

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

THE IMPACT OF COCOA LIFE PROJECT INTERVENTIONS OF WORLD
VISION GHANA ON BENEFICIARIES IN THE WASSA EAST DISTRICT,
WESTERN REGION

BY
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DECEMBER 2019

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DECLARATION**Candidate's Declaration**

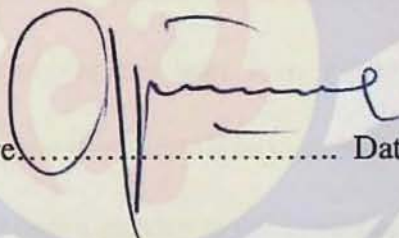
I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

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Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the impact of Cocoa Life Project interventions of World Vision Ghana (WVG) on beneficiaries in the Wassa East District (WED) using the mixed methods approach in a descriptive survey and exploratory design. The neo-liberal, alternative development, social structural, social capital and social cognitive theories were used to develop the conceptual framework for the study. A total of 410 respondents including farmers, members of village savings and loans groups, gari processors, soap makers, the Head of the District Agriculture Department, and the Head of Business Advisory Centre were sampled for the study. Interview schedule, focus group discussion and interview guides were the instruments used, with percentages, means, standard deviation, chi-square, t-test, ANOVA, thematic and content analyses as the analytical tools. The study found that unlike the implementation stage, the level of satisfaction in participation in planning and evaluation activities of the interventions was low. However, the Project was generally relevant to the development of beneficiary communities. Also, WVG put in place various measures to promote gender equality under the Project. Although various factors helped to sustain the Project, the level of transparency and accountability was low and with very short duration. Though the overall impact of the Project on the livelihood of beneficiaries is high, significant differences exist in educational, religious and ethnic backgrounds of beneficiaries based on the impact of the Project on their livelihoods. It is recommended that WVG should team up with Cocoa Life, local authorities and community leaders to design measures to ensure that project interventions truly reflect the diverse needs of beneficiaries.

KEY WORDS

Access
Alternative development
Beneficiaries
Community development
Development interventions
Empowerment
Financial literacy
Gender equality
Impact
Inclusion
Livelihood programmes
Neo-liberal theory
Participation
Project interventions
Relevance
Satisfaction
Socio economic features
Solidarity
Social capital theory
Social cognitive theory
Social structural theory
Sustainability



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DEDICATION

To my wife, children and my late father



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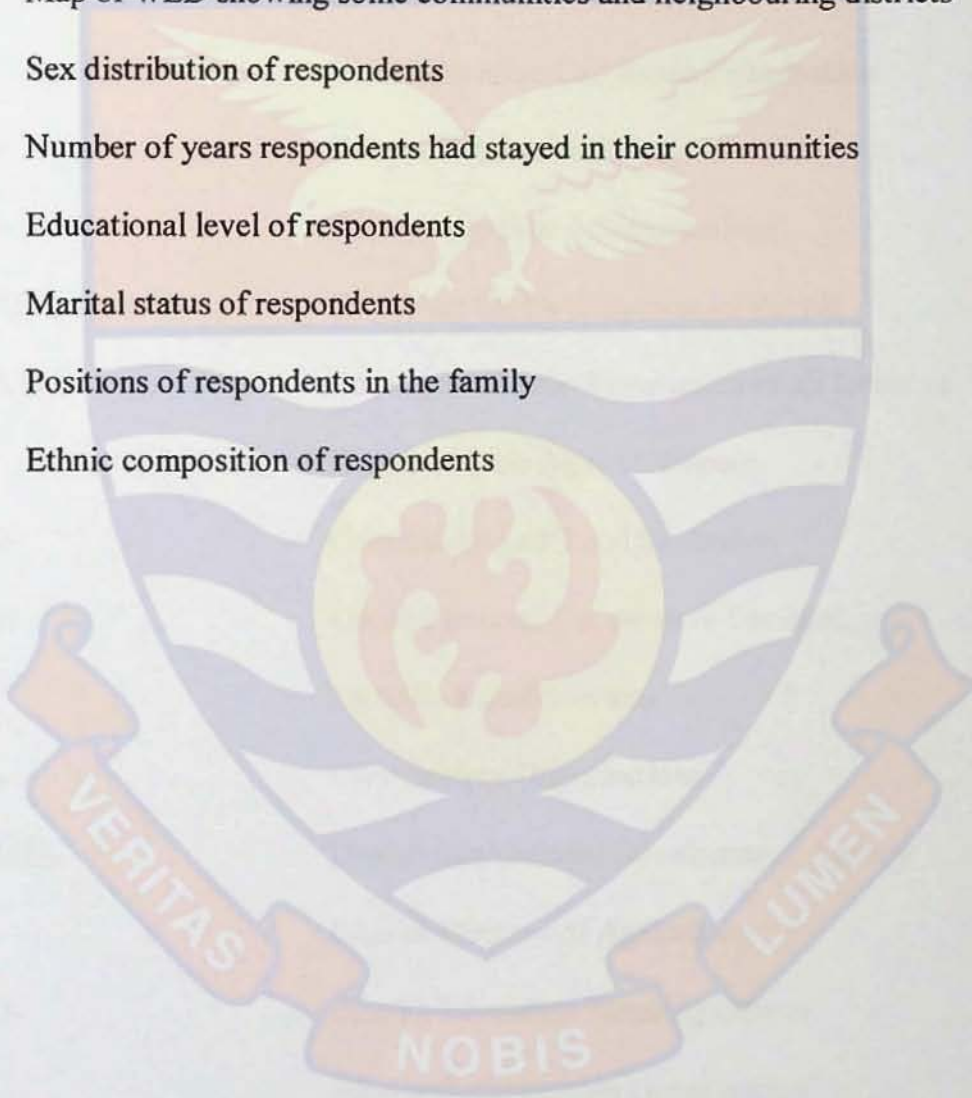
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ABCD-	Asset-Based Community Development
ADP-	Area Development Programme
ADT-	Alternative Development Theory
ANOVA-	Analysis of Variance
BAC-	Business Advisory Centre
BECE-	Basic Education Certificate Examination
CAPs-	Community Action Plans
CBOs-	Community-Based Organisations
CEDEP-	Center for the Development of People
CEDAW-	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CLTS-	Community Led Total Sanitation
CFCSS-	Cocoa Farmers' Cooperative Societies
CRS-	Catholic Relief Services
CSOs-	Civil Society Organisations
DANIDA-	Danish International Development Agency
DDA-	District Director of Agriculture
DEPO-	District Education Planning Officer
FAO-	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FAWE-	Forum for African Women Educationalists
FBOs-	Faith-Based Organisations
FGD-	Focus Group Discussion



FGDs-	Focus Group Discussions
GAD-	Gender and Development
GPGs-	Gari Processors' Groups
GSS-	Ghana Statistical Service
GWI-	Global Water Initiative
HBAC-	Head Business Advisory Centre
IDS-	Institute of Development Studies
ILO-	International Labour Organisation
IPs-	Implementing Partners
IMF-	International Monetary Fund
INGO-	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IRD-	Integrated Rural Development
JHS-	Junior High School
LDCs-	Less Developed Countries
LGs-	Local Governments
LNGO-	Local Non-Governmental Organisation
MDCs-	More Developed Countries
MI-	Mondelez International
MSLC-	Middle School Leavers' Certificate
NBCD-	Need-Based Community Development
NGO-	Non-governmental Organisation
NK-	Nijera Kori
ODA-	Official Development Assistance



PRA-	Participatory Rural Appraisal
RRA-	Rural Rapid Appraisal
SAT-	Sinapi Aba Trust
SCT-	Social Cognitive Theory
SDGs-	Sustainable Development Goals
SES-	Socio Economic Status
SHS-	Senior High School
SLF-	Sustainable Livelihood Framework
SPSS-	Statistical Product for Service Solution
SST-	Social Structural Theory
THLDD-	Twifo Hemang-Lower Denkyira District
UNECA-	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
VSLAs-	Village Savings and Loans Associations
VSO-	Volunteer Service Overseas
WASH-	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WBPLG-	World Bank Participatory Learning Group
WED-	Wassa East District
WEDA-	Wassa East District Assembly
WUSC-	World University Service of Canada
WVG-	World Vision Ghana
WVI-	World Vision International

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The development of communities, especially in rural areas, has been on the agenda of governments, corporate entities and development partners including non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Specifically, NGOs are increasingly asserting themselves as the third force in the development drive of nations (Lewis, 2005; Shivji, 2007). NGOs have and continue to show interest in providing development interventions that are aimed at improving upon the lives of people, especially those in the rural areas. Through their interventions in the areas including education, health, agriculture, governance, human rights, gender equality, environment, and enterprise development, NGOs have been viewed as a potent force in efforts to improve upon the conditions of people in the communities (Lewis & Kanji, 2009). The increasing recognition of the importance of NGOs in development of communities has led to the establishment of an overwhelming number of NGOs whose programmes, projects and activities are largely funded by donor community, corporate bodies and other development partners (Lewis, 2005; Shivji, 2007).

Despite their crucial role in development, it is widely believed that not much objective and dispassionate analysis has been done about the works of NGOs, especially in Africa (Shivji, 2007). Indeed, because many NGOs do provide diverse development services that are largely borne out of altruism and progressive motives, there has been a reluctance amongst many researchers, academics and practitioners to critically discuss the objective impact of their works. This is problematic because, in order to maximise the impact of NGOs in development,

there is the need to thoroughly examine their activities and offer constructive criticisms for the greater good of society (Lewis, 2005; Shivji, 2007). It is on this premise that this study sought to critically examine the impact of World Vision Ghana's development interventions on beneficiaries using its Cocoa Life Project interventions in the Wassa East District, Western Region, as a case.

Background to the Study

Development is about quality changes in the lives of the citizenry. Its outcomes go beyond growth in economic sense to include all other aspects of life (Sen, 2012; Todaro & Smith, 2006). Nations across the globe strive to put in place measures to bring about quality changes in the lives of their citizens. However, it is widely recognised in many developing nations that the state can no longer single-handedly provide goods and services to ensure poverty reduction and sustainable development among its people (Okorley & Nkrumah, 2012). When the state cannot provide sufficient goods and services or enabling environments that help improve upon the lives of its citizens, alternative channels of service provision and or holding governments accountable must be put in place. One such form of alternative development strategies since the 1980s has been the interventions of NGOs (Banks & Hulme, 2012; Brass, 2010). Thus, theoretically, the alternative development framework solidifies the compelling relevance of NGOs as agents of development.

Over the past three decades NGOs have increasingly been advocated as a means through which the gap between citizens' needs and existing services can be bridged. NGOs have played a continued vital role in the development sector, and

are widely praised for their strengths as innovative and grassroots-driven organisations (Banks & Hulme, 2012). NGOs are seen as having the desire and the capacity to pursue participatory and people-centred forms of development and to fill gaps left by states across the developing world in meeting the needs of their poorest citizens (Banks & Hulme, 2012; Barr, Fafchamps & Trudy, 2005).

NGOs continue to rise in prevalence and prominence. Although global figures are hard to come by due to the lack of a coordinating body, Epstein and Gang (2006) revealed that, for all Development Assistance Countries, official development assistance (ODA) to NGOs increased from US\$928 million to US\$1246 million between 1991 and 2002. This figure shows a 34 percent increase within the said period and the number of international NGOs grew by 19.3 percent. Beyond the rapid increase in the number of NGOs, there has been a concurrent trend towards growth in the size of NGOs, particularly justifying the rising interest in NGOs as a development alternative (Edwards & Hulme, 1996). In essence, NGOs are now major actors on the development stage, in some cases receiving as much or more funding than their government counterparts (Brass, 2010, 2012).

Before the late 1970s, NGOs were hardly recognised in the implementation of development projects or in policy influence. The few NGOs existing were perceived as insignificant players in service provision, short-term relief, and emergency work (Brass, 2010; Shivji, 2007). A significant change in their scale and importance was triggered in the late 1970s, when NGOs became the new sweethearts of the development sector. From the theory of neoliberalism, the recognition of NGOs at this stage was accompanied by the rise of structural

adjustment in aid policies, reduction in public expenditure, and the withdrawal of state-funded services (Shivji, 2007). Within this radical reform, the market replaced the state at the hub of development strategies given the beliefs in the trickle-down effects of economic growth (Murray & Overton, 2011; Shivji, 2007).

In essence, a number of factors led to the rising interest in the activities of NGOs globally. For example, continued donor distrust and frustrations with states generated fuelled interests in NGOs as desirable alternatives. Many people viewed NGOs favourably for their representation of beneficiaries and their role as innovators of new technologies and ways of working with the poor (Barr *et al.*, 2005; Lewis, 2005; Murray & Overton, 2011). Africa experienced its NGO boom a decade later, starting in the 1990s (Hearn, 2007). For example, Kenya experienced a rapid increase in registered NGOs, from 400 in 1990 to over 6,000 in 2008 (Brass, 2011). Likewise, in Tanzania, the 41 registered NGOs in 1990 had increased to more than 10,000 by 2000 (Hearn, 2007). In some countries such as Uganda, the NGO is viewed with mixed feelings, including a widespread suspicion that the public good is not the principal motivation fuelling their operations (Barr *et al.*, 2005). Again, political influences have been suggested as a strong influence on NGOs in Africa, with NGOs joining the patronage networks of political leaders (Brass, 2012). However, the good governance agenda which embraces the language of democracy, human rights, and public participation (Murray & Overton, 2011) consolidates the centrality of NGOs in national development. As a result of this, a new aid regime has evolved which goes beyond growth-focused neoliberalism towards a greater consultation between donors and recipients and a greater focus

on poverty and responsibility for nation-states since the year 2000 (Barr *et al.*, 2005; Murray & Overton, 2011).

A critical element in NGO interventions is the issue of sustainability. It is believed that for NGOs to be very relevant as development actors, there is the need for them to pay attention to the sustainability of their interventions. In other words, NGO projects and interventions are expected to be sustained, and the accrued benefits enlarged for the greater good of society. However, it is widely recognised that sustaining development projects and interventions of NGOs has been a challenge in development discourse (Lewis, 2005; Ward, Solomon, Ballif-Spanvill & Furhriman, 2009). Achieving an increased level of sustainability in development requires adequate participation, empowerment, local ownership, transparency, accountability, among others (Lewis, 2005; Lewis & Kanji, 2009). According to the alternative development and social structural theories, empowerment and local participation are crucial in sustaining development interventions.

Despite the growing expectation on sustainability, a common frustration most development NGOs face is that local communities continue to regard their interventions as external. This has led to the failure of NGOs and community members to make conscious attempts to sustain the interventions (Lewis & Kanji, 2009; Nalubiri, 2010); a situation which presents a challenge to the continuing relevance of NGOs in development. Another vital feature of NGO interventions is on livelihoods. NGOs are often expected to provide diverse interventions to improve upon the livelihood of people. This is due to the role livelihood plays in development (Chitongo, 2013; Ellis, 2000; Gale, 2011; Porter, 2003; Sono, 2013).

In spite of the various calls for increased attention to the plights of the Sub-Saharan Africa in the 21st century, there are several communities especially in the rural areas of the continent in need of development services (Annor-Frempong, 2013; FAO, 2007). The neglect of these communities, despite their potential for development is a reflection of the diminishing proportion of public investments which goes into rural development and the gap between those who can access opportunities and those who cannot (Bentil, 2008). According to the social structural theory, to ensure viable community development requires a deeper understanding of both internal and external forces of under-development. In essence, many governments and donors endorsed the Integrated Rural Development (IRD) approach which focuses on increasing agricultural production by means of improving health, education, sanitation and other critical social services, specifically aimed at promoting community development (FAO, 1994).

NGOs over the years have played a critical role in the development of communities (Omofonmwan & Odi, 2009). Community development involves the provision of economic, social and cultural services, programmes and projects to improve upon the lives of people (Omofonmwan & Odi, 2009). It is one of the strategies to develop the rural areas of most developing nations. Community development is a rural phenomenon which focuses on the provision of social services in areas such as education, health, and transport (Kishindo, 2001). In the views of Nikkhah and Redzuan (2009), community development is concerned with the creation of improved socio-economic conditions through collective actions, social relations and voluntary co-operation. In the African context, the spirit of self-

help has become part of the drive for community development; the practice upon which social services were based. In Malawi for example, in the late 19th century, self-help schemes were used to supplement insufficient resources available for education in rural areas in particular (Rose, 2003). Again, in Kenya, Eshiwani, as cited in Omofonmwan and Odia (2009), found that almost all primary schools built and equipped after independence had initially been the result of self-help effort. To achieve self-help at the community level requires effective relationships building and interconnections amongst community members in line with the principles of the social capital theory (Gilchrist, 2009; Kamando, 2014; Putnam, 2000).

Efforts made to ensure community development especially in the rural areas in Ghana date back to 1943 when the idea to establish the Department of Social Welfare and Community Development was first considered (Brown, 2006). Within this period, the community development approach became the main strategy for development in the rural areas. Under this approach the major target was to help the rural folk grow in civic responsibilities and in use of their potentials and talents in achieving desirable economic and socio-cultural goals. The main goal was to inspire the local people to undertake self-help projects to improve their standard of living (Brown, 2006). This called for an active participation of other development agencies such as the NGOs in line with the tenets of alternative development theory.

In essence, communities in rural areas of Ghana have benefited in diverse ways from the contributions of NGOs through the provision of services in areas including education, health, water and sanitation, agriculture, microfinance, governance, social welfare, among others. NGOs together with community

members, governments and other stakeholders, provide diverse development services to improve upon the life of people, especially in the rural areas of the country. In some circumstances, NGOs bore full cost of such community development interventions. Notable ones among the NGOs in support of rural development are Action Aid, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Plan Ghana, Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE), Volunteer Service Overseas (VSO), School for Life (SFL), World University Service of Canada (WUSC), Care International, and World Vision Ghana (WVG). These NGOs often direct their efforts towards the most deprived areas of Ghana (Boakye, cited in Egyir, 2013).

A prominent NGO that has contributed to the development of communities especially in rural Ghana is the World Vision International (WVI). WVI is a Christian relief, development and advocacy organisation dedicated to working with children, families and communities to overcome poverty and injustice. Inspired by their Christian values, they are dedicated to working with the world's most vulnerable people. World Vision provides a range of interventions tailored to contexts including programmes in education, health, economic development, microfinance, agriculture, water and sanitation. World Vision also works to ensure that governments are implementing needed measures to enhance health care delivery in rural areas of Africa. Again, as part of fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Organisation believes that sustainable development starts and ends with healthy, nourished and well-educated society. It is recognised that increased interventions in areas such as HIV and AIDS, water, sanitation and hygiene are crucial in the attainment of SDGs. For instance, a 2015

census shows that World Vision is supporting about 220,370 Community Health Workers in 48 countries including Ghana (Egyir, 2013; WVG, 2016; 2017).

World Vision Ghana (WVG) started its operations in the country in June 1979. From 1979 to 1990, the WVG gave assistance mostly in the form of funds to rural communities scattered throughout the country, with the aim of providing a holistic and an integrated rural development. Nonetheless, concerns for sustainability and quality of services led to a change in the development approach, with the new concept known as the Area Development Programme (ADP). The new approach has been operational throughout its 34 ADPs since 1990. The ADPs work in partnership and collaboration with district assemblies and other development agencies to promote community-based development. By this approach, WVG is expected to provide interventions especially to rural communities in areas where government has not been able to provide the development services required to improve the lives of the people (WVG, 2016).

WVG undertakes its development interventions with the active collaboration, sponsorship and partnership of various international and national organisations. One such powerful international organisation whose sponsorship and partnership have enabled WVG to deliver various development interventions in rural areas of the nation is the Mondelez International. In November 2012, Mondelez International launched its Cocoa Life Programme aimed at building upon the Cadbury Cocoa Partnership that was established in 2008 (Mondelez International, 2016). The programme involves a wide array of initiatives to support farmers in rural communities by helping them cultivate stronger, more resilient

crops and create more empowered cocoa communities (Melo, 2015). It focuses on key areas such as agriculture, education, environment, health and livelihoods. Other areas are business management, financial literacy, water and sanitation, and gender equality. The programme also purposely helps women to benefit from development interventions (Pieters, 2015). Cocoa Life aims to invest \$400 million USD by 2022 to empower at least 200,000 cocoa farmers and reach one million community members in six key cocoa growing nations, namely Brasil, India, Indonesia, the Dominican Republic, Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana. The programme aims to improve the life of cocoa farmers and their communities so as to ensure a sustainable cocoa supply for the good of the world (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2014).

The Wassa East District (WED) is located in the Western Region of Ghana. Being a predominantly agriculture district with mining contributing about one-third of its economic activities, WED requires more assistance from development partners and donors as part of its rural development measures (Wassa East District Assembly [WEDA], 2015). The District has been a major beneficiary of the Cocoa Life Project interventions since its inception, with WVG as the key implementer (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2015; WVG, n.d.).

Statement of the Problem

Several development interventions have provided by partner NGOs of Cocoa Life Programme since the inception of the programme. Notwithstanding these interventions, very few studies have been conducted on the impact of the Project. The first study was done in 2014 by a research team from Harvard University to evaluate the impact of the various project interventions in Ghana

(Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2015). Although the researchers observed that some gains had been made in the country since the implementation of the Project, they failed to establish the actual change in the lives of beneficiaries and communities and the key drivers of such change.

Following the initial impact study by Harvard University researchers, a study conducted at the end of 2016 also observed that Cocoa Life Project has impacted the lives of people and communities (Mondelez International, 2016; Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2015). Despite the above studies, there are concerns with the empirical evidence on the impact of Cocoa Life Project interventions across the beneficiary nations. For instance, earlier studies could not show, in details, the efforts IPs have made in promoting gender equality in beneficiary communities and what the key drivers have been. This omission appears problematic because as part of the Project, implementing partners (IPs) are enjoined to provide well-defined interventions to promote gender equality (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2013; 2014; WVG, 2016). Again, since women have lower incomes and less access to finance, IPs are expected to recognise the peculiar situation of women and tailor specific interventions to address them (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2014; 2015). Though partner NGOs seek to build women's participation in community committees, leadership roles and livelihood activities (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2015), not much evidence exists on the outcomes of these services on gender equality.

Besides, previous studies have failed to give account of the level of satisfaction with participation in the design, planning, implementation and

evaluation of the Project interventions. In other words, no studies exist to give account of whether or not stakeholders including beneficiaries and local authorities are satisfied with how they participated in planning, implementing and evaluating the various interventions under the Project. Meaningful participation is a key factor in the success of development interventions. This occurs when all stakeholders actively take part in planning, implementation and evaluation stages of the projects (Bessette, 2004; Mammah, 2006). Also, not much evidence exists on the relevance of the interventions to the development of the various beneficiary communities in Ghana. Again, no existing studies could ascertain the level of sustainability of the Project and the factors affecting the perceived level of sustainability. More so, in Ghana, not much research has been done on the impact of the Project interventions on the various aspects of livelihoods based on the situation in each district where the Project has been implemented (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2015).

Other issues which remain unknown include the socio-economic characteristics of beneficiaries and whether or not they have influence on the impact of the Project on livelihoods. Socio economic features such as sex, age, education, family size, marital status, religion, occupation, etc. are vital to development interventions and livelihood strategies (Hatlebakk, 2012; Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2015; Nwachukwu, 2014). Baffoe-Asare, Danquah and Annor-Frempong (2013) believe that socio economic features influence people's attitudes towards development projects and interventions. It is therefore crucial that development interventions consider socio economic features of people and how such features may have implications for development strategies and outcomes.

Accordingly, it is recommended that to ensure the sustainability and the continuing relevance of Cocoa Life Project in Ghana, more comprehensive independent studies should be conducted on the impact of the various project interventions delivered in the country (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2015).

WVG started operating in the WED in 2003, providing several development interventions in critical areas including education, health, water and sanitation, agriculture, empowerment, governance, and social welfare in various communities in the district. For example, in the area of education, WVG has been helping children go to school, by building and renovating schools, providing desks, textbooks and other stationery, creating awareness about girl child education and early school enrollment age and awarding scholarships to hundreds of needy children in the WED (WVG, 2016; n.d.). Also, with regard to healthcare, WVG provides immunization programmes, health centres and de-worming treatment to several families. On economic empowerment in the district, WVG supports micro-enterprise development by providing micro-credit financing, offering skills training and linkages to markets and they also increase food security by building capacities of farmers in scientific methods of crop and animal production, resulting in increased productivity and income level of people (WVI, 2005; WVG, 2014; 2016). As a major partner of Cocoa Life Programme, WVG has implemented several development interventions such as education, agriculture, health, water and sanitation, financial literacy, alternative livelihoods, etc. to improve the lives of people in cocoa growing communities in the country. The interventions also aimed at improving beneficiary communities in the cocoa growing areas of Ghana.

WED has been a beneficiary of Cocoa Life Project, with WVG as the only NGO mandated to design, plan and implement various interventions to improve the lives of people in the locality. Under the Project, WVG's interventions seek to increase productivity, income level, savings and improve livelihoods. Also, WVG's aim is to develop communities, empower the youth and enhance environmental sustainability in the District. Through this partnership, WVG has provided various interventions such as training on modern farming practices, financial literacy training, alternative livelihood programmes, community action plans, and provision of educational facilities in the District. The Organisation has also provided clean and safe water facilities, education on sanitation, training on savings culture as well as training on accessing credits. All these interventions by WVG under the Cocoa Life Project are expected to improve the lives of beneficiaries and their communities (Mondelez International, Cocoa Life & WVG, n.d.).

However, ever since WVG provided the above development services in the WED no comprehensive studies have been conducted on the impact of these interventions on the lives of beneficiaries and their communities. This paucity of knowledge makes it very difficult for a fuller appreciation of the impact of WVG's interventions under the Cocoa Life Project in the country. What is more is the fact that despite the diverse development efforts made by various stakeholders to develop the District, Wassa East District is still faced with serious development problems (Wassa East District Assembly, 2015). This raises questions about the impact of the development actors including WVG and Cocoa Life which have operated in the District over the past years. There is therefore the need for a

comprehensive examination of the impact of Cocoa Life Project interventions on the lives of beneficiaries in the WED (Lewis & Kanji, 2009; Lewis, 2005). Shivji (2007) believes that despite the various partnerships and sponsorships NGOs obtain from diverse organisations in the provision of development interventions, not much objective examination has been done on the impact of their services. The prevailing situation presents a huge challenge to the continuing relevance of NGOs within the broader framework of development (Shivji, 2007). It is against this backdrop that this study sought to examine the impact of Cocoa Life Project interventions of WVG on beneficiaries using the WED as a case in order to proffer some measures and strategies for improvement in development service delivery in the country.

Purpose of the Study

This study generally examined the impact of Cocoa Life Project interventions of WVG on beneficiaries of the WED in Western Region, Ghana.

Specifically, this study sought to:

1. Determine the socio-economic backgrounds of beneficiaries who received the Cocoa Life Project interventions of WVG in the WED;
2. Examine the perception of beneficiaries and local authorities in terms of:
 - a) their level of satisfaction with regard to participation in planning, implementation and evaluation of the interventions,
 - b) the relevance of the interventions to community development,
 - c) the efforts of WVG in promoting gender equality through the Project;
3. Assess the level of sustainability of the Cocoa Life Project and the factors affecting the sustainability of the interventions in WED;

4. Determine the extent of the perceived impact of Cocoa Life Project interventions of WVG on the livelihoods of beneficiaries in the District; and
5. Examine whether there are differences in socio-economic backgrounds (sex, age, education level, religious affiliations, marital status, major occupation, family size, income level and ethnic background) of beneficiaries and the impact of the Project interventions on livelihoods.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the study:

1. What are the socio-economic backgrounds of beneficiaries of the Cocoa Life Project interventions of WVG in the WED?
2. How do beneficiaries and local authorities perceive the Project in terms of:
 - a) their level of satisfaction with regard to participation in planning, implementation and evaluation of the interventions?
 - b) the relevance of the interventions to community development in WED?
 - c) efforts of Cocoa Life Project in promoting gender equality?
3. What is the level of sustainability of the Project and what factors affect the sustainability of the Project interventions in the District?
4. To what extent is the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihoods of beneficiaries in the District?

Research Hypotheses

The hypotheses below were formulated and tested at an alpha level of 0.05:

1. H_0 : There is no significant difference between sex and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihoods of beneficiaries.

- H₁: There is a significant difference between sex and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihoods of beneficiaries.
2. H₀: There is no significant difference between age and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihoods of beneficiaries.
- H₁: There is a significant difference between age and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihoods of beneficiaries.
3. H₀: There is no significant difference in level of education and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihoods of beneficiaries.
- H₁: There is a significant difference in level of education and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihoods of beneficiaries.
4. H₀: There is no significant difference in marital status and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihoods of beneficiaries.
- H₁: There is a significant difference in marital status and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihoods of beneficiaries.
5. H₀: There is no significant difference between occupation and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihoods of beneficiaries.
- H₁: There is a significant difference between occupation and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihoods of beneficiaries.
6. H₀: There is no significant difference in religious affiliations and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihoods of beneficiaries.
- H₁: There is a significant in between religious affiliations and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihoods of beneficiaries.

7. H₀: There is no significant difference in household size and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihoods of beneficiaries.
H₁: There is a significant difference in household size and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihoods of beneficiaries.
8. H₀: There is no significant difference in income levels and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihoods of beneficiaries.
H₁: There is a significant difference in income levels and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihoods of beneficiaries.
9. H₀: There is no significant difference in ethnic background of beneficiaries and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on their livelihoods.
H₁: There is a significant difference in ethnic background of beneficiaries and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on their livelihoods.

Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of Cocoa Life Project interventions of WVG on beneficiaries of the WED in Western Region. The findings of this study would assist WVG to better appreciate the efforts it has in the WED through the Cocoa Life Project. The study would also be of great benefit to other ADPs of WVG in general as they would be exposed to the measures required to address development problems in the various operational zones.

The District Assembly would also benefit from the findings of this study. This is because the Assembly would be better informed about the nature and scope of development challenges in the District and the measures required to address them. Besides, the findings of the study would enable Mondelez International and

Cocoa Life to fully appreciate the gains made under the Project in the WED and the measures needed to make the Cocoa Life Project better. The study would also help WVG, Cocoa Life and Mondelez International to discover the concerns that beneficiaries and local authorities face and the strategies needed to ensure the continuing relevance of the Cocoa Life Programme in rural communities.

The findings would also assist other stakeholders including NGOs and development practitioners to have a better understanding of the prospects and challenges of working in cocoa growing areas of Ghana, in particular, and the rural areas of the country as a whole. The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development would also benefit from the findings of this study since it would be exposed to the efforts made by other development actors in the area of rural development and what the concerns are in the pursuit of local level development. Finally, the findings would serve as a reference point for future researchers especially in the areas of community development, NGO Studies, participatory development, gender equality, sustainability, livelihood diversification, etc.

Scope of the Study

Although several districts have benefited from Cocoa Life Project in Ghana led by various IPs, this study focused on WED with WVG as the key implementing NGO. Conceptually, the study focused on the socio-economic backgrounds of beneficiaries; level of satisfaction in participation in the project; and the relevance of the interventions to community development. Other issues explored are: efforts to promote gender equality; the sustainability of the Project; and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihood of beneficiaries.

Limitations of the Study

As with every research, a number of problems are envisaged to be encountered. The main limitation observed is that even though beneficiaries were expected to respond to all questions related to the impact of Cocoa Life Project of WVG, some of their responses may be influenced by their personal encounter with specific interventions. Their responses can therefore be biased towards such particular encounters. Also, although the research was on all the beneficiaries in WED, the number was so large that a sample was drawn. Conclusions can therefore be subject to sampling errors. Again, the use of qualitative methods could make some of the conclusions subjective given the personal biases and preferences of respondents. As the case may be in all social research involving the use of mixed methods approach, the researcher tried his best to ensure the validity and reliability of the study through appropriate triangulation.

More so, the views of WVG's officers in terms of the impact of Cocoa Life Project interventions were not captured in this research. Thus, the results are without the perspective of the WVG officers. Finally, the nature of the topic could not allow the researcher to explore, in detail, the local and cultural factors affecting the Cocoa Life Project in WED. Hence, no comprehensive views of beneficiaries and local authorities on these factors were captured in this study.

Definition of Terms

Beneficiaries: This term refers to the individual members of the various groups that participated in the various interventions WVG implemented under the Project. The individuals consisted of both executive and non-executive members of the groups.

Development: It refers to a well-designed process of bringing about qualitative and quantitative changes in the cultural, social, economic, political, environmental and psychological aspects of a people.

Gender Equality: This represents same access, opportunities and participation which were created for both men and women in all issues which affect their lives.

Livelihood. This relates to the assets and the activities people engage in for a living. It also refers to the access and capabilities people need for a means of living.

Organisation of the Study

The study is grouped into eleven chapters. Apart from Chapter One, Chapter Two presents review of related literature including the theoretical and empirical reviews as well as the conceptual framework of the study. Chapter Three looks at the research methods used in conducting the study. Chapters Four, Five, Six, Seven, Eight, Nine and Ten present and discuss the results based on the research objectives whilst the final chapter contains the summary and theoretical implications of the study. The final chapter also looks at some suggestions to guide future research.

Chapter Summary

This chapter introduced the key issues in the study. It first advanced arguments in favour of other stakeholders in development services including NGOs. It also looked at the issue of community development entails and the role of various stakeholders. Issues affecting the success of NGO development services; and the efforts of WVG in rural development including the interventions delivered under the Cocoa Life Project in WED were explored. Again, the chapter captures the significance of the study, scope of the study, limitations and definition of terms.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Literature review is an essential part of the research process which provides a great contribution to almost every aspect of the research. It helps researchers in a number of ways such as: establishing the theoretical, conceptual and empirical bases of their studies; clarifying their ideas; and developing their research methodology (Kumar, 2011). Again, it helps to enhance and consolidate researchers' own knowledge base and helps them to situate their findings within the existing body of knowledge and frameworks (Kumar, 2011). This chapter first presents the theoretical framework of the study, followed by a review of the various concepts and key terms in the study. The chapter also contains the empirical review, the conceptual framework and also a summary of the pertinent issues in the review.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

The theories underpinning this study include the neo-liberal theory, alternative development theory and social structural theory. Other theories which grounded this study are social capital theory, and social cognitive theory. Detailed explanations and discussions of these theories and their relevance to this study are provided below:

Neo-liberal theory

The first theory that helps to locate the relevance of NGOs in the process of development for this study is the neo-liberal theory (Shivji, 2007). Essentially, neo-liberal theory is a revival and reformulation of classical liberalism. Proponents of

classical liberal theory including Adam Smith, postulated that government supervision of, and interference in the economy with monopolies, subsidies, tariffs, and other restrains impede competition, efficiency, growth, and prosperity (Roskin, Cord, Medeiros & Jones, cited in Yeboah, 2017). The theory perceives the public sector as weak in the delivery of services. The theorists posit that limited government intervention in the state will lead to increased competition and efficient service delivery (Ayee, cited in Yeboah, 2017; Shivji, 2007).

Harvey (2005) sees the neoliberal theory as a theory of political and economic practices that propose that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterised by strong involvement of actors other than the state hence, the idea of free markets and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices. The state has to guarantee, for example, the quality and integrity of money. It must also set up those military, defense, police and legal structures and functions required to secure private property rights and to guarantee, by force if need be, the proper functioning of markets. Again, if markets do not exist in areas such as water, education, health care, social security or environment, then they must be created by state action if necessary. Beyond these tasks the state should not venture, and that state interventions in markets must be kept to the barest minimum. This is because from the theory, the state cannot possibly possess enough information to anticipate market behaviours and because powerful interest groups will inevitably distort and bias state interventions for their own benefit (Harvey, 2005; Yeboah, 2017).

In effect, governments must let the economy alone, that is, free involvement of actors. In this case, efficient producers will prosper, inefficient ones will die out. Their goal is that the public will benefit from the competition offered by the players and actors in the economy (Asare & Frimpong, cited in Yeboah, 2017). The proponents of the theory contend that in the implementation of business-friendly policies, fewer government restrictions and private initiatives will ultimately improve the welfare of the entire society (Asare & Frimpong, cited in Yeboah, 2017). The idea of allowing other players to contribute to the growth and development of the society continues to aid the involvement of NGOs as key partners of development (Roskin *et. al.*, cited in Yeboah, 2017; Shivji, 2007).

The neoliberals advocate for the inclusion of other partners such as NGOs in the development process because they see state actors as rent seekers (Roskin *et. al.*, cited in Yeboah, 2017). Thus, the role and rise of NGOs have been firmly situated with the expanding and consolidating neoliberal hegemony in the global context. Despite the importance of NGOs within the neoliberal agenda, Shivji (2007) believed that proponents of neoliberalism saw in NGOs the possibility of enforcing their understanding and worldview in order to control the affairs of especially poor countries. In a rather tragic description of the activities of NGOs within the neoliberal framework, Shivji (2007), an NGO scholar and practitioner, posited that NGOs are partly responsible for the under-development of Africa. For NGOs to be sufficiently relevant to Africa's development, there is the need to properly examine and scrutinise their activities and free them from imperialist ideologies, controls and manipulations (Lewis & Kanji, 2009; Shivji, 2007).

Alternative development theory

In addressing the inherent inadequacies associated with the neoliberal theory, the Alternative Development Theory (ADT) was developed. The ADT is viewed as a critique of the mainstream development approaches which seemed to over-emphasize an economic growth model for reducing poverty and achieving social change (Pieterse, 2010). According to Pieterse (2010), ADT focuses on local development in contrast to development led by the state and market forces. In essence, ADT seeks to explore alternative ways and redefine the foci of development (Pieterse, 2010; Sarfo, 2013). In view of this, ADT aims at ensuring that local communities are self-sufficient; encouraging participation of people in decision making processes; empowering marginalised groups; and promoting the sustainable utilisation of local resources (Friedmann, 1992; Sarfo, 2013).

In general, ADT focuses on human agency through the process of mobilising people's capacity to promote social change. This attention on human agency shows the people-centered approach to development that often is characterised by some form of participation on the part of the local people. This occurs through the creation of avenues for people to develop their potentials (Friedmann, 1992). Thus, ADT promotes bottom-up strategies which thrive on effective political and institutional reforms (Pieterse, 2010; Sarfo, 2013). The ADT holds the key to a healthy development of the economic, social and the political systems. This is also termed as the inside-up approach or model to development. It is called the inside-up approach to development because domestic enterprises grow out of personal enterprises (Mintzberg, 2003). An example is the U.S.A which does

not depend on an imposed ideology or outside expert for its development and it is on the contrary developed significantly through the efforts of its own people and in their own way. Likewise, indigenous development played a key role in developing Japan, Germany, South Korea and Great Britain (Mintzberg, 2003).

The dissatisfaction with the development approaches of the 1970's which resulted in the shifting of attention towards alternative means of development presented what Nerfin, as cited in Pieterse (2010), refers to as the "terrain of the third system or citizens politics". It is this third system that seeks to ensure that the needs of the people are satisfied and that an atmosphere of self-reliance is nurtured among local people (Pieterse, 2010). Advocates of ADT argue that development should not only focus on achieving economic growth or commodities of life. It must also focus on exploring avenues for attaining human development (Sen, 1999).

Amartya Sen belongs to this school of thought and suggests that in order to ensure development, emphasis should be focused on the removal of all sources of "unfreedoms" such as extreme poverty, inequalities and social exclusion (Sen, 1999). He further elucidates that these sources of unfreedoms can also be removed through the expansion of an individual's potentialities (Sen, 2012). Capability here refers to a set of achievable important functionings. Here development involves an evaluation of one's ability to achieve a variety of valuable functionings in life (Sen, 2012). "Functionings" for Sen (2012) refers to the various things an individual is able to do or achieve in life. The capability of a person thus involves a combination of the various things he or she can achieve (Sen, 2012, p. 320). However, Sen (1999) cautions that the removal of all major unfreedoms alone will not be enough

to achieve development unless this can be done within the context of the relationship between individual freedoms and the power of social influence. Therefore, to effectively deal with underdevelopment is to perceive individual freedoms as the concern of the entire society (Sen, 1999). It is within this context that NGOs have increasingly been associated with alternative development considering their activities in local communities and the nature of their relationships with the people in such areas (Lewis & Kanji, 2009; Sarfo, 2013).

In the views of Clark (1991), based on their grass root initiatives in communities NGOs have managed to earn the trust of the people living in such areas in a manner in which local governments even find it difficult to replicate. Pieterse (2010) also opines that NGOs have now become major stakeholders in development cooperation. With alternative development specific attention is focused on local development and other grassroots initiatives. Thus, development is better achieved when the local people are involved in their own development through the support of NGOs (Mohan, 2008). It is this quest for an alternative development with NGOs as its main agents that has energized donor agencies and rich nations to channel enormous amounts of funds in support of NGOs projects and interventions in deprived communities globally over the last two decades.

The ADT is useful for the purpose of this study since NGOs are believed to be playing relevant role in alternative development. NGOs in their development work are assumed to emphasise the human agency, work with the poor, weak and vulnerable in the society. The people-centered approaches purportedly being adopted by NGOs in their operations presume that issues with development and

inequalities should be tackled from the perspectives of the local people rather than the state or government level (Pieterse, 2010; Sarfo, 2013). However, in discussing the ADT within the context of NGOs and community development, a crucial issue worth noting is the approaches used which have consistently become part of the alternative development process in recent times. The core ideas of alternative development approaches have been participation, gender equality and empowerment (Lewis & Kanji, 2009; Sarfo, 2013).

Although NGOs have been highly influential in development, their pursuit of these core ideas has often been piecemeal. Also, it is believed that NGOs' efforts to empower people in the local communities are often on small-scale. Again, sustaining interventions at the local level has been a challenge. This is due to the fact that NGOs fail to appreciate that local problems are embedded within wider structures and processes of society (Lewis & Kanji, 2009). The Cocoa Life Project is a development initiative with the active involvement of NGOs as IPs. WVG has been one key partner which has implemented several development interventions under the Project to improve the lives of people in cocoa growing communities. Under the Project, WVG plans, designs, implements and evaluates various development interventions in such communities to improve the lives of beneficiaries. The involvement of WVG as a major IP hinges on the recognition of the potency of NGOs in alternative development process globally.

Social structural theory

The social structural theory (SST) was developed by Kerckhoff and Meyer (Nwachukwu, 2011). It is seen as crucial from the socio-economic perspective in

relation to participation. The theory lays emphasis on the role of external factors including structural forces that place individuals into occupations. It also stresses the role of these forces in rewarding people's efforts on the basis of group characteristics such as gender, race and occupation (Meyer, cited in Nwachukwu, 2011). The social theory suggests that the issue of low status and low wages in society is ascribed to different opportunities available to certain type of persons in the society (Nwachukwu, 2011).

In the views of Goldbergwood and Tully (2006), structures are understood as sets of narratives and their related socio-cultural and local interactions which have existed overtime to the extent that they are perceived to become institutionalised. The structuralist theory is premised on the conviction that the environment is the catalyst of social problem and not the individual. It is also borne out of the view that the clients or sufferers are not the cause of their problems but social arrangements could be the reasons for problematic situations that such individuals face in society. These problems are often defined as products of those who suffer from them (Nwachukwu, 2011).

Bellefeville and Hemingway (2006) maintain that social structural theory focuses on the larger, overarching culture or society, its needs and how it functions, the needs and the behaviours of society at large not those of individuals. It also focuses on how well individuals fit into their cultural milieu and if their actions enhance or undermine the health, strength and effectiveness of the larger culture. Goldbergwood and Tully (2006) proposed four professional practice ideologies which ought to guide efforts towards helping people alleviate poverty and the low

status people find themselves. They include the need to connect people to the needed resources, and the need to change social structures that limit human capability. Others are the need to help people negotiate their problematic situations, and to help people deconstruct socio-political discourse to reveal its connections to their daily struggles (Goldbergwood & Tully, 2006).

In embarking on development interventions, it is important for NGOs including WVG to be fully guided by the principles of the social structural theory in order to enable people to effectively participate in decisions, choices, activities and interventions that affect them. The social structural theory is relevant to this study because within the larger society, several factors beyond the control of people affect their development and wellbeing. Thus, through proper engagement and stakeholder participation, development partners such as WVG and Cocoa Life stand a better position to appreciate the underlining factors which actually affect the lives of people. Specifically, under the Cocoa Life Project in WED, communities in the District face several factors that explain their development challenges (WEDA, 2015). Some of these factors are borne out of cultural or societal creation whilst others may be within the control of the people. Thus, through proper engagement of stakeholders Cocoa Life and WVG can better understand the problems of the communities so as to design appropriate interventions to bring about improvement in the lives of the people.

Social capital theory

Social capital was first used to refer to the public infrastructure of a nation in the 1950s. Around this time, social capital was conceived as the industrial

component of capital (Dube *et al.*, cited in Schuller, Baron & Field, 2000, p.2). However, formal postulation of social capital in terms of social behaviours, collective actions and social systems occurred between the late 1970s and 1990s (Jiang & Carroll, 2009). The key point at this period was the realisation of non-economic resources and the ability of social systems to facilitate social actions. Social capital is a socially constructed term built upon social exchange that has been developed from social ties existing in social structures. Unlike other forms of capital such as economic capital which is in people's bank accounts, or human capital which is inside people's heads, social capital is inherent in the structure of people's relationships (Jiang & Carroll, 2009; Portes, cited in Kamando, 2014).

Robert Putnam, a key contributor to the social capital debate at community level, highlighted the productive aspects of social capital which help to improve the efficiency of society by facilitating the coordination of social actions (Putnam, 1993). Putnam defined social capital as social or community cohesion resulting from the existence of local horizontal community networks in the voluntary sector, personal spheres, and the density of networking between these spheres (Putnam, 1993). He further expanded the theory of social capital with three facets. They are: a high level of (civic) participation in local networks; a positive local identity and a sense of solidarity and equality; and norms of trust, reciprocal help, support and cooperation. These facets constitute the social assets, which are also vital in political education and the community development process.

According to Putnam (2000), networks create social capital for community development. Field (2005) maintains the notion that social capital theory centres on

the assumption that people's social networks are a valuable asset which can be exploited for development. This notion reflects Pierre Bourdieu's perspective of this form of capital. He views social capital as a network of ties emerging as the end result of long-term investment decisions of the potential resources, which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual recognition (Bourdieu, 1985). In fact, social capital is made up of resources inherent in social relations and social structures. It is a kind of an investment for actors to mobilise, access and use resources in social activities for the good of society (Daly, 2010a). However, the nature of network ties that actors exhibit in social structures may both provide actors with opportunities for resources, and constrain access to them (Carolan, 2014; Daly, 2010b).

On his part, James Coleman opined that social capital theory is based on the belief that social capital is linked to the structure of ties and that the productive aspects are context-specific. To Coleman, social capital represents resources with the expectation of reciprocity, which goes beyond individuals to involve wider networks whose relationships are governed by a high degree of trust and shared values (Coleman, 1990). The generated resources resulting from social capital should benefit all actors who are part of the social structure. These resources constitute an essential part of the 'public good'. In essence, social capital is incompatible with high levels of inequality. Rather it complements egalitarian perspectives (Putnam, 2000; Schuller *et al.*, 2000).

In the views of Kamando (2014), trust and reciprocity in social capital have become critical components that reinforce social cohesion. Prell (2003) contends

that social capital is composed of cohesive networks in which actors are connected with one another and where trust and reciprocity reside. People's networks in this sense, ought to be seen as part of the wider set of social relationships and norms that permit them to pursue their goals to bind society together. Despite the significance of social capital theory, it has limited relational capacity for actors and, as such, social contacts must be developed and maintained (Bienzle, Gelabert, Jütte, Kolyva, Meyer & Tilkin, 2007). Coleman, as cited in Kamando (2014), stresses the frequent renewal of social capital to sustain its value; that, social relations need to be maintained because expectations and obligations wither over time and norms depend on regular interactions. The achievement of common goals of society relies heavily on the spirit of collective actions and social relations.

In community development efforts, relationships and social contacts matter due to the interplay of diverse societal set-ups. Transparency and accountability are the preconditions to strengthen and maintain genuine networking and social capital needed to understand community needs and expectations (Bray, 2000a; Dhillon, 2005, 2009). Trust in partnership amongst NGOs, community members and other stakeholders of development acts as 'social glue' that binds actors together. Trust also assures transparency and accountability (Dhillon, 2005, p.215). The theory is important to this study since as part of the Project, WVG formed various groups and associations and so one would expect that relationships existing in these groups could be exploited to maximise the impact of the Project interventions. Also, the relationships amongst farmers, saving and loans, and gari processing groups, etc. in each community would act as capital needed to ensure optimal benefit.

Social cognitive theory

The social cognitive theory (SCT), which is also called observational learning theory, was propounded by Albert Bandura. It emphasises that people learn through observing others' behaviours, and the outcomes of those behaviours. According to Bandura, most human behaviours are learned, observationally through modeling. In other words, through observing others, people form an idea of how new behaviours are performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action (Bandura, cited in Edjah, n.d.). The SCT explains human behaviour in terms of continuous reciprocal interaction that exists among cognitive, behavioural, and environmental influences (Edjah, n.d.).

In the views of Davis (2006), SCT offers a framework for understanding, predicting and changing human behaviours. It identifies human behaviour as an interaction of personal factors, behaviour and the environment. Bandura further identifies some conditions necessary for effective modeling. They are: attention, retention, motor reproduction, and motivation. Attention deals with those factors that increase or decrease the amount of attention paid to an object, event, entity, issue or phenomenon. This includes distinctiveness, affective valence, prevalence, complexity, functional value. It is believed that a person's characteristics such as sensory capacities, arousal level, and perceptual set, and past reinforcement influence his or her of attention (Bandura, cited in Edjah, n.d.).

On the other hand, retention refers to remembering what one has paid attention to. For an individual to be able to imitate a behaviour, he or she must be able to keep into memory what he or she observes. Retention can occur through

symbolic coding, mental images, cognitive organization, symbolic rehearsal, and motor rehearsal. Unlike retention, motor reproduction deals with reproducing the image, words, actions, etc. that one observes. However, it is important to note that for effective reproduction to occur one may need some physical capabilities (Edjah, n.d.). Finally, motivation is an essential element in effective modeling. In essence, having a good reason to imitate includes motives such as self-motivation, direct motivation and vicarious reinforcement (Bandura, 1986; Edjah, n.d.).

Based on the SCT, Bandura developed the concept of Self-efficacy. Self-efficacy refers to a person's belief and conviction he or she has of his or her abilities. It is about the conviction a person has that he or she can successfully carry out courses of action required to deal with various situations in life. This conviction determines whether or not an individual will undertake particular goal-directed activities, the amount of energy put into the effort and the length of time that the individual will persist in striving to achieve a particular goal (Bandura, 1986; Edjah, n.d.). The environment, behaviour and one's psychological processes affect people's achievements in society and the nature of the achievement (Edjah, n.d.). The SCT influences the understanding of community participation in many ways. This is because studies have shown that prior programme satisfaction influences the level of participation in future interventions (Bagherian *et al.*, 2009; Kim & Creighton, 2000). The SCT is critical in this study because when people see the dividends in past development activities, it encourages them to participate in subsequent development programmes (Bigio, 1994; Mitlin & Satterthwaite, 2004). Higher levels of satisfactions of previous programmes promotes participation in

future interventions (Bagherian *et al.*, 2009; Baker, 2000). On the issue of Cocoa Life Project interventions of WVG, it is essential to indicate that participants' observation of the perceived usefulness or otherwise of the interventions would greatly affect their attitudes towards subsequent activities under the Project. WVG had provided several interventions in the District and the communities had witnessed the outcomes of these interventions. Thus, beneficiaries' views about the outcomes of earlier interventions in the District would affect the importance they place on subsequent services of WVG such as the Cocoa Life Project interventions.

Review of Concepts and Key Issues in the Study

Understanding socio economic status and characteristics of people

The term "Socio economic status" (SES) defies a single definition as different individuals, disciplines and organisations tend to conceive the concept based on their own orientations. Among the social sciences, the term connotes one's position in the social hierarchy, how the hierarchy is structured and very often, one's consequent life chances. In other words, SES deals with one's access to collectively desired resources such as material goods, money, power, friendship networks, healthcare, leisure time, or educational opportunities. It is also about access to such resources which enables individuals and/or groups to prosper in the social world (Smith, Mulder, Bowles & Hill, 2011). During social interactions, various indicators are often displayed so as to convey one's SES to other members of the social group. Key indicators include professional titles, clothing, hairstyles, automobiles and residential addresses. All social animals including humans, appear

to recognise and appreciate social hierarchies and their position in them (Gesquiere, Learn, Simao, Onyango, Alberts & Altmann, 2011; Sapolsky, 2005).

Mueller and Parcel, as cited in Willms (2004, p.7), defined SES as the “relative position of a family or individual on a hierarchical social structure, based on their access to, or control over, wealth, prestige, and power.” SES tends to be construed in terms of its proxies, such as income, education or occupation whereas in sociology, which is where the concept emanates from, it is very much conceived of in terms of societal rank, prestige and position (Taylor & Derek, 2009).

Socio-economics implies two scopes, namely social and economic. The social scope entails authority, occupation, prestige, and education standing in the community while the economic scope involves employment, income, home ownership and financial assets. SES also could be divided into three categories, namely low SES, middle SES, high SES. Socio-economic status refers the position of an individual in a community with respect to the amount of cultural possession, effective income, material possession, prestige and social participation. According to Oladipo and Adekunle (2010), SES refers to the position of an individual in a community with respect to the amount of cultural possession, effective income, material possession, prestige and social participation. These factors and their relevance in a society, are determined by the society itself.

In fact, in places such as South Africa, “the hierarchical structure of society, including access to wealth, prestige and power, was constructed to be on the basis of race through decades and even centuries of institutionalized inequality” (Taylor & Derek, 2009, p.7). The restriction was attained by focusing on where people

could live, type of education they had, access to and the work occupations they had access to. Indeed, history has shown that SES is distributed along racial lines and it is ill advised to attempt to untangle race and class in the case of South Africa (Taylor & Derek, 2009, p.7).

SES is more difficult to define in the complex world of the 21st Century than previous, for example, the early 19th century or before. In the pre-modern era, SES may have been based on physical strength, intelligence, and/or choice of parents. In the modern era, wealth, income, educational attainment, and occupational prestige have been included as crucial indicators of SES. Many contemporary scholars seem interested in SES because it serves as an indicator of the health of a social system or society, often measured against some meritocratic ideal (Bowles, Gintis & Wright, 1998). Generally, the meritocratic ideal is that regardless of birth right or inherited endowments, individuals may increase their SES through efforts, including but not limited to the development of their inherited endowments (Bowles *et al.*, 1998). Societies without such potential are mostly seen as less healthy and backward. For meritocrats and egalitarians alike, stratification based on birth, race, gender, religions, or ethnic backgrounds are abominations to social transformation (Arrow, Bowles & Durlauf, 2000). Despite this differing position, it is clear that in appreciating socio economic backgrounds of people one needs to consider issues such as their gender, religion, ethnicity, and age.

According to Anderson, Case and Lam (2001), the educational level of a person forms an important part of his or her socio economic background. Another aspect of socio-economic background has to do with the family structure

(Anderson, 2000). Again, the income level of a person has been considered as critical to his/her socio-economic background. However, income is rather subject to short-term fluctuations and is therefore not always a good measure of long-term SES. For these reasons, consumption or expenditure is often regarded as a better proxy for long-term SES than income. However, the collection of expenditure or consumption data also carries a fairly heavy burden of time and therefore cost (Filmer & Pritchett, 2001).

Besides, other indicators of socio-economic backgrounds are marital status, health, occupation, household size, and family structure (Imoh, Nwachukwu & U-James, 2009; Nwachukwu, 2011; Seekings & Nattrass, 2005). Marital status is crucial in the social stratification and also plays a role in one's socio economic background (Seekings & Nattrass, 2005). Creighton and Hudson (2002) consider occupation/employment as a critical element in the socio-economic backgrounds of people. Within the social stratification and economic capabilities, a person's occupation/employment commands much respect all over the world. Also, Nwachukwu (2011) identified socio economic backgrounds of people as their sex, age, educational level, income level, and source of income. In essence, in measuring socio-economic backgrounds variables to consider include sex, age, marital status, occupation and education. Others are religion, household size, income sources and level, expenditure, positions, material possession, dwelling place, and ethnicity.

The concept of participation

As a concept, participation gained importance in the development discourse in the 1960s as a development tool to enhance the lives of rural people (Chambers,

1983, 1997, Francis, 2002). Francis (2002) traced the origin of the concept from two main roots. The first root is from a Latin American theorist who opined that communities could eliminate their poverty, if views and opinions about ways of doing so could be solicited from those in poverty. The second root came from an American organisational management theorising. It posited that organisations work effectively and make more gains if the workers were able to participate in the daily decision-making, policy formulation and implementation of the organisation.

In the views of Kotze and Kellerman (1997), in 1960s, participation allowed community members to take part in development programmes in the communities through decision-making, policy formulation and implementation of such programmes. The use of the concept of participation began when some development activists in a workshop organised by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), University of Sussex called for Rapid Rural Appraisal [RRA] (Bergdall, 1993; Chambers, 1997). The RRA principle gained recognition and acceptance by many institutions and countries that aimed at developing their rural communities through appraisal workshops. It became a principle employed to assess better ways that facilitators could learn about the conditions and lives of rural people and integrate those ideas into their development agenda (Chambers, 1997; Green, 2005). One key limitation with RRA has to do with inadequate local participation. Development facilitation and objectives were controlled by development agencies and few community members, to the neglect of most local people hence, the need for participatory rural appraisal [PRA] (Green, 2005).

In essence, the motivation for PRA was to address some weaknesses identified in RRA (Chambers, 1994; Kabutha & Ford, cited in Chambers, 1997). The main aim of PRA is to enable poor people explain the sort of development they aspire to attain, and become empowered through the methods and processes of PRA (McGee, 2002). PRA seeks to address the conflict of power and power relations which was the inherent weakness of RRA, so as to give local people the opportunity to actively participate in their development work, empower them and also become very proactive. McGee further explained that despite the value of local knowledge in the formulation and modification of development policy and decisions, it suffers a lot of setbacks and resistance because it helps to empower the marginalised social groups whilst disempowering those in control.

Over the last five decades PRA has added momentum to rural people's involvement in decision-making, use of community knowledge and engagement to improve development practice. For instance, in Tanzania, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) organised a conference aimed at broadening the concept of participatory development through economic growth, good governance and popular participation (Nelson & Wright, 1995). Although the UNECA approach stressed promotion of community involvement for economic growth and effective governance, it failed to allow the poor people assess their situation and find solutions to them (Chambers, 1992; 1995). Development organisations' interpretation of the concept of participation continued to change, while the rural peoples' understanding of the concept also became diverse. This led to different ways of defining and interpreting the concept of participation.

The concept “participation” has been defined and used in various ways. It is however, believed that different interpretations of the concept and answers to questions such as who should participate, how the participation should be practised, when the participation would be necessary, who should be the beneficiary of participation and in whose interest the participation should be continue to influence the definition of the concept of participation (Agarwal, 2001; Clemente, 2003; Datta, 2003; Roodt, cited in Odoom, Yeboah, Opoku & Osei-Wusu, 2018a). Whilst some scholars believe that community participation is an end in itself; others see it is a means to reach a certain goal (Servaes, 1996; World Bank, 1996). In spite of the seeming disagreement over the interpretation of the concept of participation, many scholars have attempted to explain and define participation.

In the views of Brager, Specht, and Torczyner, as cited in Odoom *et al.* (2018a), participation is a way to educate citizens and to increase their competence and wealth in the development process. It can be said from the above definitions that participation is a vehicle for influencing decisions that affects the lives of citizens and an avenue for transferring power. Also, according to Chowdhury (1996), participation entails involving a substantial number of persons in situations or actions which improve their wellbeing; including their income, security, or self-esteem. Chowdhury adds that the ideal conditions for meaningful participation can be classified into three aspects. These are the kind of participation under consideration, the participants, and the process by which participation may occur.

Westergaard (1986) defined participation as “collective efforts to increase and exercise control over resources and institutions on the part of groups and

movements of those hitherto, excluded from control” (p.14). This definition points toward a mechanism for ensuring community participation. Armitage, as cited in Odoom *et al.* (2018a) sees participation as a process by which citizens act in response to community concerns, voice their opinions about decisions that affect them, and take responsibility for changes to their community. Besides, Chappel, as cited in Odoom *et al.* (2018a), argues that participation is a reaction to the traditional sense of powerlessness felt by the general public in matters regarding the influence of government decisions. Chappel added that people often think that they cannot influence health and social services because decisions about such issues are made outside their community by unknown bureaucrats and technocrats.

Feeney (1998) defines participation as ‘an opportunity for citizens, public and private organisations to express their views on general policy and goals or to have their priorities and needs integrated into decisions made about particular projects and programmes. Participation is the sharing of ideas by people towards the benefits of development; activities making an active contribution to the development process and being involved in decision-making at all levels of society (United Nations, cited in Desai, 2002a). The World Bank Participatory Learning Group (WBPLG) (1996) sees participation as a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives, decisions and resources which affect them (Nelson & Wright, 1995).

Contrarily to the above, Oakley, as cited in Hilhorst (2003) views participation as a form of voluntary contributions made by people who might be involved in public programmes which are geared towards national, regional or

community level development but they are not supposed to make any contribution through decision-making or influence any policy formulation or implementation. In fact, unlike Oakley's conception, the WBPLG's (1996) position does not go far enough to encourage the inclusion of community members in decision-making or their influence in development policy formulation. In order to influence development policy and practice, people should have the opportunity to participate on equal terms at all stages in order to influence the plans and outcomes.

Mosse (2001) asserts that participation should embrace the total inclusion of men and women in the decision-making process to bring about maximization of development benefits. This could lead to better design of development programmes which could in turn, lead to a more effective and sustainable process, because women have been suppressed in expressing their views on development (Agarwal, 2001). It is widely recognised that some development organisations do not support participation that would give community members the opportunity to influence an already-formulated development plan, because they argue that it may lead to deviation from an existing development agenda developed by donors or external organisations (Open University, 2001). Thus, some organisations resist participation by local people in decision-making. According to Francis (2002), participation should not be limited to only facilitators or be influenced by outsiders. Rather, it should involve devolution of power, so that those at the community level can be empowered and become active participants in decision-making and influence development policies; since it is the true way by which stakeholders can cause positive change in the lives of the people they claim to serve (Mohan, 2008).

According to Jaksic, as cited in Odoom *et al.* (2018a), even though community participation concerns voluntarily influences of people in terms of issues that affect their own lives, people are often denied the opportunity to actively take part in shaping the programme or criticising its contents. Jaksic explained further that it is a moral humiliation to develop structures for community participation without regard for the interest of the community members. In the views of Bessette (2004), community participation is vital only when it becomes a process of facilitating the active involvement of different communities and groups together with other stakeholders involved and the numerous development and research agents who work with the community and decision makers.

Singh, as cited in Abiona and Niyi Bello (2013), identified people's participation in development at the local level based on certain premises including attending meetings, calls to discuss matters relating to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of natural resources management; contributing money, labour, or both to activities /projects of common interest to the group/ community; and seeking new knowledge and information and sharing it with other members of the group/community, as well as within the project authority concerned. Others are abiding by the rules and regulations set by the group/community/organisation in consultation with the local people; adoption of technologies and practices recommended by the project authority; abstaining from doing any harm or damage to the common property or asset created as a result of participatory efforts; and serving on the joint management committees which is constituted by the project authority for natural resources management (Abiona & Niyi Bello, 2013).

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Some of the objectives and functions of participation include making local wishes known, generating development ideas, providing local knowledge, and testing proposals for feasibility and improving upon them. Others include increasing the capability of communities to enable them handle their affairs, control and exploit their environments, demonstrating support for regime, ensuring that governments deliver their mandate, extracting, developing and investing in local resources (labour, finance, managerial skills, etc.) and promoting desirable relationships between people, especially through cooperative work (Egenti, 2001). Thus, participation has to be effective, authentic and enduring and it is the kind of change that is talked about when moving towards notions like rural development.

Citizen participation is about the involvement of the people or their representatives in the formulation and development of proposals, planning and implementation of programmes. Citizen participation in development programme is therefore a powerful tool for mobilising new and additional resources to ensure improved lives of people and organisations (Abiona & Niyi Bello, 2013). To ensure effective citizen participation, development programmes and project interventions should not be imposed on the target beneficiaries. Beneficiaries should not be made passive recipients of services; rather they should take part in all activities concerned with their own development or in their areas (Abiona & Niyi Bello, 2013). This means that any efforts from NGOs to ensure participation in development decisions at the grassroots contributes to people's recognition of their important roles in development. It should enable the citizens to become aware of the need to be involved personally or their representatives in the initiation, formulation and

development of proposals, planning of programmes and implementation of development programmes (Abiona & Niyi Bello, 2013; Kamando, 2014). It also requires the willingness of local people to voluntarily work together to pursue common goals for the common good (Kamando, 2014).

Typology of participation

There are various perspectives with regards to the types and levels of participation and they ought to influence policy formulation. As a concept, participation is not a “one-size-fits-all” principle; there are different types and levels of it. Each type and level of participation has implications for policy options and decisions in development process (Odoom *et al.*, 2018a). The level and form of participation differ based on stakeholders’ capacity. Participation by stakeholders may range from passive participation to active participation. Passive participation is where people are just told what is going to happen or has happened already, whilst with active participation people take responsibility for and actively contribute to project planning, design, implementation and evaluation; and any other forms of activities which affect society (Sirpal, cited in Odoom *et al.*, 2018a).

In as much as there is an extensive acceptance of the rhetoric of participation in development, there is no clear understanding of what constitutes meaningful and effective community participation. Indeed, variations exist in ways and the extent to which participation is conceptualised. In their review of literature on participation, Brodie, E., Hughes, T., Jochum, V., Ockenden, N., & Warburton, D. (2011) identified three main forms of participation. They are: public participation, social participation and individual participation. Public participation refers to the

engagement of individuals with the various structures and institutions of democracy. Public participation is also viewed as political, civic, or vertical participation and/or participatory governance. Also, social participation is conceived as the collective activities that people are involved in as part of their everyday lives. It includes being a member of a community group or a trade union. It also includes supporting the local clinic by volunteering or running a study group on behalf of an NGO. Individual participation deals with the decisions and actions that people make as part of their daily lives. Such decisions and actions symbolize the kind of society they desire to live in. Individual participation is sometimes called 'everyday politics' which may include donating monies to charities or writing petitions to demand the provision of certain services (Brodie *et al.*, 2011).

Within the framework of development, some scholars prefer to see community participation along a continuum with passive participation and self-mobilisation on the extreme ends (Chambers, 2005; Kumar, 2002). In the views of Pant (2009), community participation best thrives in democratic systems and contributes to democratisation. Pant added that participation can be coercive and manipulative in non-democratic societies. However, Pant admitted that even in democratic nations, there is the possibility of passive participation for some groups. Direct participation involves the idea of free and active debating from ancient Greece. Certain uncontrolled public places in a community are important venues for alternative discourses to develop (Evans & Boyte, cited in Odoom *et al.*, 2018a).

Beyond the above positions, scholars have listed seven distinct levels of participation, ranging from the low level to the high level. They include passive

participation, participation by information giving, participation by consultation, participation for material incentives, functional participation, interactive participation and self-mobilisation (Pretty & Scoones, cited in Mammah, 2006). With passive participation, people participate by being told what is going to happen or has already happened. It is a one-sided announcement by an administration or programme management without listening to people's responses. The information which is being shared belongs to only external professions. In the case of passive participation, the community members keep a distance and never intervene in the activities; they are told what is going to happen or what has happened already (Roodt, 2001). On the contrary, active participation is open and community members actively take part in all stages of the project. Decision making and other important activities including planning, management, monitoring and evaluation of the projects, are done by the people (Mikkelsen, 2005).

More so, participation in information giving occurs in situations where people participate by answering questions posed by researchers and programme managers. Tools such as questionnaires and interview guides are often used to gather information. Here, individuals are denied the opportunity to influence proceedings as the findings of the research programme are neither shared nor checked for accuracy. In addition, participation by consultations manifests itself in situations where people are being consulted by external agents to elicit views. These external agents outline both problems and solutions, and may modify these in the light of people's reactions. Consultation offers opportunities for the public to express their opinions on the project proposal initiated by the service providers.

Arduous planning and implementation of projects are undertaken only after extensive discussion and consultations are made. Consultation involves education, information sharing and negotiation with the aim of achieving a better decision-making process through consultations among stakeholders (Becker, cited in Odoom *et al.*, 2018a). Indeed, the weakness with this approach is that, development facilitators and professionals are not obliged to take on-board people's views.

Again, participation by material incentives happens when people partake through the provision of resources such as labour in return for food, cash or material incentives. Such people are often not part of the experimentation and have no stake in maintaining activities when incentives end (Agarwal, 2001; Mikkelsen, 2005; Odoom *et al.*, 2018a). Also, functional participation occurs in situations where people take part by forming groups to meet pre-determined objectives related to the programme, which can involve the development or promotion of externally initiated social organisation. Such participation does not occur at the early stages of programme cycle or planning. Such early decisions are often made elsewhere. Institutions which believe in this approach tend to depend on external initiators or facilitators but may become self-dependent (Agarwal, 2001; Mikkelsen, 2005).

Furthermore, interactive participation happens when people take part in joint analysis as well as the planning process. With this, the members of the target community improve their existing structures and also take charge of their development process. The joint analysis is expected to lead to action plans and the formulation of new local groups or strengthening of existing ones. It often involves interdisciplinary methodologies which seek various perspectives and make use of

methodical and structured learning processes (Mohan, 2008). Self-mobilisation is defined as a situation whereby people take part by providing initiatives independent of external institutions to change systems. Here, the community members themselves initiate, design, plan, implement and evaluate their own development interventions. Community members identify their own needs and provide solutions for the betterment of the community. Such self-initiated mobilisation efforts help to challenge existing inequitable distributions of wealth and power (Agarwal, 2001; Mikkelsen, 2005). Here, community members are the engineers of development.

Despite their relevance, the various definitions and conceptualisations of participation still seem broad, diverse and sometimes contradictory. This implies that more clarifications ought to be brought to bear on the concept so as to avoid its misuse and abuse. In fact, issues such as when to participate, what sort of participation is appropriate and at what stage participation is necessary still remain unresolved (Clemente, 2003; Lane, 1995). This complicates efforts, especially for development organisations and facilitators in demonstrating the practical relevance of the concept of participation. Besides, the wide-range of aims and objectives of development organisations and the diverse expectations of communities complicate efforts for the acceptance of a particular typology of participation as appropriate. Moreover, the unequal distribution of power and resources, and the seeming lack of willingness of some community members to be part of decision-making process present a challenge to the practical value of participation (Dixon, cited in Odoom *et al.*, 2018a). It is not surprising that Cornwall and Brock (2005) render participation as a rhetoric commodity which is often deployed to suit the interests

of different positions and viewpoints within the development discourse (Cornwall & Brock, 2005). Nonetheless, Hickey and Mohan (2004) maintain that effective participation is critical in any meaningful development programmes.

Participation occurs at various stages such as initiation, design, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages. Each of these aspects of development projects requires participation of key stakeholders including community members. The stages may include involvement of the local people, technical assistance and skills which affect local development. Others services including training and education encourage initiatives and self-help practices which are essential features of sustainable development (Datta, 2003; Mohan & Stokke, 2010; Pearce, 2000). In this study, participation was examined from three main stages; namely: planning, implementation and evaluation. It explored beneficiaries' level of satisfaction in participation during these stages of the Project interventions.

Conceptualising community

Community is a very complex and ambiguous term. Different interest groups tend to justify the use of the term within different politics, policies and practices (Kamando, 2014; Mayo, cited in Kamando, 2014). It is believed that the complexity of the term "Community" is due to the fact that it is historically situated within theoretically disputed views and ideas which alter with time, ideology, politics and economics (Shaw, 2008). Crow and Allan (1994) contended that the forces influencing the creation of community life are complex in themselves which cannot be easily manipulated. Mayo, as cited in Kamando (2014) traced the term 'community' in English language to the 14th century. Around this period, the term

'community' was used to connote the common people whose bonding was grounded on their poverty and their culture.

In the 16th century, the concept saw expansion from common people to include the quality of having something in common and a shared sense of identity and common characteristics. However, since the 19th century, the term community has assumed a bigger complexity. Within this period, communities are distinguished in terms of localities, mainly in large and complex industrial societies. Here, community was referred to the people who live in a common geographical area, and share common but diverse interests such as ethnic origin, religion, politics and occupation (Kamando, 2014; Mayo, cited in Kamando, 2014). This conception entails three main issues, namely: place or locality, interest and function (Tett, 2010). Tett defined 'Community of locality', as the most commonly used meaning, which refers to people who share things in common and live in a particular geographical community such as a town or village.

In support of Tett (2010), Mulhall (2014) conceives community as a shared locality which refers to a common geographical area such as a neighbourhood, a housing estate or a village in a rural area. Mulhall also sees community as a shared interests relating to interests based upon cultures and identities, as in the case of minority ethnic communities, or upon common identifications of particular needs. Within the African context, living a communal life dates back to the formation of societies where people were working together in groups doing many activities including farming, hunting, harvesting, building houses as well as solving natural disasters (Marah, 2006).

However, in the views of sociologists such as Ohmae (1991), and Castells (2010), 'locality' or 'spatiality' is not actually a feature of present-day communities. The authors argued that there can be communities based on networks and shared interests, feelings and identity without a spatial element. For example, there is a virtual community where contact is made possible through the internet and related networks. Nonetheless, a closer look at the nature of rural communities means that locality remains the main feature by which social relationships, networks, cohesion, a social web or bond are built among people in a community (Delanty, 2003; Kamando, 2014).

Even though one cannot discount the impacts of micro communities due to forces such as politics, wealth, differences in education and extended families within rural communities; the inherent unified nature of these communities remains an integral base of collective mobilisation which facilitates mobilization for community development and social reconstruction (Delanty, 2003). Scholars (James, 2003; Phillips & Pittman, 2009) state that 'social contact and relationships' among individuals are significant aspects of community survival. Social contacts and relationships in a given locality define the identity and the sense of belonging among people in community (James, 2003). This ensures commonality, interdependence and collective capacity which creates a social-web. It also ensures that people share resources, cultural interests, values, qualities of social cohesion and identification together (Derienzo, 2007; Kamando, 2014).

The common geographical location enables people to learn *to live* in terms of an interconnected 'we' rather than an isolated 'I' (Derienzo, 2007; Kamando,

2014). 'Learning to live' occurs when the shared values of mutual respect, solidarity and understanding are internalised and practised through a dynamic, holistic and lifelong process (UNESCO, cited in Kamando, 2014). In essence, a community is about localities, networks and identities which define people. Thus, whichever form of networks or social relationships that exist between people with certain identities for effective mutual community development, that defined locality is important (Davies, 2003; Kamando, 2014). In his study, James (2003) found that the community is perceived as a social system with a set of relationships which take place in a specific locality. This means that people and the ties that bind them in a certain geographical location are essential to their existence (Kamando, 2014).

However, scholars such as Crow and Allan (1994), and Bray (2003) believe that communities are not always homogenous. Bray added that sometimes even in a closely defined locality, some people or groups may not consider residence in a particular location as being part of community and those sub-groups do not always operate in harmony. According to Kamando (2014), the rise of social mobility in modern-day communities determines the extent of connectedness among people, due to differences in culture, values and leadership. Shaeffer, as cited in Kamando (2014) reinforces this argument by stating that some communities are united while others are conflictive. Shaeffer added that some communities are governed and managed by leaders elected democratically; whilst others are governed and administered by leaders imposed from above representing central authorities.

One key feature of modern communities is the issue of heterogeneity which often characterises most urban communities. The bonds which defines rural

communities continue to be threatened by the rise of living standards, economic forces, increasing population, freedom and spread of information communication and technology, among others (Beard & Das Gupta, 2006; Crow & Allan, 1994; Delanty, 2003). No wonder Delanty (2003) concludes that there is the loss of community due to increasing modernisation. Modern community may be understood as communication community based on new kinds of belonging, which is peculiar to the circumstances of contemporary life conveyed in unstable, fluid, open and highly individualised groups. People in today's communities are more vigorously seeking to achieve belonging than the preservation of boundaries. Mayo, as cited in Kamando (2014), views these communities as susceptible to external social networks. Communities of today are characterised by an impenetrable network of diverse relationships whose dynamics often either obstruct or facilitate development (Das Gupta, Grandvoinet & Romani, 2003; Kamando, 2014).

The concept of development

Development means different things to different people in developed and developing countries. Different meanings of development exist within the context of developed and developing countries. In developed countries the availability of infrastructure leads to increased economic activity and innovation while in developing countries the inadequate infrastructure hampers economic development and innovation (Goulet, 1992; Jussawalla, cited in Egyir, 2013). Edwards (1999) defines development as the deliberate process of reducing material wants and the enhancement of people's ability to live a life, they consider good across the widest possible range in a population.

Development refers to the qualitative and structural changes in the cultural, social, economic, political, and ecological aspects of a people (Bassand, cited in Nemes, 2005). This definition means that for a community or a nation to claim to have developed, its people need to witness both qualitative and quantitative changes in cultural, social, economic, political, and ecological lives. This means that any attempt to focus on one of these aspect to the neglect of the others can not constitute development. According to Thomas, as cited in Lewis and Kanji (2009), development refers to either deliberate attempts at progress through outside intervention, or to the people's own efforts to improve their quality of life within unfolding processes of capitalist revolution. On his part, Zakaria (2011) sees development as a change process that brings about improvement or growth in the social, economic and political lives of individuals. Both Thomas and Zakaria believe that development involves planning. Development is also seen as the quality changes in the life of a people (Opoku, Kyeremeh & Odoom, 2014).

From the above conceptualisations, it is clear that Zakaria (2011) agrees with Bassand, as cited in Nemes (2005) and Edwards' (1999) contention that development ought to manifest itself in a variety of areas which concern people. However, the challenge with Zakaria's conception lies in his apparent failure to appreciate the fact that if development is expected to lead to an advancement in the lives of a people, then it ought to be properly thought through. To do this actually requires planning. Thus, in my view, Zakaria's attention to unplanned development needlessly reduces the enormity of responsibility which ought to be deliberately shouldered by stakeholders including the state, NGOs, community members, etc.

Goulet (1992) recognises the ambiguity in the concept and practice of development. Nonetheless, Goulet opines that development is used descriptively or normatively to depict a present condition or to project a desirable alternative. Besides, in an attempt to deepen the discussion on the concept of development, Stiglitz (1999) explains development as a transformation of society, a movement from traditional relations, traditional ways of thinking, and traditional methods of production to more modern ways. Development should be seen as a multi-dimensional process involving major changes in social structures, popular attitudes and a national condition of life from unsatisfactory to satisfactory (Servaes, 1999). Servaes further asserts that satisfaction means materially well to do and spiritually happy or content with what one or a country has got. Both Servaes (1999) and Goulet view development as a life materially rich. However, Goulet expands the definition of development to include the vision of a better life; institutionally more modern and technologically more efficient and an array of means to achieve that vision (Egyir, 2013). Beyond supporting Goulet (1992) and Servaes' (1999) positions, Sen (2012) conceives development as a process of expanding people's capabilities and freedoms. The capabilities include health, literacy, self-respect and political participation (Sen, 2012).

Ribeiro (2005, p. 11) sees development as "a state, process, well-being, progress, economic and human growth or ecological balance". Umebali (2006) defined development as involving multi-dimensional alterations in structures, attitude and institutions as well as the acceleration of economic growth; the reduction of inequality and eradication of absolute poverty. In effect, development

involves economic growth, equality or social justice component, and socio-economic transformations which are all on a self-sustaining basis (Umehali, 2006). One common position in Ribeiro (2005) and Umehali's (2006) definitions is the alteration in the economic growth of a people. However, whilst Ribeiro (2005) is emphatic that ecological balance is key in development, Umehali's (2006) is silent on that. Similarly, whilst Umehali (2006) maintains that equality and social justice are vital in any meaningful development, Ribeiro (2005) does not seem to have presented a strong position on these ingredients.

Moreover, development is explained as the process of "expanding the range of choices for the population. It deals with access to income, participation in decisions and enjoyment of human, economic and political liberties (UNDP, 1991). According to Coetzee (2001), development is largely concerned with human well-being as its ultimate end. It is less concerned with human wealth. Livelihood, security, and sustainability are critical to human well-being. Development also depends on what people are capable of doing and being (Coetzee, 2001). From the above, development is viewed far beyond human wealth. Although wealth creation is key in development, meaningful development ought to look at the broader well-being of people. It entails improved changes in the personal, social, political, economic, cultural and ecological aspects of a people.

Todaro and Smith (2006) contend that freedom is such an indispensable component of any purposeful development. Todaro and Smith (2006) further state that development is both physical reality and a state of mind in which society secures the means of obtaining a better life. Through this process, the society

ensures growth in wealth acquisition and mental enrichment and betterment of quality living conditions of all the people. Society uses various economic, social, cultural and institutional processes as the means to acquire better living conditions (Todaro & Smith, 2006).

Todaro and Smith's (2006) definition highlights three main issues. Firstly, development means increased availability and distribution of basic goods such as food, shelter, health and security required for human life-sustenance. Secondly, development means improvement in the standard of living with respect to social issues such as households and national income, education, and cultural values for the enhancement of individual and national material wellbeing and self-esteem. Thirdly, development aims at expanding the range of available individuals and national economic and social choices by freeing them from servitude as a result of certain forces such as ignorance, and human misery on one hand, and dependence from the people and national states on the other hand (Todaro & Smith, 2006).

From the above, it can be stated that through development, peoples' standard of living such as incomes, consumption, food, and medical services are raised. This helps to sustain the lives of people. Also, development is about the creation of conditions conducive for the development of peoples' self-esteem through the establishment of social, political and economic systems and institutions which facilitate human dignity, respect and self-worth. Also, development seeks to increase peoples' freedom to choose by widening the range of their choice variables such as goods and services for the enhancement of their dignity and self-worth. Besides, development is an all-encompassing process aimed at improving the

material and psychological well-being of a people. It is about the creation of conditions to qualitatively and quantitatively improve the social, economic, cultural, political, environmental and institutional well-being of a people in a more sustainable way. Development is about people and for the people. The people are the ones to best describe whether or not development has taken place in their lives. Once the citizens experience development, the nation automatically develops.

Understanding the concept of community development

As a historically constructed concept, community development has a multifaceted application. It deals with the physical, social, cultural, economic, political and environmental aspects of community. In practice, the concept has existed since the creation of societies where people lived a communal life (Marah, 2006). In contemporary history, community development can be traced back to the 1960s American war on poverty (Phillips & Pittman, 2009). The crusade aimed at solving social problems among people through neighbourhood housing development projects and citizen participation. In such manifestations, Bhattacharyya (2004) regards community development as a positive response to the historic process of decline of solidarity and civic participation. Community development can therefore be used to build social capital among people to overcome perceived 'common' social problems.

Community development is also embedded in the historical epoch of imperialism and colonialism of Britain. Within this period, it was also used as a method to meet social and economic development to meet the new political and social expectations of the working class after the Second World War (Tett, 2010).

Indeed, it was hoped that involving local people would encourage self-reliance, self-regulation and self-surveillance. In essence, it led to the promotion of popular education and solidarity (Tett, 2010).

In developing countries, particularly in Africa, community development can be traced back to the post-Second World War reconstruction with the measures aimed at enhancing the social and economic wellbeing of people (Phillips & Pittman, 2009). Here, community development was used both as a tool to reduce poverty, disease and ignorance and to repress anti-colonial struggles. In places such as Kenya, the colonial administration used community development as a veritable tool to control and channel the forces of anti-colonialism which dominated the political scene (Wallis, cited in Kamando, 2014). By the late 1950s, community development officers were mainly African who had worked as assistants. According to Kishindo (2001), community development in this region is mainly a rural phenomenon with focus on the creation of social infrastructure such as schools, health centres, roads, and bridges.

The situation in other places such as Tanzania was not much different. In Tanzania, the spirit of self-help practice was a vital part of community development drive; the practice upon which social services projects were based. As such, working and living together in the established *ujamaa* (collectively-run) villages were publicly promoted in order to simplify the provision of and access to social services. In the views of Collins, cited in Kamando (2014), the principles of rural development stipulated in the Arusha Declaration included values of self-help and self-reliant efforts which were expected to enhance community development. In

this way, community development became a government-led self-help model, rather than the more independent grassroots (bottom-up) model (Kamando, 2014).

In the context of Africa, self-help schemes have become the reference point in the construction of primary and secondary schools especially after independence as part of community development. However, self-help activities became community development when they are included in the government's community development framework (Kamando, 2014). Gilchrist (2009) contends that community development is about interacting with people to assist them to make changes in their own lives. Community development is a participatory intervention that promotes self-help and service delivery when the state is unable to satisfy community aspirations. Community development in this context encourages people to unite with a national spirit of collective action to build the newly independent nation, alongside government interventions (Gilchrist, 2009; Kamando, 2014).

In the views of Kishindo (2001), and Kamando (2014), community development is as a process by which the efforts of the people themselves are combined with those of government institutions to improve the socio-economic conditions of the community. It focuses on issues such as agriculture, education, health, water and sanitation, and micro-enterprise projects. Other issues are governance, human rights, employment creation, and environment (Kamando, 2014; Kishindo, 2001; Swastik, 2012). Mulhall (2014) defines community development as a process of collective action often initiated by the members of a community in order to deal with identified problems or needs in their community.

Phillips and Pittman (2009, p.6) conceive community development as both a 'process' and an 'outcome'. As a process, it focuses on developing and enhancing people's ability to take collective actions. As an outcome, it takes a collective action, which results in community improvement in physical, economic, cultural, social, environment, and political spheres. In order to ensure the realisation of community development aims, there is the need to fully utilise the existing knowledge or provide conditions for the people to collectively initiate and execute developmental activities that better benefit them (Kamando, 2014). Again, community development is viewed as the systematic process by which a group of people in a community mutually decides to initiate a planned intervention to change their own economic, social, cultural or environmental situation (Christenson & Robinson, cited in Beaulieu & Welborn, n.d.).

According to Gilchrist (2009), community development must be seen as a process of developing relationships with people, encouraging them to build relationships with each other to get things done and also educating them about the way they can best live together, and how they can best relate to ensure the full use of resources and power (p.101). In essence, community development practitioners are implored to create learning atmospheres that help local people to establish vital connections between their lives and the structures of society that shape the world they live in (Combat Poverty, cited in Mulhall, 2014; Ledwith, 2011). Thus, community development facilitates people empowerment for the attainment of collective goal. Empowerment by means of community development affects both individuals and the wider community network (Hautekeur, 2005).

concluded that people have capability to engage in critical discussion and negotiations especially when the issue is of relevance to their very existence (Combat Poverty, cited in Mulhall, 2014). In the opinion of Beck and Purcell (2010), such situations empower people and ensure self-reliant relationships among actors in the process of community development. To this end, Rifkin and Pridmore, as cited in Kamando (2014) call for the involvement of local people in planning, implementing and evaluating development interventions which affect their lives.

Approaches to community development

Development practitioners, researchers and stakeholders have come out with various approaches to community development. Differences in conceptualisation of approaches exist due to diversity of opinions and positions. This study discussed five main approaches to community development. They are the technical assistance, the conflict, the self-help approaches, needs-based approach, and the asset-based approach. The technical assistance approach involves the delivery of programmes or interventions to improve the lives of people. It relies on top-down understanding of dealing with obstacles confronting communities. This approach employs experts to design development services and deliver them in targeted areas. It focuses on the task to be performed, and it is assumed that the answers needed are scientific, which only the experts can provide. This approach offers very little room for local participation in the planning and design of the services since it sees the local citizens as consumers (Beaulieu & Welborn, n.d.).

The conflict approach focuses on deliberate use of confrontation by professional organisers to cause people to identify and address their common needs.

This approach has the redistribution of power as its goal. It also entails confronting the forces that impede efforts to solve community problems. It again fosters suspicion of those who have formal community power and assumes power is never given away, rather it has to be taken through conscious efforts of the affected people (Beaulieu & Welborn, n.d.). Moreover, the self-help approach is the approach which encourages people to work together for the attainment of common goal of the community. With this approach, development actors employ collaboration to provide important needs and services. They also lay emphases on the processes required to improve the community. Little emphasis is placed on the task or goal since a proper execution of the process will invariably lead to goal accomplishment. Here, the beneficiaries are the integral aspect of the processes of development, right from planning to the evaluation stage of the projects (Beaulieu & Welborn, n.d.).

On the other hand, the needs-based community development approach (NBCC) often looks at deficits in communities. With this approach, community members in such situations are defined and see themselves as deficient and incapable of taking charge of their own development within the community (Kamando, 2014; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003). According to Mathie and Cunningham (2003), an NBCD approach is a 'one-sided negative view', which compromises community capacity building. This approach is a conventional way of achieving community development where local people identify various problems or needs in their community and work out how to address them (Haines, 2009).

Usually, however, the local authorities identify myriad of issues and present them to the local community as problems to be fixed. In many poor communities

with high rates of unemployment, it is not uneasy to pinpoint problems or deficits. Kretzmann and McKnight, as cited in Kamando (2014), stated that even leadership at local levels is judged on how communities attract many resources, rather than how resources can help the community to become self-reliant. Leaders therefore utilise the severity of problems they face as the best means of attracting resources and funds for the development of their communities.

Despite its importance, the NBCD has some deficiencies. In support, according to Haines (2009), when local leaders, practitioners and community members focus on problems, they tend to concentrate only on what is missing in communities and ignore the causes of problems, as well as the community's own problem solving abilities and local assets that can be tapped for development (Kamando, 2014). Again, with NBCD, power tends to become hegemonic; whereby, the powerful decide the kind of interventions to make and the powerless implement them in the name of a 'participatory approach'. In addition, Mathie and Cunningham (2003) argue that government agencies and NGOs have the tendency to set the terms of community engagement which is often limited to consultation rather than truly participatory community decision-making.

Lastly, as an alternative approach, the assets-based community development approach (ABCD) was propounded to deal with the deficiencies inherent in NBCD, which exclusively focus on needs and problems. By nature, the ABCD approach is inclusive which recognises the capacities of local people and their associations in developing powerful communities (Kretzmann & McKnight, cited in Kamando, 2014). This approach focuses on the need to recognise and

exploit the existing assets sufficiently, in terms of a community's strengths and capacities; thereby, promoting citizen-led initiatives (Haines, 2009; Russell, 2009). This is done with the conscious awareness of the problems in the community. For instance, ABCD begins with the strengths and achievements of communities. By so doing, ABCD encourages people in the solving of overwhelming lists of endless problems and also builds positive perspectives on community (Haines, 2009).

According to Mathie and Cunningham (2003), the value of ABCD lies in the fact that people in communities have the capacities to organise and drive their own development processes by identifying and mobilising existing assets, thereby responding to and creating local economic opportunity. They however concede that often, these assets are unrecognized. Assets as defined by Haines (2009) are resources including any useful or valuable quality, person, or advantage. In effect, individuals, local institutions and organisations constitute valuable assets. ABCD maintains the idea that individuals within the community are potential assets to grow in the long-term (Haines, 2009; O'Leary, Burkett & Braithwaite, 2011).

Dongier, Domelen, Ostrom, Rizvi, Wakeman, Bebbington, Alkire, Esmail and Polski (2002) assert that in the course of ensuring community development, local people have to be treated 'genuinely' as both assets and partners. This is because, local people have various skills and knowledge which are very useful for effective community development. However, for local people to effectively build on existing capacities and work as proper development partners, they need empowerment. This explains why 'power re-allocation' to local communities has been seen as central to ABCD (Kamando, 2014; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003). In

fact, the local people have been denied the power of decision-making due to the influence of NBCD and other related top-down approaches to community development initiatives. ABCD seeks to ensure the reallocation and sharing of powers by all actors for effective community development.

Scholars such as Mathie and Cunningham (2003) have cautioned both governments and NGOs to avoid the temptation of using ABCD as a self-serving initiative; rather, they have to perform a role crucial to the social obligations inherent in government-citizen/community relationships. This has to go hand-in-hand with a clearly defined rules based on transparency, commitment and accountability. This is one sure way they can protect community resources from corruption by the powerful forces (Dongier *et al.*, 2002; Kamando, 2014).

Again, even though ABCD helps communities to plan activities with or without outside intervention (O'Leary *et al.*, 2011), outside help for a suffering community is imperative. Community development can be very effective when projects are led by citizens with outside agencies playing a supporting role (Russell, 2009). Citizen-led initiatives occur when the crusade for community development begins from inside with people's awareness of their strengths. Every rural community has resources or assets which when invested appropriately create new resources in the form of 'capital' (O'Leary *et al.*, 2011, p.7). In the context of ABCD, distinguishing tangible assets from intangible ones helps to make the intangible more visible (Haines, 2009; O'Leary *et al.*, 2011). Though intangible assets such as experiences, personal strengths, culture, traditions, and competencies seem vague, they are vital for the well-being of people and communities.

Haines (2009) has identified some seven forms of capitals; namely: physical or public, financial, social, human, natural or environment, cultural and political capitals. Communities can use human and social capitals to build other forms of capitals such as financial need for their development. Human capital refers to the skills, talents and knowledge possessed by community members. General education, experiences, skills, etc. are examples of human capital. However, the extent to which people's strengths, knowledge and skills are utilised has huge implications on viable community development (Haines, 2009; Kamando, 2014).

According to Haines (2009), physical or public capital includes roads, buildings and natural resources, schools, colleges and prisons which are often the property of the community. This type of capital relies heavily on the extent and capacity of human and social capital among the community members. Unlike physical capital, social capital involves the social relationships and connections within the community. Its ingredients include trust, norms and established social networks (Kamando, 2014). In community development, as Haines (2009) argues, social relationships are a critical element for a project's success, as they impact on mobilisation for community participation. Social capital is relevant in the context of ABCD in community development activities. ABCD pays much attention to the talents of individuals as well as the social capital inherent in the relationships, local association and informal networks (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).

Promoting gender equality in development

The concept of gender has several definitions and postulations due to the different contexts in which scholars and institutions tend to look at it. Gender does

not only includes both women and men; it also includes “more easily accommodating race, class, ethnicity, and male-female power relationships” (Snyder & Tadesse, 1995, p.14). According to Moser (1993) and Meena (1998), gender focuses on women in relation to men. Similarly, Pietila and Vickers (1994) argue that policies that target women only will never achieve the best results; the target should be gender equal and the inclusion of men and their roles in society and in relation to women.

Gender as a concept denotes the roles and responsibilities of men and women that are usually constructed by our families, our societies and our cultures. Gender also entails the expectations held about the characteristics, aptitudes and likely behaviours of both men and women in society or a given defined setting. The roles and expectations of gender are often learned. They can also change with the passage of time and they vary within and between cultural settings (UNESCO, 2003). Systems of social differentiation such as age, ethnicity, political status, class, physical and mental disability, among others, alter gender roles. The concept of gender is crucial as it shows how women’s subordination or men’s domination tends to become a social construct. Since gender is not biologically pre-determined, such subordination or domination can be changed or ended (UNESCO, 2003).

Additionally, gender refers to those socially defined differences. Societies themselves define certain behaviours and qualities as being masculine or feminine and identify certain activities as being appropriate for men or women in a specific society. What is women’s task in one society or community might be men’s in another? Particular gender behaviours are based on and influenced by the cultural,

legal, social, economic and political settings in which people live. Also, regarding family relationships, gender behaviours are also deeply rooted and defined. Due to gender differences, women and men have different experiences in life and their knowledge, perspective and priorities are not the same (Wassenaar, 2006).

Gender also refers to a set of roles and responsibilities associated with being a girl or a boy, a woman or a man and in some cultures, a third or other gender based on societal constructions and creations. Gender roles vary greatly in different societies, cultures and historical periods. They also depend also on socio-economic factors such as age, education, marriage, ethnicity and religion (Kabeer, 2003a; Meena, 1998; Whitworth, 1994). A clear understanding of gender issues requires an understanding of gender analysis. Gender analysis refers to the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated information. Men and women both perform different roles in families and societies. Differences in role performance lead to women and men having different experiences, knowledge, talents and needs (UNESCO, 2003).

Gender analysis examines these differences so that policies, programmes and projects can identify and meet the different needs of men and women. It also promotes the pre-meditated use of distinct knowledge and skills possessed by men and women (UNESCO, 2003). The gender gap is the difference between women and men in terms of their levels of participation, access to resources, rights, power and influence, remuneration and benefits in any area (ILO, 2007).

The concept of gender equality implies equal enjoyment of rights by men and women. Gender roles are the sets of behaviour, roles and responsibilities attributed to women and men respectively by society which are reinforced at the

various levels of the society through its political and educational institutions and systems, employment patterns, norms and values, and the family (Kabeer, 2003; Wassenaar, 2006). The state or condition that affords women and men equal enjoyment of human rights, socially valued goods, opportunities and resources, allowing both sexes the same opportunities and potential to contribute to, and benefit from, all spheres of society (economic, political, social, and cultural) is gender equality (UNESCO, 2003; Wassenaar, 2006).

Gender equality also denotes that women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and for contributing to and benefiting from, economic, social, cultural and political development. It refers to the equality regarded by society with respect to the similarities and the differences that exist between men and women and the roles they play. It is based on men and women being full partners in their home, the community and the society (UNESCO, 2003). According to Kabeer (2003), discussions on gender as social relations shows that gender is not the only inequality in women's lives and that, women are not the only people who are victims of inequalities. Gender inequality relates to class, race and other social issues, all of which are interwoven (Kabeer, 2003a). Gender balance refers to the state of having the same (or a sufficient) number of women and men's representation and participation in all areas of interest (Wassenaar, 2006).

Gender equality occurs when people are free to make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes such that, their various contributions and needs are valued equally. It is a term used in human rights treaties such as The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

(Council for International Development, 2012). It is believed that a sector-wide shift to the use of the term 'gender equity' stands the risk of invalidating existing gender rights agreements and voiding claims against human rights violations (Council for International Development, 2012).

In fact, the issue of gender has gained so much importance in development discourses for the past decades. Gender issues are central to sustainable development (Macdonald, 1994). Its importance has led to the concept of Gender and Development (GAD). As an approach, GAD focuses on promoting interventions to address unequal gender relations which prevents inequitable development and which often locks women out of full participation. It aims at having both women and men participate, make decisions and share benefits. However, to achieve this requires a long-term commitment (UNESCO, 2003).

Inequality in gender manifests in a variety of ways including political power and representation, economic participation and opportunities, educational attainment, sexual and domestic violence, and differences in legal status and entitlements. Inequalities in political power and representation occur when men and women are often under-represented in formal decision-making structures, including governments, community councils, and policy-making institutions. With regard to economic participation and opportunities, inequalities occur in most countries; women and men are distributed differently across sectors. Women often receive lower wages for similar work, and are often on low-paid jobs and insecure work (part-time, temporary, etc.) and are likely to have less access than men with respect to productive assets such as education, skills, property and credit (UNESCO, 2003).

In educational attainment, inequalities happen when men or women have low literacy rate, low level of enrolment in primary, secondary and tertiary education. Additionally, regarding sexual and domestic violence, inequality manifests itself in situations when women tend to be victims more often in a form a domestic violence by woman's intimate partner, sexual exploitation through trafficking and sex trade, in wars by an enemy army as a weapon of attempted 'ethnic cleansing', etc. (UNESCO, 2003).

Differences in legal status and entitlements also constitute another form of inequality. Several instances exist where equal rights to personal status, security, land, inheritance and employment opportunities are denied women or men by law or practice (UNESCO, 2003). Lopez-Claros and Zahidi (2005) have identified gender gap indicators which need attention. They include economic participation, economic opportunity, and political empowerment. Others are educational attainment, and health and well-being. Economic participation refers to male and female unemployment levels, levels of economic activity, and remuneration for equal work. Economic opportunity relates to duration of maternity leave, number of women in managerial positions, availability of government-provided childcare, wage inequalities between men and women (Lopez-Claros & Zahidi, 2005).

Political empowerment refers to the number of female appointees, share of seats in parliament, women holding senior legislative and managerial positions, number of years a female has been head of state whereas educational attainment occurs in literacy rates, enrolment rates for primary, secondary and tertiary education, and average years of schooling. Finally, health and wellbeing concerns

with effectiveness of governments' efforts to reduce poverty and inequality, adolescent fertility rate, percentage of births attended by skilled health staff, as well as the maternal and infant mortality rates (Lopez-Claros & Zahidi, 2005).

A number of strategies can be adopted to promote gender equality in development. For instance, according to World Bank (2011a), the challenge of elite capture often prompts donor control of targeting and active gender-equality policies. It is recognised that if elites control the decisions over which community interventions to sponsor, the overall programme is likely to miss its objective to meet the needs of the poor and under-served (World Bank, 2011a). Gender equality strategies must therefore improve project effectiveness and outcomes. One most successful CDD programmes for women are those which include women's quotas or other mandates for women's inclusion. Women, being at a disadvantage, only benefit from projects when it is mandated in the project and accountability is enforced (Mansuri & Rao, 2012). As a strategy, women's participation in development must be meaningful and not superficial (Lubbock & Carloni, 2008).

Again, in order to promote gender equality in development, a number of measures need to be put in place by stakeholders. They include incorporating gender equality objectives into development activities, programmes or projects; using participatory strategies to involve both women and men in design and implementation of services, ensuring there is adequate time and resources for fieldwork during design and also, ensuring that gender strategies are practical and based on quality gender analysis (USAID, 1999; World Bank, 2002a). Other strategies to promote gender equality in development include supporting women's

organisations to work towards gender equality, strengthening women's leadership capacity using participatory strategies, providing women with interventions; as well as working with men to promote equality for women (Sida, 2000; USAID, 1999).

More so, to address and ensure gender equality there is the need for stakeholders to implement women-only groups to discuss, propose and manage community development projects (Ahmed, Euler, Khattak, Morton & Tariq, 2009). The success of this strategy has been echoed by Fonchingong (2013), although it is not the only vehicle for women's inclusion (Nadelman, n.d.). It is believed that having single-sex groups can work by increasing women's skills, bargaining power and respect for them in the community. Thus, men and women can be allowed to form their own groups to discuss and propose projects to address their peculiar needs (Ahmed *et al.*, 2009, p.40). The projects suggested by such groups should be considered and adopted by the development partners. This will ensure that men and women's concerns are heard and met (Browne, 2014; World Bank, 2011b).

Haider (2012) has come out with some recommendations on gender equality and empowerment from CDD programmes. They include linking economic enterprises with training and capacity building; providing quotas for women's participation in meetings and decision-making bodies; organizing separate meetings for women; and holding meetings at appropriate times of day; and encouraging women to bring their children during such meetings. Other strategies are inviting women by name rather than inviting a household representative; seating women in the front rows of meetings; using female staff and facilitators as role

models; and undertaking gender analysis activities for men and women in the planning stages of development interventions (Browne, 2014).

Additionally, the Council for International Development (2012) has identified some ways by which NGOs can promote gender equality in their work. For example, NGOs need to endorse human rights treaties, such as CEDAW, which promote gender equity and gender equality and also conduct the organisation's work in harmony with the treaty principles. Also, NGOs are expected to consider the gender-specific implications of all their policies and programmes. Again, NGOs are to communicate and cooperate with other NGOs, parliamentary bodies and grassroots organisations to work in coordination toward gender equality. Moreover, through offering of grassroots supports, education and involvement of wider society in cooperation and discussion around gender issues, NGOs can promote gender equality in their operations (Council for International Development, 2012).

Sustaining development interventions

As a concept, sustainability defies a single definition. Two of the foundational challenges of sustainability are the lack of a standard definition for the term and the variety of synonyms that are used in the literature. However, much of the literature on sustainability remains theoretical, with little guidance on how to sustain project intervention delivery, implementation strategies, and outcomes (Moore, Mascarenhas, Bain & Straus, 2017). In fact, the use of different terms leads to a conceptual jumble in understanding sustainability. This tends to hinder the ability of researchers to clearly measure the concept, ensure growth within the field and also avoid duplication of efforts (Moore *et al.*, 2017).

In their development of a research agenda in sustainability, Proctor Luke, Calhoun, McMillen, Brownson and McCrary (2015) advocated for the need to bring clarity in the term “sustainability”. Commonly used alternative terms for sustainability include maintenance, continuation, institutionalisation, routinization, and durability. These definitional challenges have likely arisen because multiple disciplines including health systems, education, social sciences, agriculture, among others, are addressing similar problems (Moore *et al.*, 2017).

The term “sustainability” is defined as our common future. Sustainable development is seen as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability for future generations to meet their own needs (Brundtland, cited in Nalubiri, 2010). This definition largely focuses on environment and natural science. Also, the key issues in the definition are social and economic forms of sustainability. Schneider and Libercier, as cited in Mammah (2006), contended that, in the context of participatory development, sustainability means that the beneficiaries reach a stage of self-reliance which enables them to pursue their current activities and to cope with changing circumstances with a relatively high degree of autonomy. To achieve sustainability therefore requires resources, know-how, skills, vision, self-confidence, and enabling socio-political and economic relationships.

In community development framework, the concept of sustainability is insufficiently operationalised. Sustainability in community development appears unclear and is seen by several scholars as vague and ambiguous. At an ideological level the concept is seen as lacking a clear understanding, consensus, objective and

standard. The term has lacked analytical tools, practical methods and an adequate theoretical framework to operationalise it (Michael, 2004; Pezzey & Toman, 2002). This has degenerated into a kind of propaganda; sustainability in community work is usually rhetoric but not demonstrated. There is a wide view that institutions set forth to promote sustainability and by so doing, have themselves become the greatest hindrance to sustainability (Heston & Fernando, cited in Nalubiri, 2010).

In the views of Aarons, Hurlburt and Horwitz (2011), sustainability refers to the provision of interventions that lead to behaviour changes in the lives of the beneficiaries. In this sense, the key indicator of sustainability is behaviour change and that any intervention that fails to ensure change in behaviour cannot be said to be sustainable. The definition by Aarons *et al.* (2011) has been supported by Doyle, Howe, Woodcock, Myron, Phekoo and McNicholas (2013) who posit that behaviour change is fundamental in any sustainability analysis.

Also, Buchanan, Fitzgerald, Ketley, Gollop, Jones and Lamont (2005) define sustainability as the situation whereby an intervention is provided over a period of time which leads to behavior change and which continues to deliver more benefits to the beneficiaries. With this definition, it is clear that issues such as duration of projects, behaviour change and the continued benefits accrued from the projects are crucial in measuring sustainability. The view of Buchanan *et al.* (2005) has been corroborated by Schneider and Libercier, as cited in Mammah (2006) and Chambers, Glasgow and Stange (2013). On their work on the paradox of sustainability, Chambers *et al.* (2013) contend that duration of projects and the delivery of multiple benefits from the projects are crucial in their sustainability.

However, Schneider and Libercier argued that sustainability does not suggest that a given activity can continue forever without change. Also, unlike Buchanan *et al.* (2005), Chambers *et al.* (2013) proposed that continuation of the project and the adaptation of practices are vital in sustainability.

Although the conceptual intention of sustainability has been criticised in community development, real community change and poverty reduction will be realised only when social interventions continuously address community needs (Michael, 2004). It is therefore vital to understand the concept of sustainability and its usage in community development. Sustainability in community development should entail interventions that improve human wellbeing while the lessons, impacts and benefits from these interventions continue to be disseminated and diffused in community for longer years (Odoom, Mensah, Opoku & Amoabeng, 2018b; Pezzey & Toman, 2002; Stockmann, cited in Michael, 2004).

In the views of Odigbo and Adediran (2004), sustainable development is human focused, long-term and enduring. It is not a quick fix. Government has a role in building and financing an enduring political, social, cultural and environmental structures to promote local development; through the encouragement and recognition of the roles of cooperatives, NGOs, and private initiatives as their grass root appeals drive sustainable local development. On their part, Johnson, Hays, Center and Daley (2004) assert that in measuring whether or not a project has been sustainable, one needs to pay attention to some indicators. They include continuation of the projects, adaptation of practices from the projects,

and the continued benefits derived from the projects. This position has largely been supported by Stirman, Kimberly, Cook, Calloway, Castro and Charns (2011).

However, in terms of departure, Striman et al (2011) maintain that duration of the projects, which Johnson *et al.* (2004) lost sight of, is an important component of sustainability. Fleiszer, Semenic, Ritchie, Richer and Denis (2015) agree with Stirman (2011) that duration, continuation of the projects, adaptation of practices from the projects, and the continued benefits derived from the projects are important elements of sustainability. The issue of behaviour change as highlighted by Buchanan *et al.* (2005) and Chambers *et al.* (2013) is missing in the views of Johnson *et al.* (2004), Stirman *et al.* (2011) and Fleiszer *et al.* (2015).

In their review of 209 articles on sustainability, Moore *et al.* (2017) arrived at five core issues that ought to underpin the concept. They are time, continued delivery, behaviour change, evolution/adaptation, and continued benefits. These five issues are vital criteria in the measurement of sustainability. First, it is believed that for a programme or project to be regarded as sustainable, it should be implemented over a period of time. Second, it is also recognised that the continued delivery of a project is important in appreciating its sustainability. Third, for a project or intervention to be seen as sustainable, it should lead to a change in behaviour. By this, it is believed that beneficiaries should show evidence of behaviour change after going through the interventions. Fourth, a project is said to be sustainable if it helps people to adapt to the new ways of doing things. As such, a mere change in behavior without a clear evidence of adaptation derails sustainability. Finally, there is the need for the continued multiplication of benefits

derived from the project (Moore *et al.*, 2017). In measuring the sustainability of the Cocoa Life Project interventions, the indicators provided by Moore *et al.* (2017) were depended upon.

A crucial factor in sustaining development projects is local participation. It is believed that through effective community participation, development projects can be sustained (Admassu *et al.*, 2002). The extent of community support determines whether a project becomes established or not, how quick and successfully it consolidates, and how it responds and adapts to meet changing needs (USAID, 2009). Involving local communities in projects starts at the planning stage, when decisions are being made about the type of project required (Fowler, 2000). Local participation is a means to empower local people to do their own analysis, take command, and gain confidence to make their own decisions (Mammah, 2006). In the views of Bastian *et al.*, as cited in Nalubiri (2010), participation offers the development of self-confidence, pride, creativity, responsibility and cooperation. Such development will provide a process whereby people learn to take charge of their own lives and find solutions to their own problems (Gaventa, 2005).

Moreover, power and empowerment are crucial elements of project sustainability (Michael, 2004). Power at all levels should evoke ability to set their own priorities, define own agenda, and exert influence on national and international development of community even in the face of opposition. This kind of power and freedom provides a conducive environment through which NGOs can be innovative, take risks, be willing to experiment, invest heavily in research and

spend more time working with communities (Donais, 2009; Michael, 2004). To achieve sustainability, an NGO must develop responsive, efficient and secure projects which have lasting impact on beneficiaries (Nalubiri, 2010). Empowered individuals and communities are likely to exercise their influence on processes which affect them in setting their priorities and agendas (Michael, 2004). This ensures a sense of potency demonstrated in terms of self-confidence and an increased sense of personal or group potential.

Again, to ensure sustainability of development projects requires local ownership. According to Williams (2003), failure by communities and other stakeholders to own projects have pushed community projects into immense financial burdens which hinders sustainability. Ownership entails a change from dependency to community responsibility, strengthening local structures, and securing a pool of local expertise, and suitable leading mechanisms (Junne & Verkoren, 2005). Ownership refers to the process of possessing, accessing, influencing and having the right to use initiatives collectively as a community. It is also about the control, management and maintenance of assets used and produced in the process of development (KRC, cited in Nalubiri, 2010). Donais *et al.*, as cited in Nalubiri (2010) see ownership as the extent to which local actors control, implement and manage the process of political, social and economic development.

Furthermore, building on local people's own initiatives and knowledge enables the NGO to play a facilitative and supportive role and in the long run withdraws from direct support (Friedmann, 1992). NGOs need to prepare themselves accordingly in order to create the capability of responding to and

incorporating local initiatives, rather than imposing their own initiatives on them (Friedmann, 1992). If interventions originate from community innovations, it is likely that their benefits will be owned, and attract local contribution and commitment to sustaining them. It is therefore assumed that if they are augmented by NGOs, the benefits will be sustained even if the NGO stops funding them (Friedmann, 1992; Nalubiri, 2010).

More so, according to Uphoff, as cited in Nalubiri (2010), if a particular project intervention is able to generate more benefits and profits, then the project is sustainable. This is attributed to the flexibility and innovativity that beneficiaries have; to expand these interventions. The benefit-cost ratio should not be understood only in the short run but also, in the long run when more stakeholders join to perpetuate the benefits (Donais, 2009; Nalubiri, 2010).

Nonetheless, Khan and Hare, as cited in Adam, Soliman and Haroun (2015) pointed out that, for NGO development projects to be sustainable they have to develop a sound institutional base, a strong programmatic approach and sufficient funds. NGOs must establish internal systems, structure and work culture which promote strong leadership and positive organisational image (Adam *et al.*, 2015). NGOs need to also foster the belief that people are willing to support products and services they find valuable and facilitate the development plans for sustainability.

Transparency and accountability are also important measures to adopt to ensure sustainability of development projects. Transparency can be defined as the avoidance of a black-box methodology and disclosure of the policies, decisions, activities and the subsequent environmental and societal impact of these. It also

entails a clear, precise and complete portrayal of policies, decisions, activities and their overall impact (Hemphill, 2013). Transparency allows stakeholders to evaluate and address any issues which may arise; thereby, contributing to an adherence to sustainable practices (Silvius & Schipper, 2014). On the other hand, accountability means that, an organisation owes the impacts of its actions, decisions and policies to the environment and society (Silvius & Schipper, 2014). To ensure project sustainability, NGOs should ensure transparency, accountable and equity by practising what they preach in line with good governance (Lekorwe, 1999).

Finally, one factor which influences sustainability of development interventions is coordination among development actors. Nalubiri (2010) buttresses this point when she submits that coordination among development actors is indispensable in project sustainability. For instance, the state needs to ensure a favourable environment for NGO operations and policies. The Private sector is required to offer economic empowerment through market linkages, and mediating between supply and demand forces. On the other hand, donor and NGOs need to complement these processes through financial investments, stakeholder participation, local ownership and empowerment whilst community members ensure checks and balances and promote favourable practices. Thus, NGOs need to ensure that there is effective coordination with other stakeholders (Nalubiri, 2010).

Understanding the concept of livelihood

As a concept, livelihood is widely used in contemporary writings on poverty and rural development. Nonetheless, the meaning of livelihood often appears elusive due to different definitions being encountered within different contexts

(Ellis, 2000). Livelihood is defined as the set of activities, assets and the access that jointly determine the living standard gained by an individual or household (Ellis, 1998). At the individual level, livelihood refers to the ability of that individual to obtain the basic necessities in life, which are: food, water, shelter and clothing. In other words, all forms of activities involved in finding food, searching for water, shelter, clothing and all necessities required for human survival at individual and household level constitute a livelihood.

A popular definition is the one offered by Chambers and Conway (1992). A livelihood, according to the authors, entails the capabilities, assets (including both material and social assets) and activities required for a means of living. Beyond this, a livelihood has briefly been defined as a combination of the resources used and the activities undertaken in order to make a living (DFID, 2000). According to Scoones (2009), livelihoods is a mobile and flexible term, which can be related to locales (rural or urban livelihoods), occupations (farming, pastoral or fishing livelihoods), social difference (gendered, age-defined livelihoods), directions (livelihood pathways, trajectories), dynamic patterns (sustainable or resilient livelihoods) and much more. In essence, people make their living by combining a complex web of activities and interactions.

Activities such as cultivation, pastoralists, fisherman, livestock farming, hunting and gathering, shop-keeping, and artisanal work are all livelihood-based activities. Other activities including wage labour, trading and hawking, providing services in transport and other available services, fetching and carrying, bakery, and basket weaving (Mphande, 2016). About 90 percent of rural households are

involved in farming activities for their living (Davis *et al.*, 2010a, b; Mphande, 2016). In Africa, about 70 percent of household income, especially in rural communities comes from farming activities, while in Asia and Latin America, 50 percent of the income is from farming activities (Davis *et al.*, 2010a, b). In many rural communities, small-scale farming, fishing, raising livestock and non-farm activities are among the common livelihoods that people survive on as a source of income (Mphande, 2016).

In essence, livelihoods perspectives are drawn based on insights from the broad literature even though, with some focus on occupation based activities; wage employment based activities; and non-agriculture based activities (including business, salaried profession, transportation; and other self-employment activities in non-agricultural sectors. Households tend to choose one or a combination of these available or other options to maximise utility that is subject to their capabilities and access to assets. Indeed, household livelihood choices depend on a large array of exogenous variables including economic, social and infrastructure related factors. These and other factors may constitute a resource or incentive upon which livelihood choices can be defined. Within the livelihoods approach, resources are referred to as 'assets' or 'capitals' (Ellis & Allison, 2004).

Farrington, Ramasut and Walker (2002) argue that to really appreciate livelihood, one has to have a full understanding of what is called livelihood assets. The authors further explain livelihood assets as the resources in which people draw from in order to carry out their livelihood strategies (Farrington *et al.*, 2002). Indeed, household members combine their capabilities, skills and knowledge with

the different resources at their disposal to create activities that will enable them to achieve the best possible livelihood for themselves. Messer and Townsley, as cited in Rahman & Shaheen (2014), conceive that, everything that goes towards creating that livelihood can be thought of as a livelihood asset.

Livelihood assets mainly include human capital in the form of age, education, gender, health status, household size, dependency ratio and leadership potential, etc. (Bezemer & Lerman, 2003; Rahman & Shaheen, 2014). There is also the physical capital which comprises the basic infrastructure and producer goods, needed to support livelihoods (DFID, 1999); and social capital which refers to networks and connectedness. Livelihood assets also entail financial capital as in savings, credit, and remittances from family members; and natural capital which is the natural resource stock (Bezemer & Lerman, 2003; CARE, 2001; Ellis, 2000).

Again, policies and institutions which crucially influence household's access to livelihood assets also constitute important aspects of livelihood framework (DFID, 2000). Institutions are the social cement which connect stakeholders to have access to capitals of various kinds through the means of exercising power and so delineate the gateways through which they pass on the route to positive or negative (livelihood) adaptation (Scoones, 1998). In fact, socio-economic characteristics of the households such as level of education, sex, age, experience, the value of household assets, farm operation size, and the value of livestock resources affect livelihood choices especially in the rural areas (Rahman & Shaheen, 2014). Thus, socio economic characteristics influence the livelihood strategies implemented to bring about improvement in the lives of people.

Livelihood strategies

According to DFID (1999), the term "Livelihood strategies" refers to the range and combination of activities and choices that people make in order to achieve their livelihood goals such as productive activities, investment strategies, reproductive choices, etc. Similarly, Ellis (2000) defines livelihood strategies as consisting of activities that generate the means of household survival. They are the well-planned activities that men and women engage in to build their livelihoods (Ellis, 2000). They are those activities designed and undertaken by households to provide and improve their means of living. These strategies are unique and diverse at every level. As it has been reviewed from Brown, Stephens, Okuro, Murithi and Barrette (2006), there are different methods and means that characterise household livelihood strategies in the literature.

A critical element in any livelihood strategy is livelihood diversification. Livelihood diversification is defined as the attempts by individuals and households to find new ways to raise incomes and reduce environmental risk. It differs sharply by the degree of freedom of choice (to diversify or not), and the reversibility of the outcome. Livelihood diversification entails both on- and off-farm activities which people undertake to generate income that is additional to that which is obtained from the main household agricultural activities. This is done through the production of other agricultural and non-agricultural goods and services, the sale of waged labour, or self-employment in small firms (Carter, 1997).

According to Ellis (1997), livelihood diversification refers to the process by which families create a diverse group of activities and social support capabilities in

their struggle for survival and in order to improve their standards of living. Ellis (1997) argues that livelihood diversification is not necessarily synonymous to income diversification. Livelihood diversification through non-agricultural activities is also very important. In many instances, non-agricultural activities have been analysed using economic models (Dercon & Krishnan, 1996) and household food security approaches (Davies, 1996b; Drinkwater & McEwan, 1994).

As a result of the variations in ability to access the basic needs of life, there are people who are rich and are able to acquire all their basic necessities without difficulty. There are those that are poor and lack one or more of their basic necessities. The livelihood of the poor is exhausting as they find themselves in a state of poverty and lack basic necessities (Mphande, 2016). The rich have a wider choice of livelihoods than the poor. This is due to the fact that with more resources, one is able to afford education or training which can add value to their skills; thereby, widening their livelihood capabilities which is not the case for those without resources. Chambers and Conway developed the concept of sustainable livelihood as a strategy to ensure poverty eradication (Mphande, 2016).

Robert Chambers and Gordon Conway defined sustainable livelihood as, A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living: a livelihood is sustainable which can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation and which contributes net benefits to other

livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the short and long term (Chambers & Conway, cited in Mphande, 2016).

The livelihoods framework provides a comprehensive although, complex approach to appreciating how people make a living. It is believed that this approach can be used as a guide to a range of issues which are significant for livelihoods (Kanji, MacGregor & Tacoli, 2005; Solesbury, 2003). In measuring sustainable livelihood, the five livelihood assets namely human capital, physical capital, social capital, financial capital and natural capital are considered. These assets play an important role in survival strategies both in rural and urban livelihoods.

The sustainable livelihood approach underscores the need for understanding the context within which people live, the assets available for them, livelihood strategies they follow in the face of existing policies and institutions, and livelihood outcomes they intend to achieve (DFID, 2000). The issues which ought to engage the attention of researchers and practitioners in any analysis of livelihood are the particular context, the kind of livelihood resources that need to be combined and the kind of livelihood strategies required to build livelihoods capacity. It is also important to pay attention to the expected outcomes or impact of such strategies on the overall livelihoods of the beneficiaries (Rahman & Shaheen, 2014; Scoones, 1998). Context here refers to the policies, politics, history, agro ecology and socio-economic conditions that are imperative to the success of livelihood strategies.

As already indicated, agriculture-based activities constitute the bulk of livelihoods in most developing nations. Although, agriculture is considered the main source of livelihood especially in rural areas of most developing countries,

the transformative potential of non-agricultural livelihood options has been identified over the past three decades (Davis, 2004; Deininger & Olinde, 2001; Smith, Gordon, Meadows & Zwick, 2001). Rural households diversify their livelihood activities to generate income in order to better cope with adverse factors and events that affect agriculture (Barrett, Reardon & Webb, 2001; Ellis, 2000; Ellis & Freeman, 2004; Rahman & Shaheen, 2014). It is believed that agricultural livelihood is the preferred category for households with cropland.

Also, wage employment and non-agricultural livelihoods are also influenced by land size (Rahman & Shaheen, 2014). There are negative signs of total land area on the livelihood choices with farming as the base category. It is very possible that people tend to rent out their lands to tenants so as to engage themselves in non-agricultural activities that generate more income (Hatlebakk, 2012). Nonetheless, Hatlebakk (2012) believes that for households with land, agriculture is the only more likely livelihood choice. In the views of Bryceson (1996), three interrelated approaches underpin livelihood diversification. They are non-agricultural activities (or non-farm/off-farm activities), non-agricultural employment and de-agrarianisation. These three interrelated approaches focus on the way in which sub-Saharan Africa is steadily becoming less rural in character (Bryceson, 1996). All these activities are part of livelihood diversification required in defining the sources of living of people.

Non-agricultural livelihoods are commonly found in regions with developed infrastructure. In other words, people tend to diversify their livelihoods with the presence of developed rural infrastructure. According to Barrett *et al.*

(2001), participation in non-farm activities decreases with distance from urban areas. This suggests that the importance of physical market access for livelihood choice is crucial. Figure 1 presents the sustainable livelihood framework. In support of Barrett *et al.* (2001), Abdulai and CroleRees (2001) submit that households in remote areas are less likely to participate in the non-farm livelihood activities. Micro enterprises have been identified as an important part of non-agricultural based livelihood activities. Many of the livelihood diversification activities of rural people, especially in Africa, involve micro-enterprises. This shows the importance of micro-enterprises in generating employment and income in many rural communities of Africa (Buckley, 1997; Mphande, 2016).

As already noted, the strategies households adopt when choosing among livelihood options are determined by a range of socio-economic factors (Eneyew, 2012; Tesfaye, Roos, Campbell & Bohlin, 2011). Even though, literature is growing greatly because of policy relevance, there is still the need to expand the scope of studies. Also, the complexity of analysis of rural livelihood choices is attributed to the fact that households engage in a variety of economic activities (Ellis & Freeman, 2004; Rahman & Shaheen, 2014). Education (either the head or member's highest education) considerably influences non-agricultural livelihood choices in addition to agricultural livelihoods. For instance, whilst educated households have access to high paid jobs, uneducated households have to contend with low paid wage employment as expected. Again, Barrett *et al.* (2001) contend that households with low level of education mostly find it very difficult to overcome the skills barrier for taking up non-farm livelihoods (Rahman & Shaheen, 2014).

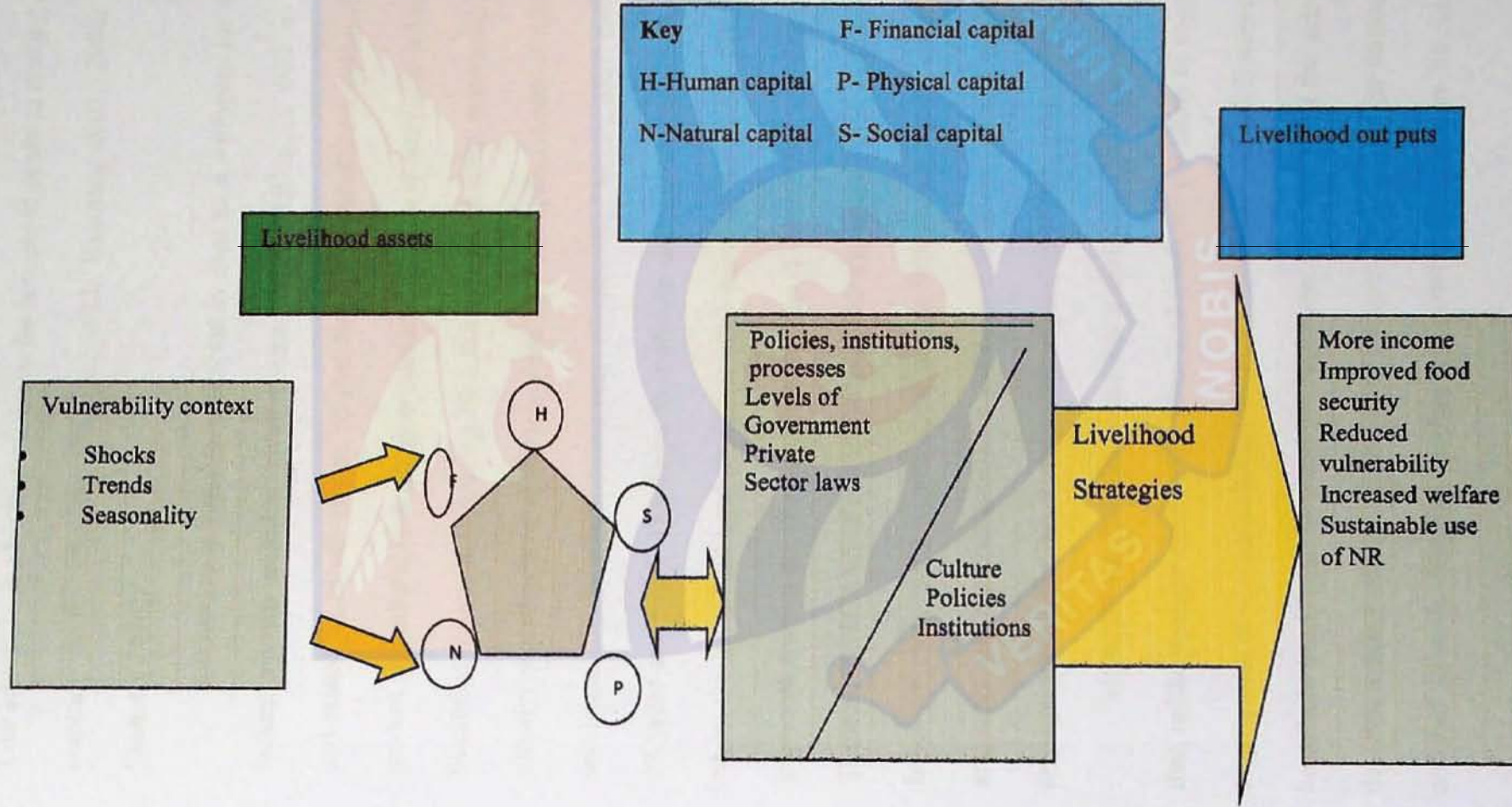


Figure 1: Sustainable Livelihoods Framework

Source: Adopted from Eneyew and Bekele (n.d.)

Low education is a binding constraint for household decision making as it is fairly common in the literature (Eneyew, 2012; Rahman, 2003; 2008; Rahman & Shaheen, 2014).

Besides, as a variable, education is used as a surrogate for a number of factors. At the technical level, access to information as well as capacity to understand technical aspects related to chosen livelihood categories, such as modern agricultural technology or specialised business activities is likely to affect livelihood choice. In measuring the influence of education, two variables are vital, namely; education level of the household head (completed years of schooling), and maximum education (completed years of schooling) among adult members (aged 19 years and over). This helps to centralise decision making in the household; where the household head as well as other educated members of the family play important roles in the choice among livelihood choices and strategies (Rahman & Shaheen, 2014). Abdulai and CroleRees (2001) submitted that, educated household heads are more likely to participate in non-farm sector. Again, casual livelihood and wage and business categories are equivalent to one's wage employment and non-agricultural livelihood categories, respectively (Hatlebakk, 2012).

Moreover, age influences livelihood decisions and strategies. It is believed that, unlike younger heads, older household heads are not likely to engage in wage employment or non-agricultural livelihoods (Hatlebakk, 2012). Besides, age of the household head is incorporated to account for the maturity of the head in his/her decision-making ability. According to Rahman (2003), younger farmers are more oriented towards adopting modern agricultural technologies as well as non-

agricultural livelihoods (Hatlebakk, 2012; Rahman & Shaheen, 2014). Rahman and Shaheen added that gender of household heads influences livelihood strategies.

It is very clear from the above discussions that the concept of livelihood lends itself to myriad of interpretations and conceptualisations. This is attributed to the different settings and perspectives scholars, institutions and disciplines tend to view the concept. This diversity in terms of conceptualisation affects livelihood strategies and outcomes in a given context. For the purpose of this study, livelihood activities were considered based on activities such as farming, agro-processing, petty trade, artisans, wage employment; and other self-employment-based activities.

Determining livelihood outcomes

Livelihood outcomes are the attainments or products of livelihood strategies (Scoones, 1998). According to OXFAM, as cited in Livelihoods Centre Report (n. d.), livelihood effects or impacts refer to the lasting results representing change in household conditions. The results can be positive or negative, intended or unintended, short or long-term changes or results that are brought about directly or indirectly by the kind of activities people engage in for their livelihoods. As such, through the various interventions, organisations provide beneficiaries with a number of livelihood activities which are expected to bring some positive effects or outcomes in their livelihood. According to Livelihoods Centre Report (n. d.), it has been very difficult to have clear indicators to measure livelihood programmes. The lack of clarity on agreed set of indicators makes it very difficult to facilitate the design of quality projects and assessment of their impact on people.

In an attempt to contribute to the measurement of livelihood outcomes, Scoones (1998) argues that livelihood outcome manifests itself in the form of increased income (e.g. cash), increased well-being (e.g. non material goods, like self-esteem, health status, access to services, sense of inclusion), and reduced vulnerability (e.g. better resilience through increase in asset status). It is also seen in improved food security (e.g. increase in financial capital in order to buy food) and sustainable use of natural resources [e.g. appropriate property rights] (Scoones, 1998). Jaspars, O'Callaghan and Stites (2007) also list that increased income, food security, wellbeing and dignity, reduced vulnerability, personal survival, and the sustainable use of natural resources as key aspects of livelihood goals.

According to Livelihoods Centre Report (n. d.), factors such as scope of survival or livelihood protection thresholds, access to productive inputs and services, the diversification and improvement of sources of income and the protection of livelihoods and natural resources are vital livelihood indicators. Other indicators include promotion activities and change in the structures and processes that regulate and enable improvement of livelihoods development. Livelihoods Report Centre further developed some key indicators for measuring the livelihood outcomes ranging from increased diversification of income sources, increased access to productive assets, increased productivity and improved food security and nutrition. Other indicators are: increased knowledge related to livelihood activities, increased access to livelihood-support services and markets, improved natural resources management and improvement of policies, regulations and rights for livelihood development (FICR, as cited in Livelihoods Report Centre, n. d.).

For the purpose of this study, the impact of interventions on livelihoods was considered using indicators such as livelihood-support services, knowledge related to livelihood activities, diversification of income sources, level of productivity, access to market, income level, savings and credit facilities. Other issues included are household assets, productive assets, food security, sense of inclusion, capacity to access basic services, and health status of people.

Livelihoods of rural communities in Ghana

Livelihoods everywhere cover various activities. It covers the wide and diverse range of things people do, comprising the capabilities, assets and activities required for a means of living. It is much more than a job. In most cases, resources found within one's immediate environment will offer a livelihood or the means of making a living. This is very typical in most rural communities in Ghana (Aduse-Poku *et al.*, 2003). Rural livelihood choices that are common in Ghana include farming (crop production and animal rearing.), gathering, hunting, trading, craft making, and public or civil service. In Ghana, the food crop sector largely sustains the livelihoods of rural households. With this, subsistence farming dominates, despite the exposure of many rural households to adverse contingencies (Butler & Mazur, 2007; Kyeremeh, 2016). Even though crop production is very common in Ghana, the issue of inadequate marketing of the produce is a problem for most communities, especially in rural areas (Aduse-Poku *et al.*, 2003).

Again, animals are mainly reared on free range in the rural areas for subsistence, however, some people engage in it commercially (Kyeremeh, 2016). A key factor undermining commercial animal production is the high initial capital

for putting up structures, acquisition of veterinary products and high cost of feed to maintain the animals. Fishing is also an important source of livelihood for people who live very close to water sources and those who have ponds constructed to produce fish for subsistence and commercial purposes. However, with the unending danger posed by illegal mining, fishing has become unsustainable due to water pollution (Aduse-Poku *et al.*, 2003).

Besides, gathering is a seasonal livelihood activity in Ghana. This is so because most of the items collected do not appear throughout the year. These products are usually gathered in the forest. Examples are snails, mushrooms, canes, raffia and leafy vegetables. They are particularly essential sources of livelihood among the rural poor who have access to few resources apart from the forest. Women, children, youth, and men engage in gathering depending on the product being gathered. Most of these forest products are however becoming extinct or unavailable due to bushfires and its continuous exploitation without any attempt to regenerate them (Aduse-Poku *et al.*, 2003; Kyeremeh, 2016).

Hunting is another form of livelihood, undertaken mainly by males. Here, small rodents are hunted during the day and bigger animals hunted during the night. Also, grasscutter domestication and snail rearing constitute a source of livelihoods for rural households in Ghana (Kyeremeh, 2016). Women are often not involved. Indeed, this livelihood relies on the continued existence of suitable wildlife habitats. Trading used to be a very popular livelihood activity among women in most rural economies. Items traded in Ghana include food, crops, local and imported products, with women and the youth doing most of the selling (Aduse-Poku *et al.*, 2003).

However, there is a change in trend now with more men getting involved in trading (Aduse-Poku *et al.*, 2003). In some villages and towns cottage industries such as pottery, woodcarving, soap making, basket weaving, cloth making, wood industry, palm oil extraction and food processing e.g. corn or rice mill are found. Some rural dwellers who have some form of formal training and are employed in the public services also engage in farm based and commercial activities as a source of income (Aduse-Poku *et al.*, 2003).

The challenge most rural households in Ghana face is that even though agriculture is their predominant livelihood activity, productivity and income from farming are often low due to a number of factors. They include poor market for agricultural produce, diseases and pests, poor technology and inadequate inputs. It is also stated that land ownership and tenure problems compound the problems most rural households face with regard to farming and food security (Kyeremeh, 2016). In addition, Stephen (2001) asserts that households engaged in farming as their sole livelihood source experience great risks in their income due to poor harvest and market failure.

Socio economic issues, livelihood choices and development interventions

Development interventions generally ought to be pursued with a conscious understanding of myriad of socio- economic factors and livelihood strategies. There is an interplay of socio-economic factors and livelihood strategies and their influence on development programmes. As such, development agencies including NGOs need to constantly ensure a proper balance between their programmes and socio- economic factors and livelihood strategies. For instance, it is believed that

the increased awareness regarding gender integration in development is crucial to ensure that projects achieve the intended goals and objectives (World Bank, 2011a; b).

In addition, it is believed that by increasing access to livelihood opportunities, jobs and income, development interventions tend to enhance women's economic empowerment. This is possible if the choices regarding development infrastructure, assets, and income generating activities reflect the needs of both men and women. Women's increased ability to access social services and participation in community decisions potentially enhance their confidence and autonomy and positively impact social relationships and gender norms. Again, as women are included in decision-making processes development interventions can increase women's political empowerment. It enables them to get a voice in the political space, ensures accountability and political participation within the community and at various levels of government (Khatun & Roy, 2012).

Again, socio-economic factors such as gender, age and family size affect livelihood choices and development interventions (Imoh *et al.*, 2009; Mphande, 2016). On distribution of labour, often times tasks between men and women vary considerably among villages and do not always correspond to the conventional impression. In some villages, men rather than women are responsible for washing and weaving (Khatun & Roy, 2012). Age differences determine the distribution of labour within individual households. Young people are generally more energetic than older folks. Thus, the types of livelihoods that can be acquired by these two age groups will differ (Mphande, 2016).

Also, big families need more resources for sustenance than smaller ones. Families with bigger sizes will engage in as many livelihood choices as possible to gain the required resources to support their families (Khatun & Roy, 2012). If each member of such a household is able to obtain a skill, it increases their income level. This means that there is a high probability that such families will do well. However, generally, while a small family with a steady income will be able to invest in skills and training that can allow for diversification, big families will not (Imoh et al., 2009; Mphande, 2016; Nwachukwu, 2011). Haq, Vanwing and Hens (2010) posited that larger household size hinders participation in development programmes. It is believed that agriculture largely constitutes the source of livelihood many rural communities due to the fact that in such communities, family size tends to be large which can be exploited in enhancing agricultural activities. In essence, theoretically, labour supply tends to affect people's choices in livelihood activities.

More so, level of education affects livelihoods and development decisions. Education creates a literate society (Khatun & Roy, 2012). If a person is able to read and write, he or she has a higher chance of choosing an appropriate field of work or further skills training in order to advance his or her livelihood (Mphande, 2016). In fact, much information for skills and application that can sustain and offer technological advances in livelihoods is in writing and if one is not able to read and write the chances of advancing are low. Again, Oladipo and Adekunle (2010) observed that people with higher educational attainment are usually faster adopters of innovation. Studies have shown that educational attainment helps people to participate and adjust to new trends to improve the society (Rogers, 2003; Schaefer,

2004). Education opens avenues that can help people access credit and loans for start-up capital and or extra capital to advance a particular livelihood (Khatun & Roy, 2012; Mphande, 2016). It enables people to expand networking and social relations that help to facilitate access to positions of influence and power in the society (Willims, 1997). Wall, Pettibone and Kesley (2005) argued that socio-economic status has a great impact on an individual's level of participation and that educational level significantly affects community commitment.

Another socio-economic element that affects livelihood choices and development interventions is asset (Khatun & Roy, 2012). The availability of assets in a household enables families to invest in new activities that will better the life of the household. Assets serve as collaterals to obtain credits to boost capital and start up new businesses and income generating activities. A poor asset base limits families' ability to diversify and or acquire loans or credit (Mphande, 2016).

Gainful employment is a basic requirement for steady income and sustenance of life. Oladipo and Adekunle (2010) linked employment or occupation and educational level influences to attitudes towards participating in community development programmes. Employment status and occupational types are linked to participating in educational programmes and that people with professional or managerial occupations participate more than those in the sales or support occupations (Creighton & Hudson, 2002). Occupation status aids in voluntary participation and helps to improve participants' self-esteem (Bigio, 1999).

Furthermore, income level affects livelihood choices and strategies (Davids, Maphunye & Theron, 2005). The higher the level of income, the better the chances

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one has to create opportunities that could earn them more money. The income level influences the kind of attention paid to skill investments. When people have the needed skills, it helps them to obtain opportunities to improve their income level and their status (Ellis, 1996). However, with low level of income, it will be difficult to reinvest and also pursue personal development. This tends to hinder one's level of income. In effect, the poor make very little income due to inadequate opportunities to improve their status such as developing their skills and knowledge base (Ellis, 1996). Kruger, Rogers, Hummer, Leclere and Bondhule (2003) asserted that income is positively related to grass root participation. Also, socio economic features affect the ability of household leaders to access information, higher income and assets, higher sense of democracy and public interest (Chesoh, 2010). Zbinden and Lee (2005) submit that the income level of households influences their participation in development programmes.

Membership of social groups is an important socio-economic indicator for livelihood choices. Being able to join social groups within the community is one way of creating social networks. These networks are beneficial in obtaining knowledge, skills and behaviours that can be used to expand livelihood choices. Social clubs are powerful ways of obtaining credit loans and serve as training grounds for skills which are vital in livelihood diversification and community improvement in rural areas (Khatun & Roy, 2012; Mphande, 2016).

It is believed that implementers of development interventions need to accord priority to agricultural activities, micro enterprise activities, environment, infrastructure and activities of value to people and communities (Mphande, 2016;

Rahman & Shaheen, 2014). However, it is argued that due to the complex nature of development, in determining the type of activities to be implemented and supported by development organisations, agriculture should no longer be perceived as the sole official activity of farmers. Several other activities need to be considered in order to ensure meaningful development programmes. Other socio-economic factors that affect livelihoods and development programmes include availability of land, savings, and access to credits (Khatun & Roy, 2012; Mphande, 2016).

The concept of NGOs

NGOs have come to be accepted as significant actors on the landscape of development. NGOs are noted for delivery of basic services to people in need and undertaking advocacy and public campaigns for positive change in society. Their activities are also focused on community improvement, poverty alleviation, capacity building and community empowerment. NGOs also offer more specialised services including democracy building, human rights work, emergency response, cultural preservation, conflict resolution, environmental activism, policy analysis, research and information provision (Lane, 1995; Lewis & Kanji, 2009).

Although NGOs' presence can be felt almost everywhere, the challenge of understanding the phenomenon of NGOs remains a startlingly difficult one. This can be ascribed to the fact that NGOs are an extremely diverse group of organisations. This phenomenon makes meaningful generalisation of NGOs a very difficult one. NGOs undertake very different functions and take different shapes and forms within and across different countries and contexts. Again, one reason is that 'NGO' as an analytical grouping is complex, often unclear and difficult to

grasp. Though NGOs are regarded in literature as independent organisations without the control and influence of government nor driven by the profit motive, there are some NGOs that receive huge funds from governments. Some NGOs also resemble extremely professionalised private organisations with strong corporate identities (Lewis & Kanji, 2009).

The term NGO is widely used to encapsulate a number of organisations. The term is often used interchangeably with not-for-profit, voluntary and civil society organisations. Sometimes, the use of these terms is a reflection of the different kinds of NGOs in operation within a given context (Lewis & Kanji, 2009; Moyo, 2000). Also, the use of these terms is a consequence of different cultures and histories through which NGOs emerged. For instance, in places such as the UK the term “voluntary organisation:” or “charity” is often used as a result of a long tradition of volunteering and voluntary work informed by Christian values and the development of charity law. However, in the United States, the term “Non-profit organisation” is commonly used due to the increasing recognition on the market of economy. The usage of the term in the United States is also due to appreciation for reward non-commercial, and non-profit-making motives of the operations of NGOs (Lewis & Kanji, 2009).

In essence, NGOs’ conceptualisation may be occasioned by their diverse activities ranging from relief organisations to service provisioning. For example, Christian Aid, CARE International, Save the Children, environmental conservations groups such as Friends of the Earth, wildlife conservation groups and self-help groups such as funeral associations, welfare organisations, farmers and

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fishermen's associations, etc. are all classified as NGOs (Lane, 1995; Mawdsley, Townsend, Porter & Oakley, 2002; Moyo, 2000). Again, the structure, funding and values influence the usage and classification of NGOs. Based on their structure, NGOs may be large or small, formal or informal, bureaucratic or flexible. With respect to funding, some NGOs are externally funded, while others depend on locally mobilised resources. Some NGOs may be well resourced and affluent, while others may be poorly resourced. There are NGOs which rely on high caliber professionals, while others depend on volunteers and supporters. In terms of values, NGOs are driven by a range of motivations which may be secular or faith-based (Lewis & Kanji, 2009).

The influence of NGOs can be traced back into the late 1940s, immediately after the Second World War (Desai, 2002b; Winter, 2001). The evolution of NGOs came at a time that some civil society organisations (CSOs) saw that they could alleviate the suffering of those affected by the war in Europe and other parts of the world; and assist countries that were experiencing economic slowdown as a result of the war. Scholars such as Long (2001), Desai (2002b), Francis (2002), and Nelson (2002) have argued that the activities of NGOs have grown beyond only welfare provisioning, especially since the late 1980s and early 1990s. In the developing world, some areas where government resources cannot reach as a result of inadequate funds and the donor support is not forthcoming, the assistance from NGOs has been extremely important.

NGOs are typically self-governing, not-for-profit or voluntary development organisations aimed at ensuring improvement in the life of disadvantaged people

or organisations not benefiting directly from government development initiatives (Desai, 2002a; Long, 2002; Vakil, 1997). In some cases, they work on behalf of a government, though not under direct control of any government department. Their agenda are based on the philosophical orientation, underpinning the establishment of the organisation. Long (2002) identified some of the activities of NGOs, including; service delivery to poor individuals or communities, support work such as capacity building, technical assistance and funding to communities, advocacy of the neglected, the marginalised and women amongst others.

In some countries, NGOs work on behalf of governments in some kind of service delivery, while others may distance themselves and run their activities that are parallel to those of the state (Clark, 2002; Desai, 2002b; Nelson, 2002; Thomas & Allen, 2000). However, some critics have argued that although NGOs are considered as effective organisations that deliver public services, the operations of some NGOs rather lead to social and political marginalisation because they oppose some government's plans and policies (Desai, 2002b; Francis, 2002). From the above, it can be stated that NGOs are voluntary, not-for-profit and non-state organisations whose aim is to provide services to improve the conditions of the vulnerable and the disadvantaged groups or individuals in society.

Forming typologies of NGOs

Several views have been expressed by scholars, researchers and organisations regarding the various ways of forming typologies of NGOs. For instance, Lane (1995) considered the types of NGOs from four main angles. They are welfare and relief, modernisation, community development and institution

building NGOs. The relief and welfare NGOs channel their efforts to assisting people affected by wars, drought, earthquakes, flood and other natural disasters and in conflict situations. The remaining three categories have been categorized under the term "Development NGOs". These NGOs mainly help promote and improve upon the lives of people through community and institutional development practices; empowerment and capacity building programmes which enable people to meet their own development aspirations and give them a way to improve their livelihoods. One such NGOs in Ghana is the WVI (Lane, 1995).

In the opinion of Cousins (1991), NGOs are put into two main categories based on their orientation; and level of operation. In terms of orientation, Cousins (1991) considered NGOs based on the type of activities they undertake. The activities may include human rights, environmental, or development works. On the other hand, NGOs' level of operation shows the scale at which they work. Some operate at the local, regional, national or international level or a combination of these levels (Vakil, 1997). Also, based on level of operation, Cousins (1991) listed community based, city-wide, national and international NGOs. This categorisation helps people to clearly identify the coverage of the NGOs' operations.

Furthermore, based on orientation, Cousins (1991) identified four types of NGOs, namely charitable, service, participatory and empowering NGOs. Charitable NGOs' activities are directed towards addressing the needs of the poor. They include distribution of food, clothing or medicine, provision of housing, transport, and schools. Service orientation NGOs also engage in activities including the provision of health, family planning or education services. Participatory NGOs

are viewed based on the self-help projects they provide where local people are actively involved in planning and implementation of projects (Cousins, 1991). The local people contribute cash, tools, land, materials and labour. Also, empowering NGOs seek to help poor people develop a better understanding of the social, political and economic factors affecting their lives, and to reinforce their awareness of their own capacity to control their lives (Dugle, Akanbang & Salakpi, 2015).

In an effort to reinforce the debate on typology of NGOs, Willetts (2002) agrees with Cousins (1991) on the issue of operational NGOs. Willetts further explained operational NGOs as NGOs which seek to “achieve small-scale change directly through projects”. Unlike Cousins (1991), Willetts (2002) believed that there also advocacy NGOs which aim at achieving large-scale change facilitated indirectly through influence of the political systems. Based on Willetts’ categorization, it can be said that operational NGOs implement projects while advocacy NGOs are concerned with holding demonstrations or campaigns to defend or promote a specific cause. In support of Willetts (2002), Mostashari (2005) argued that the difference between operational and advocacy NGOs lies in the choice between small-scale change achieved directly through projects and large-scale change promoted indirectly through political system and campaigns.

Other scholars have also categorised NGOs based on a number of factors and positions. For example, Farrington and Lewis, and Paul, as cited in Dugle *et al.* (2015) have typified NGOs based on factors such as autonomy, location, and scope of activities. Thus, the degree of autonomy, location, and scope of activities of NGOs is very crucial in categorizing NGOs. Others have classified NGOs based on

their aims and functions, as in welfare NGOs, development NGOs, service NGOs, environmental NGOs, advocacy NGOs, human rights NGOs, women's NGOs, and religious NGOs (Gallin, 1999; Tvedt, 1998). Also, in terms of their legal status, NGOs are put into four categories namely, unincorporated and voluntary association; trusts, charities and foundations; companies not for profit; and entities registered under special NGOs (Dugle *et al.*, 2015; Stillman, 2007).

There are also the international NGOs and local NGOs. The term "International Non-Governmental Organisation (INGO)" refers to NGOs whose operations are funded through bilateral, multilateral, or private-sector donors (Gyamfi, 2010; Helen, Cunt & Sujata, 2005; Lewis & Kanji, 2009). Chuku, as cited in Gyamfi (2010), defines International NGOs as NGOs whose policies and systems are managed and controlled from their various headquarters often outside the country of operation. International NGOs also called Northern NGOs. The term "Local Non-Governmental Organisation (LNGO)" also refers to local indigenous organisations including national NGOs, Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs), and Community-Based Organisations (CBOs). These local indigenous organisations provide interventions and activities often within the functional categories of advocacy and service delivery (Helen *et al.*, 2005).

Local NGOs are owned, managed and controlled by the nationals. They are formed based on the initiatives of the local people, rather than outside forces or donors. They are formed in response to the myriad of development challenges confronting their country (Turary, 2002). The driving force of these NGOs is the desire to identify certain felt needs or concerns and fashion out local solutions to

them. They are non-profit making, not affiliated to political parties, and generally concern themselves with working to ensure development and welfare of the community (Lewis & Kanji, 2009; Turary, 2002). Variations in community needs and diversity in NGOs' development agenda tend to increase the paradoxes of NGOs operating in the world today (Dugle *et al.*, 2015; Turary, 2002).

Despite the variations in community needs and priorities, NGOs have and continue to demonstrate the ability to meet the development needs of citizens. NGOs seek to address the gaps created by governments' inability to deliver development services especially to the disadvantaged persons in society (Brass, 2011). Nonetheless, it is believed that a reasonable number of NGOs do not have clear development objectives. This raises doubts about their motivations and capacity in working to address the plights of the people they claim to serve (Kamat, 2002; Mayo, 2000).

Unlike Helen *et al.* (2005), Mayo (2000) and Hudock (1999) distinguish CBOs from southern NGOs. Whilst southern NGOs operate at the national and regional levels, CBOs operate at the grassroot and village levels (Hudock, 1999; Mayo, 2000). Other NGOs focus on rural community development. The main aim of these NGOs is to ensure the development of rural communities (Ellis, 2000). Other features which inform the categorisation of NGOs are how they are cost effective, adaptable to the local environment, very innovative and understand the local situation. As a result, government departments, and international development institutions seek the help of NGOs to spend resources on their behalf (Desai, 2002b; Thomas & Allen, 2000). This form of trust strengthens the synergy between

northern NGOs and southern or community-based NGOs in the execution of development programmes and interventions.

In fact, the over reliance of some governments on NGOs to spend money on their behalf gives such NGOs influence on government policy formulation and implementation. NGOs are the vehicle through which policies of development intervention could be implemented at the grassroots level (Farrington *et al.*, 1993). The flexible nature of the policies and programmes of NGOs, their ability to work directly with the rural poor and within rural and risky conditions, make them preferable to government agencies (Lane, 1995; Long, 2001).

However, some critics believe that NGOs are just gap-filling organisations (Desai, 2002b; Thomas & Allen, 2000) which can follow non-conventional policies and operate in areas that most government departments find it difficult to operate. NGOs would not offer quick answer to a scale of global poverty or even alleviate it satisfactorily to ensure relative social stability (Pearce, 2000; 2001). In their conclusion, Thomas and Allen (2000) posit that despite the hype about the work of NGOs towards the improvement of the lives of the rural poor, the neglected and the marginalised, NGOs will never change the world. This conclusion raises questions on the views many people have about the activities and impacts of NGOs as development partners. Characteristics of NGOs are also looked at from service provision, intermediary, advocacy, and relief (Hudock, 1999; Mayo, 2000) as shown in Table 1 with their main activities.

Table 1: Characteristics of NGOs and their performance

Characteristic of NGOs	Activities
Service	Providers They provide training services, capacity building, consultancy, research, etc. at the community level, and engage in service delivery. for the needy, such as refugees, flood victims, etc.
Intermediary	They liaise with funding agencies and assist grassroots organisations in securing funds and other assistance for development activities.
Advocacy	They serve as advocates for the underprivileged, disadvantaged, widows, street children, etc.
Relief	They provide relief supplies to communities or countries affected by flood, earth quakes, famine, disease outbreaks, etc. Technical assistance in a form of training, fundraising strategies, proposal writing, to make local organisations to run their own activities and make them self-reliant.

Source: Hudock (1999), Moyo (2000)

NGOs' interventions and operational areas

Interventions are the vehicles for bringing about the desired identified changes in society. Interventions are sets of well-designed and structured processes and activities intended to achieve a certain result. As a term, interventions may refer to a set of activities organised within a project, programme to influence a particular consequence (Belcher & Palenberg, 2018). Rossi and Freeman (1993) defined intervention as any programme or other planned effort designed to produce changes in a target population. Intervention programme can be national in nature; initiated as government policies or locally by district assemblies and it can also be initiated by other actors such as NGOs. In the field of international development, the term "development interventions" or simply put, interventions is often used to describe a set of activities of a project or programme in which selected groups or individuals

engage in to ensure improvement in their lives. Thus, intervening entails planning and implementing various change-inducing action programmes. In essence, the need for change is the justification for the provision of development interventions (Belcher & Palenberg, 2018; Rossi & Freeman, 1993).

In the NGO world, intervention means any social or economic programme designed and implemented to bring about change or improvement in the life of a group of people who have been identified as living with one kind of life difficulty or the other (Gyamfi, 2010; Hulme & Edwards, 1995). The purpose of any intervention is essentially to bring relief to the people or communities. Thus, interventions WVG implemented in the WED under the Cocoa Life Project were meant to bring about desirable changes in the lives of the community members and the communities themselves.

Over the last decade, there has been a dramatic growth in the number of NGOs involved in development aid in both developed and developing countries. The total amount of public funds being spent through NGOs has grown dramatically and the proportion of development aid going through NGOs, relative to bilateral or multilateral agencies, has also increased (Gyamfi, 2010; Pearce, 2001). NGOs provide several interventions to fill the void in rural development. Although operating with limited funds of their own, NGOs make it possible for rural communities to construct their needed projects at very minimal costs.

NGO perform a crucial role in rural development in Ghana. There is no region in the country that has not benefitted from the activities of NGOs. Thus, the NGOs have been a strong force in rural development in Ghana. Through their

activities, several villages have been able to erect school buildings and health clinics, construct drainage systems, village dams, roads, undertake agricultural programmes, women empowerment, payment of school fees, granting loans, microfinance, provision of mosquito net, payment of apprentice fees, organize health education programmes and disseminate information and knowledge to the rural masses (Osei-Hwedie, cited in Egyir, 2013).

In their effort to improve living conditions of the poor and the disadvantaged in society, international and local NGOs undertake development services in various areas (Hulme & Edwards, 1995). For example, NGOs such as WVI, CRS and Action Aid provide education and literacy campaign to many communities. They also establish schools to help reduce the pressure on government institutions and replace schools under trees (Egyir, 2013). Also, regarding community projects such as the provision of potable water, road construction and housing construction NGOs including Oxfam, WVG, VSO and Plan Ghana have been quite instrumental. Again, for emergency relief and rehabilitation programmes, Red Cross Society, Oxfam, WVG, and Christian Aid play a major role including provision of food to famine affected countries and medical treatment of war, victims and refugees (Fowler, 1988; WVG, 2015).

NGOs have also been providing health and medical care. For instance, they build hospitals and provide health services and inputs. Examples of such NGOs are Lions Club, ADRA, WVI, and Plan International. These NGOs also provide a lot of assistance to children. The assistance includes paying of school fees, providing them with educational materials, training them to acquire leadership and

employable skills (Fowler, 1988). Moreover, Center for the Development of People (CEDEP), Action Aid, ADRA, Plan Ghana and WVI are examples of NGOs which play a huge role in the development of rural areas of Ghana (Egyir, 2013; Gyamfi, 2010). They do this by providing or helping the rural folks to provide for themselves, certain social services or facilities like; electricity, hospital, schools and potable water. Also, they assist them in income generating activities like cassava processing, bead making, leather works and soap making. Their aim is to help eliminate the gap between the urban and the rural areas in terms of the conditions of life (Adjei, Agyemang & Afriyie, 2012; Egyir, 2013; Fowler, 1988).

The role of NGOs in contemporary development practice

NGOs currently play diverse roles within the global contemporary development practice. NGOs' roles in the current development framework have been grouped mainly into three: service delivery, catalysis and partnership. Though these roles are distinct, one particular NGO can combine more than one role within its activities. A clear case in point is that, an NGO may carry out service delivery in order to build trust in a local community, which will create a platform for community advocacy or campaign. Also, an NGO may form a partnership with a corporation in order to try to further its aims of campaigning for socially responsible business (Lewis & Kanji, 2009). Delivering services by NGOs especially in developing countries are vital because, many people face a situation in which a wide range of vital basic services are unavailable or of poor quality (Carroll, 1992).

NGO service provision has seen a speedy growth due to the decreasing role for governments as direct service providers within the neoliberal agenda (Lewis &

Kanji, 2009). The incentive for an NGO to actively provide services varies. Sometimes, NGOs do so in order to meet previously unmet needs, while at other times NGOs are contracted by state agencies or donors to take over the delivery of services which were formerly provided by government. Admittedly, not all NGOs are into direct provision of services to local communities. For example, some NGOs aim to tackle poverty indirectly by providing other forms of services, such as giving training to government agencies, other NGOs, etc. (Lewis & Kanji, 2009).

Some donors have argued for a stronger role for NGOs in service delivery work because they are believed to possess a set of distinctive organizational capacities and comparative advantages, such as flexibility, commitment and cost-effectiveness. However, in practice, the diversity of NGOs as organisations means that such generalizations are often difficult to sustain (Lewis & Kanji, 2009). While some NGOs have proved themselves to be highly effective service providers in certain sectors and contexts, others are found to perform poorly. NGO service provision is often associated with problems of quality control, low sustainability, poor coordination, etc. (Lewis & Kanji, 2009; Robinson & White, 1997).

In the late 1970s and early 1980s conservative governments in Britain, America and many other countries afterwards, reduced the role of government in direct service provision along with the privatisation of public sector (Hulme & Edwards, 1997). This has not only led to ethical benefits but also financial ones. Since NGOs promote and utilise volunteerism, they can be more cost-effective than government (Hulme & Edwards, 1997; Sarfo, 2013). One popular service provided by NGOs in Ghana is microfinance. NGOs are non-formal providers of microcredit

loans to address poverty and hunger (Adjei & Arun, 2009). Sinapi Aba Trust (SAT) is one of the largest NGOs providing microfinance services in Ghana which gives opportunities for enterprise development and income generation to the economically disadvantaged in society, to transform their lives. Services offered by the SAT include loans, savings deposits, client welfare (insurance) scheme and non-financial services including entrepreneurial skills, with women constituting about 92 percent of the organisation's client base. However, these services do not often reach the very poor people in society (Adjei & Arun, 2009; Egyir, 2013).

The second key role NGOs play in development is serving as a catalyst. A catalyst is an agent which causes change. One of the ways by which this role is performed is that, NGOs aim at bringing about change through advocacy and seeking influence; another is that NGOs aim to innovate and to apply new solutions to development problems (Lewis & Kanji, 2009). Jenkins, as cited in Lewis and Kanji (2009), defines advocacy as any attempt which seeks to influence the decisions of any institutional elite in the collective interest of society. Lindenberg and Bryant (2001) assert that, advocacy work involves going beyond implementing programmes to help those in need, to actually take up and defend the causes of others and to speak out to the public on another's behalf. Lindenberg and Bryant explained further that in the performance of duties by NGO, advocacy focuses on clearly speaking out for policy change and action that will address the core causes of development and relief problems confronting society. An example of the advocacy is the Survival International which is an international NGO based in the United Kingdom that supported the Basarwa in Botswana in their refusal to depart

from the Central Kgalagardi Game Reserve (Lekorwe & Mpabanga, 2007). Also, in Ghana, the Ghana Coalition of NGOs in Water and Sanitation, supported by Water Aid in 2003, established a dialogue with the government to create a national water policy (Lane, 2005).

Many development NGOs play the role of 'policy entrepreneurs' which seeks to influence and change policy in innovative ways in support of development objectives (Najam, 1999). Najam conceptualises policy process as one involving three stages: agenda setting, policy development and policy implementation. Agenda setting occurs when the issues and priorities for action are agreed upon by stakeholders whereas, policy development concerns the choices among possible alternatives and options are made. Finally, at the stage of *policy implementation*, specific actions are undertaken in order to translate policies into practice. At any of these stages, Najam believes that NGOs ably influence decisions and events within the policy process. It will suffice to indicate that, NGO advocacy is not limited to influencing governments and donors, but is also increasingly concerned about influencing the private sector (Lewis & Kanji, 2009). In his study, Edwards (1993) found that, the results of NGO advocacy can be very disappointing; owing to the lack of a clear strategy, weak alliances, poor alternative measures and the dilemmas of their relationships with donors. Advocacy by development NGOs may involve organised meetings, public hearings, taking legal action, petitions, making public statements, organising seminars or public hearings, monitoring, etc. (Park, 2002).

Another example of the NGO catalyst role is that of innovation. An ability to innovate is often claimed as a special quality, or even as an area of comparative

advantage of NGOs over especially government organisations (Bebbington *et al.*, cited in Lewis & Kanji, 2009). Clark (1991) found evidence that NGOs' staff considerably experiment, adapt and try out new approaches to problem solving in communities. NGOs also encourage individuals to develop their own ideas, experiment and take risks to address their own needs. It is argued that NGO capacities to innovate are outcomes of the quality of the relationships that an NGO can construct (Biggs & Neame, cited in Lewis & Kanji, 2009; Chambers, 1992).

Again, NGOs act as watchdogs and sometimes as a whistle-blower if certain policies remain unimplemented or are poorly executed, as well as scanning the policy horizon for events and activities which could obstruct future policy formulation and implementation (Najam, 1999). Lodge and Wilson (2006) contend that NGOs act as watchdogs though they lack legal backing to do so.

A critical aspect of contemporary development policy is the creation of partnerships aimed at making more efficient, the use of scarce resources, increasing institutional sustainability and improving the quality of an NGO's interactions. Partnership may be defined as an agreed relationship based on a set of links between two or more agencies within a project or programme, often involving a division of roles and responsibilities, a sharing of risks and the pursuit of joint objectives (Lewis & Kanji, 2009). Partnership is also defined as an arrangement which draws together the resources of specified partners to create a capacity and to act based on a defined set of goals (Edwards *et al.*, cited in Kamando, 2014). Clear roles help to ensure effective partnerships (Lewis & Kanji, 2009).

Some NGOs enter into new organisational relationships so as to gain access to external resources which are conditional on partnership. Others may be part of partnerships without adequately considering the broader implications. For instance, new roles for NGO staff may have to be created in order to properly actualise the demands of the partnership. Management systems may also be required to monitor the progress of new activities within the partnership (Farrington & Bebbington, cited in Lewis & Kanji, 2009). Although there may be consensus among the partners, unclear roles and responsibilities create conflicts (Lewis, cited Lewis & Kanji, 2009). Partners may also incur additional costs such as new lines of communications, logistics, new roles for certain staff and the need to share information with other agencies (Concern's Partnership Policy Document, 2007).

NGO activities and grassroots empowerment

The concept of "Empowerment" is mostly concerned with the "collective mobilisation of marginalised groups against the disempowering activities of both the state and the market". Empowerment aims at institutional reforms to encourage state authorities and other powerful forces in society to open up spaces for marginalised groups to participate in the development process (Mohan & Stokke, 2010, p.248). Again, empowerment processes are supposed to create avenues for the marginalised in society to enhance their capabilities so as to deal with the problems affecting their lives and transform the various kinds of power relations embedded in the social structure (VeneKlasen *et al.*, 2004). According to the World Bank (2002), empowerment is the process of enhancing "the assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control and hold

accountable institutions that affect their lives (World Bank, 2002, p.11). By implication, empowerment can be achieved through improving people's freedom and access to essential capabilities such as information, education, better health care, accountability and improved access to local resources (Sen, 2012).

Moreover, empowerment connotes four kinds of power namely social, economic, political and psychological powers. This means that in order to attain empowerment all of them must be mobilised (Friedmann, 1992). Social power involves the ability of an individual to access the basic needs of life while economic power is the ability to attain economic growth. On the other hand, political power refers to the ability to participate in decision making process whereas psychological power is an individual's command over his/her thoughts exhibited through self-confidence. Empowerment is therefore about enhancing the ability of individuals to maximize the benefits of the opportunities available to them without any fear or hindrance from external forces (Friedmann, 1992).

Achieving empowerment is not a simple task, since the empowerment process seeks to alter existing and entrenched power dynamics in society. It is an agonizing and difficult process. These powerful influences include visible forms of power and hidden forces of power. Visible forms of power include government laws and policies that inhibit and discriminate against the participation of vulnerable and marginalized groups (VeneKlasen *et al.*, 2004). On other hand, hidden forces of power are usually silent powers which often favour the privileged in society. This form of power is of a profoundly psychological nature, usually invoking a feeling of inferiority and unworthiness among the less privileged in

society. Both forms of power generate some level of biases and sideline some sections of society and prevent the issues relating to them from gaining prominence in the public discourse (VeneKlasen *et al.*, 2004). In order to ensure empowerment, people need to be aware of these different dimensions of power and deal with its associated challenges. Empowerment is attained by cultivating new forms of power relations based on solidarity, equity and common good (VeneKlasen *et al.*, 2004).

According to Kabeer (2001), empowerment is the enlargement of people's ability to make important choices in life within a context where they did not have this ability previously. In this definition resides four elements critical to empowerment. One, empowerment is context specific. Two, empowerment is a process which is revealed by the expansion of the people's ability. Three, there ought to have been an element of disempowerment. Lastly, there ought to be progressive change so that the individual is able to make choices. Different circumstances influence one's appreciation of empowerment (Kabeer, 2001).

In an attempt to further explain the concept of empowerment, Kabeer (2003) identified three dimensions which are vital to the concept. They are: agency, resources and achievements. Agency is about the ability to formulate choices and to control resources and decisions (Malhotra *et al.*, 2002, p.9). For agency to be achieved, conducive environment needs to be created. Indeed, agency cannot happen outside the individual's environment and neither can the environment alone without the individual's participation lead to agency. Some dimensions of 'agency' which are commonly measured are: mobility of people in the public domain, community participation and decision-making (Kabeer, 2001).

The term "Resources", as used by Kabeer (2003), refers to the enabling factors under which empowerment is likely to occur. These enabling factors act as catalysts to aid empowerment. They include government policies and the NGO strategies that aid empowerment of rural people. Indicators often used to measure resources are access and control. Kabeer (2001) defines control in relation to resources. That is, control as in the case of earnings and expenditure; control as decision-making, among others (Kabeer, 2003; Malhotra *et al.*, 2002). Achievements refer to the consequences of the agency exercised (Kabeer, 2003). This is the realisation or lack of realisation of the individual(s) potential.

Empowerment needs to occur in many dimensions such as "economic, socio-cultural, familial/interpersonal, legal, political and psychological" (Malhotra *et al.*, 2002, p.12). Each domain can be further subdivided so as to avoid confusion. For example, economic empowerment can be sub-divided into formal employment and informal employment. It has to be noted again that empowerment needs occur at different social aggregation levels; individual level, household level, community level and at broader arenas (Malhotra *et al.*, 2002). It is therefore critical for people to be aware of the level they intend to measure the concept.

The socio-economic empowerment of people is crucial to their development. An individual is said to be socio-economically empowered when he or she is able to rise above his or her constraints and hindrances within his or her household and the larger community (Golla, Malhotra, Nanda & Mehra, 2011). These constraints and hindrances can be social, cultural and economic. In the social and cultural contexts, one has to consider issues like decision-making at household

level and community participation, among others. The economic aspect involves access and control of family resources, employment, ability to earn an income and the access to markets (Eyben *et al.*, 2008).

Social empowerment enables the individual to develop capacity for agency (Eyben *et al.*, 2008). This capacity for agency can be achieved as an individual or as a collective entity and it leads to one having a sense of self-worth and it also helps to improve social relations. Social empowerment can be achieved through education, awareness programmes and social interaction. Social empowerment includes the environment within which the individual lives. It is the most basic form of empowerment at individual level (Eyben *et al.*, 2008).

Economic empowerment enables the individual to think beyond immediate survival needs. It also leads to greater control of strategic life choices and resources. When people are economically empowered, it strengthens their negotiating power, decision-making and also increases their social status (Eyben *et al.*, 2008). There is a wide recognition that economically empowering women is critical, in terms of being able to both realize their rights and to achieve broader development goals such as economic growth, poverty reduction, health, education and welfare. By empowering women economically, the welfare of the family, the community and the nation improves (Golla *et al.*, 2011, p.3).

It is clear from the above argument that the main purpose of empowerment is to reduce poverty and inequality through enhancing the capability of marginalised and vulnerable groups in society. Through their grassroots activities, NGOs incorporate the empowerment approach to help improve the lives of people.

Most NGOs have small and horizontal structures with short lines of communication and are therefore capable of responding flexibly and rapidly to clients' needs and to changing circumstances. They also have work ethics which promote sustainable processes and impacts on people. NGOs' concern is with the rural poor, which means they often maintain a field presence in remote locations, where it is difficult to keep government staff at post (Adjei *et al.*, 2012; Lewis & Kanji, 2009). In this study, the concept of empowerment relates to how the development activities and interventions of WVG under the Project enhance the ability of people to make the right choices for the improvement of their total lives.

NGOs in Ghana

Over the past decades, NGOs have assumed prominent roles in the development agenda of most societies. In various countries across the globe, NGOs are actively engaged in activities aimed at achieving social change and Ghana is not an exception to this. Like many other developing countries, Ghana has become the hub of different NGOs who are undertaking various projects in deprived communities across the country (Adjei *et al.*, 2012; Egyir, 2013; Porter, 2003). These NGOs include international and other locally based organisations that typify the country's "traditional cultures, colonial past" and socio-economic development (Atingdui *et al.*, cited in Sarfo, 2013).

In Ghana, NGOs are described as independent civil society organisations registered voluntarily to pursue activities that will help the public (Opoku-Mensah, 2007). NGOs in Ghana are also referred to as issues-oriented organisations independent from the state but are engaged in activities that support government

interventions in national development (Whitfield, 2010). Atingdui *et al.*, as cited in Sarfo (2013), trace the origins of NGOs in Ghana to the pre-colonial era where village associations, market women associations, craft unions, churches and other Islamic welfare organisations were engaged in philanthropic and charitable activities. In the course of time, these local and international NGOs have gradually become key strategic partners of the local government in the development of rural communities in the country (Porter, 2003).

According to Opoku-Mensah (2007), the explosion of the number of NGOs and their popularity in Ghana can be attributed to the NGOs friendly policies initiated and implemented by various governments in Ghana during and after the period of independence. Particularly, various policies including the enactment of tax and other exemptions laws for NGOs have helped most of them to consolidate their presence as key development partners in Ghanaian societies (Opoku-Mensah, 2007). These factors mentioned by Opoku-Mensah (2007) have served as a catalyst for NGOs to further strengthen their activities and assist local authorities in undertaking development projects in deprived communities in Ghana.

In Ghana, most NGOs are involved in one or more of these types of activities: agriculture, education, environment, general development, peace and governance, health, emergency or refugee relief, and programmes directed at the disadvantaged and the vulnerable in communities. In the view of Whitfield (2010), the major sources of funding of NGOs in Ghana come from the United States and Germany, followed by the Nordic countries, then Holland and Canada. In essence, almost all NGOs in Ghana depend on foreign donor support (Whitfield, 2010).

Currently, most of the interventions of NGOs in Ghana are located in the Northern part of the country which is considered to be the poorest area in Ghana. However, NGOs also work in the South “where there are pockets of intense poverty” (Porter, 2003, p.133). One of such areas in the southern part of the country is Central Region which is regarded as the fourth poorest region in Ghana.

World Vision International

World Vision International (WVI) is an NGO mainly into relief and development services. It was founded in 1950 and operates in more than 15 countries across the world. WVI focuses its work on projects that help community to address the root causes and not just symptoms of poverty. As an NGO, WVI helps people based on their needs, not their creed (Quaicoo, 2006). It is a Christian NGO whose principles include being a faithful messenger of God’s love, trusted partners of lasting change, and care. It also promotes justice and peace; and inspires cooperation (Egyir, 2013; WVI, 2005). In 2017, WVI launched its first global strategy titled *Our Promise 2030: Building Brighter Futures for Vulnerable Children*. The strategy seeks to ensure that WVI delivers interventions aimed at giving vulnerable children a brighter future (WVI, 2017).

As an offshoot of WVI, WVG is into relief and development service provision. WVG is legally registered under the laws of Ghana and operates to fulfill the vision of WVI. It plans, coordinates and implements its development services through the collaboration of relevant government ministries, donors and other NGOs. WVG is headquartered in Accra with officers in all the 10 regions of Ghana (Quaicoo, 2006). WVG began its operations in June 1979, with Mr. George

Nicholson, a British national, as the first to head WVG. Rev. Commodore Philemon Quaye, was the first Ghanaian Field Director who took over from Nicholson in 1980. Dr. Joseph de graft Johnson Riverson succeeded Rev. Quaye as National Director in 1990. Currently, Mr. Dickens Thunde is the National Director of WVG.

Since its inception, WVG focuses its services on reducing vulnerabilities, enhancing capacities and providing opportunities for the poorest of the poor in these programme areas including health and education. WVG also provides services in health care, child development and protection, nutrition, water and sanitation, food security, gender and development, advocacy, income generation activities; HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support; and emergency relief and rehabilitation (Egyir, 2013; Quaicoo, 2006). Its interventions benefit about two million people in Ghana. WVG commits itself to realizing the overall global vision of WVI through its numerous development services (WVG, 2017). As an active NGO, WVG networks and partners with both international and local bodies. Over the past decades WVG has pursued its programmes in collaboration with the Ghana Government, communities, research institutions, universities, other NGOs, etc. Partner institutions of WVG include Cornell University, Desert Research Institute, Nevada USA, University of Ghana and University of Cape Coast (Quaicoo, 2006).

WVG implements its programmes and interventions in all administrative regions. There are three operational zones under WVG. They are the northern zone, central zone and southern zone. The northern zone covers Upper West, Upper East and Northern Regions; the central sector covers Ashanti, Brong- Ahafo and Eastern Regions whilst the southern sector includes Volta, Central, Western and Greater

Accra regions (Quaicoo, 2006). WVG has been supporting development initiatives across the country in all its 34 ADPs. Initially, WVG's development strategy of operating in several communities with scattered project gave way to a new concept of Area Development Programme (ADPs) in the early 1990s. An ADP seeks to assist communities to take ownership of the projects and their own development and also, to address the causes of poverty (Egyir, 2013; Quaicoo, 2006).

The ADP concept is an approach to ensure transformational development which targets a specific geographic location or district for maximum period of interventions delivery. It considers a long-term commitment to the community with the aim of achieving sustainability. The concept, among other things, was envisioned to ensure there is focus on district of individual communities for development in line with government development policy (Quaicoo, 2006). It was also to ensure partnership with identifiable stakeholders, the local government being the primary stakeholder in order to create and strengthen a network of relationship among stakeholders for efficient development service delivery. Again, ADP gives priority to children and women (Egyir, 2013). All the ADPs have officers positioned to ensure effective mobilisation of resources locally, nationally and or internationally to address development needs. WVG has also supported some institutions and homes for socially and physically disadvantaged children in places such as Akropong, Ajumako-Baa, Cape Coast, Accra, Hohoe, and Begoro (Egyir, 2013; Quaicoo, 2006).

Quality human resource is essential for national growth and development. Investment in quality of human capital is a key to sustainable development. The

increasing relevance of human resource to nations' development means that all stakeholders including NGOs need to invest in human capital formation. In pursuance of this vision, WVG has and continues to provide services in diverse ways to ensure the development of the country's human resource. Services such as the provision of educational facilities, textbooks and scholarship programmes by WVG help to develop the nation's human resource base (Quaicoo, 2006).

Regarding education, WVG provides free school uniforms, distribution of play equipments to school children and distribution of bicycles to school children in order to encourage enrolment and increase attendance. The organisation also builds bungalows for teachers to help lessen the plight of teachers, especially those in the rural areas. In order to build the capacity of teachers, WVG organises in-service training for them. It again provides libraries and reading clubs for the pupils to inculcate reading habits (Egyir, 2013; Quaicoo, 2006; WVG, n.d.). In Wassa East District, WVG has provided several interventions in education to help improve the lives of the people. They include the construction of school buildings in some communities, construction of ICT Centres, sensitisation programmes, formation of reading clubs, Child Clubs in schools, construction of pipe-borne water in schools, among others. Communities in the district such as Ekutuase, Sekyere Krobo, Atobiase, Adiembra, Atwebesa, Domama Nyamebekyere, Busosu, etc. have all benefitted from various educational interventions undertaken by WVG (WVI, n.d.).

Through its economic development and agricultural interventions, WVG strengthens livelihoods of people through access to credit, markets, technology and information. It also provides microcredit training, skill development to people and

also helps them to establish linkages with markets. Occasionally, WVG pays apprenticeship fees of people with no hand work in carpentry, plumbing, masonry, mechanic, electrician, etc. (Egyir, 2013; WVG, 2017). They also support persons in agriculture in many ways; such as deworming and vaccination of livestock and livestock management training for farmers to boost animal husbandry. WVG also organizes post-harvest preservation training and honey production (beekeeping). To ensure food security, WVG provides training on improved modern technology in cultivation and storage, gives improved seedlings to farmers, plantain sucker multiplication and citrus cultivation (Egyir, 2013). All these interventions help to increase the income level of people and improve food security among households.

On health care services, WVG has made some tremendous strides in that regard. This is in recognition of the fact that with improved health, community members will have more time for their economic activities and earn more income. Consequently, this will empower people economically, especially parents to help them provide their children's basic needs. To this end, WVG has been providing access to improved health facilities and also helps people to eradicate guinea-worm by drilling and equipping rural areas with more boreholes with hand pumps (Egyir, 2013). They also teach people about better and accessible health services to children and their families. Hundreds of traditional birth attendants have received training and mosquito nets have also been provided for families to help protect against malaria. In responding to the issue of HIV and AIDS teachers, pastors, traditional leaders and peer educators have been involved as facilitators in HIV and AIDS education, counseling and awareness programmes. WVG also offers medical and

financial support to people with HIV and AIDS and to orphans and vulnerable children. Again, they train peer health educators, form trachoma clubs and conduct dental checks. In many communities, deworming of children has led to a reduction in the level of malnutrition among children. They also facilitate the District Health Management Team to carry out health programmes. WVG also provides schools with first aid boxes to be used in times of emergency (Egyir, 2013; WVG, 2016).

In the area of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), WVG has and continues to undertake several interventions to better the lives of Ghanaians. WVG initiates hygiene education for children and adults, including proper hand and face washing to prevent disease. For instance, in 2017, WVG provided a total of 173 new boreholes to communities while 91 non-functioning water points were rehabilitated. In the same year, 19 schools and eight health facilities also gained access to improved water sources in the country. Members of several communities were sensitised on safe water handling and effective water storage practices (WVG, 2017). WVG also educates people on better hygiene practices, constructs latrines and improves health and nutrition by providing quality and accessible health services to children and their families (WVG, 2017; WVG, cited in Egyir, 2013).

Again, between 2015 and 2016, a total of 81 World Vision communities attained Open Defecation Free status. Also, as at 2016 a total of 225 communities constructed improved latrines as a result of increasing implementation of the Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) programme of WVG. Again, WASH was implemented in 231 schools with key focus on improving access to sanitation facilities (World Vision, 2016). Additionally, on WASH, a total of 502 community

members made up of 229 latrine artisans, 266 pump caretakers and 7 fabricators of assistive devices for People with Disabilities were trained to support their communities in the sustainable management of their WASH facilities. Similarly, 84 Citizen Voice Action groups implemented WASH related action plans which seek to hold duty bearers and service providers accountable for improved delivery of WASH services. For example, in the Garu-Tempane ADP, Citizen Voice Action groups have successfully influenced the decision of the District Assembly to increase its 2016 WASH budget by two percent (Egyir, 2013; WVG, 2016).

WVG provides resources and other assistance to its ADPs and zones to facilitate services delivery at local levels. All the three sectors have been assisted in several ways to provide training, monitoring and effective coordination of development programmes at the local level. The needs of the people are sought and provisions are made in request of their needs. WVG has been supporting initiatives across the country. It has resource centers in its operational areas to promote effective communication and collaboration. This also helps to draw closer to the people so as to participate in the planning of projects (WVG, cited in Egyir, 2013).

Other areas where WVG continues to make strides include child rights, women empowerment, financial literacy, business development, local governance, among others. Currently, WVG is working on a six-year strategic development plan titled "From Reliance to Resilience." In line with its new strategic plan, WVG has restructured its National Office and also redefined its processes, programmes and approaches in order to ensure goal accomplishment (World Vision, 2016).

The Cocoa Life Project

Mondelez International (MI) is the largest chocolate company. As the industry leader, MI has a unique responsibility to help transform the livelihoods of cocoa farmers and their communities over a long-term. Cocoa Life is a bold ambition that reflects the importance of cocoa as a critical raw material. The Cocoa Life approach defines what cocoa sustainability means to MI's business and the approach they take to the development and supply of cocoa. The demand for chocolate is growing, especially in the emerging markets but cocoa supply is constrained by a range of technical, environmental, socio economic and political issues. To ensure the sustainability of cocoa supply, the Cocoa Life Project was developed (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2014).

Cocoa Life Project was launched in 2012 with the aim of investing \$400 million USD by 2022 to empower at least 200,000 cocoa farmers and reach over one million community members in six key cocoa growing origins: Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Indonesia, India, the Dominican Republic and Brazil. The Project links cocoa farming to community development. It includes a wide array of initiatives to support farmers in local communities, helping them to cultivate stronger, more resilient crops and creating real impact across our cocoa communities (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2014). The Project is based on the successful Cadbury Cocoa Partnership in Ghana in 2008. It is from this work in Ghana and insights from other activities in cocoa origins, with certification schemes and from others in the cocoa industry that the Cocoa Life approach was developed (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2014).

The Cocoa Life approach is designed to guide the scale up in all cocoa origins and to ensure that, cocoa purchasing supports MI's investments in origin development. The needs in each origin are unique, the local outcomes sought after, and the programmes to be developed with key partners, are specific to each country. Nevertheless, there are some common processes on how Cocoa Life goes about it, and how it ensures its investment is having the desired impact. The Cocoa Life approach was developed with inputs from those currently IPs and external advisors. This input is directly informed by the participation of cocoa farming communities, with whom IPs have daily contact as well as more structured opportunities to gain feedback. It will continue to evolve as more insight is gained into what works and best practices in the industry (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2014; 2015).

The clear vision for Cocoa Life is thriving cocoa communities. The Project seeks to lead the transformation in cocoa growing nations by generating empowered, thriving communities, inspiring the next generation of cocoa farmers, and by doing so, securing the future of chocolate business. A thriving rural community is defined by economic, social and environmental features and has made a public commitment to this programme (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2014). The Cocoa Life approach incorporates three main guiding principles. First, Cocoa Life Project is holistic and farmer centered. Here, Cocoa Life listens to and empowers farmers and cocoa communities. It is the commitment of MI that cocoa farming becomes a livelihood that lifts people out of poverty and that, cocoa communities become desirable places for the next generation to live. Farming communities are at the center of the project and this includes improving agricultural

knowledge and practice and community development. For cocoa farming to be sustainable, non-economic barriers to cocoa sustainability, such as disempowered women and disaffected youth, must be addressed as well as economic barriers such as low yields and low incomes (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2014).

The second principle relates to commitment to partnerships. With this, Cocoa Life joins forces to build and implement the program. Here, support is given to Cocoa Life communities by finding real solutions that lead to measurable transformation through creating partnerships with communities, governments, national and international non-government organizations and supply chain partners. Partnerships are vital for best practice, sustainability, synergy and scale- they bring competencies relating to the programme objectives that is; empowerment of cocoa communities, embedding into national institutions, and connectivity with MI's supply chain (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2014; 2015).

The third principle relates to alignment with its sourcing. Here, the Project upholds and strives to ensure that all its partners, along all of their cocoa supply chains support the project. Its programme and sourcing contracts are aligned. This means the programme is implemented with farmers within its supply chain and the programme is aligned with the buying contracts or vice versa. MI aims at transparency at the farmer level. Linkage to its products is an essential part of supply chain stewardship (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2013; 2014).

The Cocoa Life project is focused on five key areas. They are farming, community, livelihood, youth empowerment, and sustainable environment. Experience shows that delivery of outcomes across these five areas contributes to

thriving cocoa communities. With farming, Cocoa Life helps farmers benefit from access to the most up-to-date agricultural information. Practices such as planting trees at optimum density, using shade trees, starting seedlings in nurseries, and protecting trees from infestation and infection help to increase yields and plot value. It is their belief that efficient farming practices lead to better incomes (Meghann, Petrin & Scott, 2016; Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2013; 2014).

Under the community focus of the Project, Cocoa Life supports men and women to work together to transform their communities by developing action plans that can bring about desired changes in the community. They desire to see confidence and a sense of opportunity and ownership emerge as communities begin to thrive. This is premised on the conviction that a shared vision unites communities. Again, through its livelihood-based activities, Cocoa Life supports farming communities to create new entrepreneurial businesses in sectors complementary or different than cocoa sector. The Project looks at ways to support improved access to micro-finance, together with training on financial literacy and how to manage additional income, allowing farmers to develop additional sources of income and to reinvest in their businesses. It is argued that a consistent livelihood creates financial security (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2013; 2014).

Moreover, through its youth empowerment programme, Cocoa Life helps young adults have more opportunities once they finish school. Jobs are being created at the rural level, and new programs encourage training for these positions. The chance to be a part of a thriving community makes villages desirable places to plan the future. It is also believed that, there is the need to create the awareness on

the need for children to attend school in order to create alternatives to avoid child labor and through this initiative, young people can be inspired by a career in farming (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2013; 2014; 2015).

Finally, emphasis on sustainable environment of the Project hinges on the fact that cocoa communities depend on fertile soil, clean air, and potable water. Through Coca Life, farmers are expected to work and use new methods in order to safeguard the land while increasing yields by implementing and maintaining modern best practices. They believe conserving the land is a promise to future generations (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2013; 2014).

The Cocoa Life approach is underpinned by an operating framework which sets out the elements that are expected to be seen in any Cocoa Life programme. Its vision and principles set the fundamental basis of programmes and the involvement of its partners in them. Multi-stakeholder governance ensures the principles are put into practice, and that the programme meets external expectations and needs. The Project is evidence-based. It starts with needs assessment which gives the partners credible, fact-based and holistic approach to understand communities' problems and root causes. Project goals and outcomes are defined based on problems identified (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2014; 2015). Thus, NGOs which are key IPs under the Project are expected to deliver interventions to improve beneficiary communities based on the varying needs of the communities.

Measuring the impact of Cocoa Life Project interventions: Key indicators

There are 10 key indicators under the five focal areas that are considered in measuring the impact of the project. Under the farming activities, the indicators for

success include increased net income from cocoa, and increased cocoa productivity. In measuring the impact of the Project on communities, indicators to consider are increased participation of community members in decision making processes, and increased community capacity to plan and advocate for their own social development. With regard to livelihood-based activities, measurement focuses on increased income from other sources of income generation activities and reduced vulnerability to external shocks. Also, indicators for youth empowerment include reduced child labour, reduced forced child labour, and increased career opportunities for youth in the cocoa sector. Finally, in measuring the impact of the Project on environment, key issues such as helping future farming generations through sustainable natural resource use on the farm, conservation of forests and maintenance of ecosystems as well as the government policy and strengthened institutions for conserving the environment are considered (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2014; 2015).

As part of efforts to address inequality, Cocoa Life Project is expected to put in place measures in the form of district cooperative unions in communities whose membership is open to anyone working including cocoa farmers, caretakers and other farm workers. In order to ensure strong representation of women in leadership positions, each cooperative society is expected to ensure that women there are more women who are executive members. Also, Cocoa Life Project is expected to provide consistent and supportive interventions to build more confidence among women to adopt leadership positions through knowledge and skills (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2015). Several training programmes

are provided to cover the well-being of beneficiaries and their families as well as good agricultural practices and leadership training. Assistance is given to beneficiaries to undergo enterprise training to help them establish and run enterprise-based cooperatives. Cocoa Life Project's gender equality strategy also seeks to ensure an increase in the number of women who are able to acquire land (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2013; 2015).

Also, Cocoa Life uses its role in the cocoa sector to advocate for women's empowerment through its engagement with key multi-stakeholder initiatives and with public and civil society institutions. For example, Cocoa Life advocates for women's empowerment through multi-stakeholder organisations such as the World Cocoa Foundation to establish sector-wide principles for cocoa sustainability that include gender equality (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2013; 2014).

Under Cocoa Life Project, IPs are expected to undertake their own action plan to bridge the gaps between women and men. IPS including NGOs work to improve training for female farmers and women working on cocoa farms, and increasing women's access to farm inputs, land ownership and membership of farmer organisations. Also, Cocoa Life Project empowers women to actively partake in decision making in households and communities and on district and national farmer forums. Among others, the initiative engages women to draw up Community Action Plans (CAPs); trains community leaders; and engages state institutions at district and national level on issues that affect women (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2013; 2014). The Project also seeks to increase access to finance for women, and also improve literacy and household food security. On

youth empowerment, IPs work to promote women and girls' involvement in the Cocoa Ambassador scheme and community reading clubs (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2013; 2014).

Cocoa Life Project interventions in Wassa East District: The role of WVG

Since the inception of the Cocoa Life Programme, WVG has been a key IP of the project. Specifically, in WED, WVG has undertaken several development interventions in 44 communities. The interventions mainly seek to increase productivity, develop communities, improve livelihoods, empower the youth and promote environmental sustainability so as to improve the lives of people and their communities (Mondelez International, Cocoa Life & World Vision, n.d.). For example, WVG provided interventions to help increase cocoa productivity and income level of beneficiaries. WVG also provided business management and leadership training support to women to empower them and enable them to participate actively in decision making processes. Again, WVG supported men and women to actively work together to transform their communities by developing action plans that can bring about changes to the communities in which they live (Mondelez International, Cocoa Life & World Vision, n.d.).

Again, through its livelihood-based strategies, WVG has supported communities to create new entrepreneurial and business activities in other sectors to complement the gains from the cocoa sector. WVG helped community members to acquire alternative livelihood skills and opportunities such as soap making, grain processing, batik / tie & dye, palm oil processing, and petty trade. Further, WVG has helped to improve beneficiaries' access to micro-finance through the

implementation of savings groups, loan schemes, financial literacy training, effective book keeping, business management, etc. (Mondelez International, Cocoa Life & World Vision, n.d.).

In addition, WVG supported the empowerment of young people in the communities including school retention and after school programmes. These interventions help to create awareness on the need for children to attend school and to create alternatives to avoid child labour. Besides, WVG trained and supported farmers on environmentally friendly and sustainable farming practices. It has also supported forest conservation and sustainable ecosystem management in cocoa growing communities (Mondelez International, Cocoa Life & World Vision, n.d.).

WVG has made other several efforts under the Project in the WED including the formation of various community groups, training of farmers and other community members, promotion of community plans and actions, and protection of children in communities. Others are provision of educational facilities, promoting access to education; provision of water and sanitation facilities; provision of health facilities, and alternative livelihood programmes. There are also the efforts in enhancing participation in decision-making and local governance, creation of career opportunities, etc. in the communities which were undertaken by WVG mainly to improve the lives of community members (Mondelez International, Cocoa Life & World Vision, n.d.).

Empirical Review

A number of studies have been done on NGO activities, community development interventions, participation, gender equality and livelihoods across the

globe. This section presents a review of works related to the study. The review was informed by the issues in the research objectives, with a particular focus generally on the research aims, methodological issues and key findings of the various studies.

To begin with, a study was conducted by Kinyanjui and Misaro (2013) in Kenya to analyze how socio-economic factors influence the levels of households' participation in constituency development funds projects as a poverty reduction strategy, using quantitative research approach. In all, 100 respondents were involved in the study whilst semi-structured questionnaire was the instrument used, with descriptive and inferential statistics as the analytical tools. It was observed that socio-economic factors influenced participation in development. Again, beneficiaries were not satisfied with participation in the projects.

Baffoe-Asare *et al.* (2013) studied the socio-economic factors which influence adoption of CODAPEC and cocoa high-tech technologies among small scale farmers in Central Region of Ghana. The study used multi-stage random sampling technique to select 250 households from 25 communities, with Tobit multivariate regression as the analytical tool. It was found that socio-economic factors such as age, education level and family size influence the adoption of technology among farmers. Also, Clark, Kotchen and Moore (2003) and Arthur (2006) observed that education, age, family size and income affect participation in development programmes. A significant relationship existed between education and livelihoods in a study conducted in Nigeria (Osawe, 2013).

Rahman and Shaheen (2014) studied the socio-economic determinants of livelihood choices of rural households in Bangladesh. In all, 4,195 households from

139 villages were examined in their quantitative study. They applied a multinomial logit model of occupational choice and a multivariate Tobit model. The authors found that socio-economic factors such as sex, age, education, etc. are associated with livelihood choices and strategies. The authors recommended that policy decisions should consider socio-economic factors including sex, education and age.

A survey was conducted in China to explore the factors that affect households' choice of livelihood strategy (Dingde, Jifei, Golam, Shaoquan, Fangting, Mengtian & Enlai, 2015). The survey depended on cluster sampling method with descriptive statistics and ordinal logistic regression model as the analytical tools. The study discovered that a number of variables such as education, age and social networks had a significant influence on livelihood strategies (Dingde *et al.*, 2015). Bagherian, Bahaman, Asnaralkhadi and Ahmad (2009) observed that high level of satisfaction of prior programme and high level of alternative income increases level of community participation. In fact, persons who were satisfied with previous programmes, knowledge about programmes are more likely to participate in future development interventions.

In a study conducted by the FAO (2005), it was found that failure to involve stakeholders at the diagnosis phase of the project impeded the full improvement in the livelihood of beneficiaries. This omission meant that some community priorities were not addressed during the delivery of the project, and subsequently derailed the effectiveness of the project (FAO, 2005). Similarly, it was observed that educated people better appreciate development programmes than less educated ones (Angba

et al., 2009). Imoh *et al.* (2009) also found that people with low level of education are unable to effectively participate in development programmes.

Mammah (2006) studied community participation and sustainable development interventions of Plan Ghana in ten communities in the Central Region. A total of 300 community members were involved in the study using systematic sampling method. Interviews, observations and questionnaire were the main data collection tools, while analytical techniques suitable for mixed method studies were used. The study found that participation in planning, monitoring and evaluation stages were found to be low. Again, there was a positive relationship between community participation and project sustainability. Despite the importance of Mammah's (2006) findings, it is problematic to understand the rationale behind the use of systematic sampling alone, given the mixed method approach of the study, coupled with the failure to state the research design used in the study.

Moreover, Abiona and Niyi Bello (2013) examined participation in decision-making process in community development programmes in Nigeria using the descriptive survey. The stratified sampling technique was adopted to select 1,984 respondents in nine communities from Osun and Kwara states. Questionnaires were used for data collection and the analysis was done using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation. Abiona and Niyi Bello (2013) found that there is significant relationship between grassroots participation in development programmes, decision-making process and sustainability of development programmes. However, given the solely quantitative nature of the study, Abiona and Niyi Bello seem to have failed to fully capture the real issues that affect

participation in development interventions. An addition of qualitative tools could have emboldened the issues examined.

Furthermore, Mweene (2006) studied the relevance of NGOs to local level development in Zambia with particular emphasis on WVI. Mweene (2006) used purposive sampling and also relied on interviews, focus group discussion and observation as the instruments for data collection. Collected data were analysed thematically. The author concludes that although development is a global issue, its implementation needs to be particularistic; a local phenomenon that adapts its interventions to the needs of the poor as seen by them and not as perceived by development experts. Indeed, it is only by this, will true development reflect the lives of the people, be locally owned and sustained by those it is intended to serve.

Also, a study was conducted by Quaicoo (2006) on the contributions of WVG to the development of basic education in the Twifo Hemang-Lower Denkyira District (THLDD) in the Central Region of Ghana. The study used 469 respondents with questionnaire, interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs) and observation as the instruments used for data collection. It was found that though WVG had contributed to improvement in educational facilities, community members it could have done far better than it did in terms of provision of development services.

Additionally, a study was done in Central Region of Uganda on the relevance of NGOs and small holder farmer groups to the health, education, agriculture as well as improving industry (Nalere, Yago & Oriel, 2015). In this case study, 87 respondents were involved through stratified sampling technique. Questionnaires, FGDs, interview guide, key informants and documentary review

were used to gather data. The researcher used probit regression model for analysis (Nalere *et al.*, 2015). The study showed that NGOs contributed to the improvements in health, education, agriculture and rural industry in rural areas of Uganda. However, the deficiency in this study lies in the reliance on only quantitative tools for data analysis, given the mixed method nature of the research.

According to Omofonmwan and Odia (2009), community development entails the provision of infrastructural facilities to the people. The provision of these social amenities can be attained through a number of ways and/or organisations which includes the government, and community development associations. They examined some of the community interventions NGOs adopt in Nigeria using purposive sampling, and interview and observations. They found that NGOs rely on community development interventions such as: environment, health and sanitation awareness creation; and promotion of child's rights law.

Hedayat and Ma'rof (2017) studied the contribution of NGOs towards sustainable community development. Their study focused on the roles, functions and programmes of NGOs, such as microfinance, capacity building and self-reliance. Hedayat and Ma'rof (2017) found that NGOs improve the economic well-being of communities through job creation and income generation which ultimately leads to economic empowerment for sustainable community development.

Similarly, a study was done by Brass (2010) who sought to examine service provision in education, healthcare, agriculture and water by internationally-funded NGOs in Kenya. The study employed mixed-methods approach, with in-depth interviews, case studies and other pieces of information the researcher gathered

during her stay in Kenya. The quantitative aspect relied on a survey of 500 secondary school students duplicates by Kenneth Prewitt while semi-structured interviews were conducted with governmental and non-governmental services providers, government officials and regular people. In this study, Brass (2010) found that healthcare, education and agriculture interventions affect the social contract between the Kenyan state and its citizens.

Another study was conducted by Dangah (2012) on the role of ProNet, an NGO based in Northern Ghana, in providing water and sanitation for the people of Nadowli District. The study used both primary and secondary data, with 189 respondents from five communities. The respondents were chosen using the simple random and purposive sampling techniques with structured interview and focus group discussion as the data collection instrument. The study found that ProNet activities in education, water and sanitation have improved the communities.

Sarfo (2013) also examined the impacts of Plan International's educational projects on quality education in the Awutu-Senya District of Ghana using qualitative research approach. Both the semi-structured interviews and FGDs were used to get the perspectives of officials of the NGO and 23 members of the beneficiary communities which included children, their parents and teachers. Sarfo established that most of the children in Plan Ghana's assisted communities have witnessed improvements in the quality of their educational system, especially in the area of learning environment and service delivery. However, problems such as high expectations from the NGO, and apathy on the part of some beneficiary communities were recorded in the course of this study. Islam (2015) also assessed

the contributions of NGOs to community development in Bangladesh in qualitative approach, where a multi-method data collection procedure was applied. It was found that NGOs play crucial roles in community development and participation.

On the issue of gender, studies conducted on employment in Nicaragua found that prior employment status aids in the participating in local development programme. This again enhanced improvement of women and vulnerable groups' ability to participate in formation of cooperatives alliances (Mitlin & Satterthwaite, 2004). Also, a study conducted by Desai (2005) revealed that NGO interventions play an important role in supporting women, men and households to be able to meet their basic needs. Other roles and functions of NGOs including counseling and support service, awareness raising and advocacy, legal aid and microfinance services help the people to become empowered (Desai, 2005).

Again, in a study conducted on rural development trust programmes, it was concluded that women benefited from the programmes in various ways such as greater empowerment in decision making and increased wages for agricultural works due to the gender-equitable wages paid for watershed work (Reddy, 2011). Also, it has been found that in the context of promoting women's participation, participation should be preceded by empowerment. In this way, women become aware of their rights and capabilities and the resources they need to enable them participate equally with men in the society (Hennink *et al.*, 2012; Rai, 2008).

Muchtar (2017) studied the influence of international development interventions on women's perception of empowerment using Oxfam's Restoring Coastal Livelihoods Project (2010-2015) in South Sulawesi, Indonesia as a case.

The researcher adopted qualitative approach and ethnographic design. Interviews, observation and documentary review were the means by which data were generated for the study. Thematic analysis was used for the study. The study found that women beneficiaries perceived empowerment mostly based on their experiences on the project. Again, it was established that the degree of empowerment depends on factors including the nature of activities, and the general understanding of gender relations. The project promoted gender equality through economic groups.

On the issue of sustainability of such interventions is crucial, Zakaria (2011) observed that many of the development interventions undertaken by NGOs in the Savelugu-Nanton District are unsustainable. The study used survey design, and purposive and quota sampling methods with questionnaires, FGDs and observation guides as the instruments. It was concluded that NGOs in the district have not shown enough efforts to sustain their interventions. However, the gaps in this qualitative study include the fact that questionnaire was used without any sufficient justifications. This singular act puts the methodology adopted in suspect.

A study was conducted in Nigeria by Enyioko (2012) on the impact of NGOs on sustainable agriculture and awareness creation in rural areas using a sample size of 180 who were selected randomly from beneficiaries, non-beneficiaries and workers development agencies. Basic statistical tools such as frequencies and percentages were used. The study revealed that NGOs are very effective in sustainable rural development activities in education, health, agriculture, energy, environment and waste, empowerment and poverty alleviation.

In their study of NGOs' roles in sustainable community development in Vietnam, Hibbard and Tang (2004) concluded that sustainable rural development is process-oriented which requires extensive community participation and relies on network to share resources, knowledge and expertise. Odoom *et al.* (2018b) explored the views of local authorities and other stakeholders on the sustainability of development interventions in the Shama District in a concurrent-sequential mixed methods design. A total of 79 respondents took part in this descriptive and exploratory study whilst purposive, convenience and census data collection methods were used. The study found that factors including local participation, local ownership, local commitment and transparency are essential in sustaining development projects at the local level.

Besides, Nalubiri (2010) explored how local NGOs and community groups act towards sustaining NGO social interventions at community level. She sought to appreciate and understand why it is so difficult to sustain benefits that accrue from NGO work using an exploratory design. It was found that local participation, empowerment, ownership, multiple benefits and coordination among development actors positively affect sustainability of NGO development interventions.

On the issue of the effects of development interventions on livelihoods in Argentina, Baker (2000, p.98) found that participants did experience increased incomes as a result of the intervention. Again, the net income that accrued by programme participants was found to be accurate due to the improved information on household welfare in areas of access to social services and government social

programmes (p.98). Also, in Bangladesh, Kabeer *et al.* (2008) found that Nijera Kori (NK), an NGO based in the country, has livelihood diversification.

Nziane (2009) carried out a research on the impact of the community development projects on the livelihoods in South Africa. The study involved 85 respondents who were mainly farmers, with interviews and observation as instruments for data collection. The study revealed that the development interventions had an impact on both job creation and income generation, although the income aspect of it was not satisfactory. It was also found that participation was skewed in favour of women throughout the project. The apparent flaw in Nziane's (2009) study, is the use of univariate, bivariate and regression analyses in a purely qualitative research. This seems to demolish the methodological logic behind the research. Also, Matsvai (2018) evaluated the impact of various NGO interventions in Zimbabwe using primary data and descriptive statistics. His results showed that NGOs play a critical role in agriculture productivity growth and average income growth, improved sustainability of livelihoods and rural development.

Eneyew and Bekele (n.d.) studied the livelihood strategies and the factors that influence the abilities of rural household's choice of livelihood strategies in Boloso Sore district of Wolayta, southern Ethiopia. A stratified sampling method was used to sample 120 household heads while focus group discussion, interview guide and interview schedule were relied on for data collection. The multinomial logit model was used for analysis. The study revealed that socio economic features such as family size, education, age, sex and assets affect livelihood strategies of

people. Despite the importance of this study, the authors failed to address how qualitative data was generated and the purpose it served in the study.

Adjei *et al.* (2012) studied the impact of NGO-led interventions in Tain District of Ghana with a mixed method research approach. Using purposive sampling technique, the researchers involved 198 respondents who were beneficiaries of four main NGOs, namely, Plan Ghana, ActionAid Ghana, Rural Action Alliance Program, and Social Development and Improvement Agency. Adjei *et al.* (2012) found that although the NGOs were involved in the provision of social services for the rural communities, they had invested much of their funding into livelihood programmes to increase productivity and households' income. Chitongo (2013) conducted a study on the impact of the development interventions implemented by CRS on beneficiaries. Chitongo (2013) found that CRS' programmes improved livestock farming and water and sanitation.

Sono (2013) examined the effects of ADRA's development interventions on livelihoods of farmers in the Yilo Krobo using a mixed method research approach. Using a cross-sectional design, this study relied on purposive and simple random sampling methods to select 150 respondents, while interviews and questionnaire were used for data collection. Descriptive statistical analysis was done for the quantitative data though. The study found that ADRA's intervention has positively contributed to increased farm sizes, rising mango output, higher incomes and improved livelihoods of most farmers. However, the study failed to indicate the tools for the analysis of the qualitative data.

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Conceptual Framework

Provision of effective development programmes and projects is on the agenda of every nation. Various stakeholders of development such as the community, the government, private entities, donors and NGOs continue to make conscious efforts to ensure the realisation of all these important agenda. NGOs' involvement in the development globally is due to governments' inability to solely provide services to meet all the needs of the people as envisaged by the ADT and Neoliberal theory. Irrespective of the actors involved, effective development programme hinges on core issues including education, health, economic development, employment creation, and agriculture. Other issues are financial literacy, water and sanitation and good governance as shown in Figure 2.

In essence, Figure 2 depicts that for NGOs' projects to be seen as relevant to the community, such interventions must seek to address the core issues of human life. When project interventions solve the problems based on the core areas of society, then the interventions are relevant to the development of communities. For instance, educational interventions NGOs provide are expected to contribute to improved education in target communities. Improved education is crucial in the human resource development of communities. Likewise, interventions within the health sector become relevant to communities only when such interventions contribute to improved health care of communities through the provision of health facilities, health personnel, etc. Other ways in which development programmes and projects become relevant to communities include increased employment creation, improved water and sanitation, improved governance, and increased food security.

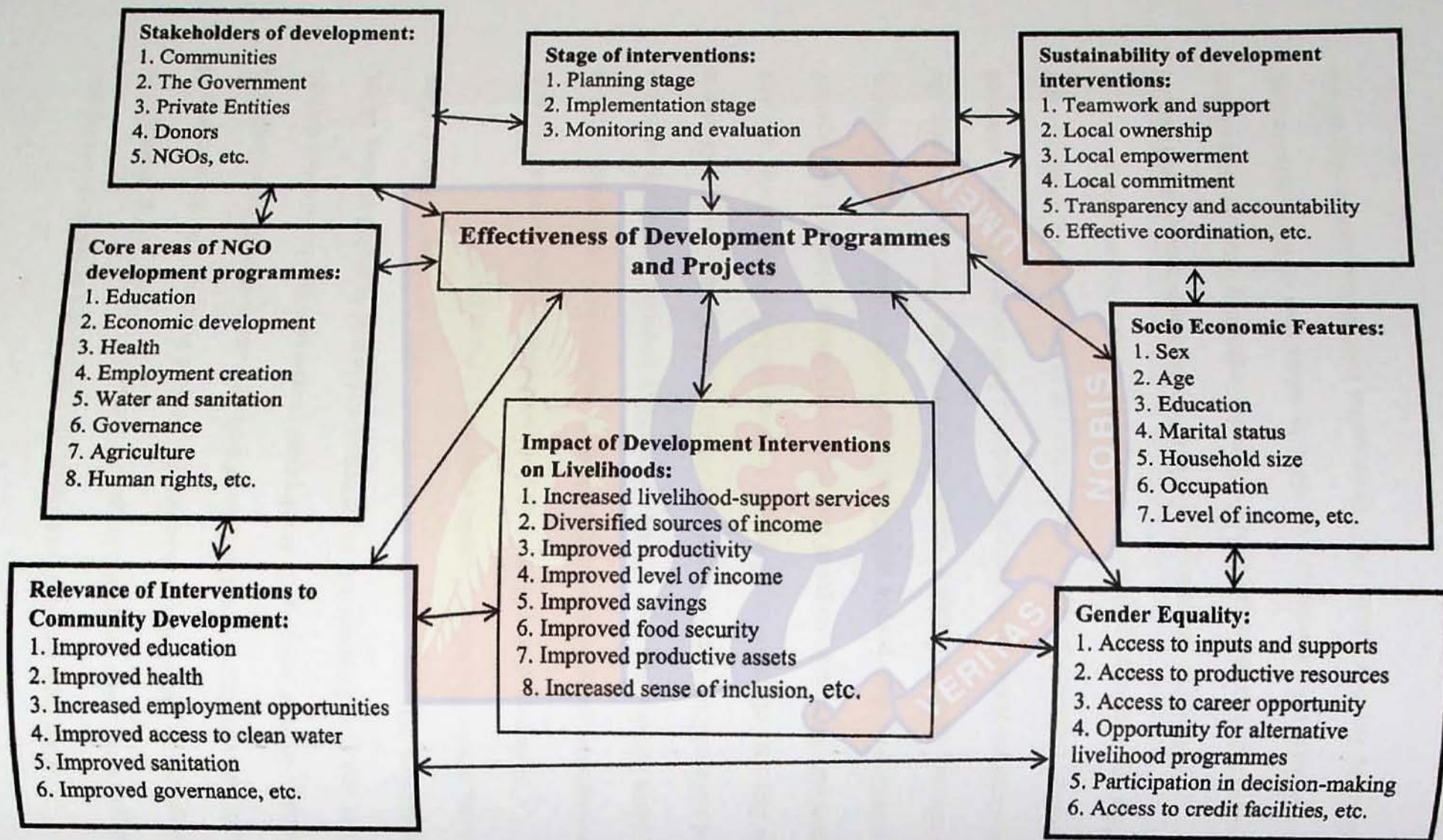


Figure 2: Conceptual framework for effective development programmes and projects

Source: Author's construct, Odoom (2018)

Apart from the above outcomes, a key component of effective development programmes and projects is gender equality. In providing development programmes, stakeholders including NGOs need to ensure that the outcomes of such interventions reflect the lives of both men and women in the communities equally. Gender equality in development programmes can be achieved through same access and opportunity to participate and benefit from skill training, inputs, productive resources, sources of livelihood, credit facilities, decision making, among others. The value of gender equality is found in the ADT.

However, it should be noted that a vital issue affecting the effectiveness of development programmes and projects is stakeholder's participation. This is because development is a shared responsibility involving diverse interest groups and stakeholders. The ADT, social structural and social capital theories all point to the fact that effective development programmes help people to offer adequate inputs into the various stages of the interventions through meaningful participation. For instance, when people satisfactorily participate in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages of interventions, they tend to own the interventions. It also promotes mobilisation of local resources leading to improved outcomes. Evidence of improved project outcomes strengthens the beliefs of people to fully support future projects as envisaged by the social cognitive theory.

Furthermore, in Figure 2, effective development programmes and projects are expected to improve people's livelihoods. Community members expect to see that development interventions provided by actors such as WVG improve their livelihoods. In other words, NGO development interventions need to improve the

capabilities of people, increase their assets and help offer them a range of activities required for a means of living. The impact of project interventions on livelihoods is evident in increased knowledge on livelihood related activities, diversified sources of livelihood, increased productivity, improved income, improved savings, and increased access to credits. Other impacts are improved increased access to productive and household assets, increased sense of inclusion and improved health. All this will eventually lead to enhanced standard of living of beneficiaries.

However, for NGO development programmes and projects to be meaningful to the people, one has to consider the socio-economic backgrounds of beneficiaries as well as the measures to sustain the interventions. For instance, differences in sex, age, education, religious affiliations, marital status, occupation, income sources, and household size may affect the nature, scope, participation level and impact of the projects. An awareness of such differences can inform the goal, nature, design and planning of NGO interventions to meet the peculiar needs of beneficiaries. Thus, these features can affect the effects of interventions on people.

Also, to sustain the interventions, NGOs need to ensure effective teamwork, local ownership, adequate participation, empowerment of local people, transparency, accountability, stakeholder commitment, etc. Thus, Figure 2 is premised on the conviction that for development programmes and interventions to be effective, there is the need for an awareness of the role of various stakeholders such as beneficiaries and the core issues that affect their lives and an adequate participation in the design, planning, implementation and evaluation of the interventions. Figure 2 further shows that effective development programmes and

projects require a full understanding of the relevance of interventions to communities, an awareness of the factors affecting the sustainability of the interventions, the expected impact of the interventions on livelihoods and the influence of the socio economic features of beneficiaries on the interventions.

Summary of Literature Review

This chapter reviewed relevant literature on the research topic. It discussed the various theories, concepts and themes, and previous works related to the study. It also presented the conceptual framework informing the study. The review showed that NGOs are important in development discourse due to the inability of the state to single-handedly provide development services to the citizenry, coupled with the dissatisfaction with other development approaches. Also, it was seen that, as a concept, development hinges on various issues all of which are core to the lives of people. Again, in development, social relationships and improved participation are needed at all levels to ensure that interventions truly improve the lives of people.

Moreover, the review showed that development interventions should be relevant to the development of communities. Besides, development agencies need to create the enabling conditions that help all key stakeholders including the local people to establish vital connections between their lives and the structures of society that shape the world they live in. More so, socio economic features, gender equality, empowerment, improved livelihoods and sustainability are vital aspects of meaningful development. Finally, although development partners such as NGOs contribute largely to the development process the foci, functions and approaches they use differ from one another due to the multifaceted nature of development.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology used in the study. It includes the research approach, research design, study population, sample and sampling procedure. It also contains the research instruments, pre-test, reliability and validity, ethical issues, data collection procedure and data processing and analysis.

Research Approach

There are three main research approaches, namely quantitative, qualitative and the mixed methods approaches. The quantitative research approach is used to test objective theories by examining the relationships among variables. These variables can then be measured and analysed using statistical procedures (Babbie, 2004; Creswell, 2008). The final report of this approach consists of introduction, literature and theory, methods, results and discussion. Advocates of this form of inquiry have assumptions about testing theories deductively, ensuring protections against bias, controlling for alternative explanations, and being able to generalise and replicate the findings (Babbie, 2004; Creswell, 2008; Creswell & Clark, 2011).

On the other hand, qualitative research approach is used for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively done, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data (Brymans, 2008; Creswell, 2014). The final report has a flexible structure. Adherents of this form of

inquiry support a way of viewing research that honours an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation (Bhattacharjee, 2012; Greene, 2007; Guest, 2013; Sarantakos, 2005).

In between the above two approaches is the mixed methods research. Mixed method research is an approach to inquiry which involves collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, integrating the two forms of data, and using distinct designs that may involve philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks (Greene, 2007). The basic assumption of this form of inquiry is that the combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches will provide a better understanding of a research problem than either approach alone. This study sought to employ the mixed methods approach on the basis that it would offer the researcher the opportunity to bring out the prevailing conditions in the WED from various perspectives of respondents (Bhattacharjee, 2012; Brymans, 2008; Guest, 2013). In order to effectively assess the impact of an intervention, researchers are advised to consider the mixed methods approach (Baker, 2000; Bamberger, Rao & Woolcock, 2010; Salmen, 2002).

Qualitative data are a significant supplement to quantitative impact evaluations because they can provide complementary perspectives on a programme's performance (Bamberger *et al.*, 2010). Qualitative approaches include FGDs and interviews with selected beneficiaries and other key informants (Rao & Woolcock, 2003). Although the views and opinions gathered during interview schedule, FGDs and interview guides may not be representative of the entire programme's beneficiaries and stakeholders, they are particularly useful for

impact evaluation (Bamberger *et al.*, 2010). In this study, interview schedule was used to generate quantitative data while FGD and interview guides were administered to obtain qualitative data. To Greene (2015), mixed methods research can be integrated at the levels of method, methodology, and paradigm.

In conducting mixed methods research, researchers are advised to pay attention to the purpose, theoretical drive, timing and integration of the issues in the study (Schoonenboom, 2016). Even though Schoonenboom (2016) appears to discredit the issue of theoretical drive as crucial in mixed methods research, she supports the idea that the purpose, timing and integration are vital elements for researchers to consider in mixed methods studies. The purpose for conducting mixed methods studies as adduced by Bryman (2006) informed this study. According to Bryman (2006), the mixed methods research, among others, seeks to increase diversity of views from a wide range of respondents, improves the usefulness of findings, and also enhance the credibility of the study. In their views, Johnson and Christensen (2017) maintain that mixed methods studies enhance the validity of findings and overall, knowledge generation.

Regarding the timing of mixed methods studies, two issues are important namely, simultaneity and dependence (Guest, 2013). Simultaneity deals with the concurrence and sequential nature of the research activities. In concurrent design, both quantitative and qualitative aspects of the study are conducted simultaneously whilst in the sequential design, one aspect precedes the other. For example, in a typical concurrent mixed methods design, a researcher may collect interview data and questionnaire data of a given study simultaneously. It is also possible for a

researcher to collect interview data after the questionnaire data have been collected, as in the case of the sequential design. Thus, the difference between sequential and concurrent designs often relates to the combination of data collection and data analysis (Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017).

On the issue of dependence, the researcher decides whether the execution of one approach depends on the data analysis of the other approach. In essence, the researcher ensures that one aspect of the study depends on the other in terms of data analysis. Research components can also be independent of one another. Here, the researcher chooses to perform data analysis independently. For example, the researcher analyses the quantitative aspect of the study independent, of the qualitative aspect or vice versa (Guest, 2013; Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017). In effect, mixed methods studies can follow concurrent-dependent design in which case both quantitative and qualitative aspects of the data are collected simultaneously but the data analysis of one aspect will depend on the other. It can also be concurrent-independent design, in this case, both quantitative and qualitative data are collected simultaneously but the data analysis of one approach does not depend on the other (Guest, 2013; Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017).

Again, mixed methods can follow a sequential-dependence design where the data collection for one approach precedes the other approach but the data analysis of one approach will depend on the other approach (Guest, 2013). Lastly, it can be a sequential-independent design where the data collection for one approach precedes the other approach whilst the data analysis of one approach is done independent of the other approach. The choice of design for a given studies is

informed by the discretion of the researcher (Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017). This study adopted the sequential-dependence design. This is because the FGDs and interview guide administration was done after administering the interview schedule. Second, the issues in the interview schedule informed the issues in the FGD and interview guides. Lastly, the analyses of the data obtained from the FGD and interview guides were done based on the results from the interview schedule.

Research Design

The researcher does not only select a qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods approach to conduct his/her research; he/she also decides on a type of study design within these three choices. Research designs are types of inquiry within qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches that provide specific direction for procedures required to undertake a given research (Guest, 2013). It is the basic framework outlining the interrelationships between the various research activities required in order to effectively address the research questions (Bhattacharjee, 2012). This study relied on a descriptive survey and exploratory research. Surveys are appropriate in gathering information when the goals of the research call for quantitative and qualitative data and when the information sought is specific and familiar to the respondents (Bhattacharjee, 2012; Bryman, 2006; Creswell & Clark, 2011).

Descriptive surveys can be used to describe phenomena and summarise them. The goal of using surveys for descriptive research is to get a precise measurement of certain phenomenon or issue. Surveys can provide a causal explanation to phenomena. Surveys are also useful for determining the degree to

which a desired objective is attained as a result of a planned programme or intervention (Brymans, 2008). According to Amedahe, as cited in Odoom, Opoku and Ayipah-Ntiakoh (2017), descriptive research helps to clearly establish the nature of prevailing conditions, practices, attitudes, opinions held by persons, processes of doing things and trends that are developed. Descriptive research aims at providing an accurate description or picture of the status or features of a situation or phenomenon (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). According to Krejcie and Morgan, as cited in Kankam (2012), researchers use descriptive survey design because it is relatively quick and cheap to conduct and administer. Also, descriptive survey helps researchers to identify the proportions of people in particular groups and controls the effects of subjects participating twice. However, descriptive survey is deficient in getting participants or respondents to provide very thoughtful and honest answers to questions posed to them (Kankam, 2012).

Exploratory research helps to identify new knowledge, new insights, new meanings and the factors related to the issue being studied. The results of exploratory studies provide a better understanding of the sample being examined (Babbie, 2004). Exploratory design is used when there is very little knowledge about the issues under study. It helps to bring clarity to the problems or issues researchers are investigating (Bryman, 2006; Sarantakos, 2005). A descriptive exploratory research design enables researchers to examine all aspects of the phenomena or problems under investigation (Sarantakos, 2005). This study adopted the descriptive survey and exploratory design with the view to extensively examining the impact of Cocoa Life Project interventions of WVG and establishing

whether or not the Project has impacted the livelihoods of beneficiaries in the study area. The design also enabled the researcher to examine various aspects of the issues including the socio-economic backgrounds of beneficiaries, the level of satisfaction with participation in the Project, the relevance of the Project to community development and the efforts made to promote gender equality under the Project. Other issues examined are the level and factors affecting the sustainability of the Project and the perceived impact of the Project on the livelihoods of beneficiaries. Also, descriptive survey and exploratory research were combined in this study on the basis that there is a growing need to utilise different designs in order to do away with the shortcomings of each single design (Kankam, 2012). It is increasingly advocated that social researchers need to abandon the spurious choice between the qualitative and quantitative methods and designs, and rather be interested in the combination of both in order to maximise the impact and relevance of their studies (Cohen & Manion, cited in Kankam, 2012). Based on the research questions, the researcher combined both quantitative and qualitative methods in the form of interview schedule, focus group discussion and interview guide in a descriptive survey and exploratory design in order to bring clarity on the issues.

Study Setting

The Wassa East District (WED) formerly Mpohor Wassa East was originally carved out from Wassa Fiase Mpohor District in 1988 under LI 1385. Daboase is its capital. The District is located at the South-Eastern end of the Western Region. It is bounded to the North East and South East by the Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira, Twifo Ati-Morkwa and Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem

Districts, all in the Central Region. The District is again bounded on the North West by the Prestea Huni-Valley District. In the south, it is bounded by, Mpohor and Shama Districts in the Western Region and occupies an area of 1880 square kilometers of which 344 square km are used as cultivable land. In 2012 Legislative Instrument (LI) 2019 split Mpohor Wassa into two namely Wassa East and Mpohor Districts. Wassa East Assembly has a total membership of thirty-two (32), made up of Twenty-one (21) elected members, eleven (11) Government Appointees, the District Chief Executive and the Member of Parliament. There are four area councils. These are Daboase, Ektuase, Ateiku and Enyinabrem Area Councils (Wassa East District Assembly, 2015).

The District has large deposits of gold, traces of iron and kaolin hence, the upsurge of mining activities in the district. Small-scale mining activities are carried out in areas like Sekyere Krobo, Sekyere Heman, Nsadweso and Ateiku. Before the District was split, the population was 123,996. The District's population is estimated at 94,507 made up of 49,616 (52.5%) male and female of 44,891 [47.5%] (GSS, 2014). The District's share of the total population of the Western Region is 6.4 percent but its fertility rate (4.5%) is higher than the regional figure of 3.6 percent (WEDA, 2015).

There are 192 settlements in the District and a spatial analysis indicates that the provision of services in the District is inadequate and their distribution skewed in favour of the District capital. The District is predominantly dominated by agriculture, with mining contributing about one-third to economic activities. About 70 percent of the active population are into peasant farming, producing food crops

and cash crops like cocoa, coffee and oil palm with about 20 percent indulged in small-scale mining activities. The main agricultural produce is food stuff. This calls for a massive investment in food processing which would lead to competitive prices for the farmers, hence higher incomes (WEDA, 2015).

According to WEDA (2015), the District has a poor road network and only 25km out of the 202km motor able roads in the area are of bituminous surface with 103 km being engineered roads while 43km is partially engineered and the remaining 31km classified as none engineered. The situation renders some of the settlements in the District inaccessible during rainy season. Besides, the poor road network accounts for the low market for agricultural produce in the District making prices very low (WEDA, 2015). Also, the District is faced with inadequate educational facilities. The District has limited classroom blocks, urinals, libraries, playgrounds, etc. which hinder academic performance. For instance, out of a total of 192 settlements, there are 94 pre-schools, 90 primary schools, 48 JHS and one SHS. There is the need for more investments in order to reduce the incidence of school dropouts and absenteeism (WEDA, 2015).

Another issue of concern in the District is inadequate health facilities. There are 17 health facilities in the District which are inadequate to cater for the health needs of the inhabitants. Inhabitants on the average travel about 31km to access health facilities. The doctor/patient ratio is 1:32,555 with a nurse/patient ratio of 1:2,668. There is the need for the construction of more health facilities and also equip the existing facilities (WEDA, 2015). The situation in the District requires more health interventions from NGOs, CBOs and corporate bodies (WEDA, 2015).

Figure 3 presents the map of WED, showing some of the villages and neighbouring districts. In addition, the District is saddled with inadequate safe and clean water, toilet facilities and sanitary facilities.

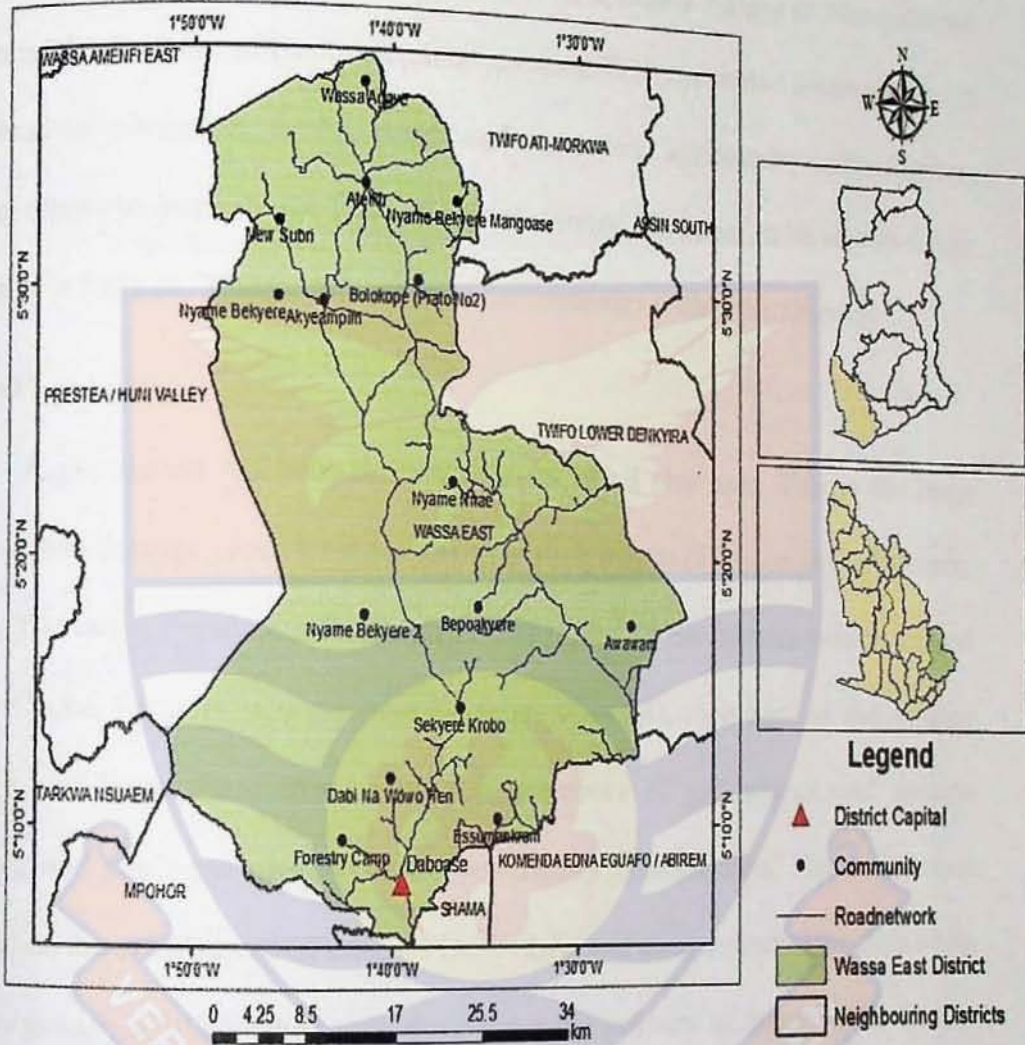


Figure 3: Map of WED showing some communities and neighbouring districts

Source: Department of Geography and Regional Planning, University of Cape Coast (2018)

The District has 65 percent water coverage as at the end of 2013. Out of this, 4 communities have access to pipe-borne water and 3 communities with Small Town Piped System. Sixty-two communities have boreholes while 70 communities have hand-dug wells. There is the need for increased development interventions

from development partners and agencies in order to augment the efforts of the Assembly (WEDA, 2015). WVG operated mainly in Ekutuase and Daboase Area Councils. Out of these two Area Councils, WVG operated mainly in 18 registered communities for most of its development services. WVG provided interventions in the areas of education, health, water and sanitation, agriculture, microfinance, among others to improve the lives of the inhabitants. However, with regard to the Cocoa Life Project, WVG operated in 44 communities within the District.

Study Population

A population has been defined as a set of all elements. This is the large group to which researchers want to generalise their results (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). The target population for the study comprised all the farmers who belonged to the Cocoa Farmers' Cooperative Societies (CFCSSs), members of the village savings and loans associations (VSLAs), members of gari processors' groups (GPGs), and the soap makers in the beneficiary communities. The researcher focused on the members of CFCSSs, GPGs, VSLAs and soap makers since they were the key groups WVG worked with throughout the delivery of many of the Cocoa Life Project interventions in the WED. The population also included the District Director of Agriculture (DDA), the Head of Business Advisory Centre (HBAC), District Education Planning Officer (DEPO), and Extension Agents.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2006), a sample is the group from which information is obtained. A number of factors including expenditure, time, and accessibility commonly prevent researchers from gaining information from the

entire population (Cohen, Manion & Marrison, 2004). This explains the need for researchers to often collect data from a smaller group or subset of the total population. This is done such that the knowledge obtained is representative of the whole population under study.

The study used purposive, stratified, random and convenience sampling techniques. Purposive sampling method was used to select the DDA, HBAC, DEPO, and one Extension Agent as key informants of the study. These officers played a key role in the implementation of the interventions. For example, many of the interventions which targeted farmer beneficiaries were implemented by the District Agricultural Department, with Extension Agents providing some of the training programme on modern farming methods and also mobilising the farmers in the various communities for the Project. Besides, almost all the interventions related to alternative livelihoods, business development, financial literacy, savings and loans, etc. were implemented by the Business Advisory Centre (BAC).

Also, having obtained a list of beneficiaries from the District Agricultural Office and the BAC, the researcher stratified the beneficiaries into four different strata, namely members of CFCSSs, members of VSLAs, members of GPGs, and soap makers. Sampling was done separately for each stratum. The farmer beneficiaries belonged to CFCSSs formed by WVG in the communities. However, some communities such as Sekyere Krobo, Aboaboso, etc. had more than one Society. For example, Sekyere Krobo had three Societies all of which benefited from the Project. In all, there were 57 CFCSSs in the communities. Even though farmer beneficiaries belonged to CFCSSs, not all of them were active members of

their various Societies. Some farmers became less interested in the activities of their Societies after the departure of WVG from the District at the end of the delivery of the Project. In all, there were 456 active members of CFCSS across the 57 Societies in the District, with some CFCSSs having more active members than others. Many of the active members were the executives of the CFCSSs who had the mandate to ensure the Societies were sustained in the larger interest of the communities.

Using Yamane's (1967) sample size formula, at a margin of error (0.05), 213 were selected out of the 456 beneficiary farmers in the communities through simple random sampling method (lottery approach). The list of all the farmers in the beneficiary communities was entered into Microsoft Excel (2010) version. Random numbers were generated for the names in the list. The random numbers were used to shuffle the names, after which the first 213 farmer beneficiaries with their communities were selected. Below is the equation proposed by Yamane (1967):

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where;

n represents the sample size

N represents the population

e represents the margin of error

$$n = \frac{456}{1 + 456(0.05)^2} = 213 \text{ members of CFCSSs}$$

Again, as part of the Project, WVG formed VSLAs in beneficiary communities. Members of these VSLAs also benefited from the Project interventions such as training on business skills, financial literacy, alternative livelihood programmes, etc. to members of the groups. The associations were made up of farmers, petty traders, gari processors, soap makers and other income generating groups in the communities. However, not all communities had VSLAs. Communities which had VSLAs included Kwabaa, Nyankonakpoe, Apatebi, Esumankrom, Ebukrom Nkwanta, Nkapiem and Amposaso. Other communities are Awawam, Aboaboso, Anto, Domama, Fante Nyamebekyere, Sekyere Nyamebekyere, Beenuyie and Nyamendaye. Also, not all the VSLAs were actively in operation due to two main reasons. First, some VSLAs had experienced theft cases with regard to the savings of members. For instance, at Kwabaa the loss of over Ten Thousand Ghana cedis (GH¢10,000) savings had discouraged many members to take part in the activities of the Association. Second, the departure of WVG from the District after the delivery of the Project interventions in the District reduced the interest of members in the VSLAs. Thus, there was a total of 120 active members of VSLAs in the beneficiary communities. Based on Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size distribution table, with a population of 120 at 95 percent confidence level and 5 percent margin of error, 92 beneficiaries of VSLAs were selected for the study through simple random sampling method (lottery approach).

Also, WVG's project interventions focused on the members of GPGs in the communities. Apart from farming, some community members were into the production of gari as alternative livelihood source. WVG provided training on petty

trading, business skills, financial literacy, etc. to the members of these groups. The members were also trained on modern method of gari production. Again, not all communities were into the production of gari. Besides, though some communities were into gari processing they did not have recognised groups of gari processors. Communities which had GPGs included Anto, Aboboaso, Nkapiem, Ebukurom Junction, Esumankurom, Sekyere Nyamebekyere and Apetabi had gari processors with recognised groups. Others communities are Amankesease, Kwabaa, Domama and Nyankponpke. In all, there were 75 members of gari processing who were into active and well-organised groups in the communities. Using the formula proposed by Yamane's (1967), 63 beneficiaries who were into gari processing were selected for this study through simple random sampling technique (lottery approach). Table 2 displays the sample distribution for the study apart from the key informants.

Table 2: Sample distribution for beneficiaries of the Project

Category of beneficiaries	Population	Sample
Members of CFCSs	456	213
Members of VSLAs	120	92
Members of GPGs	75	63
Soap Makers	-	38
Total	651	406

Source: Field Survey, Odoom (2018)

Besides, the researcher included beneficiaries who were into soap making. Unlike the farmers and gari processors, soap makers did not have recognised associations with clearly defined leadership structure in the District. Also, although

many community members were trained in soap making as an alternative livelihood, many of the beneficiaries were not using the knowledge gained to expand their livelihood choices. Thus, the researcher used convenience sampling to select 38 soap makers in communities including Kwaaba, Miaweni, Aboboaso, Apatebi, Esumankrom, Ebukrom Nkwanta, Nkapiem and Amposaso. Others are Domama, Fante Nyamebikyere, Beenuyie and Nyamendaye. The inclusion of beneficiaries who were into soap making was to enable the researcher to obtain diverse views on the issues from various perspectives. Convenience sampling helps to select subjects based on their accessibility, availability and proximity to the researcher (Babbie, cited in Gyamfi, 2014; Sarantakos, 2005). According to Suen, Huang and Lee, as cited in Hu (2014), even though convenience sampling method is a non-probabilistic method, it can also be used in quantitative studies.

A total of 410 respondents made up of four key informants, 213 farmers, 92 members of VSLAs, 63 gari processors, and 38 soap makers were sampled for the study. On the whole, apart from the soap makers, beneficiaries involved in this study were dominated by the executives of the various groups. As leaders of the groups, the executives had the duty to work hard to sustain the groups, hence they were very active in the groups. The minimum participants in descriptive studies and correlation studies should be 100 and 50 respectively (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006).

Data Collection Instruments

Interview schedule, FGD and interview guides were used for data collection. Aside the popularity of interview schedules as tools for collecting data from large respondents, FGD and interview guides are very useful supplements to

quantitative data in impact evaluation (Creswell, 2008, 2014; Rao & Woolcock, 2003; Sarantakos, 2005). A set of interview schedule made up of six sections was used to collect data from the members of the CFCSSs, GPGs, and VSLAs, as well as soap makers who benefited from the Project. Section A solicits data on the socio-economic backgrounds of respondents using 20 items made up of both open and close ended questions. Section B focused on beneficiaries and local authorities' level of satisfaction in planning, implementation and evaluation stages of the interventions. There were 17 closed ended items measured on the scale of 5=Very Highly Satisfied; 4=Highly Satisfied; 3=Moderately Satisfied; 2=Lowly Satisfied; and 1=Very Lowly Satisfied.

Again, Section C of the interview schedule looked at the perception of beneficiaries and local authorities with regard to the relevance of Cocoa Life Project to community development. All the 18 items were close ended based on the scale of 5=Very Highly Relevant; 4=Highly Relevant; 3=Moderately Relevant; 2=Lowly Relevant; and 1=Very Lowly Relevant. Section D examined the perception of beneficiaries and local authorities on the efforts WVG put in place to promote gender equality in the District using 19 different items measured based on a scale of 5=Strongly Agree; 4=Moderately Agree; 3=Undecided; 2=Moderately Disagree; and 1=Strongly Disagree.

Section E examined the sustainability of the Cocoa Life Project interventions of WVG in the District. In all, two issues were considered. The first part dealt with the level of sustainability of the Project in two ways. It began with whether or not the interventions were sustainable, based on the following scale:

5=Very Sustainable; 4=Moderately Sustainable; 3=Neutral; 2=Moderately Unsustainable; and 1=Very Unsustainable. The second part of the first issue looked at the relationship between indicators of sustainability and the Project, measured using a scale of 5=Strongly Agree; 4=Moderately Agree; 3=Undecided; 2=Moderately Disagree; and 1=Strongly Disagree. The second issue of the third research objective explored the views of respondents on the factors affecting the sustainability of the project interventions. There were 12 items measured on a scale of 5=Very Strongly Agree; 4=Strongly Agree, 3=Moderately Agree; 2=Lowly Agree; and 1=Very Lowly Agree.

Finally, Section F explored the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihood of beneficiaries in two parts. The first part made up of 14 items looked at the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihood of beneficiaries based on the scale of 5=Very Highly Agree; 4=Highly Agree; 3=Moderately Agree; 2=Lowly Agree; and 1=Very Lowly Agree. The second part also made up of 14 items considered the state of livelihood before and after the interventions on a scale of 4=High; 3=Moderate; 2=Low; and 1=Uncertain.

Like questionnaires, interview schedules often provide evidence of patterns amongst a relatively large population. Interview schedule administration becomes possible when the interviewer decides to structure the items or issues that he/she intends to gather data on. It allows all interviewees to be given exactly the same context of questioning which is usually specific and very often in the forms of closed and open-ended. The strength of interview schedules lies in the fact that data collected is easier to analyse, code and compare (Bryman, 2001; Sarantakos, 2005).

In order to fully capture the real issues of change in the lives of beneficiaries, Rooney (2011) suggests that NGOs should embrace qualitative evaluations of the impact of their interventions. In the views of Bhattacharjee (2012) and Baker (2000), the best way to assess the impact of an intervention is through triangulation. By so doing, researchers employ variety of means to validate data generated from various sources. In this sense, apart from the interview schedule, the researcher organised FGDs for some of the selected beneficiaries and also conducted key informant interviews. The researcher conducted FGDs for some selected members of CFCSSs, VSLAs, GPGs, and soap makers using convenience sampling method. In all, two FGDs were organised for the selected members of CFCSSs, VSLAs, GPGs, and soap makers, one in each of the two Area Councils. There were eight members in each FGD organised for the selected members of CFCSSs, VSLAs, GPGs, and soap makers. Thus, 16 members participated in the FGDs conducted for the members of the CFCSSs, GPGs, VSLAs, and soap makers.

The FGDs focused on the perception of beneficiaries and local authorities regarding their satisfaction in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the Project; the relevance of the Cocoa Life Project to community development; and the efforts of WVG to promote gender equality through the Project. It also explored the level of sustainability of the Project and the factors responsible for it. Again, the FGDs focused on the perceived impact of the Project on the livelihood of beneficiaries.

FGD is a qualitative data collection technique which makes use of group interviews rather than single interviews with the aid of a facilitator. FGD helps the

researcher to interview groups of people who share a common affinity to the topic under consideration. It also enables the researcher to solicit the varied opinions and explore the different perspectives and experiences of participants on the same topic (Creswell, 2008, 2014; Matthews & Ross, 2010). FGD is a type of data collection method that involves bringing in a small group of subjects (usually 6 to 10 people) at one location, and having them discuss a phenomenon of interest. One advantage of using FGD is that it helps to build a holistic understanding of the problem based on participants' experiences. Like interview guides, FGD guides are flexible which allows the researcher to probe into the underlying issues (Bryman, 2001; Corbetta, 2003; Kendall, 2008). They are used to obtain in-depth insights on participant's attitudes, actions, and opinions (Babbie, 2004; Creswell, 2008; Kendall, 2008).

Moreover, as a means of validating the data, the researcher conducted key informant interviews with the HDAD, HBAC, DEPO, and one Extension Agent. The researcher administered an interview guide in order to solicit views from these key informants to complement the data from the beneficiaries (Babbie, 2004; Bhattacharjee, 2012; Creswell, 2014). Interviews can be relied upon either as complementary or supplementary method. Despite the nature of its usage in data collection, interviews it can be structured, semi-structured and unstructured (Cohen et al., cited in Kankam, 2012). Though an unstructured interview allows more freedom for interviewees to handle their responses, it is not conducted based on a list of prepared questions (Kvale, 2008). A semi-structured interview is conducted with some freedom to probe the responses of the interviewees but this may not be

the case in respect of interview guide since the latter must follow a set pattern. The main issues in the interview schedule informed the issues in the interview guide.

The interview schedule, the FGD and interview guides were constructed based on the literature reviewed in the study. The instruments were revised by the supervisors on many occasions to ensure that the layout, wording and contents of the instruments were appropriate. The revision also helped to avoid unnecessary repetition of items and also deal with ambiguities and threatening questions. The constructive and informative responses from the supervisors helped to improve the final version of the instruments. The interview schedule, FGD and interview guides were appropriate for this study since they are often used together in mixed methods studies (Greene, 2007; Matthews & Ross, 2010; Strauss & Corbin, 2004).

Pre-testing of Instruments

Pre-testing data collection instruments seeks to achieve three goals. First, it helps to ensure that the instruments are suitable to elicit the right responses. Second, it enables the researcher to check whether or not the items are clear and to identify any ambiguity if so exists. Third, pre-testing helps to ensure that administrative procedures are effectively followed by the researcher (Kankam, 2012). Data collection instruments were pre-tested on 38 randomly selected respondents in Fantekwa District. Apart from Wassa East ADP, Fantekwa is the only district in which WVG first implemented its interventions under the Cocoa Life Project. The results of the pre-test informed the level of suitability of the instruments. The results also necessitated some alterations and redesign of the instruments with the view to ensuring accuracy and validity of the data collected.

Validity and Reliability of Instruments

According to the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing, as cited in Kankam (2012), validity is about the accuracy of the inferences or interpretations made based on the test scores. In fact, it is the inferences regarding specific uses of a test which are validated, not the test itself. In essence, validity is seen as a judgment of the appropriateness of a measure for the specific inferences or decisions that result from the scores generated by the measure (Kankam, 2012; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2006). Examining the validity seeks to ensure that the instruments used measure what they are supposed to measure. To establish the validity of data, three approaches are essential. They are: content-related, criterion-related and construct-related validity (Cohen *et al.*, 2004; Kankam, 2012).

On the other hand, according to Cunningham, as cited in Kankam (2012), reliability is a statistical quality of test scores that is independent of content. Reliability helps to ensure that the instruments for data collection produce consistent and approximately the same results in different settings and at different points in time. Reliability is the extent to which measures are free from errors. If a measure has high reliability, it has relatively little error and if it has low reliability, there is a great error. If the instrument is unreliable, it would have a tendency to bring about unexpected outcomes (Kankam, 2012; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2006).

Cunningham, as cited in Kankam (2012) identifies two main types of reliability. Cunningham adds that internal reliability deals with the consistency of the instruments which can be obtained by using Cronbach alpha. While external reliability can be obtained by using the same methods and procedures in the same

or similar settings in order to discover whether the results will be consistent or not (Kankam, 2012; Wiersma & Jurs, 2005). The reliability of the questionnaire and interview schedules can be obtained using Kuder Cunningham,-Richardson "KR" and Cronbach's "alpha" which means that a high KR reliability or high and both indicate good reliability. Obtaining over 0.7 from alpha test suggests a good internal consistency of the instruments (Cunningham, cited in Kankam, 2012).

In order to increase the value of pre-testing the interview schedule, the respondents were provided with a space to make comments on the problems and suggestions for any development. Reliability was computed using Cronbach alpha. While reliability of quantitative data can be achieved by using the statistical procedures, ensuring the reliability in qualitative data is a little different. Some procedures have been suggested to enhance the reliability of qualitative studies. First, is about checking multiple sources of qualitative data to ensure that the data collected is consistent. Second, is about thinking carefully about the procedures employed to gather the data about the trustworthiness of the sources of informants. The last procedure relates to applying internal criticism [e.g. compare what the informant says against what is said by other informants] (Mertler & Charles, 2005).

The procedures stated above were strictly adhered to. The instruments were pre-tested to ensure their effectiveness and appropriateness for the study. Data were obtained from different respondents from diverse sources. The Cronbach's alpha was calculated for the items in each objective. For the items in the first part of objective two, coefficients of 0.707, 0.802 and 0.702 respectively were recorded for planning, implementation and evaluation. On relevance of the Project to

community development, the coefficient was 0.819 whilst on WVG's efforts to promote gender equality had coefficient of 0.708 as shown in Appendix D.

Also, the level of sustainability of the Project and the factors affecting the sustainability of the Project had coefficients of 0.841 and 0.770 respectively whilst the perceived impact of the Project on livelihood of beneficiaries had coefficient of 0.803. Based on George and Mallery (2003) rules of thumb for Cronbach's alpha, all the items were found to be reliable. Based on the results of the pre-test, some changes were made to ensure the reliability and validity of the instruments. For example, the items in the first part of objective two were reviewed, thus reducing them to 17 whilst the items in the third part were reduced to 19. Also, apart from determining the overall perceived impact of the Project as in the fourth objective, the state of livelihood before and after the interventions was looked at. Besides, a few corrections were made to some of the items to ensure clarity of understanding so as to obtain the right responses during the actual data collection.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues that were considered in the study include observing institutional protocol before carrying out the data collection exercise in the communities and other key departments. The researcher presented an introductory letter obtained from the Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension indicating the purpose of the study to the HDAD, HBAC, DEPO, Assembly members, as well as the executives of CFCSS, GPGs and VSLAs in the communities. The purpose of the research was also explained to the members of the various groups in the beneficiary communities. Respondents and participants

were informed that the study was for an academic purpose. Also, respondents and participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity of information provided. Again, respondents and participants were told that participation was voluntary and that they had the right at any point in time to refuse participation. Besides, the researcher sought the consent of respondents and participants prior to the collection of data. The duration used to complete the items on the instruments was discussed with the respondents and the participants.

Data Collection Procedure

As a result of the extensive nature of the work, the researcher recruited and trained five research assistants to help with the field data. The five field assistants were selected on the basis of their educational background and their ability to sufficiently explain the terms to the respondents in their local languages. The researcher also considered the experience of assistants in terms of social science research. Two of the assistants were trained teachers working in the District, one national service person, and a trained Extension Agent. The fifth person was an Assembly man who had worked with WVG as a Child Welfare Supervisor in WED.

During the training, the research instruments were thoroughly discussed. The aim of the study was discussed and the terms operationalised in the study were explained to them. The training offered a platform for equal understanding and interpretation of questions, correctness and completeness in recording responses. It also equipped field assistants with community entry techniques and human relations skills. The data collection took place from July 2018 to October 2018. In line with sequential-dependence mixed methods design, the interview schedule was

first conducted followed by the FGDs and interview guides. The researcher personally organised the FGDs and the key informant interviews in the final two weeks of data collection period. Enough time was given to respondents during the data collection exercise so as to ensure quality in data. One key challenge faced was language barrier in the Ewe dominated communities. The researcher addressed this challenge by including two persons who spoke Ewe fluently in the research team.

Data Processing and Analysis

Data analysis is key in any credible research. Serious researchers usually consider the mode of analysis to be employed before the collection of data (Cohen *et al.*, 2004). Data analysis refers to the systematic process by which researchers interpret the data gathered from their observation, interviews and readings. It entails identifying, classifying, categorising, synthesising, consolidating, sorting, explaining, developing theories, searching for themes, and organising in order to make sense out of the data that one has collected (Denzin, cited in Kankam, 2012). The collected data from the field were edited for spelling mistakes and inconsistencies. The data were further cleaned to ensure that the research assistants followed all the instructions and checked whether all questions were answered, before entries were made for analysis. The analysis of data collected in mixed methods studies is informed by both quantitative and qualitative analytical techniques (Corbetta, 2003; Creswell, 2014; Sarantakos, 2005).

In compliance with the sequential-dependence mixed methods research design, the researcher ensured that the analysis of the qualitative data was dependent on the quantitative data (Johnson, 2017; Morgan, 2014; Schoonenboom,

2016). In other words, the issues in the interview schedule informed the analyses of the data generated through the FGD and interview guides. The Statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS) version 22.0 was used to input the quantitative data for processing and analysis. The SPSS has a good editing and labeling facilities and it is able to handle missing data with ease. Tables, graphs and charts were used to present the results based on the data obtained using the interview schedule.

In qualitative analysis, personal choices, preferences and decisions as well as subjective views about truths and knowledge form the basis for inquiry (Babbie, 2004; Creswell, 2008, 2014). In this study, qualitative data were analysed using thematic and content analyses. Here, the various responses obtained from the FGDs and interview guides were collated, coded, grouped and discussed. Thematic analysis was done based on the data from the FGDs, whereas content analysis was employed for the data obtained from the key informant interviews. Relevant themes were obtained, presented and discussed and useful quotations were used to enrich the discussion. Also, the analyses of both the quantitative and qualitative data were done based on the research objectives.

Below are the quantitative analytical tools used for the study:

Research Objective 1: Determine the socio-economic backgrounds of beneficiaries who received the Cocoa Life Project interventions of WVG

Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were used to describe and explain the socio-economic backgrounds of beneficiaries.

Research Objective 2a: Examine the perception of beneficiaries and local authorities in terms of their level of satisfaction with regard to participation in planning, implementation and evaluation of the interventions

Means and standard deviations were used to examine the views of respondents on the level of satisfaction with regard to participation in planning, implementation and evaluation activities of the interventions.

Research Objective 2b: Examine the perception of beneficiaries and local authorities in terms of the relevance of the interventions to community development

Means and standard deviations were used to analyse the data obtained using the interview schedule. Diverse responses on the relevance of the Cocoa Life Project interventions to community development were presented and discussed.

Research Objective 2c: Examine the perception of beneficiaries and local authorities in terms of the efforts of WVG in promoting gender equality through the Project

Frequencies and percentages were used to describe the views of beneficiaries on the efforts of WVG in promoting gender equality through the Project based on the data from the interview schedule. Additionally, an independent samples t-test was used to compare the mean scores of male and female beneficiaries on the efforts WVG put in place to promote gender equality through the Project interventions. The responses for Very Strongly Agree (VSA), Strongly Agree (SA), and Moderately Agree (MA) were classified as Agreed (A), while the

responses for Moderately Disagree (MD), Strongly Disagree (SD) and Very Strongly Disagree (VSD) were grouped as Disagreed (D).

Research Objective 3: Assess the level of sustainability of the Cocoa Life Project and the factors affecting the sustainability of the interventions in WED

Frequencies and percentages were used to ascertain the level of sustainability of the Project interventions. A chi-square analysis was further conducted to determine the relationship between key indicators of sustainability and the Project. Also, means and standard deviation were used to explore the views of respondents on the factors affecting the sustainability of the Project.

Research Objective 4: Determine the extent of the perceived impact of Cocoa Life Project interventions on the livelihoods of beneficiaries

Means and standard deviation were used to explore the extent of the perceived impact of the Project interventions on beneficiaries' livelihoods. Also, frequencies and percentages were used to describe the views of beneficiaries on the state of livelihood before and after the interventions. Again, for inferential analysis, a paired-samples t-test was used to determine whether significant differences existed between the state of livelihoods before and after the interventions.

Research Objective 5: Examine whether there are differences in socio-economic backgrounds (sex, age, education level, religious affiliations, marital status, major occupation, family size, income level and ethnic background) of beneficiaries and the impact of the Project interventions on livelihoods

An independent samples t-test was used to compare the mean scores of the impact of the Project on the livelihood of beneficiaries based on sex. Moreover, a

One-Way Between Groups (ANOVA) was conducted to determine the differences in age, educational levels, marital status and the perceived impact of the Project on livelihoods of beneficiaries. A similar analytical approach was used to examine the differences in occupation, religious affiliations, income levels, household size and ethnic backgrounds and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihood of beneficiaries.

Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the methods used in the study. The study relied on the sequential-dependence mixed methods approach and descriptive survey and exploratory design, with members of CFCSSs, GPGs, VSLAs, GPGs, and soap makers in the beneficiary communities as the population. The population also included the DDA, HBAC, DEPO, and an extension agent. Purposive, stratified, simple random and convenience sampling techniques were used to select 410 respondents. Of this number (410), 346 actually took part in the study as some of the selected beneficiaries failed to take part in the interview schedule exercise after several attempts by the researcher and his research team to reach them. Interview schedule, FGD and interview guides are the research instruments used in the study. Quantitative analytical tools including percentages, means, standard deviation, chi-square, independence samples t-test, paired samples t-test and ANOVA were used whereas thematic and content analyses were done in the case of the qualitative analysis. Tables, charts and graphs were used to present the results from the quantitative data.

CHAPTER FOUR

SOCIO ECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS OF PROJECT BENEFICIARIES INVOLVED IN THE STUDY

Introduction

This chapter discusses the results based on the objective that sought to determine the socio-economic characteristics of beneficiaries of Cocoa Life Project interventions who were involved in the study. Specifically, the chapter presents background characteristics such as sex, number of years beneficiaries had lived in the communities, age, education, religious affiliation, marital status, and major occupation. Other variables discussed were position in the family, family size, sources and levels of income, expenditure, highest level of formal education attained by a member in the household, assets, as well as the ethnic inclinations of beneficiaries. These background characteristics had been found to influence impact of development interventions on the lives of people (Anderson, Case & Lam, 2001; Creighton & Hudson, 2002; Filmer & Pritchett, 2001; Nwachukwu, 2014; Imoh *et al.*, 2009, Osawe, 2013; Rahman & Shaheen, 2014; Seekings & Natrass, 2005).

Sex distribution of respondents

The first socio-economic feature of respondents was sex distribution. An awareness of the sex composition of people helps in understanding the group dynamics, roles and expectations of different people in society. Furthermore, tasks men and women perform are often not the same (Khatun & Roy, 2012). The study found out that, more than half of the respondents (53.8%) were males while 46.2 percent were females (Figure 4).

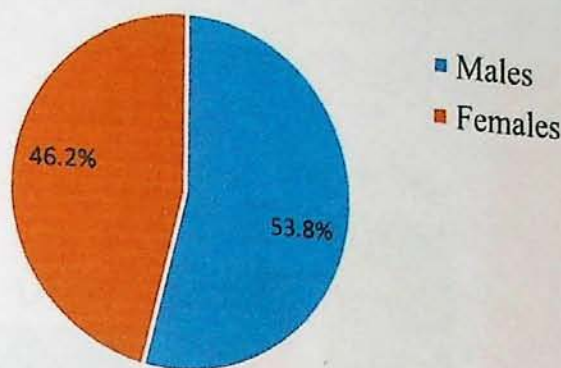


Figure 4: Sex distribution of respondents

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

This means that there were more male beneficiaries of the Project who took part in this study as compared to females. The finding on sex distribution is vital because sex plays a critical role in livelihood choices and community development interventions (Mphande, 2016).

Number of years respondents had stayed in the communities

Again, a little less than half (40.6%) of the respondents had lived there for more than 15 years on whilst just a few (13.9%) had lived for not more than five years. Furthermore, (20.2%) had lived and spent between six and 10 years and about a quarter (25.4%) had spent between 11 and 15 years. In essence, the majority (66%) of the respondents had lived in the communities for at least eleven years as shown in Figure 5. It is therefore expected that respondents who benefited from the Project would have a good understanding of the expectations and dynamics of the project interventions and their impact on the communities.

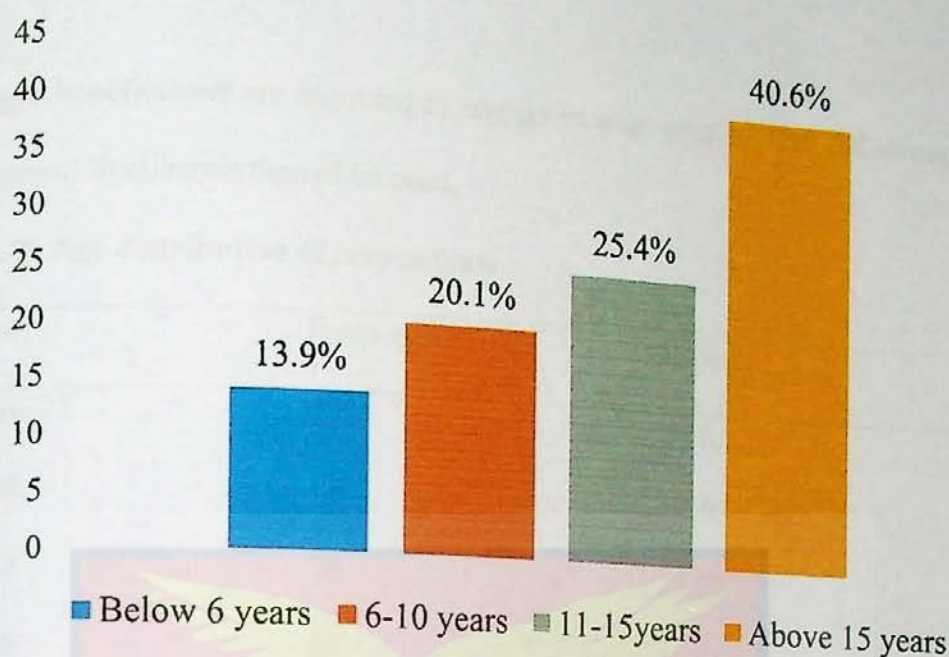


Figure 5: Number of years respondents had stayed in their communities

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

Age distribution of respondents

Under the Project, Cocoa Life expected that key interventions are delivered to empower and also improve the lives of the youth. Thus, it is vital to ascertain the involvement of the youth in the interventions in the District based on the categorization of the age distribution of respondents as presented in Table 3. Age is vital in the context of development interventions and livelihood strategies. Close to three-fourth of the respondents (73.39%) were between 25 and 44 years but few were below 25 years (6.43%). This implies that most of the beneficiaries of the Project interventions who were involved in this study were youthful. Age has an impact on livelihood choices and strategies of people (Gale, 2011). It is believed that younger farmer beneficiaries are more likely to be oriented towards adopting modern agricultural technologies as well as non-agricultural livelihoods than older ones. Furthermore, age has been found to influence livelihood (Dingde *et al.*, 2015).

Younger beneficiaries are expected to engage in wage employment and or non-agricultural livelihoods than older ones.

Table 3: Age distribution of respondents

Years	Frequency	Percent
Below 25	22	6.43
25-29	66	19.30
30-34	76	22.22
35-39	64	18.71
40-44	45	13.16
45 and above	69	20.18
Total	342	100.00

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

The age of a person determines the experience, productive assets accumulated, social networks established for survival, and energy levels (Gale, 2011).

Educational level of respondents

The study results revealed that more than half (50.9%) of respondents had no formal education. About (39.8%) had basic education whilst very few (1.2%) had educational qualification up to the tertiary level (Figure 6). Low level of education has been associated with skill difficulty in taking up non-farm livelihood activities (Barrett *et al.*, 2001; Oladipo & Adekunle, 2010; Rahman & Shaheen, 2014). Barbier and Hochard (2014) argued that education is vital for human capital formation. People who have higher educational attainment often adopt innovations faster and easily (Oladipo & Adekunle, 2010). The result on educational level

confirms the position of the District Assembly (WEDA, 2015) which reported that, low education is a major concern bedeviling the District.

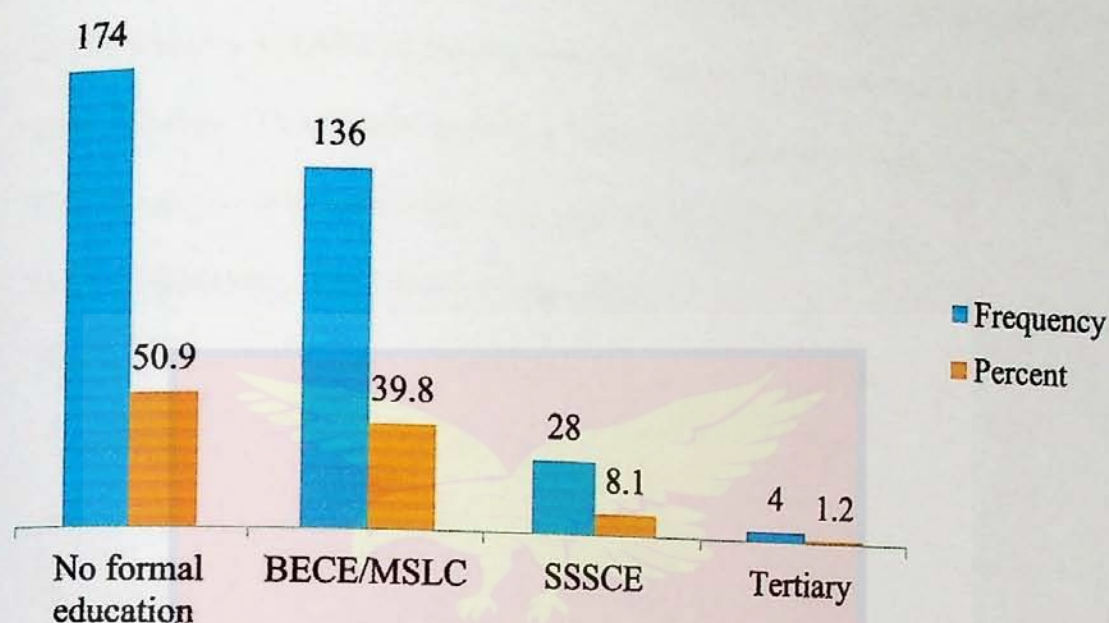


Figure 6: Educational level of respondents

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

Again, the findings on level of education agrees with Egyir (2013) who found that many people in rural communities in Ghana have low level of education. Adoption of technology was key in the Cocoa Life Project intervention of WVG. For instance, beneficiaries were trained on modern farming methods. However, the general low level of education might affect how beneficiaries adopted the new farming methods provided by WVG. This is because educational level influences technology adoption (Baffoe-Asare *et al.*, 2013). Besides, low level of education is a challenge to the Sustainable Livelihood Framework [SLF] (Figure 1) since education is key in any livelihood framework.

Religious affiliations of respondents

The results on religious affiliation of the respondents are presented in Table 4. The majority (64.6%) of the respondents were Christians whilst 28.9 percent were Muslims. This is not surprising because Christianity, Islam and African Tradition are the dominant religious groups in the District and Ghana.

Table 4: Religious affiliations of respondents

Religion	Frequency	Percent
Christianity	221	64.60
Islam	99	28.90
Traditional	17	5.00
Others	5	1.50
Total	342	100.00

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

Marital status of respondents

The study further looked at the marital status of respondents. Figure 7 shows that many (61.1%) of the respondents who participated in this study were married. Marital status is a source of prestige, enhances confidence of people in decision-making, and promotes participation in the activities of the larger society. Married people tend to have many responsibilities which is likely to influence attendance at meetings (Seekings & Natrass, 2005).

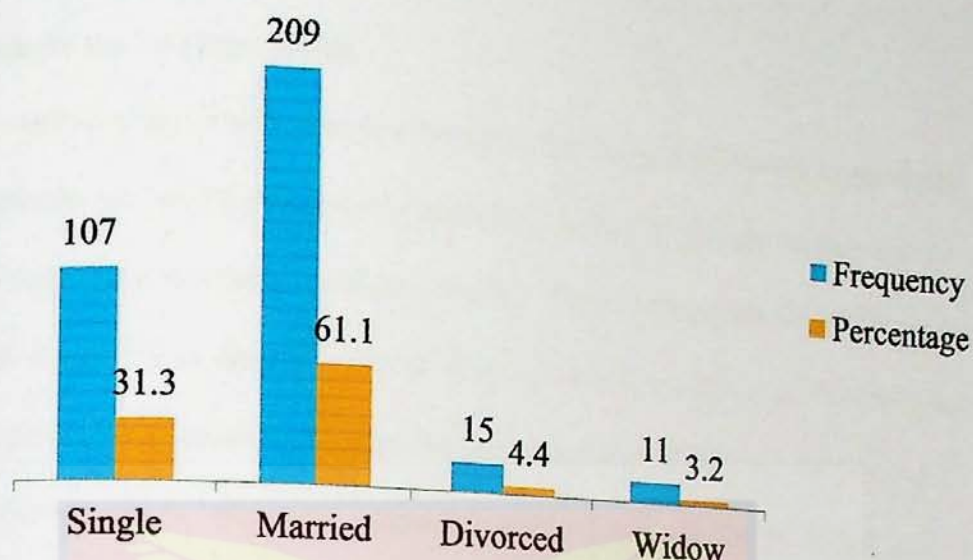


Figure 7: Marital status of respondents

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

Position of respondents in the family

About a quarter (25.4%) of respondents were household heads whilst the majority (74.5%) were ordinary members of individual family (Figure 8). The study conforms to GSS (2014) which concluded that only 23.4 percent of the inhabitants in the District were household heads.

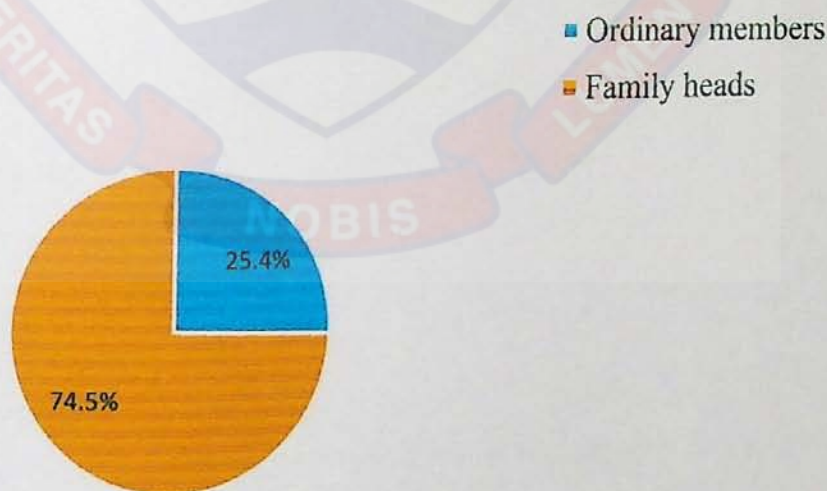


Figure 8: Positions of respondents in the family

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

Household size of respondents

In this study, it was observed that more than half (52.6%) of the respondents had between six and 10 people in the household. About 19 percent had between 11 and 15 household members. In effect, most (81.5%) of the respondents had between six and 15 people in their household. Household size can affect participation in development programmes, and that the larger the household size, the lower the participation in development activities. Also, households with small sizes participate better because they do not face the heavy burden of providing the basic needs for the survival of household (Imoh *et al.*, 2009).

Highest formal education of household members of respondents

Educated members in household tend to influence the livelihood choices and strategies (Rahman & Shaheen, 2014). Table 5 presents the results on the highest level of formal education attained by household members of respondents.

Table 5: Highest educational level of household members of respondents

Qualification	Frequency	Percent
BECE/MSLC	118	34.5
SSSCE	133	38.9
Teacher Training Certificate	47	13.7
HND/Diploma	19	5.6
Bachelor's degree	25	7.3
Total	342	100.0

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

Most (73.4%) household members of respondents have not undergone formal education beyond SSSCE, with very few (7.3%) who had Bachelors degree. This result conforms to previous study by Sono (2013). Low formal education can derail the efforts towards successful community development (FAO & ILO, 2009; Oladipo & Adekunle, 2010; Sono, 2013).

Major occupation of respondents

Table 6 shows that on occupation of respondents, farming was the major (72.8%) occupation, followed by agro-processing (9.6%).

Table 6: Major occupation of respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Farming	249	72.8
Agro-processing	33	9.6
Petty trade	26	7.6
Artisanship	21	6.1
Others	13	3.8
Total	342	100.0

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

Other respondents were found to be involved in petty trading and artisan works such as masonry, carpentry, dressmaking, etc.

Sources of income of respondents

Respondents had diverse sources of income as revealed in Table 7. Income sources of people influence livelihood choices and strategies of people and the overall development (Khatun & Roy, 2012; Nwachukwu, 2014).

Table 7: Sources of income of respondents

Source	Frequency	Percentage
Farming	283	82.7
Petty trade	165	48.2
Gari processing	98	28.7
Wage labour	95	27.8
Artisanship	83	24.3
Soap making	57	16.7

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

The majority (82.7%) of respondents derive their income from farming. This is followed by petty trading (48.2%), and gari processing (28.7%). Wages from labour in farm and non-farm activities, artisanship and soap making were other sources beneficiaries relied on. Farming was the major source of income among beneficiaries and this is not surprising because farming is the main source of livelihood in the rural areas of most developing countries (Hatlebakk, 2012). The derivation of other sources of livelihood such as petty trading, gari processing, and soap making by the beneficiaries indicates the need to exploit potentials in non-farm livelihoods to improve upon the livelihood of beneficiaries (Davis, 2004; Deininger & Olinde, 2001; Gale, 2011; Smith, Gordon, Meadows & Zwick, 2001).

Income and expenditure levels of respondents

Majority (70.8%) of respondents had an average monthly income of between GH¢250 and GH¢440, with very few (5.8%) of the respondents having above GH¢440 (Table 8).

Table 8: Average monthly income and expenditure of respondents

Amount (GH¢)	Income		Expenditure	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Below 150	31	9.1	32	9.4
150-240	46	13.4	88	25.7
250-340	177	51.8	160	46.8
350-440	65	19.0	60	17.5
450-540	20	5.8	2	0.6
Above 540	3	0.9	-	-
Total	342	100.0	342	100.0

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

Results in Table 8 further indicate that, the majority (71.5%) of the respondents averagely spent between GH¢150 and GH¢340 per month. A few (9.4%) of them spent below GH¢150. The WEDA has reported that income level is generally low in the District; hence, the need for inhabitants to increase income levels through livelihood diversification (WEDA, 2015). Income levels are also related to commitment towards community development (Wall, Pettibone & Kesley, 2005; Zbinden & Lee, 2005).

Employment of status of household members of respondents

The employment status of household members of respondents was explored in this study (Table 9). Emphasis was laid on the number of household members employed in the formal sector. It also looked at those household members in the informal sector of the economy. Table 9 shows the results for both sectors.

Table 9: Employment status of household members of respondents

Number	Those in the formal sector		Those in the informal sector	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Zero	114	33.3	-	-
1-3	98	28.7	121	35.4
4-6	96	28.1	132	38.6
7-9	25	7.3	85	24.9
Above 9	9	2.6	4	1.2
Total	342	100.0	342	100.0

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

The majority (56.8%) of the respondents had between one and six household members employed in the formal sector. More so, the informal sector is the highest employer in the District. Members in the formal sector include teachers, nurses, policemen and women, local government staff, accountants, auditors, etc. whilst those in the informal sector include farmers, artisans, petty traders, etc. GSS (2014) reported that the informal sector is the highest employer in the District.

Dwelling units of respondents

The study revealed that (49.1%) of respondents were living in their own houses, (43.9%) were living in family houses whilst a few (7%) of the respondents were living in rented houses. This means that, most (93%) of the respondents were either living in their own houses or were living in houses owned by family members. This study could confirm GSS (2014) study that most dwelling units in

the District are owned by members of the family. Houses are vital physical assets of people based on the SLF (Figure 1), and FAO and ILO (2009).

Ownership of land

Table 10 shows that, majority (67.5%) of the respondents owned between one and 20 acres of agricultural land. Furthermore, it is seen that about half (48.8%) of the respondents owned no non-agricultural land.

Table 10: Agricultural and non-agricultural land owned by respondents

Land	Agricultural land		Non- Agricultural land	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
No land	91	26.6	167	48.8
1-10 acres	166	48.5	107	31.3
11-20 acres	65	19.0	51	14.9
21-30 acres	15	4.4	14	4.1
Above 30 acres	5	1.5	3	.9
Total	342	100.0	342	100.0

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

Table 10 shows that many (73.4%) of the respondents possessed agricultural land which is natural capital since land is classified as a natural capital. The land can be used in productive ventures in order to improve livelihood strategies (FAO & ILO, 2009). People need land for agricultural activities to build homes and also support their small-scale businesses and non-farm activities (Barbier & Hochard, 2014). Barbier and Hochard (2014) assert that apart from human capital, ownership of land is critical in ensuring sustainable rural livelihoods.

Other assets of respondents

Apart from land, respondents had other assets including livestock, gari processing machines, television, radio, motor cycle, vehicles and cell phones as depicted in Table 11.

Table 11: Other assets of respondents

Possession	Yes		No	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Livestock	248	72.5	94	25.5
Gari processing machine	57	16.7	285	83.3
Television	235	68.7	107	31.7
Radio	242	70.8	100	29.3
Motor	97	28.4	245	71.6
Vehicle	37	10.8	305	89.2
Mobile phone	236	69.0	106	31.0

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

The various assets were found to be playing very important roles in the lives of the beneficiaries. In Table 11, most (72.5%) of the respondents had livestock which is a source of financial capital. In some cases, beneficiaries depended on the sale of livestock to complement the proceeds they obtained from cocoa farms and gari business. Thus, livestock is considered as a measure of wealth which has a diverse effect on livelihood. Besides, livestock is an important measure of sustainable livelihood. Livestock ownership contributes positively to livelihood choices and diversification of people (Benin *et al.*, 2004; Rahman, 2008). Other

beneficiaries who owned motor cycles used them as another source of income in the form of transport business. Due to the poor nature of roads in the District, it is very difficult to ply vehicles in most of the communities. Thus, people resort to the use of motor cycles as a means of transport.

Again, from Table 11, it is seen that, more (70%) respondents had radio, (69%) had cell phones and (68.7) had television whilst a few (16.7%) had gari processing machines. The possession of cell phones, radio and television sets is a good sign which is apparently because of the ever-increasing relevance of these devices in these modern times. For example, access to television and radio enables beneficiaries to get abreast with the times and with issues which circulate round the world. It also helps beneficiaries to understand and appreciate the rights and responsibilities of individuals in the development process.

Ethnic backgrounds of respondents

The ethnic background of respondents is shown in Figure 9. Akan is the dominant ethnic group among the respondents accounting for about two-third (67.3%). This is followed by the Ewes (19%), with the Dagombas (9.9%) as the third largest ethnic group. This is not surprising because the Wassa people are Akan but it is pleasing to note that there are other ethnic groups who have become settlers in the District. The study shows the diversity of people in the area of study which is common in Ghana. This study mirrors previous a study that, the major ethnic groups in the Wassa East District are the Akan, followed by Ewe (GSS, 2014).

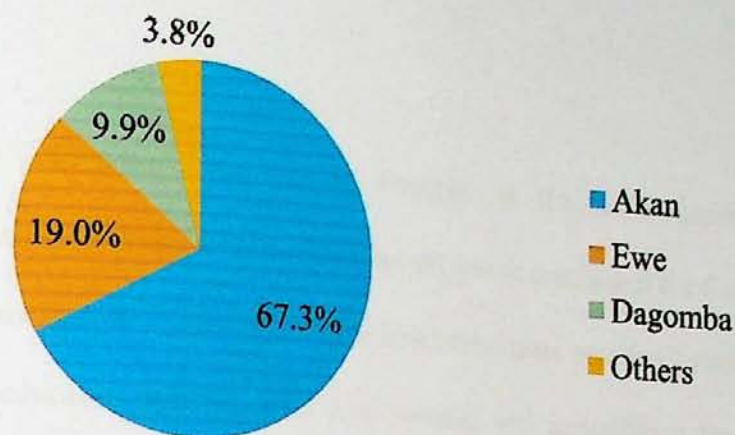


Figure 9: Ethnic composition of respondents

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

Summary

The analysis and discussion of socio-economic backgrounds of respondents revealed that more male beneficiaries as compared to females took part in the study. Respondents who were mostly Christians and mainly between 30 and 44 years had no formal education, although they were married and had farming as their major occupation. Additionally, respondents had household sizes mainly between six and 15 members; most of whom had education up to the secondary school level. The average monthly income was between GH¢250 and GH¢440 but most of them spent between GH¢150 and GH¢340 on the average per month. Many respondents live in their own houses or were living in the family houses. Akan constituted the dominant ethnic group of respondents. Also, respondents had access to lands, livestock, gari processing machines, television, radio, motor cycle, vehicles and cell phones.

Conclusions

The study concludes that there is diversity in the socio-economic backgrounds of beneficiaries. However, males and the youth dominated the Cocoa Life Project interventions of WVG. The beneficiaries who were mostly Christians are not formally educated, and are with low income and expenditure levels. Nonetheless, many of them live in either their own houses or family houses, have access to land and also possess other access to different livelihood assets.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of chapter four, it is recommended that Mondelez International and Cocoa Life should effectively team up with WVG and the District Assembly to come out with clearly defined development interventions to meet the diverse socio-economic backgrounds of beneficiaries. The diversity in socio-economic backgrounds such as gender, age, education, religion, marital status, sources of income and assets should inform the design of development programmes in the District. This will ensure that, no discrimination exists in the development programmes with regard to the socio-economic backgrounds of beneficiaries.

Development partners including WVG, Cocoa Life and Mondelez International should collaborate with the District Assembly and community members to come out with development interventions which reflect the diverse needs of males and females in the District. Development interventions in the District should be made and taken into cognizance, the large number of males and married people in the communities.

It is recommended that more development programmes which address the peculiar needs of the youth should be provided by WVG, Cocoa Life and Mondelez International through the active partnership with the District Assembly.

The District Assembly should team up with District Agriculture Office, the Business Advisory Centre, community members, NGOs and corporate bodies to initiate development interventions to help improve the income level of people in the District. This will require a clear understanding of the diverse needs of the people. For example, various alternative livelihood programmes can be designed and implemented to improve the income level of people in the District.

The District Assembly should team up with community leaders, corporate bodies and other development partners to organise sensitisation programmes on the need to invest in education of children in the communities.

WVG, Cocoa Life, Mondelez International and other development partners should exploit the livelihood assets of community members to help improve the lives of people. These assets can help in livelihood diversification strategies of WVG, Cocoa Life, Mondelez International and other development partners in the District.

SD=1.25) and setting up project goals and objectives (M=2.20, SD=1.25). Again, the results in Table 12 show that respondents were very lowly satisfied with participation in designing project interventions (M=1.31, SD=0.63) and preparing budgets for the project interventions (M=1.22, SD=0.51). Respondents indicated that though their executives might have been involved, most beneficiaries were not consulted during the design and preparation of project budgets. In all, although the views varied, respondents were lowly satisfied with participation (M=2.22, SD=0.97) in planning the various project interventions.

Table 12: Perceived satisfaction with participation in planning activities

Planning activity	Mean	Std. Dev.
Creating awareness about problems in the community	3.21	0.90
Identifying problems in the community	3.17	0.96
Ranking the needs of the community in terms of importance	2.24	1.29
Generation of possible solutions	2.21	1.25
Defining project goals	2.20	1.25
Designing the project interventions	1.31	0.63
Preparing the budgets for the project	1.22	0.51
Grand	2.22	0.97

Means were calculated from a scale of: 5-Very Highly Satisfied, 4-Highly Satisfied, 3-Moderately Satisfied, 2-Lowly Satisfied, 1-Very Lowly Satisfied

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

The results from the FGDs showed that the beneficiaries were lowly satisfied with participation in planning the various interventions. For instance, participants from Daboase Area Council stated, "Though we were informed about the inception of the Project, our participation in creating awareness about problems

in the community and in defining project goals and strategies was very low". The beneficiaries from Daboase further stated, "World Vision had meetings with us to discuss the problems we were facing. The meetings were good but many of the problems we identified were not considered in defining project goals and in generating possible solutions". Also, participants from Ekutuase remarked that, although WVG organised durbars and meetings for communities to help identify problems in the community, their inputs did not much influence the design of the interventions. They stated that very few beneficiaries took part in planning the various interventions. In the words of beneficiaries from Ekutuase Council, "The officers refused to ask us which of our many development needs should be tackled first. It is fair that at least they find out from us which development services need to be provided first and how to go about it". Participants explained further, "Planning is very important and it should start with how development needs are identified. But development needs identification was not participatory enough." Other areas of planning activities which the beneficiaries' satisfaction in participation was found to be low include prioritising the needs of the community and budget preparation.

Based on the results from both the interview schedule and FGDs, it can be said that beneficiaries were very lowly satisfied with participation in planning the interventions. The study is consistent with FAO (2005) which found that stakeholders' satisfaction with participation in planning development projects as low. Again, the level of satisfaction with planning of the interventions deviates from Sirpal and Singh, as cited in Abiona and Niyi Bello (2013) who posited that

with participation during the implementation of the Project interventions in spite of the variations in the views of respondents ($M=4.16$, $SD=0.6$).

Table 13: Perceived satisfaction in participation at the implementation stage of the interventions

Aspect of implementation	Mean	Std. Dev.
Selecting project management team members	4.30	0.46
Organising community for project delivery	4.26	0.45
Deciding the time for the commencement of project	4.24	0.48
Mobilising resources for project delivery	4.22	0.50
Delivering the project interventions	3.82	1.11
Grand	4.16	0.6

Means were calculated from a scale of: 5-Very Highly Satisfied, 4-Highly Satisfied, 3-Moderately Satisfied, 2-Lowly Satisfied, 1-Verly Lowly Satisfied

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

Also, discussions with some selected beneficiaries showed that they were highly satisfied with their participation during the implementation stage of the interventions. For instance, the beneficiaries who participated in the discussion stated that they had adequate inputs into when the various interventions were to commence. They further commented that they took part in mobilising resources for the delivery of the interventions. In Ekutuase Council, participants remarked, "We are very much satisfied with how we participated during the implementation of the interventions. WVG allowed us to make inputs into the various stages of the project delivery". At Daboase Area Council revealed, "All the farmers, gari processors, members of VSLAs and soap makers all made useful inputs into the implementation of the interventions." Participants from Ekutuase added, "We were allowed to suggest persons to be part of the project team members. We also set the

times for commencing many of the interventions. They know most of us are farmers, so getting all of us is not easy." Thus, both quantitative and qualitative results showed that beneficiaries' satisfaction in participation in the implementation of the interventions was high. This revelation supports a study by Mammah (2006) which discovered that beneficiaries' satisfaction in participation during the implementation stage of NGO development interventions was high. Participation is crucial in project implementation (Sirpal, cited in Odoom *et al.*, 2018a).

Perceived satisfaction of beneficiaries with participation in evaluation activities of the Project

The results on the level of satisfaction among respondents in participation during the evaluation stage of the Interventions are found in Table 14.

Table 14: Perceived satisfaction with participation in evaluation activities

Aspect of evaluation	Mean	Std. Dev.
Monitoring the Project interventions	3.74	1.14
Assessing how appropriate interventions were to the needs of beneficiary communities	1.57	1.02
Assessing the degree to which project goals were reached	1.50	0.87
Assessment of the effect of project interventions	1.43	0.91
Assessing how funds earmarked for the projects were used	1.40	0.79
Grand	1.92	0.94

Means were calculated from a scale of: 5-Very Highly Satisfied, 4-Highly Satisfied, 3-Moderately Satisfied, 2-Lowly Satisfied, 1-Verly Lowly Satisfied

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

Respondents approximately indicated that they were highly satisfied with their participation in monitoring the interventions ($M=3.76$, $SD=0.46$). Besides, respondents were lowly satisfied with participation in assessing how appropriate

interventions were to the needs of beneficiary communities ($M=1.57$, $SD=1.02$) and assessing the degree to which project goals were reached ($M=1.50$, $SD=0.87$). Respondents were very lowly satisfied with participation in assessment of the effect of project interventions ($M=1.43$, $SD=0.91$) and assessing how funds earmarked for the projects were used ($M=1.40$, $SD=0.79$).

In effect, though there were various views expressed in this study, respondents were lowly satisfied with participation in evaluating the interventions ($M=1.92$, $SD=0.94$). Moreover, the FGDs showed that the level of satisfaction in participation in evaluating the interventions was very low. For instance, satisfaction with participation in assessing the extent to which the project goals were achieved and also how funds earmarked for the Project was used was very low. Beneficiaries from Daboase Council who took part in the FGDs noted, "No comprehensive efforts have been made to evaluate the effects of the interventions on our lives". Participants from Daboase further said, "We do not know the amount of money which was given for the Project and how much was actually spent on the Project. We won't even ask because we will not be told. Besides, they do not prepare their budgets with the inputs of community members." Also, participants in the Ekuuase Area commented, "We are not aware of any evaluation which has been done on the various interventions. We are looking for the opportunity to express views on the various interventions based on what we expected to be done for us."

It can be concluded based on the results from the interview schedule and FGDs that beneficiaries were very lowly satisfied with participation in evaluating the interventions. This finding is at variance with the position of Singh, as cited in

Abiona and Niyi Bello (2013). The author observed that development partners are to pay much attention to participation of stakeholders during the evaluation of the project interventions. Also, according to Agunga et al. (2006), participation in project evaluation is vital in development communication.

Furthermore, interviews with key informants revealed that participation during the implementation stage of the interventions was highly satisfactory. The HBAC said, "My outfit played a key role in the implementation of most of the livelihood programmes." Also, the DDA commented, "We played a vital role during the implementation of agriculture-related interventions provided under the Project." Other informants admitted that they played a vital role in the Project. Despite their role in the Project, all the informants believed their participation in the planning and evaluation stages was very low. One informant bemoaned, "In fact, I was not satisfied with participation at the planning stage." Another informant said, "Am told some beneficiaries have been spoken on their views about the Project. But I really do not think proper evaluation has been done. You cannot speak with five or ten people and call it project evaluation!" Generally, the views of the key informants on planning and evaluation stages are similar to previous studies (Kinyanjui & Misaro, 2013; Mammah, 2006) which reported low satisfaction in participation in projects. The situation is problematic since participation in planning and evaluation stages of projects is key in effective development programmes and projects (Mammah, 2006; Mikkelsen, 2005; Zakaria, 2011). Project beneficiaries become satisfied with their participation when they are empowered to actively take part in decision-making and development policies expected to cause positive

change in their lives (Mohan, 2008). The study departs from the conceptual framework (Figure 2) which calls for meaningful participation in all stages of development interventions. The framework shows that when there is very little satisfaction with participation by key actors including beneficiaries promoting viable development programmes and projects becomes difficult.

Summary

Respondents had diverse views on their participation in planning, implementation and evaluation stages of the Project. They were moderately satisfied with participation in creating awareness about the problems in the communities and identifying development problems in the communities. Respondents were lowly satisfied with participation in prioritising the needs of the communities and generation of possible solutions. They were very lowly satisfied with participation in project design and budgeting. However, respondents were highly satisfied with participation in the selection of project management members, organising communities for the delivery of the Project, deciding the time for the commencement of the various interventions and mobilisation of resources. Apart from participation in monitoring the interventions, satisfaction with participation in project evaluation among beneficiaries and key informants was low.

Conclusions

It can be concluded that beneficiaries and local authorities are generally lowly satisfied with participation in planning activities of the interventions except in awareness creation on problem situation and the identification of development problems. Beneficiaries and local authorities are highly satisfied with participation

in the various activities which were carried out at the implementation stage of the Project. With the exception of monitoring, satisfaction in participation in evaluation of the interventions is very low amongst beneficiaries and local authorities. Efforts to ensure beneficiaries and local authorities' participation in planning activities of the Project are not satisfactory enough. In the same vein, no comprehensive attempts have been made to evaluate the Project interventions in the District.

Recommendations

WVG is encouraged to ensure that beneficiaries become very highly satisfied with participation in planning activities of project interventions. All planning activities should be done with active involvement of community members. For example, development needs should be identified with active participation of community members likewise development goal setting. Again, there should be transparency in designing projects and preparation of project budgets. This will also require that, copies of project designs and budgets are given to educated members of target beneficiaries.

Besides, community members should insist on having copies of these documents because such projects are supposed to be theirs. Ownership of projects and development interventions will require that beneficiaries have access to the project design and budgets of which is critical to project success. WVI should consider using gadgets such as radio sets, pictures, audio visuals as well as models to ensure that participation in ranking of development needs of communities and generation of possible solutions is successful. Again, WVG, Cocoa Life and Mondelez International are encouraged to ensure that project beneficiaries and

other stakeholders become highly satisfied with participation in selecting project management team members.

WVG should team up with Cocoa Life, Mondelez International and the District Assembly and community leaders to ensure that community members are well organised for the delivery of projects and interventions. Community members are also encouraged to mobilise local resources to support the delivery of development interventions. WVG should team up with Cocoa Life, Mondelez International, the District Assembly and community leaders to ensure that beneficiaries form a vital part of project monitoring teams.

Mondelez International should team up with Cocoa Life and WVG to come out with an effective team in charge of the monitoring and evaluation of the various development interventions provided to beneficiary communities.

WVG, Cocoa Life and Mondelez International should consider including local authorities and opinion leaders in designing clear tools to evaluate the project. There should be openness, transparency and accountability in the use of project funds. Community members should be allowed to offer adequate inputs into the use of all project funds. Community members should insist on knowing how funds earmarked for project interventions have been used.

The District Assembly and community members should insist on always assessing the appropriateness of project interventions against identified needs and project goals. By so doing, they can clearly know whether or not project interventions have been successful and proffer the measures required to improve upon subsequent interventions.

CHAPTER SIX

RELEVANCE OF COCOA LIFE PROJECT INTERVENTIONS TO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

In Chapter Six, the results relating to the perception of beneficiaries on the relevance of Project interventions of WVG to the development of communities were presented and discussed (Table 15). Several aspects of community development such as education, business development, agriculture, employment, financial literacy, health, water and sanitation, among others were examined.

Relevance to the development of education

Table 15 shows that the interventions were highly relevant to the development of education in the beneficiary communities. For example, respondents stated that the Project was highly relevant in ensuring access to (M=4.03, SD=0.90) and awareness creation on education in the communities in the District. Moreover, beneficiaries saw the Cocoa Project of WVG as highly relevant (M=4.21, SD=0.50) to the construction of educational infrastructure. The results from the FGDs showed that WVG contributed to the development of education in the beneficiary communities. For instance, the beneficiaries in the Ekuase Area Council who were part of the FGDs said:

Project interventions of WVG has been very relevant to the development to our communities in areas such as expanding access to education, and awareness creation on importance of education. For example, we now have ICT centres in schools of some communities.

The participants from Eketuase Area again said, "So much awareness has been created about the importance of education. Some officers from WVG used to meet the community once in a while to educate us on the danger of child labour. They also built teachers' bungalow for us".

Table 15: Views of respondents on the relevance of the project interventions to community development

Activity to ensure community development:	Mean	Std. Dev.
Training on modern farming practices	4.30	0.46
Diversifying sources of earning living	4.26	0.45
Rehabilitation of farms in the community	4.26	0.45
Awareness creation on importance of education	4.21	0.50
Provision of microcredit facilities to people	4.07	0.61
Expanding access to education in the community	4.03	0.90
Training on financial literacy	4.03	0.90
Skills training on business development	4.00	0.64
Construction of educational infrastructure	3.67	1.12
Creation of career opportunities	3.40	1.08
Expanding access to safe and clean water	3.40	1.08
Capacity building on local level leadership	3.40	1.08
Support for community action	3.40	1.11
Behaviour change towards community activities	3.39	1.08
Public awareness on sanitation practices	3.34	1.16
Expanding access to health care services	3.16	1.19
Capacity building on community planning	3.14	1.21
Grand	3.49	0.82

Means were calculated from a scale of: 5=Very Highly Relevant, 4=Highly Relevant, 3-Moderately Relevant, 2- Lowly Relevant, 1-Verly Lowly Relevant

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

Participants from Daboase Council stated that awareness creation on education coupled with educational infrastructure such as ICT centres in schools help to boost education in the communities. In the words of beneficiaries from Daboase, "In the past, very few people sent their wards to Senior High School (SHS) but now, because of awareness creation on education, many people are trying hard to send their wards to SHS." Also, from Daboase Area it was indicated, "WVG provided include ICT centres which our children make us of when they are in school". In essence, the results from both the qualitative and quantitative studies show that the Project largely contributed to the development of education in the District. The findings on education are consistent with previous studies (Kombian, 2008; Quaicoo, 2006; Stromquist, 2002) which found that NGOs are active in the provision of educational facilities. Also, the results on educational services corroborate Farrel and Hartwell (2008), and USAID (2009b) revelations that NGOs in Ghana are into the provision of educational services. Similarly, in Nigeria, Enyioko (2012) found that NGOs play a crucial role in the development of education. Again, WVG's efforts in the education sector are similar to what other NGOs are doing globally (ActionAid International, 2013). Besides, the results agree with the conceptual framework (Figure 2) which illustrates that improved education is critical in any meaningful development programmes and projects.

Relevance to the development of business skills

Business development is key in any sustainable development agenda. Thus, the study also explored how relevant the interventions were to business development in the communities. The researcher observed that the interventions of

WVG under the Cocoa Life Project were highly relevant to business development through the provision of skills training programmes to beneficiaries ($M=4.00$, $SD=0.64$) as revealed in Table 15. Similarly, the group discussions showed that the interventions were highly relevant to the development of businesses in the communities through the skill training offered to the beneficiaries. In the words of participants from Daboase Area Council, "We have acquired skills training on business development in areas including petty trading, soap making, gari processing and animal rearing." Also, beneficiaries from Ekutuase agreed with the views expressed in Daboase Area. In support, beneficiaries of Ekutuase stated, "Through the Project, WVG offered us training on business skills. They taught us how to venture into businesses so that we obtain other sources of income". Thus, the results from the two approaches point to the fact that the Project was highly relevant to business development which is critical to the economic development of the District. This finding corroborates previous studies which established that development partners including NGOs are active in the provision of skill training on businesses (Adjei *et al.*, 2012; Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2014; USAID, 2009b).

Relevance to access to microcredit facilities in the communities

Credit facilities are important tools in micro-financing. Such facilities obtained through microfinance activities promote economic development (Biekart, 2008). In this study, it was established that Cocoa Life Project interventions of WVG had been highly relevant in expanding beneficiaries' access to microcredit facilities ($M=4.07$, $SD=0.61$) in the District (Table 15). Also, all the beneficiaries

who participated in the FGDs from the two Area Councils were very pleased with their access to credit facilities in the communities. The participants admitted that through the various VSLA formed by WVG they had been able to expand their access to credit facilities in the communities. On their part, beneficiaries from Ekutuase intimated, "Because we are members of the VSLA we can go for small loans to do business or pay school fees whenever the need arises. There is no pressure on us when we are repaying this loan." The FGDs with beneficiaries of Daboase Area also showed, "We get flexible loans from the VSLA at very minimal interest rates. We as members of the groups understand each other, so we do not require any collateral before accessing the credit facilities." It can be said that the interventions were very relevant to access to microcredit facilities. This result strengthens previous research by Hedayat and Ma'rof (2017) who found that NGOs improve the economic well-being of communities through microcredit facilities they offer. Microcredit facilities help people to achieve their ability, skill and knowledge and take control over their own lives and finally become economically empowered (Biekart, 2008; Desai, 2005; FAO & ILO, 2009).

Development of agriculture in the communities

Moreover, the study discovered that the Project has been highly relevant to the development of agriculture with respect to farming in the District. For instance, beneficiaries indicated that the interventions were highly relevant to skill training on modern farming practices ($M=4.30$, $SD=0.46$). Also, the interventions were highly relevant in providing farm rehabilitation ($M=4.26$, $SD=0.45$) in the communities. Also, the FGDs from both Councils showed that the interventions

helped to improve agriculture in the communities through skill training, rehabilitation of farms and animal rearing. For instance, beneficiaries from Daboase Council said, "We have obtained so much assistance in the area of agriculture. They gave us fertilizers, and also taught us how to practice modern farming methods to increase farm produce." Also, at Ekuase participants stated, "They engaged the Extension Agents to train us on new ways of farming." Thus, the results from both the interview schedule and the group discussions show that the Project was highly relevant to the development of agriculture in the communities. These findings support other studies (Nalere *et al.*, 2015; Streeten, 1997) on the contribution of NGO activities to community development through agriculture. Similarly, in Nigeria, NGOs help to improve agriculture of communities (Enyioko, 2012). More so, applying modern technologies to boost agriculture is one of the reliable means of reducing poverty (Nelson, 2000). Again, the findings support the conceptual framework (Figure 2) on the importance of agriculture in effective development programmes and projects especially at the local level.

Financial literacy and income diversification

Additionally, the interventions were observed to be highly relevant to financial literacy ($M=4.03$, $SD=0.90$) and diversification of income sources [$M=4.26$, $SD=0.45$] (Table 15). Beneficiaries again stated that the interventions were highly relevant to diversification of sources of income. Moreover, the group discussions with the selected beneficiaries from Daboase Council indicated that the interventions were highly relevant to financial literacy and income diversification among communities. Similar observation was made by beneficiaries in the

Ekutuase Area Council. For instance, beneficiaries from Ekutuase said, "WVG offered financial literacy training in the communities. Many of the interventions WVG provided can help us to diversify our sources of income." Thus, both the interview schedule and FGDs found that the interventions were highly relevant to financial literacy in the communities. These findings are similar to Mondelez International and Cocoa Life (2016) which observed that Cocoa Life Project improves financial literacy and diversification of income sources.

Relevance to the creation of career opportunities

On career opportunities in the communities, it was observed that the relevance of the Project too was moderate ($M=3.40$, $SD=1.08$). Additionally, the group discussions revealed that WVG effort made towards career opportunities in the District was moderate. However, participants from the two Area Councils indicated that more efforts needed to be made, especially to help offer career opportunities for the youth. In the words of the participants from Ekutuase Area, "Even though WVG created opportunities for the youth to get involved in cocoa farming as a career, not many of them are into it." Also, at Daboase it was observed, "Despite the efforts WVG made, many of the youth still do not appear to be much interested in career opportunities farming offers them." All the participants said that WVG has not done much to turn the fortunes of the teeming youth around. Some of the youth do not see any prospect in the cocoa farming as a source of employment in the District. This means that the Project was moderately relevant to the creation of career opportunities in the communities. Notwithstanding the moderate impact on job creation, this study converges with Nziane (2009) who found that

development interventions impact job creation. Also, the result is essential because aside empowerment and security, job opportunities are one vital way that has complimentary and supplementary role in neutralisation of economic deprivation (Mehta, 2009). Besides, the study conforms to Adjei *et al.* (2012) and Hedayat and Ma'rof (2017) studies which found that NGOs' activities have contributed to creation of employment opportunities in many developing countries. Creation of career opportunities leads to economic empowerment.

Relevance to health care services in the communities

Furthermore, the beneficiaries believed that project interventions were moderately relevant to health care services in the communities ($M=3.16$, $SD=1.19$). Discussions with some of the participants showed that though the Project was relevant to health care services of communities, the contribution was not very strong as they had hoped. In effect, it can be stated that the interventions were moderately relevant to health care services in the communities. Again, the FGDs with some beneficiaries in the Ekutuase Area showed, "Despite the awareness created about health care, the interventions have not very relevant to the health of community members." Again, in Daboase, the study observed, "Health issues have received very low attention under the Cocoa Life Project. Our health is very important, so there should be some effective measures to tackle the health issues." Despite the moderate nature of the efforts, the findings on health care services strengthen other studies on the critical roles, other development agents such as NGOs play in health care services in most developing countries including Kenya and Ghana (Farrel & Hartwell, 2008; USAID, 2009; Wamani, 2007). More so, the

result on health care is consistent with Nalere *et al.* (2015) findings. In addition, this study is vital because improved health care is crucial to the development programme (Omofonmwan & Odia, 2009; Stiglitz, cited in Annor-Frempong, 2013).

Relevance to water and sanitation in the communities

More so, the relevance of the Project to access to safe and clean water in the communities was moderate [$M=3.40$, $SD=1.08$] (Table 15). Also, Table 17 shows that the Project was moderately relevant to the creation of public awareness on sanitation practices ($M=3.42$, $SD=1.16$). Similarly, the group discussions with selected beneficiaries proved that even though communities had access to safe and clean water under the Project, they perceived such efforts by WVG as very moderate. On their part, beneficiaries from Daboase who took part in the FGDs indicated that access to safe and clean water in the communities has been very low. They commented, "The Project has contributed very little to the improvement of water and sanitation in the communities." Many communities are still in need of safe and clean drinking water." The beneficiaries from Ekutuase commented, "Not much has been done with respect to access to safe and clean water in the communities. Sanitation practice has also not seen much improvement. This is a major problem we wanted WVG and Cocoa Life to address for us." In effect, whilst the interview schedule showed some improvement in water and sanitation, the group discussions with selected beneficiaries indicated that no improvement has been seen. The results based on the interview schedule affirm earlier studies (Chitongo, 2013; Dangah, 2012; Enyioko, 2012; WVI, 2010) which found that

NGOs help provide water and sanitation services to several communities across the globe. Access to safe drinking water supply and improved sanitation is key in effective development programme (Adjei *et al.*, 2012; Egyir, 2013; Enyioko, 2012). However, the results from the FGDs is a huge challenge to the realisation of Sustainable Development Goal [SDG] 6 (United Nations, 2016) which seeks to ensure increased access to clean water and improved sanitation.

Community planning and local leadership

Again, the interventions were moderately relevant to capacity building on community planning ($M=3.14$, $SD=1.21$) and local leadership ($M=3.40$, $SD=1.08$) in beneficiary communities. The results from the FGDs with the selected beneficiaries showed that the interventions were relevant to capacity building on community planning and local leadership. In the Daboase Area, beneficiaries commented, "The Project has helped our communities in terms of the support for community action plans and local leadership empowerment". The participants from Ekuutuase Council said, "We have been taught how to plan for community development. Through Cocoa Life Project, many communities have members who can sit down and plan and develop actions and strategies for the communities. Also, we are able to take up leadership positions in the community." However, participants from both Councils were displeased that many beneficiaries are still not able to develop their own actions plans to improve their communities. They ascribed the situation to the way and manner interventions on community action plans were designed and implemented, with virtually no inputs from community leaders, members and opinion leaders. Regardless of this concern, the Project was

generally relevant to community planning and local leadership in WED which agrees with Mondelez International and Cocoa Life (2014; 2016) that Cocoa Life Project helps communities to develop action plans.

Besides, interviews with key informants showed that the interventions were generally relevant to the development of communities. The informants said, "The interventions were highly relevant in areas such as education and agriculture." Other informants identified, "Financial literacy, business skill development, and livelihood diversification" as some of the areas where the Project was relevant to the development of beneficiary communities. Again, in the words of the HBAC, "The Project has improved savings culture and access to credit facilities in many of the communities where it was implemented. But the Project did not help much in terms of creation of career opportunities." However, for other aspects of community development such as health care services, water and sanitation, etc. the interventions were least relevant. The informants also said that poor stakeholder engagement especially at the planning stage did not help to maximise the impact of the interventions on the development of beneficiary communities.

The informants explained further that WVG could have put in place more effective measures to understand the diverse needs of beneficiary communities. Communities had various and different needs which could only be identified through well-planned and comprehensive strategies. Nonetheless, the informants admitted that the interventions had helped to improve beneficiary communities. In short, it can be said that Cocoa Life Project interventions of WVG were relevant to community development in the Wassa East District. This result reflects earlier

studies by scholars including Lewis and Kanji (2009), Brass (2010), Enyioko (2012) and Islam (2015) on the contributions of NGOs to local development in countries such as Bangladesh, Nigeria and Kenya. Besides, the findings generally validate the conceptual framework (Figure 2) which recognises that for development programmes and projects to be relevant to communities such services must improve education, health, agriculture, employment creation, water and sanitation, local governance, etc. within the community.

Summary

Various views were expressed by beneficiaries and key informants on the relevance of project interventions to community development in the District. Project interventions were highly relevant to the development of education, business development and access to microcredit facilities in the communities. Also, project interventions were found to be highly relevant to the development of agriculture, financial literacy and diversification of sources of earning a living in the communities. However, the relevance of the interventions to career opportunities, health care services, water and sanitation, capacity building and local leadership was moderate. Again, respondents saw the relevance of the interventions in terms of support to community action and behaviour change towards community activities as moderate. On the whole, despite the variations in the views of respondents, the study showed that the interventions were moderately relevant in improving beneficiary communities ($M=3.49$, $SD=0.82$). Besides, the interventions would have been more relevant to the development of beneficiary communities if more efforts had been made by WVG to truly understand the diverse and varying

development needs of communities. The FGDs revealed that there were a number of concerns with the impact of the Project on the communities despite the efforts made. Many communities still faced problems with regard to water and sanitation, and health care services. Also, training on development of community action plans was designed and planned with very little inputs from beneficiaries.

Conclusions

Project interventions are generally relevant to the development of beneficiary communities. Through the Cocoa Life Project, WVG has been able to provide development interventions to improve education, business, microcredit facilities, agriculture, livelihood diversification and financial literacy which are core to the development of beneficiary communities. The contribution to the above aspects of communities is high. However, WVG's contribution to other areas of community development such as career opportunities, health care services, water and sanitation which are vital to community development is moderate. Besides, in terms of community planning, local leadership, support for community action and behaviour change towards community activities, WVG is able to provide project interventions to moderately improve communities. Also, beneficiary communities have diverse development needs which can only be understood through well-planned and comprehensive needs assessment strategies. Despite the efforts made, many communities still do not have access to safe and clean water and improved sanitation. There are also concerns with health care services in the communities. Training on development of community action plans is designed and implemented with very little input from beneficiaries.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Cocoa Life and Mondelez International should continue to sponsor WVG to provide development interventions to improve the education, agriculture, and health of cocoa growing communities. Mondelez International is encouraged to offer the necessary assistance to WVG in order to be able to provide project interventions to improve the business skill, financial literacy and microcredit facilities of members in cocoa growing communities.

Mondelez International should team up with Cocoa Life, WVG, the District Assembly, and other local authorities to devise strategies to maximise the relevance of the Project interventions in career opportunities, health care services, water and sanitation, community planning, local leadership and support for community action. Doing this requires expanding the focus of implementing partners towards these areas which are critical in effective community development agenda. It also requires that community members are allowed to offer critical inputs into the design of the interventions.

The District Assembly should team up with community members to conduct appropriate community needs assessment to guide development goals and objectives. Cocoa Life and Mondelez International should collaborate effectively District Agriculture Department and BAC to come out with clear measures to create career opportunities especially for the youth in the communities. The District Assembly should team up with other NGOs, corporate bodies and donor agencies to provide water and sanitation facilities to improve the lives of people in the

communities. The same approach is recommended for consideration in addressing the health care challenges faced by the communities in the District.

WVI is encouraged to design appropriate strategies to encourage communities to develop and implement their own community development action plans. WVG should consider using local radio stations and community information centres to promote extensive discussion of matters which are vital to the development of communities.

WVG, Cocoa Life and Mondelez International are encouraged to team up and appoint development facilitators and project managers who are capable of understanding community dynamics, structures and expectations and how best to help communities to clearly identify their own development needs and initiate appropriate measures to address these needs. Such development facilitators and project managers should possess good public relations, development communication, networking, advocacy and resource mobilisation skills which are relevant in promoting community development.

Community members are encouraged to demand an adequate platform from development partners to express their needs and also ensure that such needs inform project goals and designs. This can be done using local radio stations and community information centres.

CHAPTER SEVEN
PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY THROUGH COCOA LIFE
PROJECT INTERVENTIONS

Introduction

The results based on the perception of the respondents on the efforts of WVG in promoting gender equality through the interventions are discussed in this chapter. Table 16 presents the results obtained based on the quantitative data.

Gender equality in modern farming practices

In Table 16, it is seen that access to training on modern farming practices was provided equally for male and female respondents (82.4%). This implies that both male and female beneficiaries had equal access to be trained on modern farming practices. The FGDs with selected beneficiaries showed that access to training on modern farming practices was provided equally for male and female beneficiaries. Beneficiaries who participated in the discussions at Daboase Council said, "Both men and women were equally trained on modern farming practices. On their part, beneficiaries from Ekutuase stated, "Even though equal access to training on modern farming methods was given to men and women, many women were unable to take part in the training due to domestic several duties they had to attend to." However, there were concerns with participation on the part of women. For instance, at Daboase, the beneficiaries said, "There were many instances women were informed to be part of upcoming training on modern farming methods, but some of them could not avail themselves since they had to take care of their children

who were not yet in school.” This means that several constraints due to the structure of society make the goal of gender equality very difficult to achieve.

Table 16: Views of respondents on the efforts WVG made to promote gender equality under the Cocoa Life Project interventions

Through the Cocoa Life Project interventions of WVG:	A	U	D
Men had more access to be trained on modern farming practices	85.3	2.0	12.7
Women had more access to be trained on modern farming practices	83.1	6.1	10.8
Training on modern farming practices was provided equally for men and women	82.4	4.1	13.5
Men had more access to farm inputs	85.7	5.0	10.3
Women had more access to farm inputs	74.8	7.0	18.2
Access to farm inputs was equal for men and women	71.9	7.9	20.2
Access to farm land reflected gender balance	45.7	2.0	52.3
Access to productive resources was equal for men and women	63.2	9.6	27.2
Access to career opportunity was equal for men and women	59.3	13.5	27.2
Women and men had equal opportunity to take part in alternative livelihood programmes	71.9	7.9	20.2
Financial literacy training was provided to participants irrespective of their gender	83.1	6.1	10.8
Women and men had equal access to credit facilities	82.4	4.1	13.5
Men and women had equal opportunity to increase their incomes	74.8	7.8	17.4
Men and women had equal access to information	85.7	5.0	10.3
Women and men had equal access to decision making processes	73.4	7.6	19.0
Men and women had equal access to take part in community planning	70.5	8.2	21.3
Access to health care services was equal for men and women	63.4	8.5	28.1
Men and women equally participated in community meetings	67.5	7.3	25.2
Access to membership of community groups was equal for men and women	66.4	10.5	23.1

Keys: A- Agree

U-Undecided

D- Disagree

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

Nevertheless, the results from the quantitative approach showed that there was gender equality with regard to access to modern farming practices which corroborates the assertion of Mondelez International and Cocoa Life (2013; 2014) that men and women had equal access to modern farming practices. Cocoa Life Project improves knowledge and practice of men and women beneficiaries on farming (Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2013; 2014).

Gender equality through access to farm inputs

On the issue of access to farm inputs, Table 16 reveals that there was gender equality (71.9%). This means that access to farm inputs through the Project reflected gender balance. The results from the FGDs at both councils indicated that women and men in the communities had equal access to farm inputs provided through the Project. However, beneficiaries from Ekutuase Council said, "Men still had upper hand over women since many men who were in executive positions were generally in charge of the collection and distribution of farm inputs, so they were in a better position to act to their own advantage." In spite of this fear, the results from the FGDs and the interview schedule showed there was gender equality in terms of access to farm inputs under the Project. This revelation confirms previous study (Wassenaar, 2006) which found that ensuring equal access to inputs for men and women is a major strategy to promote gender equality.

Gender equality in access to productive resources

Again, more (63.2%) respondents believed that there was gender equality in the provision of access to productive resources under the Project. During the group discussions, participants noted that both men and women had equal access to

productive resources. They further explained that although productive resources women obtained were sometimes different from what men had, equal access was generally provided with respect to productive resources. At Daboase Council, participants noted "Unlike men, many women got access to gari processing machines in the communities since many of the gari processors were women." Also, beneficiaries from Ekuase Council remarked, "Our women had equal access to productive resources. Sometimes women had certain productive assets such as gari processing machines which many men did not have." Generally, WVG made some efforts to promote gender equality through productive resources given to beneficiaries. This finding confirms World Bank (2002), Hunt and Brouwers (2003), and Wassenaar (2006) assertions that equal access to productive resources for men and women ensures gender equality. Further, the study conforms to Mondelez International and Cocoa Life Progress (2014; 2016) that there is gender equality in access to productive assets. Access to productive resources is vital in the context of the SLF (FAO & ILO, 2009).

Efforts to ensure gender equality through career opportunities

Another aspect of gender equality examined is career opportunities. Most (69.3%) respondents stated that access to career opportunities was offered equally to both men and women under the Project. However, group discussions with selected beneficiaries proved that access to career opportunities was not equally created for men and women. For example, beneficiaries from Ekuase Council, "The project targeted the youth in terms of career opportunities. They wanted them to go into cocoa farming which was already dominated by men. No effective

measures were put in place to enable female youth to also go into cocoa farming.” A similar view was expressed by beneficiaries from Daboase Council. Thus, although both approaches indicated that there was gender equality with regard to access to career opportunities, there were some concerns with the efforts as seen from the FGDs. Nevertheless, the importance of this finding generally finds expression in the works of Hunt and Brouwers (2003) who concluded that equal access to creation of career opportunities for men and women constitutes a vital strategy towards achieving gender equality.

Gender equality in alternative livelihood programmes

In Table 16, majority (71.9%) of the respondents believed there was gender equality in terms of access to alternative livelihood programmes under the Project. This suggests that most beneficiaries felt there was gender equality in accessing alternative livelihood programmes. Also, the FGDs with some beneficiaries showed that there were some specific interventions including training on soap making and modern gari processing methods which targeted mainly women as a way of empowering female beneficiaries. FGDs organised at Ekutuase Council observed, “Women had training on soap making in addition to other skill training programmes they attended together with men in the communities.” Also, FGDs at Daboase revealed, “Both men and women equally benefited from the business skill training which was organised for the beneficiaries. The training programmes help to empower us” Empowerment is vital in gender equality initiatives. It occurs in many dimensions such as economic conditions including the provision of diverse alternative livelihood choices. Alternative livelihood is critical in any sustainable

development drive (Malhotra *et al.*, 2002). Also, the decision to provide specific livelihood programmes for women is an essential strategy for gender equality since livelihood needs and strategies of men and women are different due to differing gender roles and responsibilities, coupled with gender disparities in access to resources. As such, development interventions that fail to incorporate these differences will be ineffective in empowering people especially women to play their active roles in development (World Bank, 2015). This result also buttresses the Ahmed *et al.* (2009) point that specific interventions can be implemented based on the peculiar needs of men and women in order to promote gender equality.

Gender equality through financial literacy training

In this study, it was found that there was gender equality through access to financial literacy training (83.1%). This shows that beneficiaries had equal access to financial literacy training under the Project irrespective of gender. These views were largely supported by participants in the FGDs. For example, participants from Daboase Council agreed, "Many financial training programmes were given to us. All of us, whether men or women equally took part in the training." Similarly, beneficiaries from Ekutuase remarked, "Through Cocoa Life, WVG organised financial literacy training for community members. Both men and women equally benefited from the training." Participants from the two Councils claimed that the mode of delivery at the training should be improved upon. They added, "The duration for the training was too short. Such training programmes are very helpful, so we need enough time to learn in order to adapt the changes." The results from both the FGDs and the interview schedule depict that through its financial literacy

programme WVG promoted gender equality. This supports the position held by Lopez-Claros and Zahidi (2005) which shows that access to financial literacy training promotes gender equality. Again, financial literacy is vital in sustainable livelihood and overall economic empowerment of people (FAO & ILO, 2009).

Ensuring gender equality in access to credit facilities

Additionally, on the issue of credit facilities in the District, a large number of respondents (82.4%) said there was equal opportunity. In the same vein, the results from the FGDs with some beneficiaries revealed that access to credit facilities was the same for men and women. For instance, beneficiaries from Daboase Council said, "Access to credit facilities for male and female beneficiaries was the same. All that is required is for you to belong to a savings and loans group." Also, at Ekutuase Area Council participants stated, "Many community members can access credit facilities through the village savings and loans schemes formed under the Project. The terms of repayment of such loans are flexible." From the two approaches, it can be said that WVG made some efforts to promote gender equality in respect of access to credit facilities. This result is valid because access to credit helps to promote gender equality and SLF (FAO & ILO, 2009; Wassenaar, 2006).

Promoting gender equality through access to information

Access to information is an important approach in promoting gender equality (World Bank, 2002). In this study, there were more beneficiaries (85.7%) who agreed that both men and women had equal access to information throughout the delivery of the various interventions of Cocoa Life Project of WVG. A similar view was expressed during the FGDs. Beneficiaries from Daboase agreed,

be done at the household level in order to achieve equal access and control for men and women in decision making processes. In spite of the skepticism, the study showed that women and men generally had the same access in decision making process. This agrees with Care International, Cocoa Life and Mondelez International (2016) on the contribution of Cocoa Life towards increased participation in decision making. Also, this study supports other studies (Hunt & Brouwers, 2003; World Bank, 2002) done in places such as Peru and Vietnam. The result also coincides with UNESCO's (2003) submission that gender equality occurs when men and women have access to decision-making processes. Equal access to participation for men and women is key in the overall development process (Allah-Mensah, cited in Odoom, Opoku & Ayipah, 2017; Mondelez International & Cocoa Life, 2014).

Equality in participation in community planning and community groups

The study further established that gender equality occurred with respect to access to decision-making on community planning (70.5%), and membership of community groups (66.4%). These results were reinforced during the FGDs. WVG formed various groups in the communities. In these groups, both men and women had the same access to become members. Beneficiaries from Daboase observed, "There are committees for community action plans in various communities. Membership and leadership of each group are equally open to male and females." Beneficiaries from Ektuase claimed, "Weekly meetings are held by group or committee members to discuss matters of importance to them and the community. In such meetings, both women and men are equally represented." In

had access to farm lands. However, this access is often relinquished to men due to financial constraints, cultural factors, power relations and other challenges." At Ekutuase, FGD members intimated that within the Akan land tenure systems, women have access to family lands. However, because women often tend to lack the ability and power to own, control and manage lands, they tend to lose their lands to males in the families. In both Councils the FGD participants stated, "Women in the communities generally do not have the financial capacity to till the land. This constraint makes it very difficult for women to own, control and benefit from farm lands." Besides, all the beneficiaries bemoaned that women mainly take care of domestic chores such as cooking and taking care of children, so they do not have enough time to make good use of farm lands even when it is given to them coupled with the belief that men are the breadwinner of the family who must control and use all the resources of the family. In effect, power relations, inadequate funds and cultural factors limit women's access to own, control and use lands for productive activities. This seems to support the views expressed in the interview schedule.

The findings on access to farm land contradict Wassenaar (2006) who argued that gender equality occurs in access to land for community members. However, the results agree with FAO (2009) study that there is gender inequality in access to land in many communities in the developing nations. Again, the study mirrors Abane, as cited in Odoom *et al.* (2017) who found that financial constraints and cultural factors limit the abilities of women especially in Africa. What is more, the result suggests that more efforts need to be made to achieve women empowerment in the communities. Empowerment helps to create avenues for the

marginalised in society including women to enhance their capabilities, maximise the benefits of the opportunities available to them and transform the various kinds of power relations existing in the social structure (Friedmann, 1992; VeneKlasen *et al.*, 2004). Without secure access to land, access to credit facilities is hampered greatly (FAO, 2009).

A further analysis using an independent samples t-test was conducted to determine whether or not differences existed in the views of male and female beneficiaries in terms of the efforts WVG put in place to promote gender equality through its Cocoa Life Project interventions as shown in Table 17. There was no statistically significant difference in scores for males ($M=77.59$, $SD=13.76$) and females [$M=75.65$, $SD=16.25$; $t(342)=-1.4161$, $p=.233$]. Both male and female beneficiaries perceived WVG's efforts to promote gender equality as the same.

Table 17: An independent samples t-test for mean perception on WVG's efforts to promote gender equality for male and female respondents

Sex	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Effect size	Df	P-value
Male	184	77.59	13.76	.004	340	0.233
Female	158	75.65	16.25			

(Statistic is significant at 0.05): df = degree of freedom

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

The key informant interviews also showed that WVG made some efforts to promote gender equality in almost all the interventions the organisation implemented under the Cocoa Life Project in the District. The informants stated that WVG tried to create equal access, opportunities and benefits for both men and

women to be part of the various interventions implemented under the Project. Areas where gender equality occurred include modern farm practices, farm inputs, financial literacy training, information, alternative livelihood programmes, productive assets and community decision making. The findings are relevant in the context of the SDG 5 which enjoins states and other stakeholders of development to put in place measures to achieve gender equality. Nonetheless, these results accentuate the importance of the conceptual framework (Figure 2) which states that viable development programmes and projects must pay attention to gender equality.

Summary

Several efforts were made by WVG to promote gender equality under the Cocoa Life Project interventions. WVG created equal access to training on modern farming practices, farm inputs and productive resources for both male and female beneficiaries. WVG ensured equal participation in career opportunities and alternative livelihood programmes for both male and female beneficiaries. WVG created equal access to financial literacy training, credit facilities and to information for men and women. The Organisation helped both women and men to have equally belong to community groups and also participate in decision making processes in the communities. Although WVG made some effort to promote gender equality in access to land, it did not ensure gender balance in access to land in the communities. Financial constraints, power relations and cultural forces combined to hinder efforts to promote gender equality in terms of access to land. Whilst most men had greater access, women's access to farm lands was very limited. Although access to training on modern farming methods was equal for men and women, some women could

not avail themselves for the training since they had to take care of their children who were not yet in school. Though there was gender equality in participation in financial literacy training, the duration of the programme was too short. Again, no effective measures were put in place to enable female youth to also go into cocoa farming. Besides, there was no difference in sex and WVG's efforts to promote gender equality under the Project.

Conclusions

WVG has clearly defined efforts to promote gender equality under Cocoa Life Project interventions. Several efforts by WVG such as creation of access to training on modern farming practices, farm inputs, productive resources, and career opportunities help to promote gender equality. As part of Cocoa Life Project interventions, WVG ensures that its alternative livelihood and financial literacy training programmes reflect gender balance. Also, WVG provides equal access to credit facilities and information to both male and female beneficiaries as a strategy to promote gender equality under the Project. WVG ensures that there is no discrimination in access to membership of community groups and participation in community decision making processes for both women and men. WVG is unable to promote gender equality in terms of access to farm lands due to financial constraints, power relations and cultural forces which pose a setback to women. Although there is equal access to training on modern farming methods for men and women, women find it very difficult to avail themselves for such training due to domestic duties. Even though there is gender equality with respect to participation in financial literacy training, the duration of the programme is too short coupled

with the fact no clearly defined measures exist to enable female youth to also go into cocoa farming. On the whole, even though some efforts exist to promote gender equality under the Cocoa Life Project there are certain gender-specific concerns and local factors which need to be considered by key stakeholders in order to achieve any meaningful results with respect to gender equality.

Recommendations

Cocoa Life and Mondelez International are encouraged to sufficiently support WVG in order to be able to continually create access to training on modern farming practices, farm inputs and productive resources equally to men and women. Cocoa Life and Mondelez International should also team up with WVG to improve upon career opportunities created for men and women in the communities.

The District Assembly and community members should insist that project interventions provided to communities equally reflect the needs of both women and men. WVG should team up with Cocoa Life and community leaders to ensure that access to credit facilities and information in communities is provided equally to both men and women. There should be specific project interventions which address the peculiar needs of both male and female youth in the communities.

In order to ensure gender equality with regard to farm lands, WVG should collaborate effectively with Cocoa Life and Mondelez International, other NGOs, Agricultural Extension Agents and community leaders to organise comprehensive sensitisation programmes aimed at educating community members on the value of women's access to farm lands. Chiefs and family heads should also be sensitised on the need to enable women to utilise their access and control over farm land in

the communities. Community radios, local radio stations and community information centres can be used to facilitate such sensitisation programmes.

Again, WVG should pay increased attention to alternative livelihood programmes for women in order to empower them financially. To do that requires active participation of women during the planning of such interventions. Also, to address the skill barrier women face, WVG should collaborate with the District Assembly and community leaders to direct more efforts at expanding access to education and encouraging women to go to school. This can also be done through well-designed advocacy programmes aimed at addressing the cultural barriers which limit women's abilities and power in the society.

WVG should team up with Mondelez International, Cocoa Life and HBAC to extend the duration for financial literacy training and alternative livelihood programmes provided for project beneficiaries. Community members are encouraged to take advantage of policy interventions such as free education in order to address skill barriers especially on the part of women.

Women are encouraged to insist on having equal access to farm lands and in decision-making processes in the communities. They are encouraged to team up with CBOs to form advocacy groups to protect their rights to land and also demand for equal share to farm lands in order to enhance their livelihood choices.

Finally, it is recommended that Mondelez International, Cocoa Life, WVG, the District Assemblies should collaborate to come out with clearly-defined measures to address gender-specific concerns and local factors which hamper gender equality.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT INTERVENTIONS

Introduction

This chapter examined the sustainability of the Project interventions in two parts. The first part of the chapter examined the level of sustainability of the interventions. The second part of the chapter presented and discussed the views of respondents on the factors affecting the sustainability of the project interventions.

Level of Sustainability of the Project Interventions

More than half of the respondents (55.8%) believed that the interventions were fairly sustainable. This implies that beneficiaries were generally convinced that the Project interventions in WED were sustainable. Despite the concerns on the Project including the low inputs participants made into its planning, the FGDs with some beneficiaries showed that the interventions were sustainable in the communities. This was due to the importance community members accorded to the project interventions. However, at Daboase Area, it was revealed that some of the interventions including, "sanitation practices, soap making skill training, animal rearing, etc. were not sustainable". Among others, beneficiaries ascribed the situation to "inadequate start-up capital, failure of WVG and Cocoa Life to honour their promises and unavailability of market". Similar views were expressed during the FGDs at Ekutuase. In spite of the concerns from beneficiaries, it can be stated that on the whole the project interventions were sustainable. This study disagrees with Zakaria (2011) who found that NGOs are unable to sustain their development interventions.

The study further explored the key indicators of sustainability, namely duration of project interventions, adaptation of practices obtained from the Project, continuous delivery of interventions, behaviour change among the beneficiaries, and continuous derivation of benefits from the Project (Moore *et al.*, 2017). A little more than half (51.3%) of the respondents stated that the duration of the Project was adequate (Table 18). The results from the qualitative data showed that specific interventions were provided over a period of time. In the FGDs, all the beneficiaries expected the duration for some of the interventions to be extended so as to achieve the desired goal. For instance, in the Daboase Council, beneficiaries agreed, "The duration for animal rearing, and saving and loan training programmes was too short." Also, beneficiaries of Daboase Council said, "a little more time should have been given to the training on new methods of gari processing and soap making." Yet, it was agreed that the duration was fairly ok.

Table 18: Key indicators of project sustainability

Indicator	A		U		D	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
The duration for implementation was adequate	187	51.3	28	8.2	127	40.2
There has been adaptation of practices obtained from the Project	244	71.4	23	6.6	75	22.0
WVG continues to deliver interventions to the communities	-	-	8	2.0	335	98.0
There has been a behaviour change among the beneficiaries	218	63.7	34	10	90	26.3
Beneficiaries continue to derive more benefits from the Project	224	65.5	10	2.9	108	31.6

Keys: A- Agree

U- Undecided

D- Disagree

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

Also, in the Ekuase Council, beneficiaries said, "Although the duration was generally ok, it was not enough for some of the interventions." In short, although beneficiaries admitted that the duration was generally ok, it was found that the duration was short for some of the interventions. These findings generally uphold the position held by Stirman *et al.* (2012), and Schneider and Libercier, as cited in Mammah (2006) that the duration within which project interventions are delivered contributes to the sustainability of the project. The results also agree with Fleischer *et al.* (2015) who observed that the duration plays a vital role in project sustainability. Nonetheless, Schneider and Libercier conceded that projects cannot continue in perpetuity. This means that beneficiaries need to get to the stage of self-reliance which enables them to pursue their current activities and to effectively cope with changing circumstances (Schneider & Libercier, cited in Mammah, 2006).

Again, most (71.4%) of the respondents believed that practices obtained from the Cocoa Life Project interventions had been adapted by the beneficiaries. The results from the FGDs did not differ markedly from that of the interview schedule. Beneficiaries from Ekuase Council stated, "Many farmers have adopted the modern farming practices they obtained through the Cocoa Life Project of WVG." Many beneficiaries still use the knowledge and skill obtained from the training on savings, alternative livelihood, financial literacy, among others. Beneficiaries at the Daboase Area Council shared with the observations by Ekuase Council. They stated further, "We still use the knowledge we obtained from the Project in farming and gari processing. "Also, participants from Daboase said, "We still use the knowledge we gained from the financial literacy training and

the community development planning. Our saving culture is better now because we are still using what WVG taught us as part of the Project.” However, beneficiaries admitted that those who obtained skill training on soap making generally found it very difficult to put into practice the knowledge they acquired due to the increasing cost of production. It was further revealed that beneficiaries overly depended on farming which affected the time they spent on other income generation activities they had learnt, coupled with the low support from WVG. Beneficiaries from Ekutuase Area said, “They asked us to buy hencoop and they would give us chickens to rear. But they have not even bothered to find out whether or not we have bought them.” Thus, from both the interview schedule and FGDs, beneficiaries adapted the practices they learnt from the Project though, they had some challenges. The findings resonate with Moore *et al.* (2017) who maintained that adaptation of practices from project interventions is a crucial indicator of project sustainability.

Also, almost all (98%) the respondents stated that WVG had stopped providing interventions. Further inquiries done by the researcher confirmed that WVG was not providing any more interventions in the District. The organisation had left the District for another district about a year ago before this study was even conducted. All the beneficiaries for the FGDs stated that WVG was not providing any interventions again and that they had left the District. However, beneficiaries admitted that WVG informed them of their departure ahead of time. This finding is a deviation from the expressions of scholars (Fleischer, 2015; Moore *et al.*, 2017; Schell *et al.*, 2013; Schneider & Libercier, cited in Mammah, 2006; Stirman *et al.*,

2012) on the need to ensure a continuation of project interventions over a period of time. In order to achieve this, according to Schneider and Libercier, requires resources, know-how, skills, vision, self-confidence, and enabling socio-political and economic relationships.

Besides, Table 18 shows that most (63.7%) of the respondents indicated that there was a change in behaviour as a result of the Project. The group discussions with the beneficiaries from Daboase Council showed, "Many of the farmers, gari processors, and those involved in savings and loans have all witnessed a positive change in behaviour which they attributed to the Project." On their part, beneficiaries from Ektuase indicated, "There has been a great change in our farming methods and the way we go about our soap making and gari processing ever since the Project was implemented." However, the members admitted that some of the old behaviours had not changed. For instance, despite the public education on health care, some people were using mosquito nets donated to them to fence their backyard gardens whilst they continued to battle with malaria. Nevertheless, it can be inferred that there was a change in behaviour among beneficiaries. This is consistent with Buchanan *et al.* (2005), and Chambers *et al.* (2013) who observed that a change in behaviour among project beneficiaries shows that the project is sustainable. Also, the study agrees with Engh, as cited in Roe *et al.* (2015) who reported a change in behaviour by project beneficiaries.

The study further observed that majority (65.5%) of the respondents were still deriving benefits from the Project although WVG had left the District. The FGDs largely confirmed that community members still derive benefits from the

A significant relationship existed between the Project and the key indicators of sustainability such as: adequacy of time for implementation of the project, presence of adaptation of practices, continued delivery of project interventions, behaviour change, and continued deriving of more benefits from the Project with p-values of 0.000, 0.000, 0.000, 0.000, and 0.000 respectively.

Factors Affecting the Sustainability of the Project Interventions

Having examined the level of sustainability of the Project, the study further explored the factors affecting the sustainability of the interventions as shown in Table 20.

Table 20: Factors affecting the sustainability of the Project

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev
Commitment from local people towards the Project	4.21	0.54
Supportive relationship between WVG team and community members	4.18	0.52
Local ownership of the project right from the onset	4.09	0.86
Local people were empowered throughout the Project	4.05	0.92
Teamwork for the delivery of the Project	4.01	0.91
Flexibility in the Project interventions	3.37	1.25
Clear communication between the beneficiaries and WVG	3.34	1.09
Effective coordination between WVG and beneficiaries	3.33	1.08
Good working culture of personnel at WVG who led the delivery of the Project	3.14	1.22
Adequate participation in the form of beneficiaries' inputs throughout the project cycle	2.09	1.22
Accountability throughout the delivery of the Project	2.06	1.24
Transparency in the implementation of the Project	2.00	1.21

Means were calculated from a scale of: 5-Very Strongly Agree 4- Strongly Agree
 3-Moderately Agree 2-Lowly Agree 1- Very Lowly Agree
 Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

Specifically, factors such as teamwork, supportive relationship, working culture, communication, and adequate participation. Others are local ownership, transparency, accountability, empowerment, local people's commitment, and coordination.

Teamwork and support from officers of WVG

Respondents agreed that teamwork ($M=4.01$, $SD=0.91$) and supportive relationship ($M=4.18$, $SD=0.52$) WVG provided in the course of the intervention contributed to the sustainability of the Project interventions as found in Table 20. In essence, teamwork and supportive relationship positively affected how sustainable the interventions have been. Also, the results from the FGDs at Ekutuase Area Council showed, "WVG put in place a team and supports in charge of the Project. In fact, WVG appointed some officers who handled issues on their Cocoa Life Project. They worked as a team." Moreover, in the Daboase Council, beneficiaries agreed that there was teamwork but also indicated that WVG could have done more to support especially in the area of animal rearing through proper engagement. It can be said that there was teamwork and supportive relationship which positively affected the sustainability of the Project.

Working culture of personnel of WVG in charge of the interventions

Again, respondents considered the working culture of officers from WVG in charge of the Project as good ($M=3.14$, $SD=1.22$). This helped to sustain the Project. In the same vein, the FGDs revealed that personnel from WVG demonstrated a good working culture. Participants from Ekutuase contended, "The personnel from WVG showed commitment in the course of the Project. They were

time conscious.” It was added that the attitude of some beneficiaries towards time was problematic. However, participants from Daboase Council admitted, “Not all the Officers of WVG cooperated with us. Some of them were not patient to explain issues to us. Not all of us are literate, so they have to be patient with us and explain things better to us.” In Ekutuase, the FGDs noted, “We all wanted to learn the new methods of farming and soap making but the speed at which some of the methods were explained to us did not help us. Thus, based on the two approaches, even though there was a good working culture from WVG personnel there was more to be done to make the Project very meaningful to the people. This finding supports that of Adam, Soliman and Haroun (2015) who discovered that favourable working culture exhibited by NGOs promotes the sustainability of project interventions.

Local ownership of the interventions

In this study, beneficiaries agreed that there was local ownership of the interventions ($M=4.09$, $SD=0.86$). In essence, beneficiaries indicated that the local people were allowed to own the project right from the onset. During the FGDs with selected beneficiaries, it was revealed that there was local ownership of the interventions. It was noted further that WVG informed beneficiaries that the Project was for them so they should take advantage of the interventions. In the words of participants from Ekutuase, “We were told to own the Project right from the start of the implementation.” Also, at Daboase it was said, “WVG and Cocoa Life constantly advised us to own and commit more to the Project. They said they are here because of us, so we should see the Project as our own.” However, participants from both councils admitted that their inputs and expertise did not have much

influence on the Project. Nevertheless, local ownership generally contributed to the sustainability of the Project. Previous studies (Nalubiri, 2010; Junne & Verkoren, 2005) on local ownership heighten the importance of this study. Local ownership is critical in sustaining any development interventions. Allowing local people to own development projects right from the onset is another factor which affects project sustainability (Junné & Verkoren, 2005; Odoom *et al.*, 2018b). However, the failure to fully include the inputs and expertise of the local people is a challenge to the practical relevance of the ABCD. As an approach, ABCD advocates for the recognition and exploitation of local initiatives and expertise for community development (Haines, 2009; Russell, 2009).

Empowerment of local people

Moreover, respondents were empowered ($M=4.05$, $SD=0.92$) which promoted the sustainability of the Project. Also, the group discussions showed that the interventions empowered the beneficiaries. At Daboase Council beneficiaries conceded that the Project had empowered them in many ways. They remarked, "Interventions on farming and gari processing have empowered us financially." At the same Council (Daboase), it was observed, "The Project also helped us to diversify our sources of income and this has empowered us financially." Similarly, beneficiaries from Eketuase Council intimated, "All the training programme on business skills, community planning, water and sanitation interventions, financial literacy training and career opportunities for the youth have empowered us a lot." Beneficiaries added that as community members were empowered their level of self-confidence increases. The result on empowerment is consistent with previous

studies (Baccaro, 2001; Hedayat & Ma'rof, 2010) which found that NGOs help promote local empowerment. The result further validates Nalubiri's (2010) finding that local empowerment positively affects sustainability of development interventions. When individuals and communities feel empowered, they tend to show a sense of potency and competence which boosts their self-confidence and sense of personal and/or collective potential (Michael, 2004).

Commitment from the local people

Another factor affecting the sustainability of the Project is commitment from the local people [$M=4.21$, $SD=0.54$] (Table 20). Respondents agreed that there was commitment from the local people during the delivery of the Project which accounted for the sustainability of the Project. Besides, further group discussions revealed that there was local commitment due to the fact that WVG had been in the District for some time, providing a number of projects to the communities. Participants from Ekutuase said, "We have known WVG for long in the District. They have provided services to many communities in this District, so we knew they would not disappoint us. We have seen what they have done in many communities in the District." Again, at Daboase Council, the study noted, "WVG had worked with many of us before this Project. They provided us with assistance in areas such as education, health, agriculture and water, so we knew they would help to deliver the Cocoa Life Project better." In effect, there was local commitment towards the Project interventions due to what beneficiaries had learnt about WVG in the District. This confirms Odoom *et al.* (2018b) study on the value of commitment of local people to project sustainability.

Adequacy of participation in the interventions

Besides, respondents described their overall participation as low ($M=2.09$, $SD=1.22$). The FGDs also confirmed that the level of participation especially in planning and evaluation stages of the interventions was low. Beneficiaries from Ekutuase noted, "We had expected to have more inputs into the planning of the interventions but this did not occur. We wanted to define our own development goals based on our needs but our views were not captured into the planning of the Project." In addition, beneficiaries at Daboase Council contended, "We wanted WVG to spend enough time to find out whether the interventions they provided had achieved the goals set but this did not happen. You can't just assume that everything you give to communities helps to solve their needs and problems. We have to find out." Thus, the interview schedule and FGDs results showed that there was inadequate participation. It is no wonder that beneficiaries said that they were lowly satisfied especially with their participation in planning and evaluating the interventions. The study confirms that of Mammah (2006) who discovered that participation in NGO interventions by beneficiaries is low in Ghana. Cornwall and Brock (2005) cautioned that there is more rhetorics about participation due to the varying interests of people and development actors. Despite this concern, Cornwall and Brock (2005) maintain that participation is vital in sustaining interventions.

Transparency and accountability issues in the Project

Although transparency and accountability are important measures to promote sustainability of development interventions (Lekorwe, 1999), in this study, there was low level of transparency ($M=2.00$, $SD=1.21$) and accountability during

the implementation of the Project ($M=2.06$, $SD=1.24$). This shows that beneficiaries had concerns with the level of transparency and accountability WVG showed in the Project. In the FGDs, beneficiaries were not pleased with how issues of transparency and accountability were addressed by WVG. Participants at Ekutuase said, "Officers of WVG did not fully listen to us to know how the interventions were going on and what inputs we as beneficiaries could make to improve the Project." Again, participants from Daboase opined, "We could not even ask how much was being spent on the interventions. They had their own budgets and there was nothing we could do to change any aspect of the budgets." Beneficiaries said that how funds for the Project were being used was not explained to them and they were also not in the position to find out. When beneficiaries were asked why they failed to find out, they said it is the practice in Ghana that even when the state is providing services to the people, issues of transparency and accountability are poorly handled. Although beneficiaries inquired from WVG on issues of accountability and transparency, the responses the Officers provided were not convincing. In effect, transparency and accountability were not properly addressed under the Project. The findings agree with Edward and Hulme's assertion, as cited in TANGO (2002a), and Lewis and Kanji (2009) that accountability is not taken seriously by NGOs. Also, the findings support that of Semezana, as cited in Mushi (2011) who found that lack of accountability is a common feature of NGOs in places such as Tanzania. Semezana concludes that NGOs are not accountable even to people they claim they serve. The rising number of NGOs globally means that development partners including NGOs must pay

attention to good governance issues such as accountability and transparency in their projects (Lekorwe, 1999; Rooney, 2011).

Coordination of the project interventions

In addition, Table 20 shows that coordination during the delivery of the interventions was moderately effective ($M=3.33$, $SD=1.08$). Beneficiaries said that WVG coordinated the interventions well. On the contrary, the results based on the FGDs showed that there was poor coordination during the Project delivery. Beneficiaries from Ekutuase believed coordination which occurred during the training on animal rearing and savings and loans was very poor. In the words of beneficiaries from Ekutuase, "We kept on calling to even find out when our savings boxes would be provided but there was nobody to respond to us. Some officers said we should contact BAC but others said we should talk to the woman in charge of Cocoa Life." Similar frustrations were expressed during the FGDs at Daboase. The participants commented, "Coordination was very poor for some of the interventions." This finding coincides with Nalubiri (2010) who asserts that effective coordination is essential in sustaining development projects.

On their part, the key informants said that the interventions were fairly sustainable due to factors such as teamwork, good working culture, local empowerment, and coordination. However, there were concerns with sustainability of the Project. For instance, the duration of training on new farming methods and alternative livelihood programmes was inadequate. They also commented that low commitment on the part of some beneficiaries could hinder the sustainability of the interventions, coupled with inadequate start-up capital of many beneficiaries. In the

words of HBAC, "Many beneficiaries who desired to start new businesses did not have the initial capital to do so." Additionally, it was stated that without appropriate local ownership ICT facilities, gari processing machines as well as the skills learnt for diversified livelihoods may be poorly sustained. Also, too much focus on groups without regard to specific needs of individual members hampered commitment from some beneficiaries towards the interventions. The informants had also expected the District Agric Office, BAC, extension agents and the assembly members to actively take part in the needs assessment stage of the interventions because of the important data, such entities and individuals may have. However, this did not happen which contradicts earlier studies (Haines, 2009; Mammah, 2006; Nalubiri, 2010). The authors submitted that proper stakeholder engagement helps to sustain project interventions. Generally, this study is in line with the conceptual framework (Figure 2) which demonstrates that sustainability is an essential component of viable development programmes and projects. The framework further reveals that in order to ensure sustainability of development programmes a number of measures including local ownership, commitment, coordination and teamwork should be put in place. Besides, the results on inadequate participation, low accountability and poor transparency measures call for the need to pay increased attention to sustainability of development services.

Summary

Chapter nine explored the factors affecting the sustainability of the interventions. Project interventions were sustainable. The project was generally sustainable. Also, it has been established that a significant relationship existed

between the sustainability of the project interventions and key factors such as: duration of implementation of the project, presence of adaptation of practices obtained through the project, behaviour change, and continued deriving of more benefits from the Project. The interventions were delivered over a period of time. Again, teamwork and good working culture demonstrated by WVG led to the sustainability of the Project. Moreover, the sustainability of the Project was ascribed to supportive relationship, effective coordination and flexible nature of the interventions. Local people were allowed to own the project from the onset. Besides, by empowering local people, WVG helped to sustain the Project. However, there were concerns with project interventions. For example, not all the interventions delivered in the communities were sustainable coupled with inadequate duration of some of the interventions. There was inadequate participation especially in the planning of the interventions as the inputs of beneficiaries were not seriously considered in development goal setting. Also, poor transparency and accountability during the implementation of the Project constituted a challenge to the sustainability of the Project.

Conclusions

The Cocoa Life Project interventions implemented in the District are generally sustainable. The duration of the intervention and adaptation of new practices contribute to the sustainability of WVG's project interventions. Also, Cocoa Life Project interventions lead to a change in behaviour, coupled with the fact that most beneficiaries still derive benefits from the Project. Again, WVG demonstrates teamwork and supportive relationship which help to sustain project

interventions. Besides, local ownership and empowerment of local people promote project sustainability. Effective coordination and flexibility of project interventions play a critical role in the sustainability of development interventions. Nonetheless, there are concerns with the level of accountability and transparency of WVG's interventions under the Project. Even though the interventions are delivered over a period of time in the communities, not all of them are sustainable coupled with inadequate duration of some of the interventions. There is inadequate participation especially in the planning of the interventions as the inputs of beneficiaries are not seriously considered in development goal setting.

Recommendations

WVG should work in partnership with Mondelez International and Cocoa Life to extend the duration of the Project interventions in order to ensure that beneficiaries fully realise the expected returns of the Project. WVG should continue to demonstrate teamwork, good working culture and supportive relationships in the course of undertaking development services in communities. WVG should liaise with Cocoa Life, District Assemblies and other NGOs to provide development services to empower people, especially those in the rural areas of the country.

More so, WVG should team up with Mondelez International, Cocoa Life the District Agriculture Offices, BACs and the District Assemblies to design clear measures to promote accountability and transparency in the delivery of project interventions. This will enable beneficiaries to appreciate and also, demand answers for concerns they may raise with regard to accountability and transparency in project delivery.

It is also recommended that adequate measures be put in place by WVG and Cocoa Life to promote local participation in project interventions. Community members should show more commitment to development interventions and programmes provided to them. They need to be actively involved in the various activities provided by development partners and stakeholders in the District.

WVG should team up with local authorities and community leaders to create more measures to ensure effective coordination of development projects.

The District Assembly should collaborate with Cocoa Life, NGOs, the District Agric Office, the BAC and community leaders to ensure that project beneficiaries actually utilise knowledge, skills and practices imparted to them. Awards can be instituted to beneficiaries who are able to effectively use knowledge, skills and practices obtained from projects. Periodic sensitisation using local radio stations, information centres and mobile information van should be done with the active involvement of community members.

WVG should team up with Cocoa Life and Mondelez International in order to extend the duration for project interventions especially the animal rearing, and financial literacy, modern gari processing, soap making and savings and loans training programmes. The approach in delivering some of these interventions should be redefined in order to clearly focus on the peculiar needs of beneficiaries.

Community members are urged to make effective use of the knowledge, practices and inputs obtained from project interventions. They are also urged to own and commit to development services undertaken in their locality since they are the ultimate beneficiaries of the services.

CHAPTER NINE

PERCEIVED IMPACT OF PROJECT INTERVENTIONS ON THE LIVELIHOODS OF BENEFICIARIES

Introduction

Chapter Nine contains the results on the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihoods of beneficiaries. Table 21 explored the overall perceived impact of the Project on the livelihood of beneficiaries, whilst Tables 22 and 23 summarised the difference in the state of livelihood of beneficiaries before and after the interventions. Specific issues explored in the chapter include access to livelihood support services, knowledge on livelihood activities, diversification of income sources, productivity, and access to markets. Others are savings, credit facilities, assets, food security, inclusion and access to basic services.

Impact on access to livelihood support-services

The Project was found to have improved respondents' access to livelihood-support services ($M=4.06$, $SD=0.93$) [Table 21]. Also, Table 22 shows that more respondents (56.7%) had low access to livelihood support-services before the interventions. However, after participating in the Project there was moderate improvement in access to livelihood support-services as observed in Table 22. Also, the group discussions revealed that beneficiaries had obtained a lot of livelihood support services from the Project. Participants from Daboase Council identified, "skill training, farm inputs, and gari processing machines" as some of the services they received to enhance their livelihood. Also, beneficiaries at Ekutuase Area said, "We have obtained diverse livelihood support services through the Project. These

support services have helped us to improve our livelihoods." Thus, both the interview schedule and the FGDs showed that the Project enabled beneficiaries to have livelihood support-services. This revelation conforms to a study in Kenya by Brass (2010) which found that NGOs in the country provide livelihood support-services to improve the lives of people. Livelihood support-services promote effective community development programmes (Brass, 2010).

Table 21: Perceived impact of the Project on the livelihood of respondents

Impact of the Project on livelihood	Mean	Std. Dev.
Improved savings of beneficiaries	4.21	0.50
Increased knowledge on livelihood activities	4.17	0.63
Increased sense of inclusion among beneficiaries	4.17	0.63
Improved access to livelihood-support services	4.06	0.93
Improved access to credit facilities	4.06	0.93
Increased net income of beneficiaries	4.03	0.90
Enhanced productivity of beneficiaries	4.01	0.91
Diversified sources of livelihood	3.33	1.13
Improved household capacity to access basic services	3.33	1.13
Increased productive assets of beneficiaries	3.24	1.16
Improved health status of beneficiaries	3.23	1.32
Improved household food security	3.19	1.33
Increased access to markets for produce	3.18	0.52
Increased household assets of beneficiaries	3.18	1.36
Grand	3.67	0.87

Means were calculated from a scale of: 5-Very Highly Agree
 4-Highly Agree 3-Moderately Agree 2-Lowly Agree
 1-Very Lowly Agree

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

Impact on knowledge related to livelihood activities

The study further established that the interventions have highly increased respondents' knowledge on livelihood activities ($M=4.17$, $SD=0.63$) in the District as (Table 21). The results on before and after interventions showed that most (67.5%) respondents' knowledge on livelihood activities has increased (Table 22).

Table 22: States of livelihood of respondents before and after the interventions

Aspect of Livelihood	Before Interventions				After Interventions			
	H (%)	M (%)	L (%)	U (%)	H (%)	M (%)	L (%)	U (%)
Access to livelihood-support services	2.0	20.2	64.3	13.5	32.7	56.7	7.3	3.2
Knowledge on livelihood activities	2.0	20.5	67.0	10.5	67.5	24.6	5.6	2.3
Diversification of livelihood sources	2.0	19.9	68.4	9.6	31.6	63.2	2.0	3.2
Yearly productivity	2.0	19.9	68.4	9.6	71.3	14.3	5.0	9.4
Access to markets	1.8	15.8	74.6	7.9	5.1	52.3	8.2	4.4
Monthly net income	0.3	22.5	71.6	5.6	71.9	17.5	6.4	4.1
Monthly savings	0.9	12.9	69.6	16.7	72.5	14.9	2.9	9.6
Access to credit facilities	2.6	12.9	68.1	16.4	67.5	24.6	5.6	2.3
Household assets	2.6	12.6	75.7	9.1	22.0	59.8	12.6	5.6
Productive assets	2.0	26.0	63.2	8.5	5.8	81.3	6.7	6.1
Household food security	0.9	28.7	62.0	8.5	31.3	57.0	8.2	3.5
Sense of inclusion	2.0	19.9	68.4	9.6	76.3	6.1	6.4	11.1
Access to basic services	2.0	19.9	68.4	9.6	34.8	55.6	5.1	4.4
Health status	2.1	20.5	53.1	24.3	33.9	52.6	8.2	5.3

Keys: H-High M-Moderate L-Low U-Uncertain

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

The FGDs also showed that through the Project interventions beneficiaries have increased their knowledge on livelihood choices and activities. At Daboase Area Council, participants commented, "We did not have these skills and knowledge before the introduction of the Project. We now have them due to the interventions provided under the Project." Again, beneficiaries at Ekutuase Area Council expressed, "Our knowledge on livelihood choices and activities has increased due to the Project. We never knew of the modern method of processing gari and also the new farming methods we were taught. But as a result of the Project we have learnt these new things" In essence, through the Project interventions of WVG in the District, beneficiaries' knowledge on livelihood activities increased based on the two approaches. These findings meet the expectations of Scoones (1998). According to the Scoones (1998), access to increased knowledge on livelihood activities is key in sustainable development. The study further confirms the fact that increased knowledge on livelihood activities is an important indicator of livelihood outcome (FAO & ILO, 2009; Livelihoods Centre Report, n. d.).

Impact on diversification of income sources

Also, it is clear from Table 21 that the Project moderately enabled respondents to diversify their sources of income ($M=3.33$, $SD=1.13$). Similarly, in Table 22, more respondents (63.2%) reported a moderate change in diversification of income sources after the interventions. The views obtained from the FGDs were not different from the interview schedule. At Ekutuase Area, beneficiaries involved in the FGDs mentioned, "WVG trained us on how to diversify our sources of income. They trained on soap making, gari processing and petty trading. Some

people are now into petty trading and gari processing in addition to farming. Some are also into soap making." Participants from Daboase said, "Diversification of sources of income was key on the agenda of the Project. The investment training beneficiaries also enabled some of them to go into transport business as another sources of income." However, at both Area Councils, participants intimated that some of the income generation sources would demand huge capital injection which they did not have. On the whole, the study observed that the Project helped to diversify income sources of beneficiaries which corroborates previous study (Kabeer *et al.*, 2008). In a study conducted in Bangladesh, Kabeer *et al.* (2008) found that NGOs helped to diversify the income sources of beneficiaries. Again, this result is similar to Jones, Petrin and Scott (2015) study which found that Cocoa Life interventions have led to diversification of income sources of beneficiaries in Indonesia. According to the SLF (Figure 1), diversification of income sources is essential in sustainable livelihood. Besides, the findings buttress the conceptual framework (Figure 2) which submits that income diversification is important on the agenda of meaningful development interventions.

Impact on productivity

Also, the Project highly enhanced the productivity ($M=4.01$, $SD=0.91$) of respondents as presented in Table 21. Again, in Table 22, it is clear that many respondents who had low productivity rated their productivity as high (71.3%) after the interventions. Further discussions with some selected beneficiaries confirmed the above observations. In Daboase Area Council it was agreed,

We have seen a big difference in the cocoa yields we get ever

since we took part in the Cocoa Life Project led by WVG. People who could not harvest even a bag of cocoa yields a year can now get more than three bags in a year due to the Project. Those who used to get three bags of cocoa before the Project but through the skill training on modern farming and the inputs they gave us, we can now get close to six bags. Everybody who is part of the Project has seen an increase in his or her cocoa yields. We talk to each other almost every day.

Also, beneficiaries from Ekutuase Area Council submitted,

People who were getting four sacks of cocoa yield each year now get six or sometimes seven sacks each year. The modern practices they taught us is helping us a lot. We also are able to get some cocoa yield to sell even in off seasons. Again, gari processors are also producing more gari than they used to do prior to the Project. They taught us modern way of processing gari. Some people are getting more than twice the size of gari they used to produce before the start of the Project. The gari processing machines they gave us are helping us to increase the amount of gari we produce.

Besides, the FGDs showed that most people who had learnt the modern method of gari processing which involved the addition of ginger, soya beans and other nutrients to the cassava before processing were still using the old method. This was due to the fact that after using the modern method the product becomes very expensive, so they risked not getting buyers. Nonetheless, the results from the two approaches proved that there has been an increase in productivity among

beneficiaries as a result of the interventions provided by WVG under the Cocoa Life Project. This study corroborates the findings of other scholars (Adjei *et al.*, 2012; Matsvai, 2018) on the efforts development partners are making in places such as Ghana and Zimbabwe. Specifically, Adjei *et al.* (2012) found that Plan Ghana, ActionAid Ghana, Rural Action Alliance Program, and Social Development and Improvement Agency have made huge impact on the productivity of beneficiaries. Also, in Zimbabwe, Matsvai (2018) found that NGO interventions enable beneficiaries to increase their level of productivity.

Impact on access to market

The results in both Tables 21 and 22 indicate that the Project has led to increased access to markets. However, Table 22 shows that the effect of the Project on respondents' access to market was only moderate (52.3%). Beneficiaries involved in the group discussions were not very much pleased with access to markets for the products. At Daboase Area Council, beneficiaries stated, "Sometimes we struggled to get market to sell our produce. Sometimes gari processors and soap makers do not get markets to sell their products due to many factors including poor road networks, inadequate storage facilities." Also, at Ekutuase, beneficiaries intimated, "Some of us have processed gari which we have not been able to sell because of low access to market. The Ekutuase and Atobiase markets are very small for the goods we want to sell." At both Area Councils, participants acknowledged that in some instances, beneficiaries were compelled to sell their products including plantain, cassava, cocoyam and yam almost at a give-away price. Thus, the qualitative results proved that there were concerns with

access to market in the District. Nonetheless, the finding conforms to the assertion that access to market is vital in ensuring improved livelihoods (Engh, cited in Roe *et al.*, 2015). Engh adds that unfavourable market conditions can alter all the gains beneficiaries have made from livelihood interventions.

Impact on level of income

Moreover, Table 21 reveals that the Project has highly increased net income of respondents (M=4.03, SD=0.90). Also, most respondents (71.9%) generally believed that their income level increased after participating in the Project interventions (Table 22). The responses from the FGDs were very similar to the views expressed in the interview schedule. For example, beneficiaries from Daboase Area Council said, "The project has increased our incomes. Those of us who were earning on average, GH¢120 each month are now earning GH¢250 each month." They added that people who were earning GH¢160 a month, are now earning GH¢340, each month. Again, in Eketuase Area Council it was expressed,

What we were getting as income from cocoa farms and other sources has increased. We now have more incomes due to the help of the interventions. People who were earning GH¢145 averagely each month are now earning GH¢320 each month. Some people who were earning less than GH¢150 a month, now earn close to GH¢300, each month. Our income level has indeed increased. Some people now earn more than two times what they were earning before WVG started the Project interventions.

At both Area Councils, participants generally identified increased cocoa yields, proceeds from gari processing, increased savings, and proceeds from petty trading as the key drivers of the change they see in their income. However, participants believed more needs to be done to increase prices of cocoa in the face of the rising competition from rubber plantation. At Ekutuase, participants bemoaned, "Mondeleze and the government need to do something about the cocoa prices. Rubber plantation is a lucrative venture which some farmers have started investing in. We are afraid that if prices of cocoa do not go up, there will be problems." Despite the concerns, there was a change in income after participation in the Project. The results confirm earlier studies (Adjei *et al.*, 2012; Ansoglenang, 2006; Baker, 2000; Muyatwa, 2006) on the effects of NGOs on income of beneficiaries in countries such as Zambia and Ghana. The authors found that NGO interventions improve the income level of beneficiaries in those countries. Also, a study in Zimbabwe by Matsvai (2018) revealed that interventions by development partners including NGOs increase income levels of beneficiaries. However, the result contradicts Nziane's (2009) study which observed a very low effect of project interventions on the income level of beneficiaries.

Impact on savings

Savings constitutes a vital strategy in effective livelihood programmes especially in the field of NGOs (Brass, 2010). In this study, it was found that the Project has improved savings ($M=4.21$) of respondents as seen in Table 21. Again, most respondents (72.5%) increased their average monthly savings after the interventions (Table 22). The results from the FGDs revealed that there was marked

improvement in the savings of beneficiaries as a result of the Project. For example, at Ekutuase Area, beneficiaries stated, "Our savings culture has improved because of the Project. We can now save on daily and weekly basis as a result of financial literacy training we obtained and also the diversified sources of income due to the Project." In Daboase Area, it was indicated, "Our attitude towards savings has improved since WVG implemented its interventions. Those who were unable to save anything can now save GH¢80 a month and even more." The various VSLAs which WVG formed have been one of the major determinants of the positive impact of the Project on the livelihoods of beneficiaries. In the words of beneficiaries, "The VSLAs have been very helpful in improving our savings culture. But many communities need to be helped to form the savings associations."

Despite the improvement, it was agreed that there was the need to properly safeguard the boxes in which daily and weekly savings were kept, as some of the communities including Kwabaa had recorded theft cases in respect of their savings. Nevertheless, the results from both the quantitative and qualitative analyses confirm that beneficiaries had improved their savings as a result of the Project. The finding of this study supports the position expressed in WVG Report (n.d.) that the organisation has played an important role in improving saving culture of its beneficiaries. Besides, the finding is consistent with that of Oxfam (2008) which reported that NGOs helped to improve the savings culture of beneficiaries. More so, saving is critical in sustainable livelihood agenda (FAO & ILO, 2009). Also, the finding is in agreement with the key performance indicators of Cocoa Life

Project, and the conceptual framework (Figure 2) which depicts that improved savings is crucial in effective development programmes and projects.

Impact on access to credit facilities

More so, the researcher observed that the Project highly led to improved access to credit facilities for respondents ($M=4.06$, $SD=0.93$). Also, in Table 22 most of the respondents (67.5%) perceived their access to credit facilities as generally high after the Project. The FGD results confirmed the findings above. In the words of the beneficiaries from Ekutuase Area, "Any time we are in need of financial assistance, all we have to do is to inform the leaders of the VSLAs and they will grant us credit facility to take care of our needs." Beneficiaries from Daboase Council also commented, "We can now obtain credit facility easily especially in emergency situations. The interest on the loan is very low compared with the mainstream banking sector. We are not under any pressure to repay the loans." In essence, the above results showed that the Project improved beneficiaries' access to credit facilities. This finding is in line with a report which found that beneficiaries are able to access credit facilities due to the activities of NGOs (World Vision Ghana, n.d.). The study also validates that of Oxfam (2008) which found that NGOs improve access to credit facilities among people. Just like savings, access to credit, and ability to borrow are vital factors in livelihoods and livelihood diversification (Bezemer & Lerman, 2003; FAO & ILO, 2009; Khatun & Roy, 2012). These factors are also significant in the context of SLF (Figure 1).

Impact on households and productive assets

More so, Table 21 shows that the interventions of WVG moderately increased households' assets of respondents ($M=3.18$, $SD=1.36$) in the District. Again, the Project was found to have moderately increased productive assets for respondents ($M=3.24$, $SD=1.16$). The observations in Table 21 were further emphasised by respondents in Table 22 and also in the FGDs. At both Area Councils, participants in the FGDs listed some of the productive assets obtained as, "gari processing machines, shops, motor cycles, mobile phone business, spraying machines and other farm implements". Beneficiaries listed television sets, radio sets, mobile phones, etc. as household assets they had been able to obtain due to their involvement in the Project. In essence, the Project has enabled beneficiaries to increase both their household and productive assets. In livelihood analysis, household asset status is important based on the belief that people require a range of assets to achieve desirable outcomes. People with more assets are more likely to have greater livelihood options with which to pursue their goals and reduce poverty (Gale, 2011). Besides, access to household and productive assets influences livelihood choices and strategies of people (Rahman & Shaheen, 2014). More so, household and productive assets are critical in sustainable livelihood strategies.

Impact on household food security

Moreover, the beneficiaries who took part in this study revealed that the Project has moderately improved household food security ($M=3.19$, $SD=1.33$) in the communities. Table 22 accentuates the fact that more (57.0%) beneficiaries perceived the change in household food security after the interventions as moderate.

Similarly, during the FGDs, beneficiaries mentioned that the Project has improved food security. They concluded, "We can now afford to buy food for the house because of the diverse sources of income. The increased income from cocoa yields, gari processing and petty trading all enable us to afford food for the house." In essence, beneficiaries can now afford to buy food due to increased produce, improved income and savings. This revelation is consistent with other studies (Brass, 2010; USAID, 2009b). In her study in Kenya, Brass (2010) found that NGOs in the country provide services aimed at ensuring food security. Emphasis on food security is an important strategy for expanding livelihood choices (Devereux, 2006; Ellis & Freeman, 2007; Mehta, 2009). Mehta (2009) added that ensuring food security is one strategy to neutralise economic deprivation. Again, Stiglitz, as cited in Annor-Frempong (2013), asserts that improved food security is a critical strategy to ensure community development. Also, the attempts by WVG on food security resonate with other NGOs such as Care International, ActionAid and Plan International (Adjei *et al.*, 2012; Care International, 2017). Besides, WVG's effort towards food security under the Cocoa Life Project will help to actualise the SDG 2 (United Nations, 2016).

Impact on sense of inclusion

In addition, the study revealed that the Project has highly increased beneficiaries' sense of inclusion in the communities [$M=4.17$, $SD=0.63$] (Table 21). It was further observed that more (76.3%) beneficiaries believed that their sense of inclusion was high after the interventions (Table 22). This result is supported by participants in the group discussions. In the discussions, it was

observed that the beneficiaries had increased their sense of inclusion through the Project. Beneficiaries from Ektuase revealed, "We belonged to at least two groups namely CFCSs and VSLA in the communities. Some of us even belong to three groups. All these groups help us to achieve a sense of affiliation. Our inputs and ideas are valued by members of the groups. We are accepted by the executives too." The members of these associations meet weekly to discuss issues about their welfare and also plan for their communities. It was added, "We share ideas and support each other as members of the groups." Also, in Daboase, beneficiaries said, "We feel belonged to the groups in which we are members. We meet every week to discuss issues about our welfare and we learn from each other every day we meet as associations. It has helped us to build confidence to contribute to discussions in the groups without fear." Beneficiaries further said that WVG encouraged community members to build relationships and also utilise their inclusion in the association to help each other. Thus, beneficiaries now relate well with each other in the communities due to the associations they belong to. In effect, the interventions had led to a sense of inclusion among beneficiaries. This finding affirms Khatun and Roy (2012) who contended that membership to social groups is an essential tool which affects livelihood diversification. Social relationships through inclusion can be regarded as a non-material asset required to make the SLF a living reality (FAO & ILO, 2009; Gale, 2011). Also, building relationships and helping one another are critical in community development. Building relationships with people and encouraging them to build relationships with each other to get things done are imperative in development programme (Gilchrist, 2009).

Further analysis using a paired samples t-test showed that there had been a change in livelihood of beneficiaries after participation in the Project interventions. Table 23 shows a significant difference in the state of livelihood before interventions (M=29.84, SD=5.26) and after the intervention (M=46.78, SD=4.22, $t(340)=-47.13$, $p=.000$). This means that there was a change in the state of livelihood of beneficiaries after the Project interventions. The eta squared statistics (.866) showed a large effect in view of Cohen (1988) classifications.

Table 23: A paired samples t-test for the difference in the states of livelihood of respondents before and after the implementation of the Project

Time	Mean	Std. Dev.	Effect size	T	Df	Sig (2-tailed)
Before	29.84	5.26	.866	-47.139	340	.000
Interventions						
After	46.78	4.22				
Interventions						

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

Moreover, the results from the interview guide established that the interventions improved productivity, income, savings, access to credit facilities, household assets, productive assets, basic services and food security of community members. In the words of an informant, "Beneficiaries can now save some of their income and can also access credit facilities from the VSLAs." Another informant stated, "Beneficiaries now harvest more cocoa and other farm produce than they were doing before the interventions." Also, beneficiaries are now included in decision-making at the community level due to the various groups formed by WVG under the Project. However, there were concerns with availability of market, storage facilities and prices of produce. More so, the informants believed that

rubber plantation in WED is a big danger to the sustainability of the cocoa sector. Due to the rising belief that the former offers favourable prices, some farmers are virtually cutting down their cocoa trees to make way for rubber farms. There is the need for urgent attention from the various stakeholders in the cocoa sector. Nevertheless, the Project was found to have improved the livelihoods of beneficiaries. This validates the conceptual framework (Figure 2) on improved livelihood as a crucial outcome of successful development interventions.

Summary

The results of this chapter showed that the Project interventions highly improved beneficiaries' access to livelihood-support services, knowledge on livelihood activities, productivity and income level of beneficiaries. Again, the interventions highly helped beneficiaries to save and also obtain credit facilities. Besides, project interventions increased beneficiaries' sense of inclusion. Even though the interventions helped diversify sources of income and improve household assets, the impact on these aspects of livelihood was moderate. Increased cocoa yields, proceeds from gari processing, increased savings, and proceeds from petty trading were the key drivers of the change in income level of beneficiaries. There was a moderate impact on beneficiaries' productive assets and capacity to access basic services in the communities. Despite the variation in views, the interventions were found to have highly improved the livelihoods of beneficiaries ($M=3.67$, $SD=0.87$). Though significant differences existed in the state of livelihood before interventions ($M=29.84$, $SD=5.26$) and after the intervention ($M=46.78$, $SD=4.22$,

$t(340)=-47.13, p=.000$), the rising conviction in the prospects of rubber plantation posed a challenge to the sustainability of the cocoa sector in the District.

Conclusions

Even though the Project interventions lead to improvement in the livelihood of beneficiaries, its magnitude differs along a number of issues. For instance, the impact on beneficiaries' knowledge on livelihood activities, productivity and income level is high. A change in income level of beneficiaries is the result of increased cocoa yields, increased proceeds from gari processing, increased savings, and increased profits from petty trading among beneficiaries. Again, the impact on the interventions on savings culture, access to credit facilities and sense of inclusion among the beneficiaries is high. However, the impact on beneficiaries' access to livelihood-support services, diversification of income sources and household assets is moderate. There is also a moderate impact of the Project on productive assets, and capacity to access basic services. A significant change is seen in the state of livelihood of beneficiaries after the interventions. In all, the Project interventions have a high impact on the livelihoods of beneficiaries. Nevertheless, the rubber plantation poses a challenge to the sustainability of the cocoa sector due to the perceived investment returns associated with the former. Again, poor road networks and inadequate market centres hinder efforts to improve the livelihoods of community members. This means that more efforts need to be made by Mondelez International, Cocoa Life and implementing NGOs especially WVG in order to sustain the gains made under the Project with respect to the livelihoods of project beneficiaries.

Recommendations

It is recommended that WVG should work together with Mondelez International, Cocoa Life, the District Assembly and BACs in the District to design clear measures aimed at helping community members to enhance their access to livelihood-support services.

WVG should team up with Cocoa Life, District Agric Department and the District Assembly to come out with measures to enhance alternative livelihood sources for community members. They can invest in food processing and agro-processing which can provide alternative sources of income.

Also, in order to ensure increased income level of beneficiaries, Mondelez International should team up with the Cocoa Board to offer more competitive prices to cocoa farmers especially in the face of the rising interest in rubber plantation and the danger it poses to the cocoa sector. Besides, community members are encouraged to invest the returns from increased cocoa yields, gari processing, and profits from other income generating activities they engage in.

WVG and Cocoa Life should team up with the District Assembly, the Agric Office, the BAC and community leaders to come out with measures to encourage beneficiaries to make effective use of the knowledge derived from alternative livelihood programmes.

Mondelez International should liaise with the District Assembly and BACs to provide storage facilities for community members. This will help community members to obtain competitive prices for their produce and also increase their level of income. Cocoa Life and Mondelez International should collaborate with WVG

and the District Assembly to provide more productive assets such as farm inputs and gari processing machines to community members.

Community members are encouraged to make effective use of productive assets given to them by development stakeholders. They should also seek assistance from Cocoa Life, WVG, District Agric Department and BACs on farm and non-farm livelihood activities they wish to venture into.

Cocoa Life should team up with WVG, opinion leaders and community members to put in place measures to safeguard the daily and weekly savings of community members so as to avoid possible cases of thefts and misuse of savings.

Community members are also urged to join community groups and associations and contribute meaningfully to the attainment of goals. This will help foster sense of belonging and also increase their sense of inclusion. They will also be able to learn from each other on the various ways to improve their lives.

The District Assembly should team up with the central government and other development partners to expand the road networks and also construct market centres especially in remote areas of the District. This will enable inhabitants to transport their produce to market centres and also sell them at competitive prices.

CHAPTER TEN

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SOCIO ECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS AND
THE IMPACT OF PROJECT INTERVENTIONS ON LIVELIHOODS**Introduction**

The final research objective examined whether or not differences existed in socio economic backgrounds and the perceived impact of the Project on the livelihoods of beneficiaries. Specific socio economic features examined are sex, age, education level and marital status. Others are occupation, religious affiliations, household size, income level and ethnic backgrounds of respondents. As already stated, an alpha level of 0.05 was used for all statistical tests in this study.

Differences between sex and the perceived impact of the Project on the livelihoods of beneficiaries

The study looked at the difference in the mean scores of perceived impact of the Project on livelihoods across male and female respondents (Table 24).

Table 24: An independent samples t-test for mean perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihood for male and female respondents

Item	Sex	N	Mean	SD	T	Df	Sig.
Perceived impact of Project interventions on livelihood	Female	184	52.43	8.81	-.074	340	.941
	Male	158	52.50	8.97			

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

From Table 24, the p-value of 0.94 indicates that there is no statistically significant difference in mean scores for males ($M=52.43$, $SD=8.81$) and females ($M=52.50$,

SD=8.97). This means that both male and female respondents perceived the impact of the Project on the livelihoods of beneficiaries as the same. This result contrasts the views expressed by (Khatun & Roy, 2012; Mphande, 2016).

Differences between age and the perceived impact of the Project on livelihoods of beneficiaries

The study further examined whether the different age groups had any influence on the perceived the impact of the Project on the livelihood of beneficiaries. Subjects were divided into six age groups (Group 1: Below 30years; Group 2: 30-34years; Group 3: 35-39years; Group 4: 40-44years; Group 5: 45-49years; Group 6: 50years and above) as shown in Table 25.

Table 25: ANOVA test of age of respondents and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on their livelihood

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
Between groups	238.777	5	47.755	.603	0.698
Within groups	26622.369	336	79.233		
Total	26861.146	341			

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

From Table 25, the p-value of 0.698 indicates that there was statistically no significant difference in age based on the perceived impact of the Project on the livelihoods of beneficiaries across the six age groups [$F(5, 336)=.60, p=.69$]. Thus, all the six age groups viewed the perceived impact of the Project on the livelihood of beneficiaries as the same. This contradicts other scholars (Angba *et al.*, 2009; Clark, Kotchen & Moore, 2003; Osawe, 2013; Rahman & Shaheen, 2014) who

seemed to suggest that differences existed between age and the impact of development projects on livelihoods.

Differences between educational level of beneficiaries and the perceived impact of the Project on livelihoods

Again, the study determined whether beneficiaries' perception on the impact of the Project on the livelihood of beneficiaries differed based on the level of education (Table 26). Subjects were divided into four groups (Group 1: No formal education; Group 2: BECE; Group 3: SSSCE; Group 4: Tertiary education). There was statistically significant difference for the four educational levels at p-value of 0.005 which is less than the alpha value of 0.05.

Table 26: ANOVA test of educational level and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihood of respondents

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1002.123	3	334.041	4.366	.005
Within Groups	25859.024	338	76.506		
Total	26861.146	341			

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

However, the actual difference in mean scores was quite small. The effect size, calculated using the eta-squared was 0.04. Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that Group 1 ($M=52.83$, $SD=8.35$) differed significantly from Group 2 ($M=50.94$, $SD=9.13$), Group 3 ($M=57.25$, $SD=9.50$), and Group 4 ($M=54.75$, $SD=4.57$). Group 2 ($M=50.94$, $SD=9.13$) differed significantly from Group 3 ($M=57.25$, $SD=9.50$), and Group 4 ($M=54.75$, $SD=4.57$), whilst Group 3 ($M=57.25$, $SD=9.50$) differed significantly from Group 4 ($M=54.75$, $SD=4.57$). In

essence, a significant difference existed in educational level and the perceived impact of the Project interventions. This result is similar that of Osawe (2013) who suggests that differences may exist between education and the impact of interventions on livelihoods, and that people with higher levels of education are likely to attract higher wage paying jobs than those with lower levels of education.

Differences between marital status and the perceived impact of the Project on the livelihoods of beneficiaries

Table 27 presents the results on the differences between marital status and the perceived impact of the Project on the livelihood of beneficiaries. Subjects were divided into four groups (Group 1: Single; Group 2: Married; Group 3: Divorced; Group 4: Widow). The significance level ($p=0.257$) which is greater than the alpha value of 0.05 shows that no significant differences existed between marital status of beneficiaries with respect to the perceived impact of the Project on livelihoods. This means the views of beneficiaries on the impact of the Project on their livelihood were the same irrespective of their marital status.

Table 27: ANOVA test of marital status of respondents and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on their livelihoods

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
Between groups	318.625	3	106.208	1.352	.257
Within groups	26542.521	338	78.528		
Total	26861.146	341			

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

Differences between occupation and the perceived impact of the Project on livelihoods of beneficiaries

Moreover, this study examined the difference between occupation and the perceived impact of the project interventions on the livelihoods of beneficiaries. Subjects were divided into five groups according to their occupation (Group 1: Farming; Group 2: Agro-processing; Group 3: Petty trade; Group 4: Artisan; Group 5: Others). It was observed that no significant difference ($p=0.177$) existed in the mean scores of the perceived impact of the Project on livelihoods based on occupation of respondents for the five occupational groups [$F(4, 337)=1.5, p=.177$] as summarised in Table 28.

Table 28: ANOVA test of occupation and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihood of respondents

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
Between groups	497.061	4	124.265	1.588	0.177
Within groups	26364.086	337	78.232		
Total	26861.146	341			

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

This study conflicts Whitehead (2002) study which indicated that differences exist between occupation and the impact of project interventions on livelihood of people.

Differences in religious affiliations of beneficiaries and the perceived impact of the Project on livelihoods

Table 29 looked at the differences between religious affiliations and the perceived impact of the Project on livelihoods. Subjects were categorised into four

groups (Group 1: Christians; Group 2: Moslems; Group 3: Traditional worshippers; and Group 4: others). It was found that significant differences ($p=0.006$) existed between religious affiliations of beneficiaries based on their views on the impact of the Project on livelihoods. Despite the statistical significance, the actual difference in mean scores between the groups was small in line with the guidelines outlined by Cohen (1988), with 0.03 as the effect size, calculated using the eta-squared.

Table 29: ANOVA test of religious affiliation and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihood of respondents

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
Between groups	969.425	3	323.142	4.218	0.006
Within groups	25891.721	338	76.603		
Total	26861.146	341			

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

Post-hoc comparisons based on Tukey HSD test showed that the mean score for Group 1 ($M=53.44$, $SD=8.89$) was different from Group 2 ($M=49.92$, $SD=8.56$), and Group 4 ($M=57.20$, $SD=7.91$). Also, Group 2 ($M=49.92$, $SD=8.56$) was different from Group 3 ($M=53.11$, $SD=8.12$), and Group 4 ($M=57.20$, $SD=7.91$). Similarly, Group 3 ($M=53.11$, $SD=8.12$) differed significantly from Group 4 ($M=57.20$, $SD=7.91$). However, Group 1 ($M=53.44$, $SD=8.89$) did not differ significantly from Group 3 ($M=53.11$, $SD=8.12$).

Differences between household size and the perceived impact of the Project on the livelihoods of beneficiaries

Furthermore, the researcher determined the difference between household size and the perceived impact of the Project on the livelihoods of beneficiaries

(Table 30) based on three groups of subjects (Group 1: 1-5; Group 2: 6-10; and Group 3: 11-15). The significance level ($p=0.079$) is greater than the alpha value (0.05). This shows that there was no statistically significant difference between household size and the impact of the Project on livelihoods of beneficiaries. This disconfirms the position held by scholars (Arthur, 2006; Clark *et al.*, 2003; Haq *et al.*, 2010) which seems to indicate that differences exist between household size and the effects of projects on people's livelihoods.

Table 30: ANOVA test of household size and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihood of respondents

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
Between groups	398.889	2	199.444	2.555	.079
Within groups	26462.257	339	78.060		
Total	26861.146	341			

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

Differences in income level and the perceived impact of the Project on the livelihoods of beneficiaries

In addition, no significant differences ($p=0.060$) were observed in the income levels of beneficiaries and the perceived impact of the Project on their livelihoods (Table 31). This suggests that beneficiaries who were involved in this study perceived the impact of the Project on the livelihoods as the same regardless of their income levels. The study contrasts the estimation of other researchers (Arthur, 2006; Chesoh, 2010; Haq *et al.*, 2010; Zbinden & Lee, 2005) that differences manifest in income level and the impact of projects on the livelihoods.

Table 31: ANOVA test of income level and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihood of respondents

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
Between groups	831.427	5	166.285	2.146	0.060
Within groups	26029.719	336	77.469		
Total	26861.146	341			

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

Differences between ethnic background and the perceived impact of the Project on the livelihoods of beneficiaries

Table 32 presents the results on the differences between ethnic background and the perceived impact of the Project Interventions on the livelihoods of beneficiaries.

Table 32: ANOVA test of ethnic backgrounds and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihoods of respondents

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
Between groups	603.625	3	201.208	2.590	.053
Within groups	26257.521	338	77.685		
Total	26861.146	341			

Source: Field survey, Odoom (2018)

Subjects were divided into six age groups (Group 1: Akan; Group 2: Ewe; Group 3: Dagomba; and Group 4: Others). The significance level ($P=0.053$) is not different from the alpha value of 0.05 which means that significant differences existed between ethnic backgrounds of beneficiaries and the impact of the Project on their livelihoods. In spite of the statistical significance, the actual difference in mean

scores between the groups was small based on the guidelines provided by Cohen (1988). The effect size, calculated using the eta-squared was 0.02. Post-hoc comparisons based on Tukey HSD test showed that the mean score for Group 1 ($M=52.91$, $SD=8.88$) differed significantly from Group 2 ($M=50.24$, $SD=8.40$), Group 3 ($M=54.61$, $SD=9.91$), and Group 4 ($M=50.00$, $SD=5.87$). Again, Group 2 differed significantly from Group 4 but no significant difference existed between Group 2 ($M=50.24$, $SD=8.40$) and Group 4 ($M=50.00$, $SD=5.87$). Also, Group 3 ($M=54.61$, $SD=9.91$) differed significantly from Group 4 ($M=50.00$, $SD=5.87$).

Summary

The results and discussion showed that no significant differences existed between sex and age, and the perceived impact of the Project on the livelihoods of beneficiaries. Also, no significant differences were recorded in marital status of beneficiaries and the impact of Cocoa Life Project interventions on their livelihoods. Again, there were no differences in occupation, household size and income level of beneficiaries based on their views on the impact of the Project on livelihoods. However, significant differences were recorded in educational levels of beneficiaries and the perceived impact of Cocoa Life Project on livelihoods. Moreover, beneficiaries showed significant differences in their religious affiliations and ethnic backgrounds, and their views on the impact of the Project on livelihoods.

Conclusions

There is no significant differences between sex and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on beneficiaries. Also, the views of beneficiaries on the impact of the Project interventions on their livelihood are the same irrespective on

their ages. Similarly, there are no significant differences between marital status of beneficiaries and the impact of Cocoa Life Project interventions on livelihoods. Again, no differences exist in occupation, household size and income level of beneficiaries based on their views on how the Project impacts their livelihoods. However, there are differences in educational levels of people and the impact of the Project on their livelihoods. Besides, significant differences manifest in religious affiliations of people and their views on the impact of projects on their livelihoods. Finally, significant differences exist in the ethnic backgrounds of beneficiaries and their perception on the impact of the Project interventions on their livelihoods.

Recommendations

WVG and Cocoa Life should team up with Mondelez International, other NGOs and the District Assembly to come out with livelihood programmes to address the needs of both men and women in the communities. No unreasonable discrimination in livelihood interventions based on sex should be encouraged.

Also, WVG and Cocoa Life should partner Mondelez International, other NGOs and community members to design programmes to improve the livelihood of people in the communities regardless of their age.

More alternative livelihood programmes must be provided by WVG, Cocoa Life, other NGOs and the District Assembly taken into account the age features of the community members. For example, both the elderly and the youth must benefit from livelihood programmes without any discrimination.

Mondelez International and Cocoa Life should team up with WVG, other NGOs and local authorities to provide projects to people based on their marital

status and occupation. For instance, married, single and widow beneficiaries should all benefit from livelihood interventions provided in the communities. Also, livelihood programmes should be undertaken to meet the various needs of beneficiaries based on their occupations.

Cocoa Life should collaborate with Mondelez International, WVG, other NGOs and the District Assembly to provide projects in line with the different educational levels of beneficiaries. For example, some specific interventions can be provided for people in the communities based on their level of formal education. This will require an awareness of the educational levels of community members.

Religious affiliations should inform the design of project interventions undertaken by Cocoa Life, WVG and the District Assembly. Interventions which conflict with religious beliefs of beneficiaries should not be undertaken. For example, days such as Sundays and Fridays which are special to Christians and Moslems must be respected in project planning. Interventions should not be undertaken on these days since they will not achieve the intended goal due to poor participation of community members.

WVG and Cocoa Life should obtain accurate socio economic data of people so as to ensure informed development decisions. Community members are implored to give accurate socio economic data to development partners and stakeholders to aid the delivery of interventions.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

SUMMARY AND THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Introduction

This chapter presents the summary and theoretical implications of the study. The chapter also highlights some suggestions to guide future studies.

Summary of the Study

This study examined the impact of Cocoa Life Project of WVG on beneficiaries in the Wassa East District. The study adopted the sequential-dependence mixed methods design in a descriptive survey and exploratory design. The population consisted of the members of CFCSS, VSLAs and GPGs, and soap makers. Also, the DDA, HBAC, DEPO and an extension agent took part in the study. Purposive, stratified, simple random and convenience sampling techniques were used to select a total of 410 beneficiaries and local authorities for the study, with 84.2 percent response rate for the quantitative data. Interview schedule, FGD and interview guides were the research instruments used whilst quantitative analytical tools such as frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviation were used to describe the data.

Again, Chi-square was used to find out the relationships between key indicators of sustainability and the Project interventions. An independent samples t-test was used to find out whether or not significant differences existed in the views of male and female respondents with respect to the efforts of WVG to promote gender equality. A paired-samples t-test was conducted to determine the differences between beneficiaries' state of livelihood before and after the interventions. Also,

an independent samples t-test and One Way ANOVA test were used to find out whether significant differences existed between socio economic backgrounds of beneficiaries and the perceived impact of the Project on the livelihoods of beneficiaries. More so, qualitative tools such as thematic and content analyses were employed in this study after transcribing the audio recording and written notes from the FGDs and the key informant interviews. Key findings of the study include:

1. Diversity existed in the socio economic backgrounds of beneficiaries.
2. Despite the diversity, males, the youth, married couples, Christians, lowly educated people, farmers, low income earners, etc. dominated the study.
3. Beneficiaries who took part in the study had diverse livelihood assets which can be useful in livelihood diversification strategies.
4. With the exception of activities during the implementation of the Project interventions, satisfaction with participation in planning and evaluation activities amongst project beneficiaries and key informants was low.
5. Project beneficiaries and key informants did not see the efforts made to plan and evaluate project interventions as comprehensive enough.
6. Project interventions were relevant to the development of beneficiary communities in the District. However, the degree of relevance was not the same for various areas of community development.
7. Despite the efforts made to improve beneficiary communities, many communities still faced water and sanitation, and health problems.
8. Also, training programme on development of community action plans was designed and planned with very little input from beneficiaries.

9. WVG's interventions under the Project helped to promote gender equality.
10. Although access to training on modern farming methods was created equally for men and women, some women could not avail themselves for the training since the timing of the training conflicted their domestic duties.
11. Though opportunity to participate in financial literacy training reflected gender balance, the duration of the training programme was too short.
12. More so, no clearly defined measures were put in place to enable female youth to also go into cocoa farming in the communities.
13. WVG's efforts to promote gender equality under Project were constrained by issues such as power, culture and financial resource.
14. The views of male and female beneficiaries on the efforts of WVG in promoting gender equality were the same.
15. Project interventions implemented in WED were generally sustainable.
16. WVG demonstrated teamwork and supportive relationship which helped to sustain the interventions.
17. Also, factors such as good working culture and local ownership helped to promote the sustainability of the Project.
18. By empowering local people through the interventions which boosted their confidence, the Project was sustained.
19. However, concerns with the level of participation, transparency and accountability became obstacles to the sustainability of the Project.
20. Though the Project interventions had positive impact on the livelihoods of beneficiaries, there were variations in the degree of the impact based on

- diverse aspects of livelihood. Despite the variations, the interventions generally had a high positive impact on the livelihoods of beneficiaries.
21. With the exception of education, religious affiliations and ethnicity, no statistically significant differences existed between socio economic backgrounds and the perceived impact of the Project interventions on the livelihoods of beneficiaries.

Theoretical Implications of the Study

Research findings are especially relevant when they are used to support, modify or build on the existing theoretical frameworks (Lester, 2005). Situating research findings within the existing theories offers a way to identify the relationships between theory and practice, and ultimately help in constructing and broadening knowledge base in a given field of study. This section presents the theoretical implications of the study. As already stated, the neoliberal theory, the ADT, the SST, the social capital theory, and the SCT informed this study.

To begin with, participation of beneficiaries and key informants in the implementation stage of the Project interventions was highly satisfactory. This shows that WVG created adequate conditions to enable beneficiaries fully take part in the implementation of the Project which is in line with the ADT. This implies that effective development requires development partners to create conditions vital to ensure better participation of all stakeholders of interventions. Thus, for the ADT to be practically relevant within the development discourse, key stakeholders including NGOs must create enabling conditions to allow project beneficiaries to fully participate in implementing the projects (Lewis & Kanji, 2009).

On the other hand, in this study, satisfaction of respondents in participation in planning and evaluation stages of the interventions was very low. This shows that conditions WVG created to enable beneficiaries and other stakeholders fully participate in planning and evaluation activities were inadequate which departs from the full intent of the ADT. This suggests that the ADT becomes truly useful to development practice to the extent that stakeholders including NGOs and development partners create conditions to promote meaningful stakeholder participation in planning and evaluating projects (Mohan, 2008; Pieterse, 2010).

Also, the study observed that beneficiaries had very little inputs into needs identification and goal definition of the interventions which deviates from the SST. According to the SST, several factors explain under-development of people. Some of these factors are within the control of the people whilst others are external, structural or cultural creation (Goldbergwood & Tully, 2006). Therefore, in order to ensure effective development, stakeholders need to fully understand the problems people face and the solutions required to tackle them. To achieve this means that NGOs must ensure that project beneficiaries actively take part in clearly identifying their own needs and in defining appropriate solutions to them. Thus, the theory is limited to the extent that WVG failed to put in place adequate measures to allow beneficiaries to be part of the needs identification and goal definition stages of interventions. Such situations can make it very difficult for WVG to effectively help in solving the myriad development problems of communities.

Moreover, the study showed that WVG contributed to the development of beneficiary communities in the District. Various interventions in areas such as

education, agriculture, opportunity for job creation, financial literacy, skill development, water and sanitation, health, among others, helped to improve the communities. This result supports the argument in favour of the neoliberal theory which calls for the need to allow other players such as NGOs and other development partners in the provision of development services (Lewis & Kanji, 2009; Shivji, 2007; Yeboah, 2017). However, merely allowing other players into the development process without regard to the key areas of focus and the major obstacles to development will not yield to improved lives of people. Thus, constraints related to the duration of the interventions should properly be considered by actors of development services. In effect, the neoliberal theory is apparently relevant to development when other players such as WVG clearly identify specific areas of society needs and design appropriate services to bring about improvement.

Similarly, the study discovered that WVG played a major role in providing services to improve the beneficiary communities as a way of complementing the efforts of government in terms of the delivery of development services in the District. This result conforms to the ADT. The theory sees NGOs as potent alternative actors to deliver development services to communities. Also, inherent in the theory is the belief that local development can be achieved with the active involvement of NGOs in service delivery. By engaging in grass root development interventions, WVG stands the chance of earning the trust of the people living in such areas in a way that local governments may even find it difficult to replicate (Clark, 1991; Mohan, 2008). Thus, the intent of ADT can be realised only when NGOs purposefully design measures to engage in grass root development activities.

However, concerns with regard to financial literacy training, community action plans, water and sanitation as well as the health care services mean that there is more to be done by NGOs in order to make the ADT truly meaningful to development services.

More so, the result of this study in terms of provision of development services by WVG is in line with the tenets of the SST. This theory lays emphasis on the fact that the myriad development problems of society can best be addressed through the efforts of both internal and external partners. A sole dependence on internal forces will not help to fully address the various problems society is faced with. By relying on an external force such as WVG by communities to address their development problems this study helps to reinforce the practical relevance of the social structural theory (Meyer, cited in Nwachukwu, 2011). However, in order to make the theory relevant to development practice a certain level of cooperation, and mutual respect are required from community members and development actors.

Additionally, in this study, it was established that WVG put in place efforts towards the promotion of gender equality. This was done through the creation of equal access and opportunity for men and women to participate in the various interventions. Also, some specific interventions were put in place to address the peculiar needs of both men and women. These findings help to confirm the role of the ADT in development discourse. The ADT identifies gender equality as crucial in any successful local development programme. However, it is obvious that for the theory to be meaningful there is the need for development actors to clearly devise strategies to create access and opportunities for both men and women to be part of

development services they provide. Access and opportunities created by development actors must reflect gender balance as exemplified by WVG under the Cocoa Life Project (Lewis & Kanji, 2009). However, the full intention of the theory is hindered in the face of issues such as power relations, culture and finance. This means that there is more to gender equality which the ADT has failed to clearly highlight. Mere creation of access and opportunities for men and women by development actors without regard to the existing power relations, cultural factors and financial capacity of people will not lead to gender equality.

Again, the results revealed that there was no gender equality with regard to access to land. Notable reasons cited for this occurrence were power relations and cultural factors which hampered women's access to farm lands in the communities. For instance, the beliefs that women are to take care of domestic chores and men being the sole breadwinner in the family limit the opportunity of women to own, control and utilise land for serious productive activities. Essentially, this situation limits opportunities available to women as well as their participation in livelihood activities in the communities as highlighted by the SST. The theory says that certain external forces limit the opportunities available to people in society. In particular, the theory considers the larger culture or society, its needs and how it functions, the needs and the behaviours of society at large as the key drivers of the wellbeing of people. It adds that factors such as gender affect the rewards people receive in society. That, in improving the life of people requires an alteration to such drivers which are inimical to the society (Meyer, cited in Nwachukwu, 2011). This theory implies that improving the life of women in the communities will require

connecting them to needed resources in the communities such as lands and also deconstructing socio-political discourse to help reveal the struggles women in the communities and in Ghana often go through (Goldbergwood & Tully, 2006).

Beyond gender equality, it was found that WVG exhibited teamwork and supportive relationships which helped in sustaining the interventions. A team of WVG's officers who were in charge of the various interventions helped to deliver the Project to improve the livelihoods of the beneficiaries. Teamwork and supportive relationships are fundamental in achieving organisational goals as espoused by the social capital theory. According to this theory, there are resources inherent in social relationships, teamwork and interconnections. These resources are vital for the attainment of set goals of organisations, if they are properly utilised (Field, 2005; Putnam, 2000). Development actors are to put in place effective teams for the delivery of development projects and interventions. Team members are to support each other so as to ensure the attainment of project goals and objectives.

Besides, the study found that the local people committed to the project interventions because WVG had been in the District for long and had successfully delivered various interventions. Beneficiaries had learnt about the role of WVG in development activities by observing previous interventions and their outcomes in the communities. This observation enhanced the belief of beneficiaries in WVG's development interventions. Based on such beliefs, beneficiaries committed to the various interventions provided by WVG in agreement with the SCT. The theory states that people learn by observing others' behaviours and the outcomes of such behaviours. The outcome of what they observe influences their future actions and

behaviours (Edjah, n.d.). In essence, within the field of NGO and community development, it is important for development actors to provide evidence of their effectiveness in delivering project interventions. This will help to strengthen the belief of community members in development activities and also enable them attach importance to development interventions undertaken in their locality.

Furthermore, the Project interventions helped to empower the beneficiaries. Empowerment is an essential aspect of effective development programmes. As beneficiaries were empowered due to the interventions provided, their self-confidence was increased. The attempt at empowering the local people helps to ground the ADT which sees empowerment of people as key to development (Friedmann, 1992; Sarfo, 2013). However, it is worthy to note that development services empower community members only when such services are relevant to the communities. When NGOs provide development services without considering their relevance to beneficiary communities, empowerment of community members will be a mirage. Also, the value of self-confidence among beneficiaries due to empowerment is expressed in the SCT as advanced by Albert Bandura (Edjah, n.d.).

Better still, the Project interventions increased sense of inclusion among beneficiaries in the communities through the various groups and associations formed by WVG. Group members supported, cooperated with and learnt from each other in the course of the various interventions. This result reflects the value of the social capital theory which is premised on the fact that achievement of common goals relies heavily on the spirit of solidarity, inclusion, support and cooperation (Kamando, 2014). As development actors, NGOs' role in fostering social ties and

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PROJECT BENEFICIARIES

Introduction

I am undertaking a study on the topic "The Impact of Cocoa Life Project Interventions of World Vision Ghana on beneficiaries in the Wassa East District, Western Region." This interview session seeks to enable me generate data on the topic. The study is purely for academic purposes and so respondents are assured that any information provided will be treated confidentially. Your informed consent is also needed as part of the session. Please give as candid information as possible.

Name of community:..... Time:.....

Category of respondent:..... Date:.....

Section A: Socio Economic Backgrounds of Beneficiaries

1. Sex: Male [] Female []
2. How long have you stayed in this community? 1-5years []
6-10 years [] 11-15 years [] Above 15 years []
3. What is your age?
4. What is your highest educational qualification? No Formal Education []
BECE [] SSCE [] Certificate [] HND []
1st Degree [] 2nd Degree []
5. What is your religious affiliation? Christianity [] Islam []
Traditional [] Others []
6. What is your marital status? Single [] Married [] Divorced []
Widow []
7. What is your position in your family?
Family head [] Ordinary member []
8. What is the size of your household?
9. What is the highest educational qualification a member in the family has?
BECE [] SSCE [] Certificate [] HND/Diploma []
1st degree [] Above 1st degree []
10. What is your major occupation?.....

11. What are your sources of income?.....
12. How much is your average income per month?.....
13. How much is your average expenditure per month?
14. Number of household members working in the formal sector.....
15. Number of household members working in the informal sector.....
16. Type of house living in:
 Own house [] Rented house [] Family house []
17. Possession of agricultural land: Does not own agricultural land []
 1-10 acres of land [] 11-20 acres of land []
 21-30 acres of land [] Above 30 acres []
18. Possession of non-agricultural land: Does not own agricultural land []
 1-10 acres of land [] 11-20 acres of land []
 21-30 acres of land [] Above 30 acres []
19. Other assets.....
20. What is your ethnic background?

Section B: Perception of Beneficiaries with regard to their Satisfaction in the Planning, Implementation and Evaluation of the Cocoa Life Project

21. The following are project activities that require the participation of beneficiaries. Please indicate your level of satisfaction with your participation in these activities under the Cocoa Life Project interventions of WVG based on the following scale:

Scale: 5=Very Highly Satisfied, 4=Highly Satisfied, 3=Moderately Satisfied, 2=Lowly Satisfied, 1=Verly Lowly Satisfied

	5	4	3	2	1
Planning					
Creating awareness about problems in the community					
Identifying problems in the community					
Ranking the needs of the community in terms of importance					
Generation of possible solutions					
Defining project goals					
Designing the project interventions					
Preparing the budgets for the project					

Implementation					
Selecting project management team members					
Organising community for project delivery					
Deciding the time for the commencement of project					
Mobilising resources for project delivery					
Delivering the project interventions					
Evaluation					
Monitoring the project interventions					
Assessing how appropriate interventions were in addressing the needs of beneficiary communities					
Assessing the degree to which project goals were reached					
Assessing how funds earmarked for the projects were used					
Assessment of the effect of project interventions					

Section C: Perception of Beneficiaries with regard to the Relevance of Cocoa Life Project to Community Development

22. The statements below relate to activities that improve community development. Based on these statements, please indicate how relevant Cocoa Life Project interventions of WVG has been to community development by picking the correct number on the following scale:

Scale: 5=Very Highly Relevant, 4=Highly Relevant,

3=Moderately Relevant, 2=Lowly Relevant, 1=Verly Lowly Relevant

Activity to ensure community development:	5	4	3	2	1
Expanding access to education in the community					
Construction of educational infrastructure					
Awareness creation on importance of education					
Skills training on business development					
Provision of microcredit facilities to people					
Creation of career opportunities					
Training on modern farming practices					
Rehabilitation of farms in the community					
Expanding access to health care services					
Expanding access to safe and clean water					
Public awareness on sanitation practices					
Training on financial literacy					
Capacity building on community planning					
Capacity building on local level leadership					
Support for community action					
Diversifying sources of earning a living					
Behaviour change towards community activities					

Section D: Perception of Beneficiaries with regard to the Efforts of Cocoa Life Project Interventions of WVG in Promoting Gender Equality in the District

23. Below are statements that relate to efforts WVG has made to ensure gender equality through Cocoa Life Project interventions. Based on the scale below, to what extent do you agree or disagree with these statements?

Scale: 5=Strongly Agree 4=Moderately Agree
 3=Undecided 2=Moderately Disagree 1=Strongly Disagree

Through the Cocoa Life Project of WVG:	5	4	3	2	1
Men had more access to be trained on modern farming practices					
Women had more access to be trained on modern farming practices					
Training on modern farming practices was provided equally for men and women					
Men had more access to farm inputs					
Women had more access to farm inputs					
Access to farm inputs was equal for men and women					
Access to farm land reflected gender balance					
Access to productive resources was equal for men and women					
Access to career opportunity was equal for men and women					
Women and men had equal opportunity to take part in alternative livelihood programmes					
Financial literacy training was provided to participants irrespective of their gender					
Women and men had equal access to credit facilities					
Men and women had equal opportunity to increase their incomes					
Men and women had equal access to information					
Women and men had equal access to decision making processes					
Men and women had equal access to take part in community planning					
Access to health care services was equal for men and women					
Men and women had equal access to participate in community meetings					
Access to membership of community groups was equal for men and women					

Section E: Level of Sustainability of the Project and the Factors Affecting the Sustainability of the Project Interventions of WVG in the District

24. To what extent do you consider the project interventions in your community as sustainable or not sustainable? Please select your response based on the following scale:

5=Very Sustainable [] 4=Moderately Sustainable [] 3=Neutral []
 2=Moderately Unsustainable 1=Very Unsustainable []

25. The following are indicators of sustainability of development projects and interventions. To what extent do you agree with these statements in terms of the sustainability of the Cocoa Life Project interventions using the scale below?

Scale: 5=Strongly Agree 4=Moderately Agree
 3= Undecided 2= Moderately Disagree 1= Strongly Disagree

Statement	5	4	3	2	1
The time for its implementation was adequate					
There has been adaptation of practices obtained from the Project					
WVG continues to deliver interventions to the communities					
There has been a behaviour change among the beneficiaries					
Beneficiaries continue to derive more benefits from the Project					

26. Below are statements about factors which affect sustainability of development programmes and project interventions. Using the scale below, to what extent do you agree with these statements with regard to Cocoa Life Project interventions of WVG?

Scale: 5=Very Strongly Agree 4= Strongly Agree
 3=Moderately Agree 2=Lowly Agree 1=Very Lowly Agree

Statement	5	4	3	2	1
WVG put in place a team for the delivery of the Project					
There was a supportive relationship between WVG team and community members					
The working culture of personnel at WVG who led the delivery of the Project was good					
Communication channels between the beneficiaries and WVG were clear					
There was adequate participation of beneficiaries throughout the project cycle					

Local people were allowed to own the project right from the onset.					
The implementation of the Project was transparent					
WVG put in place accountability mechanisms throughout the delivery of the Project					
Local people were empowered throughout the Project					
There was flexibility in the delivery of project interventions					
Local people showed more commitment to the Project					
There was coordination between WVG and beneficiaries					

Section F: Perceived Impact of Cocoa Life Project Interventions of WVG on the Livelihood of Beneficiaries

27. The following statements relate to the impact of Project interventions of WVG on your livelihood. Please state the extent to which you consider each statement as impact of the Project interventions on your livelihood based on the following scale: 5=Very Highly Agree 4=Highly Agree
 3=Moderately Agree 2=Lowly Agree 1=Very Lowly Agree

Statement: The Cocoa Life Project of WVG has:	5	4	3	2	1
Improved access to livelihood-support services					
Increased my knowledge on livelihood activities					
Diversified my sources of livelihood					
Enhanced my productivity					
Increased my access to markets for my produce					
Increased my net income					
Improved my savings					
Improved my access to credit facilities					
Increased my household assets					
Increased my productive assets					
Improved my household food security					
Increased my sense of inclusion					
Improved my household capacity to access basic services					
Improved my health status					

28. The following statements are issues of livelihood. Please indicate the extent to which you consider each of the statements in respect of the state of your livelihood before and after the Project interventions based on the following scale:

Scale: 4-High (H) 3-Moderate (M) 2-Low (L) 1-Uncertain (U)

Aspect of Livelihood	Before Interventions				After Interventions			
	H	M	L	U	H	M	L	U
	Access to livelihood-support services							
Knowledge on livelihood activities								
Diversification of sources of livelihood								
Yearly productivity								
Access to markets for produce								
Average monthly net income								
Average monthly savings								
Access to credit facilities								
Value of household assets								
Value of productive assets								
Expenditure on household food security								
Sense of inclusion								
Access to basic services								
Health status								

APPENDIX B

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR PROJECT BENEFICIARIES**Introduction**

This interview session is to enable the researcher generate data on the topic "The impact of Cocoa Life Project of World Vision Ghana on of beneficiaries in the Wassa East District, Western Region". This study is purely for academic purposes and so respondents are assured that any information provided will be treated confidentially. Please give as candid information as possible.

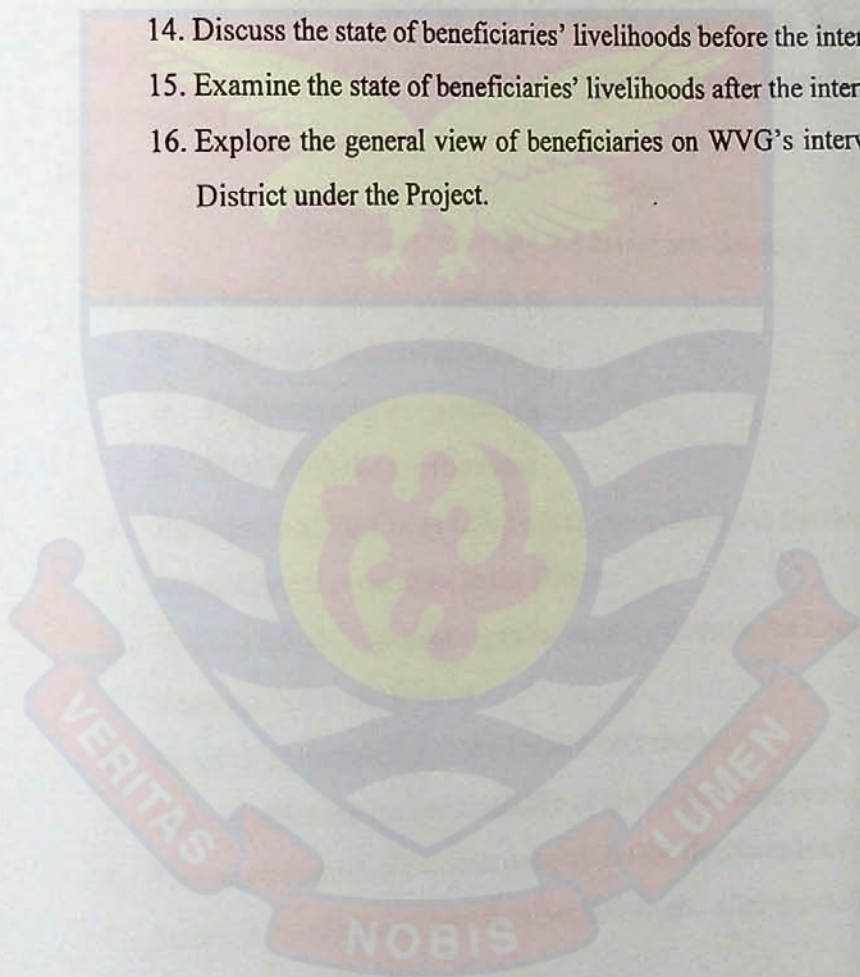
Area Council:**Date:****Time:**

General Rule: In this session, everybody is allowed to express his/her views on any issue which is being discussed. No one is allowed to intimidate other participants. However, at the end of every issue a consensus will be reached on the position of the group. Kindly alert me by showing up your hand whenever you want to contribute so we can have a very fruitful session for all of us.

A guide for the Group Discussion:

1. Examine the perception of beneficiaries with regard to their satisfaction in the planning of the Cocoa Life Project interventions
2. Discuss the perception of beneficiaries concerning their satisfaction in the implementation of the Cocoa Life Project interventions.
3. Examine the perception of beneficiaries regarding their satisfaction in the evaluation of the Cocoa Life Project interventions.
4. Examine the perception of beneficiaries regarding their satisfaction in their overall participation in the Cocoa Life Project interventions.
5. Explore the perception of beneficiaries with regard to the relevance of the Cocoa Life Project to community development
6. Examine the perception of beneficiaries as regards the efforts of Cocoa Life Project in promoting gender equality
7. Discuss how sustainable the interventions they participated in have been.
8. Explore the views of participants on the duration of the Project.

9. Discuss how beneficiaries have ensured adaptation of the practices learnt from the Project.
10. Discuss whether or not there is the need for continued delivery of the Project.
11. Examine the overall view on the level of sustainability of the Project.
12. Explore the factors affecting the sustainability of the Project in the District.
13. Discuss the perceived impact of the Project on the livelihoods of beneficiaries.
14. Discuss the state of beneficiaries' livelihoods before the interventions.
15. Examine the state of beneficiaries' livelihoods after the interventions.
16. Explore the general view of beneficiaries on WVG's interventions in the District under the Project.



APPENDIX C
**INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DISTRICT DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE,
HEAD OF BUSINESS ADVISORY CENTRE, DISTRICT EDUCATIONAL
PLANNER AND EXTENSION AGENT**

My name is Daniel Odoom, a PhD (NGO Studies and Community Development) student of the University of Cape Coast. As part of my programme, I am to undertake a research on the topic "The Impact of Cocoa Life Project Interventions of WVG on Beneficiaries in the Wassa East District, Western Region." This study is purely for academic purpose and so you are assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Please, give as candid as possible your views on the Project interventions.

Date:

Time:

Key Issues Guiding the Interview Session:

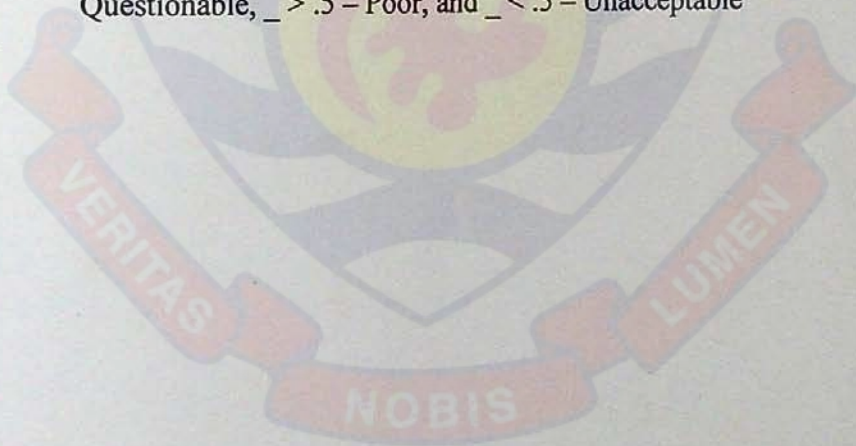
1. Satisfaction with participation in:
 - a. Planning the interventions
 - b. Implementing the interventions
 - c. Evaluating the interventions
2. Relevance of the Cocoa Life Project interventions to the development of beneficiary communities in the District.
3. WVG's efforts to promote gender equality through the Cocoa Life Project interventions in the District.
4. Level of sustainability of the Project interventions.
5. Factors affecting the sustainability of the Project interventions
6. Perceived impact of the interventions on the livelihoods of beneficiaries.
7. States of livelihood of beneficiaries before and after the delivery of the Project interventions.
8. General view about WVG's interventions in the District under the Project.

APPENDIX D

Results of Reliability Co-Efficient

Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach's alpha
Satisfaction in participation in planning the Project	7	0.707
Satisfaction in participation in implementing the Project	5	0.802
Satisfaction in participation in evaluating the Project	6	0.702
Relevance of Project to community development	17	0.819
Efforts to address gender inequality	20	0.708
Level of sustainability of the Project	6	0.841
Factors affecting the sustainability of the Project	11	0.770
Perceived impact of the Project on the livelihood of beneficiaries	14	0.803

George and Mallery (2003) provide the following rules of thumb for Cronbach's alpha co-efficient: “ $> .9$ – Excellent, $> .8$ – Good, $> .7$ – Acceptable, $> .6$ – Questionable, $> .5$ – Poor, and $< .5$ – Unacceptable



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