



Contribution of Non-Governmental Organizations Programmes towards Quality Education in Public Primary Schools in Arusha District Council, Tanzania

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Abstract: This study examined the contribution of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) programmes towards quality education in public primary schools. Specifically, the study assessed the contributions of various NGOs programmes towards quality education, and proposed strategies to improve the contribution of NGOs programmes support towards quality education. Stakeholder Theory and convergent mixed methods research design guided the study, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. From a target population of 589, a sample size of 80 respondents was obtained from 20 head teachers, and 22 NGOs managers selected through purposive sampling while 38 teachers were selected through simple and stratified random sampling. Questionnaires, interview guides, and documentary review helped in data collection. Validity was ensured through expert review, and reliability (0.888) was generated using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient after conducting a pilot study. Peer debriefing and triangulation was carried out to establish the trustworthiness of qualitative instruments. Ethical issues such as acquiring research permits, signed informed consent, avoiding plagiarism, confidentiality and anonymity were observed. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics in the SPSS Version 25 to generate tables, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically. The findings revealed that NGOs contribute to quality education through the provision of teaching and learning materials, infrastructure development, teacher training programmes, ICT resources, and support to vulnerable pupils. In conclusion, greater coordination, sustainability, and institutional capacity are needed to maximize their impact. In recommendation, strengthening monitoring and evaluation systems, aligning programmes with government policies, improving communication, strengthening school data systems and increasing community participation are strategies to improve NGOs effectiveness.

Keywords: NGOs programmes, Quality Education, Professional Development, Community Engagement, Tanzania

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1. Introduction

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have a role to play in improving quality education in the educational sector. According to Rose (2021), NGOs provide basic support for quality education. Quality education enables learners to acquire knowledge, skills, values and

competencies required for personal development and national transformation. Despite significant progress in expanding access to primary education, many countries continue to experience challenges related to learning outcomes, teacher quality, availability of teaching and learning resources, school infrastructure and equity in educational opportunities. These challenges have

encouraged increased involvement of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in supporting government efforts to improve the quality of education, particularly in public primary schools.

In Southeast Asia, Saengouthay (2022) detailed the influence of NGO's programmes on primary school education policy in Laos, especially through policy advocacy and dialogue with government and international agencies. Chea and Seng (2023) extended this line of inquiry by reporting how NGO's programmes engage with district education authorities to shape local curricula, promote inclusive practices, and represent marginalized voices in policy conversations. In developing countries, NGOs often operate in disadvantaged communities where government resources are insufficient to meet the increasing demand for quality education. For example, organizations such as UNICEF, World Vision International, Save the Children and BRAC have implemented education programmes aimed at improving learning environments and strengthening education systems. NGO's programmes play a strategic role in shaping educational agendas, especially when national policy frameworks are weak or poorly implemented. Adu-Baffoe (2021), and Adekunle & Nzomo (2021) shows that NGO's programmes provide valuable support through resources and teacher training. Nevertheless the impact on learning outcomes is often uneven due to sustainability and coordination issues.

Many African countries continue to experience shortages of qualified teachers, inadequate learning materials, overcrowded classrooms, limited infrastructure and low learning achievement among primary school learners (Rollan, 2024). NGOs have therefore supported governments through interventions such as teacher training, school feeding programmes, construction of classrooms, provision of desks and textbooks, girls' education initiatives and community mobilization. These interventions have contributed to improving school participation, retention and learning outcomes among vulnerable groups. National NGO programme literature in Tanzania, including reports by HakiElimu (2023), has documented NGOs' contributions to policy advocacy, enhancement of teacher accountability, and strengthening of community awareness in the education sector. These contributions are further situated within Tanzania's broader institutional and policy framework governing collaboration between the state and non-state actors. For example, the Public - Private Partnership (PPP) Policy (2009) and its subsequent legal reforms, including the PPP Act and its 2018 amendments, establish structured mechanisms for collaboration between government and non-state partners in service delivery, including education, with an emphasis on efficiency, accountability, and improved service outcomes. Similarly, the 1992 Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Tanzania and the Christian Social Services Commission (CSSC) formalized long-standing cooperation in the provision of education and health services, defining mutual responsibilities in management, financing, and quality assurance of social services.

Joseph (2025) noted the role of NGO's programmes in promoting inclusive education for marginalized children in Tanzania, examining how NGO's programmes support learners with disabilities and other at-risk groups. In Arusha Region, particularly Arusha District Council, public primary schools serve learners from diverse social and economic backgrounds and continue to experience educational challenges that require collaborative responses. According to Ngonyani et al. (2024), NGOs operating in the area have supported schools through various programmes, including teacher professional development, literacy promotion, provision of learning materials, community participation initiatives, support for disadvantaged children and improvement of school learning environments. These programmes are expected to contribute towards quality education by improving teaching effectiveness, learner participation, school attendance and academic achievement. However, sustainability of these programmes remained relatively low. Consequently, it was necessary to conduct a study to investigate the contribution of NGOs programmes towards quality education in public primary schools in Arusha District Council.

1.1 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the various NGOs programmes that contribute towards quality education in public primary schools in Arusha District Council?
2. What are the possible strategies to improve the contribution of NGOs programmes in supporting quality education in public primary schools in Arusha District?

2. Literature Review

This study was built on Stakeholder Theory. The theory was propounded by Edward Freeman in 1984.

2.1 Stakeholder Theory

The theory argues that organizations cannot achieve their objectives by focusing only on internal operations but must consider the interests, contributions and relationships of all individuals and groups who influence or are influenced by organizational activities (Freeman, 1984). In education contexts, the theory explains that achieving quality education requires active participation and cooperation among various stakeholders, including government authorities, NGOs, school administrators, teachers, parents, learners, communities and development partners. Stakeholder Theory argues that organizations must identify all groups or individuals who have an interest in, influence over, or are affected by their activities.

2.1.1 Strengths of Stakeholder Theory

A major strength of Stakeholder Theory is that it acknowledges that educational improvement cannot be achieved by one institution alone. This is relevant because NGOs operate within a wider education system involving government, schools and communities. Antony (2022) argued that building human capital is essential for sustainable development and quality education, particularly in under-resourced settings such as rural and peri-urban Tanzania.

2.1.2 Application of Stakeholder Theory

It helps explain why effective partnerships between NGOs, district education authorities and schools are important for successful implementation of education programmes. Stakeholder Theory emphasizes ownership and participation, which are important for maintaining programmes after external support ends. The theory assists in examining whether NGO-supported education programmes create local ownership among schools and communities, thereby increasing sustainability (Tan 2024). Since NGOs operate through relationships with beneficiaries, donors, government institutions and communities, Stakeholder Theory provides a suitable framework for understanding their role and contribution. The theory directly supports investigation of NGO programmes, challenges and possible improvement strategies.

2.2 Empirical Review

The study reviewed empirical studies in line with themes generated from research objectives.

2.2.1 The Contributions of Various Non-Governmental Organizations programmes towards Quality Education in Public Primary Schools

Nath et al. (2022) in rural Bangladesh evaluated the effectiveness of non-formal primary education programme in improving learning outcomes among disadvantaged children. Using a quasi-experimental research design and a mixed-methods approach, data were collected from approximately 1,200 pupils, 120 teachers and school administrators selected through multistage cluster sampling. The study established that pupils enrolled in non-formal primary education programme achieved significantly higher literacy and numeracy scores than pupils in comparable government schools. Banerjee et al. (2023) in India investigated the effectiveness of Pratham's Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) programme in improving foundational learning among public primary school pupils. The study adopted a randomized controlled trial (RCT) and a quantitative research approach. Data were analysed using ordinary least squares regression, analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) and impact evaluation techniques. The study revealed that pupils exposed to TaRL demonstrated significantly higher gains in literacy and numeracy than those in comparison schools. The programme was

particularly effective among low-performing learners because instruction was organized according to learners' competency levels rather than age or grade. The study was conducted under closely monitored implementation conditions that may not fully reflect routine implementation in ordinary public schools

Additionally, World Vision Ghana (2022) in the Afram Plains North and South Districts of Ghana assessed the effectiveness of the Unlock Literacy Project in enhancing foundational literacy among learners in public primary schools. The study adopted a programme evaluation research design using a mixed-methods approach. The study found that the programme significantly improved pupils' reading fluency, vocabulary development and classroom participation. Teacher instructional competence also improved through regular coaching and professional development activities. The findings further indicated that parental engagement and community reading clubs contributed to sustaining children's literacy development beyond the classroom. Piper et al. (2022) in Tanga Region, Tanzania evaluated the effectiveness of the Room to Read Literacy Programme in improving literacy outcomes among pupils in public primary schools. The study employed a quasi-experimental research design using a mixed-methods approach. The findings revealed that pupils in schools supported by Room to Read demonstrated significantly higher gains in reading fluency, reading comprehension and vocabulary than pupils in comparison schools. The programme also strengthened teachers' instructional practices through continuous coaching, provision of teaching and learning materials, and classroom mentoring. However, the study concentrated primarily on literacy outcomes and did not comprehensively assess other indicators of quality education such as test achievement, school leadership or learner retention.

2.2.2 Strategies for Enhancing the Effectiveness and Sustainability of NGO Programmes in Supporting Quality Education

In India, Ahuj et al. (2021) examined the implementation experience of Room to Read's school library and literacy programmes and identify strategies for strengthening NGO contributions towards improving primary school literacy outcomes. This was a programme evaluation study that employed a qualitative research approach. Data were collected from teachers, programme facilitators, school administrators and education stakeholders involved in Room to Read-supported schools, selected through purposive sampling and analysed using thematic analysis. The study found that NGO education programmes can be strengthened through stronger collaboration with government education authorities, development of locally relevant reading materials, continuous teacher mentoring, community involvement and gradual transfer of programme ownership to schools. In addition, Amin (2021) in Bangladesh investigated strategies for improving the sustainability and effectiveness of Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC)-supported primary

education programmes. This was a case study research design that employed a qualitative research approach. Data were collected from 45 participants consisting of teachers, programme managers, parents and community members, selected through purposive sampling. Data were analysed using thematic analysis. The study's limitation was that it relied mainly on stakeholder perceptions rather than measurements of pupil learning outcomes to ascertain the quality of education.

Kinunga (2023) conducted a study in Tanzania to examine how community participation could strengthen school development activities and improve quality education in public primary schools. This was a case study research design employing a qualitative research approach. Data were collected from 250 participants comprising 5 head teachers, 10 teachers, 225 pupils and 10 community members, selected using quota and purposive sampling techniques. Data were collected through interviews, focus group discussions, observation and document analysis and analysed using content analysis. The study found that NGO programmes supporting education could be improved by strengthening school - community partnerships, training parents and community members on their roles, increasing transparency in school development activities and promoting shared responsibility for educational improvement. Also, Mbitiet al. (2024) in Tanzania examined how teacher professional development interventions could improve classroom practices and pupil learning outcomes in public primary schools. The study employed a randomized controlled trial (RCT) research design using a quantitative research approach. Data were collected from 220 public primary schools selected through cluster random sampling, involving teachers and pupils participating in the intervention. Data were analysed using regression analysis, impact evaluation techniques and comparison of treatment and control groups. The study found that NGO-supported programmes could be improved by emphasizing practical teacher coaching, participatory teaching methods, continuous classroom support and evidence-based monitoring rather than relying only on short-term training workshops. However, the experimental design, while strong for measuring impact, provided limited information about financial sustainability, institutional barriers and challenges of scaling the programme nationally.

3. Methodology

Convergent mixed methods research design was adopted. The design allowed the researcher to utilise both forms of data – quantitative and qualitative, whereby the weakness of one form of data was supplemented by the strength of the other (Creswell and Creswell, 2023). According to Creswell and Creswell (2018) in this single-phase approach, a researcher collects both quantitative and qualitative data, analyses them separately, and then compares the results to see if the findings confirm or disconfirm to each other. The

quantitative and qualitative findings were later integrated in order to enhance the validity and reliability of the findings.

The target population for this study included 102 head teachers from 102 public primary schools, and 381 teachers in charge of academics (MoEST, 2026). Also, the study targeted 106 staff members managing NGOs programmes. These participants were responsible for planning, funding, and monitoring education programmes, and were expected to possess relevant knowledge and experience regarding the implementation and contribution of NGOs' programmes in supporting quality education in public primary schools. Teachers were included because they implement and oversee the quality of education in primary school. Gay and Aersian. (2021) propose a sample size for a study to be between 10% and 30% of the target population. Consequently, in order to ensure a representative and comprehensive sample that reflected the characteristics of the population under investigation, the researcher adopted a sampling rate of 20% for head teachers, 15.8% for teachers in charge of academics and 21% for staff members managing NGOs programmes. Therefore, the sample size of 80 included 20 head teachers, 38 teachers in charge of academics, and 22 NGOs managers.

This study used criterion purposive sampling to select 20 head teachers, one from each school while simple and stratified random sampling was employed to select 38 teachers in charge of academics from public primary schools in Arusha District council. Teachers were stratified based on their gender where 19 females and 19 males were randomly selected. Also, criterion purposive sampling was used to select 22 NGOs managers. This study used questionnaires, interview guides, and documentary review checklists to collect primary and secondary data. These multiple sources enhanced triangulation since questionnaires provided quantitative data, while interviews and document reviews offered qualitative insights (Raajeswari, 2024).

The questionnaire administered to teachers was constructed in the form of 5-Likert Scale responses. In addition, interview guide was administered to head teachers and NGOs managers. The interview was of structured form with a set of questions that investigated the specific objectives. Documentary review involved the examination of NGO programme reports, school records, project evaluation reports, and relevant policy documents. It provided secondary data on NGO activities, funding, and programme outcomes, offering historical and contextual insights into primary education support (Scribbr, 2024). Content and face validity of the instruments was ensured by research experts. The inputs from experts were used to improve the research tools, refine and ascertain its relevance, coverage and consistency before its application in real field situations. Cronbach alpha method was used to determine the reliability of the questionnaires after a pilot study in 10% of the sample size and the correlation Cronbach's Alpha coefficient value of 0.888 for teachers' questionnaires was

generated. According to Cohen, et al.(2017), the instruments were found to be fairly reliable for the study.

Questionnaires were then issued to the respondents and collected after one day while personal interview was conducted the same day of visit. The consent of the interviewees was sought before audio recording the conversation for later transcription. Regarding trustworthiness of instruments used to collect qualitative data, the researcher employed a triangulation technique, whereby data were collected using one instrument from different sources, and also by different instruments from different sources. During data collection, the researcher ensured confidentiality of the information gathered and anonymity by not exposing their names. The data collected was used for the research purposes only. To avoid plagiarism and fraud, the researcher duly acknowledged all the authors whose works have been cited in this study.

4. Results and Discussion

This section presents the results and the discussion of the findings on the contribution of Non-Governmental Organizations Programmes towards quality education in public primary schools in Arusha District Council.

4.1 Findings on the Contribution of Various Non-Governmental Organizations Programmes towards Quality Education in Public Primary Schools in Arusha District Council

The first research question of this study assessed the contribution of various NGOs programmes towards quality education in public primary schools in Arusha District Council. To achieve this objective, the study prepared items 1–10 in the questionnaire for teachers. A five-level Likert scale was employed to make the unit of analysis in which 1=Strongly Disagree (SD), 2=Disagree (D), 3=Undecided (U), 4=Agree (A), 5=Strongly Agree (SA). For easy analysis, it was necessary to collapse the scale for those who Agreed and Disagreed since there was no significant number of respondents who were Undecided (Taherdoost, 2019). Likewise, interview questions for head teachers and NGO staff were used to gather qualitative information concerning the contribution of NGO programmes towards quality education in public primary schools. During data collection, teachers were asked to indicate their level of agreement regarding the contribution of NGO programmes in schools, while school administrators and NGO staff provided detailed explanations through interviews. Following Warmbrod (2024), a high mean (closer to 5) indicates NGOs programmes that greatly contributed towards quality education, while a low mean (closer to 1) shows a very low or low contribution. A moderate mean (around 3) reflects an average or neutral effect. The standard deviation (Std. Dev.) indicates the level of contribution towards quality education, with lower values showing high level of contribution while higher values showing low level. The data is summarized and presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Contribution of Various NGOs Programmes towards Quality Education in Public Primary Schools in Arusha District Council (n=38)

Item	Agreed f(%)	Disagreed f(%)	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean Interpretation
1. Programmes on regular provision of teaching and learning materials to schools	35(92.1)	3(7.9)	4.59	0.49	Strong Agreement
2. Schools receive infrastructure support from NGOs	32(80.0)	6(20.0)	4.17	0.69	Strong Agreement
3. NGOs provide training or capacity-building programmes for teachers	34(89.5)	4(10.5)	4.38	0.61	Strong Agreement
4. NGOs programmes on the educational needs of school	31(81.6)	7(18.4)	4.06	0.74	Strong Agreement
5. NGOs support co-curricular or extracurricular activities in the school	29(76.3)	9(23.7)	3.75	0.83	Moderate Agreement

Item	Agreed f(%)	Disagreed f(%)	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean Interpretation
6. The school receives ICT materials and digital learning tools from NGOs	27(71.1)	11(28.9)	3.54	0.91	Moderate Agreement
7. NGOs frequently collaborate with school leadership during project planning	33(86.8)	5(13.2)	4.27	0.65	Strong Agreement
8. NGOs provide support to Vulnerable Children	37(97.4)	1(2.6)	4.79	0.41	Very Strong Agreement
9. Girls' Education and Gender Equality Programme	30(78.9)	8(21.1)	3.96	0.78	Moderate Agreement
10. Child Protection Programme	36(94.7)	2(5.3)	4.69	0.46	Very Strong Agreement

Source: Research 2026

The data in Table 1 indicate that the majority of teachers, equivalent to 92.1%, agreed and 7.9% disagreed that through their programmes, NGOs regularly provide teaching and learning materials to public primary schools in Arusha District Council. The mean score recorded was 4.59 with a standard deviation of 0.49. These materials include textbooks, exercise books, teaching aids, desks, and other instructional resources that facilitate effective teaching and learning. The findings imply that to some extent, NGO support has helped schools reduce shortages of educational materials and improve classroom participation among respondents. The availability of learning materials also motivates teachers to prepare lessons effectively and improves respondents' understanding during classroom instruction. These findings suggest that NGOs contribute directly towards improving the quality of education through educational resource provision. The findings correspond with Smith and Chen (2022), who observed that NGOs contribute to educational quality through provision of learning materials and instructional support in schools.

While responding to the contributions of various Non-Governmental Organization programmes towards quality education in public primary schools, one head teacher explained during the interview that:

"NGOs have helped our school by supplying textbooks, exercise books, and teaching aids which were previously insufficient. Learners now participate more actively during lessons because learning materials are more available than before. Teachers also find it easier to conduct lessons effectively because they have increased instructional resources. The support has improved

classroom interaction and learners' understanding during teaching."(Personal Interview with HT1, 13 May 2026)

Responding to the same question, one NGO manager noted that:

In many public primary schools, shortages of learning materials negatively affect teaching effectiveness and pupil's achievement. Through NGO interventions, we have been able to improve access to educational resources which enable teachers to conduct lessons more effectively thereby allowing pupils to participate actively in learning activities."(Personal Interview with NGO1 manager, 14 May 2026)

Another NGO manager remarked that:

Well, our NGO contribute to quality education through the provision of essential teaching and learning resources. These include textbooks, storybooks, exercise books, teaching aids, classroom learning materials, and digital learning resources .These initiatives contribute towards quality education by improving pupils' competencies in basic skills that form the foundation for later academic achievement."(Personal Interview with NGO7 manager, 14 May 2026)

Interview responses emphasized that NGOs' support has increased pupils' attendance, improved classroom discipline, and boosted learners' confidence during lessons because they have access to the required basic learning resources. These findings demonstrate that effective

collaboration between NGOs and public schools complements government efforts to achieve quality education. The excerpts from respondents together with the quantitative findings indicate that the continuous provision of teaching and learning materials by NGOs has strengthened the overall teaching process and enhanced school performance. Adequate instructional resources enable teachers to employ a variety of learner-centered teaching methods, thereby increasing pupils' engagement and improving academic achievement. The availability of essential materials also reduces the financial burden on parents and schools, particularly in resource-constrained communities where government resources alone are often insufficient. Consequently, sustained partnerships between NGOs, local authorities, and school management are essential for maintaining adequate educational resources and improving learning outcomes in public primary schools. In this regard, UNDP (2021) explained that effective partnerships between NGOs and schools improve access to education and learning environments when aligned with educational priorities. Therefore, provision of teaching and learning materials and infrastructure support from NGOs contributes greatly towards improving educational quality in public primary schools.

The data further indicate that 80.0% of teachers agreed that schools normally receive infrastructure support from NGOs and 20.0% disagreed. This support includes classroom construction, renovation of school buildings, provision of desks, water facilities, toilets, and libraries. The mean score recorded was 4.17 with a standard deviation of 0.69. The findings suggest that NGO interventions contribute significantly towards improving the physical learning environment in public primary schools. Improved infrastructure creates conducive learning conditions for both learners and teachers, thereby enhancing concentration and classroom effectiveness. School administrators explained that before NGO interventions, many schools experienced classroom congestion, poor sanitation, and inadequate learning spaces which negatively affected academic performance. However, infrastructure support from NGOs has improved learners' attendance - particularly girls and classroom comfort.

Furthermore, qualitative responses from interviews reinforced the survey results by showing that infrastructure improvements created a safer and more attractive learning environment for pupils. One head teacher stated that

"The construction of additional classrooms and toilets by NGOs has reduced overcrowding and improved pupils' regular attendance, especially among girls. Improved infrastructure contributes to quality education by creating safe, healthy and conducive environments for teaching and learning."(Personal Interview with HT1, 13 May 2026)

One NGO manager pointed out that:

Indeed, it is true that NGOs have made significant contributions towards improving quality education in public primary schools in Arusha District Council through various programmes targeting teachers, learners, schools and communities. These programmes complement government efforts by addressing gaps in educational resources, teaching capacity, learner support and school development (Personal Interview with NGO manager, 14 May 2026).

The remarks made during interviews show that these initiatives contribute towards quality education by improving pupils' competencies in basic skills that form the foundation for later academic achievement. These findings indicate that NGOs' support contributes positively towards school development and educational quality improvement. These findings are in agreement with Komba and Michael (2024), who found that NGOs help bridge infrastructure gaps in schools where government resources are limited. The findings also align with Stakeholder Theory, which highlights the importance of collaborative partnerships between NGOs and government in creating safe and supportive learning environments.

One NGO staff member reported that:

"Our organization has focused on improving school infrastructure because a good learning environment is essential for quality education. We have supported classroom construction, desks, toilets, and water facilities in several schools within the district. These improvements have helped reduce classroom congestion and improved learners' attendance. Teachers are also motivated to work in environments that are safe and conducive for teaching and learning activities."(Personal Interview, 15 May 2026)

Another respondent noted that:

The establishment of school libraries and provision of furniture increased pupils' motivation to learn and enabled teachers to deliver lessons more effectively. In areas where public schools experience overcrowding or inadequate facilities, NGO support helps reduce barriers that affect learners' participation and academic achievement (Personal Interview with NGO20 manager, 16 May 2026).

These findings demonstrate that infrastructure development not only addresses physical resource shortages but also enhances teaching effectiveness, learner participation, and overall school performance. Consequently, sustained collaboration between NGOs, local government authorities, and school communities remains essential for ensuring that infrastructure investments are maintained and continue to support quality education in public primary schools.

4.2 Findings on the Possible Strategies for Improving NGOs' Support Programmes towards Quality Education in Public Primary Schools in Arusha District Council

The second research question for this study proposed the possible Strategies for Improving NGOs' support programmes towards quality education in public primary schools in Arusha District Council. To achieve this objective, the study prepared questionnaire items for teachers. A five-level Likert scale was employed to make the unit of analysis in which 1=Strongly Disagree (SD), 2=Disagree (D), 3=Undecided (U), 4=Agree (A), 5=Strongly Agree (SA). For easy analysis, it was necessary to collapse the scale for those who Agreed and Disagreed

since there was no significant number of respondents who were Undecided (Taherdoost, 2019). Likewise, interview questions for school administrators and NGO staff were used to gather qualitative information concerning strategies that can improve the effectiveness and sustainability of NGO programmes towards quality education in schools. During data collection, teachers were asked to indicate their level of agreement on different aspects related to improving NGOs programmes in schools. School administrators and NGO staff also provided detailed views through interviews. The findings are presented in Table 2. Following Warmbrod (2024), a high mean (closer to 5) indicates strong agreement that a strategy is effective, while a low mean (closer to 1) shows disagreement. A moderate mean (around 3) reflects neutral or mixed perceptions. The standard deviation (Std. Dev.) shows how much responses vary, with lower values indicating agreement and higher values indicating some sort of disagreement. The responses are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Strategies for Improving NGOs' Support Programmes towards Quality Education in Public Primary Schools in Arusha District Council (n=38)

Item	Agreed f(%)	Disagreed f(%)	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean Interpretation
Strengthen NGO - Government collaboration	32(84.2)	6(15.8)	4.17	0.69	Strong Agreement
Integrate successful NGO models into government systems	34(89.5)	4(10.5)	4.48	0.57	Strong Agreement
Continuous teacher coaching and mentoring	31(81.6)	7(18.4)	4.06	0.74	Strong Agreement
Increase community ownership	29(76.3)	9(23.7)	3.85	0.81	Moderate Agreement
Use education data for decision-making	28(73.7)	10(26.3)	3.65	0.89	Moderate Agreement
Strengthen monitoring and evaluation systems	25(65.8)	13(34.2)	3.33	0.94	Moderate Agreement
Reduce donor dependency through sustainability planning	32 (84.2)	6 (15.8)	4.27	0.65	Strong Agreement
Develop context-specific interventions tailored towards need assessment	35(92.1)	3(7.9)	4.59	0.49	Strong Agreement
Increase schools data and information required for effective NGO planning	33(86.8)	5(13.2)	4.38	0.61	Strong Agreement
Improve cultural and social interactions to help NGO engagement with schools	29(76.3)	9(23.7)	3.75	0.83	Moderate Agreement

Source: Field data, 2026. Note: Mean = M, Std. Deviation = SD

Table 2 shows that 32 academic teachers accounting for 84.2% agreed while 15.8% disagreed that strengthening NGO - Government collaboration is a possible strategy to improve NGOs' support programmes, this measure received strong agreement (Mean = 4.17, SD = 0.69) suggesting that teachers perceive partnerships between NGOs and government authorities as essential for improving the

effectiveness and sustainability of education programmes. This finding is in agreement with the study by Putra and Suryanawa (2022), who found that effective collaboration between education stakeholders significantly enhance institutional performance and improved educational service delivery.

Additionally, the data shows that continuous teacher coaching and mentoring was strongly supported by 81.6% teachers while 18.4% disagreed. The mean score of 4.06 and SD of 0.74 recorded demonstrate that teachers recognize ongoing professional support as essential for improving instructional quality. This finding agrees with the study by Kraft et al. (2018), whose meta-analysis found that instructional coaching significantly improve teachers' classroom practices and student achievement. More recent evidence from UNESCO (2024) also concluded that continuous mentoring programmes strengthened teacher competencies, particularly in resource-constrained schools.

While responding to the possible strategies to improve NGOs' support programmes towards quality education in primary schools in Arusha District, one NGO manager explained that:

One important way to improve NGOs' support programmes is by strengthening collaboration between NGOs and government education authorities. Effective collaboration enables NGOs to align their interventions with national education policies, district education priorities, and school improvement plans, thereby reducing duplication of activities and promoting efficient use of resources. Through regular coordination meetings, joint planning, and information sharing, both parties can identify priority needs and ensure that educational interventions complement government efforts. Strong partnership also improves accountability, transparency, and sustainability of education programmes. When NGOs and government institutions work together, schools are more likely to receive coordinated support in areas such as teacher professional development, learning materials, infrastructure development, and inclusive education. This collaborative approach contributes to improving the overall quality of education and ensuring that educational gains continue beyond the duration of donor-funded projects.”(Personal Interview, 19th May 2026)

Another NGO manager also remarked that:

Alright, improving monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems is another important strategy for enhancing NGO support programmes. Strong M&E systems enable NGOs to regularly assess programme implementation, measure progress towards intended objectives, identify implementation challenges, and make evidence-based decisions for programme improvement. Continuous monitoring through school visits, classroom observations, and stakeholder consultations provides timely information that allows corrective measures to be taken before challenges become unbearable. Evaluation also generates evidence on

programme effectiveness and educational outcomes, strengthening accountability among donors, government authorities, schools, and local communities. In addition, lessons learned through monitoring and evaluation can inform future programme design and facilitate the replication of successful interventions in other schools. Consequently, robust M&E systems if put in place will contribute to improving programme quality, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability (Personal Interview, 20th May 2026)

The head teacher reported that:

Effective strategy should involve designing NGO programmes based on comprehensive needs assessments conducted within individual schools and communities. Since schools differ in terms of infrastructure, teacher capacity, learner needs, and socio-economic conditions, interventions should be tailored to address specific local challenges rather than applying uniform solutions. Therefore, conducting needs assessments will enable NGOs to identify priority areas requiring support and allocate resources more efficiently (Personal Interview, 19th May 2026).

The responses suggest that improving NGOs' support programmes towards quality education in public primary schools requires a comprehensive approach that emphasizes collaboration, responsiveness to local needs, and continuous programme improvement. First, the emphasis on strengthening NGO–government collaboration indicates that respondents recognize that quality education cannot be achieved through isolated efforts. Instead, coordinated partnerships between NGOs, government authorities, and schools are essential for aligning educational interventions with national priorities in order to avoid duplication of resources, and enhancing programme sustainability. Secondly, the strong emphasis on developing context-specific interventions based on needs assessments implies that respondents believe NGO programmes are more effective when they are designed to address the unique challenges faced by individual schools and communities. The finding agrees with Akseer et al. (2023), who found that scaling up proven NGO-led education innovations through government systems significantly improved long-term educational outcomes in developing countries.

From documentary review, the findings indicate that Non-Governmental Organizations play a significant complementary role in improving the quality of education in public primary schools. NGO programme reports revealed that interventions extended beyond material support to include teacher professional development, literacy and numeracy initiatives, school infrastructure improvement, child protection, water, sanitation and

hygiene (WASH) programmes and community mobilization. These interventions align with national education priorities aimed at improving learning outcomes and creating conducive learning environments (HakiElimu, 2023).

The reviewed school records corroborated the information contained in NGO reports by showing improvements in school facilities, increased availability of teaching and learning materials, enhanced teacher participation in professional development activities and better pupil attendance. In several schools, documentary evidence suggested improvements in internal examination results and reduced absenteeism following implementation of NGO-supported programmes. Such findings indicate that NGO interventions have strengthened both teaching and learning processes. This finding is consistent with OECD (2023) reported that integrating externally funded innovations into national education policies enhances programme sustainability and maximizes public investment.

Project evaluation reports further demonstrated that NGO programmes contributed to improving literacy and numeracy competencies, teacher instructional practices, school leadership and community participation. However, these reports also highlighted challenges including dependence on external donor funding, limited financial sustainability, uneven implementation across schools and insufficient monitoring and evaluation systems. These findings suggest that although NGO programmes positively influence educational quality, their long-term effectiveness depends on stronger institutional coordination and sustainability planning.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

In conclusion, the study indicates that NGO programmes are widely recognized as beneficial in improving teaching and learning conditions in public primary schools in Arusha District Council. However, their effectiveness depends on overcoming challenges related to funding, coordination, technical capacity, and administrative systems. Strengthening collaboration, accountability, and policy alignment is therefore essential for improving sustainability and impact.

Lastly, the study concludes that improving monitoring and evaluation systems, strengthening stakeholder capacity, and ensuring alignment with national education policies are critical for enhancing the sustainability and effectiveness of NGO-supported education programmes. Therefore, strengthening institutional linkages through regular communication among stakeholders with NGOs, local government authorities, and school management committees is crucial for improving the effectiveness and long-term sustainability of education interventions in public primary schools. Without these measures, the long-term impact of NGO interventions remains limited.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the conclusion of the study, the researcher recommended the following:

1. There is need to strengthen coordination between NGOs and government authorities. NGOs should establish formal collaboration mechanisms with district education offices, ward education officers, and school management to ensure that educational programmes complement government priorities and avoid duplication of interventions.
2. A comprehensive needs assessment should be conducted before programme implementation. NGOs should involve teachers, head teachers, parents, school committees, learners, and local government officials in identifying priority educational needs to ensure that interventions are relevant and responsive to local circumstances.
3. There is need to strengthen monitoring and evaluation frameworks. NGOs should develop comprehensive monitoring and evaluation systems with clear performance indicators, regular school monitoring visits, stakeholder feedback mechanisms, and periodic impact evaluations to improve programme effectiveness and accountability.
4. Stakeholder participation should be enhanced. NGOs should encourage active participation of parents, community leaders, school committees, and local government authorities throughout programme planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation to strengthen ownership and sustainability.
5. Sustainability strategies should be developed. Every NGO-supported education programme should include sustainability plans that strengthen local institutional capacity, facilitate gradual transfer of programme ownership to schools and communities, and reduce long-term dependence on external donor funding.

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