its meetings is 2 meetings a year.
- Auditors: for the moment, whoever plays this role comes twice a week.
- The management committee: it is the daily management body that meets once a week. No member is permanent; no one is subject to a fixed schedule to be respected in the performance of his duties at ASVIE. However, the presence at these meetings caused a lot of problems, to the point that today these meetings no longer exist.
- This has the following consequences:
- No adequate planning: the first budget was born in 2013 (it even existed although not seriously followed) lack of follow-up, non-compliance or non-implementation of the decisions taken in the meetings.
- Unrelated public relations: relationships with the outside world have often caused problems: forgetting to honor one's commitments to a particular partner (going to a meeting, responding to a letter, etc.) or paying a given payment (state taxes, debts, etc.).

- Insufficient administration: lack of coordination of regular reports (monthly or annual), difficulties in respect of procedures, lack of documents of procedures, no rigorous classification of documents, poor follow-up of correspondences, difficulty of the application of the discipline (disciplinary action for more than 10 years, impunity, etc.).
- No organized control: no systematic hierarchical control system (the head of the Management Committee spends an hour or two at the offices, he is not aware of many things at a certain point in time. not to know certain expenses made by the treasurer), the auditor has no quality to carry out a rigorous control (it is an electrician).
- Unorganized financial management: no or no respect of the financial procedure (anyone incurring expenses, contracting debts in the name of the structure), no control of the finances (liquidity of the fund known only by the treasurer), the same person keeps the receipts and realizes the expenses, not keeping book of cash or book done in an unprofessional way).

Qualifications of the managerial staff: at the Management Committee there is a licensee in SPA as general secretary, a licensee in international relations as Administrative and Financial Director, a agro pastoral director agricultural engineer and his assistant veterinary doctor, an accountant graduated in statistics, a logistician construction licensee and his electronic assistant, a technical treasurer, etc. As it appears here and there there are problems from the point of view of qualification. It is the same for the members of the Board of Directors, at the level of the auditors who were voted without taking into account the criteria of qualification: they are unable to properly perform their work.

- Recruitment of managerial staff: the procedure is either the election or the appointment simply.
- Compensation of the management staff:

All the governing bodies of the NGDO are supposed to work on a voluntary basis because it is a non-profit organization. At ASVIE there is no paid officer who manages the activities on a daily basis. However, some encouraging actions were carried out but this was not enough to motivate the staff enough: the communication costs (500 units) per month for all the members of the bodies, an attendance fee for the Board of Directors (which was not even regular).

This explains the lack of motivation and regular absences or simply drop positions:

- Absences at the General Assembly mean that at each meeting the quorum has never been reached, the meetings are always postponed. Out of 120, an average of 43 people attends meetings. Hence a decision to exclude irregulars was taken.
- The Board of Directors: because of the absences, some members were excluded and the number increased from 16 to 5. After elections in 2015 the number went from 5 to 10.
- Auditors: of the two there is only one who works. The one that was added was recovered as treasurer.
- The Management Committee: of the 11 people who should regularly attend meetings, today there are two more (the Secretary General and the CFO) more or less

permanent and a request sometimes when needed (agropastoral director).

This decrease in participation and in the number of members of the governing bodies sufficiently demonstrates their demotivation. And in a demotivated leader, you cannot expect anything that can make things happen: no creativity, endurance or courage, initiative, perfection or efficiency, etc. And this situation makes it difficult to think of recruiting experts who would demand more in terms of remuneration. Moreover, having by chance an expert who accepts a sacrifice and who is not going to be used to the fullest is not in our sense of professionalism.

## 2) Professionalization as A Perspective

### a) Need for professionalization at ASVIE.

For the future of ASVIE we offer professionalization. It is not just about having an expert staff, but also and above all available and motivated. For this the ASVIE must agree to spend in this field of personnel to hope to improve deeply the management and to obtain favorable results.

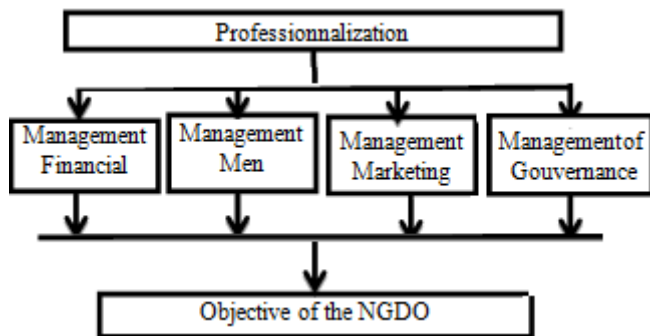
The evolution of the ASVIE shows that this is the way that will allow it to know a serious flight. Indeed, when there was no permanent expert of the Management Committee, the ASVIE was practically bankrupt; its assets could not pay its debts. As soon as it tried to somehow place managers more or less permanent, more or less expert and more or less remunerated, all debts were paid, and major investment activities were carried out, allowing ASVIE to stabilize in a certain way.

We therefore believe that ASVIE must radicalize this process in order to maximize the expected results. Indeed, a structure of about 30 workers, belonging to 120 people, generating revenues of more than 30 000 USD per month, with about 40 workers and a trade union delegation, to face various services of the State, to the competition, to thousands of people to serve by month, is not a lesser for not having an expert permanent top manager, paid as it should, fully integrated into the structure and assisted by a team of experts sturdy.

In addition, the current situation is that the top manager's salary is lower than some of his subordinates, including doctors. What motivation can we derive from it? He can only consider himself as someone who does an apostolate. And that cannot push someone to give all he can: all his time, all his intelligence, all his strength. However, management remains the driving force of the entire march of an organization. If it is not done well, all efforts may be annihilated. Moreover, its collaborators are not all experts, which explain the various flaws in the different fields of professionalization.

### b) Model of professionalization

We retain the four axes of professionalization as pillars of the revival of ASVIE NGDO activities.



**Scheme No. 1:** Model of Professionalization  
Source: ourselves

Professionalization at ASVIE should focus on the management of human resources: we have just seen that there was no time for a human resources management policy of the NGDO (we do not talk about the workers engaged for the various activities such as polyclinics or pharmacy, most of whom are not members). ASVIE needs a good recruitment and remuneration policy. Regarding recruitment: organize tests, but provide training to inculcate the values of the NGDO to those recruited, second criterion to keep people who have passed the test and basis of their listing. Regarding remuneration: the ASVIE must establish a fair salary scale that takes into account positions.

Professionalization must also be aimed at financial resources: in this respect, ASVIE must place the competent people in financial matters in order to be able to make financial analyzes that can regularly provide the financial statement of the structure. It must also require the regular maintenance of all financial documents in due form, so that there are no delays in the preparation of the balance sheets, as is the case for the moment. Indeed, some delays in holding meetings are due to the preparation of the balance sheets.

The professionalization of governance: in relation to the objective, it is generally accepted that it is difficult to work for the development of a population without associating it with decision-making. We also concede it for ASVIE. But with respect to hired staff working for the polyclinic and pharmacy, for example, managers must adopt command styles appropriate to the circumstances. Moreover, it will require training in this direction.

The professionalization of marketing: ASVIE must make its activities known so that its impact is visible and widespread. But she must also make marketing for the efficiency of her lucrative activities. In this case, one must strictly respect ethics and not stray from one's non-profit objectives.

These four axes have constant reciprocal relations. Indeed, they are links in the same chain that constitute the strength. Mismanaged human resources will have a negative impact on finances, marketing and governance and vice versa.

### 3. Conclusion

ASVIE, in its activities, has not yet, after 14 years of existence, does any activity in some of its areas of intervention: out of 8 listed areas, one has been the subject

of sporadic activities, and one of permanent activities. It's only in the area of health that things seem to be working. But the scale of this activity shows some management failures. At this level, difficulties arise in terms of top management, at the administrative and financial level, at the level of control. In all this the real problem is that these failures appear because of a partial professionalisation to the ASVIE.

The reconciliation of the logic of values and efficiency seems to us to be a salutary solution for ASVIE, whose path is still long and perilous. Moreover, until then the efforts provided seem to concern more the survival and viability rather than the accomplishment of the assigned missions. Since the assets are there, we think it's high time to professionalize not to see them disappear simply.

But what is paradoxical for ASVIE is that the logic of values must first be deepened itself. Because, as we have shown, the nonprofit aspect does not appear accurately. Hence the fear of a complete diversion of the objectives of the NGDO in case the professionalization was deepened. Thus the question of choice between survival and values reappears. On our part, we believe that the survival and viability of the institution remain crucial for the moment and we have proposed professionalization for this. But an effort must be made to ensure that the logic of values takes its place in this NGDO.

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