Gaps Between NGOS Polices and Their Implementation in The North West Region, Cameroon

Edwin Sakah Nsah
sakahedwin@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: *Non-Governmental Organisations occupy a big spot in community development, on the other hand, their involvement in community development has little or zero impact on their beneficiaries as most communities continue to live in poverty. NGOs in the North West region of Cameroon are not different from the above given the involvement of Non-Governmental Organisations in developmental programmes but the level of poverty continues to be high in some communities served by these NGOs. This has become a great concern in Cameroon as Non-Governmental Organisations have been existing in this country for years. On the other hand, deficiency is getting deeper and wider in the same areas serviced by these organisations. This paper analyses the challenges hindering Non-Governmental Organisations programmes from producing positive impact in the North West region of Cameroon. One objective was projected for the study ''understanding the perception of Non-Governmental Organisations personnel and their project beneficiaries on why Non-Governmental Organisations programmes are not yielding satisfaction''. A qualitative approach and sustainable livelihood approach were used. The findings show that the studied Non-Governmental Organisations have good community development programmes, nevertheless, their programmes are not yielding benefits because they failed to recognize and build on their beneficiaries' strengths. In most circumstances they were using top-down approach instead of bottom-top approach which recognises the strengths of the beneficiaries as a result their programmes continue to fail. The study strongly recommends that NGOs and the government should apply Sustainable livelihood approach if they really want a positive impact in their program since the approach stresses that any meaningful strategy or programme to yield satisfaction, the beneficiaries of the programmes should be at the core of the programme from the beginning to the end. This study may add more insight into the ways in which NGOs frame their programmes*

KEYWORDS: NGOS polices, implementation, North West Region, Cameroon

INTRODUCTION

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are believed to be the pillars of community development, however, the level of benefits as a result of their involvement in community

development is slighter [1] . Namara (2009) argues that the reason NGOs benefits are not visible in communities is because some NGOs are engaged in charitable and humanitarian works that have little or nothing to do with community development and others have self-appointed and corporate leadership not answerable to any group of people other than their funders. NGOs in the North West Region (NWR) of Cameroon are not different from the above given the involvement of NGOs in community development but the level of deficiency continues to be extraordinary in some communities served by these NGOs. The World Bank (2019) studies prove that poverty has increased from 55% in 2014 to 57% in 2019 in the NWR and in some districts in the northern provinces the condition is shoddier as insufficiency has increased from 74% in 2014 to 77% in 2019[4]. This has become a great fear in Cameroon as NGOs have been existing in this country for years. On the other hand, deficiency is getting deeper and wider in the same areas serviced by these NGOs [2][3]. There is a lack of basic services like education, shelter, water and health facilities preventing Cameroonians from getting out of poverty [5]

There are a lots of studies in Cameroon about NGOs, Eyong (2003), Mbwoge (2014), Belgah et al., (2015) Fambon, McKay, Timnou, Kouakep, Dzossa, & Ngoho, (2016), Abia et al, (2016), however, literature review in French, English and other languages suggests there are no studies to assess the gaps between NGOs policies and their implementation. Against an examination of the role of NGOs in community development, this paper aims to analyse the challenges hindering NGOs programmes from producing a positive impact in the NWR of Cameroon. To achieve the study aim, one objective was projected: ''understanding the perception of NGO personnel and their project beneficiaries on why NGOs programmes are not yielding satisfaction''. A qualitative approach and sustainable livelihood approach (SLA) were anticipated for this study as will be illustrated in the subsequent sections. This study may add more insight into the ways in which NGOs frame their programmes

The research assesses the programmes of three NGOs in the study regions, Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), Plan international (PI) and Vicony's Global Success World (VGSW). **(1) Summer Institute of Linguistics** is a faith-based organisation devoted to building capacity for workable language development. SIL was formed in 1934 and now has a workforce of over 4,800 from 84 countries. SIL Cameroon is a subsidiary of SIL International and has been serving in Cameroon since 1969. Administrative team of SIL Cameroon consists of six directors. The mother organisation is based in Yaoundé and has projects in other regions in Cameroon. Its areas of interest include linguistic research, literacy, training, translation, scripture engagement, and the promotion and expansion of multilingual education. The aim of this organisation in Cameroon is to help make communication easier and reduce poverty, health problems and the neglected state of communities. SIL cooperates closely with churches in Cameroon and civil society organisations [6]. **(2) Vicony's Global Success World (VGSW)** is a women and youth centred NGO with headquarters in Bamenda in the NWR of Cameroon. The organisation gained authorisation from the Cameroon government in February 2009. VGSW provides support in community development such as health and sanitation, gender empowerment, human rights and sustainable development, working specifically with minority groups within

the Momo division. The VGSW management team is made-up of four top-level officials, three permanent community volunteers and many temporary volunteers. Community volunteers are the intermediary between the VGSW and the communities in Momo division[7] (3) **Plan International** is a British based organisation working in 51 emerging countries across Africa, Asia and America to support child rights and lift children out of poverty. Child sponsorship is the foundation of this organisation. PI plays a facilitating role between a child in need and the foster parents who would help that child. PI has been working in NWR of Cameroon since 1996. PI works with eight councils in the NWR (Boyo, Mezam, Momo and Ngoketunjia divisions). PI Bamenda management team is made up of five top-level managers, six first-line managers and 192 community volunteers. According to the PI Report (2015:5) PI Bamenda is supporting more than 6250 foster children and their families (PI families) in the NWR [8]. Major activities carried out by PI in these regions to reduce poverty include health, learning, habitation, and building relations [9].

Understanding The Concept of NGOS
NGO is a wide term used for organisations that deal with non-profit social development activities for the benefit of society. The term is heterogeneity in terms of size, visions and purposes within the sector [10]. Different nations use different terms for these organisations E.G. In the United Kingdom, NGOs are known as voluntary, charitable or third sector [11]. In the United States of America the term non-profit or not-for-profit sectors is used [12]. However, the use of such expressions in the United States of America, and in the United Kingdom, has been condemned on the basis that they focus on only one characteristic of non-profit or not-for-profit distribution to members [13]. Even though NGOs have different definitions, and challenges, their character remains the same through all their definitions. Such characteristics include the provision of goods and services, not to give profits to personnel in their individual capacities, they are formed, sustained, and terminated based on charitable decisions and the initiatives by members or a board and, finally, they exhibit wisdom regularly based on resilient ethical components [14].

The activities of NGOs are influenced by their internal environment. One will see relief NGOs where there are disasters, human rights NGOs where there are political supremacies, discrimination, and developmental NGOs where there is poverty [15]. In the NWR of Cameroon both international and local NGOs are involved in human rights, political and development activities even though each NGO has different objectives [16]. International NGOs are those NGOs operating in several countries with headquarters in another country. Some of these international NGOs may have sufficient funding and means but have narrow country grassroots information [17]. This is not the case with local NGOs whose activities are limited in scale and scope, they depend mostly on other international NGOs for survival [18].
Growth of NGOS in the North West Region

NGOs grow from inside in reaction to particular historical and sociocultural contexts [1]. One of the reasons for the fast growing of NGOs in the North West region is the traditional set up of the people in this region. There are five main ethnic groups in these regions; the Tikar, Ngemba, Chamba Fulani and Moghamo which are structured from the lowest unit which is

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the family to the chiefdom which is the highest in the NWR of Cameroon. The centralized authority of these chiefs with their clearly defined hierarchies allows for rapid mobilization of members of the tribal groups, which provide a strong impetus for common initiatives and ventures. The ability of chiefs and populations to rally together at short notice and to work together encourages foreign NGOs to work in the region [19]. Additionally, the liberalization and existence of many political and pressure groups during the British administration of the Southern Cameroons explains the existence of many of such groups in the NWR today. The common initiative groups and the existence of a communal spirit were promoted by the traditional set up of the dynamic people of the Region. All these factors created a more favourable environment for the operation and success of NGOs in the North West region of Cameroon [20].

The existence of a culture of self-reliance also encourages the growth of NGOs in the region. The high number of self-help groups in the regions was a direct consequence of the colonial policy of indirect rule and the powerlessness of the government to assist the people with elementary needs, especially roads, coupled with the hostile physical milieu consisting of hills, mountains, valleys, lakes, and waterfalls among others in the study regions pose a hazard to economic advancement and thus need an intensive effort for any significant change to take place [26]. All these factors instigated a spirit of healthy competition among the various communities to improve their access to services which acted as a gravitational pull on NGOs into the NWR [21][22][23][24]. The most important fact about these self-help groups in the study regions is that these groups were operating without due registration until 1991 when the parliament of Cameroon passed the law on freedom of associations. It is found that those that are registered today only did so after operating for some years, which enabled them to gain international assistance and recognition. [25].

The role of NGOs in community development will be analyse under three headings *(*1) NGOs as a substitute for the government (2) complementary actors to the government *and,* (3) agents of donors and of their own survival.

NGOs as a Substitute for the Government
In many countries including Cameroon, NGOs offer services to civil servants, for example, the NGO sector in Kenya serves as a source of employment for over 250,000 people [27]. NGOs are also assisting in educational programmes like HIV/AIDS awareness at schools, fighting a specific illness, focusing on peace building, and holding the government accountable. The benefits of these programmes are not translated immediately into improving the living conditions of the underprivileged in the short run [28]. Molua (2007:37) added that the Netherlands Development Organization in Cameroon agitated for the government's decentralization projects to be put into practice, which is a key element to democracy in Cameroon. In addition, Plan International's role here also has been instrumental. Baka community children in Cameroon do not have the opportunity to go to school and the government does not recognize them officially in the database. Because of cultural reasons in general, and illiteracy in particular, most children are born without any legal registration of

their birth. Plan International assisted them to issue birth certificates to children of the Baka people in Eastern Cameroon in order to have them on the national development database [29].

Complementary Actors to the Government
NGOs have turned out to be the leading service providers in states where the government is not capable of accomplishing its obligation. This is because NGOs are highly philanthropic; they struggle for liberation, care for the uncared for and improve the livelihoods of the poor [30]. The good role of NGOs is seen in Oxfam international's mission "to overcome poverty, injustice and suffering in the world" [31]. Choudry & Kapoor (2013:104) indicated that NGOs' role is now shifting from popular struggle to policy making. Choudry & Kapoor (2013:104) show a situation in South Africa where NGO staff distanced themselves from social movements and engaged with the state against marching on the street. This implies that NGOs are working hand in hand to complement each other as the governments usually create a potential situation where NGOs are compatible with the government. Alternatively, this role sometimes creates conflicting relations with governments. For example, the NGO role might be seen as a form of rivalry, replacing the government instead of promoting growth in their project communities. In this context, they are condemned for taking a slice of a procedure that aggressively deteriorates the power of the government to become an accountable and trustworthy provider of services. It might be too harsh to suggest, though, that the main outcome of the NGO presence in services provision has been to weaken the abilities of the government [32]. However, the role of NGOs as complementary actors to the government is still very important. For example, in Uganda educational establishment or programmes are above all the task of the Ministry of Education. Yet, Uganda's lack of ability and the weak natural surroundings of the state in general have opened up opportunities for NGOs to take control over education (maintainers, assist teachers, provide the needy with basic school provisions) and also help reinforce government in Uganda [33].

Agents of Donors
Accountability between NGOs and their project beneficiaries indicate that NGOs have crossed the path of their early objectives and in doing so, "run the risk of becoming yet another system of aid managers and disbursers rather than development agents in their own right" [34]. For example, in some project communities, the community within which NGOs work hardly gets any information about the budget or a briefing of how the whole project is expected to run so that they could also follow up and call to order the organisation when it is drifting [2]. This implies that there is a lack of good governance concerning decision-making. Fowler (2005) acknowledged that NGOs are given privileges to access decision-making processes but in reality they do not follow a needs-based approach in their decision-making processes; instead their decision-making processes are donor driven. From his view we can conclude that there are inconsistencies between what NGOs set out to do and what they actually do as the above author further states that NGO roles are slowly changing with the changing face of development in most communities.

Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) in Community Development

Sustainable Livelihood Approaches are diverse and mean different things to different people at different levels [35]. SLA can be defined as the connecting of three concepts; (1) increasing social sustainability, that is, vulnerability of the underprivileged ought to be minimized by decreasing external pressure and providing safety nets such as public allowances; (2) enhancing capability, that is, in facing irregularity, people are flexible, speedy to adapt and able to exploit diverse opportunities and (3) improving equity, the main concern ought to be given to the assets, capabilities and access of the poorest of the poor, including minorities and women[36].

Applying the SLA to NGOs development programmes will share the concern that the economic well-being of the NGOs beneficiaries ought to be understood from the perspective of the beneficiaries themselves. From this insight, any developmental programme to assist the beneficiaries entails a holistic and participatory assessment of the range of livelihood activities that people draw upon, and of the strategies they employ. For the purpose of this study, Krantz, (2001) definition of SLA is used. According to Krantz a livelihood consists of the capabilities, assets and activities necessary to make a living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can handle and pull through from pressures and shocks and maintain or boost its abilities and resources both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base [37]. These explanations emphasise that sustainable livelihoods should provide significant work that fulfil the social, economic, cultural and spiritual needs of all members of a society, present and future, and protect cultural and biological diversity.

The approach is used in this study to illustrate how NGOs can prepare for and respond to changes in their programmes. Cárdenas (2015 indicates that numerous approaches have been unsuccessful to deal with community projects and stresses that the application of SLA in any developmental project will have a positive impact as it can be a valuable instrument for understanding their work and how it contributes to peoples' means of support. The approach stresses the involvement of all people including women and marginalised at all levels of decision making. The advantage of this method is that it positions the underprivileged and their conditions firmly at the centre of the investigation. The approach has core principles

People centred: Krantz (2001) explains that sustainable poverty reduction will be accomplished only if outside assistance centres on what matters to individuals, recognises the changes between groups of individuals, and works with them in a way that is well-suited to their existing livelihood approaches, social setting, and capability to adjust.

Being responsive and participatory: Every individual has strengths. As a result, any developmental programme should recognize and build on people's strengths through participation [38].

Working with partners: The method emphases the significance of forming partnerships. Partnerships should be transparent arrangements, built upon shared goals [40].

Being dynamic; Means of support and the elements influencing them are continuously changing. The method should try to support constructive ways of change and create longer-term assurances [41].

Disaggregate: It is dynamic to apprehend how resources, voices and livelihood approaches vary among affluent groups and underprivileged groups as well as between males and females in these groups [42].

The SLA is used in this study because the method encourages a bottom-top approach which stresses that the beneficiaries of the project should be at the core when developing any programme for them. The approach recognises that the poor also have strengths including natural resources [43]. This is in line with results from contemporary participatory poverty assessments, which demonstrate that poverty is a much more problematic phenomenon than just low income or inadequate assets [3].

The criticism about this approach is that it does not deal with the problem of how to recognise those who are really in need of assistance. The approach does not offer a clear scheme for dealing with essential elements of policy making, such as individual positioning and collective worldviews or their knowledge and emotional affections and, similarly, the way assets and other living prospects are spread locally and are time and again determined by natural structures of social authority and power within the people themselves. Despite these criticisms, the approach offers a more appropriate technique to evaluate developmental programme and provides a framework through which programmes can be implemented

METHODOLOGY

Qualitative in-depth interviews with 56 NGOs stakeholders (12 NGO officials, 24 NGO beneficiaries, 16 NGO community volunteers and 4 NGO funders) were collected for this study. Different groups were represented in the study to provide wider data sources for the study. Purposive and snowball sampling techniques were used in selecting participants. NGO stakeholders who have been working with their NGOs for many years and have good knowledge about their organisation were selected. The author worked in partnership with the directors and community volunteers to organise interviews in order to reduce all meeting period conflicts. The selection of NGOs was guided by the following principle; the selected NGO must be involved with a community programme/project to determine whether beneficiaries were benefiting from the services of these NGOs. The researcher's choice of the study region was influenced by his own knowledge of the regions, which simplified his access into data sources. The researcher has lived in the study regions and knows much about the activities of the NGOs. Furthermore, he is familiar with cultural practices, values, norms and languages. There were some communities where members could only speak Pidgin English or mother tongue. It was easier for the researcher to translate the phrase(s) into English to mitigate the possible loss of deep meanings since he understood Pidgin English but he did not let his opinion influence the translation or responses of the participants.

This approach gave the researcher the chance to understand participant's perception of the challenges hindering NGOs programmes as it was easy to handle pre-defined conditions and follow-up probing to develop a rich and comprehensive understanding of the participants. The researcher regarded the NGO stakeholder's as specialists as most of them have been

involved in NGO community programmes for many years. Initial interviews were conducted between September 2016 and February 2017 and follow-up interviews between August 2017 and October 2018. Follow-up interviews were relevant to pursue issues emerging in order to reduce flaws and identify cohesions. All interviews were audio recorded with the permission of the participants. The researcher listened to these recorded interviews repeatedly which made it possible to produce verbatim transcriptions from the interviews. Any significant responses that touched on the research objective were coded accordingly. The transcripts were word for word but did not include breaks in proceedings, varieties, and other elements of discourse since the focus was on the fundamental meaning of the explanations rather than their structure. Transcription was within 24 hours of each interview to make sure that the questions discussed and the answers were still fresh in the mind of the researcher. In the analysis process, similar responses were grouped into themes and common themes merged together. Codes were used to identify themes. The findings of this study are presented according to the themes.

REPORTING THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

This section discusses the key findings of the study. In the prevailing SLA framework, the role of NGOs in community development is required to lead to broad-based ownership, pro-poor effectiveness and accountability, which will ultimately benefit project recipients. As seen in the introduction above, NGOs have a long history of partaking in community development programmes in the NWR as service providers. In a determination to comprehend why NGOs programmes were not generating good fruits, the question ''in your view why are NGOs programmes not producing a positive outcome in the community'' was asked. It was found that NGOs programmes were not yielding positive impact because of many influences as will be presented below;

Discrimination.
Different forms of discrimination were found to be one of the factors hampering NGOs programmes from producing positive outcomes in the region under study. According to the PI field coordinator, discrimination was creating gender gaps in Mbororo communities where only boys were allowed to attend school;

"Girls in Mbororo communities who are in classrooms are the lucky ones. Over 75% of girls' children are out of school and just a handful of Mbororo female children make it through to secondary education because their families believe school is only for boys and girls for marriage" (PI field coordinator, 09/12/ 2017).

From his interpretations, Mbororo believes that only boy's education can better their lives and their aim to educate girls' and decreases discrimination in communities as education empowers marginalised females and gives them a voice to better their future and their families is inadequate. In a follow up probing to understand if there were other means they are using to close the gender gap, it was identifying that they were trying to educate the elderly who are custodian of Mbororo culture to recognize the negative impact of their

culture so that they can encourages girl education, however, this strategy was not helping as they believed that culture can't be change.

''we are trying to inform the elderly who are custodians of Mbororo culture to recognize the negative impact of their culture but they are not willing. They believed this culture can never be change'' (Ibid). Further examination confirmed that educating a female child is a waste of resources as educated females do not have respect for men; ''Female children are not allowed to go school. Educated women believe they are more intelligent than their men, females who have not gone to school are always good house wives and families cannot waste their resources to educate females (PI beneficiary 14/04/2018).

This finding is not new in Africa as Alasah's (2008) study shows that in Ghana and Nigeria Mbororo families are reluctant to sponsor a girl child in school because of the belief that they will bear the cost of the girl child in school and benefits of education will be enjoyed by the girl's husband. It can thus be concluded that girls are denied education partly because it is perceived that families bear the cost of their education and the benefits are enjoyed by the husband's families [44]. This issue is creating a big gender gaps in NGOs educational programmes

Another form of discrimination was religious belief;
"Our programme is failing in Muslim communities especially in Bamessing, Babanlang and Bagolang because these are Muslim communities and they believed our aim is to introduce Christianity into their communities rather than teaching them on how to read and write in their mother tongue" (SIL field coordinator,27/6/2018).

From his views, there is disunity in these communities between the Christians and the Muslims. This weakens the spirit of community development as Clarke's study (2013) argues that when a community is in one accord, there is motivation for people to engage in community development because there is a desirable behaviour [45]. Disunity was found to be a serious challenge in these communities as Muslims were not willing to get involved in any good programme organised by Christians.

Another issue of discrimination hampering NGOs progress in the regions under study was land ownership ''women are not allowed to own land in some villages in the NWR. Land belongs to men'' (PI beneficiary 24/02/2017).

She further explained that the PI goat rearing programme in the region was a failure because land belonged to men and women needed to negotiate for a piece of land with their husbands in order for them to rear goats and their husband control them on how to use the money (PI beneficiary (17/4/2018).

From her views, this fundamentally gives the man more power to choose what the wife can do in the land which limits women's rights. Degrade, Schreckenberg, Mbosso & Mfoumou, (2007) explained that access to land and transfer of property rights are determined by the type

of descent groups in Cameroon. In most regions in Cameroon particularly in the region under study property rights are passed from father to son. This form of discrimination discourages community development as Mah (2016:219-20) and Njoh (2011) argues that any successful implementation of any community project depends on whether the beneficiaries perceive the project as truly theirs. Unfortunately, the grassroots traditional authorities and their cultural practices have undermined the role of women as they do not have control over land as their husbands decide what needs to be done on land. It was also found that women are not allowed to participate in decision-making when men are discussing. ''In our culture, females cannot discourse when husbands are discussing, especially when your relatives are in the meeting. We are petrified that what we say can bring shame to the family" (SIL beneficiary, 20/02.2017). Power-relations constitute a barrier to developmental programmes as Semati et al. (2012) explained that when an individual is denied equal access to class status, his economic status is also weakened. Women are the strength of any developmental project, the aim of the project cannot be achieved in rural communities when they are excluded from decision-making [46].

Increases in Demand for Skilled Labour
The basic theory of neoliberal economic policies explained that income or earning disparities in the job market is the reason some people are poor (Hurst, 2004). The labour shortage can have far-reaching negative impacts not only to the organisation but it can also affect other sectors. All the three studied NGOs consistently mentioned that their staff were leaving their organisation for better pay in other sectors,

"We are failing to succeed in our projects because there is a lack of resilience; our staff are leaving our organisation because of low salaries and moving to newly created NGOs with higher salaries. We have limited funds to keep our employees in our organisation" (SIL director, June 2018).

From his views, high demand for labour has pushed the price of labour to increase in the region and they are not able to afford higher prices. Through observation, and further probing, it was found that the crises in the North-west and South-west regions in Cameroon have resulted in high humanitarian activities in these regions creating room for international NGOs;

"What is happening now in NWR is pushing international organisations to have projects in this community and most of these international NGOs want to employ only those with working experience" (SIL director, June, 2018).

From their views, the newly created NGOs in the region have enough resources and are willing and able to pay high salaries to have experienced workers. This is a setback in their programmes because their qualified staff are joining these newly created organisations because they lack funds to keep them.

"Our highly qualified staff are leaving our organisation and we are forced to employ new staff and train them. This is hampering our long-term strategy because we continue to employ new staff. Furthermore, in order to work effectively and efficiently in the community, both community members and employees need to be familiar with each other" (PI field coordinator, 05/12/ 2016).

From his view, when old staff that are used to project beneficiaries leave the project, it creates a problem of sustainability because new staff need time to become familiar with the beneficiaries. Their organisation is now acting like a training centre where people can gain skills and search for better opportunities. This is a big problem because long-term projects are failing because they are spending time on induction rather than focusing on the project objective.

Lack of Sufficient Resources
Lack of resources in terms of income, and other opportunities that may make things better is a key to failure [47]. All the studied NGOs complained they do not have sufficient funds/resources to efficiently run their programmes;

"The biggest shortcoming we have is funding. Child sponsorship is the foundation of the organisation and sponsorship donations are not always enough to cover all our programmes/projects cost. There are some children in the community that have never received a gift or even a letter from their foster parents" (PI administrative director, December 2016).

SIL director had a similar comment;
"I think finance is one of the main problems that we face. Our activities are always more than our resources although some of our staffs are missionaries, meaning they are not receiving full salaries, part of their salaries is being used to fund the activities of the organisation yet, we are still not able to have required funds to run the activities of the organisation smoothly" (SIL language director, July 2018).

The VGSW director also had the same views about insufficient funds;
"The support we received from our funders is not enough to run the organisation. In most cases, we have to do fundraising yet the funds are not enough and that takes a lot of our time because we cannot focus on one thing only" (VGSW director, November 2016).

From their views, they are failing to satisfy their communities because some of their services are provided by volunteers that do not have skills simply because they don't have enough resources to hire qualified labour to handle the activities of the organisation effectively.

Cultural Beliefs
People at times are not willing to take part in useful community activities in part because of how they culturally perceive their community [4]. It was found that cultural beliefs were a strong hindrance hampering NGOs programmes from yielding satisfaction;

"Our HIV/AIDs programmes is failing because many people lack reading skills and here, parent do not discuss issues pertaining to sexual maturity, condom use, sexual transmitted infections and contraceptives because they believed it is forbidden to talk about such issues with children" (SIL director 08/07/2018).

From his assessments, the beneficiaries of these programmes have learned not to discuss sexual matters because of cultural beliefs. In further probing, beneficiaries confirmed that you cannot discuss anything about sex with children: "It is an embarrassment to discuss sex with children and I feared being misinterpreted by children that I want to engage in sexual activity with them" (SIL beneficiary 29/06/2018).

VGSW beneficiaries shared the same perception as they also said that children are inquisitive; talking about the sexual role in their heads will just lead them to try it out: "We can't talk with our children about sex because this will be like we are directing them to engage in sexual activities" (VGSW beneficiary, 10/12/2016).

From their observations, any issues to do with sexual roles are by tradition forbidden and they are considered as a reserved subject not for open dialogue. Further probing found that religious beliefs are also preventing the success of this programme. "We have made attempts to talk about these social issues in churches since most community members do not like to talk about these issues at home but churches are not comfortable with the idea" (VGSW director, 18/06/2018). This was found to be a barrier because it discourages parents from talking with their children about sexual role issues.

A study carried out in Tanzania by Wamoyi, Fenwick, Urassa, Zaba & Stones (2010) illustrated that this challenge is not new in NGOs programmes. Their study shows that children regard their close relatives as being unfriendly and they did not want to be misinterpreted as well as being interrogated on private matters, such as sexual roles. Such factors were seen as barriers to effective communication between close adult relatives and their young relatives affecting the success of NGO projects. Other studies added that media such as television and the internet are the best media through which NGO programmes regarding HIV/AIDs can be shared as Motsomi, Makanjee, Basera, & Nyasulu (2016) illustrated that parents prefer their children to get information about sexual and reproductive health from social media, which therefore diminishes the parents' role as the primary source of information.

Beneficiaries' Absence in Major Decision Making
SLA illustrates that when all the members of a project are involved right from the beginning, they own the project and when it comes to rolling it out, the members know everything, including where they can source funds [48]. One of the challenges mentioned by the study participants regarding projects failures was lack of Government role in community development;

"Government is not doing enough in providing the basic amenities such as drinking water, building rural infrastructures and creating economic activities. In most communities, people walk for long distances to fetch water or attend school. This is a setback because it reduces the time they could have been in their farms. Attending NGO general meetings means they will end up not going to their farms and they are not willing to forgo their farm because of NGOs meetings" (PI manager Bamenda, December 2106).

From his observations, walking long distances to fetch water reduces their available time and, as such, those who were not benefiting from NGO activities were not willing to forgo their farming because of NGO meetings. This was confirmed when the researcher observed that the pipe-borne water was far away from homes in Ibal. In further probing, beneficiaries said that if there is a good transport network, they can attend the meetings knowing that they are not going to struggle to return to their farms.

From his interpretations, the projects were implemented based on assumptions and not based on beneficiary's priorities simply because community members were sometimes not available to engage in decision making during planning, implantation, monitoring and evolution. Roodt (2001) explained that development cannot be achieved unless the people become the agents of their own development.

Funders' Influence
SLA illustrates that development does not start with material belongings, it begins with individuals and a good system of government [49]. One of the setbacks in NGO programmes in this study was the presence of funders in major decision making in projects and most of such decisions were not responding to community development plans

 "Our funders are more and more performance-driven with respect to their funds. It is good that they want to see that every assistance they provide goes to the project and as such, they give us guidance. The aim is to make sure that the project is completed in time. However, there are some customs in our project communities that we cannot try to interfere with such customs, for example women are not allowed to talk when men are talking, our funders insist we should make sure women are part of decision making" (PI field coordinator, 05/12/ 2016).

From his explanation, their funders are not considering cultural practices an important aspect in their project and making it difficult for them to achieve their main objective. In probing for clarification, the same PI administrative director explained that there are usually suggestions from their beneficiaries on how to implement the programmes but their suggestions cannot be implemented immediately as they have to discuss these suggestions with their funders first, especially suggestions that have to do with spending of funds;

"We do not have available funds that can be spent at any time. In most cases, we need to discuss financial issues with our funders before any action can be taken. What delayed implementation of recommendations at time is the time duration we have to meet our funders'' (PI director, July 2018).

Further probing found that NGOs officials were comfortable to implement funder's decision than project beneficiaries

"Our suggestions are hardly implemented. NGOs officials will tell us they are going to discuss what we suggested with their funders and sometimes they do not come back with a response and when they do come back with the response, it is usually negative or only what the funders want" (PI beneficiary, 28/06/ 2018).

From her views, NGOs are implementing the funder recommendation instead of their beneficiaries' recommendations who knows their situation because funders provide the resources. Brass (2012) acknowledges that when donors give funds they influence the activities of NGOs as they force NGOs to implement decisions rather than working with the communities to identify priorities before embarking on their programmes. Namara (2009:41) agreed by stating that when funders make decisions, they are indirectly forcing NGOs to ultimately abandon the good job they were doing to concentrate on funders' changes.

CONCLUSION

This paper analyses the challenges hindering PI, SIL and VGSW from yielding benefit in the North West region of Cameroon. Based on the study finding, the paper concluded that the studied NGOs have good community development programmes, nevertheless, their programmes were not yielding positive impact because of many influences from within the NGOs, funders and beneficiaries. The studied NGOs failed to recognize and build on their beneficiaries' strengths who were energetic decision-makers that can influence their project. NGOs in most cases were using top-down approach instead of bottom-top approach which recognises the strengths of the beneficiaries as a result their programmes continue to fail. SLA stresses that any meaningful strategy or programme to yield satisfaction, the beneficiaries of the programmes should be at the core of the programme from the beginning to the end but this was not happening in Most NGOs programmes.

The study strongly recommends that NGOs and the government should apply SLA if they really want a positive impact in their program. With regard to discrimination, the study suggests that NGOs, government or any one that wants to deal with discrimination issues in Mbororo communities in the NWR should start by enlightening the Mbororo how stereotyping and social classification influence defiance and behavior. This can be achieved by organizing frequent events and inviting Mbororo men and women to discuss the historical background of discrimination towards their group to raise awareness and train them to be open minded. The discussion should focus more on their knowledge, skills, and abilities/attitudes, this strategy will reduce the gender gap between boys and girls in Mbororo communities. With regard to HIV/AIDS programmes the study suggests that there is a need for NGOs to find an intermediate ground between parents and children, taking into consideration the roles and duties of parents and their children while supporting cultural integration.

It is not always easy to quickly handle a skilled labour shortage because it takes a combination of training, education and other activities to achieve this, the study suggest that in order to make up for shortages in skilled workforces, NGOs can recruit unskilled workers on long term deals and train them, the contract will limit them from seeking jobs in other organisations. This will bring a positive result as employees will be familiar with their work environment and project beneficiaries. As seen in SLA above development begins with individuals, and a good system of government and not material belongings as the NGOs assumed. The study suggests that there should be collaboration between NGOs, funders and project beneficiaries to familiarize themselves with their project community's culture, traditions, customs and rights. With regard to limited funds, the study suggests that instead of having so many programmes that are not yielding satisfaction because of limited funds, NGOs should close those programmes that are not top priority in communities. Use the limited resources to concentrate on a few that will have a positive impact. NGOs should also develop new means of raising funds rather than solely on their funders.

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