UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS IN POVERTY REDUCTION: A CASE STUDY OF ACTIONAID GHANA IN SISSALA EAST DISTRICT

BY

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THIS LONG ESSAY IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION DEGREE

MAY, 2018.
DECLARATION

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DATE
CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this long essay was supervised in accordance with the procedures, rules and regulations of this University.

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DR. THOMAS BUABENG  DATE

(SUPERVISOR)
DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to God Almighty my creator, my strong pillar, my source of inspiration, wisdom, knowledge and understanding. He has been the source of my strength throughout this program and on His wings only have I soared.

I also dedicate this piece of work to my husband; George Kobina Botwe Effisah upon whose advice, I started this program and have encouraged me all the way through and whose reassurances have pushed me to this end. To my children Aubrey, Aimone and Alvin George who have been affected in every way possible by this journey and to my father, mother, my mother-in-law and father –in-law for all the support showed to me. Thank you. My love for all can never be quantified. I say God Bless You.
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<td>Country Strategy Paper</td>
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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research work was to examine the role of non-governmental organizations in poverty reduction with focus on ActionAid Ghana in the Sissala East District of the Upper West Region. The study employed qualitative research design with interview as the main research instrument for data collection. The study employed twenty-five (25) respondents who are key beneficiaries of ActionAid programs in Ghana. The study found out that, pursuant to effort in reducing poverty in the study area, ActionAid has instituted several poverty reduction related projects, in the areas of economic and income generation, provision of health care, scholarship and educational facilities and provision of financial assistance for economic and agricultural purposes, resulting in an improved living standard of the people in the district. Further, the study found that, the activities of ActionAid is impeded with issues of sustainability, politicization of the programs and operations of the organization, unwillingness on the part of local communities to do away with existing harmful cultures practices and lack of corporation on the part of state institutions in the area. the study recommend that, state institutions charged with the primary responsibility of reducing poverty must work in tandem with ActionAid and other NGOs towards attaining poverty reduction and development in the area.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter covers the introduction and background to the study, statement of research problem, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study, and organization of the study.

1.1 Background of the study

In 2013, the year of the latest comprehensive data on global poverty, 767 million people are estimated to have been living below the international poverty line of US$1.90 per person per day, almost 11 people in every 100 in the world, or 10.7 percent of the global population, were poor by this standard (The World Bank, 2016). This represent about 1.7 percentage points down from the global poverty headcount ratio in 2012. Although this represent a noticeable decline, given the low standard of living implied by the $1.90 a day threshold (Poverty and shared prosperity, 2016). This figure translates into millions of children, women and men whose lives are characterized by lack of food, shelter, healthcare, and education (Sen, 1982). The substantial decline is mostly explained by the lower number of the extreme poor in two regions, east Asia pacific 71 million fewer poor) and south Asia (37 million fewer poor), (world bank, 2016) While the same report states that world poverty has declined in many regions, poverty still, however, continues to be a prominent problem in other areas around the world. Despite the progress made in reducing poverty, the number of people living in extreme poverty globally remains unacceptably high. And given global growth forecasts, poverty reduction may not be fast enough
to reach the target of ending and reducing poverty headcount ratio from 10.7 percent globally in 2013 to 3.0 percent by 2030, which is the first goal of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) advanced by the United Nations, particularly in places like Sub-Saharan Africa, partly due to low level of development with its attendant effect unemployment, high birth rate and larger population (United Nations, 2015).

Global estimate from the world bank shows that the share of Africans who are poor fell from 57 percent in 1990 to 43 percent in 2012 but for a following challenges, such as limited estimates to comparable surveys, drawing on non-consumption survey et cetera, poverty may have declined even more, (poverty in a rising Africa report : world bank, 2016) nonetheless even given the most optimistic estimates, still many more people are poor because of other factors such as population growth, which has caused the number of poor people implied by these estimates to increase from 288 million in 1990 to 389 million in 2012 according to the report by poverty in a rising Africa (World bank, 2016).

In the Ghanaian context, on account of various researches, both national and international, Ghana is one of the economically strong countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. The country has experiences substantial economic growth over the years and in 2015, Human Development Index (HDI) survey, ranked it 139th out of the 188 countries and territories in the world (Caluag, 2015). Between 1992 and 2013 Ghana’s national level of poverty fell by more than half (from 56.5% to 24.2%), thereby achieving the MDG1 target, confirming that more progress for the poor has been made over the years (Cooke, et al., 2016, p. 1). This is however for ‘extreme poverty and not ‘poverty’ as a whole, as the poverty depth index was shown to decline over the period from 20.9% in 1992 to 7.8% in 2013, signifying the degree of poor people living below the poverty line compared to the 1990s (ibid., 9). Despite this growth, poverty still remains a
pronounced problem in the country. There is no doubt that the country has experienced significant decline in poverty levels, however there is still an imbalance. According to the Ghana Poverty and Inequality Report, although the proportion of people living in poverty has declined by a quarter since 2006, the number of people living in poverty has only declined by 10%, signifying the lack of correlation of poverty reduction and the population growth (Cooke, et al., 2016, p. 1).

Additionally, there is a huge inequality gap between the rich and the poor. The growth rate of the poor has been lower compared to the wealthier groups who have benefited more, depicting lack of inclusive growth (ibid. 2). Poverty incidence is much higher in the northern regions of Ghana, compared to the other regions (Ghana Statistical Service, 2015). Poverty in Ghana has been measured and presented in various reports, however it must be noted that these measurements are mostly based on consumption expenditure only. As a result, they may fail to capture other non-monetary but relevant aspects of poverty and vulnerability (Ghana Statistical Service, 2015, p. 40). Poverty as a result might even be worse in reality than that which is presented in these reports.

Over the years, the government has made several efforts towards reducing poverty, as it forms an important part in promoting the growth of the nation. Ghana’s efforts at poverty reduction have resulted in the adoption of several programs over the past decades. Programs range from the Economic Recovery Program (ERP), Structural Adjustment Program (SAP), Programme of Actions to Mitigate the Social Costs of Adjustments (PAMSCAD), Sector – Wide Approaches (SWAPs), Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), Livelihood Empowerment against poverty (LEAP) to savanna accelerated development agency (SADA). Notwithstanding, efforts towards reducing poverty cannot be solely attributed to the government, it is evident that Ghana,
and other developing countries, cannot depend on the government alone to help in the fight against poverty and its related issues and hence, the need for people to start moving towards finding more practical solutions. Consequently, there is an unrelenting need in today’s world for more people who have a sense of social responsibility that is not mandated upon them, but that they instead choose to carry, whether individuals, groups, or organizations, Social contract to transform the society and shape its future (Bass 1999). An example of such individual(s) is the expanding civil society, represented by all the different non-governmental organizations (NGOs), non-profit organizations (NPOs) and syndicates that address a variety of significant and critical issues in the community such as poverty, illiteracy, women rights, girl child education, corruption and others. In most cases, NGOs are referred to as the ‘third sector’ in development and poverty reduction of countries (Issa, 2005).

In most cases, NGOs have been argued to appear more successful in poverty reduction efforts than most government-initiated programs (Murray & Overton, 2011; Lewis & Kanji, 2009; Bebbington et al, 2008; Barr et al, 2005; Riddell & Robinson, 1995). For instance, Riddell and Robinson (1995) provide key reasons why most NGO projects appear more successful than government-initiated interventions. The authors suggested that three factors in particular stood out: the participation of the beneficiaries in the various cycles of the project; strong and effective NGO management and institutional capability; and the caliber of project staff, their commitment to overall project objectives, their skills and the degree of empathy with the intended beneficiaries. The authors suggest that NGO interventions in poverty reduction efforts appear to influence the lives of beneficiaries in diverse ways because of the effectiveness of NGO strategies and orientation. NGOs have been said to respond effectively and efficiently to most problems of poverty, advocacy, social mobilization; delivery of social services, provision of
livelihood programs; training and relief, and rehabilitation (Adablah, 2003; Mani, 2003). Further, arguments by Nkrumah (2000) suggest that the activities of NGOs have intensified under decentralization and that the activities of NGOs have sought to increase participation which is considered key in pro-poor targeting. It is against this background that, this study is dedicated to exploring the role of NGOs, as transformational organizations, in reducing poverty and, with focus on one NGO, namely ActionAid, which was specifically chosen for its major efforts in the field of development, social change and poverty alleviation in the upper west region of Ghana, which is one of the poorest regions in the country (Ghana statistical service, 2013)

1.2 Statement of the problem

Ghana is one of the country’s in sub-Sahara Africa to halve extreme poverty that is part of the population living below the poverty line was cut down from 36.5% to 18.2% between 1999 and 2006 there by achieving the millennium goal 1. According to a report by UNICEF Ghana, 2013 revealed that despite the eradication of extreme poverty in Ghana, the incidence of extreme poverty is highest in the rural areas. with as many as over 1.8 million persons living in extreme poverty in rural areas (2010 PHC projections), this locality accounts for nearly three-fifths of those living in extreme poverty in Ghana. This is to say that the dynamics of poverty is still very much a rural phenomenon (Ghana statistical service, 2013). The three northern regions combined account for more than half of those living in extreme poverty (52.7%) in Ghana. ActionAid Ghana country strategy paper (CSP) V also outlined that 70% of the people with income that falls below the poverty line of less than ($1.25 daily) are found in the northern and savannah areas (ActionAid country strategy paper V,2015-2019).

The pattern is very similar to the findings in 2005/06, although the three northern regions account for slightly less of the extreme poor in 2012/13 than in 2005/06 considering the upper
poverty line of GH₵1,314, the proportion of the population defined as poor is 24.2 percent in 2012/2013, with a poverty gap index of 7.8 percent (in other words, the mean income of the poor falls below the poverty line by 7.8%). However, even though poverty in the Upper West region where the study is based is the highest amongst the regions, its contributes less than ten percent to the national poverty due to the fact that it is the smallest region in Ghana in terms of population. Indeed, out of the 6.4 million persons who are deemed poor in Ghana, only half a million are from the Upper West region. Again, the Ghana poverty mapping, report the Upper West Region (70.7%) to have the highest poverty incidence among all the regions in Ghana. With WA West (92.4%) recording the highest poverty headcount, followed by Wa East (83.8%) and Sissala West (81.2%) districts. The poverty headcount for Wa Municipal (35.5%) is the lowest in the region.

The incidence rates for eight out of the 11 districts in the region range from 71.4 to 92.4 percent, and are above the regional average of 69.4 percent, other indicators such as the depth of poverty, inequality and the number of poor persons also follows similar patterns. One of the major reasons for this poverty parity is the fixation by policy makers on developing urban areas within Ghana. The relatively poor level of socio-economic development of the region has put majority of the population in high poverty bracket. According to Boon & Ahenkan (2008:10) and IMF Staff Country Report (2003:15), eight out of ten people in the region are poor by income measure of poverty. It also implies that they are living in absolute poverty, which according to Agyei-Mensah (2006) and Iliffe (1987:2) is a condition of life so limited by malnutrition, illiteracy, high mortality and low life expectancy amongst others beneath any reasonable definition of human decency. Meanwhile, the rest of the country has made some progress in attaining lower middle-income status in 2011 (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012).
Aryeetey and Goldstein (2000:286), Botchway (2001) and Songsore et al (2001) however denied lack of development initiatives in northern Ghana. Rather, their various researches tend to question what development could mean to different stakeholders and the manner in which development interventions has always been introduced to supposed beneficiaries. Some development literature have also attributed little success of most development programmes towards poverty reduction to the manner such programmes have been approached in their conception, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Stressing on the importance of any type, form or way and context of participation to the success of development programmes, Brett (2003:8, Drezé and Sen 2002:8) mentioned it centrality to any development effort. Other sources also doubt whether in the design and implementation of such programmes, genuine beneficiary inclusion and satisfaction have always gotten enough consideration. So as development continue to elude the people of the Upper West region.

From the above, it’s evident that the government effort alone cannot bridge this gap, as a result the awakening debut of individuals and society groups as players in development since the 1990s, has however been accompanied with transformations. These transformations of course do not occur in isolation but are largely connected to a country’s development. A great and common example of transformational organizations is the expanding civil society represented by all different non-governmental organizations, not for profit organizations and syndicates that address a variety of significant and critical issues in the community such as poverty, illiteracy, women rights and others. Despite the unstable political environment, the unfavorable economic conditions and the challenges they face due to the poor and outmoded socio-culture practices, poor laws regulations, formulations and enforcement there is quite a great influx of NGOs in the county particularly the upper west region which has the highest poverty incidence rate.
(Ghana statistical services, 2013) although the region recorded a reduction in poverty incidence in 2012. A significant proportion of the Ghanaian population are still living in poverty despite influx of various NGOs who claim to be working on improving the lives of the poor. Why is this so? My study seeks to explore how NGOs programs or activities are working to reducing rural poverty in Ghana. My focus is on, ActionAid Ghana in the upper west region with more emphasis on 3(three) communities within the Sissala east district now a municipal who have benefited from activities of ActionAid Ghana.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The main aim of the study is to explore the contributions made by ActionAid in reducing poverty in the Sissala east district of the upper west region of Ghana. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Examine the various poverty reduction programs by action aid in the Sissala East District

2. Assess the effect of these poverty reduction programs on the lives of beneficiaries in the communities

3. Find out the challenges that hinder the effectiveness of poverty reduction programs of Action Aid.

4. Find ways to enhance poverty reduction programs of ActionAid in the district
1.4 Research question

The main question that this study attempt to answer is “what are the contributions made by ActionAid in reducing poverty in the Sissala East district of the upper west Region of Ghana?

And the sub-questions that the study seeks to find answers are,

1. What are the various poverty reduction programs of ActionAid in the Sissala East District?
2. What effects has the poverty reduction initiatives on the lives of beneficiaries in the communities?
3. What challenges hinder the effectiveness of poverty reduction programs of Action Aid?
4. What are the ways of enhancing poverty reduction programs of ActionAid in the Sissala East District?

1.5 Significance of the Study

NGOs programs will be successful if they collaborate with the relevant stakeholders or developmental agents. Provision of Useful information for national decision making is very crucial, in project planning and implementation to provide realistic project for the rural poor. This study will have unearthed data and information regarding the functions and activities of ActionAid, by studying their ways of operation and reviewing some outcomes with suggestions and proposals to effectively carry out their development roles. Action aid is one of the numerous NGOs that have contributed to the development in the Sissala east district. The study will bridge the gap and add to existing knowledge on the topic and provide a platform for further research. It will also contribute to empirical, conceptual, theoretical and methodological knowledge about the problem on the activities and efforts of ActionAid to improve the living conditions of the
people in the Sissala East District. However, the condition of the people is progressing at a rate slower than expected. Hopefully this research will outline the reasons for the slow developmental rate in the district and the role of ActionAid in supporting development in the district.

Findings and recommendations of the study will serve as a spring board to generate interest for further research into the other aspects of the activities of NGOs in Ghana. This stems from the fact poverty and for that matter rural poverty challenge is a multifaceted phenomenon and no one research is capable of addressing it in full.

Lastly, the study will contribute to existing literature on the role of NGOs in sustainable national development and serve as a reference point for policy making and implementation and to the body of academic knowledge.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The research is designed to explore the role of ActionAid as a transformational organization in reducing rural poverty in Sissala east district of the upper west region of Ghana. Thus, the study is guided by and confined to the four stipulated research objectives identified. Again, the scope of the study is narrowed by developing and conducting an in-depth investigation into the activities of NGOs using a qualitative approach. This might limit the generalization of the findings to other institutions and researchers unless in the case of a specific context and/or phenomenon.

1.7 Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one includes the background of the study, problem statement, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, significance of
the study, study scope and limitation and organization of the study. Chapter two highlights and reviews the theories that underpin the study as well as other relevant existing literature. Chapter three presents the methodology of the study. These include the research paradigm, the research design, the study area, target population, sample size, sampling techniques, data collection instrument, data management and analysis, ethical considerations, limitations of the study, and a chapter conclusion as well. Chapter four covers data analysis and discussion whereas chapter Five comprises the summary, conclusions and recommendations
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews both the empirical and theoretical perspective of the study and is organized under the following sub-headings; concept of non-governmental organization (NGOs), NGOs and their activities, funding of NGOs, historical background of NGOs in Ghana, NGOs and poverty reduction, NGOs and poverty reduction in Ghana and ActionAid in the Sissala East district.

2.1 Definition of Concept

2.1.2 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

Sohel (2007) defines an NGO as “a legally constituted organization created by natural or legal persons that operates independently from any government and a term usually used by governments to refer to entities that have no government status” (Sohel, et al., 2007, p. 3). The NGO phenomenon amidst its multifaceted categorization and definition has an underlying notion of bringing about some form of change. Lang (2013) constructively summaries this in her work by outlining shared characteristics of NGOs as “not related to government; not for profit; voluntary; and pursue activities for the common good instead of just for their members”, all of which take the form of either service provision or advocacy of public policy” (Lang, 2013, p. 12). The United Nations in 1945 was the first to use the term “NGO” when it made a distinction in its charter between the participation of intergovernmental agencies and non-government associated groups (Lewis & Kanji, 2009; Lang, 2013, p. 10). The spade of NGOs increased since
World War II, even though several voluntary organizations existed before this period (Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern World, 2008). Recently, NGOs have taken up the primary responsibility of government in providing development and ensuring human rights and livelihood. Thus far, most NGOs, overtime, have taken up the role of charity particularly in Africa. The term NGO has been the most popular term in charity related organization’s work, different names are used sometimes for other charity-based organizations. For instance, Lewis & Kanji, contended that, the application of different terms for charitable based organizations sometimes connotes differences in organizations and purposes. A great example is distinction usually made between grassroots or membership NGOs, composed of people organizing to advance their own interests; and intermediary NGOs, made up of people working on behalf or in support of a marginalized group (Lewis & Kanji, 2009). In similar studies, differences between NGOs is made on the basis of developmental NGOs and member-based organizations (Banks, et al., 2015, p. 708). Moreover, studies have shown that, NGOs are the third sector of the world’s institutions with government and profit-based organizations being the first and second respectively (Lewis & Kanji, 2009). Other terminologies such as Grass-roots organizations, community-based organizations (CBOs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), all became popularized as an expression of new politics. According to a report published by Sida, ‘civil society’ “includes everything between and including big non-governmental organizations and small, informally structured organizations that handfuls of villagers’ form in remote areas of a less developed country” (Manor, 2004, p. 7). Despite the different levels of NGOs, they all still have a similar driving force, which is to pursue the interests of the poor. The important point is not the level of their operations, but their level of impact in the lives of the poor. The fact that the outputs of these NGOs may differ due to differences in their level of operations and capacities
cannot be disputed. However, in spite of all these, the activities of NGOs contribute to improving the lives of the poor all over the world.

2.1.3 The concept of poverty

The term poverty is multidimensional both in its definition and measurements, ranging from economic, social to human. According to Adjei Osei-Wusu et al., (2012), “…the major theme underlying the conceptualization of poverty is diversity; diversity of ways in which people perceive and understand poverty, diversity of how poverty is measured and how people strive to either escape or cope with it, and diversity of policy interventions employed to combat poverty” (Adjei Osei-Wusu, et al., 2012, p. 52). As per the latest report by the UN in 2016 poverty is the condition of people living on 1.9 US$ or less per day. Scholars such as Amartya Sen defined poverty as the inability to cover the persons most basic needs. (Sen,1982). In terms of measuring poverty, he viewed poverty with different lenses, postulating the need to go beyond income in order to get a more accurate measure of poverty (Abraham & Kumar, 2008, p. 79). Sen’s approach focuses on enriching the lives of individuals through the opportunity to develop capabilities. People have extended abilities to do what they can do and be what they can be, thus having freedom. Jeffery Sachs similarly implies the need for capability development when he indicated that the first solution in combating poverty is dealing with the ‘poverty trap’. This depicts the inability and lack of control of the poor to overcome their poverty situation by using their own resources (Suharko, 2007, p. 4). In this research, the concept of poverty is viewed in its multifaceted nature without any rigid alignment, as NGO activities cut across all dimensions.
2.2 NGOs and Poverty Reduction

NGOs have been regarded as one of the most important institution of development worldwide. This notion stems from the various activities undertaken by both local and International NGOs in relation to poverty reduction and national development effort. This has thus made NGOs gain prominence in the provision of public goods and developmental assistance (Lewis & Kanji, 2009, p. 1; McGuire, 2013, p. 706). Upswing of NGO recognition can be partly attributed to their “assumed ability to fill gaps in service-delivery as well as their drive and tenacity in pursuing transformative agendas and equal relationships, through their people centered approaches” (Holmen & Jirstrom, 2009; McGuire, 2013; Banks, et al., 2015, p. 10). Although terminological categorization of NGOs appears to be rigid, classification of its activities is diversified and cannot be sharply divided as their labels portray. Most scholars categorized their activities as service delivery, advocacy, and developmental oriented work (Hill, 2005; Mcguire, 2013).

2.2.1 Service delivery role

NGOs are known to be involved in service delivery like clothing, food, to the poor. They have the ability to fill in the gaps in society through mobilization of resource to provide services for those who need them (Willetts, 2002; Lewis & Kanji, 2009; Banks, et al., 2015). In spite of the tedious and complex nature of their service provision activities, engaging in such activities has boosted the recognition of NGOs as capable channels. And over the last two decades, have been increasingly contracted by governments and donors to undertake specific tasks in return for payment (Lewis & Kanji, 2009). Add some example from the Ethiopian studies on poverty reduction.
2.2.2 Advocacy role

The advocacy element of NGO activities is also very popular, as various NGOs have been seen to take the leading role in enforcing and demanding change in various ways. In relation to this author have classified them as catalysts; campaigning; advocacy; political and having civil society functions (Hudson, 2000; Willetts, 2002; Lewis & Kanji, 2009; Holmen & Jirstrom, 2009; Banks, et al., 2015). According to Lewis & Kanji (2009), the catalytic nature of NGOs is evident in their ability to bring about positive transformation by facilitating agendas and contributing to improved thinking and action amongst individuals, groups, local communities or other stakeholders in developments such as government, businesses or donors. (Willetts, 2002; Banks, et al., 2015).

Through advocacy activities, NGOs act as a voice for the poor. Their advocacy takes the form of researching, analyzing and informing the public about issues; mobilizing citizen action through media campaigns and other forms of activism; and lobbying business leaders and policy makers (Nelson, 2007, p. 2). Aside influencing policy, the political aspects of NGO advocacy, includes their role as watchdogs of duty bearers and also promoters of democracy. Advocacy efforts of NGO towards development and creating an environment for poverty reduction are countless. In relation to democracy, several authors have highlighted the role of NGOs in influencing democracy. They play an active role as advocates in building and maintaining democracy in many countries both in the North and South. For example, Bolivia and Brazil (Banks, et al., 2015); South Africa; Sudan; Congo (Lewis & Opoku-Mensah, 2006). In the 1990s, civil society had been liberated from the hegemonic grip of African States and had expression of great interest from western governments. Civil society stood as symbol of defense for democracy and played an active role in enhancing African politics through promotion of pluralism and democratic
consolidation (Raheem, 2012). Additionally, most governments, to an extent regard NGOs as a threat to their authority and have made countless efforts to suppress their activities. A study done in Ghana shows that governments are most threatened by NGOs during elections, as the government is aware of the influence NGOs have on the people, especially those at the grassroots (Porter, 2003, p. 5).

2.2.3 Developmental role

NGOs often undertake long term developmental goals/projects. They contribute to development projects by adapting to local context through involving local stakeholders; private enterprises; acting as gatekeepers of government in developmental activities by enforcing accountability and efficiency; and contributing real content of concepts through concrete action (Ulleberg, 2009, p. 17). In this case, NGOs are classified as “partners” (Lewis & Kanji, 2009), and “developmental” (Holmen & Jirstrom, 2009). Over the years they have attracted the attention of most western donors, as efficient channels of development. Compared to the bureaucratic and ineffective government to government project- based aid, NGOs are more flexible and portray higher possibilities of local- level, bottom-up, and grassroots participation implementation of projects (Makoba 2002; Lewis & Kanji, 2009, p. 16).

Makoba, further described them as an essential factor in catering for the needs of groups in society, whose place at the State or market table is not reserved (Makoba, 2002). Furthermore, through the developmental activities of NGOs, the lives of the poor are improved. There is an evident link between poverty and development, in the sense that it is through devotion to achieve development which leads to poverty reduction (Iniamagha, 2015, p. 2). For example, poverty related issues such as lack of education, lack of access to basic needs etc., are all tackled under developmental projects, and consequent results of tackling these issues is a reduction in poverty.
NGOs in this light are a force to reckon with, as their developmental activities have underlying poverty reduction effects. For instance, infrastructural development activities of World Vision reduced poverty in the Amhara rural area of Ethiopia (Belshaw & Coyle, 2001, p. 33); and efforts to improve designated poverty indicators by Gram Vikas NGO in (Iniamagha, 2015).

Following the important roles played by NGOs the world all over, NGOs receive large amounts of money from different categories of donors to enhance their work. According to Boyson (2001), Categories of donors include; Official Development Assistance (ODA) Agencies; United Nations Agencies; Multilateral Development Banks; International Foundations; Global Corporations; International Nongovernmental Organizations; and International Church-Based or Religious Organizations (Boyson, 2001, pp. 4-7). Most of this financial assistance are North (developed/western countries) to South (developing countries) aligned. This reference often appears due to the fact that most often than not, developmental efforts especially in relation to combating poverty is needed more in developing countries as compared to developed countries. The North and the South therefore have this donor-recipient relationship. The northern NGOs, which are based in one country and seek development objectives abroad are known as International non-governmental organizations (NNGOs or INGOs), whereas those in the South who are on the receiving end are “local NGOs or SNGOs” (Lewis & Kanji, 2009; Banks & Hulme, 2012, p. 4). Studies have shown that the donor-recipient relationship between the North and South is a blessing and a curse, with consequences of a strained relationship with the poor.

As Banks and Hulme (2012) put it, “NGOs have become too close to the powerful and too far from the powerless”. Thus, in as much as NGOs need financial support to run and maintain their activities, some of these supports have invisible strings attached, which clips the wings of NGOs to an extent. NGOs have been widely criticized for their lack of representativeness,
ineffectiveness and difficulty in remaining loyal to their distinctive values, among others (Banks & Hulme, 2012; Banks, et al., 2015). In this regard, Holmen & Jirstrom suggest that some NGOs instead of focusing on effectively undertaking their activities are mainly concerned with gaining access to foreign cash flows (Holmen & Jirstrom, 2009). These results in the questioning of NGO legitimacy as significant drivers of poverty alleviation and development as a whole. NGOs pursuing their mandate to reduce poverty through their developmental activities, in conjunction with financial resources, greatly determine the efficiency of their output. Currently, in Ghana, most civil society organizations (CSOs) are dependent on foreign donors. However, due to Ghana’s emergence as an oil economy and the global economic crisis, it is envisaged that inflows of donor funding will decrease in the coming years, which might have significant implications on NGOs (Tsikata, et al., 2013).

Contrary to the 1980s where NGOs gained an increased developmental role through service delivery, the 2000s depicted an expansion of NGOs’ activities, to focus more on active public advocacy instead of purely service delivery initiatives (Tsikata, et al., 2013). More so, the 2000s introduced the two significant approaches to development, one of which is the Rights Based Approach (RBA) (Tsikata, et al., 2013). This involves “the shift of NGOs from service delivery to policy advocacy and holding duty bearers to account” (Tsikata, et al., 2013, p. 18).

2.4 NGOs involvement in poverty reduction in Ghana

On account of various researches, both national and international, Ghana is one of the growing economically strong countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. The country has experienced substantial economic growth over the years and in a 2015 Human Development Index (HDI) survey, it ranked 139th out of the 188 countries and territories in the world (Caluag, 2015). Between 1992 and 2013 Ghana’s national level of poverty fell by more than half (from 56.5% to 24.2%),
thereby achieving the MDG1 target, confirming that more progress for the poor has been made over the years (Cooke, et al., 2016, p. 1). This is however for ‘extreme poverty and not ‘poverty’ as a whole, as the poverty depth index was shown to decline over the period from 20.9% in 1992 to 7.8% in 2013, signifying the degree of poor people living deeply below the poverty line compared to the 1990s (ibid., 9).

Despite this growth, poverty still remains a pronounced problem in the country. There is no doubt that the country has experienced significant decline in poverty levels, however there is still an imbalance. According to the Ghana Poverty and Inequality Report, although the proportion of people living in poverty has declined by a quarter since 2006, the number of people living in poverty has only declined by 10%, signifying the lack of correlation of poverty reduction and population growth (Cooke, et al., 2016, p. 1). Additionally, there is a huge inequality gap between the rich and the poor. The growth rate of the poor has been lower compared to the wealthier groups who have benefited more, depicting lack of inclusive growth (ibid., 2). Poverty incidence is much larger in the northern regions of Ghana, compared to the southern regions (Ghana Statistical Service, 2015).

The high levels of poverty in Ghana has seen the emergence of several International and local NGOs as far back during the colonial era. Recent pace of NGOs emergence in Ghana is dated back to the 1990s and 2000s which provided an enabling environment for NGO operations due to political and economic liberalization; transition to civilian-democratic rule; neo-liberal policy ascendancy and a push to deepen democracy in Ghana (Tsikata, et al., 2013). The recognition of NGOs in Ghana was deepened due to increased interest and support from foreign donors (Christensen, 2010). NGOs activities have therefore flourished over the years from the 2000s and have gained the status as important players in development in Ghana.
Overtime, NGOs’ in Ghana engage in diverse activities ranging from capacity building, service provision, to micro finance. They have been persistent in pursuing their aims to promote sustainable livelihoods among the poor. Despite the existing poverty levels in Ghana, evidence point to significant contributions made by NGOs to the lives of the poor, from provision of health and educational facilities, provision of employment opportunities and improved access to potable water (Adjei Osei-Wusu, et al., 2012, p. 53). Also, these activities are done in conjunction with CBOs and local government structures. Examples are the Smart Water for Green School Project by Green Cross International in Volta region, and water and sanitation facility provision project by Safe Water Network (SWN) and Water Health International (WHI) in Amasaman (ibid.). Aside service provision, another means that has become popular as a strategic tool of reducing poverty is the establishment of micro finance entities (Adjei, et al., 2009). Ghana is flooded with several microfinances, being managed by NGOs. This is regarded as an effective means of reducing poverty. Having traces of Sens postulations, it is believed that provision of small loans, savings and insurance products to the poor (especially women), could be a way of developing capabilities through providing opportunities and encouraging self-reliance and active control of their households and community roles (ibid.). For example, Sinapi Aba Trust (SAT) the largest microfinance NGO in Ghana provides support and creates opportunities for enterprise development, and income generation to the vulnerable in the society. “The organization serves as the bank for over 50,000 poor clients, offering credit, savings, insurance and holistic training services, with women constituting about 92% of the organization’s client base” (Dangah, 2012, p. 21).

NGOs in Ghana also play an increasingly active role in advocacy in the form of influencing governments development policies, serving as the voice of the poor and pushing for their
benefits, through keeping duty bearers accountable to the poor. In 2003, Water Aid supported a group of local NGOs called the Ghana Coalition of NGOs in Water and Sanitation (CONIWAS) to engage with the government, towards creating a national water policy. “The Ghana government has acknowledged the role that NGOs play in making, following and monitoring the national water and sanitation policies. Due to this, investment in rural water sector increased coverage from less than 8% in 1994, to 40% in 1998, and the MOLE series created the conditions for nationwide convergence on the Right to Water” (Dangah, 2012, pp. 24-25).

2.5. Impediments to NGOs Activities

The work and effort of most NGOs around the world towards poverty reduction has been regarded as not too rosy as one may term despite the fact that in most cases, NGOs receive support from sectors, (Mohana, 2009). In an examination of the literature on impediments to the work and activities of NGOs around the world, various studies have been conducted. In the case of NGOs in India, Sub- Sahara Africa, and some parts of Asia in particular, Mohana (2009); Ramesh (2017); Pradeep (2014) and Kupoyini and Ladele (2016) presented the following as some of the obstacles affecting the effectiveness of NGOs effort towards poverty reduction.

1. Lack of Funds

Majority of NGOs in Asia, Africa and India are has been hit largely by paucity of funds. In most cases, NGOs in these parts of the world depend largely on donor funding and support as government does not provide any form of financial assistance to the works and operationalization of NGOs. Following this, in most cases, NGOs in these areas will have to chase for funds from donor partners most of which do not come on time, and in extreme cases do not come at all. Such situations put the operations and activities of NGOs to a halt making them languish in their works.
2. Lack of dedicated leadership

Most NGOs in Africa have suffered overtime from leadership challenge. Leadership credentials determine the direction of NGOs works and operations. Leadership in NGOs in most countries has suffered several setbacks due to influence of politicians, the quest of NGO leaders to enter into politics, unfaithfulness on the part of the leaders as regards financial management amongst others. Kupoyini and Ladele (2016;18) reported that “In the post-independence era, unfortunately, the NGOs faced the crisis of leadership as the leaders who pioneered voluntary action and worked for it with spirit of devotion and dedication choose to enter politics to find berths in legislatures and parliament thus creating a vacuum for dedication leadership in NGOs”. Again in some cases, leadership in NGOs is managed by elderly people who in most cases are autocratic and frustrate younger employees who have much more energy to work and are open to new ideas, initiatives and innovation (Mehta et al., 2010).

3. Inadequate Trained Personnel

Studies on NGOs have uncovered inadequate trained persons as a bane to the work and effectiveness of NGOs in most countries. This is because, until relatively recently, NGOs were regarded as social services organizations and that working with such organizations meant for the social good of people did not attract much salary. In this regard only, dedicated people were recruited in NGOs to support the cause of development. This thus resulted in the employment if several untrained but dedicated and committed people who were willing to work in rural communities. However, the nature of work of NGOs now requires trained and educated people to supplement the development effort of organizations. Ramesh (2017) submitted that, the present crop of professionals and educated people are not willing to work with NGOs as they wish to work in urban communities and not the rural areas. Again, their expectations in terms of salaries
and remunerations juxtaposing the financial position of NGOs makes them unable to recruit such people. Even with those working for NGOs, most of them are not been trained due to the lack of money on the part of organizations.

4. Misuse of Funds

Studies has uncovered most leadership of NGOs have misapplied funds meant for the organization for their individual private gains and this has thus affected the image, performance and growth of NGOs in most of the World. For instance, Kupoyini and Ladele (2016;25) stated that, “it is the matter of fact that some unscrupulous elements have made fortunes by floating NGOs for their personnel gains and managing grants from the government. It is a common experience that there have been serious charges of misuse and misappropriation of funds received as grant- in-aid form the government, foreign donors and raised through their own resources by the most of the NGOs. These NGOs may reflect its image to other NGOs who are working with dedication and commitment”.

5. Lack of Public Participation

One of the core areas of NGO operations is to provide the platform for citizens to participate in national political discourse; however, not much has been done in this regard. Pradeep (2014;36) in his analysis of the challenges confronting NGOs in India concluded as “NGOs are meant to provide opportunities to the citizens for democratic participation but they have not been able to fulfill this Obligation due to the method and manner in which they function, and failed to attract people, interested in construction work and develop channels for people’s enthusiastic participation. Some of the factors responsible for such a state of affairs are general backwardness of the people, absence of adequate number of dedicated persons, over emphasis on targets and time bound programmes, political interference and vested interests, easy availability of funds
without proper planning and assessment of felt needs and safeguards for the community, distrust of agencies and workers who do not have a base in the community and are unable to win its support and lack of decentralization which could give a feeling of being partners in development rather than development being thrust from above”.

6. Lack of Coordination

In most cases, NGOs have been referred to as lacking coordination with local, state and national level institutions even among NGOs themselves and this has resulted in overlapping, duplication, non-coordination amongst others. Mehta, et al. (2012; 95) indicated that, “the absence of such a Common forum also incapacitates NGOs to offer united stand against the government when it humiliates them by extraneous considerations at the behest of politicians and egoistic government officers. Moreover, the state of affairs also does not facilitate exchange of information, data collection, research, training and publication and also does not create favorable conditions where common difficulties can be placed before the government”

2.7 Ways of Enhancing Poverty Reduction Activities of NGOs

Literatures on the operationalization of NGOs have argued that, most NGOs have applied measures for enhancing their operations and activities, world-wide. Empirical studies by Toly (2010); UNESCO (2010); UNESCO (2007); Nagao et al (2007); IIASA (2006) has outlined similar measures employed by most NGOs around the world in enhancing their operations. Among the list of measures adopted are discussed as follows;

1. Community Focus and Ownership

One of the core annals of managing and successfully enhancing the activities and operations of NGOs is by operating by the concept of community focus and ownership. According to research,
successful projects by NGOs are designed to meet the specific needs and requirement of the operation areas or communities that they are implemented by this, NGOs are required to do assessment of the various communities and communicate the programs and projects to them during the project planning stage. This is because, individual people and communities have different developmental needs and challenges and that designing programs and projects for them must take into account these unique needs and requirement of the community. This essentially results in effective and efficient management of project and activities of NGOs. UNESCO (2007; 126) presented that, when NGOs work with the various communities and needs in mind, they attract greater involvement and support from the community. Thus far, “involving the community in the planning and decision making of programs strengthens the relationship between NGO’s, the communities and projects. Community members feel more ownership and responsibility for the projects and are more likely to be invested in a project’s success and effectiveness. Community involvement can also help with funding and staffing of programs and increases the likelihood of a successful handover from NGOs to the community”.

2). Partnership

Another mechanism for successful NGO management as per literature on NGO is the creation of systems of partnership with other organizations, civil society, International organizations and institutions, and/or government. In most cases, International Organizations have partnered with local civil society and NGOs to effectively and efficiently plan and implement various poverty reduction activities and programs in the local communities. NGOs have also on numerous occasions partnered with other NGOs and organizations to share and learn information on best practices and funding streams for the purpose of effective and efficient project management. Some NGOs have also partnered with government around the world to develop and implement
poverty reduction schemes. When NGOs partner with other organizations like civil society and/government, they help spread share the planning, funding and management cost as well as burden of projects and programmes in relation to poverty reduction in communities as this makes projects more effective and efficient.

3. Innovative Approaches to service provision

Studies on NGOs posit that, for effective management, projects by NGOs must employ innovative approaches to service provision. Provision of service NGO projects goes beyond the normal approaches of mere service delivery this is because, many projects are implemented outside of the traditional and formal institutions resulting in NGO projects reaching larger population and having greater as well as broader impacts on the lives of the ordinary people.

Toly (2010;12) concluded that, “successful programs provide services in interesting, interactive, or unique ways. Often this means moving away from preconceived ideas had prior to working with a community, and for NGOs to be flexible and willing to change or supplement their programming when necessary. One large area of recent innovation is the integration of technology for more effective and engaging programming”.

4. Capacity Building

For the purpose of developing and managing effective poverty related projects and programmes for the masses, NGOs must the infrastructure and develop capacity of institutions, communities and governments to support the implementation of these projects. Nagao et al (2007;13), contended that, “Capacity building can be done in many forms; including institutional, physical or intellectual—depending on the needs of the community. Sometimes this means increasing physical infrastructure—building roads, buildings, telecommunication, etc that will ease the implementation of projects. Other projects focus on building intellectual capacity; passing on
new knowledge, technology and skills to community members. Still others focus on building the institutional capacity of governments, institutions and other civil society groups to take on and administer the services NGOs are providing. Countries must develop their infrastructure in order to provide the services NGOs are currently providing to their citizens in the future. Successful NGOs focus on building capacity in order to implement programs efficiently and enhance communities’ ability to provide services by themselves in the future”.

5. Donor Alliance and Support

Studies have shown of the mechanism of donor alliance and support, by which most NGOs have effectively and efficiently provided poverty reduction and other related activities for their beneficiaries. NGOs activities are mostly supported by International Organizations as well as other charitable networks that provide support and financial aids to local organizations and NGOs to Ghana and beyond. For effective management of poverty reduction and alleviation programmes, most NGOs have built networks with other charitable organizations that provide support in the form of financial assistance, materials, technical know-how amongst others. Action Aid has thus built on this alliance with other donor organizations to supports its growing activities and demands over time.

2.6. ActionAid in the Sissala east district and Poverty Reduction

ActionAid is a global movement of people working together to further human rights and defeat poverty for all. ActionAid started work in the Upper West Region in 1998 in the Sissala district. Three years later, in 2001, a second development area was established in the Jirapa-Lambussie district, funded by sponsors from United Kingdom. Located in northern Ghana, the Upper West region is within the government administrative boundaries. ActionAid has invested about 35 million in various projects alone during its 18yrs of operation in the district. These interventions
include education, women empowerment, human rights, food security and governance among others. The interventions may be grouped under service delivery, advocacy and developmental. Examples of some of the programmes carried out among the chosen communities are:

i) partnership for the promotion of rights; These strategic interventions are anchored on the Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) which analyzes inequalities, vulnerabilities and discrimination emanating from social and cultural norms and practices and thereby facilitate right-holder and duty-bearer engagements in addressing such injustices and human rights violations. Instructively, the Upper West Region and for that matter the Sissala East District is besieged with a number of challenges and injustices.

On the gender and women’s rights front, among the injustices include gender-based violence mostly against women and girls, child marriages, high incidence of teenage pregnancies, gender equality in access to resources, poor representation and participation of women in decision-making processes and burdensome workload of women.

ii) Promoting community participation in school governance and management of school resources, this intervention led to the introduction of mothers clubs; which is to encourage women participate in schools governance. It also offers the women the platform for seeking and accessing various economic empowerment interventions from government and other developmental partners. In 2012, a women was elected the vice chairperson of the Sissala East district PTA federation which increased significantly from about 17% to about 34%.

iii) Sissala East greening and food Security Project; mobilized 45 women groups from 9(nine) communities in Sissala east and supporting them with small ruminants as some alternative
livelihood activities to discourage the spate of charcoal production and deforestation. A total of 225 women benefited from a livestock revolving fund.

IV) Food fortification for women’s empowerment and child nutrition; This was aimed at helping communities and households to improve nutrition for their children. Women groups in the communities have been introduced to the production of local food supplement made with locally available food ingredients, (maize, soybean and groundnuts). Over 150 women have been trained on its preparation in the Sissala East and over 600 children are using it for improved nutrition.

v) Positive actions against forced early marriages (PAFEM);

Mobilized, trained and engaged with the law enforcement agencies and other stakeholders such as (GES, GHS, PTAs, traditional and religious leaders and girls clubs to act against forced and early marriages in the Sissala district. Succeeded in the development of community action plans (CAPs) developed for the 3project communities under the lead of the district assembly such identified priorities would be mainstreamed into the 2014-2017 (DMTDP).

vi). Promoting Basic research and Advocacy in education management:

One key strategy intervention adopted in Education is the use of simple research and advocacy. On a biennial bases ASUDEV(Partner of ActionAid) conduct district-wide Education Resource Mapping exercise where we map out all school resources in all schools within selected district in the region with the objective of ascertaining the availability, adequacy, equity of distribution, and the use of all school resources including, human resources, key infrastructure, teaching and learning materials, effectiveness of school governance and management structures etc. the results from these studies are then used as the basis for effective advocacy with various education
authorities mainly the GES, District assembly and the community opinion leaders. This has been a flagship novelty which has gained the needed popularity and has resulted in a number of responsive actions by the managers of education in the districts.

(vii) **Entrepreneurship training for women;**

This intervention is a coaching exercise which is aimed at transforming the business of caterers from informal domestic entities into promising small-scale enterprises through entrepreneurship training.

(viii) **Save our mothers platforms (SOMP) II Project.** This is to reduce maternal and child mortality by increasing community role in health care delivery via the CHIPS program me in the Sissala east west, Lambussie-Karni and Nadowli-kaleo district of the upper west region. In all these, communities are courage to undertake self-help development initiatives while holding the duty bearers accountable. The organization also undertakes initiatives to empower people to understand how public policies, processes and institutions affect their lives and demand from duty bearers’ effective service delivery.
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology employed in the study. It covers areas such as research paradigm, research design, the scope of study and target population, sample size and sampling technique, sources of data as well as data collection instrument. The final part of the chapter discusses data management and analysis, limitations of the study and the organizational profile.

3.1 Research Paradigm

Research paradigm explains and addresses the “philosophical assumptions and dimensions within which a study examines and presents issues. Thus, a research paradigm consists of a set of fundamental assumptions, understanding and the beliefs of the perception of world that informs and guides the thinking and behavior of the researcher in drawing conclusions” (Jonker and Penn ink, 2010). Besides, Neumann (2011), Saunders et al. (2009) and Creswell (2009) categorically state that the “first important issue to consider in conducting a research in social science is the determination and selection of an appropriate research paradigm – as it forms the basis for framing and understanding social phenomena.” This study adopts the interpretivist or constructivist paradigm because it emphasizes the understanding of the social world as influenced by the experiences and subjective meanings that people attach to it. And this paradigm will enable me to favorable interact and dialogue with mine participants or respondents properly. Again, interpretivist paradigm helped the study uncover the inside perspectives or the real meanings of social issues such as poverty and how its affect the people in the selected

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communities in the Sissala East district and the related challenges faced by NGOs in trying to alleviate the menace.

Besides, the interpretivist paradigm draws exclusively from qualitative data which offers rich descriptions of social phenomena or construct. (Wahyuni, 2012). Thus, based on the strengths and suitability of the qualitative approach with respect to the interpretivist paradigm, this study employs qualitative approach for collection and analysis. This approach involves the collection of variety of data and analysis processes and techniques that involve the use of structured, semi-structured and open-ended interviews. Besides, qualitative approach will aid in gathering realistic and holistic data. The basic strength of the qualitative approach is that it helps to probe deeper into values, beliefs, and assumptions and also gain a full appreciation of the study group or society. Moreover, qualitative approach offers respondents the opportunity to freely offer descriptive and explanatory information on the issues under consideration without any restriction.

3.2 Research Design

The design used for the study is that of a case study. According to bromley (1990), case study is a systematic enquiry into an event or a set off related event which aims to describe and explain the phenomena of interest. Yin (1984 cited by Zucker 2001) also define case study as an empirical enquiry that investigate the contemporary phenomena within it real life context when the boundaries between the phenomena and the context are not clearly evidence and in which multiple sources of evidence are used. A case study helps in developing a detailed rather than a generalization of research issues (Ellis and Levy, 2009). This approach was chosen because it generates context specific research knowledge. Again, Frybjerg (2006) asserts that this approach makes it possible to research contemporary issues like poverty reduction. Again, it allows the use
of multiple sources of evidence, thus improving the quality of data for the study as it allowed for validation of one source of data by another. Furthermore, once the researcher has little control of the phenomenon under investigation, the case study design becomes an appropriate method to be employed for the study. Finally, this approach will enable the researcher to learn from practices as it enhances better understanding of the concept of poverty reduction in Ghana.

**Study Area**

The Sissala East District Assembly was created in the year 2004 by Legislative Instrument (LI.) 1766 with Tumu as its district capital. The district is located in the North- Eastern part of the Upper West Region of Ghana and share boundary on the north with Burkina Faso, east with Kassena Nankana West and Builsa District, to the south-east with West Mamprusi District, south-west with Wa East and Daffiama-Bussie-Issah districts and to the west by Sissala West District. The district has a total land size of 5,092.8 square kilometers representing 26.7 percent of the total landmass of the region. The district has a total land size of 5,092.8 square kilometers representing 26.7 percent of the total landmass of the region. The population of Sissala District is 56,528 representing 8.1 percent of the region’s total population. The district population is made up of 48.7 percent male and 51.3 percent female. The majority of the populations are in the rural (81.2%) areas than urban (18.8%), the age group 5 -9 years has the highest population representing 15.2 percent and age group 80-84 years constitutes the least population of 0.8 percent. The sex ratio for the district is 94.8. This means that for every 100 females in the district, there are approximately 95 males. Considering the population 11 years and above, 41.6 percent are literate and 58.4 percent are non-literate. The proportion of literate males is higher (%) than that of females (66.7%). Six out of ten people (24.3%) could read and write both English and Ghanaian languages. About 74.2 percent of the populations aged 15 years and older
are economically active while 25.8 per cent are economically not active. Of the economically active population, 98.1 percent are employed while 1.9 percent are unemployed. For those who are economically not active, a larger percentage of them are students (53.3%), 15.9 percent perform household duties and 5.2 percent are disabled or too sick to work. Five out of ten unemployed are seeking work for the first time. With respect to the employed population, the main occupation of the area is farming with about 83.2 percent engaged as skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers, 5.3 percent in service and sales, 3.7 percent in craft and related trade, and 0.8 percent are engaged as managers, professionals, and technicians (GSS, 2010 PHC). Of the economy of the district is largely agrarian (69%), services and commerce (15%), and the industrial sector (16%). The Sissala East district is basically rural with more than (80%) of the people living in rural settlements and being farmers (GSS, 2010 PHC).

The administrative structure of the Sissala East District is made up of the District Assembly and its secretariat, departments of the District Assembly, one Town Council (Tumu), four Area councils (namely Bujan, Wellembelle, Sakai and Nabulo) and twenty one Unit Committees. The District Assembly is the highest decision-making body and is responsible for the overall development of the district. The culture of the people of the Sissala East District is dynamic. “Paari Gbiele” is celebrated once every year. And the tourism potentials identified include the slave market at Kasana; the Wotuomo cave between Dangi and Lilixia; the Hunter’s footprints at Dolibizon; the Mysterious rocks at Pieng; the Mysterious river at Nmanduanu; the Bone setters at Wuru, Kwapun and Banu; the Historical site at Santijan and the White man’s grave at Tumu. The Sissala East District has two chieftaincy divisions. These are Tumu and Wellembelle. These two paramountcies have come together to form the Sissala East Traditional council.
3.3 Sources of data

Data collection is crucial in getting the needed answers for the research questions. For the purpose of the study, primary and secondary data were used. One-on-one in-depth interview were used to collect the primary data. This approach gave the research participant the freedom to express themselves about the phenomenon under study. The secondary of source data included the review already documented literature and information. These were made up of published and unpublished documents such as research report, books, journal and articles. The secondary source of data provided preliminary insight into the study and was also used in formulating the research problems and research findings.

3.4 Target population

The total unit from which the sample was selected is the population of the study (Ghauri and Gonhaug, 2005). The target population of the research is the staff of Action Aid, Action Aid partners; Community based Anti-violence Team (COMBAT) and the community of Peing, Challu and Sakai in the Sissala East District. The choice of these respondents was because of their role in poverty reduction.

3.5 Sample size

To validate the generalization of the research results, the sample size were the representative of the population. The sample size of twenty-five (25) respondents was used. These participants were selected from (1) staff from ActionAid; three communities in the Sissala East district namely Peing, Sakai and Challu respectively contributed nine (9), eight (8) seven (7) participants. The above respondents were selected because they constitute the employee and beneficiaries who are in the position to provide relevant information of the subject under study.
It is important to mention that, the unequal contribution of participant for the study from the communities was as result of the availability of respondents at the time of interviews.

3.6 Sample Technique

Purposive and Convenient sampling technique were adopted for this research. The choice for these two sampling techniques were informed by the fact that convenient sampling aided in the selection of respondents who were willing and readily available to participate in interviews and without having to disturb the peace or force individual members to participate in the study. Again, convenient sampling technique was employed based on the ease of access to the three (3) communities. Moreover, purposive sampling technique was employed to ensure that only partners such as COMBAT group members, individual project beneficiaries and officials of ActionAid were involved in the study.

3.7 Instrumentation of Data Collection Procedure

An in-depth interview was used as the instrument to collect the primary data. The main research technique used to collect the data was the key informants’ interviews. This method was practical and useful because it enabled a Vis a Vis questioning and discussions with respondents. The merit of this method is with great fallibility in questioning and probing for clarifications where necessary. This technique afforded the research participant the room to express themselves without any restrictions. It also afforded the researcher to ask follow up questions where necessary following the choice, an interview was developed to reflect the study objectives and the questions. All interviews were conducted in English and Sissala language.
3.8 Data Management and Analysis

Data analysis is the interpretation of information gathered during the research activity. For attaining uniformity and coherence, data gathered from the study was grouped under the various objectives of the study. Data gathered from the different respondents’ groups were collated. Findings that were thought to be similar or the same but from different respondents’ groups were put under one broad topic for discussion whiles different opinions or answers provided were also discussed separately. Moreover, a more intriguing answers and data provided were specially put in an “italicized” form in the data analysis process. This was done to ensure that, a more compelling and interesting findings are specially noted. Again, explanations, descriptions, and further elaborations were offered to answers and illustrations provided for by the respondents.

3.9 limitations to the study

Limiting the sample to the Sissala east within the upper west region and only 3(three) communities within the sample would affect the generalisation of the research findings to the entire district. However, appropriate and representative sampling techniques would be employed such that the findings could give some insight into the research topic to help in decision making. Additionally, considering the fact that a greater number of residents in the district are illiterate (Ghana statistical service 2012), some residents were unwilling to openly and truthfully give up vital information relevant to this study. Therefore, some important information may be withheld and this is expected to affect the outcomes of the study.
CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter of the dissertation details the discussion and analysis of the study with reference to the data gathered and the objectives of the study based on the topic “Non-Governmental Organizations in poverty reduction; a case study of Action Aid Ghana in Sissala East District”. Data for the study was gathered from respondents who are stakeholders in and with ActionAid Ghana. Respondents numbering twenty-five (25) participated in the research work. The study was conducted in three main communities under the district with respondents spanning across all the communities. Communities involved in the study were Peing, Sakai and Challu. Moreover, the study embodied response from management of ActionAid Ghana in the region. Of twenty-five (25) respondents earmarked for the study, it is important to mention that, all of them participated in the research work through an interview process. This made the outcome of the study more comprehensive, representative and convincing. The study employed interview as its main instrument of data collection. Following this, interview guide was developed for the various respondents based on the objectives of the study. Data gathered during the research work was analysed using descriptive approach. The result of findings was discussed under;

1. Demographic information of respondents
2. Poverty reduction activities of ActionAid in the Sissala East District
3. Effects of poverty reduction activities of ActionAid on the communities
4. Challenges to poverty reduction efforts of ActionAid in in the Sissala East District
5. Ways of enhancing poverty reduction programs of ActionAid in the District
4.1 Demographic Information of Respondents

The study embodied respondents with different features and demographic characteristics. Respondents’ demographic information is centered on the following elements; sex composition of respondents, age, marital status, educational level of respondents, occupation of respondents, and communities of respondents. As regards the demographic information on sex composition of various respondents in the study, whereas ten (10) of the respondents were males, the remaining fifteen (15) were females indicating that, most respondents were females as against males. It is important to explain that the unequal representation of the sexes was not the researcher’s choice but as a result of the availability of respondents at the time of data collection. Regarding the composition of age, eighteen (18) of the respondents aged between 35-55, the remaining seven (7) are between age 18-34. As regards marital status, majority of respondents numbering eighteen (18) are married whereas two (2) have separated with five (5) being single. This indicates majority of respondents in the study were married couples as against other marital status of respondents. Concerning educational level of all respondents, most of the participant in the study did not attain any form of education whether formal or informal. On the other just a handful acquired primary education with secondary education certificate holders being the next with lowest figure. Tertiary educational certificate holders are the least on the data on educational level of various respondents in the study.

Again, on occupation of respondents, farming is the most dominant occupation of respondents as this is indicated by attaining a ratio of sixteen (16). Moreover, trading became next with those who are unemployed as third. Only one (1) respondent works with a Non-Governmental Organization. On the last of demographic information are the various communities that participated in the study. Of the total of 25(twenty five) participants, Peing contributed nine (9)
participants, Sakai and Challu contributing eight (8) and seven (7) respectively. ActionAid, which is the organization understudy, contributed only one (1) respondent to the study.

Juxtaposing information on demographic characteristics of respondents, it could be examined that, the study included respondents with different features and characteristics who perhaps have worked and/or benefited from the activities and programs of ActionAid, overtime. The differences in ratio of demographic features resulted from the availability and readiness of various respondents for the study. The inclusion of respondents with different features was to derive information from all sectors of beneficiaries and stakeholders of ActionAid activities, who have knowledge on the operations and performance of the study organization in the district.

4.2 Poverty Reduction Programs/ Activities of ActionAid

This section of the research takes on the various activities engaged by ActionAid towards poverty eradication in the district. In relation to examining the development of poverty related activities as well as criteria for selecting poor communities and people, questions to that effect was posed. According to the team leader of ActionAid, the organization defines poor people as

“Individuals or groups of people, who are unable to meet various basic needs and rights in society, such as clothing, shelter, health, water and food amongst many others.

To the organization, the absence of these life sustaining commodities puts individual people in a tight situation and makes them vulnerable to various conditions in society. Thus this definition agrees with Amartya Sen, who defines poverty as the inability to cover the persons most basic needs (Sen, 1982) Following this, ActionAid has developed certain criteria in the selection of deprived communities and individuals. On the part of the officials in the study, the organization employs the profiles district and communities to examine which district and communities are
poorer in relation to standards of living and various poverty related issues in the region and the country at large. Moreover, the organization resorts to medium term development strategy as well as undertaking community appraisal by staff and consultants engaged by the organization. This is done to complement the effort and data as well as profile obtained from the district and community profile to ascertain the true and real poverty position of communities and individuals.

4.2.1 Economic Activity of Respondents

In furtherance to the quest of investigating the source of livelihood of participant in the study, respondents were asked whether they have any source of livelihoods. It is important to note that, of all the twenty-five (25) respondents in the study, a greater ratio numbering twenty-three (23) identified as engaging in some form economic activity as their sources of livelihoods in the various study communities. Meanwhile, respondents with the ratio of two (2) are jobless with no source of livelihoods. Some respondents are engaged in multiple economic activities, others have only one sources of income for their livelihoods. Economic activities under listed in the study were, crop farming, trading or commerce, animal farming, food vending and any others.

According to the primary data gathered, sixteen (16) respondents are engaged in crop farming as their major source of livelihood with either trading, food vending, commerce and animal farming as their second source of livelihood whereas six (6) of them solely engage in trading and commerce. In the same vein, the information obtained on the field shows that two (2) respondent are engages in animal farming business with only one (1) of them being a food vendor solely. A critical analysis of the economic activities engaged in by respondents in the study indicates that they have various sources of livelihoods. Majority of them posited that, these sources of livelihoods were largely influenced by the activities and programs of ActionAid in the area.
4.2.2 Poverty Reduction Programs of ActionAid in the study communities

Concerning the objective of examining the various poverty-based activities and programs of ActionAid Ghana in the communities of study, respondents were first asked of how they heard or knew about the interventions mounted by ActionAid. Respondents answers to the various means of knowledge of ActionAid programs ranges from community radio, relatives/friend’s referrals, ActionAid’s sensitization and others as well. It is important to mention that, responses came across from all the various avenues or options provided through the interviews with some respondents identifying multiple sources of knowledge to ActionAid’s programmes and interventions. According to majority of respondents numbering nineteen (19) in the entire respondents’ ratio, they had knowledge of ActionAid’s programs through various community radios under operation and sometimes had information by other various means like messages from relatives and friends as well as through ActionAid’s sensitization. This indicates that, a greater percentage of respondent’s ratio knew of their programmes by means of community radio. Community radio in this regard has thus aided ActionAid to expand information to various communities as they have had to be informed of its programmes by this means. Similarly, as three (3) respondents exclusively revealed of having knowledge through ActionAid’s sensitization programmes, two (2) spoke of knowing of ActionAid through relatives and friends exclusively. On the other hand, one (1) respondent mentioned of engaging with the organization through other means like action for sustainable fight for development (ASUDEV). By this, all various of means of communication have aided in the dissemination of information as regards the various activities and programmes engaged in by the organization in various communities although community radio information dissemination seem to have been the most contributory means of information dissemination about the organization’s activities. This might have been
occasioned by its availability and closeness to the respective respondents and communities. One respondent remarked as,

“In this our village, we have community information center that broadcast information about anything which is about to happen in the area. We were just here one day and the information came from the community information center that, an NGO, called ActionAid would like to meet some people. We went and there begun our activities and operations with the organization”

(interviewer in Peing community, 2018).

In furtherance to this is the various programme areas engaged in by the organization with which respondents are beneficiaries. ActionAid’s poverty reduction activities evolve around capacity building and empowerment of the poor, income generation activities, health and sanitation and many other activities. Primary data gathered indicates most respondents are engaged in several activities of under ActionAid, Ghana. According to the data, of all the respondents size in the study, five (5) are engaged in capacity building and empowerment related programmes under the auspices of ActionAid as well as other related activities of the organization. On the other hand, sixteen (16) of the entire respondent’s size have been enrolled on all various income generating activities of the organization as a means for alleviating poverty and economic hardship whereas only a paltry of four (4) respondents ratio have been signed onto the health and sanitation programmes of ActionAid. This data indicates that, all the various respondents have been signed unto various poverty eradication programmes in the catchment district and communities of ActionAid. Thus far, the living conditions of various respondents and communities in the study have improved greatly as they are empowered for life sustenance through the various designed programmes. The data indicates that, even though majority of respondents are enrolled on
various economic and income related programmes, there was no much difference as a significant number of respondents are also enrolled onto other programmes of the organization.

Further, on the poverty reduction activities of ActionAid, respondents explained that, on income generating programmes, community members who are beneficiaries of ActionAid have been trained in soap making and processing, shea butter and oil production, tom brown, groundnut paste, small ruminant production for women, grain baking, donkey traction for farming, building of various community self-help groups for women, grain banking, feeding programmes, provision of grinding machines and tricycles, access to loans through the support of ActionAid, and many others as the organization overtime comes in contact with to be the drive for the development of individual people and eradication of poverty. One woman who was happy of the presence of ActionAid in the area stated it as

“Since the organization, referring to ActionAid came to this our community, most of we the women have been trained in several areas. Myself for example, I was trained in soap and grain baking. I now engage in these income generating activities on large scale apart from our traditional occupation of farming and this has helped my family so much so that we now have a comfortable life” (interviewee in Sakai, 2018).

The introduction of income generating is very essential to boosting the livelihoods of the poor village as they will now be able to generate additional income. Lewis & Opoku-Mensah (2006) in a similar study in Ghana indicated that, most NGOs that have aimed to help government tackle thee poverty menace in the country, have sought to use women by training most of the village women in their areas of operations on various income generating activities. Such trainings have
thus offered opportunity for them to have sources of livelihoods and which has greatly helped in improving the life of rural folks.

In the case of activities and programmes on capacity building and empowerment of the poor instituted by ActionAid, respondents explained as follows;

“that the organization has put in place measures such as educating community members on their rights, training on how to educate their children, education on the need for peace, sensitization on child marriage, construction of primary school unit blocks for the respective communities, training on food storage, provision of job opportunities and combat group formation, sensitization on school dropout, they intimated.’’ (ActionAid staff, 2018).

He elucidated that, these activities are being undertaken effectively and efficiently to ensure that, community members are well educated and empowered to mainstream their effort towards economic empowerment and eradication of poverty among various communities. In the view of one respondent, he intimated as

“ActionAid has helped us so much in this community. Now, girls are not given for marriage at tender age and they also go to school. The male children who use to chase us in the farm have all now returned to school. Now there is peace and harmony among all residents. We now understand lot of social issues”’. (Challu chief linguist).

This goes to support the finding of the study by (Hudson, 2000; Willetts, 2002; Lewis & Kanji, 2009; Holmen & Jirstrom, 2009; Banks, et al., 2015) in which they agreed that, one of the pivotal roles of NGOs has been advocacy in leading role in enforcing and demanding change in various ways. In relation to this, some authors have classified them as catalysts; campaigning; advocacy; political and having civil society functions. A similar position was shared by Lewis & Kanji
(2009), in which they described NGOs as being catalytic as they have sought to bring about positive transformation by facilitating agendas and contributing to improved thinking and action amongst individuals, groups, local communities or other stakeholders in developments. As regards data on health and sanitation programmes, respondents identified the provision of free health screening, registration of free National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) for community member’s sensitization and education of maternal related issues as well as provision of child health education to various communities. Juxtaposing the three extremes of poverty reduction areas operated on with the primary data gathered, it is imperative to underscore the fact, ActionAid has greatly engaged communities on various economic empowerment and other poverty eradication schemes which would greatly improve attempt to reducing poverty among rural folks in the districts. In the opinion of one respondent, he remarked as

“This organization (ActionAid) has greatly helped in government’s effort to reducing poverty in this our community and districts as a whole. They have trained thousands of women in various income generating activities like oil and soap making, and this has positioned them to work on other economic ventures aside farming. Now most of our women are into various businesses partly due to the training offered them by the organization. Again, majority of these women and their children and even men in some cases have benefited from health-related issues. We all have been educated on issues like early marriage, peace and violence amongst others. I think their operations in this community have greatly helped in poverty reduction effort”, (Peing interviewee, 2018).

Service provision by ActionAid Ghana in this regard goes to settle the argument in literature that, NGOs offer service delivery roles. For instance, on the part of (Willets, 2002; Lewis & Kanji, 2009; Banks, et al., 2015), NGOs the world all over, are known to be involved in service delivery
like clothing, food, health, and education to the poor through mobilization of resources from various partners. These they intimated, NGOs have embarked on various service provision which has gone a long way to reduce the incidence of poverty in most places. By these service provisions, literature supports that, NGOs have undertaken developmental responsibilities towards alleviating people from poverty and improving livelihoods.

4.3 Effects of Poverty Reduction Activities of ActionAid on Communities

In the quest to examining the various likely impacts or contributions of the poverty-based activities and programmes of action aid Ghana in relation to reduction and eradication of poverty in the three communities of study, various questions to those effects were posed. First, respondents were asked whether the various poverty related programmes in the areas of employment opportunities for the poor, income of the poor, health and sanitation of the poor and empowerment and capacity building of the poor introduced by ActionAid has made any significant impact in the communities. All respondents who made up this research work indicated in the affirmative that, of all the various areas of operation embarked upon by organization in an attempt to reducing poverty, they have had tremendous positive impacts in the various communities. This is indicated by answering “yes” to the question posed to this effect making response rate to this an overwhelming 100% with the ratio of 25. In relation to this, respondents assessed the extent of impact of the projects to poverty reduction in the three communities. Of the twenty-five (25) respondents who appraised the extent of impact of all poverty related programmes in the various communities involved in the study and under the management of ActionAid Ghana, twenty-one (21) of them representing 84% of the entire ratio of respondents appraised the programmes of being very good and good whereas the remaining four (4) with the percentage of 16% appraised the various poverty related programmes to be
excellent, as efforts towards poverty reduction in the districts. This ultimately indicates that, this poverty related programs have had greater impacts on poverty reduction in the lives of the ordinary individual in the district. Respondents further intimated explained the impacts of the programmes as follows;

First, data gathered for the study indicates that, the various poverty reduction programmes instituted by ActionAid Ghana has created employment avenues for various beneficiaries in the districts. According to respondents, Action Aid has trained several numbers of women in various income generating activities in areas like oil and soap making and processing, shea butter and oil production, tom brown, groundnut paste, small ruminant production for women, grain baking, donkey traction for farming and grain banking. On their part, these new areas of occupation have become predominant by most women due its economic potency and drive in the district. This is because beneficiaries now make huge sums of economic gains engaging in the businesses of the organization rather than concentrating on annual farming and harvesting. Following this, farming has largely become the second occupation for most women as they seek to concentrate more in their newly found business. The training offered has thus created avenues for income generation for beneficiaries in the districts. One respondent remarked as

“ActionAid has now trained most of our women in easy money-making businesses like liquid and other soap, shea butter and oil making, sewing and hair dressing amongst other businesses. As a result, most of our women have now found new businesses and are happily doing it. These businesses seem to benefit the women, we as husbands and the entire family as they are economically viable. It has thus reduced financial burden greatly on most families in this district. Their programs have been instrumental in reducing poverty levels, he remarked” (Sakai Community Assembly member, 2018).
In an examination of the contribution of NGOs to development of Ghana, Adjei Osei-Wusu, et al. (2012, p. 53), indicated that, NGOs have pursued several sustainable livelihoods related projects in most rural communities among the poor by training poor family members in income generating activities in places, like Kpandai and Chireponi. In their analysis, they posited that, the provision of such economic and income generating activities are important to the rural poor who undoubtedly have little hope of government support to largely improving their situations. NGOs are thus the next institution of hoping in providing income and livelihood for the village poor.

Secondly, according to respondents, the organization has helped reduce incidence of poverty through provision of scholarship and grants for children of poor homes and construction of several school blocks in the district. One of the focal areas of interventions by the organization has been the education of children in the area. However, many of such children running from nursery to the primary level have been disadvantaged by the incidence of poverty and as such are not in school since their parents are not able to afford the cost of education. The NGO as parts of its poverty alleviation effort has broadened its scope thus cover the education of the younger ones in the catchment areas. Following this, scholarships are offered for all children from poor homes that are not able to pursue education. Scholarship covers their books, uniforms, pens and pencils, shoes, school fees and any other related expenditure on education. Again, on this, the organization has sought as parts of its effort to building school blocks for various communities lacking them. This has created opportunity for children to have access to education. By the introduction of such schemes, respondents opined, poverty levels have been hugely reduced as parents have been relieved of several financial responsibilities that should have been borne by them in respect to educating their children. In the words of one female respondent, she stated
“At first, most of the children in this community, including my own were not in school. Majority of the parents could not afford to pay their fees and provide other essential educational materials. Moreover, the community did not have a good school building. The organization has provided the children with scholarship and also built nursery classroom unit block for us”. (Sakai, female Group interviewee, 2018).

In support of the above (Holmen & Jirstrom, 2009), indicated that, NGOs have served as partners in they helped provide essential social services like education for the poor and needy in society as most NGOs have aided in provision of essential services like water, schools, health facilities and public toilets. In a similar opinion, (Makoba, 2002), contended provision of essential facilities like that of education in most African countries would not be possible but for the presence of NGOs in several of the poor communities. This goes to support that, the activity of ActionAid in providing scholarship and educational facilities is in the right direction and an action towards poverty eradication.

Further, respondents identified the provision of financial support and equipment as necessary steps in poverty eradication effort of the organization. Data gathered in the study indicates that, ActionAid Ghana has granted beneficiaries of their projects the opportunity to access soft loans from banks as well as creating savings schemes for them through women are able to access loans to and their respective enterprises. As explained by respondents, the organization has set up various women groups which aid them to save little amounts of money overtime. As their savings increases, such monies are handed over to individual members at a particular time concurrently. Moreover, beneficiaries are assisted under the scheme of the organization and as such could use their businesses with approval from ActionAid to secure soft loans to support their businesses. Such financial opportunities granted beneficiaries assist in expanding and
growing their businesses which ultimately help improve their source of income thereby aiding in poverty reduction attempt, they added. Moreover, beneficiaries, according to respondents are sometimes given various forms of equipment like tractors and others taking into account the business and operations of the individual member and this help grow their businesses resulting in improved financial life. One farmer put it as

“The organization has helped as acquire tractors, ploughing machines and others needed to aid our farming activity. They also have provided our women with some form of financial assistance. Now, most of the women are engaged in trading and other form of businesses. These initiatives of ActionAid have greatly led to a surge in our living standards” (member, food security project (interviewee in Peing community, 2018).

This finding on the impact of ActionAid’s activities wards poverty reduction collaborates the account by Adjei, et al., (2009); (ibid) in which he concluded most NGOs have resorted to establishing micro finance entities as a means to providing soft loans for the poor in rural communities to reducing as it is believed that provision of small loans, savings and insurance products to the poor (especially women), could be a way of developing capabilities through providing opportunities and encouraging self-reliance and active control of their households and community roles. Moreover, respondents opined of impact of their involvement in decision making and education on various social issues. Primary data gathered for the study shows various projects undertaken by the organization has resulted in women and other beneficiary’s involvement in decision making in various communities as education on relevant social issues. Until the coming into force of ActionAid in various communities with their attendant introduction of various incoming generating activities and sensitization on democracy and decision making at the rural level, women and the poor in general were considered worthy to
participate in decisions making. However, according to respondents in the study, the organization has sensitized various communities of the need for inclusiveness in decision regardless of one’s sex, financial or status. Community members overtime, have come to thus recognize the need for such inclusiveness in decision and thus has helped changed the status quo. A further probe on this importance had respondent remarked as,

“Because of our culture, at first, girls below age fifteen (15) years were being given for marriage. Moreover, women and people who were considered poor could not be given the chance to even participate in decision making process. However, the sudden presence of ActionAid and its sensitization has educated us on most of these issues and we have greatly improved over them” (Challu COMBAT group member, 2018)

Literature on NGO has affirmed of the important roles most NGOs have played around the world on advocacy and education on various issues of concern like culture (Hudson, 2000; Willetts, 2002; Lewis & Kanji, 2009; Holmen & Jirstrom, 2009; Banks, et al., 2015), presented that, most NGOs have advocacy societies on bad and inhuman cultural practices in most parts of Africa and Asia and have thus also educated them on various issues like the importance of education, family health issues and democracy. This justifies the effort of ActionAid in relation to their program on social issues and educating beneficiary communities on several issues of importance. Again, members have been educated on issues of child marriages, education, family health, savings, maternal morality related issues amongst others and this has sought to enlighten all residents in various communities resulting in improved life style and approaches to issues and life. Ultimately, poverty reduction effort has been completed greatly by the organization. Finally, on the part of some respondents in the study, ActionAid has reduced poverty in the districts through its association with the Livelihood Empowerment against Poverty (LEAP), provision of
free National Health Insurance Schemes (NHIS) and facilities like toilet and water in beneficiary communities. In the opinion of respondents in the study, the study organization has linked up with the social welfare scheme to ensure the fastest and easiest way of delivering benefits to people rolled on the LEAP program in the area. The overall aim of such initiative by ActionAid is to ensure that, communities and beneficiaries of the programme receives their allowances on time to aid in their businesses whilst serving as another revenue stream for their operations and businesses. This has gone a long way to create avenue for beneficiaries to increase their income and businesses and thus resulting in economic freedom. Similarly, the registration of beneficiaries unto the NHIS freely has reduced the financial burden of families who under normal circumstance could not have afforded to register on the scheme. This paves way for their free access to health care in the area. Moreover, the provision of various social amenities has led to a more than proportionate improvement in the standard of living of the people. One respondent put it as

“In this our community, at first, we did not have any place of convenience and as such residents were using bushes around as you can see. However, when ActionAid started operation in this community, they discussed with us about our developmental needs and it came out that, we needed place of convenience. The organization has thus provided us with and now the entire community is dependent on this” (Challu COMBAT Group, 2018).

The finding above on advocacy role of ActionAid in the area goes to agree with the findings of in a similar study on NGOs by (Banks, et al., 2015) in Brazil; South Africa; Sudan; and (Lewis & Opoku-Mensah, 2006) in Congo in which they posited that, NGOs play an active role as advocates in building and maintaining democracy in many countries both in the North and South. In relation to democracy, NGOs have played influencing role. For
instance, in the 1990s, civil society had been liberated from the hegemonic grip of African States and had expression of great interest from western governments. Civil society stood as symbol of defense for democracy and played an active role in enhancing African politics through promotion of pluralism and democratic consolidation (Raheem, 2012).

4.4 Obstacles to Poverty Reduction Efforts of ActionAid

For the purpose of examining the various challenges faced by communities and individual beneficiaries in working with ActionAid Ghana as well as organizational challenges faced by ActionAid in area, respondents and officials of ActionAid were asked various related questions. On the part of communities and individual challenges in dealing with the organization, respondents stated them as; distance, and timing for meeting, inadequate training and training equipment, and poor organization. In the case of distance and timing for meeting as a challenge, respondents explained that, mostly, their communities and locations are far from the areas where meetings are often organized and this affects their participation in meetings. Moreover, respondents complained of a situation where meetings are often held at their blind side as information regarding meetings do not reach time to enable them attend. Such situations, they posited affect them greatly. Again, respondents complained of how poor sometimes meetings are organized.

Again, the challenge of inadequate training was posited by respondents as impeding the effectiveness of various projects. Respondents explained that, in most case, training programmes organized for them on most economic activities are not enough as much is sometimes not learnt. Similarly, various teams complained of inadequacy of training equipment and thus affects the effectiveness of service delivery during meetings and training programmes for various beneficiaries. In the case of challenges faced by the organization, ActionAid officials who
participated in the study identified sustainability issues, lack of commitment and support on the part of state institutions and the desire to hold on to traditions and culture and lack of commitment on the part of politicians to implement policies and programmes with medium term development plans as envisaged by the organization. On the part of ActionAid officials, state institutions in the region for instance do not support and complement the effort of the organization in an attempt to reducing poverty and developing various areas. This is particularly so as government institutions do not aim in any way to support either by means of finance, logistics and other services that could assist the organization in achieving its set target and freeing the poor from the shackles of poverty in the region. As a result, effort to developing communities and providing economic freedom with its subsequent emancipation from poverty solely depends on the organization. Meanwhile, the organization has limitations in terms of resources and other critical logistics and thus cannot achieve much gain without government support. The regional manager of the organization put such opinion as such

“As NGO complementing government effort of reducing poverty in the area, we do not receive any form of support and assistance from state institutions be it technical or whatever to do our work. Such absence of collaboration greatly impacts negatively on our activities”. (ActionAid 2018).

In a similar study by Kupoyini and Ladele (2016) in Nigeria, they indicated that, most NGOs have not received the form of collaboration and partnership from state institutions needed to undertake their various projects. This seemingly lack of partnership, Kupoyini and Ladele (2016) explained could stem from the fear of government to associate with NGOs that seeks to work with various accountability mechanism.
Further, the desire of community folks to hold onto various traditions and cultures as against various sensitization and education programmes on critical human rights related issues like rights to girl child education, child marriages, family planning and other related issues impedes the pace of development and poverty eradication effort of the organization. Moreover, officials identified the interest and desire of politicians in the region and the district to lure the organizations, its officials and projects to their side or direction where they would want to be involved in the activities of the organization to secure political points. In most instances, they would want to politicize the projects and programmes of the organization. Sometimes, officials will thus need to be careful in dealing with rural communities as politicians sometimes would want to get involved.

In a further explanation of this challenge, the team leader stated as, “our desire is to sometimes collaborate with influential people like the ministers, members of parliament and district chief executives, but their attitude sometimes affects our effort. Even when projects have been done by the organization, these politicians just want to chip in political colors to claim the projects belongs to them so as to score cheap political points. As a result, we are having difficulty collaborating with them to secure funding and support even from government and other agencies. NGOs operate free from politics”. (Team-leader ActionAid, 2018).

Relating to this, Ramesh (2017) argued that, most NGOs do not collaborate with government and state institutions due to the interest of politicians to politicize the activities of these NGOs and take credit for themselves. Ramesh further narrated that, in India, most NGOs prefer to deal independently and not to associate with political and governmental offices because they mostly wish to impose their interest on the NGOs. In cases where NGOs have refused such control, it has resulted in conflict.
4.5 Ways of Enhancing Poverty Reduction Activities of ActionAid in Ghana

With regards to the objective of enhancing/improving the various poverty reduction programs and activities of the study organization, respondents outlined measures such as;

First, respondents opined of the provision of adequate financial support as necessary to enhancing the programs of ActionAid. On the part of the regional manager, the organization has planned of several poverty reduction schemes that would go a long way to ensuring liberation on the part of the people in the study area, however, the organization is sometimes limited by the inadequacy of finances. Donor support sometimes are not enough and the organization has no other stream of organization to supplement its poverty reduction strides. The regional manager opined as

“We are bent on helping reduce poverty and improve the lives of the ordinary one in the area. However, sometimes, the finances for such activities is smaller such that, the organization is not able to do much. Sometimes, grants and donor support do not also come on time. Even when they come, sometimes the expected amount is not derived and this greatly affects the activities of the organization”. (team-leader ActionAid,2018 ).

Similarly, on the part of beneficiaries, even though the organization has helped them greatly in reducing their incidence of poverty, financial support for their various income generating activities is less and does not help much in their strides towards reducing poverty and improving living conditions. Thus far, to effectively and efficiently improve the effort of the organization, financial support to beneficiaries must be increased. In the opinion of one respondent, he remarked as
“ActionAid has helped to improve our living conditions particularly, our wives. But the financial support is not enough to expand our businesses that much. If they can increase it, we would be glad”. (Sakai COMBAT group member, 2018).

It is pretty clear that financial requirement is essential in provision of various poverty reduction activities of ActionAid as well as any other organization. Toly (2010) also argued that, NGOs thrive mostly on the availability of finances for their operations. Finances for NGOs comes mostly from donations and grants. Since NGOs are not profit oriented organizations, donors and grants are key for sustaining the planning, initiation and management of various poverty reduction activities of NGOs in India, and other parts of the world.

Secondly, respondents stated that, for the purpose of enhancing the operations and activities of the organization, communities should be made a central part of the management and implementation of various poverty related projects and programs. According to the response, the culture, needs and conditions of the local communities are best understood by local people, particularly opinion leaders in the respective communities. As such, the organization should employ the services of these people who would better communicate with the poor as regards the type of income generating activities they would want to embark on amongst others. When such partnership is done between local communities and the organization it would help identify the most essential areas of income generation for respondents. In the words of an opinion leader, “Sometimes when officials of ActionAid come, we are not able to relate to them because they are not one of us. We usually want to feel at ease with someone who is our own and understands our problems. If it will be possible, like we will ask to employ one of our local men or women who could understand us better to deal with us”, (interviewee, Peing Community 2018).
This position is greatly accepted by researchers in the field of NGOs and thus has UNESCO (2007; 126) presented that, when NGOs work with the various communities and needs in mind, they attract greater involvement and support from the community. Thus far, “involving the community in the planning and decision making of programs strengthens the relationship between NGO’s, the communities and projects. Community members feel more ownership and responsibility for the projects and are more likely to be invested in a project’s success and effectiveness. Community involvement can also help with funding and staffing of programs and increases the likelihood of a successful handover from NGOs to the community.

Further, the team-leader of the organization stated of the need for collaboration between state led organizations in the region and the organization as key to the reduction and subsequent eradication of poverty in the area. According to him, the government has the sole responsibility of ensuring the development of the people and eradication of poverty in the area. However, NGOs have become a force to reckon with in poverty reduction and thus, government must assist such organizations in the performance of such poverty alleviation role. Nothing less, government organizations charged with such roles in the region have done little to support the organization. Thus far, for the purpose of enhancing the operations of ActionAid, government institutions in the region must supplement the effort of NGOs to fully realize the objective of reducing poverty in the region. The team-leader presented it as such,

“The NGO is only there to support the effort of government in reducing poverty. It is therefore the role of government institutions to provide the necessary partnership for NGOs towards poverty eradication effort”. (Team-leader, ActionAid, 2018).

This position clearly indicates of the need for effective partnership between government and NGOs for the efficient delivery of the functions of non-governmental organizations. Nagao et al
(2007) shares similar position and opined that, partnership between government, state led institutions and NGOs are critical to the development of projects as well as sustaining the works of NGOs around the world. He further intimated that, NGOs are just partners for development and their effective and/or efficiency relies greatly on government. Any serious government that seeks development and poverty reduction should thus partner with NGOs for the collective being of society.

Finally, beneficiaries of various communities stated of the provision of adequate training and provision of other agricultural inputs for those enrolled on various agricultural programmes as necessary to enhancing poverty reduction initiatives of the organization. On the part of respondents in the three study communities, the organization does not offer much training on the various modules implemented in the areas particularly on new initiatives of which people do not have much knowledge about. This situation thus limits the exploration abilities of beneficiaries in making greater gains as regards income and poverty reduction. For that matter, the organization should introduce more training schemes on the various modules in place so as broaden the skills and scope of beneficiaries. Again, beneficiaries on the agricultural and farming modules must be provided with more farming implements like tractors to supplement their effort embarking on effective agriculture. In the remarks of one respondent, he posited that,

“Even though ActionAid is helping us so much than the government and that the organization has provided for us some items for farming, they are not enough. If the organization want to help us greatly, then they should support us with means to acquire more implement’s like ploughing machines and tractors”, he indicated (interviewee, 2018).

A similar study by Adjei Osei-Wusu, et al. (2012) on NGOs role to poverty reduction in Ghana similarly identified the provision of various farming equipment as necessary to the poor village
farmer in reducing poverty. In their analysis, they indicated most of poor farmers at the rural level do not have enough capital to purchase equipment like tractor which are necessary for the farming business considering the kinds farming they are engaged in. As a result, any effort by NGOs operating in rural farming must initiative effort to assists the poor village farmer in acquiring the essential farming implements for their businesses as this will go a long way to argument their activities resulting in greater income generation and subsequent poverty reduction effort.
CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

The main aim of this study was to explore the role of ActionAid as a transformational organization in reducing poverty in Sissala East district of the Upper West Region of Ghana. This chapter discusses the summary of research findings, conclusion and recommendations to the study.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The summary of research findings is done under the following sub-headings;

1. Poverty reduction programmes of action in Sissala East District
2. Effects/impact of poverty reduction programmes to Beneficiaries
3. Obstacles to poverty reduction programmes of ActionAid
4. Ways of enhancing ActionAid programs in the District

5.2 Poverty Reduction Programmes of ActionAid in Sissala East District

On the objective of identifying the various poverty reduction programmes being rolled out in the three communities of study namely sakai, Peing and Challu in the Sissala East district by ActionAid, Ghana, the following summary is made; First, regarding poverty eradication programmes in the three communities, primary data gathered for the study indicates that, ActionAid has mounted several poverty reduction projects aimed at cushioning the lives of the poor towards reducing and ultimately eradicating poverty in the area. Poverty eradication schemes, respondents identified centers around three thematic areas of livelihood and economic
empowerment like, capacity building and empowerment of the poor, income generation activities, health and sanitation.

As regards the area of economic empowerment and income generation programmes, beneficiaries have been trained in various economic and income generating activities such as soap making and processing, shea butter and oil production, tom brown, groundnut paste, small ruminant production for women, grain baking, donkey traction for farming, building of various community self-help groups for women, grain banking, feeding programmes and provision of grinding machines and tricycles, as well as providing access to loans through the support of ActionAid. This according to beneficiaries has created a different avenue for them and that they have now different streams of income generation as aside their traditional occupation of farming. Consequently, livelihoods have been improved greatly among beneficiaries. In the case of projects on health and sanitation, beneficiaries identified the provision of free health screening, registration of free National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) for community members, sensitization and education on maternal related issues as well as provision of child health education to various communities. Moreover, on capacity building and empowerment of the poor, poverty reduction programmes includes education and sensitization of community members on rights, sensitization on child marriages, sensitization on peace and nation building, sensitization on child up bring and school dropout.

5.3 Effects of Poverty Reduction Programmes on Beneficiaries

With regards to the second objective of the study, thus to assess the effect of the various poverty reduction projects on beneficiaries, data gathered from the study indicates the projects have impacted successfully on the lives of various communities and beneficiaries and thus has reduced drastically, poverty in their catchment areas. Significant areas of impacts, according to
the data are; employment generation, education of the child through scholarship, provision of loans and farm implements, participation in decision making, and provision of health care. In the case of benefit of job provision, respondents intimated the organization has trained several beneficiaries in various economic and income generating activities and thus has helped in broadening the income sources of most families resulting in poverty reduction in the area.

Again, on education of children, respondents identified the provision of scholarship and construction of school buildings for communities to have been very instrumental in poverty reduction effort. Moreover, on provision of financial support, respondents explained the organization has created avenues where beneficiaries are given financial aid in the form of soft loans from various banks, the organization’s own stream of income as well as building teams where members save to help themselves raise capital for their businesses. This has led to a surge in beneficiary’s business levels which has ultimately improved their income generation capacity thus promoting their livelihoods.

Finally, on provision of health care schemes, data gathered indicates, this intervention by the organization has resulted in overhaul of poverty levels in the three study communities as the organization registers all beneficiaries of their schemes on the National Health Insurance Scheme for free, provides maternal health related education and services as well as screening and provision of various drugs to the aged in the communities. These interventions, they added have led to eradicating the financial burden of village folks seeking medical care and this cushioned them greatly to having better living conditions.
5.4 Obstacles to Poverty Reduction Efforts of ActionAid

In relation to the objective of examining the various challenges faced in the management affairs of poverty reduction programmes in the study communities, both officials and other respondents who double as beneficiaries underscored the fact that, there are some levels of challenges. On the part of beneficiaries, their enrollment on ActionAid’s projects is faced by various challenges like distance, and timing for meeting, inadequate training and training equipment, and poor organization. With regards to the challenges of distance and timing for meeting, most beneficiaries underscored the fact, meetings are held sometimes without them being informed and also, the places where meetings are organized, mostly in the bigger communities and distance to such places are far making it impossible for them to participate. In the case of the challenge of inadequate training equipment, beneficiaries lamented they are often not provided with much training on the various projects they have been enrolled and, in some cases, equipment offered for their training are not enough and this greatly impacts their level of effectiveness expected from the program.

On the part of the organization, organizational challenges faced includes sustainability issues, lack of commitment and support on the part of state institutions and the desire to hold on to traditions and culture and lack of commitment on the part of politicians to implement policies and programmes with medium term development plans as envisaged by the organization.

5.5. Ways of enhancing poverty reduction programmes of ActionAid

The fourth objective, which attempts to find out ways of enhancing poverty related programs of ActionAid, indicates from the data of the study that, provision of adequate financial support, community focus and participation, partnership between the ActionAid and government as well as other organizations, are critical to enhancing the various programs of the organization.
Concerning the success factors of financial support and community participation, respondents stated that, the organization should broaden its streams of sources of funds so beneficiaries could access financial support from such sources whereas local community members should be made a central part in the management and implementation of various schemes. In the case of partnership with other agencies as essential to the organization, respondents intimated that, ActionAid must collaborate with state agencies as well as organizations to secure financial support as well as provide other essential services for the maintenance of various programs rolled out by the organization.

5.6 Conclusion
This study sought to explore the role of ActionAid reducing poverty in Sissala east district. The study concludes that, ActionAid has introduced several poverty reduction projects like, soap making, shea butter and oil production, provision of loans and farm implements, provision of health care, sensitization on inclusive governance, and scholarship on education. Consequently, the institution of poverty reduction projects has greatly contributed to the reduction and eradication of poverty in the three study communities of Sakai, Peing and Challu in the district. Again, the study found out that, obstacles such as lack of commitment and support on the part of state institutions and the desire to hold on to traditions and culture by the local communities, and lack of commitment on the part of politicians to implement policies and programmes with medium term development plans as envisaged by the organization and sustainability related issues have impacted negatively on the activities and performance of the organization.

Finally, the study has established that for the effectiveness and success of various programs rolled out by the organization, there should be partnership between ActionAid and other
organizations, and that the organization should provide adequate financial support to the various beneficiaries of their programs.

5.7 Recommendation

The overall goal guiding this research work was to explore the role of ActionAid as a non-governmental organization in reducing poverty in Sissala East district and has concluded that, the organization has contributed immensely to reduction of poverty although there are few challenges impeding its work. Following this, the following recommendations are made;

First, politicians in the region, district and the entire country for that matter should avoid partisan politics in relation to the activities and operations of NGO like ActionAid and should rather provide support in any form towards the activities of non-governmental organizations.

Secondly, it is important for state institutions to provide the enabling environment and support needed for non-governmental organizations like ActionAid to thrive in the performance of their responsibilities and in their respective jurisdictions.

Further, ActionAid should develop a system of timing and locations for their various meetings with beneficiary communities so as to enable all communities to effectively participate in meetings and proceedings as they are called for.

Again, ActionAid should seek greater partnership and collaboration with various government agencies as well as other NGOs and private businesses in the region to broaden their various revenue streams and provide other essential technical support to sustaining their various programs rolled out in the district and region as well.
Finally, ActionAid should give particular attention to beneficiary communities and make them a central part of their planning, and implementation of various programs taking into accounts the characteristics and culture of local communities.
REFERENCES


Asamoah, K. K., 2009. The contributions of international development partners to rural poverty reduction in Ghana: A case study of the international fund for agricultural development (ifad) and small-holder farming in the Sekyere-West District, Ashanti Region.,


APPENDICES

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BENEFICIARIES, COMBAT GROUPS AND COMMUNITIES

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND HEALTH SERVICE MANAGEMENT

This research is conducted on “non-governmental organizations in reduction of rural poverty: case study of ActionAid Ghana” with a focus on selected communities in the Sissala East district of the upper west region. The researcher is a final year Master of Public Administration student at the University of Ghana Business School.

I would be grateful if you could provide answers to the following questions in connection with the research topic. I assure you that any information provided will be accorded the strictest anonymity and confidentiality; and will be used principally for academic purposes only.

MODULE A: IDENTIFICATION

Date ………………/……………../……………… (DD/MM/YYYY)

Name of interviewer …………………………………………

Activity participated…………………………………………

Region…………………………………………………………

District/Municipal……………………………………………..

Community: Sakai  Ping  Challu


MODULE B: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Sex: Male…. (1) Female…. (2)

Age (in yrs.): 18-25…. (1) 26-35…. (2) 36-45…. (3) 46-55…. (4) Above 55…. (5)

Marital status: single…. (1) Married…. (2) Separated…. (3) Divorced…. (4) widow(er)…. (5)

Highest level of Education: None…. (1) Primary…. (2) Secondary…. (3) Tertiary…. (4) Others…. (5)

Occupation: Unemployed…. (1) Farmer…. (2) Civil/Public…. (3) Trader…. (4) Artisan…. (5) Others…. (6)

Objective 1: Poverty reduction activities of ActionAid

1. Do you engage in any economic activity? YES…. (1) NO…. (2)

2. What form/type of economic activity are you engaged in?
   a. crop farming …………………………… (1)
   b. trading/commerce ……………………… (2)
   c. animal rearing ………………………… (3)
   d. food vending ………………………… (4)
   e. others ……………………………… (5)

3. How did you know about the ActionAid interventions?
   a. community radio…. (1)
   b. relatives/friends referrals …. (2)
   c. Action Aid’s sensitization…. (3)
   d. others…………………………… (4)
4. Which programs are you enrolled on with ActionAid?
   a. Building the capacity of and empowering the poor…(1)
   b. Income generation…(2)
   c. Health and sanitation…(3)
   d. other activities………(4)

5. To what extent has the activities carried out by ActionAid in the community enhanced your life? Please give examples

6. Do you think the activities of ActionAid have helped in building the capacity and empowered the poor in community? Please give examples

**Objective 2: Effect of poverty reduction activities of Action Aid on the community**

7. Please mention noticeable improvements in your living conditions as a result of the interventions?
8. Has the programs of ActionAid made impact in the community in the following areas?

a. Employment opportunities for the poor  Yes…(1) No…(2)

b. Income of the poor  Yes…(1) No…(2)

c. Health and Sanitation of the poor  Yes…(1) No…(2)

d. Empowerment and capacity building of the poor  Yes…(1) No…(2)

f. Any other ………………………………………………………………

9. To what extent will you assess the projects with respect to poverty reduction?

Excellent…(1) Very good…(2) Good…(3) Average…(4) Poor…(5)

10. Has there been any meaningful improvement in the lives of the poor people in the community?  Yes…(1) No…(2)

How has it improved the lives of the poor in the community?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………..

11 What asset have you been able to acquire?

a. Motor bikes…. (1)
b. Tricycles……(2)  
c. Animals for traction…..(3)  
d. Small ruminant/ poultry…..(4)  
e. Holding in trust(for a group)…5  
f. Others………………………..(6)

12. How did you acquire these assets?  
   a. gift….(1)  
   b. purchase…. (2)  
   c. through ActionAid…..(3)  
   d. others……………………(4)

13. How sustainable are the interventions of ActionAid?  
   a. very sustainable…..(1)  
   b. sustainable…. (2)  
   c. not sustainable…. (3)

14. What were some of the challenges that you faced in accessing poverty reduction activities of action aid.  
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………
APPENDIX 2

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ACTIONAID OFFICIALS

This research is conducted on “non-governmental organizations in reduction of rural poverty: case study of ActionAid Ghana” with a focus on selected communities in the Sissala East district of the upper west region. The researcher is a final year Master of Public Administration student at the University of Ghana Business School.

I would be grateful if you could provide answers to the following questions in connection with the research topic. I assure you that any information provided will be accorded the strictest anonymity and confidentiality; and will be used principally for academic purposes only.

SECTION A: Background information

Organization ..........................................................

Position held..........................................................

Sex ..........................................................

SECTION B

(a) Poverty reduction and social change activities of ActionAid Ghana

1. How does ActionAid identify poor and vulnerable people in the district? (Peing, chalou and Sakalou). What criteria do you use? Who are the poor?

2. What are the main poverty reduction activities of ActionAid in these areas? (Peing, chalou and sakalou).
3. What activities has ActionAid carried out in the community to enhance the income generation activities of poor people?

4. What activities has ActionAid embarked on to build the capacity and to empower the rural folks in the community?

5. How in your opinion, does the NGO promote development in the communities?

(b) Effect of poverty reduction activities on the communities

6. Do you think these projects or programs have any effect on the living conditions of the poor? Please, give 3 reasons.

7. To what extent does these activities aimed at reducing poverty and promoting social change? Give 3 indicators.

8. How does action aid evaluate the effects of their poverty reduction and social change programs?

9. Do you think poor people benefit from your activities carried out in the selected communities? How? Give 3 examples.

(c) Challenges facing the NGO

10. Please mention four (4) main challenges faced by ActionAid in its work in the sissala east district?

11. To what extent does internal environment affect delivery of your programs? Please give 3 examples.

12. To what extent does politics interfere with the effective delivery of your programs? Please give examples
13 what support do you get from the government in carrying out your activities? Please give 3 reasons.

14. How do you collaborate with other NGOs in your activities?

15. Are there any suggestions or recommendations to enhance the smooth operation of poverty reduction activities in these selected communities?
APPENDIX 3

ILLUSTRATION OF INCIDENCE OF POVERTY IN THE RURAL SAVANNAH IN GHANA

Figure 1.1

Source: (Ghana statistical service, 2013)
APPENDIX 4

DISTRICT MAP OF SISSALA EAST