

The “Big Survey”: Decolonisation, Development and the First Wave of NGO Expansion in Africa after 1945

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Abstract

This article sheds new light on NGO activity across Africa after the Second World War and the vital yet overlooked role played by non-state actors in the process of decolonisation. The International Council of Voluntary Agencies’ ‘Repertory of Africa’s NGOs’ (1968), analysed here for the first time, yields unprecedented insights into the ‘first wave’ of NGO expansion as an important aspect of the history of twentieth century international relations. We situate ICVA’s Repertory in the spate of ‘Big Surveys’ which questioned development policy and practice. We then examine the link between decolonisation and NGO expansion and evolution. Decolonisation was a global phenomenon, involving a wide array of non-state actors intent upon shaping the post-colonial world. The Repertory provides a stronger basis for the view that ex-colonial powers expected to retain close links with former colonies and colonial connections were replicated through NGO activities. Global history is not only a matter of empire, however. We further reveal how, already by the later 1960s, territorial pathways forged by colonialism were disrupted by international NGOs from countries with no history of imperialism in Africa, and how an expanding footprint of indigenous NGOs gave Africans the means to assert agency over development agendas and take back vital aspects of their own governance amidst ‘second wave decolonisation’.

Keywords: Non-Governmental Organisations; Africa; Decolonisation; International Development

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Introduction

The 1950s and 1960s, the epicentre of decolonisation, witnessed the ‘first wave’ of global NGO expansion.¹ This was no coincidence. In fact, the two phenomena were integrally linked. The rapid expansion of non-governmental activity promoting aid and development occurred alongside, and was fundamentally affected by, the collapse of European colonial rule. This period of post-war NGO expansion, including the substantial yet widely overlooked presence of indigenous African NGOs, is an important aspect of the history of twentieth century international relations. Our analysis of the phenomenon stems from a major new archival discovery.² The presumption to date has been that a large-scale and continent-wide analysis of NGO expansion in Africa at the end of empire was hardly possible. Researchers refer to a ‘first wave’ of NGO expansion but they rarely go further, hampered by the lack of an adequate evidence base.³ The discovery of the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) ‘Repertory of Africa’s NGOs’ (1968), which we reveal and analyse for the first time, yields unprecedented insights into the geography, scale and nature of NGO activity in nearly and newly independent African states.

The historiography on this first wave of NGO expansion may be limited and fragmented but many contemporaries commented upon the phenomenon. The former Canadian Prime minister, Lester Pearson, reported on the ‘very substantial contribution’ of NGOs to the World Bank in 1969, while noting their contribution was ‘too often forgotten’.⁴ Pearson went on to record that, by this time, NGOs were placing 25,000 volunteers in developing countries, a number equal to almost a quarter of those working in official development programmes.⁵ NGOs came in varying sizes but were generally felt to have

particular advantages over official forms of development assistance. They were invariably involved in smaller projects which larger multilateral organisations would not consider; they could undertake ‘experimental ventures’ because they had ‘less political prestige at stake’; and by working more closely with recipients they found it easier ‘to preserve mutual self-respect in the aid relationship’.⁶

We cast new light on the link between NGO expansion, evolution and decolonisation. The decades of decolonisation lay at the heart of this first wave of NGO expansion,⁷ and ICVA’s Repertory tells us more about those non-governmental organisations involved than any other source. Its 299-page directory, never before accessed by researchers, provides details of 1,839 NGOs working in post-war Africa and encompasses international, regional, national and local organisations, as well as national branches of international agencies. It also spans independent states as well as remaining colonies under white minority rule. From the ICVA data we can revisit basic yet fundamental questions of how, why and where NGOs expanded into Africa. We can see how ex-colonial powers expected to retain close connections with their former colonies, how colonial connections were replicated through NGO activity, and how the first wave of expansion built upon the foundations of empire. Decolonisation was however a truly global phenomenon. Already, by the later 1960s, colonial connections were disrupted by the sizeable number of new NGOs from countries with no history of African colonialism. In addition, the data we present provides a much stronger empirical anchor for the view that faith-based organisations retained a vital place in the international development community after 1945, with many Christian and especially Catholic NGOs and, by comparison, very few Islamic. Finally, the Repertory uncovers, in a way not hitherto possible, the significant and much-neglected presence of indigenous African NGOs⁸ through which Africans sought to assert their agency and to achieve greater control over development agendas, as part of ‘second wave decolonisation’.⁹

Through the Repertory we gain new insights into the dynamics of development aid and how NGOs conceived their role. They were invariably involved in multiple projects and programmes; much of their work, moreover, did not require substantial funding and was highly localised.¹⁰ This was a period when major, equipment intensive, statist development programmes existed alongside – and were considerably outnumbered by – smaller, community-facing rural NGO programmes. Even when viewed in aggregate terms, the contribution of NGOs to development is less visible than that of large-scale, state-backed and frequently controversial, internationally-funded projects, like the introduction of new crops or the building of dams.¹¹ Yet the resources these NGOs mobilised were far from trivial. One 1968 study records a global total of \$12.8bn in development funding from (non-Communist) public and private sources, with NGOs spending more than \$1bn annually (in kind and cash).¹² NGOs were an increasingly visible and forceful presence – in terms of the number of development projects and their funding – in the years immediately preceding and following independence.

The Repertory, however distinctive, is one of several ‘Big Surveys’ published in the wake of decolonisation. This was a time of intense questioning of development policy and practice when the international community interrogated the results if not always the underlying premises of post-war development. We briefly contextualise these ‘Big Surveys’ before introducing the ICVA Repertory itself. We then present the evidence in two parts. First, we provide a detailed delineation of the first wave of NGO expansion. Second, we identify three types of NGOs that were expanding their footprint in Africa on the eve of independence: international NGOs; faith-based NGOs; and indigenous African NGOs. We conclude by drawing out the implications of the first wave of NGO expansion for the relationship between decolonisation and development, relating the better documented second wave of NGO expansion to its post-war predecessor.

NGOs and Development in Africa during Decolonisation

Decolonisation required all actors in the international arena to grapple with large issues regarding the purpose of late-colonial rule, the transition of colonies towards independence, and struggles for supremacy in post-colonial states and at a time of intensifying Cold War competition. NGOs were no exception. Historical scholarship on NGOs in Africa during decolonisation is growing,¹³ yet it mostly focuses upon the better-known international NGOs (Save the Children Fund and Oxfam especially)¹⁴, their work in donor countries, as well as among beneficiary populations.¹⁵ By contrast, studies of local, African and smaller-scale NGOs are far less common. This seriously underplays how far Africans themselves were active in development activity, albeit in ways more complicated than state-led programmes and nationalist state-making may suggest.¹⁶

The 1960s reconfigured yet ratcheted up expectations. The targets set by the UN's First Development Decade were nothing if not ambitious: 5 per cent annual growth for developing countries, and assistance from the developed countries (state and private finance) equal to 1 per cent of their combined national income.¹⁷ If the UN's Development Decade foregrounded poverty reduction, African states saw development as central to nation-building. Exercising African (rather than colonial) control over development was a rallying cry for nationalists. As two leading scholars of post-war colonial development argue, 'The development concept was crucial to all participants to rethink unequal relationships in the era of decolonization'.¹⁸

The mid-1950s to the early-1960s was a moment of great optimism about Africa's potential to develop. This was not without reason. Across the continent as a whole life expectancy rose, infant mortality rates fell, and school enrolments increased.¹⁹ The mood did not last long, however.²⁰ The UN's targets were not met. Indeed, by the mid-1960s there was little expectation they would be. As the economist Barbara Ward, founder of the International

Institute for the Environment and Development, commented: ‘The whole idea of a Decade of Development lay in the belief that we could so hasten up development in the ‘South’ of our planet that, in fact, ten years could be taken as a meaningful period for basic change’.²¹ This assumption no longer held. Rather than a decade, she now foresaw ‘development in half a century’.²²

Leading post-war development economists increasingly questioned why development had ‘failed’. Albert Hirschman criticised the ‘hubris’ and ‘downright naiveté’ of large development projects.²³ Others denounced the way aid was spent – not only the waste of money but how political motivations shaped spending.²⁴ Many international organisations delivering development programmes came to face a crisis of confidence about their actual achievements.²⁵ Criticism of working modalities and practices, alongside growing scepticism over results, led them to conclude that their future would have to look very different from their past.

At the same time, discourses of development were fiercely contested by liberation movements and a new generation of post-colonial leaders.²⁶ From the mid-1960s, the idea of development as a human right took hold in multilateral fora like the UNCTAD, the Commonwealth, and the Non-Aligned Movement. By the 1970s, voices from the Global South were calling for a more radical agenda with greater equity and fairness in global trade, an agenda encapsulated by the slogan ‘New International Economic Order’ which would entail permanent national sovereignty over natural resources.²⁷ The UN Group of 77 (f. 1968) – a coalition of developing countries whose numbers quickly climbed to well over a hundred – vigorously pushed this agenda as new member states challenged the meaning of development and who should control it. African nationalists, with their supporters in European metropolises, attacked what became widely known as ‘neo-colonialism’, prompted by their fear that hard fought-for political independence would not be matched

economically.²⁸ These new anti-colonial critiques added to the pressures to measure aid effectiveness. As the UN was planning the Second Development Decade, the need to scrutinise development projects was not only more widely acknowledged but increasingly politicised.²⁹

The Phenomenon of the ‘Big Survey’

In response to the de-legitimization of colonialism, and its contestations internationally and on the ground, a spate of ‘Big Surveys’ of development were commissioned starting in the late-1960s and continuing through to the mid-1970s. Some of these surveys focused upon the development process generally, others more specifically on NGO activity. One contemporary went so far as to speak of ‘an explosion of reports about development problems’.³⁰ The phenomenon of so many survey reports appearing at once is noteworthy. They were widely debated at the time and quickly acquired a collective significance that transcended their individual impacts, even if they have since received curiously little scholarly attention.

The ‘Big Surveys’ need to be addressed collectively as they had shared concerns. In 1967, ICVA and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) compiled the ‘Directory Development Aid of Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organisations’. This survey was followed in 1968 by ICVA’s ‘Repertory of Africa’s NGOs’. In the same year, ICVA produced a major compilation on ‘Assistance to African Refugees by Voluntary Organizations’ – refugee crises were among the most pressing of humanitarian crises that marked the end of empire and they rapidly morphed into development challenges.³¹ Two further, and more controversial, surveys commissioned by international organisations were published in 1969: the Pearson Report for the World Bank,³² and the Jackson Report for the United Nations Development Programme.³³ Then, in 1970, a report was published by the American government on ‘U.S. Foreign Assistance in the 1970s: A New Approach—Report to the President from the Task Force on International Development’,³⁴ as well as a report on

Latin America for the Inter-American Development Bank.³⁵ In 1971, the UN Food and Agricultural Organisation published 'An Assessment of Co-operation in Freedom from Hunger Campaign Field Projects'.³⁶ Individual NGOs were also busy conducting their own appraisals. Oxfam appointed an inaugural aid appraiser in 1968³⁷ and in 1972 Save the Children instituted a review of its work.³⁸ An even bigger undertaking was the 1975 Tansley Report for the International Red Cross.³⁹

This, then, was a period when many prominent international organisations were beginning to ask searching questions of themselves – how effectively was aid administered, and was the disappointment of the time justified? The World Bank 'Partners in Development' report spoke of 'a point of crisis', with the climate surrounding foreign aid programs 'heavy with disillusion and distrust'.⁴⁰ Both the Pearson and Jackson reports were coruscatingly critical of their respective agencies, while the Tansley report went so far as to suggest that many Red Cross community development projects were a waste of money. To be sure, these 'Big Surveys' did not seek or serve to undermine underlying assumptions about the need for Western-led development;⁴¹ they did nonetheless feed a frenzy of self-examination.

Differing views emerged within international organisations as to how to navigate and negotiate their way from a late-colonial to a post-colonial world. By the 1960s, the nerve-centre of humanitarian action was shifting from Europe towards Africa just as the Global South was ramping up its call for a decolonisation of the systems and structures that delivered international aid. After 1945 international organisations and NGOs had gradually assumed a much larger, and in many ways unforeseen, role in world affairs. Yet their Western origins and orientation were increasingly regarded as problematic. An agency like UNHCR, mindful of its lack of experience in Africa, was initially reluctant to involve itself on the continent. For others, the quest for favoured relationships and the goodwill of post-colonial leaders was more deliberately if tentatively sought. In 1962, Samuel Gonard, member of the Presidential

Council of the world's largest aid agency, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), went to Africa to enquire into the organisation's presence there. His aim was to try to move the ICRC away from being a predominantly European organisation.⁴² Yet, over a decade later, the ICRC's standing with the Global South was still very much an issue. As the Tansley Report noted: 'the Red Cross also has a problem of attitudes ... National Societies in the Third World are increasingly unhappy with the lack of non-European relief personnel and with the necessity of accepting delegates from donor Societies (or the League) in order to receive material assistance'.⁴³ A post-war generation of international organisations, many of whose leaders continued to exhibit a highly paternalistic and sometimes blatantly racist streak, struggled to reposition themselves as more representative of the populations in Africa, Asia and Latin America, the very places where their geographical footprint was expanding.⁴⁴

ICVA's 'Repertory of Africa's NGOs'

ICVA was a major coordinating body for NGOs which had consultative status at the United Nations. Created in March 1962, as a merger of the 1922 Conference of NGOs Interested in Migration, the 1948 Standing Committee of Voluntary Organisations Working for Refugees, and the 1959 International Committee for World Refugee Year, the organisation quickly expanded from emergency relief into broader issues of development.⁴⁵ Funding came through annual subscriptions, donor governments, private foundations (such as the Ford Foundation), and the World Bank. Operating through a General Conference, Governing Board and series of Programme Commissions, ICVA presented itself an "international confederation and clearing house" for over a hundred citizens' voluntary associations, albeit more Anglophone than Francophone – its composition reflected the agendas of the bigger agencies in the US and UK.⁴⁶ ICVA's particular involvement with NGOs focusing on refugee relief led to a formalised relationship with the UNHCR.⁴⁷ In 1968, ICVA ambitiously described itself as 'a practical organ of cooperation for the entire non-governmental world' whose role was to

‘assist the voluntary agencies as and when possible in the betterment and growth of their programmes’.⁴⁸ The 1967 OECD-ICVA ‘Directory Development Aid of Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organisations’ focused on NGOs based in OECD member countries and provided information about their funding, projects, staff, membership, publications and cooperation with other agencies.⁴⁹ The following year ICVA compiled a smaller but more in-depth study about twenty international NGOs working with refugees in Africa.⁵⁰ Both of these surveys shared the same limitation: they comprised international NGOs only.

By contrast, ICVA’s Repertory mapped NGOs by recipient country. It is the only study of which we are aware which pays close attention to local, small-scale African NGOs as well as to international organisations. While the majority of the other ‘Big Surveys’ flatten the diversity across the African continent by looking at development from a donor perspective, ICVA’s Repertory focuses on the distribution of NGOs and their activities at the country level.

Cyril Ritchie, Executive Director of ICVA from 1964 to 1978, recalled in a recent interview that the Repertory was part of a concerted move away from ICVA’s initial focus on European refugees to a broader concern with long-term African development.⁵¹ According to Ritchie, ICVA’s ambition was to establish itself as an authority on NGOs working in Africa and a repository of knowledge of their involvement on the continent.⁵² To that end, ICVA sought to provide ‘a more comprehensive picture’ about ‘the handling of developmental aid in the developing countries themselves’.⁵³ The Repertory provides unique insights into who was engaged with development, where, and in what capacity. Max Braude, Chairman of the ICVA Commission on Social and Economic Development, later commented: ‘[the report] produced a remarkably useful reference work filling a major gap in our knowledge of social, humanitarian and developmental work in Africa’.⁵⁴

There were four steps to gathering the data. From June 1967, project staff asked people from Africa, Europe and North America to provide the names and addresses of all the NGOs working in Africa of which they knew. This process furnished more than 3,000 organisations.⁵⁵ Project staff then cut down this list, based on their definition of an NGO (see below), and sent out a 4-page questionnaire. From August, the team began evaluating and classifying the data they received.⁵⁶ Hence, at its most comprehensive, the Repertory details funding structures, partner organisations, managers, founding dates and types of activity. None of this information is to be found elsewhere. Even when NGOs did not respond the Repertory details their presence and location. The inclusion of so many and varied organisations distinguishes the Repertory from any of the other studies of the period, and it is the only known 'Big Survey' to feature locally formed indigenous African NGOs. Significantly, we know considerably more about the compiling of this particular survey than the other 'Big Surveys' of the period; inter alia, this means it is clearer how the process of collecting the information shaped the data collected.⁵⁷

The Repertory contains comprehensive data on 1,839 NGOs. Specifically, to provide a detailed assessment of the first wave, we coded each entry in the Repertory by country-of-origin, the type of NGO, the activities of each NGO and the date when each NGO was established. The painstaking task of data coding, which was completed over several months, is the basis of the empirical evidence detailing the extent, growth, form, source and host countries that we present below.

Like all other surveys, the Repertory had to face the question of how to define a non-governmental organisation. ICVA used a 'liberal' interpretation.⁵⁸ 'Non-governmental' and 'non-profit making' were the key criteria. Whether NGOs were voluntary was not a concern.⁵⁹ ICVA's was a very wide definition, therefore, including churches, student unions, boy scouts and self-help groups.⁶⁰ The Repertory, moreover, helpfully focuses on operational

NGOs as well as funding bodies – a vital distinction yet one which a new historiography on NGOs is largely silent upon. Funding NGOs did not act on-the-ground but channelled money through others. Oxfam in this period was a predominantly funding body with branches in four African countries only. Most of Oxfam's money was channelled through other agencies, including missions, other NGOs, and international organisations.⁶¹ By contrast, operational NGOs were active in delivery, interacting with the communities in which they were working. Hybrid NGOs were operational as well as funding other agencies. Catholic Relief Services, with an impressive biannual income of around US \$260m in 1969 and a presence in 25 countries, is a good example, albeit somewhat neglected by scholars.⁶² In addition to distributing foodstuffs and nutritional supplements among other activities, Catholic Relief Services provided funding to other bodies.⁶³

This distinction between funding and operational NGOs is critical for it explains how the NGO system actually worked in Africa in the 1960s. Only by recognising the distinction can we truly comprehend the growing presence of indigenous African NGOs – organisations which until now appear to have been hiding in plain sight in the archive. How do we explain the neglect of these 'subaltern NGOs'? Certainly there has been a long-standing predisposition to focus on wealthier Western NGOs and, by extension, to sometimes mistake the establishment of a recognised international NGO presence for a solution to the problems that presence was intended to address. But local, regional and national NGOs, however occluded in the historiography, were the very bodies with access to and understanding of the rural communities through which international organisations were often compelled to work. Their role in delivering development aid (as well as emergency relief) was expanding and they were not simply creatures of the Global North. Rather, indigenous African NGOs were a response to social change 'on the ground', whether the disruption of existing networks arising through land loss, forced displacements of population and rapid urbanisation, or the

politicisation of society via new expectations of what the post-colonial state could and should be delivering in terms of welfare. The selective gaze of development historians is testimony to how easily we can fall prey to the view that it was NGOs from the Global North and international efforts which drove mainstream development policy and practice, at the expense of marginalising local organisations and NGO activists from the Global South.⁶⁴

In reality, however, a single (Western) funding NGO would not uncommonly be working with a range of operational (Southern) NGOs, at local, regional and national levels. Looking exclusively at a single, invariably international, funding body risks exaggerating their role in wider NGO networks comprised of multiple rural, self-help and voluntary organisations each with their own development agendas and goals. The analogy of the iceberg is apt here. Western international NGOs, above the waterline, were the more visible. But below the waterline existed a plethora of locally- and regionally-controlled groups, seeking to strengthen community structures, to differing degrees dependent on ‘external NGOs’ for funding, and entering into complex relationships with the development programmes pursued by post-colonial governments.

More importantly, we should not fall into the trap of assuming that the relationship between international funding NGOs and local operational NGOs was one-way or transactional. If indigenous NGOs were shaped by international ideas of welfare and development, international NGOs were shaped by local ideas and practices too. Indeed, funders’ agendas could be adapted, reinterpreted and even subverted by those engaged in on-the-ground anti-poverty work, who saw themselves as grassroots promoters of development and agents of social change in their own right and not merely as implementing partners.⁶⁵ By the 1960s, the breakdown of pre-existing welfare structures – originating from the colonial era – created the space for new forms of community activism and new types of rural organisation which were sometimes complicit with yet at other times constituted a

counterpoint to the large-scale, top-down modernisation pursued by late-colonial and post-colonial states. We do not know exactly how many NGOs fitted into the funder, operational or hybrid categories.⁶⁶ What we do know is that the Repertory distinctively focuses on operational NGOs.⁶⁷

The First Wave of NGO Expansion: When, Where and Why?

NGOs were present in Africa well before the 1950s.⁶⁸ The earliest recorded NGO was the Society of Friends (Quakers), set up in South Africa in 1728. Most of these NGOs were either churches and missions or branches of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA). Missions in particular played a substantial role in service provision across Africa; they were key players in the early colonial voluntary sphere. Other types of religious NGOs had yet to make an equivalent contribution, even if the presence of the YMCA, YWCA and Salvation Army was expanding by the early-twentieth century.

Figure 1 presents the growth of the total number of NGOs in Africa from the 1700s to the late 1960s; data is based on founding date as reported in the Repertory. Ideally we would have reported on a wider range of metrics to capture the growth and presence of NGOs (for example, on numbers of staff and branches, funding etc) but since this data is only sporadically recorded in the Repertory, our focus is on the number of NGOs. As Figure 1 highlights, these numbers markedly increased during the 1950s and 1960s. From 1950 to 1959 around 160 NGOs were established across Africa, a four-fold increase on the previous decade. The 1960s saw nearly an additional 180 NGOs. Figure 2 profiles the first wave in more detail. The years from 1957 witnessed the fastest expansion. Almost half of the Repertory's NGOs were formed after this date. The inextricable connection between the first wave of NGO expansion and the advent of decolonisation is captured by this data. NGOs did not simply fill the void left by decolonisation, however. Nor was the moment of

independence always the catalyst to their arrival. 332 NGOs began their work pre-independence, 26 in the year of that country's independence, and 106 afterwards.⁶⁹ The Repertory therefore opens up important questions about the role of NGOs in the broader dynamics of the collapse of colonial rule. It is strongly suggestive of a situation whereby humanitarian aid helped to beget decolonisation (for example, by exposing the actions of Europe's colonial powers to greater external scrutiny) as well as decolonisation triggering the formation of new non-governmental organisations.

--FIGURE 1 HERE--

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Figure 3 separates international NGOs from indigenous African NGOs over this expansionary period. Although the former outnumbered the latter, the growth (numerically and in percentage terms) of African NGOs is striking. 20 international NGOs were founded in the 1940s, rising to over 70 between 1950 and 1959. Contrast this with the growth in indigenous African NGOs which increased 6-fold from 10 NGOs from 1940-1949 to around 60 during the 1950s. More than half of these African NGOs were in (former) British colonies, with the largest numbers in Nigeria (13) and Kenya (9). Hence a salient feature of this first wave of NGO expansion is not just the absolute increase in NGOs but the expanding presence of indigenous African NGOs. Two further points are worthy of note here. First, indigenous African NGOs were not branches of international NGOs but formed independently, even though a significant number may have had an affiliation with international organisations.⁷⁰ Second, it is likely that due to the nature of data collection,⁷¹ respondents did not have the same knowledge of indigenous African NGOs as they did of European and American organisations; as such, the number of African NGOs is likely under-recorded. In summary, decolonisation had a double effect: an influx of international agencies moved into Africa from abroad, and a new spate of NGOs were set up within Africa itself.⁷²

--FIGURE 3 HERE--

The Repertory reveals exactly where NGOs were active. Former colonies of Britain dominate the data reported in Table 1. In fact, the top 5 host countries were all former British colonies; together they account for 553 NGOs and represent 30 per cent of the total. The large number of international NGOs of British origin helps to explain why this was the case: Britain as a colonial power was more open to British-based NGOs within its territory. While British (former) colonies typically had the largest number of NGOs, French (former) colonies were not far behind. This is interesting. The stronger Francophone emphasis on the state as the provider of welfare – compared to the public-private mix of British colonies – might be expected to have resulted in a smaller number of NGOs. This was not the case.⁷³ Those with fewest NGOs were a number of islands and small states as well as states still under colonial rule.⁷⁴

The openness of different European colonial powers to NGOs operating within their colonies is a factor the historiography is largely silent upon. Recent scholarship rightly sees colonial ties as a major factor in determining the footprint of post-war NGOs across African territories.⁷⁵ However, the continuing colonial situation and recent colonial past cannot explain everything for there were significant variations across the African continent. Figure 4 presents a more granular view of the distribution of NGOs across colonies. 51 per cent (935 in total) of NGOs documented in the Repertory were based in (former) British colonies compared with 30 per cent (546) based in (former) French colonies. Belgium had 7 per cent of NGOs based in its (former) colonies; Italy and Portugal were lower (2 and 1 per cent respectively). In the case of Portugal, we can speculate that this was the result of on-going violent counter-insurgency campaigns and the impact of white minority regimes. Nevertheless, the variance across European colonial powers, including the marked

Portuguese reluctance to allow NGOs to form in their colonies or to enter from outside, merits more attention.

--TABLE 1 HERE—

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International NGOs

After 1945 international NGOs had to grapple with rapid shifts in relative power comprised of pressures exerted by late-colonial states and the realities of African decolonisation interlaced with intensifying East-West rivalries and the global character of the Cold War. The range of positions they adopted towards liberation movements spanned a spectrum from distant sympathy and paternalistic charity, to pragmatic accommodation and professional mediation, to critical solidarity and committed support.⁷⁶ For the most part, it was not until the eve of independence, if not after, that international NGOs displayed any marked sympathy and solidarity with African liberation movements or switched their allegiances to nationalist politicians. Even then, the range of relationships NGOs constructed with post-colonial states, as they sought to carve out political space in which to act, is striking,⁷⁷ stretching from hostility towards any formal association to full-throated support. The majority sat on a spectrum somewhere in between.

1,069 (58 per cent) of the 1,839 NGOs tracked down by the Repertory were international NGOs. Many if not all of the larger European and American organisations (including Oxfam, Catholic Relief Services, Caritas and Freedom from Hunger) rapidly expanded their remit beyond Europe after 1945. Not surprisingly, they have left a bigger imprint upon the archives than many other types of non-governmental organisation.⁷⁸ As Thompson observes: ‘the geographical spread of humanitarian action, [occurred] via territorial pathways forged by colonialism’.⁷⁹ Others highlight the significance of colonial connections either by reference to the personnel moving from colonial services to

international NGOs, or by focusing on individual Western NGOs which favoured the (former) empires of their country of origin.⁸⁰ What we learn from ICVA's Repertory, however, is exactly how these colonial connections shaped NGO distribution. More specifically, we are able to see where international NGOs were most active in Africa and which particular African countries had the most international NGOs.

The Repertory provides a firmer statistical basis for the assumption that Britain and France, with the largest colonial African empires, had the largest NGO presence. NGOs that originated in Britain were by far the most prominent (353 in total), followed by those from France (249) and the United States (189). Notably, NGOs from Britain and France make up around 56 per cent of total international NGOs. Just how far the NGO presence is skewed towards these two European powers is indicative of the significance of colonialism. Their colonial pasts furnished deep and substantial connections for NGOs to build upon, including language, religion, personnel, as well as broader social and economic structures. NGOs from one colonial power could even prove reluctant to work beyond their home country's colonies: Oxfam's leaders in the late 1960s were somewhat hesitant to get involved in former French West Africa precisely because they still perceived the region as a French sphere of influence.⁸¹

--TABLE 2 HERE--

Figures 5-7 shed further light on the importance of colonial ties in countries in which international NGOs were active. French, British and Portuguese NGOs mostly targeted their own (former) colonies. 73 per cent of French-based NGOs were based in (former) French colonies (Figure 5); the corresponding figure for Britain is 69 per cent (Figure 6). The importance of colonial ties was noticeably weaker in the case of Belgian (former) colonies, with only 30 per cent sourced from the mother country (Figure 7).

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The Repertory has the potential therefore to prize open our (still) very bordered understanding of European colonialism and its demise. The data we present certainly adds weight to the recent historiographical emphasis on colonial connections. At the same time, our findings considerably complicate how we actually understand these connections. True, most British and French NGOs operated in their (former) colonies. If we switch our perspective, however, to look from the perspective of African countries (Table 3) a different story emerges. Non-governmental organisations from former metropolises were typically not the majority. Indeed, less than half of the international NGOs in Africa in 1967 were cases of (former) colonial powers operating in (former) colonies: 54 per cent were from other countries. Furthermore, the pattern across individual African states differs significantly. In Algeria, half of the international NGOs were from France, half from elsewhere; in Congo (Kinshasa) 5 were from Belgium, 43 from elsewhere; in Senegal, 28 were from France, 8 from elsewhere; in Rhodesia, 42 were from Britain, 21 elsewhere. ICVA's Repertory records that French (former) colonies had the highest proportion of NGOs originating in the metropole and Belgian former colonies the lowest (Table 3).

--TABLE 3 HERE—

The growing presence of international NGOs from beyond the colonial metropole is a vital if poorly understood aspect of the first wave of NGO expansion. There were two distinct types of NGO in question: those from European colonial powers expanding their footprint beyond their own empires, and those moving into Africa from powers that had not possessed African colonies.⁸² Figure 8 provides a time profile of the entry of international NGOs. Of the total, close to 46 per cent were from former colonial metropolises; 20 per cent from

colonial powers working beyond their own empire and 34 per cent from non-colonial countries. Hence the latter two categories when combined (54 per cent) outweigh the former (46 per cent).

After 1945, NGOs from countries with no history of colonialism in Africa were expanding their footprint in the continent. To be sure, this process was triggered not only by decolonisation but predates the Second World War. Nonetheless, for the first half of the twentieth century, international NGOs in any given African colony, not tied to the relevant colonial metropole, were more commonly NGOs from colonial powers working outside their own empires. After 1945 – and especially during the first wave of NGO expansion – the presence of non-governmental organisations from countries without a history of formal colonialism in Africa increased far more rapidly. The year of the ICVA survey – 1968 – is likely to have been significant in this regard. Well into the 1960s, it was generally expected that the majority of ex-colonies would in various ways remain tied to their old European masters. By the end of the decade, this assumption had been punctured if not entirely falsified. The context for the provision of development aid was shifting as foreign aid, especially that provided by the United States, became ‘a tool for fortifying the world against Communist expansion’.⁸³ The proliferation of non-colonial power NGOs occurred at precisely the moment when the West was waking up to Soviet bloc activity in Africa, Cold War competition was intensifying, and the need to promote the values of liberty, democracy and free markets was more acutely felt. The Soviet Union’s entry into the development arena in the second half of the 1950s enhanced the sense of East-West rivalry in the developing world even though it was primarily driven through state apparatus rather than NGOs – there were only 7 NGOs recorded in the Repertory which had been founded in Russia.

--FIGURE 8 HERE—

Figures 5-7 point to the sizeable proportion of British and French NGOs active beyond the boundaries of their (former) empires. Belgian NGOs in particular were more active in other parts of Africa than in their own former colonies. We can partly if not wholly explain this colony crossing by NGOs through pre-existing patterns of missionary and church activity, where borders were far less decisive. Missions rarely aligned with colonial empires, nor were they necessarily staffed just from one country. Neither the British nor French limited access to their own missions by nationality.⁸⁴

Of those NGOs originating in countries with no African colonies, a high number came from Germany (with Caritas active in many countries) and Switzerland (largely because of the Red Cross). America was the most significant, however. The US had the third largest NGO presence across the continent, in all but 8 countries (see Table 2). Two of the most prominent international NGOs were American: Freedom from Hunger and Catholic Relief Services, and together they make up a major part of the American presence. Where did American NGOs gravitate? The quirks of politics that gave one country more of an internal communist threat than another was a significant factor if by no means the only one.⁸⁵ The promotion of American interests abroad via so-called PVOs or ‘Private Voluntary Organisations’ was also weighted towards Anglophone Africa. South Africa and Ethiopia had the most American NGOs, and there was a strong American presence in Liberia where historic American ties are worth noting. There is a clear correlation between American-based NGOs and (former) British colonies. Figure 9 shows more than 50 per cent of American NGOs were based in (former) British colonies: the ten countries with the most US NGOs were all (former) British colonies. These countries, when independent or under British control, were more welcoming to American organisations. The American interest in Africa was increasing with decolonisation coupled to Cold War concerns.⁸⁶ It was by no means

limited to NGOs. American volunteerism more broadly challenged the European colonial powers' dominance and offered an alternative source of support for independent African states.⁸⁷

To summarise: countries that had not possessed African colonies or engaged in formal colonialism are a vital if under-recognised component of the first wave of African NGO expansion. The fact that so many NGOs from countries that were not colonial powers were active in Africa after 1945 begs the question of 'colonialism without colonies'. We need to know much more about the actual behaviours of these Western-based international NGOs and their activities on-the-ground. Only then can we establish whether even those European countries – as well as the United States – without formal colonies can be nevertheless considered part of a wider development project, anchored in a set of largely scientific and technocratic assumptions which extended the precepts and practices of the late-colonial period into the post-independence era.⁸⁸

--FIGURE 9 HERE--

When looking at the complexion of NGOs in any given African country, the Repertory, therefore, gives us a much clearer line of sight upon the relative importance of colonial metropolises compared with other European colonial powers and countries that had not been colonial powers in Africa. In the absence of such data, the assumed primacy of formal colonial connections has been the dominant narrative. But the Repertory reminds us of the dangers of over-reliance on the official colonial archive when studying NGO activity. The end of the age of great territorial empires certainly shaped the context for NGO expansion. International organisations of many kinds were able to ride on top of and kick on from the connections forged by Europe's colonial powers, and even to take those connections to a new level of intensity and importance. That said, a much larger view is required to relate decolonisation to the historic changes in the post-war international order of which the first

wave of NGO expansion was an integral part. To differing degrees, Anglophone, Francophone and Lusophone worlds all conditioned the spatial distribution of NGOs. The post-colonial phase of globalisation must, however, be seen as more of a process than an outcome. Connectedness was uneven and irregular: it is not explicable simply in terms of relations between coloniser and colonised. Rather, post-war NGO expansion shows how the ‘imperial’ paved the way for, overlapped with and, for a while, considerably complicated the emergence of an international sphere. Judged by NGO activity at least, the boundaries between different European empires – and between those empires and other major powers – were becoming increasingly blurred.

Faith-Based NGOs

Faith-based organisations occupy centre stage in any consideration of the first wave of NGO expansion in Africa. The Repertory includes churches as well as missions. While NGO research tends to conflate missions with other religious groups, missions are a minority of the total number of ‘churches, missions and national Christian executives’ recorded in the Repertory. If missions and churches had a long presence in Africa, there was significant growth in their numbers from the 1950s, likely accelerated by their response to the UN Freedom from Hunger Campaign in the early 1960s (see Figure 10). Of all NGOs, 42.4 per cent were recorded as Christian, compared to 55 per cent with no specified religion, around 1 per cent non-Christian religions, and between 1 and 2 per cent undetermined.⁸⁹ Christian NGOs encompassed many different types: international missions and churches; African independent churches; African organisations which were Christian in origin or targeted Christians; and international NGOs inspired by their Christian faith.⁹⁰ By the 1960s, most international Christian organisations involved in development did not exclusively target their own faith community, even if denomination impacted their choices of activity and/or beneficiary.⁹¹ Of the international NGOs with Christian origins, it is worth noting the

geographical reach of specific faith-based NGOs: Catholic Relief Services (with a presence in 25 countries), YMCA (18 countries) and YWCA (14 countries), the Society of St Vincent de Paul (18 countries), and the Salvation Army (9 countries). Explicitly religious organisations were therefore among the most prominent of international NGOs throughout the decades of decolonisation. Some of these organisations also saw themselves as distinct from more secular NGOs, not least as regards their experience of living with – and sympathy for – the African populations among whom they worked.⁹²

--FIGURE 10 HERE--

What made faith-based NGOs distinct? First, they were able to tap into global religious networks of giving and advocacy, networks that provided substantial donor support as well as links to wider religious communities. Second, faith-based organisations were often key partners through which ‘funding NGOs’ channelled their aid. For example, working with missions was the primary strategy of Christian Aid and often Oxfam, as each sought to expand their respective footprints in Africa after 1945.⁹³

In ICVA’s view, missions and churches *were* NGOs and, as such, fully engaged in development. David Maxwell argues that with decolonisation churches in Africa were ‘NGO-ised’; by which he means they were drawn increasingly into development activity.⁹⁴ Maxwell carefully charts how access to international development funds became essential to faith-based NGO’s post-colonial presence.⁹⁵ He is not the only scholar to do so.⁹⁶ By enhancing their role in basic welfare service provision, religious groups of many kinds involved themselves in a far wider range of state-like activity. It is tempting to portray this as a ‘hangover’ from the colonial era when missions and churches were themselves crucial providers of education and healthcare. The range and type of activities were expanding, however, into intermediate and secondary schooling, youth projects, orphanages, transportation, water and power supply, housing, and the distribution of foodstuffs and

nutritional supplements. Faith-based NGOs were, then, widening their remit of welfare activity well beyond traditional colonial roles.

In many African countries, missions and churches made up a sizeable part of the overall NGO presence. Of those included in the survey, 98 had their origins in Africa. In twenty-six countries, missions and churches account for over 20 per cent of their total NGOs, and for sixteen countries, over 30 per cent (Figure 11).⁹⁷ As the survey comprised only ‘major representatives’, meaning smaller organisations were left out, the amount of church-based work in the field of development is likely underestimated.

--FIGURE 11 HERE--

The Repertory provides data by denomination. For NGOs recorded as Christian (around 42 per cent of the total), Figure 12 gives the breakdown. The predominance of Catholicism is immediately apparent: 42 per cent of the Christian NGOs were Catholic, as opposed to 26 per cent Protestant. The focus of much NGO research on British organisations probably exaggerates the Protestant trajectory. Catholic NGOs were equally key actors. This can be traced back to the prominence of the Catholic Church during the colonial era, when a number of significant missionary societies, such as the White Fathers and Jesuits, were very active across Africa.⁹⁸ It may also relate to the expansion of Catholic schools within missions in the late-colonial period, from which a growing African middle class employed as doctors, teachers, and officials emerged.⁹⁹ All but one of the NGOs from Spain were Catholic, all of them from Ireland, almost half from Portugal, and 20 of 23 from Italy. 38 per cent of NGOs from France were Catholic, with just 5 per cent Protestant, while 11 per cent of British NGOs were Catholic and 14 per cent Protestant.

Whereas Protestant churches led the expansion of humanitarian activity in Africa in the 1920s and 1930s, Catholic affiliated organisations took a more engaged stance from the 1950s. In Anglophone Africa, Catholic NGOs were more likely to be supportive of liberation

struggles and theology. Furthermore, the organisational structure and centralised framework of the Catholic Church meant that, as regards emergency relief operations, scale was more readily reached. Church education also figured prominently in the modernization plans of several post-colonial states. It is a moot point whether Catholics ran more schools and hospitals than Protestants as part of social service of missions. Some historians suggest this may have been so. By the 1960s, international Catholic organisations linked to *Caritas*, like the Catholic Relief Services (American), Secours Catholique (French), and Misericordia (German), were key to strengthening the Catholic humanitarian position in Africa.¹⁰⁰ Catholic Relief Services, as one of the larger American aid agencies, expanded its operations quite dramatically after the 1950s, as it professionalised its operations and attracted more government funding, especially subsidies in food.¹⁰¹ In addition, it may be significant that the Repertory was conducted not long after the Second Vatican Council (1962-5), a gathering which placed increased emphasis on the relationship between human rights and development.¹⁰² Finally, it is possible that the larger number of Catholic converts across Africa¹⁰³ is reflected in the number of Catholic NGOs.¹⁰⁴

--FIGURE 12 HERE--

A very small number of Islamic NGOs are recorded in ICVA's Repertory. Given the religious make-up of the continent, a higher number would be expected. Yet only five countries are listed as hosting Islamic NGOs: Morocco, Nigeria, Tanzania, Tunisia, and Uganda. (Those in East Africa were specifically for Asian populations.) It is possible that many Islamic organisations did not consider themselves NGOs. The role of charity in the Islamic faith is certainly wider than the NGO sector. John Iliffe points to a strong tradition of Islamic charity in Africa, yet largely based on individual giving rather than institutionalised.¹⁰⁵ Moreover, although privately endowed, the Islamic waqf tradition, strong in North Africa, is usually seen by scholars as institutionalised but is not captured by the

Repertory. Islamic NGOs are most probably under-recorded therefore.¹⁰⁶ Information was collected through personal and institutional channels and those gathering the data unlikely had equivalent access to Muslim networks as they did to Christian. They may not have considered Islamic organisations and mosques to be NGOs in the way that they thought of missions and churches, even when engaged in similar types of community activity. Recent research suggests Islamic NGOs were increasingly important after 1945,¹⁰⁷ but their presence in all of the ‘Big Surveys’ – ICVA’s included – was limited.

This neglect of Islamic NGOs arguably speaks to a deeper truth. Islam’s ‘humanitarian imperative’ was conceived differently from the western or colonial model upon which it nevertheless drew. As Faisal Devji observes, sacrificial acts of humanitarianism expressed the universal character of Muslim brotherhood; they built upon Islamic forms of internationalism, repudiating racial and other sectional loyalties, while portraying a global Muslim community as humanity in miniature.¹⁰⁸ The marginalisation of Islamic NGOs in all of the ‘Big Surveys’ thus reopens basic yet fundamental questions of who were deemed to be the humanitarians? And who determined the recipients of aid? At a time when the proper boundaries of relief and development were up for grabs, Christianity continued to be a major mobiliser of public sympathy and solidarity, yet arguably by channelling such feelings towards certain faith groups and away from others.

Indigenous African NGOs

More than anything else, the inclusion of indigenous, rural African NGOs makes ICVA’s Repertory unique. No other ‘Big Survey’ of the period registers the substantial presence of NGOs set up by and for Africans so painstakingly or precisely. Through the first wave of NGO expansion, Africans forged new humanitarian spaces more firmly under their control and more readily adapted to their needs. This is not, however, the impression conveyed by much of the literature which by fixating on northern NGOs privileges a narrative of ‘saving

the South'. Scant attention is paid to the partnerships through which NGOs in the North and South frequently worked together,¹⁰⁹ partnerships that nevertheless lay at the heart of relations between funding bodies and operational groups.¹¹⁰

'Indigenous African NGOs' are here defined as those founded in Africa and first and foremost accountable to African society.¹¹¹ Such an assertion of African agency became more characteristic of a rapidly expanding NGO sector during decolonisation. Through creating their own non-governmental organisations, Africans asserted their right to shape development agendas. African NGOs were therefore a signal of intent. Africans rejected notions of European tutelage and instead asserted themselves through a variety of non-state structures which they themselves had created. In that sense, indigenous African NGOs acted in ways not dissimilar to the movement for Independent African Churches, from which many had indeed sprung.¹¹²

The birth of the post-colonial, indigenous African NGO reflected a desire for greater accountability to local populations. Although operating within a world of Western ideas and institutions, African NGOs sought to move beyond a colonial position of marginality and inferiority.¹¹³ They could (and did) challenge the legitimacy of international organisations, determined as they were to show that Africans could speak for, organise and assist themselves. Their focus on 'self-help' was a riposte to the idea that development was something to be done to Africans.¹¹⁴

Post-independence African governments took a strong interest in NGOs, whether external or home-grown. For nearly or newly independent African states, making a reality of their sovereignty and exercising control over the levers of state power were key policy priorities. Hence African political leaders increasingly involved themselves in the decisions of NGOs as regards to where to work, among which communities to work, and whether to work through official channels.¹¹⁵

Different schools of thought have recently emerged as regards the precise nature of the relationship between post-colonial African states and post-war NGOs. While there is broad consensus that NGOs opened up new civic spaces for humanitarian action, scholars disagree on the central question of who was dependent upon whom. One view is that post-colonial states came to rely heavily on NGOs to deliver basic services. This is even said to have been true in the wake of independence when new sovereignties were highly-prized.¹¹⁶ Scholars of this persuasion also highlight the danger of drawing too stark a distinction between services provided by the state and by voluntary bodies. They go on to argue that NGOs, indigenous and international, were part and parcel of the development apparatus of African states and that this remained true through to the 1980s.¹¹⁷ A contrary view sees NGOs often becoming ensnared by the apparatus of post-colonial states. For example, in Tanzania and Upper Volta (Burkina Faso), the state set out to exercise tight control over non-state organisations.¹¹⁸ In practice, it is possible to see both of these trends at work. Michael Jennings, for example, shows how Oxfam and other NGOs became ‘surrogates of the state’ in 1960s Tanzania.¹¹⁹ The Tanzanian state needed the input of NGOs to achieve its development goals. Yet by offering their support, NGOs in Tanzania were incorporated into the state’s development apparatus.¹²⁰

The Repertory numbers 291 indigenous African NGOs. There are also 479 of undetermined origin, the majority of which were likely founded in Africa.¹²¹ This means that a sizeable proportion – up to 40 per cent – of the NGOs in ICVA’s Repertory had their origins in Africa. Meanwhile, the number of NGOs founded in African countries varies considerably across the continent. Nigeria had 52, Uganda 26, Kenya 19, South Africa 18, Tanzania 14, Congo (Kinshasa) 12 and Rhodesia 12, while all other countries had fewer than 10.¹²² Nine countries had no African NGOs recorded (or none where it is conclusive).

Looking at indigenous African NGOs across the continent, it is worth noting that one third were related to churches or national Christian executives.

A core aim of the Repertory was to examine what type of development activity African NGOs were undertaking. That they did not simply concern themselves with emergency relief is immediately apparent.¹²³ For international NGOs, relief and refugee assistance accounted for only 4 per cent of total activity and, for indigenous African NGOs, 2 per cent. Figures 13 and 14 summarise the data. The top five most common forms of activity were shared: education, healthcare, community development, vocational training, and agriculture.¹²⁴ Together, they account for 80 per cent of total activity for international NGOs and for indigenous African NGOs. However, the order of priority differed somewhat: indigenous African NGOs placed greater emphasis on education, which accounted for 25 per cent of total activities compared with 18 per cent for international NGOs. Many newly-independent African states considered education a matter of human rights as well as development. With growing numbers of educated unemployed, vocational training also gained prominence.¹²⁵ Indeed the Pearson Report viewed a lack of education and trained personnel as Africa's primary problem.¹²⁶

--FIGURE 13 HERE--

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The Repertory provides the only detailed data we currently have on the composition of staff employed by NGOs.¹²⁷ This data casts new light upon the critical question of Africanisation and how far this agenda had progressed in the NGO sector by the mid-1960s. For newly independent states, an important way of making a reality of hard fought-for independence was through Africanising their personnel. Meanwhile for many international organisations,¹²⁸ responding dynamically to this agenda was a vital way of demonstrating their commitment to new ways of working in which Africans were not viewed as inferior.

From ICVA's Repertory we learn that the Africanisation of NGO staff was some way in advance of the Africanisation of leadership. Across all NGOs, the total proportion of African staff was 90 per cent, with 10 per cent only expatriates. It is likely that these figures would have been markedly different a decade earlier.

After 1945 Africanisation progressed noticeably in several African NGOs. The organisation with the largest number of African staff was Jeunesse agricole et rurale catholique in Madagascar, which claimed 5,000 staff, none of whom were expatriates. This NGO had its origins in France, but by the time of the survey it was fully Africanised. Notably, 34 per cent of all African NGOs employed no expatriate staff whatsoever. However, if we contrast this figure with NGO leadership and management, progress was considerably less advanced. We know from the experience of National Red Cross Societies that the Africanising of humanitarian leadership was frequently slow and patchy, especially in countries where there were substantial minorities of white settlers.¹²⁹ The Repertory reveals that 38 per cent of NGOs had black African managers. It is worth highlighting here that the proportion run by black Africans was appreciably higher among the indigenous African NGOs than among the international NGOs: 48 per cent compared to around 36 per cent.¹³⁰ Nonetheless, these figures indicate that more than half of the indigenous African NGOs were not run by black Africans.

A more granular investigation of the data confirms this mixed picture. Several of the large international organisations – Catholic Relief Services and the Salvation Army – were fully managed by expatriates in all their branches. Other international NGOs had indigenous managers in some countries but not others, for example, Caritas and Secours Catholique. Missions and churches show a similarly mixed picture relating to the role of indigenous and non-indigenous managers. Taken together, while some of the international NGOs were making a concerted effort to 'Africanise' leadership, others were paying lip service.

This was, then, a highly transitional moment in the Africanisation of leadership. The process had moved well beyond the colonial situation, yet was far from complete. The marked disparity in the Africanisation of NGO personnel and leadership helps to explain why the post-war generation of African nationalist leaders put growing pressure on international aid agencies to rationalize their expatriate presence; why they were determined to diversify the sources of aid and reduce reliance upon any particular donor, and why they strove to shift the centre of gravity of development from the international arena toward the national arena.¹³¹ The incompleteness of formal decolonisation was in many ways exemplified by the first wave of NGO expansion in Africa, while the imperative of securing control over state apparatus was exemplified by the struggle to indigenise ‘foreign’ or ‘expeditionary’ models of aid.

Conclusion

ICVA’s Repertory enlarges our understanding of the first wave of NGO expansion in Africa as an important facet of twentieth century international relations. A wealth of providers of aid, not normally visible in the archive, are for the first time brought into view. By careful coding and analysis of the Repertory data, we inject a long-overdue empiricism into a field hitherto guided by qualitative case study or by presumption and intuition. In this way, the Repertory serves as both a corroboration and a corrective of what we thought we knew.

Things presumed true can now be backed by more robust evidence. Here we refer to the geographical spread of international organisations from Europe and the United States into the Global South; the salience of churches and missions in development policy and practice after 1945; and the part played by colonial connections in the spread of NGOs across Africa after the moment of independence. An NGO presence in independent Africa was shaped by these colonial connections – including the sizeable percentage of international NGOs which had their origins in Europe’s two major colonial powers, Britain and France. It was not

therefore just the post-colonial crises of the 1960s that brought humanitarian NGOs to Africa: the colonial legacy exerted an equally powerful effect.

That said, our analysis of the Repertory data does more than simply affirm existing views of the relationship between development and decolonisation. The link between NGO expansion and evolution was more complicated than often recognised. Colonial connections were one among several factors shaping the first wave of that expansion in Africa.¹³² NGOs from countries with no colonial history spread rapidly across the continent, as did NGOs from European colonial powers working beyond the confines of their own empires, in both cases propelled by Cold War considerations as much as by decolonisation. This is not to deny the connections between late-colonialism and post-war development, but the Repertory data qualifies and complicates these connections to say the least. Moreover, the number and type of operational NGOs delivering development programmes was far more diverse than the existing historiography, largely focused on international funding agencies, suggests. It was through grass-roots, community-based NGOs that many Africans actually encountered development; funders channelled their resources through them, and, indeed, developed a dependency upon them. While international NGOs are easier to explore archivally, the role of local, regional and rural organisations, in which women were often prominent, is crucial to development activity. The Repertory establishes that indigenous African NGOs had a far larger presence in the post-war development landscape than hitherto recognised. The existing emphasis on the informality of African care structures is therefore at best only part of the picture. Alongside such informal structures were growing numbers of non-governmental welfare organisations founded by and for Africans during and immediately after the collapse of colonial rule.

To be sure, the ICVA Repertory does not answer all of the questions to be asked of the relationship between NGOs, development and decolonisation. Of the areas left open for

future exploration, the contribution of Islamic NGOs to post-war development stands out. Here the data is at present severely limited. The key concept in Islamic humanitarianism is ‘zakat’ (closest translation of the Arabic probably the word ‘alms’). We know that after 1945 Islamic charities intervened to provide aid – in the form of zakat – to refugees and the displaced. Organisations like the Society of Muslim Brothers developed a kind of dual identity, part political, part social welfare. But the institutional underpinnings of ‘zakat’ do not clearly emerge from the relatively small number of studies on the concept. Whether Islamic charities were to any degree NGO-ised, like many Christian missions, is uncertain. But the politicisation of the Arab Red Crescent from the 1960s, with the concerted mobilisation of Middle Eastern members of the Federation of National Societies, suggests that Islamic relief was by no means indifferent to wider developments in the humanitarian world.¹³³

We also need to pay greater attention to how NGOs actually operated on-the-ground. What were the key differences between indigenous African NGOs and international NGOs in terms of their missions and working modalities? There is a shortage of case studies of individual indigenous African NGOs, particularly exploring the relationships between funding and operational activities as they played out in Africa, and not just in donor countries. In what ways the growth and distribution of NGOs was conditioned by local factors (conflict, political instability, ethnic and religious fragmentation) likewise merits further investigation.

Finally, we return to the ‘second wave’ of NGO expansion at the end of the twentieth century – widely heralded as a turning or tipping point in the ascendancy of the ‘modern NGO’. This second wave coincided with a far-reaching shift in development policy and practice. An earlier emphasis on state-led planning, centralised control over key sectors of the economy and import substitution was said to have delivered, at best, a varied performance

across Africa.¹³⁴ Although some countries recorded positive per capita growth, by the 1980s and 1990s many others recorded lower levels of GDP compared with the 1960s. At the heart of the controversial ‘Washington Consensus’, embraced by the World Bank, was a call for structural adjustment programmes as a response to perceived economic mismanagement.¹³⁵ This policy shift provoked heated debate at the time and subsequently. The World Bank, the IMF and western donors emphasised macroeconomic stabilisation, privatisation and good governance. They turned away from the nation state as the key development agency in the belief that states in developing countries were too big and largely inefficient. NGOs provided an unlikely partnership. Newly-attractive as facilitators of development and as recipients of development funding, they contributed to social capital formation, undertaking an advocacy and lobbying role on issues such as gender and empowerment.

The second wave of expansion, with NGOs’ enhanced influence on development, could not have existed without the first wave, however. It is somewhat surprising, therefore, that the former is so sporadically documented. With the discovery of the ICVA Repertory, we gain a much richer and more rounded perspective of the first wave of NGO expansion, by origin, function, type, and location. We are able to separate international NGOs from indigenous NGOs and to explore the implications of decolonisation for both types of organisation.

In many ways the first and second waves of NGO expansion stand in contrast. Their perspectives of the development process differed markedly. By the 1980s, decolonisation had largely passed, and NGOs did not shift or shape the contours of the development debate in the 1950s and 1960s to the same extent they did subsequently. Nevertheless, the first wave was in several senses foundational. Post-war NGOs were greater in number, more varied in remit, and more ambitious in their aims than documented to date. Their growing geographical reach formed the basis for the influence they acquired at the end of the century. The second

wave of NGO expansion was emphatically not a chance event. It grew out of the experience NGOs had accumulated in the first wave. There were strong institutional continuities (many of the NGOs recorded in the Repertory would have been active at the end of the century). There were clear continuities in their modus operandi (in particular the interplay between funding and operational NGOs). And the growth of local, regional and national NGOs towards the end of the century has a firmer basis in the post-war era than previously recognised. Indeed, the refocusing of development in the 1980s and 1990s was built upon the transformations of the 1950s and 1960s – transformations without which NGOs could never have played such an enhanced role in the delivery of development aid a quarter of a century or so later.

Endnotes

¹ Kevin O’Sullivan, ‘A ‘Global Nervous System’: The Rise and Rise of European Humanitarian NGOs, 1945-1985,’ in *International Organizations and Development, 1945-1990* eds., Marc Frey, Sönke Kunkel and Corinna R. Unger (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 196-219; Michael Barnett, *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011); Matthew Hilton, ‘Charity and the End of Empire: British Non-Governmental Organizations, Africa, and International Development in the 1960s,’ *American Historical Review*, cxxiii (2018), 493-517.

² The data upon which this article is based was discovered in the basement of the ICVA headquarters in Geneva. It was buried in one of many uncatalogued boxes that had clearly not been opened for many years. We are grateful to Cyril Ritchie and Nan Buzard for alerting us to the existence of ICVA’s ‘archive’.

³ The first wave of NGO expansion is briefly referred to in studies of the ‘second wave’ that occurred during the 1990s: W. R. Smyser, *The Humanitarian Conscience: Caring for Others in the Age of Terror* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 107-10; Barnett, *Empire of Humanity*, 212-9; Paul Adler, ‘Creating ‘The NGO International’: The Rise of Advocacy for Alternative Development, 1974–1994’, in *The Development Century: A Global History*, eds. Stephen J. Macekura and Erez Manela (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 322-4. Africanist researchers also recognise the place of NGOs in the history of late- and post-colonial development: see Jonathan Otto, ‘NGOs in the Sahel: Actors and Issues in Natural Resource Management,’ Occasional Paper Series on Non-Governmental Organizations, Centre for International Education, University of Massachusetts Amherst (1991); Michael Jennings, *Surrogates of the State: NGOs, Development, and Ujamaa in Tanzania* (Bloomfield: Kumarian Press, 2008). For the gendering of development, see Barbara Bush, ‘Nationalism, Development, and Welfare Colonialism: Gender and the Dynamics of Decolonization,’ in *The Oxford Handbook of the Ends of Empire*, eds. Martin Thomas and Andrew S. Thompson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018). Scholars exploring the relationship between humanitarianism and faith-based missions examine the first wave from the perspective of the

churches: see David Maxwell, 'Post-colonial Christianity in Africa,' in *World Christianities c. 1914-2000*, ed. Hugh McLeod (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 411-2; Jeffrey Cox, 'From the Empire of Christ to the Third World: Religion and the Experience of Empire in the Twentieth Century,' in *Britain's Experience of Empire in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Andrew Thompson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 109-13; Reuben A. Loffman, *Church, State and Colonialism in South-Eastern Congo, 1890-1962* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 190-6. The degree of continuity between the work of Christian missions and that of faith-based NGOs is a matter of debate. The latter are arguably distinguished not so much by the type of social services provided as by the external recognition they secured by doing so. We are grateful to Michael Jennings for this observation. Meanwhile, several imperial historians chart the recycling of late-colonial officials into development organisations which switched their emphasis from emergency relief to development during the post-war period during the first wave: see Joseph M. Hodge, *Triumph of the Expert: Agrarian Doctrines of Development and the Legacies of British Colonialism*, (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2007).

⁴ Lester B. Pearson, *Partners in Development: Report of the Commission on International Development* (London, 1969), 185.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 186.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 188.

⁷ The 'first wave' built on substantial missionary presence in Africa from the mid-nineteenth century. Although missions were an important part of the NGO presence in post-war Africa, the 1950s and 1960s encompassed a much wider range of NGOs than earlier decades. We believe this makes the 'first wave' (rather than 'missionary humanitarianism') a more appropriate label.

⁸ In this article, we use the terms 'international NGOs' and 'indigenous African NGOs'. Our definition is based on where NGOs originated. Those originating outside of Africa are counted as international, even where national branches were set up in African countries, such as branches of the Red Cross / Crescent. 'International NGOs' were founded outside of Africa, accountable to some degree to an external organization, and likely registered overseas. By contrast, those founded in their

African country of operation are classed as ‘indigenous African NGOs’. They were not primarily accountable overseas, even if they had funding or other types of connection beyond the continent. There are other possible ways of defining ‘indigenous African NGOs’ such as ‘having no overseas connections’, ‘working only in Africa’, ‘having African management’, or ‘only employing African staff’. Our definition may also imply some of the above. But the question of origins of NGOs speaks more directly to how Africans were engaged in creating organisations of their own which they believed would benefit their own communities. Our definition also highlights how international NGOs extended their footprint in Africa. As Ondine Barrow and Michael Jennings have argued, and we agree, ‘The most important difference ... lies their accountability structures’. ‘Introduction: The Charitable Impulse,’ in *The Charitable Impulse: NGOs & Development in East & North-East Africa*, eds. Ondine Barrow and Michael Jennings (Oxford: James Currey, 2001), 4.

⁹ See Andrew Thompson, ‘Unravelling the Relationships between Humanitarianism, Human Rights, and Decolonization: Time for a Radical Rethink?’, in *The Oxford Handbook of the Ends of Empire*, eds. Martin Thomas and Andrew Thompson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

¹⁰ The contribution made by small organisations with limited resources is well documented in missionary historiography. Recent research on the historical roots of economic development examines the long-term impacts of missionary activities upon educational and health outcomes. See Nathan Nunn ‘Gender and Missionary Influence in Colonial Africa,’ in *Africa’s Development in Historical Perspective*, eds. Emmanuel Akyeampong, Robert H. Bates, Nathan Nunn and James A. Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014) and Elise Huillery ‘History Matters: The Long-Term Impact of Colonial Public Investments in French West Africa,’ *American Economics Journal: Applied Economics*, i (2009), 176-215.

¹¹ See, for example, Michael Jennings, ‘Building Better People: Modernity and Utopia in Late Colonial Tanganyika,’ *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, iii (2009), 94-111; Allen F. Isaacman and Barbara S. Isaacman, *Dams, Displacement, and the Delusion of Development: Cahora Bassa and its Legacies in Mozambique, 1965-2007* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2013).

¹² Pearson, *Partners in Development*, 3, 185.

¹³ Thompson, 'Humanitarianism, Human Rights, and Decolonization,'; Hilton, 'Charity and the End of Empire'; Barnett, *Empire of Humanity*.

¹⁴ Emily Baughan, 'Every Citizen of Empire Implored to Save the Children!' Empire, Internationalism and the Save the Children Fund in Inter-War Britain,' *Historical Research*, lxxxvi (2013), 116-137; Anna Bocking-Welch, 'Imperial Legacies and Internationalist Discourses: British Involvement in the United Nations Freedom from Hunger Campaign, 1960–70,' *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* xl (2012), 879-896; Matthew Hilton, 'Oxfam and the Problem of NGO Aid Appraisal in the 1960s,' *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development*, ix (2018), 1-18; Michael Jennings, "'Almost an Oxfam in Itself': Oxfam, Ujamaa and Development in Tanzania,' *African Affairs*, ci (2002), 509–530.

¹⁵ Matthew Hilton, James McKay, Nicholas Crowson and Jean-François Mouhot, *A Historical Guide to NGOs in Britain: Charities, Civil Society and the Voluntary Sector since 1945* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

¹⁶ Notable exceptions include the Zenzele movement, a woman's self-help group in South Africa begun in the 1920s, see Catherine Higgs, 'Zenzele: African Women's Self-Help Organizations in South Africa, 1927-1998,' *African Studies Review*, xlvii (2004), 119-141 and Iris Berger, 'An African American 'Mother of the Nation': Madie Hall Xuma in South Africa, 1940-1963,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, xxvii (2001), 547-566; and the Jairos Jiri Association set up to help people with disabilities in Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), see Patrick Devlieger, 'From Self-help to Charity in Disability Service: the *Jairos Jiri Association* in Zimbabwe,' *Disability & Society*, x (1995), 39-48.

¹⁷ Olav Stokke, *The UN and Development: From Aid to Cooperation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 8.

¹⁸ Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard, 'Introduction', in *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge*, eds. Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 8.

¹⁹ Frederick Cooper, *Africa since 1940: The Past of the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 107-115.

²⁰ See, for example, *The First U.N. Development Decade and Its Lessons for the 1970's*, ed. Colin Legum (New York: Praeger, 1970).

²¹ Barbara Ward, 'The Decade of Development – A Study in Frustration?,' Lecture delivered in London under the auspices of the Overseas Development Institute on May 3, 1965 (London, 1965), 3.

²² *Ibid.*, 6.

²³ Albert O. Hirschman, *Development Projects Observed* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1967).

²⁴ Pearson, *Partners in Development*, 4-5.

²⁵ Inter alia, this crisis of confidence was reflected in a growing discussion in the NGO world of 'alternative paths to development', revolving, in particular, around the 'infinitely malleable', 'ostensibly radical' yet often self-contradictory discourses of 'accountability', 'participation' and 'empowerment' which were more widely promoted in the 1960s and 1970s and which later, in the 1980s and 1990s, became new orthodoxy. See, especially, Andrea Cornwall, 'Historical Perspectives on Participation in Development', *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, Vol.44, No.1, 2006, pp.62-83; Uma Kothari, 'Authority and Expertise: the professionalism of international development and the ordering of dissent', *Antipode*, Vol.37, Issue 3 (2005), pp.425-46; R.L.Sirrat and Heiko Henkel, "The Development Gift: the problem of reciprocity in the NGO world", *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol.554 (1997), pp.66-80.

²⁶ A range of alternative development discourses emerged from the Global South including 'conscientisation', 'permanent sovereignty over natural resources', 'participatory approaches' and 'post-development'. See Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (Dar es Salaam: Verso, 1972); Paulo Freire, 'Conscientisation,' *Cross Currents*, xxiv (1974), 23-31; Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995); Aram Ziai, ed., *Exploring Post-Development: Theory and Practice, Problems and Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2007); *UNCTAD at 50: A Short History* (2014) https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/osg2014d1_en.pdf accessed 3 August 2020; Nils Gilman, 'The New International Economic Order: A Reintroduction,' *Humanity*, vi (2015), 1-16; Gilbert Rist,

The History of Development: From Western Origins to Global Faith, translated by Patrick Camiller, Fifth edition (London: Zed Books, 2019).

²⁷ See Vanessa Ogle, 'State Rights against Private Capital: The 'New International Economic Order' and the Struggle over Aid, Trade, and Foreign Investment, 1962–1981,' *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development*, v (2014), 211-234.

²⁸ Kwame Nkrumah, *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* (London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1965).

²⁹ Hilton, 'Charity and the End of Empire,' 495.

³⁰ Johan Kaufmann, 'The Capacity of the United Nations Development Program: The Jackson Report: Comment,' *International Organization*, xxv (1971), 938.

³¹ *OECD-ICVA Directory Development Aid of Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organisations* (1967); ICVA Repertory of Africa's NGOs (1968); 1968 ICVA General Conference, Conference Document 8: Assistance to African Refugees by Voluntary Organizations.

³² Pearson, *Partners in Development* [Pearson Report].

³³ A Study of the Capacity of the United Nations Development System, Volumes 1 and 2 (United Nations, Geneva, 1969) [Jackson Report].

³⁴ Memorandum from President Nixon, Washington, March 5, 1970, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v04/d128> accessed 18 September 2019.

³⁵ Raúl Prebisch, '*Transformación y desarrollo: la gran tarea: informe presentado al Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo*' [*Change and Development: Latin America's Great Task: Report Submitted to the Inter-American Development Bank*] (April 1970).

³⁶ Hilton, 'Charity and the End of Empire,' 514.

³⁷ Hilton, 'Oxfam and the Problem of NGO Aid Appraisal,' 1-18.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 13.

³⁹ *Final Report: An Agenda for the Red Cross* (July, 1975) [Tansley Report].

⁴⁰ Pearson, *Partners in Development*, 4.

⁴¹ Cooper and Packard, 'Introduction,' 2.

⁴² Andrew Thompson, ‘Humanitarian Principles Put to the Test: Challenges to Humanitarian Action during Decolonization,’ *International Review of the Red Cross*, xcvi (2016), 45-76, 72.

⁴³ *Final Report: An Agenda for the Red Cross* (July, 1975), 27.

⁴⁴ For an overview see Thompson, “Unravelling the Relationships”, 460-62 and Barnett, *Empire of Humanity*, 31, 133, 233. For how this played out in Africa, see Mann, *From Empires to NGOs*, 175-76, 185-8, 207-8; and Tague, *Displaced Mozambicans*, 121-22, 128, 135, 153, 165-5.

⁴⁵ Correspondence with Cyril Ritchie, Executive Director of ICVA 1964-78 and 1990-1, December 2019.

⁴⁶ Although principal donor governments also included Australia, Canada, Norway and Sweden.

⁴⁷ ICVA Archive, Geneva: ‘ICVA: Twenty-Five Years ... and beyond’ and ‘ICVA: a brief history’; Jacqueline Tong, *ICVA at Forty-Something. The life and times of a middle-aged NGO consortium* (Geneva, 2009). Information also drawn from Professor Thompson’s interviews with past and present ICVA Executive Directors, Mr Cyril Ritchie and Ms Nan Buzard.

⁴⁸ 1968 ICVA General Conference, Conference Document 8: Assistance to African Refugees by Voluntary Organizations, 71.

⁴⁹ OECD-ICVA *Directory Development Aid of Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organisations* (1967).

⁵⁰ 1968 ICVA General Conference, Conference Document 8: Assistance to African Refugees by Voluntary Organizations.

⁵¹ Correspondence with Cyril Ritchie, Executive Director of ICVA 1964-78 and 1990-1, December 2019.

⁵² *Ibid.* Funded by a grant from the Ministry of the Interior of the Federal Republic of Germany, the research was carried out by the Socio-Psychological Research Centre on Development Planning of the University of the Saar, with Hans-Jürgen Koebnick as Project Coordinator. It was published in English and French.

⁵³ ICVA *Repertory of Africa’s NGOs* (1968), 7.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁵⁵ This method of collection was a potential limitation as it relied on networks already in place and is more likely to impact on the recorded number of indigenous African NGOs as noted below.

⁵⁶ Koebnick visited ten countries chosen from those with good and poor response rates, which represented countries which had been British and French colonies. *Ibid.*, 7.

⁵⁷ For example, only countries that had been former French and British colonies were actually visited; this may partly explain the lower numbers of NGOs reported in Portuguese and Spanish territories.

⁵⁸ The selection criteria were introduced when ICVA cut down their initial list of c.3,000 to c.1,800.

⁵⁹ Universities were excluded, as were cooperatives, and ‘only *major* representatives of religious denominations and of trade unions’ were included. Excluding cooperatives meant leaving out many small and locally organised groups.

⁶⁰ For example, the National Council of Social Services in Tanzania identified 22 NGOs in 1966; here Tanzania is recorded as having 93. See Jennings, *Surrogates of the State*, 92.

⁶¹ 1968 ICVA General Conference, Conference Document 8: Assistance to African Refugees by Voluntary Organizations, 46-9.

⁶² Though see Barnett, *Empire of Humanity*, 112-3, 127-8.

⁶³ 1968 ICVA General Conference, Conference Document 8: Assistance to African Refugees by Voluntary Organizations, 14; Heike Wieters, *The NGO Care and Food Aid from America, 1945-80. Showered with Kindness?* (Manchester: Manchester University Press: 2017), p.190.

⁶⁴ On this point, see, Adler, ‘Creating ‘The NGO International’’, 306.

⁶⁵ Consider, for example, the relationship between the UNHCR and the Tanganyika Christian Refugee Services working with refugees in Tanzania. Although UNHCR provided the financial support, the Tanganyika Christian Refugee Services experimented beyond the plans agreed with UNHCR in the refugee camps they operated: Joanna T. Tague, *Displaced Mozambicans in Postcolonial Tanzania* (London: Routledge, 2019), 122, 153-5.

⁶⁶ The ICVA Refugee Agency survey records four pure funders and nine as operational.

⁶⁷ Although the Repertory reveals some links to funding NGOs. These include: CORSO: New Zealand Council of Organisation for Relief Service Overseas, Misereor, the United Nations Children's Fund, and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

⁶⁸ 514 NGOs can be dated to when they began work in a country.

⁶⁹ This excludes Ethiopia, Liberia and South Africa due to their different histories. On links between colonial and post-colonial development efforts, see John Aerni-Flessner, 'Development, Politics, and the Centralization of State Power in Lesotho, 1960-75,' *Journal of African History*, liv (2014), 401-21.

⁷⁰ Where we have data, roughly half of indigenous African NGOs were affiliated with an international NGO comprised of: (1) religious bodies such as the World Council of Churches and Caritas Internationalis; (2) humanitarian organisations including United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and War on Want; (3) health organisations like the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind and International Union Against Tuberculosis; and (4) solidarity organisations like the International Council of Women and International Student Conference. Affiliation with other indigenous African NGOs was more common, however.

⁷¹ See footnote 55.

⁷² There are 479 NGOs of undetermined origin; most are likely to have been set up in Africa. If these had been included as indigenous African NGOs, the number founded in the 1950s and 1960s would be substantially higher. However, to be confident of what is revealed from the ICVA data, we contain the discussion to NGOs where there is no doubt about their status. In large part, the distribution of activities does not change.

⁷³ Although the number of French NGOs with strong state involvement may have been greater.

⁷⁴ Those compiling the data might have had less access to places still under colonial rule as they did not visit any of those countries.

⁷⁵ We explored this issue in more detail. Using an econometric framework to assess the determinants of the distribution of NGOs across Africa, GDP per capita did not appear to be a main determinant of NGO presence. The results confirmed the importance of colonial ties. However, as we also note

below, the results also indicated that NGO presence in former colonies was influenced by the entry of NGOs from countries that had did not have a history of colonialism in Africa.

⁷⁶ Thompson, 'Humanitarianism, Human Rights, and Decolonization,' 460.

⁷⁷ Mann, *From Empires to NGOs*, 174-5.

⁷⁸ O'Sullivan, 'Global Nervous System,' 197.

⁷⁹ Thompson, 'Humanitarianism, Human Rights, and Decolonization,' 457.

⁸⁰ See, for example, Joseph M. Hodge, 'British Colonial Expertise, Post-Colonial Careerism and the Early History of International Development,' *Journal of Modern European History*, viii (2010), 24-46; Hilton, *Charity and the End of Empire*, 493-517.

⁸¹ Thompson, 'Humanitarianism, Human Rights, and Decolonization,' 457.

⁸² Germany is counted as a power without African colonies. Although Germany had colonies in Africa until the end of the First World War, in the data there is only one German NGO set up during their colonial era (in 1908), but in Nigeria, not one of its colonies. This suggests their colonial presence did not seriously shape their NGO presence in Africa.

⁸³ For US PVOs as agents of American expansion, see Landrum Bollig, *Private Foreign Aid. US Philanthropy for Relief and Development* (Boulder Colorado, 1982), 20-21 and Brian Smith, *More than Altruism. The Politics of Private Foreign Aid* (Princeton NJ., 1990).

⁸⁴ Norman Etherington, 'Afterword: The Missionary Experience in British and French Empires,' in *God's Empire: French Missionaries and the Modern World*, eds. Owen White and J.P. Daughton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 280-3, 297.

⁸⁵ Bollig, *Private Foreign Aid*, p.21; Smith, *More than Altruism*, 43, 109.

⁸⁶ For example, see Philip E. Muehlenbeck, *Betting on the Africans: John F. Kennedy's Courting of African Nationalist Leaders* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

⁸⁷ The creation of the Peace Corps in 1961 led to many Americans volunteering across Africa. In the two years from its foundation, 1,148 of 4,300 Peace Corps volunteers went to Africa (see Larry Grubs, *Secular Missionaries: Americans and African Development in the 1960s* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009), 170). Africa was one of the Peace Corps' priorities, with some of the

first missions in Ghana and Tanzania. By 1968, the Peace Corps was engaged in 26 countries in Africa. Although there is not a precise correlation between where American NGOs were active and where the Peace Corps worked, there is a connection. Peace Corps were active in very few countries where there were no American NGOs, while they were present in most of the places where there were multiple American NGOs.

⁸⁸ See, for example, Priya Lal, *African Socialism in Postcolonial Tanzania. Between the Village and the World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 163-4. The difficulty with this argument, as Lal herself notes, is that international NGOs were very far from monolithic. They therefore resist the type of generalisations that such critiques entail.

⁸⁹ The determination of religious denomination is largely based on the name of the NGO, so it is possible others were religious but their names do not make this clear.

⁹⁰ For a definition of faith-based NGOs see Elizabeth Ferris, 'Faith-Based and Secular Humanitarian Organizations,' *International Review of the Red Cross*, lxxxvii (2005), 311-325, 312.

⁹¹ Barnett, *Empire of Humanity*, 229-30.

⁹² Jerney Rich, 'Victims or Burdens? Angolan Refugees and Humanitarian Aid Organisations in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 1961-63,' *The International History Review*, (2021), 8-9, referring to the British and North America Protestant missionaries of the Congo Protestant Relief Agency.

⁹³ Cox, 'Religion and the Experience of Empire,' 109-13.

⁹⁴ Maxwell, 'Post-Colonial Christianity in Africa,' 411-2. Others argue that the role of faith-based actors is more complex and that missions created the voluntary sector space (of which NGOs were a part): see Michael Jennings, 'Common Counsel, Common Policy: Healthcare, Missions and the Rise of the 'Voluntary Sector' in Colonial Tanzania,' *Development and Change*, xlv (2013), 939-963; Michael Jennings, 'The Precariousness of the Franchise State: Voluntary Sector Health Services and International NGOs in Tanzania, 1960s - mid-1980s', *Social Science & Medicine*, cxli (2015), 1-8.

⁹⁵ Maxwell, 'Post-colonial Christianity in Africa,' 411-2.

⁹⁶ See Ruth Compton Brouwer, 'When Missions Became Development: Ironies of 'NGO-ization' in Mainstream Canadian Churches in the 1960s,' *The Canadian Historical Review*, xci (2010), 661-693; Cox, 'Religion and the Experience of Empire,' 108-15.

⁹⁷ Guinea had six NGOs; two were missions, one a national Christian executive. Portuguese Guinea had three NGOs including one mission and one national Christian executive. Elsewhere, though, the numbers were much higher: in Ethiopia, churches, missions and national Christian executives comprised 26 out of 56 NGOs and in Zambia 27 out of 67.

⁹⁸ David Ryall, 'The Catholic Church as a Transnational Actor,' in *Non-State Actors in World Politics*, eds. Daphne Josselin and William Wallace (Basingstoke: Springer, 2001), 45; Louis Audet Gosselin and Boris Koenig, 'Catholic NGOs in Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire: A Case Apart?', in *Faith and Charity Book: Religion and Humanitarian Assistance in West Africa*, eds. Marie Nathalie LeBlanc and Louis Audet Gosselin (London: Pluto Press, 2016), 64-8.

⁹⁹ Loffman, *Church, State and Colonialism*, 192ff.

¹⁰⁰ Ryall, 'Catholic Church as a Transnational Actor,' 45-8.

¹⁰¹ Heike Wieters, *The NGO CARE and Food Aid from America, 1945-80* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017), 166-7, 179.

¹⁰² J. Bryan Hehir, 'The Modern Catholic Church and Human Rights: The Impact of the Second Vatican Council,' in *Christianity and Human Rights: An Introduction*, eds. John Witte, Jr and Frank S. Alexander (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 113-134.

¹⁰³ In 1965, out of a total African population of 306m, 34m were Catholic, 21m Protestant, 13m Orthodox-Coptic, and 7m African Independent Churches: Bengt Sundkler and Christopher Steed, *A History of the Church in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 906.

¹⁰⁴ Although Catholic uniformity can be overstated, as there were subdivisions between monastic orders or branches of Catholicism. See Etherington, 'The Missionary Experience,' 284.

¹⁰⁵ John Iliffe, *The African Poor: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 197.

¹⁰⁶ For example, one organisation which did exist but was not recorded in the survey was the Union Culturelle Musulmane in Senegal, founded in 1953. Mayke Kaag, 'Connectivities Compared:

Transnational Islamic NGOs in Chad and Senegal,' in *The Social Life of Connectivity in Africa*, eds. Mirjam de Bruijn and Rijk van Dijk (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 193.

¹⁰⁷ On Islamic NGOs, see Jonathan Benthall, *Islamic charities and Islamic Humanism in Troubled Times* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 29-32.

¹⁰⁸ We are grateful here to Professor Faisal Devji, for sharing his unpublished paper, 'Escaping the Global Event'.

¹⁰⁹ Adler, 'Creating "The NGO International"', 305-8.

¹¹⁰ Alternatively, researchers have focused on Africa's informal care structures and thereby implied that organisations were limited: Iliffe, *The African Poor*, 7-8.

¹¹¹ For more discussion, see footnote 8. In a small number of the countries, with a larger and longer settler presence (including Rhodesia, Angola and Mozambique), as well as Apartheid South Africa, the category of indigenous African NGOs includes a minority of organisations, such as medical NGOs, which were likely set up by whites. Many had a majority black membership and were likely in transition by the time of the survey, actively Africanising their leadership.

¹¹² Setting up trade unions, labour unions and student unions were other means of responding to the coercive working policies and practices pursued by late-colonial states and of demanding more African control. See Frederick Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society: The Labor Question in French and British Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 1-4.

¹¹³ For more on this point, see Thompson, 'Humanitarianism, Human Rights, and Decolonization'.

¹¹⁴ Higgs, 'Zenzele: African Women's Self-Help,' 119-141.

¹¹⁵ Otto, 'NGOs in the Sahel'.

¹¹⁶ Mann, *From Empires to NGOs*, 2-8; Otto, 'NGOs in the Sahel'.

¹¹⁷ Jennings, 'Precariousness of the Franchise State,' 1-8.

¹¹⁸ Gosselin and Koenig, 'Catholic NGOs in Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire,' 69; Wanjiru M. Gitau, 'Kenya and Tanzania,' in *Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa*, eds. Kenneth R. Ross, J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu and Todd M. Johnson (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 114.

¹¹⁹ Jennings, *Surrogates of the State*, 63, 93.

¹²⁰ For the links between international NGOs, local NGOs, refugee relief and rural development in Tanzania, see Tague, *Displaced Mozambicans in Postcolonial Tanzania*. There were close ties between the UNHCR, the Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service and officials of the Tanzanian government (113, 145).

¹²¹ Examples of which include the Union of Rural Clubs in the United Arab Republic, Women's Association of Mauritius, Nakuru Homemakers in Kenya, and many of the student unions.

¹²² Note that in Rhodesia and South Africa, under white minority rule, we know of a small number of NGOs that were set up by both white settlers and indigenous Africans.

¹²³ Existing scholarship often displays a trajectory of humanitarian organisations beginning with 'relief' activity and later moving to 'development'. The data provided in the Repertory complicates this picture. Rather than moving from emergency relief to long-term development activities, indigenous African NGOs, as well as organisations like missions, were likely to have been focused on development from the start.

¹²⁴ Community development, as grouped here, includes youth work, orphanages and homes for the aged.

¹²⁵ Paul Nugent, *Africa since Independence*, second edition (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2012), 64; Clemente K. Abrokwa, 'Vocational Education in the Third World: revisiting the debate,' *The Vocational Aspect of Education*, xlvii (1995), 129-140, 130-32.

¹²⁶ Pearson, *Partners in Development*, 268.

¹²⁷ There is data about staff, managers or both for over 350 NGOs.

¹²⁸ On the importance of Africanisation in the banking industry see Stephanie Decker, 'Decolonising Barclays Bank DCO? Corporate Africanisation in Nigeria, 1945-6', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, xxxiii (2005), 419-440; James Morris, "'Cultivating the African': Barclays DCO and the Decolonisation of Business Strategy in Kenya, 1950-78', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, xlv (2016), 649-671.

¹²⁹ Thompson, 'Humanitarian Principles,' 73-4.

¹³⁰ Of the 62.2% who were not of black African descent, it is not possible to say whether they were white citizens or expatriates brought into a country to lead an NGO, as this analysis is based on the names of managers.

¹³¹ Thompson, 'Humanitarianism, Human Rights, and Decolonization,' 470-72.

¹³² For a newly-emerging literature capturing other aspects, including the Cold War dynamic, see Agnieszka Sobocinska's study of development volunteering, *Saving the World? Western Volunteers and the Rise of the Humanitarian-Development Complex* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), and Kevin O'Sullivan on the counter-balancing role of smaller and middling powers, *Ireland, Africa and the End of Empire: Small State Identity in the Cold War, 1955-75* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012).

¹³³ Jonathan Benthall and Jérôme Bellion-Jourdan, *The Charitable Crescent: Politics of Aid in the Muslim World* (London: Bloomsbury, 2003); Jonathan Benthall, 'Islamic Humanitarianism in Adversarial Context,' in *Forces of Compassion: Humanitarianism Between Ethics and Politics*, eds. Erica Bornstein and Peter Redfield (Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2010), 99-121.

¹³⁴ A considerable amount of attention was devoted to the economic performance of African countries in the 1980s and 1990s. See, for example, William Easterly and Ross Levine, 'Africa's Growth Tragedy: Policies and Ethnic Divisions,' *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, (1987), 1203-1250. The World Bank also published a number of reports highlighting the cross-African experience. See, for example, *Adjustment in Africa: Reforms, Results and the Road Ahead*, (Washington: World Bank, 1994) and *Can Africa Claim the 21st Century?* (Washington: World Bank, 2000).

¹³⁵ For an overview, see Corinna Unger, *International Development. A Postwar History* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), ch.8.



FIGURE Error! Main Document Only.

NUMBER of NGOs in AFRICA FOUNDED by DATE

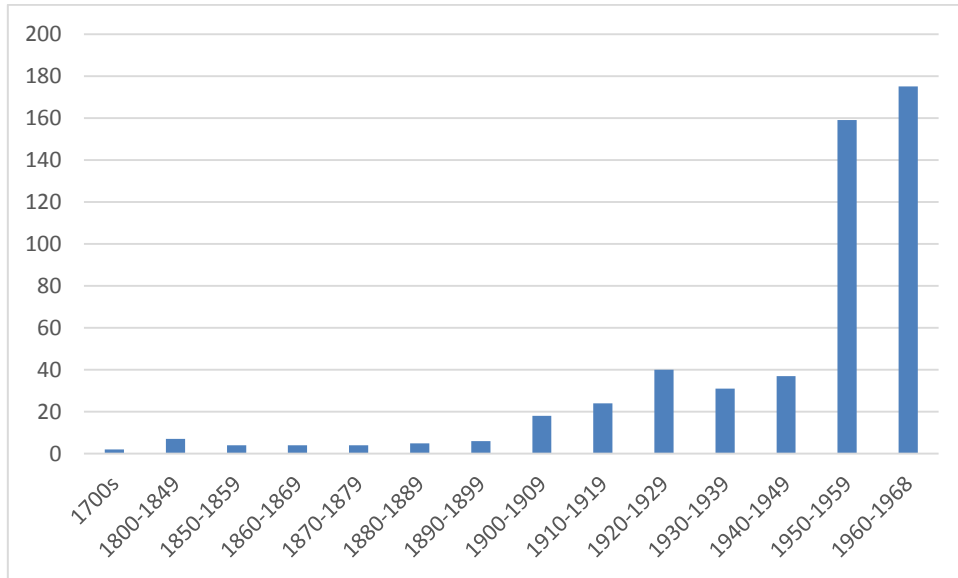


FIGURE 2

NUMBER of NGOs in AFRICA FOUNDED by DATE, 1950-1966

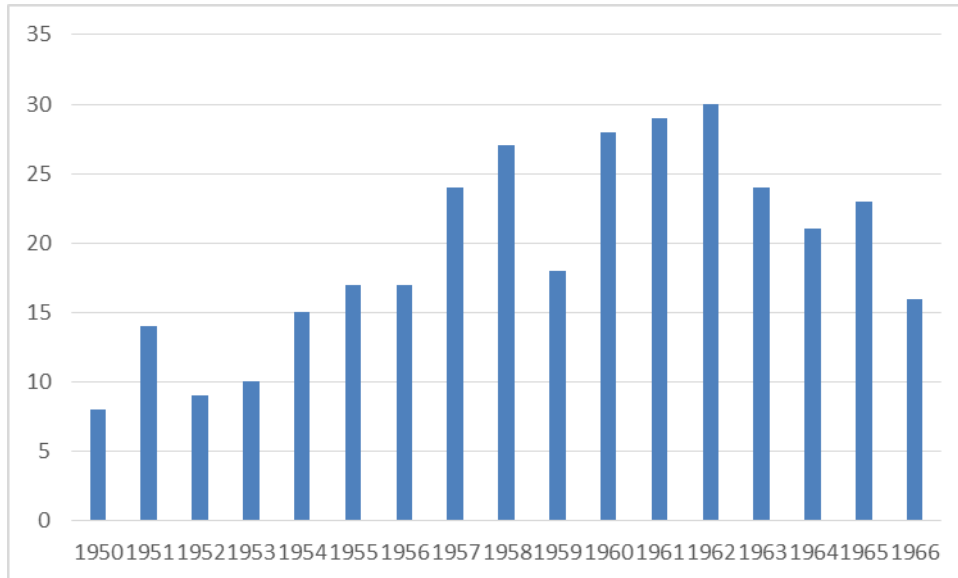


FIGURE Error! Main Document Only.

NUMBER of NGOs in AFRICA FOUNDED by DATE and TYPE

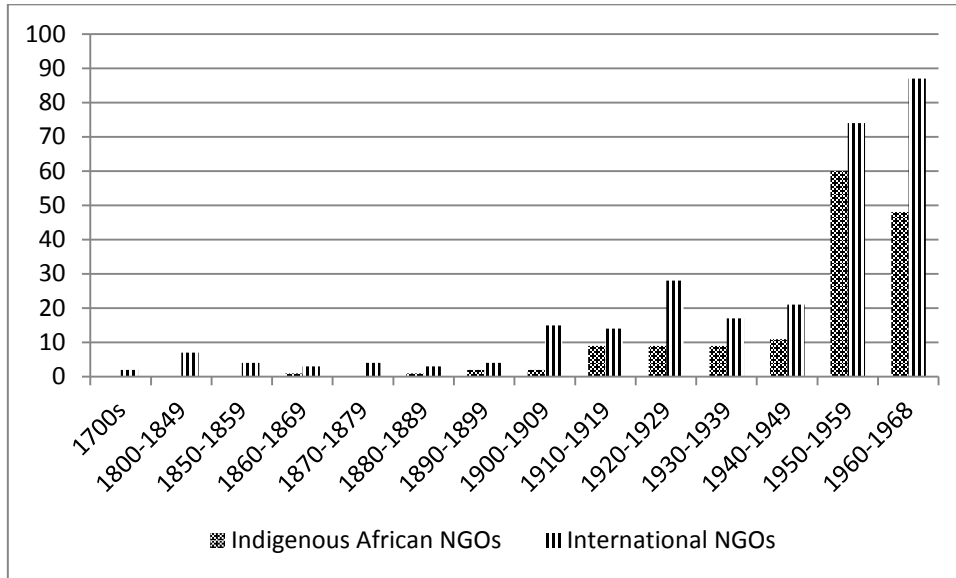


FIGURE 4
NGOs ORGANISED by TERRITORY DIVIDED into (FORMER) COLONIAL EMPIRES

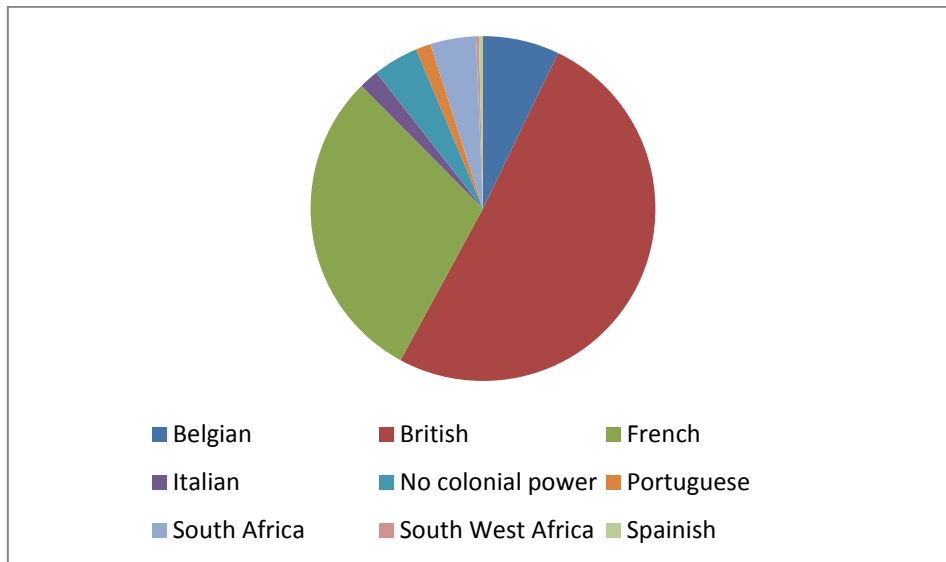


FIGURE 5
FRENCH-BASED NGOs WORKING in (FORMER) COLONIAL EMPIRES

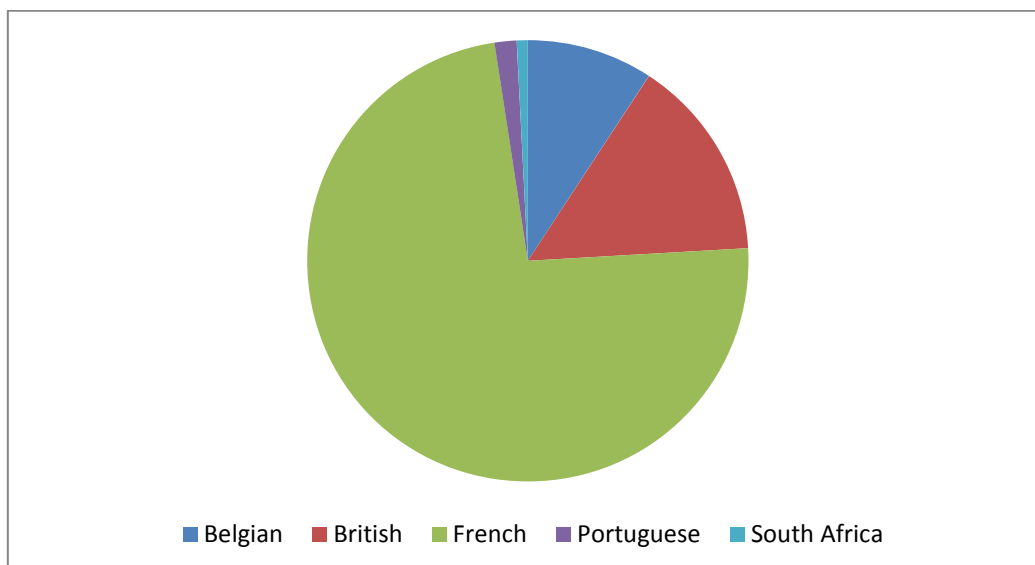


FIGURE 6
BRITISH-BASED NGOs WORKING in (FORMER) COLONIAL EMPIRES

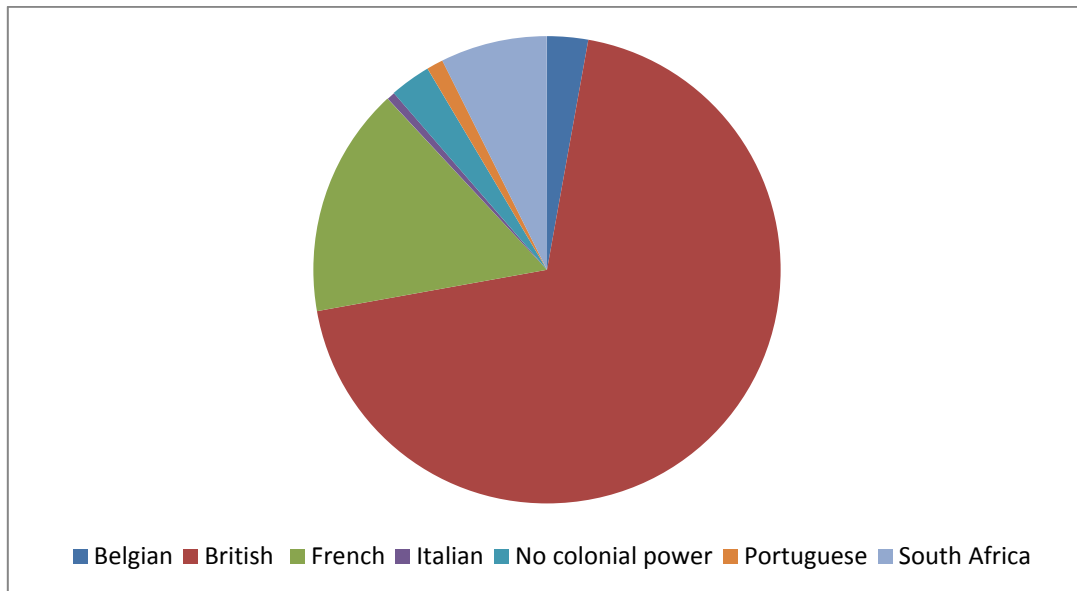


FIGURE 7
BELGIAN-BASED NGOs WORKING in (FORMER) COLONIAL EMPIRES

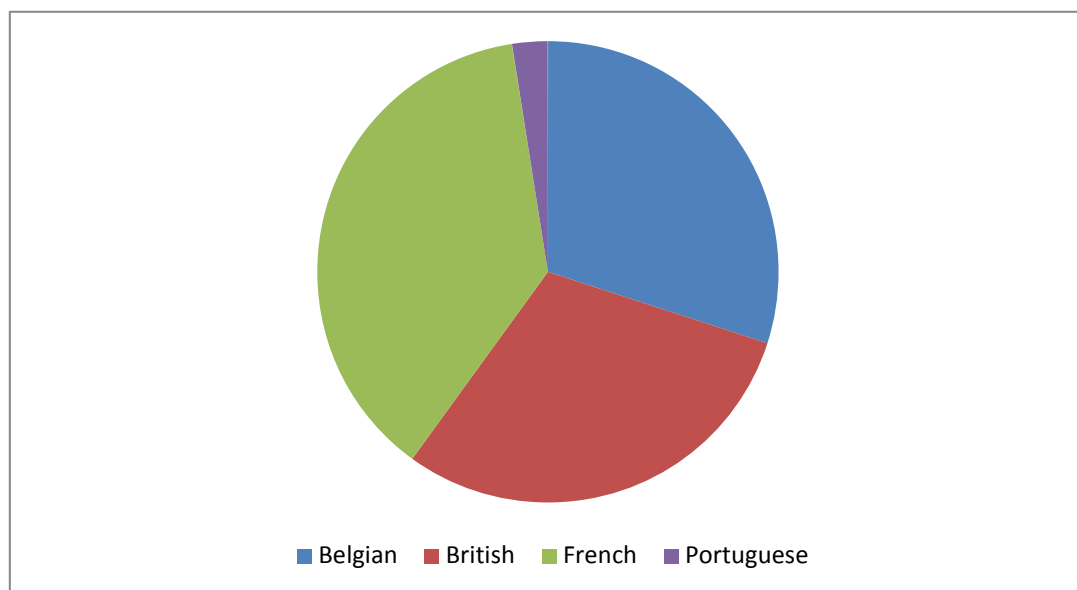


FIGURE 8
INTERNATIONAL NGOs ORIGINATING in COLONIAL METROPOLE and OTHER
COUNTRIES

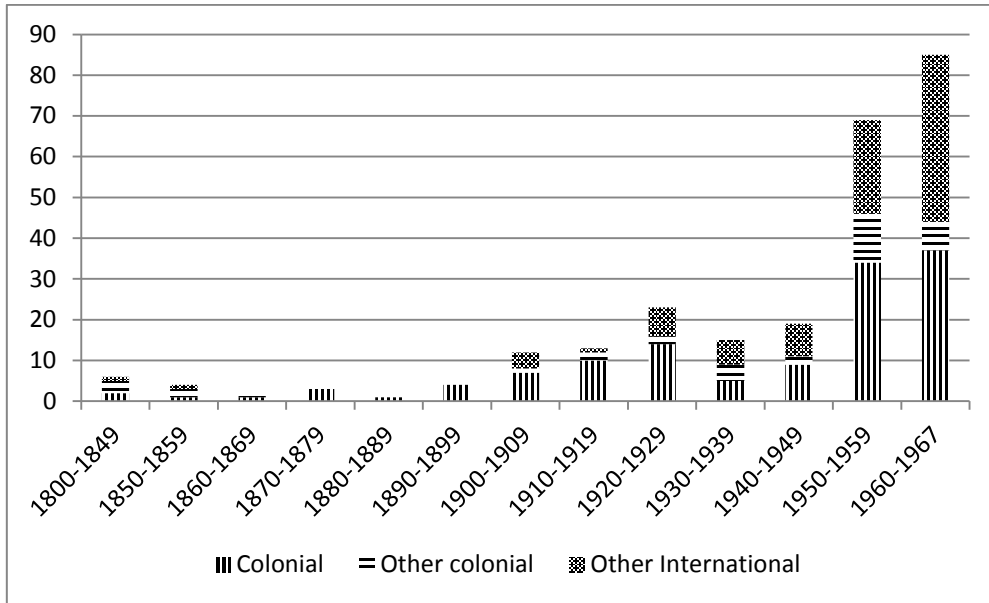


FIGURE 9

AMERICAN NGOs WORKING in (FORMER) COLONIAL EMPIRES

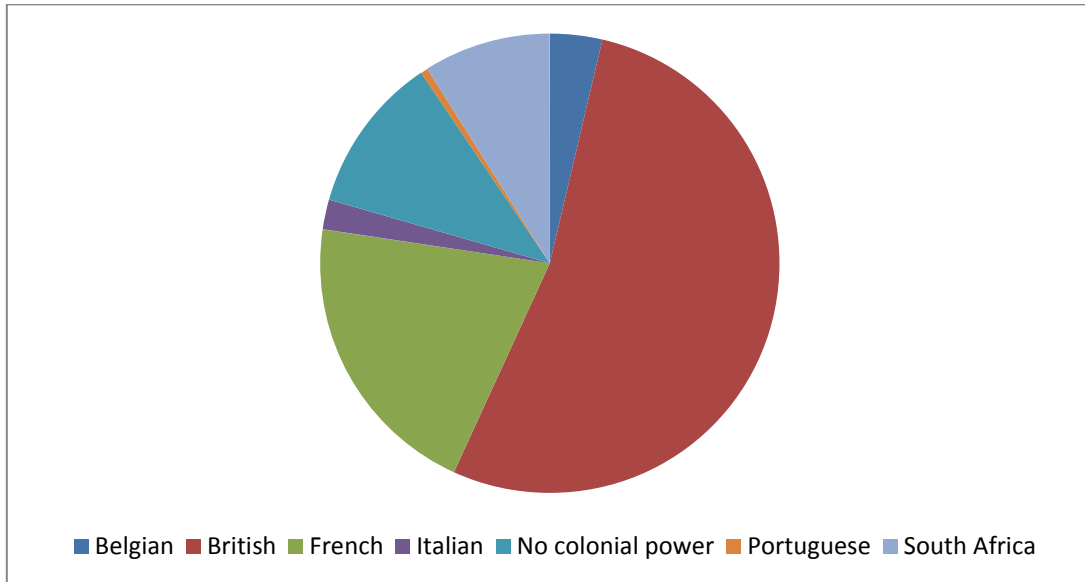


FIGURE 10

CHURCHES and MISSIONS' STARTING DATES

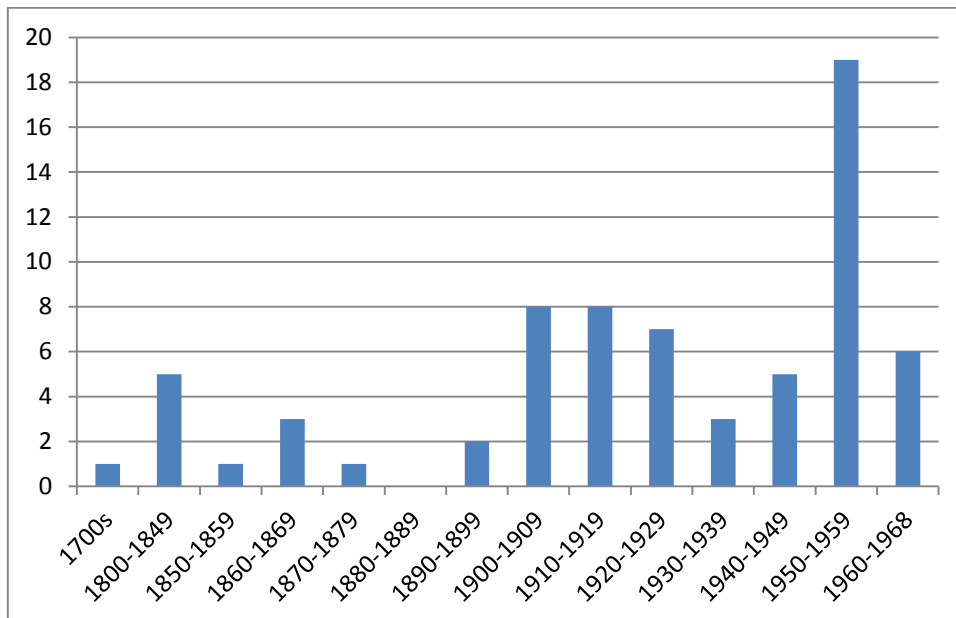


FIGURE 11
COUNTRIES WHERE PROPORTION of CHURCHES and MISSIONS EXCEEDED 30% of
TOTAL NGOs

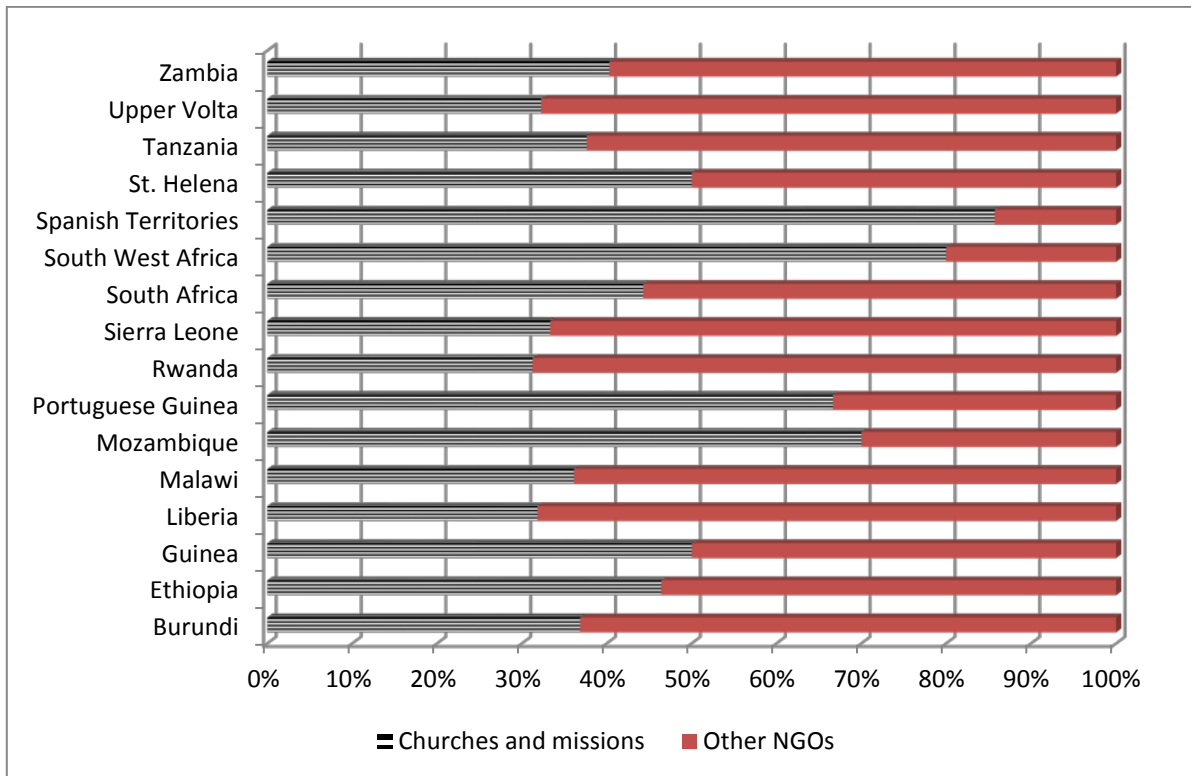


FIGURE 12
CHRISTIAN NGOs by DENOMINATION

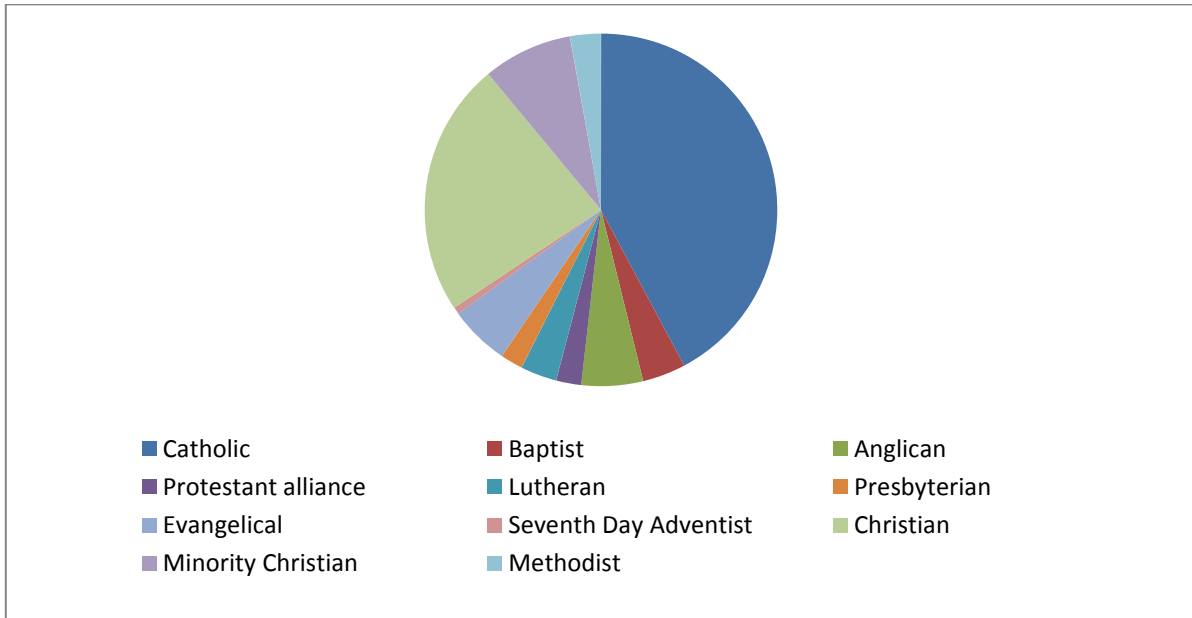


FIGURE 13
ACTIVITIES of INDIGENOUS AFRICAN NGOs

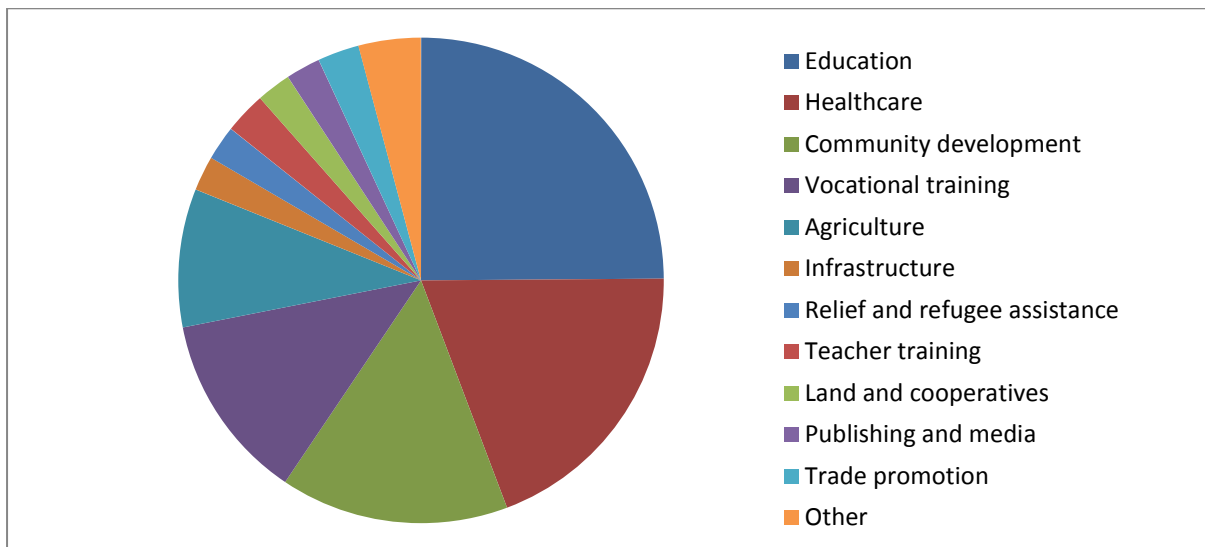


FIGURE 14

ACTIVITIES of INTERNATIONAL NGOs

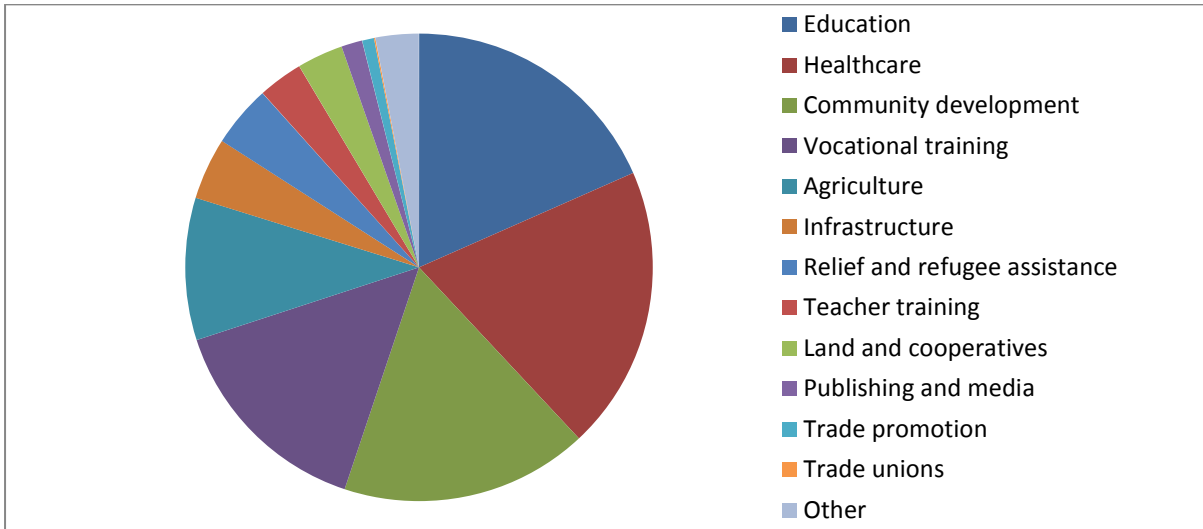


TABLE 1
NUMBER of NGOs by AFRICAN COUNTRY

Country	Number	Country	Number
Nigeria	152	Sudan	27
Rhodesia	107	Gabon	25
Uganda	106	Liberia	22
Kenya	95	Libya	22
Tanzania	93	Burundi	19
Cameroon	92	Chad	19
Congo (Kinshasa)	86	Swaziland	18
South Africa	79	Central African Republic	17
Zambia	67	Niger	16
Ghana	63	Rwanda	16
Ethiopia	56	Gambia	15
Senegal	52	Angola & Ascension	13
Ivory Coast	48	Mali	12
Madagascar	47	Somalia	12
Mauritius	46	Congo (Brazzaville)	11
Dahomey	39	Botswana	10
Malawi	36	Mozambique	10
Sierra Leone	36	Spanish Territories	7
United Arab Republic	36	Guinea	6
Morocco	35	Mauritania	5
Togo	35	Seychelles	5
Algeria	34	South West Africa	5
Lesotho	31	Reunion	4
Upper Volta	31	Portuguese Guinea	3
Tunisia	29	St. Helena	2

TABLE 2
NUMBER of NGOs ORIGINATING in SOURCE COUNTRIES

Country	Number of NGOs from Source
Britain	353 (including 22 Welsh and Scottish NGOs)
France	249
USA	189 (includes 5 African American NGOs)
Germany	42
Belgium	40
International Western Europe and US collaboration	39
Switzerland	38
Italy	23
Austria	17
United Nations	13
The Netherlands	10
Portugal	9
Russia	7
Spain	7
Canada	6
Asia	6
Sweden	5
Ireland	5
Other	11

TABLE 3
ORIGIN of INTERNATIONAL NGOs

	NGOs Originating in Colonial Power (per cent)	Other International NGOs (per cent)
French (former) colonies	51.7	48.3
British (former) colonies	46.1	53.9
Portuguese colonies	35.3	64.7
Belgian (former) colonies	12.7	87.3