

**AN ASSESSMENT OF ACTIONAID GHANA RIGHTS- BASED APPROACH TO  
POVERTY REDUCTION. A CASE OF ASUTIFI DISTRICT IN THE BRONG AHAFO  
REGION**

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work towards the MSc. degree and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published by another person nor material which has been accepted for the award of any degree of the University, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my Dear Wife, Mrs. Monica Amontum Abaa, without whose caring support it would not have been possible, and to my lovely daughter Evanscella Abaa.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I wish to sincerely thank the Almighty God for guiding and supporting me throughout this work. I whole heartedly wish to thank my supervisor Dr. Inkoom for his immense support and direction during this research. May God bless you and increase his favour for you.

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## **ABSTRACT**

Poverty as a complex phenomenon is on a global ascendancy especially in developing countries such as Ghana and has become one of the main developmental challenges facing the country. Over the years, many strategies have been put in place by different actors to reduce poverty in the country. This includes giving of charity to cushion the poor, need based approach and Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) to poverty reduction. However, studies (if they even exist) to measure the impacts of these approaches are apparently scanty. As a result, the focus of this study is an assessment of Action Aid's Human Rights Based Approach to poverty reduction in the Asutifi District of the Brong Ahafo Region. The study examines into the modus operandi of the HRBA as well as its effectiveness or otherwise as a tool for alleviating poverty.

The study adopted the case study research design in undertaking this systematic enquiry. The rationale for this research approach is to allow for an extensive analysis of the HRBA and its impact(s) on poverty reduction using the Asutifi District as a case for the investigation. Both primary and secondary data were sourced for the study. Respondents were mainly drawn from heads of households and institutions including ActionAid Ghana's (AAG), Domestic Violence Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU), Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), and Center for Maternal Health and Community Empowerment (CMCE).

The study highlights on some of the key activities in the HBRA undertaken by AAG over the years towards helping the vulnerable groups such as the poor, women and children who are easily neglected by policy makers so as to give a voice to the voiceless and also, secure land for the landless. Additionally, the study brings to fore the three (3) crucial pillars, namely; promotion of human rights, food rights and improvement in education as the strategies embedded in the HBRA for fighting poverty by AAG.

In conclusion, the study recommends among other things, the need for other organizations including both governmental and non-governmental to come on board and collaborate with AAG to pool resources, share ideas/technologies, provide technical assistance and whatever; to streamline the HBRA system and additionally, scale up the coverage of the approach not only in the Asutifi District but also, the rest of Ghana in order to advance the process of poverty reduction across the country.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

AAG	Action Aid Ghana
AIDS	Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
CHRAJ	Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice
CMHCE	Center for Maternal Health and Community Empowerment
CBRDP	Community Based Rural Development Project
CBV	Community Based Volunteers
DACF	District Assemblies Common fund
DFID	Department for International Development
DOVVSU	Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit
HIV	Human Immune Virus
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
IDA	International Development Agency
ILO	International Labour Organization
MSHAP	Multi Sectoral HIV/AIDS Project
NGOs	Non Governmental Organisations
RBA	Rights-Based Approach

UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **RIGHT BASED APPROACH TO POVERTY REDUCTION- BACKGROUND AND CHALLENGES**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

The past two decades have seen the re-emergence of ‘poverty’ onto the international development agenda, marked by the World Development Report 1990 (World Bank, 1990). It is usually conceptualized as an economic or social condition, and has major implications for policy. As the term of poverty expanded with the concept of basic needs in the 1970s, qualitative indicators expanded to incorporate the satisfaction of those needs. These indicators incorporated aspects of ill-being, such as poor nutrition, shelter, clothing and access to health services (Nunan et al, 2002).

Participatory approaches to poverty also challenge the conventional explanations, expounding the direct inclusion of the poor themselves in the process of defining poverty. It is argued that income/consumption poverty has assumed importance only because of its importance as a developed world state (Nunan et al, 2002). According to Chambers (1995), income deprivation is quite low on the priority ranking of the poor, below self-respect and lack of domination. The participatory school asserts that the conventional understanding of poverty does not allow for its fundamental subjectivity. For the poor, poverty is a local, diverse and dynamic condition.

Due to the increasing focus on the urgency of reducing poverty, and the broadening understanding of poverty, many international organizations are attempting to develop a better understanding of the ways of combating poverty through development approaches (Nunan et al, 2002).

The rapid growth of advocacy training in the last decade has generated a wide variety of definitions, approaches and strategies towards the improvement of societal wellbeing. Diverse advocacy approaches are not just different ways of reaching a similar end. They embody different values, political views and goals, and thus seek different ends. The distinctions have important implications for excluded groups such as women, indigenous communities and ethnic minorities. Advocacy initiatives concerned with empowerment, citizenship, and participation appear different from those that only focus on policy reform (Klasen and Miller, 2002).

On one level, a rights-based approach to development builds on people's desire for dignity and the satisfaction of their basic needs. Over time people and organizations have broadened the traditional needs-based vision of development by expanding and reframing needs such as food, jobs, health and respect as human rights. They work to incorporate rights into laws and policies and to build alternatives and change ideas and attitudes that affect their fulfillment. Thus a rightsbased development approach integrates the political side of development and change efforts – making legal frameworks more just and supportive of the rights of the poor and excluded with the capacity-building and creative side strengthening their skills, awareness and possibilities for designing alternatives (Chapman et al, 2005).

The next sub-section thus explores the magnitude of the failure in employing the right-based approach in alleviating poverty as well as the significance of the right-based development approach to poverty reduction.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

The notion of rights as universal standards of human dignity belies their inherently political and conflictual nature. Rights do not come in neat packages, but rather are part of dynamic, sometimes messy, processes of resistance and change that work to engage and transform relations of power. Despite the existence of the international human rights system, the terrain of rights remains an ever-changing, political arena where some groups' rights compete and conflict with others worsening their plight (Vene Klasen Miller et al 2004). This situation is not different from the happenings in Ghana especially in the rural areas.

Poverty is now seen as multidimensional, 'dynamic, complex, institutionally-embedded, and a gender- and location-specific phenomenon' (World Bank, 2000). The poor are not a homogeneous group, but experience poverty in different ways, requiring a range of policy responses and measurements. In terms of the linkages between poverty and rights-based approach, these are inevitably complex and diverse, reflecting the diversity of poverty dimensions and experiences (Nunan et al, 2002).

The Millennium Declaration recognizes the importance of human rights. It states: —We will spare no efforts to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty. We are committed to making the right to development a reality for everyone

and to freeing the entire human race from want (United Nations, 2000). Therefore the growing recognition that poverty is about more than economic needs and that growth centered development has to address more complex and fundamental causes of poverty and inequality such as discrimination, exploitation and abuse.

The implications of a development organization truly adopting a rights-based approach towards poverty alleviation are massive. Despite the current popularity of rights rhetoric in the development field, these implications have not been fully appreciated. First a rights-based approach is inherently a political approach – one that takes into consideration power, struggle and a vision of a better society as key factors in development. It opposes a depoliticized interpretation of development which portrays problems ‘as purely technical matters that can be resolved outside the political arena’ without conflict when in fact, they are rooted in differences of power, income and assets (Dochas, 2003).

According to the 1992 Republican Constitution of Ghana, the state is to respect, protect, promote and fulfill the rights of all citizens. Holding government accountable for the fulfillment of human rights is also a central part of rights-based approach. Rights cannot be truly realized without changes in the structure and relationships of power in all their forms. Changes in who makes decisions, whose voice is heard, what topics are seen as legitimate, people’s sense of relative self-worth and in the confidence of people to speak out (Government of Ghana, 1992).

However these positive outcomes of rights-based approaches depend largely on linking them with participation, empowerment and social change. There are considerable dangers in the tendency to equate a rights-based development approach primarily with policy and advocacy work and to see rights as the sole solution to poverty. This kind of limited understanding ignores key fundamentals about how power and change operate in society and has set up polarities with other development approaches. By emphasizing the pre-eminence of rights work and not incorporating strategies of empowerment and participation such as constituency organizing, leadership development and the creation of concrete alternatives to the current neoliberal paradigm, these polarities are resulting in one-dimensional responses that ultimately will be ineffectual in promoting long-term change (Chapman et al, 2005) especially in Ghana.

The above understanding of rights-based approaches implies that the primary role of development organizations and donors shifts from being implementers and drivers of development to being allies



and fellow partners with people's development and social movements in a collective struggle for change. This implies a much more complex mix of roles that involves sharing and negotiating power in new ways, challenging assumptions, and taking clear, often risky, political stands in favor of people marginalized by poverty and the privilege of others (Chapman, et al, 2005).

This paper explores some of the challenges of taking a rights-based approach in ensuring adequate engagement with the poorest and their immediate concerns. Again, the paper seeks to appreciate the efforts of Action Aid Ghana in alleviating poverty especially in the Brong Ahafo region of Ghana using the Rights-based development approach.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

From the foregoing, the study sought to answer the following research questions;

- What is the extent of coverage of the Action Aid Rights-based Approach in the BrongAhafo region?
- Who are the stakeholders involved in and their roles in the ActionAid Rights-based Approach in reducing poverty in the Brong Ahafo region?
- What are the effects of Action Aid Rights-based Approach on the quality of lives of the people in the Brong Ahafo region?
- What are the challenges impeding the smooth implementation of the Action Aid Rightsbased Approach in reducing poverty?

## **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

Based on the problem statement, the study has the general objective of examining the ActionAid Rights-based Approach in reducing poverty in the Brong-Ahafo region of Ghana. With respect to that the study sought to achieve the following specific objectives:

- To examine the extent of coverage of the ActionAid Rights-based Approach in the Brong Ahafo region.

- To assess the effects of the adoption of the ActionAid Rights-based Approach on improving the quality of lives of the people in the Brong Ahafo region.
- To identify the challenges confronting the ActionAid Rights-based Approach in reducing poverty in the Brong Ahafo region.
- To ascertain the various roles of the stakeholders concerned and connected to the ActionAid Rights-based Approach in alleviating poverty in the Brong Ahafo region.
- To recommend pragmatic strategies in improving the quality of lives of the people through ActionAid Rights-based Approach.

#### **1.4 Scope of the Study**

The study focused on the Asutifi district in the Brong Ahafo region of Ghana. The selection of this place was influenced by the effects of the activities of ActionAid Ghana in improving the quality of lives of the people especially through the Rights-based Development Approach. Again, the Brong Ahafo region is basically agricultural dominated region with most of the people living in poverty.

This research explores the extent of the ActionAid Rights-based Approach in reducing poverty in the Brong Ahafo region with specific emphasis on the effects of the adoption of Rights-based Approach in reducing poverty on the quality of lives of the people. In addition, the role of government and other institutions in promoting the activities of the ActionAid Rights-based Development Approach would be examined.

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This research on evaluating the ActionAid Rights-based Approach to poverty reduction and development would add to the body of knowledge in diverse ways. This study would bring to bear the several ways and strategies that can be employed through the Rights-based Approach to alleviate poverty especially in rural areas. This is because city authorities, district assemblies, Non-Governmental Originations and other agencies would be informed of the need to incorporate the people especially the poor into the activities with particular reference to their rights as well as the articulation of these rights.

An observation of the poverty alleviation programmes and development processes in the Brong Ahafo region and Ghana in general limits full participation of the beneficiary communities. An important value provided by the application of Rights-based Development Approach is the focus on the most marginalized and excluded in society as their human rights are most widely denied or left unfulfilled. A conscious assessment of these challenges and the benefits of the Rightsbased Development Approach would lead to the formulation and development of pragmatic and effective strategies in improving the plight of the poor.

In addition, poverty is in consonance with unsustainable environmental and socio-economic development, hence this study would results in gaining a deeper understanding and insight into the activities of the ActionAid Ghana especially in the area of the Rights-based Development Approach. This eventually lead to the realization of effective policies of reducing poverty and accelerating development. This study seeks to unravel techniques, methods and strategies of improving the quality of lives of the poor mainly in the Brong Ahafo region.

It is in appreciating and according the Rights-based development approach with the needed attention and adoption in the Brong Ahafo region that the numerous challenges impeding poverty reduction programmes can be overcome. Also, understanding the concept of the Rights-based Development Approach that the poor people would begin to express their developmental concerns and take initiatives to achieve them. This would lessen the burden on city authorities, district assemblies and other developmental organizations thus enhancing their operations. This is because issues pertaining to poverty and development would be adequately addressed through the Rights-based Approach by making the people not only beneficiaries of development projects but more importantly the agents for the change so desired.

At the national level, the reduction of poverty and accelerating development through the Rightsbased Approach would situate the region on a higher pedestal to contribute to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals especially Goal One which is linked to poverty alleviation. The location of the region, particularly the Asutifi district puts it on a better platform for accelerated development and therefore reduction in poverty in the region would create the environment for a sustainable socio-economic and environmental development of the region.

Ghana, particularly the Brong Ahafo region has implemented several poverty reduction policies and strategies over the decades and this study would augment the existing literature on alleviating

poverty and enhancing development. Again, it would serve as a basis for further research in the area of poverty reduction through the empowerment of the local people.

## **1.6 Organization of Study**

The study was organized into five chapters with Chapter One providing a background to the study, emphasizing on the problem statement, research questions, objectives and the scope of the study. This chapter gives the underlying reason for the research to be undertaken, what the study intends to achieve and the methods used for the study.

Chapter Two is centered on the review of existing literature relevant to the research. It looks at the explanations of concept such as poverty, causes, dimensions of poverty, and the development approaches and other management systems available for alleviating poverty. The chapter provides a guide and sets the tone for the analysis of collected data.

The methodology employed for the research and the study area profile were captured in Chapter Three. This chapter expatiates the methodology used included the research design, data required and sources, sampling techniques and the tools employed in carrying out the research. In addition, this chapter captured the profile of the study area which includes the geographical location, population, poverty levels, relief and climate and the conditions of its natural and built environments among others.

The analysis of the primary data obtained from the field survey was presented in Chapter Four with the findings and recommendations as well as the conclusion of the study in the Chapter Five of the report.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **POVERTY REDUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT– ISSUES AND APPROACHES 2.1**

#### **Introduction**

Poverty is a complex problem. Tackling it effectively requires a multi-faceted and coherent approach. Numerous policy domains and sectoral programmes have to be integrated in the bid of poverty alleviation. These range from a favourable and stable macro-economic framework, to education, health, infrastructure, development of enterprises and of key sectors of the economy. Access to employment and income generation opportunities, especially for low- and middleincome households is the link between economic growth and broad-based poverty reduction (International Labour Organization, 2004).

Reducing poverty has become a major concern of development policy. To inform policy, research on poverty has focused on income or consumption based poverty measures. Yet it is now

increasingly realized that poverty is multidimensional, encompassing all important human requirements. Poverty is now widely viewed in terms of capability deprivation (Kakwani, 2006).

This chapter therefore focuses on the definitions and explanations of concepts and terms related to poverty reduction and development within the framework the activities of Action Aid. Again, issues relating to poverty and development as well as strategies and efforts that are geared towards the alleviation of poverty and sustainable development are examined in this chapter.

## **2.2 Definitions and Explanations of Relevant Concepts**

### **2.2.1 Poverty**

Poverty is a slippery term to define, and may have different meanings depending upon country of origin. It can usually be thought of as the state of lacking resources that would provide people with basic necessities, or that force people to go without certain needed things like three meals a day or shelter. Yet it ought to be understood that people can still have some of these things, like a roof over their heads, and yet not enough of other things, like food, money to seek medical treatment, or to purchase adequate clothing and be considered poor (Ellis-Christensen, 2010).

Poverty is about not having enough money to meet basic needs including food, clothing and shelter. However, poverty is more, much more than just not having enough money. According to the World Bank, poverty is hunger; poverty is lack of shelter; poverty is being sick and not being able to see a doctor; poverty is not having access to school and not knowing how to read. Poverty is not having a job, is fear for the future, living one day at a time (Department of Social Development, 2007).

Poverty has many faces, changing from place to place and across time, and has been described in many ways. Most often, poverty is a situation people want to escape. So poverty is a call to action -- for the poor and the wealthy alike -- a call to change the world so that many more may have enough to eat, adequate shelter, access to education and health, protection from violence, and a voice in what happens in their communities (Department of Social Development, 2007).

Fukuda-Parr (2006) emphasized that there are alternative perspectives of poverty that have refocused the concept of poverty as a human condition that reflects failures in many dimensions of human life – hunger, unemployment, homelessness, illness and health care, powerlessness and victimization, and social injustice; they all add up to an assault on human dignity. To Fukuda-Par,

strategies to eradicate poverty require not only economic growth and redistribution but also direct intervention in many areas such as expanding education, removing discrimination and securing social injustice; different types of deprivations in human lives are interrelated and reinforce one another.

Poverty is thus recognized as multi-dimensional with complex interactive and causal relationships between the dimensions. According to the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (2003) poverty is defined as unacceptable physiological and social deprivation. This may be caused or exacerbated by lack of macro-economic stability that erodes the resources of the poor through inflation and other variables; the inability of the national economy to optimize benefits within the global system; low capacities through lack of education, vocational skills, entrepreneurial abilities, poor health and poor quality of life; low levels of consumption through lack of access to capital, social assets, land and market opportunities; exposure to shocks due to limited use of technology to stem effects of droughts, floods, army worms, crop pests, crop diseases, and environmental degradation; habits and conventions based upon superstition and myths giving rise to anti social behavior; the lack of capacity of the poor to influence social processes, public policy choices and resource allocations; the disadvantaged position of women in society and; other factors leading to vulnerability and exclusion.

Despite the many definitions, one thing is certain; poverty is a complex societal issue. No matter how poverty is defined, it can be agreed that it is an issue that requires everyone's attention. It is important that all members of society work together to provide the opportunities for all members to reach their full potential.

### **2.3 The Concept of Development Explained**

Development is a complex issue, with many different and sometimes contentious definitions. A basic perspective equates development with economic growth. The United Nations Development Programme (2004) defined development as the option 'to lead long and healthy lives, to be knowledgeable, to have access to the resources needed for a decent standard of living and to be able to participate in the life of the community.'

Achieving human development is linked to a perspective of development which views it as freeing people from obstacles that affect their ability to develop their own lives and communities.

Development, therefore, is empowerment; it is about local people taking control of their own lives, expressing their own demands and finding their own solutions to their problems (Volunteering and Development, 2008)

According to Cherry (2009) development describes the growth of humans throughout the lifespan, from conception to death. The scientific study of human development seeks to understand and explain how and why people change throughout life. This includes all aspects of human growth, including physical, emotional, intellectual, social, perceptual, and personality development.

The United Nations Development Programme (2005) viewed development with the measurement of indicators of wealth, which reflect the quantity of resources available to a society, provide no information about the allocation of those resources—for instance, about more or less equitable distribution of income among social groups, about the shares of resources used to provide free health and education services, and about the effects of production and consumption on people's environment.

In addition, the United Nations Development Programme (2006) indicated that, development can be understood in four different clusters and the first is income-poverty. When many, especially economists, use the word poverty they are referring to income. The second cluster of meanings is material lack or want. Besides income, this includes lack of or little wealth and lack or low quality of other assets such as shelter, clothing, furniture, personal means of transport, radios or television, and so on. This also tends to include no or poor access to services.

A third cluster of meanings is expressed as capability deprivation, referring to what people can or cannot do, can or cannot be. This includes but goes beyond material lack or want to include human capabilities, for example skills and physical abilities, and also self-respect in society. A fourth cluster takes a yet more broadly multi-dimensional view of deprivation, with material lack or want as only one of several mutually reinforcing dimensions.

Thus, it is no wonder that countries with average incomes can differ substantially in development when it comes to people's quality of life: access to education and health care, employment opportunities, availability of clean air and safe drinking water, the threat of crime.



## **2.4 The Relationship between Poverty and Development**

Many social movements and NGOs have recognized the importance of integrating rights into development work and its consequential effect on poverty, not as a separate approach but as an essential part of a holistic process. As a result the use of rights language in development work has increased in recent years and, as with many concepts, there are disagreements about definitions and approaches to rights and rights-based development (ActionAid International, 2003).

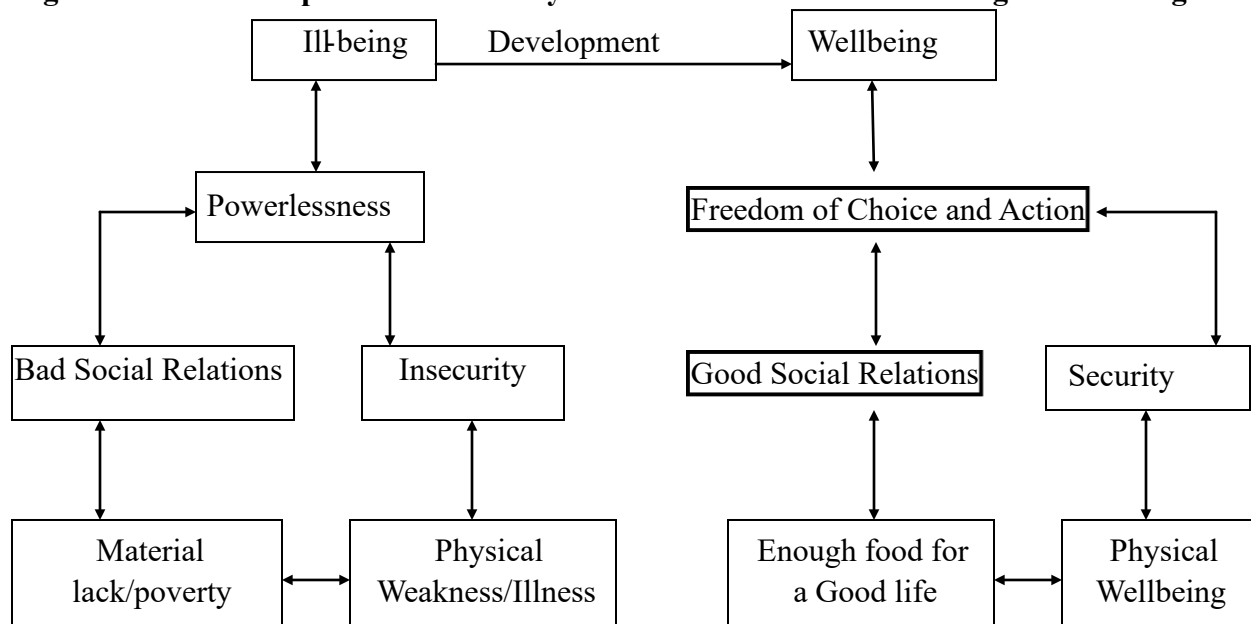
According to the ActionAid International (2008), people living in poverty are often treated as less than human, which results in a deepening cycle of poverty. Day to day, from the cradle to the grave, they are cheated and exploited and are denied the very material and philosophical basis that allows them to flourish as human beings. This is perpetrated by family members, neighbors, employers, traders, and most shamefully, the state, the very body that is ultimately entrusted with the duty to protect and promote people's human rights, dignity and well-being.

When people are treated as less than human, they often feel that they have no rights. They feel deeply humiliated and shamed, robbed of their dignity and their sense of equality with others, as well as their sense of self-worth. This further deepens their sense of powerlessness and impacts on their ability to stand up for themselves. Still worse, it strips away their core joy and value of being uniquely human: to be free to reason and imagine what they want to be, what they want to do and what they want to become. It robs them of their ability to plan according to their hopes and needs, and to be free to act on their plans by themselves or with others. And so the cycle continues (ActionAid International, 2008).

Thus on one level, the connection between poverty and human rights is easily explained. The international human rights framework states that all people have a human right to a standard of living that is adequate for their health and well-being, to food, clothing, housing, medical care and social services, civil and political freedoms. However, many people living in poverty experience a disproportionate lack of enjoyment of their human rights. Many have no access to education, health services, food, adequate shelter, security or a voice. Furthermore, active processes of discrimination and impoverishment are at work to ensure that their rights are denied. Poverty is thus explained as a denial or a violation of human rights, though not all violations of human rights cause poverty (ActionAid International, 2008). The human rightsbased approach to poverty eradication and development is thus best explained as having poor people fulfill their individual needs by claiming or securing their human rights.

Development thus can be seen as shifting from ill-being to wellbeing with equity, with interventions to enhance wellbeing possible at any of the five points. The relationship between poverty and development is established in Figure 2.1.

**Figure 2.1: Development as a Poverty Alleviation Tool – from Ill-being to Wellbeing**



Source: UNDP (2006)

## 2.5 Approaches to Development and Poverty Reduction

Many social movements and NGOs have utilized several modes or approaches in their quest to help promote development and reduce poverty. Traditional development programmes have tended to focus almost exclusively on meeting basic needs. Yet in trying to address these basic needs, people have gradually framed needs such as food, jobs, health and respect as human rights and worked collectively to ensure their incorporation into laws and policies and to change attitudes that affect their fulfillment (ActionAid International, 2007). These have resulted in the emergence of

three approaches to development and poverty reduction based on the rationale and focus of the civil society organised. They are charity based, needs based and rights based approaches to development. These have been discussed below with emphasis on the rights based approach which is the subject matter of the study.

### 2.5.1 Charity Based Approach

A charity-based approach has a long history. It can go as far back as Medieval times where, for instance in England, religious groups established hospitals for people in need (Brenton, 1985). A more modern use of the word charity means benevolent giving by those who have more to those who have less (Harris-Curtis, 2003). Under this approach poverty is defined as the absence of a public good or knowledge. If the state or another vehicle such as a non-governmental organization provides the absent good, then poverty can be alleviated and development will occur (Offenheiser and Holcombe, 2003). The important implications here lie in the power relationship between the givers and receivers, where givers voluntarily make decisions to fill the gaps of the needs of the receivers or so-called beneficiaries. The decision-making power of the beneficiaries, therefore, is limited in this approach. Charity organisations and a charity-based approach have historically served to innovatively fill the gaps of existing needs (Harris-Curtis, 2003).

Nevertheless, this approach has been heavily criticized because it gives the impression that the problems have been solved, it does not challenge the fundamental structure, which is the root cause of the situation, and further, because of the mechanism inherent in it, which takes away the decision making power and/or ownership from the beneficiaries. This approach lacks a way to hold governments accountable for their actions or inaction. It fails to address governments' inability to fulfill their citizen's rights either because of funding or knowledge. It also constructs the poor as objects of charity, predetermining their roles in civic society (Offenheiser and Holcombe, 2003).

### 2.5.2 Needs Based Approach

This approach perceives situations simply in terms of developmental requirements or gaps have to be addressed. Under this the focus of development is solving societal problems. A needs-based approach aims to change people's situation of deprivation or lack of access to services, viewing people as passive recipients or beneficiaries. Under the needs-based approach, agencies

external to the struggling poor survey needs, analyze problems, and identify solutions to meet those needs. (Mathie and Cunningham 2003) External financial resources and programs are administered by these agencies to meet the needs of the poor. Billions of dollars have been poured into this approach, however despite some achievements there has not been success with this model (Harris-Curtis, 2003).

Critics have contended that the needs-based approach has numerous detrimental effects. This approach may satisfy the needs of that group of people for now but there are no guarantees that improvements in access will be sustained. A major concern with the needs-based approach is a fostering of leadership that denigrates the marginalized and vulnerable. (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1996) In order to attract the necessary resources for the poor, leaders are forced to exaggerate the severity of the problems. Under this approach citizens or beneficiaries no longer view themselves as capable producers, but rather consumers of services. The negative results associated with the needs-based approach have led to the recent development of other approaches (Mathie and Cunningham, 2003).

### 2.5.3 Rights-Based Approach (RBA)

A human rights-based approach entails consciously and systematically paying attention to human rights in all aspects of programme development (Annan, 1998). A rights-based approach is a transformational development process in which people are the drivers and subjects of their own development. A rights-based approach is about improving wider systems of governance. It implies a change in the power dynamics between those without access and the duty bearers. It aims to bring about sustainable and long term structural change in policies, procedures and laws, as well as changes in attitudes and behaviours. Rights-based approach is thus a conceptual framework for the process of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights (OHCHR and UNDP, 2005).

A rights-based approach to development builds upon elements of traditional ‘good programming practice’, such as: emphasizing the process as well as the outcome of development; including the most marginalized in equitable service delivery; extending and deepening participation; ensuring local ownership of development processes; and strengthening the accountability of all actors (Theis, 2004). It seeks to analyse inequalities which lie at the heart of development problems and

redress discriminatory practices and unjust distributions of power that impede development progress. Under a human rights-based approach, the plans, policies and processes of development are anchored in a system of rights and corresponding obligations established by international law. This helps to promote the sustainability of development work, empowering people themselves especially the most marginalized to participate in policy formulation and hold accountable those who have a duty to act (OHCHR and UNDP, 2005).

While there's no universal recipe for a human rights-based approach, United Nations agencies have nonetheless agreed a number of essential attributes. These are: formulated development policies and programmes the main should the main objective of fulfilling human rights, a human rights-based approach identifies rights-holders and their entitlements and corresponding dutybearers and their obligations, and works towards strengthening the capacities of rights-holders to make their claims and of duty-bearers to meet their obligations; principles and standards derived from international human rights treaties should guide all development cooperation and programming in all sectors and in all phases of the development programming process (OHCHR and UNDP, 2005).

A rights-based approach is rapidly replacing a charity-based and needs approach for overcome its shortcomings and to change the paradigm, at least in theory. Like the other development approaches, RBA implies an effort to improve the situation of people, focusing on their needs, problems and potentials. In this sense, RBA relates to the same issues as most development initiatives such as food, water, shelter, healthcare, education, security, freedom to pursue life goals etc. Central to the premise of RBA is that human beings have inalienable rights and a deprivation of needs can often be addressed as a denial of rights. When a RBA is used as a means, it caters to the principles of empowerment, participation, non-discrimination and accountability with the priority on vulnerable people (Lundström-Sarelin and MustaniemiLaakso, 2007). That is, the process becomes participatory and transparent with equality in decision-making and a sharing of the outcomes of the process among involved stakeholders.

The shift in development thinking introduced by RBA as well as the distinction between it and the other two approaches are summarized in Table 2.1 below:

**Table 2.1: Differences between the Three Approaches to Development**

<b>CHARITY APPROACH</b>	<b>NEEDS APPROACH</b>	<b>RIGHTS BASED APPROACH</b>
Focus on input not outcome	Focus on input and outcome	Focus on process and outcome
Emphasizes on filling gaps	Emphasizes meeting needs	Emphasizes realizing rights
Recognizes moral responsibility of rich towards poor	Recognizes needs as valid claims	Recognizes individual and group rights as claims toward legal and moral duty-bearers
Individuals are seen as victims or beneficiaries	Individuals are objects of development interventions	Individuals and groups are rightsholders as well as duty-bearers in different contexts
Individuals deserve assistance	Individuals deserve assistance	Individuals are entitled to assistance
Focuses on manifestation of problems	Focuses on immediate causes of problems	Focuses on structural causes and their manifestations

Source: Lundström-Sarelin and Mustaniemi-Laakso, (2007) adapted by Author

The preference for RBA to the other approaches is premised on the following:

- It involves all human beings in the mainstream discourse, including the most vulnerable groups of people such as persons with disabilities.
- The approach requires rights-based actions instead of charity, which has predominated.
- The approach stipulates state obligation to secure the human rights of the people concerned.
- It demands transnational obligations, which is the biggest difference from the other approaches.
- Offers a framework to address the problems of the poorest and the most vulnerable human beings.
- Understands poverty not as a personal circumstance but places it within a context of the community, the government and the international society.

- Offers better focus on the root causes of poverty by addressing the accountability of the duty bearers.
- Offers a dynamic view of poverty by including focus on power balances and politics through the inclusion of full range of inalienable and indivisible rights.
- Offers legitimacy through a common and international recognize framework for development.
- Recognizes and assists state in fulfilling their international obligations towards their citizens without discrimination.
- Enhances empowerment by building accountability relations between state structures, social groups and individual.
- Has considerable potential to achieve positive changes in people's lives due its focus on injustices, inequality, discrimination, exploitation and denial.

These significances have made it more attractive to development organisations in recent times over the others. The subsequent sections discuss rights based approach to development in-depth since it is the central theme of this.

## **2.6 The Application of Rights-Based Approach in Development and Poverty Reduction**

The Right-Based Approach to poverty reduction starts with the connection between poverty and human rights, from the perspective of people living in poverty. Rights based approach to poverty reduction see poverty as not merely about a lack of adequate resources and can therefore seldom be addressed adequately by material solutions alone. Even when resources are available, access to them is often denied to the poor because of who they are, where they live, or sometimes simply because of neglect and lack of concern. Such discrimination may be the result of social norms and values causing stigmatization and marginalization in communities or within households or it may be the result of discrimination in policies or the product of legal inequalities, or inequalities in status and entitlements. In this perspective, poverty is something that is done to people (OHCR, 2004).

For the poor, gaining access to resources and services to meet basic human needs and human rights can be invoked in a number of possible poverty reduction strategies. The main features of a rights-based approach to poverty reduction strategies include the following:

- Empowerment of the poor and ensuring effective community participation in planning, decision-making and implementation.
- Explicit recognition of the national and international human rights normative framework and ensuring that both the process and the concrete poverty reduction targets are consistent with international human rights standards.
- Accessible mechanisms of accountability in accordance with rights and obligations
- Attention to non-discrimination and equality.
- The informed and active participation of the public, particularly poor and vulnerable groups, by ensuring a basic standard of civil and political rights thus guaranteeing free and meaningful participation
- The well-being of especially vulnerable groups and supporting the collection of disaggregated data to identify those most in need
- The identification of immediate, intermediate, and long-term baselines, priorities, and targets along with effective monitoring methods, i.e. indicators and benchmarks
- To sustain ownership amongst stakeholders during structural economic change
- To transform needs for essential resources and services into rights that can be asserted and claimed.
- To raise awareness of such rights through human rights education directed both at rightsholders as well as at duty-bearers.
- To provide support for those in need to claim their rights through programmes of legal services and other access to justice programmes. ( UNDP, 2004)

In sum these features make reduction of poverty a right as was stated by Nelson Mandela, cited in UNDP, 2004) that —overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity; it is an act of justice; it is protection of fundamental human rights, the right to dignity and decent life...||

#### 2.6.1 Properties of Rights-Based Approach in Poverty Reduction

The human rights discourse has consolidated its position as the prevailing moral and social language of this so-called ‘global’ era. Today increasingly more people couch their demands in



‘rights’ terms: politicians and diplomats, academics and journalists, minorities and majorities, ‘humanitarians’ and ‘developmentalists’. Yet the constant stream of reported human rights abuses from around the world does not recede (Morago-Nicolás, 2000).

Thus, there is the need to strive to reach a better understanding of the nature and practical implications of the rights-based approach, and also become more aware of the risk of falling into utopian discourses, lacking in coherence and realism. A rights-based approach examines the world through a certain lens: a lens that focuses on human beings as they enjoy, or are deprived of, their basic rights and freedoms. In this sense, it draws attention to the systematic denial and violation of human rights, which often lie beneath poverty, conflict and natural disasters (Morago-Nicolás, 2000).

It seems, however, that the resulting field of vision still appears to be unclear and blurred. Not surprisingly, many practitioners have already expressed the need —to get a clearer picture of rights-based theory and practice. In other words, the need for a better analysis on rights issues. Perhaps, in order to improve vision, there is the need for a pair of rights-based glasses. Building on current analytical frameworks (for instance, empowerment approach and vulnerability analysis), these spectacles would have the following properties according to Morago-Nicolás, (2000).

- i. Shifting the focus and widening the field of vision

By shifting the focus of the analysis towards the structural causes of poverty and humanitarian crises, the rights-based glasses focus attention to the societal arrangements of a particular human community. Hence the emphasis is placed on the position of individuals and groups within society, rather than exclusively on their situation. Since virtually each human society organizes itself around the basic notions of rights and obligations, the rights-based glasses widen the field of vision reconciling analyses of power, governance and rights.

- ii. Dissolving differences and revealing linkages

A rights-based analysis advances the integration of emergencies and development practice. At the level of principles, the rights-based glasses act dissolving the traditional differences between humanitarianism and development. As Slim (2000) argues both are concerned with saving life, both are short and long-term, and both are political in the proper sense of being concerned with the

use and abuse of power in human relations. Essentially, humanitarianism and development share a fundamental belief in human dignity and in the essential equality of human beings. In practical terms, a focus on rights reveals further linkages between poverty and development work, encouraging innovative programming and policy initiatives. Closely interconnected, poverty and vulnerability to emergencies often share a common root: the widespread denial of specific rights and freedoms.

### iii. Combating short-sightedness

The rights-based glasses help to combat short-sightedness. They strengthen the ability to look at both the past and the future by unveiling the long-term nature, causes and implications of poverty, conflict and suffering. As a result, short-term relief interventions are seen within the context of longer-term processes. If vulnerability reduction is about transforming power relations as well as extending rights and freedoms, both short-term emergency work and long-term development are complementary, mutually reinforcing.

### iv. Scanning and broadening the view of rights

When analyzing human rights, there is a tendency to concentrate on the lists of rights and freedoms contained in the different international and regional legal instruments. Without denying the relevance of such instruments, the rights-based glasses compel the scanning of those rights as formulated and internalized by the different national and local legal systems. Similarly, rights are often narrowly understood just as ‘claims’ held by individuals against the state. There is, however, a wider range of rights, freedoms, powers and immunities to be taken into consideration.

### v. Assessing and resolving drawbacks in the rights-based approach

A rights-based analysis seeks to address the contentious question of the relationship between humanitarianism and politics. It is said that addressing issues of structural denial of rights cannot be politically neutral. Since development and human rights practice converge, a number of critical dilemmas arise. According to Leader and Macrae (2000), the increasing merger of objectives of aid and politics poses a risk of violation of key humanitarian principles, particularly independence and neutrality. As they suggest, the use of aid as a tool of conflict management may mean that aid is delivered or withheld not on the basis of need, but according to an analysis of its likely impact on the conflict dynamic.

Yet a rights-based approach demands an active engagement in overcoming poverty on advocacy and influencing activities, whose political nature is undeniable. The nature and style of such engagement will be largely dictated by the context in which one operates.

#### 2.6.2 Rationales or Values of Rights-Based Approach in Poverty Reduction

Applying a rights-based approach is always a work in progress. There is no set formula and no single approach that can be applied across all settings. The process must be contextual, participatory and based on national ownership. Hence, there is value in the very process of adopting a rights-based approach. The three main rationales for rights-based approach in poverty reduction are (a) intrinsic (acknowledging that a rights-based approach is the right thing to do, morally and legally); (b) instrumental (recognizing that a rights-based approach leads to better and more sustainable human development outcomes); and (c) institutional (neutrality and respect for self reliance to deal with sensitive issues in a holistic manner) (Gruskin, et al 2007 and UN, 2007). In practice, the reason for pursuing a human rights-based approach is usually a blend of these three.

A rights-based approach seeks to build upon and learn from-rather than discard the lessons of good development practice and strengthen arguments for their more consistent implementation. Empirical evidence and practice show the vital importance to development of many human rights outcomes, such as improved girls' education, enhanced security of tenure and ensuring women's equal access to land, and the importance of civil and political rights for good governance (Bhalla et al, 2003 and Kaufmann et al 2000). The practical value of a rights-based approach to development lies in the following:

- i. Whose rights?- A human rights-based approach focuses on the realization of the rights of the excluded and marginalized populations, and those whose rights are at risk of being violated, building on the premise that a country cannot achieve sustained progress without recognizing human rights principles (especially universality) as core principles of governance. Universality means that all people have human rights, even if resource constraints imply prioritization. It does not mean that all problems of all people must be tackled at once (Bhalla et al, 2003 and Kaufmann et al 2000).
- ii. Holistic view- A programme guided by a human rights-based approach takes a holistic view of its environment, considering the family, the community, civil society, local and national authorities. It considers the social, political and legal framework that determines the

relationship between those institutions, and the resulting claims, duties and accountabilities. A human rights-based approach lifts sectoral —blinkers‖ and facilitates an integrated response to multifaceted development problems (Kaufmann et al, 2000). iii. International instruments-: Specific results, standards of service delivery and conduct are derived from universal human rights instruments, conventions and other inter-nationally agreed goals, targets, norms or standards. A human rights-based approach assists countries in translating such goals and standards into time-bound and achievable national results (Dollar and Pritchett, 1998).

- iv. Participatory process-: Accountabilities for achieving these results or standards are determined through participatory processes (policy development, national planning), and reflect the consensus between those whose rights are violated and those with a duty to act. A human rights-based approach seeks both to assist in the participatory formulation of the needed policy and legislative framework and to ensure that participatory and democratic processes are institutionalized locally and nationally (including through capacity-building among families, communities and civil society to participate constructively in relevant forums) (Isham, et al, 1997).
- v. Transparency and accountability-: A human rights-based approach helps to formulate policy, legislation, regulations and budgets that clearly determine the particular human right(s) to be addressed-what must be done and to what standard, who is accountable-and ensures the availability of needed capacities (or resources to build the lacking capacities). The approach helps to make the policy formulation process more transparent, and empowers people and communities to hold those who have a duty to act accountable, ensuring effective remedies where rights are violated (Isham, et al, 1997).
- vi. Monitoring-: A human rights-based approach to development supports the monitoring of State commitments with the help of recommendations of human rights treaty bodies, and through public and independent assessments of State performance (Kaufmann et al, 2000 and Dollar and Pritchett, 1998).
- vii. Sustained results-: A human rights-based approach leads to better sustained results of development efforts and greater returns on investments by: building the capacity of prime actors to engage in dialogue; meeting their own responsibilities and hold the State

accountable; strengthening social cohesion through seeking consensus with participatory processes, and focusing assistance on the excluded and most marginalized; codifying social and political consensus on accountabilities for results into laws, policies and programmes aligned with international conventions; anchoring human rights entitlements within a framework of laws and institutions; institutionalizing democratic processes; and strengthening the capacities of individuals and institutions to carry out their obligations as expressed in local, national and international laws, policies and programmes (Bhalla et al, 2003 and Kaufmann et al 2000).

### 2.6.3 Processes Involved in the Application of RBA to Development and Poverty Alleviation

Applying the rights-based approach to poverty reduction require the carrying out of number of activities which are arraigned in a cyclical manner. The rights-based approach in development programming cycle is made up of four stages namely situation assessment and analysis, planning and design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation (UNFPA, 2009). The various stages as well as their sub-stages are elaborated below:

#### i. Situational Analysis

Support to, or facilitation of a poverty reduction intervention requires an assessment and analysis of the context in which that effort will operate. Such a situational analysis would study both the enabling and institutional environment involved. Through a human rights lens, a situational analysis is conducted in a participatory and empowering manner, using disaggregated data to reveal disparities and human rights-sensitive indicators. In adopting a human rights approach, the analysis is required to give priority to those who are deprived in society (usually the poor) and to make factors that empower poor families an explicit objective of its focus (UNDP, 2005).

A —causality tree analysis is applied in the situational analysis to identify root causes and their inter-linkages, the differentiated impact of selected development challenges, as well as the roles and responsibilities of different national and international partners. The tree analysis is divided in three parts: the causality analysis, obligation analysis, and capacity analysis. Causality analysis identifies human rights situations and impacts and the causes thereof. The problem identified is stated in human rights terms with human rights standards providing a road map to the problem. Obligation analysis identifies the stakeholders (disaggregated by gender; age; race; location; and

special needs) and the behavior of both claim-holders to claim and exercise rights (empowerment analysis) and of duty-bearers to fulfill their obligations. The obligation analysis is a means to understand the complex web of relationships between claim-holders (subjects) and duty-bearers (objects). The obligation analysis establishes the responsibility of the duty-bearer. Capacity analysis helps to review the capacity of duty-bearers to discharge their duties. It analyses why duty-bearers do not perform their duties properly, and why claim-holders are not claiming their rights. Capacity analysis looks at issues such as responsibility/motivation/leadership; authority; resources; capability to communicate; and the capability for rational decision-making and learning (UNFPA, 2009 and UNDP, 2005).

## ii. Planning and Design of the Development Programme

After the situation assessment and analysis stage attention is turned to the planning and design stage. Through intensive collaboration the poverty reduction programmes are designed based upon the national priorities that were determined after the situation assessment and analysis. The results at different levels form a results chain comprising of input, output, outcome and impact which describes the necessary sequence for achieving the desired objectives of reducing poverty.

Sufficient attention is given to how a programme will be monitored and evaluated at the planning and design stage. Appropriate indicators are thus decided upon and systems designed to allow for appropriate data collection at this stage. In line with the object of rights-based approach, ensuring a human rights perspective at the programme planning and design stage means paying attention to the outcomes themselves, their impact and how these are achieved (UNFPA, 2009 and UNDP, 2005).

## iii. Implementation

Applying a rights-based approach in the poverty alleviation programme implementation stage means, once again, ensuring that the human rights principles and standards are consistently being respected throughout the programming cycle. Universality and inalienability, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness, equality and non-discrimination, participation and inclusion, and accountability and rule of law are essential characteristics of a high quality process. Ensuring a rights-based approach at the implementation stage means carefully following the human rights-based plans and processes outlined in the design stage. This could include, for example, enabling

the participation of all relevant stakeholders at project meetings even if it may be difficult to ensure that some ‘hard-to-reach’ groups can attend (UNFPA, 2009 and UNDP, 2005).

#### iv. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) consists of tracking and assessing the actual results of the programme as compared to the ones that were planned or expected. Both monitoring and evaluation are meant to guide decision-making, including decisions to improve, reorient or discontinue the evaluated intervention or policy. Monitoring and evaluation of activities are essential for tracking whether activities are being carried out as planned and whether they are having the anticipated impact. A coherent and coordinated monitoring and evaluation system in rights-based approach to poverty reduction strategies ensure that: relevant, timely and accurate data are made available to programme leaders and managers at each level of the programme; selected quality data are reported to national programme leaders; and the national programme is able to meet donor and international reporting requirements. A rights-based approach calls for monitoring the implementation process, outputs, outcomes and impact. Monitoring and evaluation indicators are chosen to capture the extent to which human rights have been incorporated into all stages of the programme (from the situation assessment and analysis through to the monitoring and evaluation), and demonstrate how incorporating rights has contributed to overall programme effectiveness. A rights-based approach calls for ensuring that both rights-holders and duty-bearers are involved in monitoring and evaluation, as well as individuals or groups such as NGOs who are external to the project and can give an objective perspective (UNFPA, 2009 and UNDP, 2005).

#### 2.6.4 Components of Rights-Based Approach Poverty Reduction Strategies

Rights-based development is value-based development which works for the ethical inclusion of all people, without discrimination, in building a fair, just and non-discriminatory society. In general, organisations working towards rights-based development share a common focus in working to address the root causes of poverty. While different agencies have different interpretations of exactly what a rights-based approach means in practice, most would agree with the main elements outlined in the United Nations Common Understanding which include the three elements of DFID’s own rights-based approach (UK Interagency Group on Human Rights Based Approaches, 2007). The three components rights-based approach to poverty reduction is based on three underlying principles of:

- Participation: enabling people to realise their rights to participate in, and access information relating to, the decision-making processes which affect their lives.
- Inclusion: building socially inclusive societies, based on the values of equality and nondiscrimination, through development which promotes all human rights for all people.
- Fulfilling obligation: strengthening institutions and policies which ensure that obligations to protect and promote the realisation of all human rights are fulfilled by states and other duty bearers.

#### 2.6.5 Outcomes and Impacts of Rights-Based Approach in Poverty Reduction

Rights-based approach leads to immediate impacts which benefit stakeholders. Rights-based approach leads to sustained positive change. Rights-based approach tackles the underlying causes of poverty and disadvantage, and work in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders to address these causes. They link citizens and state in new ways and create systems and mechanisms that ensure that all actors can be part of an accountable development processes (UK Interagency Group on Human Rights Based Approaches, 2007). Successful work in the three components discussed above areas of rights-based approach in development and poverty reduction leads to outcome in terms of the following.

##### i. Asset accumulation

Rights-based approach brings significant improvements in people's lives in terms of the capacity of target groups to accumulate assets (economic, environmental, physical etc.) A rights-based approach to development leads to increased and improved access to: education and retention in primary school, especially for girls and marginalised children; healthcare, including access to maternal and neo-natal services; money through accumulative savings and livelihood opportunities; water and sanitation; productive resources, e.g. land and increased protection against HIV/AIDS and communicable diseases and in increasing gender equity. These benefits which target groups receive are sustainable over time under the rights-based approach poverty reduction strategies (UK Interagency Group on Human Rights Based Approaches, 2007).



ii. Reduction of vulnerability

Rights-based approach demonstrates significant impacts in terms of reduction of vulnerability for their constituent groups. In right-based approach to poverty reduction vulnerability is seen as a structural issue, both deriving from, and resulting in, inequitable power relations in society. Rights-based approach give poor and marginalised people support in the development of more diverse social networks of partnerships and alliances. These networks are keys to reducing poverty and strengthening human security (Bhalla et al, 2003 and UNDP, 2005).

iii. Improved access to justice

The rights-based approach contributes to improving access to justice (and protection from injustice) for their beneficiaries. The way that RBAs challenge traditional, social and cultural norms means that poor and marginalised people have greater access to justice within the power structures of their own communities, and in the wider mainstream society (UNFPA, 2009 and UNDP, 2005).

iv. Livelihood security and diversification

A rights-based approach makes a stronger contribution to ensuring livelihood diversification. Also, because there is a trend in the rights-based approach towards social disaggregation, these have looked at livelihood issues beyond the household level and given special attention to individual needs within the household (UK Interagency Group on Human Rights Based Approaches, 2007).

v. Increased protection against gender-based and other social discrimination

The rights-based approach challenges the social norms and practices underpinning discrimination on the grounds of gender, social background, ethnicity and age, although more could be done. In addition to increasing indigenous and older peoples' participation in decision making, projects need to tackle the gender biases that subordinate women in such communities and restrict their meaningful representation and participation.

vi. Inclusion

Rights-based approach has considerable impact in the area of improving social inclusion of poor and marginalized people. Rights-based approach addresses inclusion issues by opening up spaces where people who are normally excluded can take an active part in decision making and action to improve their wellbeing. This is not only internally, within marginalized groups, but in wider fora which link voice and response. In the best instances, systems to ensure inclusion of poorer and more marginalized people are systematized and embedded. The more developed rights-based approach employs a systematic approach to understanding social differentiation which allowed them to understand how power works in society and to challenge social norms perpetuating social exclusion (UK Interagency Group on Human Rights Based Approaches, 2007).

vii. Shifting power relations

Rights-based approach has some favourable impact on shifting power relations. Non-RBAs did not engage with power issues. In working for the rights of the poor and marginalized. A rightsbased approach to poverty reduction inevitably engages with power issues. A rights-based approach works to find ways to ensure that the shifts in power towards people who have traditionally been powerless can be made safely, and for the benefit of all. People are not easily willing to give up power. But, when they can see that power sharing means that they are more able to fulfill their own obligations and that, for example, citizens will share in the responsibility in running services, they may be willing to change (UNFPA, 2009 and UNDP, 2005).

viii. Accountability and obligation

A rights-based approach to poverty alleviation gives far more attention to accountability and obligation fulfillment. Rights-based approach actively engages with issues of power and has success in making poor and marginalized people's participation meaningful. It brings about changes so that even those who have traditionally been voiceless can challenge authority and expect a degree of accountability (UK Interagency Group on Human Rights Based Approaches, 2007). ix. Conflict prevention

Rights-based approach places far more emphasis on opening up direct channels of communication between citizens and state and on voice. By opening up space for expressing demands and multi-way communication among stakeholders, rights-based approach creates possibilities in conflict prevention. Grievances simmering beneath the surface are brought into open debate and negotiation (UNFPA, 2009 and UNDP, 2005).

## 2.6.6 Limitations or Challenges of a Rights-Based Approach in Poverty Reduction

The rights-based development approach has limitation in certain aspects as far as its application in poverty reduction strategies is concerned. The challenges or limitation are discussed in detail below.

- i. Lack of solid evidence to prove its effectiveness-: Unfortunately, given the fact that a rights-based approach is still a relatively new way of working, confusion and lack of clarity still surround the meaning of a ‘rights-based approach’. This has made it difficult to gather solid evidence to fully demonstrate its effectiveness. Given the varied approaches towards implementation of a rights-based approach insufficient documentation has been gathered at this time to show evidence of what successfully integrating human rights into programming actually means. This has led to the presentation of information in ways that have not been easily transferable or comparable, and thus difficult to assess. In general, there has been limited operational guidance as to how human rights are best integrated into programmes. This lack of guidance has made it difficult to compare programmes against each other, and gather the evidence need in order to show the effectiveness of a rights-based approach (Gruskin, et al 2007 and UN, 2007).
- ii. Difficulty in measuring-: For reasons similar to those listed above, it has been difficult to measure the success of rights-based approach. Indicators that can accurately measure the process of a rights-based approach are still being developed-and as we mentioned above, process is a core aspect of a rights-based approach. Some human rights principles, such as ‘indivisibility’ or ‘interdependence’ are harder to measure, even in a qualitative manner. It has been difficult to show how the application of the principle of interdependence (UN, 2007).
- iii. Time-intensive-: A rights-based approach often requires devoting time to capacitybuilding activities for both rights-holders and duty-bearers-with capacity-building often encompassing the complex process of introducing people to the concept of human rights and helping them think about human rights in a more pragmatic manner; building people’s skills to enable them to apply human rights to their immediate goals; and finally helping them to develop these skills. Developing the ability to use human rights skills effectively

in the community constitutes a continuous learning experience, and learners often benefit from ongoing support from human rights trainers and mentors as they figure out how to best use a human rights framework to accomplish their goals (UN, 2007).

- iv. Challenges of working with many participants-: A rights-based approach's emphasis on participation at all development programming stages can lead to difficulties in cases where programme participants have different views or different ideas regarding how things can be done. Participation can also be expensive to implement, especially if training is needed for certain groups to ensure that their participation is meaningful (Gruskin, et al 2007).

## **2.7 Conceptual Framework for RBA to Development and Poverty Reduction**

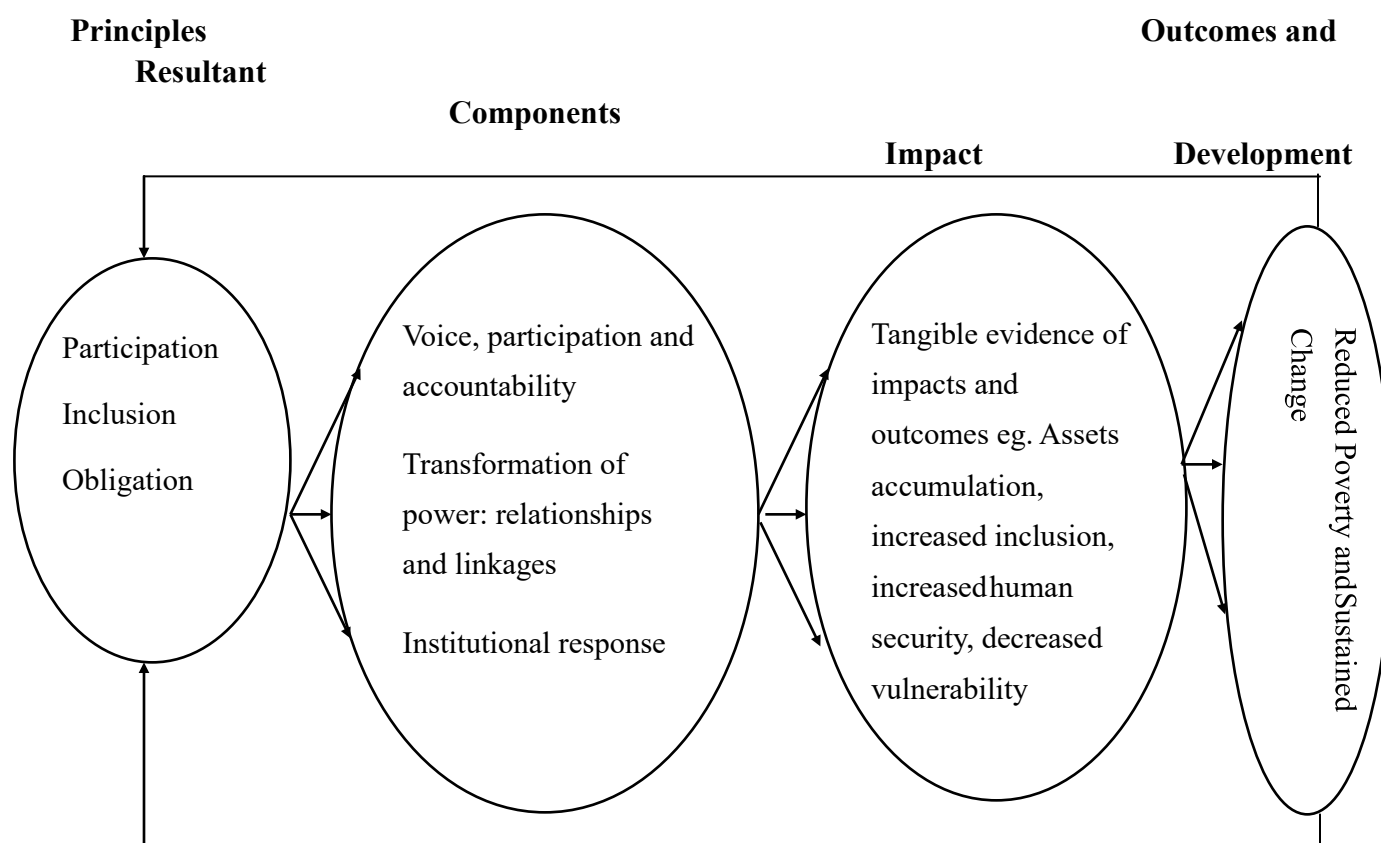
The interconnected and interrelated characteristics of poverty have been explored. There cannot be development in poverty prone regions. Again, development can only occur in an environment where there is alleviation or eradication. It was also revealed from the literature several development approaches that are directed towards poverty alleviation. However, the composition and structure of the Action Aid Right based approach presents a more comprehensive and better strategy of combating poverty and enhancing development.

The practice of human rights approach to poverty eradication work has evolved over the past years, and will continue to do so through practical experience of working in different countries and situations. It can be said that embracing a human rights approach to eradicating poverty requires a corresponding strengthening of capacity in a number of areas. There is the need to develop the current discourse on human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights where poverty is entrenched. Again, there is the need to develop human rights instruments and institutions at local, national and international level, enhance the ability to research and report on evidence and exposure of human rights violations as well as building capacity to work with and support social mobilization and social movements

In integrating human rights, various actors have uncovered numerous questions about the conceptual and practical application of explicit rights-based approaches (RBAs). While many have accepted the added value of RBAs, others remain to be convinced. Donors have questioned the value of RBAs, especially as there has been little work done to evaluate their true value. This study therefore addresses the difficult balance between theory and practice concerning the rightsbased

approach in the context of poverty alleviation. It does so by presenting a case study based on Action Aid's rights-based approach in reducing poverty and improving the standard of living of people. To make a meaningful comparison between the rights-based approach in theory and practice the diagrammatic assessment framework below, which encompasses and describes the approach in theory shall be used as the benchmark. The framework is a generic and comprehensive tool which incorporates the principles, components, outcomes and impacts of the rights-based approach in poverty alleviation.

**Fig. 2.2.0: Conceptual Framework for RBA to Development and Poverty Reduction**



**Source: Author's Construct, 2014, Adapted from UK Interagency Group on Human Rights Based Approaches, (2007).**

Rights based approach builds on the knowledge and the technical foundations of existing development practice. By merging development with the human rights framework and its focus on justice, RBA, however, becomes much more sensitive to issues of power balances, discrimination, insecurity, and vulnerability. Rights based approach recognizes that economic growth does not necessarily lead to social development or better conditions for the poor. RBA emphasizes the

interrelationship between the individual at the micro level and the state and the international community at the macro level. It focuses on participation and empowerment of the poor and their right to hold governments and other responsible actors accountable and in this way it legitimizes and supports the struggle of poor people to secure the full spectrum of their rights.

Again, right-based approaches seek to hold governments and other duty-bearers accountable and encourage rights holder to claim their rights. Demanding accountability does not simply imply confrontation with the state. RBA also aims to enable duty-bearers to meet their obligations. States may violate rights because of lack of awareness, knowledge or capacity. Thus, working with power balances, marginalization and the obligation of duty-bearers means that development efforts must integrate practices and methods from the human rights field. The following pages aim to inspire you to make this integration in practice. As explained earlier, many of the methods and perspectives presented existed as part of development methodology before RBA came to the fore. However, rights based approach offers a coherent framework as well as an element of legitimacy by being based on internationally agreed laws and standards.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The preceding chapters were designed to assess the issues, approaches and challenges of the ActionAid Rights-based Approach in reducing poverty in the Asutifi District in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. These chapters emphasized on the general introduction of the study, problem statement, research questions and objectives in addition to the literature review of the phenomenon under investigation.

This chapter focused on the research methodology employed for the study as well as the study area profile. It also explores the methods and techniques employed in undertaking the research by explaining the study design used, the data requirements and sources, sampling methods and other study variables.

### **3.2 Research Design**

The identification and choice of the type of research design to be used is dependent on the disposition and nature of the research problem. According to Morgan and Smircich (1980) the genuine suitability of a research method, derives from the nature of the social phenomena to be explored. The research method employed for the study was the case study method. A case study research design according to Bromley (1990) is a systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aim to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest.

According to Nachmias, (1992) a case study entails an observation of a single group or phenomenon at a single point in time, usually subsequent to some phenomenon that allegedly produced change. Haggett (1977) states that a case study is an empirical enquiry that allows for an investigation of the dynamics of a particular system. It is usually appropriate for investigating contemporary phenomenon within its real life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1993). Based on the above understanding the Asutifi District was chosen as the case study area and subjected to investigation to ascertain the activities of the ActionAid Rights-based Approach in alleviating poverty and ensuring sustainable development. The case study was deemed appropriate research design for study because the phenomenon under investigation was a current issue, having a major impact on the development of the country and the research focused on a real life situation.

This will create a platform and an avenue for better understanding and assessment of the situation and facilitates the consideration of the responses of the communities and institutions to questions and issues emanated in the cause of the research. This method will enable the researcher to understand the complex real-life activities in which multiple sources of evidence were used (Kumekpor, 2002).

### **3.3 Data Requirements and Sources**

The data required for the research were the coverage of the activities of the ActionAid International in the Asutifi North District. In addition, data on the effects of the operations of the ActionAid International especially the Rights-based Approach in reducing poverty in the selected communities in the district, the challenges impeding the smooth operation of the Rightsbased Approach in improving the quality of lives of the people were required. Again, data was required on the various stakeholders and their roles in ensuring poverty reduction through the Rights-based Approach in the district as well as the strategies of improving the adoption and functioning of the Rights-based Approach in improving quality of lives of the people in the district.

In carrying out the study, both secondary and primary data sources were employed to ensure deeper theoretical and empirical exploration of the issue under investigation. The secondary data was gathered through the review of relevant literature and other related materials. The secondary data was thus obtained from journals, publications, internet among other sources. The literature review provided a theoretical and conceptual understanding and appraisal of fundamental concepts, forms of poverty reduction strategies and connected issues and the impacts of the activities of the ActionAid International especially the Rights-based Approach on the quality of lives of the people in the Asutifi district.

The primary data on the extent of coverage of the operations of the ActionAid International in Asutifi District and the effects of the adoption of Rights-based Approach on reducing poverty as well as the challenges impeding the activities of the ActionAid International in reducing poverty in the district was gathered from the district offices of the ActionAid Ghana, Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice and the Asutifi District Assembly in addition the various household contacted. Table 3.1 depicts the data type and the sources for the research.



**Table 3.1: Data Type and Sources**

Data Required	Source of Data	Mode of Collection
Coverage of the activities of ActionAid Right-based Approach.	ActionAid International and Asutifi District Assembly.	Structured Institutional Questionnaire and Interview Guide
Components of the ActionAid Rights-based Approach	ActionAid International, CHRAJ	Structured Institutional Questionnaire and Interview Guide
Effects of Rights-based Approach in Reducing Poverty	ActionAid International, Asutifi District Assembly, CHRAJ Households,	Structured Institutional Questionnaire, Interview Guide and Household Questionnaire
Stakeholders and their roles in ensuring effective operation of the ActionAid International Rights-based Approach	ActionAid International, Asutifi District Assembly, CHRAJ, Households,	Structured Institutional Questionnaire, Interview Guide, and Household Questionnaires
Challenges confronting the operations of the Rights-based Approach to poverty reduction	ActionAid International, Asutifi District Assembly, CHRAJ, Households,	Structured Institutional Questionnaire, Interview Guide and household questionnaires
Strategies of enhancing effective operations of the ActionAid Rights-based Approach	ActionAid International, Asutifi District Assembly, CHRAJ and Households,	Structured Institutional Questionnaire, Interview Guide and household questionnaires

Source: Author's Construct, 2014

### 3.4 Data Collection Tools

The data collection instruments that were used for the study included the use of structured institutional questionnaires, interview guide, household questionnaires and observation. These

instruments were essential in the gathering of the data as they facilitated and enhanced the data collection procedure and were employed as and when they necessary

The use of the structured institutional questionnaires was basically for the gathering of institutional data. Different set of questions pertaining to the contributions of the ActionAid Rights-based Approach in alleviating poverty and facilitating sustainable development posed to be responded to by the officers in the selected institutions which were the Asutifi District Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice. Data collection from these institutions accorded the researcher to review some secondary data that were made available.

The Interview guide was used in the collection of data from the office of the ActionAid Ghana situated in the Asutifi District. In the administration of the interview guides, both close and open ended questions were employed. Stemming from the above, the purposive sampling technique was used with the ActionAid Ghana being selected and interviewed with regard to its operations in the area of reducing poverty through the Rights-based Approach. It must however be noted that the organization was not having enough information about all its activities in the district particularly with respect to the acceptability of the Rights-based Approach by the various communities in the district. This was surmounted as the household questionnaires and institutional questionnaires help validated the responses given.

In addition, observation was employed as a technique of collecting physical information. This is because it offered the researcher the platform to appreciate the state of activities of the ActionAid Rights-based Approach in poverty alleviation in the Asutifi District. Furthermore, observation was used to identify some of the poverty reduction projects that had emanated from the implementation of the Right-based Approach.

### **3.5 Study Population and Area Selection**

According to Frankel and Wallen (2000) a population refers to the group to which the results of the research are intended to apply. They further stated that a population is usually the individuals who posses certain characteristics or a set of features a study seeks to examine and analyze.

Kumekpor (2002) affirmed this by stating that a population refers to the total number of all units of the issue or phenomenon to be investigated into which is —all possible observations of the same kindll.

The study population comprises the number of activity areas and coverage of the ActionAid International in the Asutifi District. Again, heads of the offices of the ActionAid International, Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice and the Asutifi District Assembly were essential components of the study population. Also, poverty indicators such as income level, access to basic services and involvement or participation in development programmes in the district forms part of the study population.

The study is restricted to the Asutifi District in the Brong Ahafo region of Ghana. The concentration of the activities of the ActionAid International especially in the Rights-based Development Approach in the district coupled with the considerable improvement in the quality of lives of the communities in the district influenced the selection of the district as the case study area for the study. It must be emphasized that the choice of the study area was purposively made due to the availability of information on subject being researched into.

### **3.6 Sampling Techniques**

According to Agyedu, (1999) the impossibility of sampling the entire population makes sampling a vital component of both social and scientific research as it makes it possible to limit a research to a relatively small portion of the population which can further be generalized for the whole. The study employed the multi-stage sampling techniques which were the purposive sampling technique and the simple random technique which are non probability and probability sampling methods respectively. The use of a combination of various sampling techniques at different stages of sampling is a characteristic feature of the multi-stage sampling method.

The purposive sampling method (non probability sampling technique) was used in the selection of the institutions for the research which included the District Office of the ActionAid Ghana, Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice and the Asutifi District Assembly as well as the five selected communities (Donkorkrom, Obengkrom, Nkrankrom, Asamang and Ohiatua) in the district. This sampling method was used because the sampling units selected satisfy certain criteria of interest. The study evolved around the key informants like the Heads of ActionAid International and the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice as well as the Asutifi District Assembly who have knowledge, information and role to play in poverty alleviation through the Rights-based Approach.

Moreso, the random sampling method was employed to identify and select the sample units for the administration of the household questionnaires after the determination of the sample size.

Households' heads were randomly chosen from the five selected communities in the district to respond to issues relating to the activities of the Rights-based Approach and its impacts on the improving the quality of lives of the communities.

### 3.6.1 Sample Determination

The total population of the selected communities (sample frame) was as follows: Donkorkrom = 1234, Obengkrom,= 1200, Nkrankrom = 947, Asamang = 692 and Ohiatua= 846. The research employed a mathematical model for the calculation of the sample size. The application of this mathematical model was necessitated by its scientific approach to social research and allows for margin of error and the distribution of the sample over the frame. The mathematical model used is as given by Miller and Brewer (2003);

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

Where: n = sample size

N = sample frame

$\alpha$  = margin of error

The sample was therefore determined with a margin of error of 0.09.

The sample frame together with various sample size for the communities selected are shown in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2 Sample Frame and Sample Size of the Selected Communities**

Community	Sample Frame	Sample Size
Donkorkrom	1234	112
Obengkrom	1200	103

Nkrankrom	947	87
Asamang	692	74
Ohiatua	846	81

Source: Author's Construct, October, 2010 based on 2000 Population Housing Census

### **3.7 Key Study Variables**

According to Babbie (2007) variables are the logical groupings of attributes. Kreuger and Neuman (2006) explained that a variable is a concept that varies. They stated that a variable may take on two or more values which are its attributes. This was reiterated by Miller and Brewer (2003) as they conceived the idea that variables help in moving a research from a conceptual to an empirical level, employing the variables as key elements of the research problem. Key study variables should therefore reflect the purpose of the research.

Thus, based on the objectives sought to be achieved by this study, the key variables examined were: coverage of the rights-based poverty reduction strategy employed by ActionAid in the Brong Ahafo, the effects of the strategy in poverty reduction, the roles of stakeholders connected to poverty alleviation in the Brong Ahafo and the challenges confronting the implementation of the rights-based approach in reducing poverty in the Brong Ahafo region. Investigating these variables by raising questions and finding pertinent answers to them will help in achieving the objectives for which the study was carried out.

### **3.8 Unit of Analysis and Data Processing**

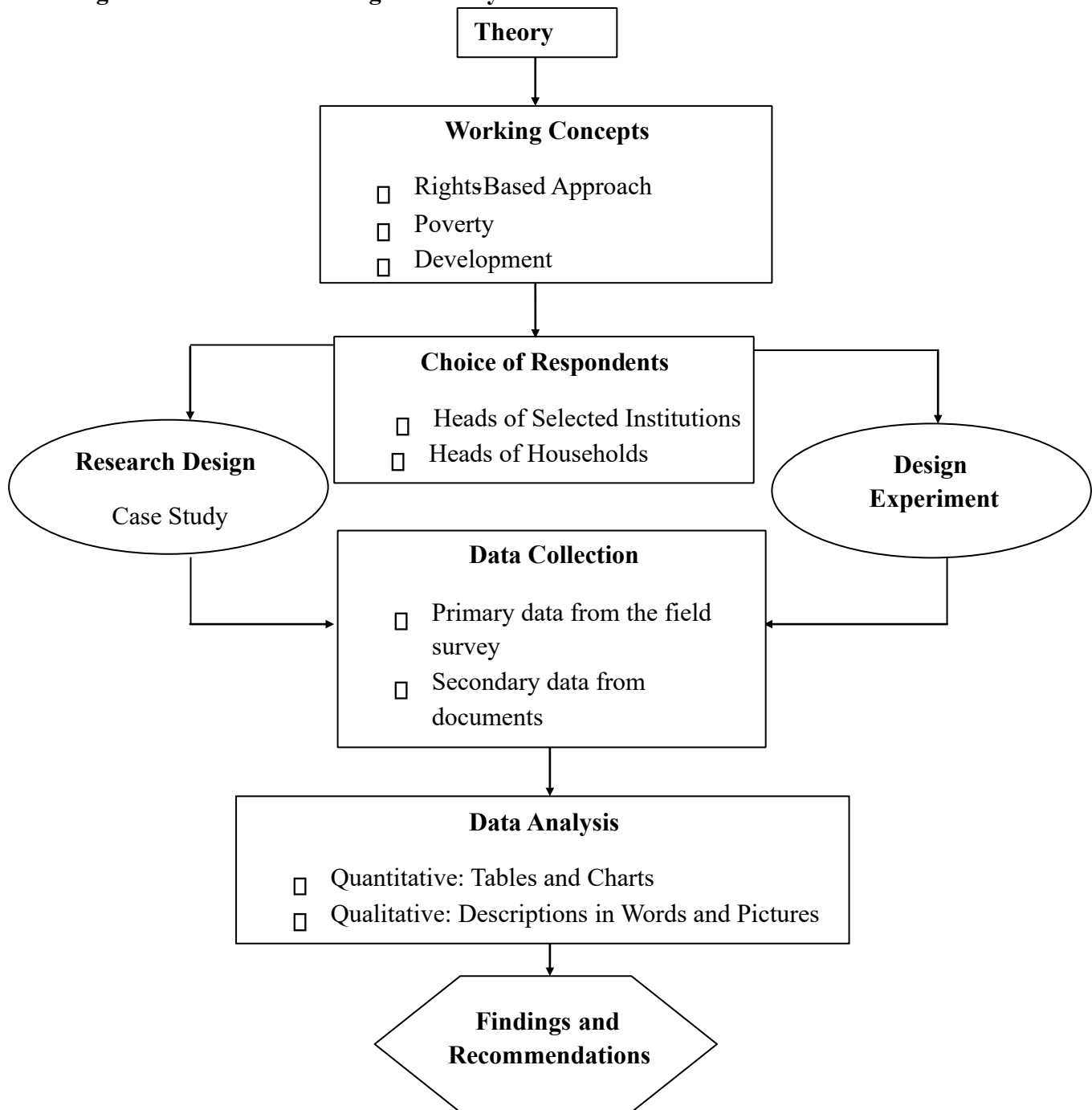
According to Babbie (2007) a unit of analysis is the \_what\_ or \_whom\_ being studied. He further argued that unit of analysis in a research are usually referred to as unit of observation. Unit of analysis has also been viewed as the most basic part of a phenomenon being researched into. Given the focus of this study, the unit of analysis will be right-based approach concept and how it is applied by Action Aid International in its quest to reduce poverty. To assess the adherence or otherwise to the approach by Action Aid International; the rationales, processes, components and target beneficiaries of the NGO's programmes and activities will be analyzed to determine the extent to which they conform to the tenets of the concept. The heads of the ActionAid International, Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice, Asutifi District Assembly and the various households formed the units of observation for the study. The will provide the necessary

information needed for assessing the application of the approach by Action Aid International in its activities.

The understanding and insight gained from the key concepts of the research will form a formidable foundation for the analysis of the data gathered. The processing of the data collected will involve editing to overcome errors and clean the data and the coding and tabulating of the data for the analysis. The analysis of the data will be carried out using qualitative and quantitative techniques. A qualitative method involves descriptive analysis and it was used to analyze data obtained from the institutions and households in addition to the observations made by the researcher. Tables, charts, ratios, among others will be used in quantitative analysis.

The structure of the data analysis and reporting is depicted in Figure 3.1

**Figure 3.1: Data Processing and Analysis Structure**



Source: Author's Construct, 2014: Based on Waugh (1995), Geography, An integrated Approach (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed): Page 403.

### 3.9 Profile of the Study Area

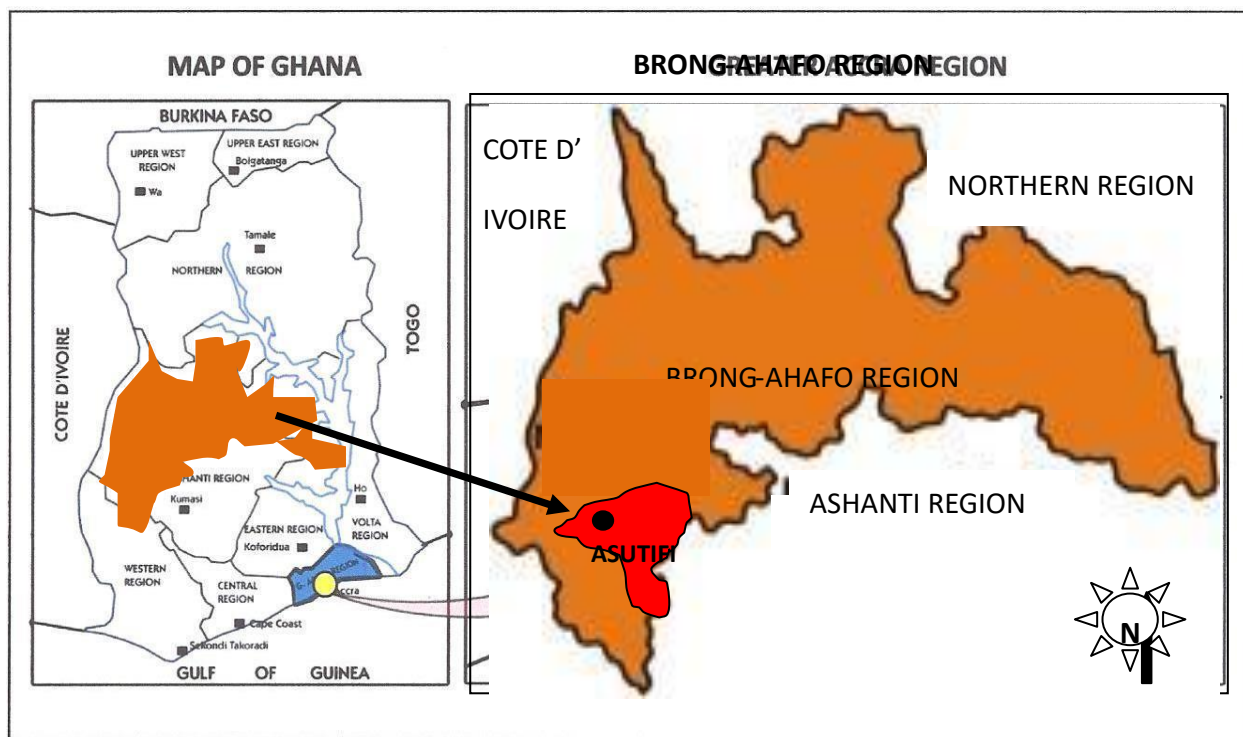
#### 3.9.1 Location and Size

Asutifi District is one of the nineteen (19) districts in Brong Ahafo. It is located between latitudes 6°40' and 7°15' North and Longitudes 2°15' and 2°45' West. It shares boundaries with Sunyani District in the North, Tano South District to the North East, Dormaa District to North West, Asunafo North and South Districts in the South West and Ahafo Ano South and North Districts (Ashanti Region) in the South East.

With a total land surface area of 1500 sq.km, the district is one of the smallest in the Brong Ahafo Region. There are a total of 117 settlements in the district and four paramountcies, namely: Kenyasi No.1 Kenyasi No.2, Hwidiem and Acherensua. The district capital is Kenyasi, which is about 50km from Sunyani, the regional capital of Brong Ahafo, through Atronie and Ntotroso.

Figures 3.2 show the Asutifi District in the National and Regional context respectively. **Figure**

### 3.2: Asutifi District in the National and Regional Context



**Source: Author's Construct, 2014**

#### 3.9.2 Topography and Drainage

The district lies within the forest dissected plateau physiographic region with average height of about 700 feet above sea level. The lowest part is about 650ft above sea level found along the river



basins whilst the highest point is found within a chain of mountains in the north east reaching a height of 1400 feet above sea level. These mountains form water shed for the many tributaries of the Tano River and other streams. There are out crops of gigantic rocks found over Birimian rocks basement standing about 750 - 900 feet above the broad plateau surface.

The district is drained by Tano River and its many tributaries which include Nsubin, Goa and Ntotro rivers exhibiting a dendritic pattern. These youthful fast flowing rivers have cut up the plateau surface giving rise to the dissected nature of the plateau.

### 3.9.3 Climate and Vegetation

The district lies within the wet semi-equatorial zone marked by double rainfall maxima; June and October with a mean annual rainfall between 125cm and 200cm. The first rainy season is from May to July (maximum) and the second rainy season is from September to October (minimum) when the district comes under the influence of the Wet Maritime Airmass. The beginning of the rainy season is marked by heavy thunderstorms which sometimes cause the ripping off of building roofs as experienced at Gambia and other places this year. There is a sharp dry season between the two rainy seasons the main one coming between November and March when the tropical continental Airmass in the country sweep over the area. Relative humidity is generally high ranging between 75percent to 80percent during the two rainy seasons and 70percent to 80percent during the rest of the year. (Asutifi District Assembly; Medium-Term Development Plan, 2009).

The district has a moist semi-deciduous forest. Man's activities notably farming, lumbering and occasional bush fires have however disturbed this vegetation. This has changed some areas into a derived wooded savanna. Such transitional zones could be observed along the roads to GoamuKoforidua, Kensere and Dadiesoaba. These developments call for immediate measures to protect this sensitive ecological zone. There are however, large areas of forest reserves. These include the following: - Biaso Shelter Belt BIA Tam Forest Reserve Asukese Forest Reserve Goa Forest Reserve Desiri Forest Reserve These forest reserves together covers a total of about 475.63 square kilometres about 30percent of the entire land surface area of the district. (Asutifi District Assembly; Medium-Term Development Plan, 2009).

### **3.9.4 Demographic Characteristics**

The district was carved out of a larger Ahafo District in 1988. The population of the district is estimated to be about 84,475 in 2000. From the National population Census of 1984 and 2000, the Population of Asutifi Local Council whose boundaries almost coincide with the present Asutifi District changed from 54,891 in 1984 to 84,475 in 2000 giving a population growth rate of 2.8 percent per annum. This growth rate is quite low compared with the rate of 3.0 percent at the national level for the same period. The low population growth rate barring any data errors was attributed to the absence of job opportunities to attract immigrants. The District population was estimated to be 94,486 in the year 2004 and again estimated to be 99,928 in 2006 using 2.8 percent as the Growth Rate. (Asutifi District Assembly; Medium-Term Development Plan, 2009).

### **3.9.5 Economic Characteristics**

Asutifi is a typical agricultural district with the tendency of people to stay together or to have large family members to provide farm hands. Within the mining communities households are clustering in fewer rooms for other rooms to be rented out to mine workers who are ready to pay high rent. This has implications for occupancy rates and for housing space in the district.

The predominant occupation in the District is subsistence agriculture which engages 66.7 percent of the economically active labour force. About 91 percent of those engaged in other occupations outside agriculture still take up agriculture as a minor activity. The rural nature of the district coupled with recent influx of job seekers to the mine-take areas and the limited employment opportunity accounts partly for this skewed occupational distribution in the District.

The next occupation after agriculture, service sector, scored 27.1 percent, which is an improvement on the situation in 2002 (21 percent) thus, indicating a growing services sector in the district. This can be attributed to the upsurge of mining activities in the district coupled with the influx of migrants and the demand for mining related services. At the regional and national levels, agriculture engages about 71 percent and 57.2 percent of the economically active labour force respectively.

About 54.7 percent of the population falls within the labour force (18-64), 27.1 percent of which are males and 27.6 percent females. This gives a low district age dependency ratio of 1:0.98 compared

with 1:0.96 at the national level. This implies a likelihood of low burden on the working class. However, the economic dependency ratio revealed a high dependency ratio of 1:1.8 compared with the national figure of 1:1.3. This could be explained by the absence of adequate job opportunities in the district which ranked second in the development problems compiled from the field survey. Unemployment rate in the district is 21.1percent. The implication of such a high economic dependency ratio is a large burden on workers with respect to consumption and social overhead investment (Asutifi District Assembly; Medium-Term Development Plan, 2009).

A lot of pressure is exerted on the working population and limits their capacity to save and to contribute financially to investment and in the implementation of development projects. This situation is unfavourable for development and further emphasizes the need to create job avenues from the much potential in the areas of mining, lumbering, agriculture and small-scale industries. The informal sector also needs to be activated to play its role in job creation.

#### 3.9.6 Health Characteristics

With regard to health, the district has one major facility, namely: the Saint Elizabeth Hospital located at Hwidiem. This facility which is serving as the district hospital to Asutifi and referral center for Asunafo District is owned and managed by the Roman Catholic Church. It has one Medical Officer with a bed capacity of 130, with surgical, medical and obstetric service. There are five other health stations manned by Ministry of Health namely: Kenyasi Health Centre, Gyedu Health Post, Acherensua Health Post, Dadiesoaba Health Post and Gambia MCH Clinic. In addition to these facilities, there are seven (7) structural community clinics with only three (3) currently functioning, located at Gambia No.1, Goamu-Koforidua, Kenyasi No.III, Amamaso/Gyadu, Sunkwa/Dadiesoaba, Nkaseim Community Clinic. The rest are, three Private Maternity homes located at Kensere, Kenyasi and Twabidi and three (3) Homeopathic Clinics and sixty (60) trained Traditional Birth Attendants (Asutifi District Assembly; Medium-Term Development Plan, 2009).

Most of these community clinics and Traditional Birth Attendants do not function properly due to the lack of logistics support and remuneration for their Clinic attendants. The predominant disease in the district, like all other districts in Ghana, is malaria. Fifty-five percent (55percent) of the sampled population mentioned malaria as the leading causes of illness in the district. This is a clear reflection of the poor insanitary conditions in the district. Other diseases according to the

district health report are depicted in table below Even though the district has adequate health facilities; it lags far behind, comparing the Doctor-Patient ratio of 1:42,237 as against national figure of 1:7,813. The situation is quite different when comparing the bed population ratio of 1:210 against the national figure of 1:1,204 (Asutifi District Assembly; Medium-Term Development Plan, 2009).

### 3.9.7 Private Sector and Non-Governmental Organization Involvement in the Development of the District

Private economic and political thinking that favours NGO private sector initiatives as a solution to deteriorating economic and employment problems point to the need for developing enterprises and self-employment. Asutifi is one such District that recognizes the potential of the private sector as becoming the engine of growth. Furthermore, both the urban and rural areas of the District have major problems affecting national productivity and development (Asutifi District Assembly; Medium-Term Development Plan, 2009).

Among our proposed strategies are: promoting and increasing access to technology, credit and economic services especially to rural and urban informal sectors; promoting and supporting the informal sectors and cooperatives; improving marketing linkages in the agricultural sector; improving access to entrepreneurial training; improving Public-Private sector dialogue and strengthening capacities of NGOs for the provision of basic development services. The District Assembly is engaged in fruitful interventions to increase productions in all sectors of the economy in order to enhance gainful employment of the teeming masses of the District. This is in line with the GPRS II of wealth creation and the development of the private sector as the mover of the economy. This portion discusses the major sectors that employ the bulk of the people in skills training in the District. The Rural Enterprises Project, which is based in district, is designed to sustain the Government of Ghana's economic reforms by combining the adjustment process with programmes generating efficient employment in the private productive sectors. The overall objective of the project is to increase the incomes of the rural poor and to meet the needs of agricultural producers for inputs and services. The Ahofo Agri-business Initiative (AAGI) being sponsored by Newmont Ghana Gold is also offering skills training to inhabitants of the mine take areas; and several development projects being embarked upon by NGOs (Asutifi District Assembly; Medium-Term Development Plan, 2009).

### 3.9.8 Development Projects

Information gathered indicates that most projects and programme in the district are funded by the scarce District Assemblies Common Fund. And given the enormous needs and aspirations of the communities in the district, the over reliance on the DACF is unsustainable. It would, therefore, be important for the Assembly to be pro active in seeking support from Business enterprises, Local and International NGOs as well as bilateral development agencies. Currently, there are a number of on-going projects with external support. Some of the funding sources in the district at the moment include; ActionAid Ghana, IDA, DFID, GET FUND, HIPC, MSHAP funds for HIV/AIDS activities, CBRDP Fund, Ghana School Feeding Programme Fund, Newmont Ghana Gold and District Assemblies Common fund (DACF), . These constitute opportunities for development in the district (Asutifi District Assembly; Medium-Term Development Plan, 2009).

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **AN ASSESSMENT OF ACTIONAID RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH TO POVERTY REDUCTION 4.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter detailed out the processes that were followed in collecting and analyzing the data. This chapter which is the penultimate chapter details the findings and analysis of data as was found out from the field survey. The chapter begins with a brief background of the respondents such as sex, the ages of respondents, the educational background of respondents. The chapter then continues with the processes of fighting poverty using by Action Aid Ghana, their area of coverage, achievements, stakeholders and challenges.

## 4.2 Background of Respondents

This section analyses aspects of respondents such as sex, ages, marital status, educational background and employment status of respondents.

### 4.2.1 Sex of Respondents

The data gathered from the field survey revealed that females dominate in the study area. The data shows that males and females constitute 46 and 54 percent respectively of the respondents. This figure is consistent with the district wide pattern where about 50.4 percent of the estimated population is females and the rest 49.6 percent males. This gives a sex ratio of 1:1.02 males to females. In spite of the fact that females are in the majority, the men are considered as the heads of households and so when it comes to taken decisions for the family such as talking to strangers; it is the responsibility of the man. The findings above could be interpreted as the fact that the communities that were visited are dominated by men when it comes to taken decisions. This is because during the survey, it was realized that where the man who is considered as the head of the household was not in the house, the wife will have to send someone to call the husband or she will refuse to answer the questionnaire. Even in situations where the wife is widowed or divorced, the respondents' call for the assistance of brothers or the eldest son to come and sit by before questionnaires would be responded to.

**Table 4.1: Sex of Respondents**

Sex of Respondents	Frequency	Percent
Male	210	46.0
Female	247	54.0
Total	457	100.0

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2014

### 4.2.2 Educational Background of Respondents

Education plays a crucial role in every economy. As a means of developing human capital, it has both direct and indirect effects on the socio-economic status of any individual and or country. From the survey, it was found out that the number of respondents who attended Primary school constitutes approximately 5.7 percent of the respondents whilst 72.9 percent of the respondents completed school at the JHS level. Clearly, it can be seen that a greater segment of the respondents acquired only basic

education (i.e. 78.6% primary & JHS combined). Thus, with a vast majority of them having low educational background (which implies little or no employable skills); it essentially underscores why majority of them operate in the informal economy. Table 4.2 shows the educational level of the respondents interviewed.

**Table 4.2: Educational Level of Respondents**

Educational Level	Frequency	Percent
Primary	26	5.7
JSS	333	72.9
SHS/Tech/Voc	62	13.6
Tertiary	36	7.9
Total	457	100.0

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2014

#### 4.2.3 Age of Respondents

The population structure of developing countries including Ghana generally has the shape of a pyramid where the population at the bottom is greater than that at the top. However the study area's sampled population depicts something different. It depicts an area where the adult population (above 25) is by far, greater than the youthful population (15-24). It must be emphasis that the study communities are mostly farming communities.

The survey revealed that, there's availability of arable lands in the district, however; most of the youth usually migrate to other parts of the country in search of greener pastures. Farming has therefore been left to the elderly who produce on subsistence basis with little or nothing left for the market.

**Table 4.3: Ages of Respondents**

Ages	Frequency	Percent
15-20	81	17.7
21-25	52	11.4
26-30	48	10.5

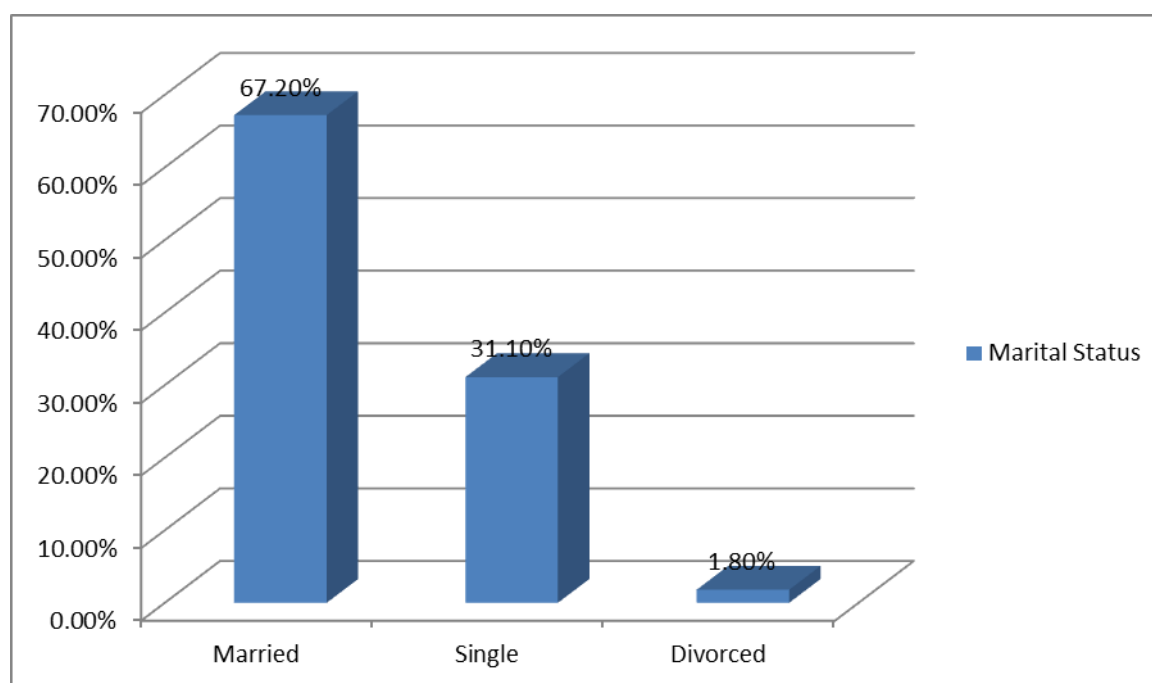
31-35	107	23.4
Above 36	169	37.0
Total	457	100.0

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2014

#### 4.2.4 Marital Status of Respondents

From the survey it was found out that a large majority that is about 67.2 percent of the respondents are married whiles, 31.1 percent are single. Only 1.8 percent of the respondents were found to be divorced. Figure 4.1 presents more details about the marital status of respondents. Given the fact that majority of the respondents are males, it can be inferred that most of the respondents are breadwinners or household heads that provide the greater percentage of households' income with the income they earn from their activities. It is therefore important to note that the livelihood assets of the respondents will determine how sustainable the livelihood of the particular individual in question and how the person will respond to external shocks. This stems from the fact that majority of the respondents are married and taking care of not themselves alone but other members of their household such as wives and children.

**Figure 4.1: Marital Status of Respondents**



Source: Author's Construct, 2014

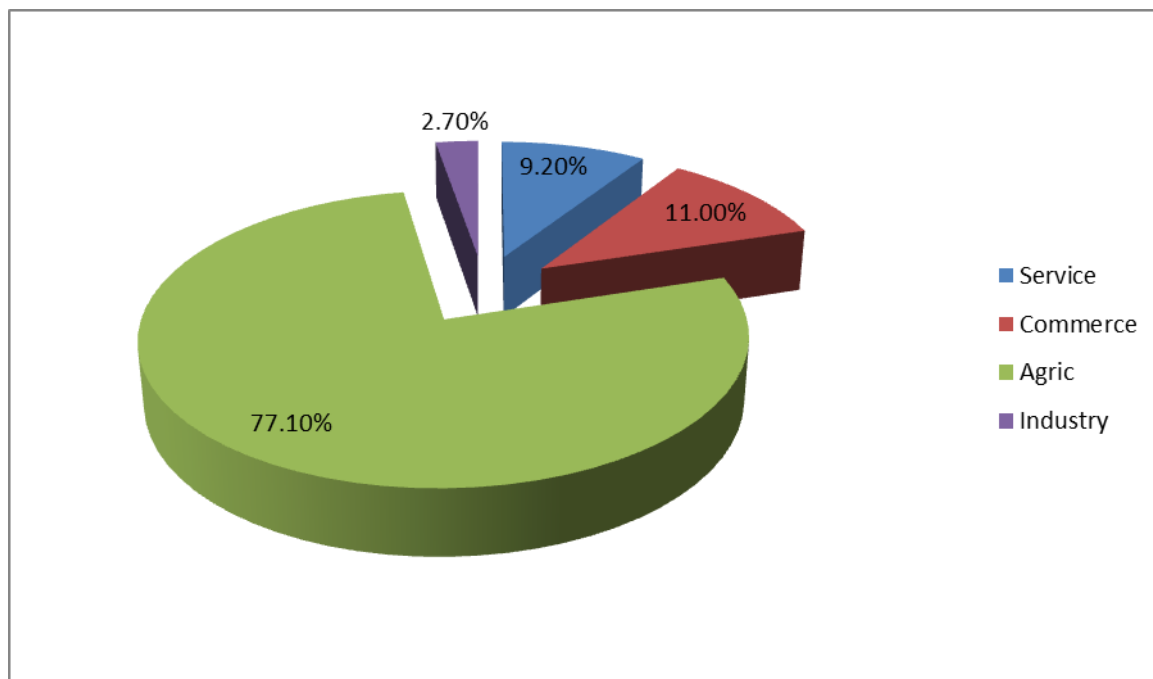


#### 4.2.4 Economic Activities Engaged in by Respondents

According to the survey, the sectors of employment of respondents are agriculture, industrial and service sectors with agriculture absorbing majority of the respondents. That is 77.1 percent of the respondents are engaged in agriculture, 11 percent engaged in commerce, 2.7 percent in small scale industrial activities and the rest which constitute about 9.2 percent of the respondents are engaged in service. Of those who are engaged in agriculture, the type of farming activities the respondents engage in are cash crop farming, food crop farming, livestock and poultry farming. However, majority of the respondents engage in cash and food crop production with poultry and livestock rearing on a minimal scale.

Again, of those who are engaged in small scale industrial activities such as carpentry, fitting, bread making and sculpture; about 60 percent of the respondents are carpenters whilst those in the service sector such as civil service, hair dressing, food vending, retail shopping, barbering and suchlike, jointly constitute the remaining 40percent.

**Figure 4.2: Economic Activity engaged in by Respondents**



Source: Author's construct, 2014

### **4.3 Activities of Action Aid Ghana (AAG) in the study area**

This section analyses the activities of AAG in the study communities including the scope of their activities and the methods used in fighting poverty in the study communities.

#### **4.3.1 Scope of Activities of Action Aid Ghana in the Study Area**

ActionAid Ghana as anti-poverty Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) basically operates in rural Districts of Ghana. AAG focuses on the people who are marginalized, face discrimination and those whose voices are ignored. AAG's goal is to see a world without poverty in which every person enjoys their right to life of dignity. Again AAG wants to see that the poor and excluded people exercise power to serve their rights. AAG helps people to fight for their rights including; the right to education, the right to stay on their land and have a say in the decision making process and inter alia. Thus, AAG guides the less-privileged using their resources, influence and experience to find solutions to their problems. The survey revealed that AAG started its operations about 23 years ago in the Asutifi District and operates in most of the towns and villages in the District such as Donkokrom, Obengkrom, Bogyansa, Obengkrom, Asiamang, Ohiatua, Nkrankrom, Gambia No. 1&2, Dadieasoba, Siencheim, Manhyia, and Mehame . The activities of AAG in the study area have been concentrated on food rights & climate change, right to education and women's rights.

#### **4.3.2 Methods of Fighting Poverty by AAG in the Study Communities**

The survey revealed that AAG's actions in fighting poverty in the study area are embedded in three distinct strategies. These are promotion of human rights, education and increasing agricultural production. These strategies are discussed below. □ Promotion of Human Rights

From the field survey, it was realized that one of the major impediments for the growth and development of women and children in the study area include ill-cultural practices. One example of these cultural practices is a taboo which prevents women from giving birth in the house at Donkorkrom. Additionally, it was discovered that incidents of child neglect and molestation such as defilement of children, rape and abuse of women by their husbands used to be alarming. However, the survey also indicated that AAG has over the years provided sensitization programmes on human rights for the people, particularly the women to stand up of their rights and the need to abolish certain cultural practices which are inhibiting their progress. In this case, AAG is a facilitator rather than an implementer. With the help of AAG, a community structure called Community Based Anti Violence Teams (COMBAT) has been formed in the study communities.

The main role of these community structures are to educate community members on domestic violence Act and to promote women's rights by supporting victims of domestic violence to access justice. They focus on child neglect, defilement, rape, child abuse and abuse of wives by husbands. COMBAT members work in close collaboration with government institutions such as Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVSU), Commission of Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) and the Ghana Police. In the first place, the COMBAT members settle minor cases such as marital fights but reports serious cases such as rape and defilement to the police. Again, AAG also engages directly with the study communities to educate them about the need to abolish age old traditions such as the one which prevents women from giving birth in the house at Donkorkrom and taboos which does not promote the growth and development of the study communities. This is done through meetings, seminars, community education, stakeholders' forums, radio discussions involving chiefs and people of the study communities.

#### □ Increasing Agricultural Production with the Aim of Reducing Poverty

The study revealed that AAG helps address the plight of rural women through increasing their access to production investment in small holder farmer related activities, climate change and adaptations. The strategies adopted by AAG were to partner government agencies such as district agricultural office to provide extension service and the provision of agricultural inputs such as fertilizers. With this AAG facilitated the creation of farmers association and District Farmers Network. The District Farmers Network organizes the famers especially women in the study communities to facilitate access to extension workers. The District Farmers Network also ensures that women farmers have permanent title to their land. It is the norm in the study communities such as Ohiatua that it is the responsibility of the men who farm and as a result land is bequeathed to the men. This leaves women with little land to farm and as a result predisposing them to acute poverty since they have little to depend on. Nonetheless, the intervention of AAG has helped vulnerable groups such as women to have permanent title to their land. Also, extension services and farm inputs were provided to farmers including men and women to increase productivity.

One major intervention in the agricultural sector that AAG executed in the Asutifi District was the livelihood project to reduce poverty of women.

The table below provides information on respondent farmers who have benefitted from AAG agricultural intervention.

Table 4.4: Respondent farmers who have benefitted from AAG agricultural strategy for reducing poverty

Sex	No. of respondents assisted to acquire land title (2013)	No. of respondents assisted with inputs and extension services (2013)	Total
Males	13	232	245
Females	61	275	336
Total	74	507	581

Source: author's Field Survey, 2014

### □ Promoting Education in the Study Communities

It was noted from the survey that one of the cardinal objectives of AAG was to improve literacy through improving on the formal and informal sectors of education with the focus on the most deprived children from the most vulnerable communities. This was done through strengthening the school governance system, campaigning on rights to and in education as a fundamental right and challenging violence against girls in schools. The study unraveled that before the coming of AAG, about 80 percent of children from vulnerable backgrounds such as girls and disabled children from deprived communities did not get the opportunity of formal education.

In correcting this distressing situation, AAG sought to increase access to education to vulnerable groups through the introduction of various interventions targeted at these groups. The interventions were the Regenerated Freirian Literacy Through Empowering Community Techniques (REFLECT), Rural Education Volunteer Scheme (REV) and the strengthening of PTA's to make them more effective. These interventions were introduced in all the study communities.

Some of the significant milestones achieved by AAG under its educational strategy to reducing poverty are summarized below:

#### i. Rural Education Volunteers Scheme (REV)

The Rural Education Volunteer (REV) scheme has offered a stop-gap measure to address the acute shortage of teachers in basic schools especially in the deprived communities. The scheme with other interventions of ActionAid, GES and other stakeholders has impacted positively on quality education delivery in the Asutifi district. The period saw Asutifi district emerging from its last

position in 2000 in the region at the BECE to occupy the 5<sup>th</sup> position in 2001, 2<sup>nd</sup> in 2002, and 1<sup>st</sup> position in 2003.

The survey shows that, a total of 87 youth comprising 53 males and 34 females have benefited from the REV scheme in the Asutifi district which most of them have furthered their education and are back to the teaching field in our partner communities as trained teachers. Amanfrom, Ata-ne-Ata and Nsuta in Asutifi are some of the communities which are still benefiting from the impact of REV.

#### ii. Training of Nursery Attendants and Supply of Teaching Manuals

To make teaching more beneficial to pupils, ActionAid between 2002 and 2005 supported Asutifi GES Directorate to train all the nursery attendants in the then 40 nursery schools who had not benefitted from any of such in-service training before. 160 nursery attendants benefited from such facility. Besides the training, ActionAid supported each nursery school with a teaching manual to make teaching and learning meaningful for the pupils.

#### iii. Fuel Support to Circuit Supervisors

In consultation with GES, ActionAid supported circuit supervisors in Asutifi over the period of 2003 to 2008 with 21 gallons (three gallons per supervisor) of fuel every quarter. It was aimed at making circuit supervisors mobile for regular and effective supervision in schools, especially the REVs.

#### iv. Support to STME and SPAM

To enhance school girls' interest in science and mathematics and encourage stakeholders participation in education delivery, ActionAid in 2001 to 2006, supported the organization of STME and SPAM in Asutifi. With this support, communities and other education stakeholders participated actively in reviewing the status of education from the school level to the district and set new targets. School girls also developed interest in mathematics and science which were seen as difficult and only boys were capable of doing.

#### v. Textbooks and other Teaching & Learning Materials

Based on challenges identified during the Asutifi appraisal in 1999/2000, ActionAid supported Asutifi GES with 12,789 English, Mathematics and Science textbooks, 13 wall maps, 22 dictionaries and 4 globes which were distributed to all primary and Junior Secondary schools in the district between 2000 and 2004. It was aimed at augmenting the government's efforts to improving performance of pupils.

vi. Reading Clubs in basic schools

In Asutifi, ActionAid supported 32 primary schools in the partner communities with 60 different types of supplementary readers for all the schools and a cupboard each to keep the books safe. In total 1,920 readers were given out to the schools.

Beside the aforementioned programmes, ActionAid has provided support in the construction of several classroom blocks with ancillary facilities across the Brong Ahafo Region. The table below provides details on the classroom blocks and other facilities provided region-wide:

Table 4.5: Structures built with support of ActionAid in Asutifi district from 2001 to 2012

No	Community	District	Type of Infrastructure	Year
----	-----------	----------	------------------------	------

1	Ohiatua	Asutifi	3-unit classroom block, office and store	2001
2	Yaw Brefo	Asutifi	3-unit Classroom block, office and store	2002
3	Koforidua	Asutifi	2-unit Nursery block, office and store	2002
5	Mehame	Asutifi	6-unit teachers' quarters	2003
6	Manhyia	Asutifi	4-unit classroom block	2003
9	Gambia 2	Asutifi	3-Unit Classroom block	2004
10	Kenyasi 3	Asutifi	7-unit bedroom teachers' qtrs.	2004
11	Gambia 1	Asutifi	6-unit bedroom teachers' qtrs.	2004
12	Bogyampa	Asutifi	2-unit nursery block, office and store plus 2-seater KVIP	2004
15	Dadiesoaba	Asutifi	3-unit classroom block, office and store plus 2-seater KVIP	2005
16	Kenyasi 3	Asutifi	6-unit bedroom teachers' qtrs.	2005
17	Amomaso	Asutifi	6-bedroom teachers' qtrs.	2005
18	Mehame	Asutifi	2-unit nursery block	2005
19	Nsuta	Asutifi	2-unit nursery block, office and store plus 2-seater KVIP	2005
20	Kojokrom	Asutifi	3-unit classroom block, office and store plus 2-seater KVIP	2006
21	Sienchem	Asutifi	2-unit Nursery block, office and store plus 2-seater KVIP and urinal	2006
22	Obengkrom	Asutifi	2-unit nursery block, office and store plus 2-seater KVIP and urinal	2006
23	Donkorkrom	Asutifi	2-unit nursery block, office and store plus cladding of two wooden blocks	2007
25	Asamang	Asutifi	2-unit nursery block, office and store plus 2-seater KVIP and urinal	2008
27	Apenimadi	Asutifi	4-unit bedroom teachers' qtrs. and 6-seater KVIP	2009
29	Nkrankrom	Asutifi	2-unit nursery block, office and store plus 2-seater KVIP	2010

Source; Brong Ahafo Regional Office, 2013

#### 4.4 Stakeholders that Partners AAG in Fighting Poverty in the Study Area

The stakeholders were the District Assembly, Domestic Violence Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU), Traditional Authorities and Unit Committee Members.

##### 4.4.1 The District Assembly

The Asutifi District Assembly as the main body responsible for the development of the area under its jurisdiction partners other development agents such as AAG to function effectively. The survey revealed that the Assembly plays various roles in alleviating poverty in the study communities. This includes provision of vocational training by the Business Advisory Center (B.A.C) of the Assembly, provision of scholarships to needy but brilliant students and teaming up with statutory

agencies such as NGOs and Civil Society Groups (CSOs) in providing social services to the populace.

However, the survey indicated that the role of the District Assembly towards AAG and NGOs in general was under-performed due resource and logistical constraints.

#### 4.4.2 Domestic Violence Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU)

DOVVSU is a government institution that ensures that women whose rights are denied have access to justice. DOVVSU is one of the key institutions that help AAG in promoting human rights in the study area. According to, ASP Setina Aboagye, Deputy Regional Coordinator for DOVVSU who also doubles as the focal person for the study area said that DOVVSU collaborates with AAG on many fronts. According to ASP Setina, DOVVSU helps in providing personnel to facilitate AAG activities in promoting women's and children's rights. They also provide logistics such as vehicles to monitor the work of COMBAT and they also carry out joint activities with AAG to ensure that violence against women and children are reduced.

#### 4.4.3 Traditional Authorities (Chiefs)

The traditional authorities are the custodian of land in the study communities under the study. Chiefs in the selected communities play an important role in allocating land within their stool for developmental purposes. At the settlement level, sub-chiefs or village chiefs, in consultation with elders resolve disputes as indicated by the respondents. The chiefs also organize the people in the study communities to help with the work of AAG and helps in the education of the respondents.

#### 4.4.4 Communities

Their role is to participate in all development projects; harness their locally available resources to bring about development change. During the discussion with extension officers who work close with this group as technical experts, the complaint was that, the communities were passive in the projects implemented for them. The emphasis was on farmer's registration, a programme that started in 2006 in the district. To date there are farmers who are not registered for they do not see the importance of doing so. This attitude of the communities' members makes the implementation of programmes very difficult in the study communities.

### **4.5 Impacts of Activities of AAG in Fighting Poverty in the Study Area**

This section of the study discusses the awareness of the presence of AAG in the selected communities, what the respondents associate with AAG, the impacts of AAG on education,

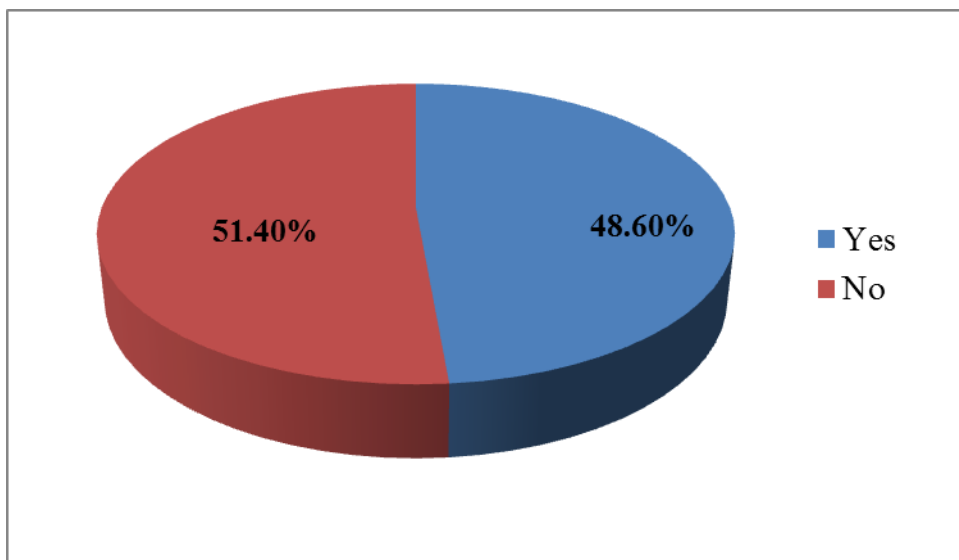


woman's rights and agricultural productivity.

#### 4.5.1 Respondents Awareness of the Presence of AAG in the Communities

The study revealed interesting findings about the awareness of AAG's rights approach in reducing poverty. From figure 4.3, when the respondents were asked whether they were aware of the presence of an NGO called ActionAid Ghana in their communities, 48.6 percent responded in the affirmative whilst the rest constituting 51.4 percent of the respondents affirmed negatively.

**Figure 4.3: Respondents Awareness of Action Aid Right Approach in Reducing Poverty**



Source: Field Survey, 2014

A further breakdown of the responses from respondents gives much detail. Whilst 88.4 percent of the respondents at Obengkrom responded that they are not aware of the presence of AAG, 89.7 percent responded that they are aware of the presence of AAG at Donkorkrom. Table 4.4 gives much detail. In fact, what was realized from the field survey was that, the respondents know the name of programmes that have been introduced by AAG such as COMBAT but they are not aware that those programmes were executed by AAG. For instance, they easily associate with Community Based Anti Violence Teams (COMBAT) but are not aware that these programmes were introduced by AAG.

**Table 4.6: Study Communities and the Respondents Awareness of ActionAid Right-Based Approach in Reducing Poverty**

Study communities	Respondents Awareness of Action Aid Rightbased Approach in reducing poverty		Total Percent
	Those aware (%)	Those not aware (%)	
Obengkrom	11.6	88.4	100
Donkokrom	89.7	10.3	100
Nkrankrom	16.1	83.9	100
Asaman	89.2	10.8	100
Ohiatua	69.9	30.1	100

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2014

#### 4.5.2 Impact of AAG in the Educational Sector in the Study Area

The study revealed that one of the approaches use by AAG in fighting poverty is to empower the respondents socially through the provision of quality education to the people in the study communities. The study sought to seek the views of respondents about the impact of AAG in improving education in the study communities, from figure 4.4, about 85.2 percent of the respondents believe that AAG has helped very much in improving education in the study area whilst only 14.8 percent of respondents thought otherwise. According to the respondents, AAG's activities on education has largely centered on improving school governance and promoting girl child education.

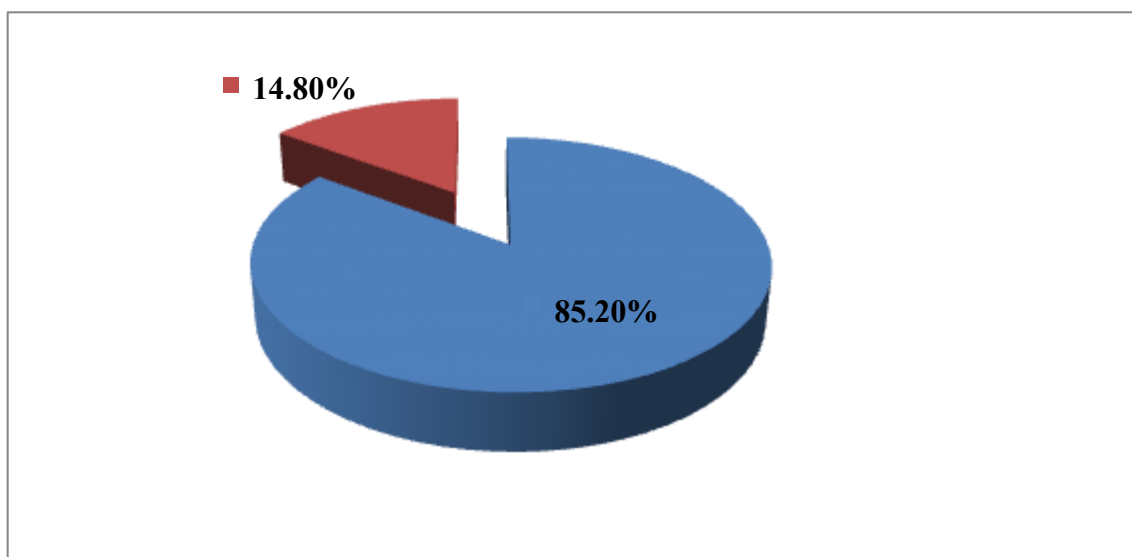
According to the respondents, AAG has helped strengthened the PTA in the study communities and they are now very effective. The PTA serves as watchdogs on teacher's absenteeism and lateness in the study communities. Moreover, the PTA's in communities such as Ohiatua, Asamang and Obengkrom has been trained in order to detect and report the harassment of girls by teachers to the appropriate authorities. AAG has constructed a basic KG Unit Block at Nkrankrom and three Unit classroom block at Asamang.

The survey revealed that, all the communities have benefited from the Rural Education

Volunteer Schemes (REV) and Regenerated Freirean Literacy Through Empowering Community Techniques (REFLECT) which is focused on adult literacy.

Moreover, beside the respondents' perception on ActionAid's impacts on their lives, the survey indicated that ActionAid has since 2000 facilitated the construction of 33 school infrastructure and teacher accommodation in the district towards enhancing access and quality education delivery in the region. Other achievements pertaining to education include; training of nursery attendants, supply of teaching manuals, textbooks and support to STME and SPAM.

**Figure 4.4: Respondents View about the Impact of AAG on Improving Education**



Source: Author's construct, 2014

#### 4.5.3 Women's Rights

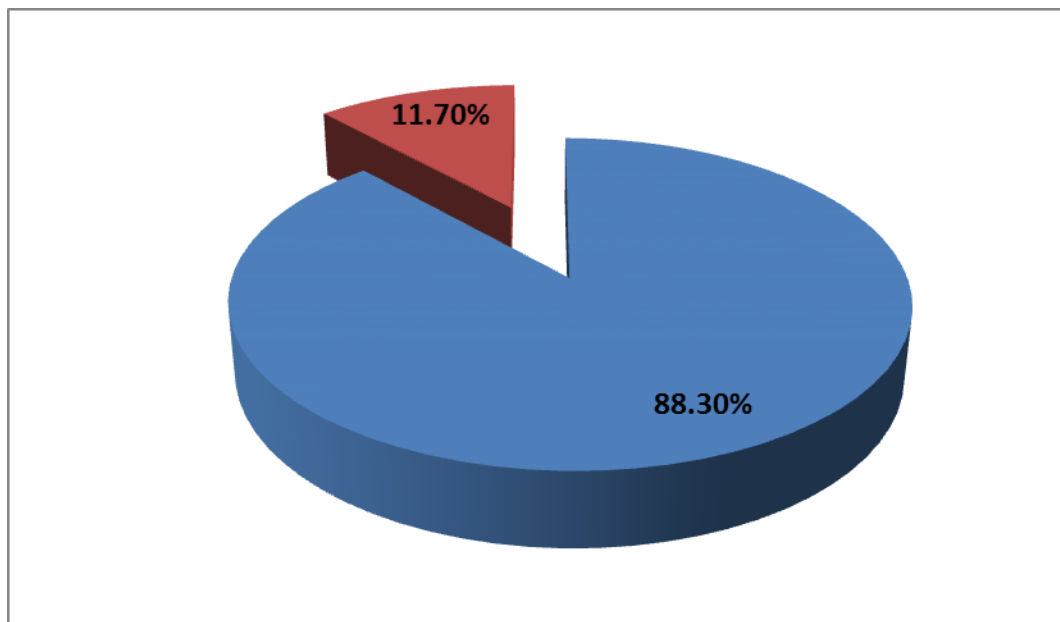
The survey revealed that one of the cardinal goals of AAG is to help empower the respondents to fight for their rights and especially to educate the respondents to abolish age old taboos and traditions which are inhibitive to their development. It was evident from the survey that AAG is on course to achieving this objective. From the survey (refer to figure 4.5) about 88.3 percent of the respondents affirmed that AAG has helped in eradicating obnoxious taboos as well as educating people about their rights; whilst 11.7 percent of the respondents think otherwise.

All the respondents from Donkorkrom testified about one particular taboo in the community which AAG through their activities has made it a thing of the past. For instance, one striking taboo which

previously existed was that; pregnant women were prohibited to give birth in the house and so if a woman mistakenly goes contrary to that, she is made to sacrifice a sheep or undergo some rituals in order to pacify the land.

This backward taboo forced pregnant women to travel to Hwediem to give birth under extremely difficult circumstances including; walking long distances, putting them on bicycles or carried by men to Hwediem Ante Natal Clinic to give birth and as a result, some of the women give birth in the bush. In the light of this, a programme was initiated by AAG under the theme —Women's Rights are Human Rights to educate the people of Donkorkrom which has done away with this taboo

**Figure 4.5: Respondents Views about the Impact of AAG on Human Rights**



Source: Author's construct, 2014

#### 4.5.4 Achievements of ActionAid Ghana in the Study Area

The survey indicated that, AAG works through the Community Based Anti Violence Teams (COMBAT) in promoting women's rights in the study communities. According to the survey, COMBAT in the study communities settled 19 cases of domestic violence in 2012.

However 9 cases were reported to the CHRAJ and 5 to DOVVSU. While in 2009 and 2010 reported cases of domestic violence in the whole of Brong Ahafo region increased from 1,028 to

1,278 representing about a 2.5 percent increase. In 2011, the figure came down to 1,040 partly due to COMBAT increased campaigning and awareness creation on domestic violence. Most of these cases came from ActionAid communities.

The usefulness of COMBAT was summarized by Kwadwo Asiedu, a married man with two boys who remarked during the field survey about the work of COMBAT as follows:

**Plate 1: Witnesses of AAG's Human Rights Programme**



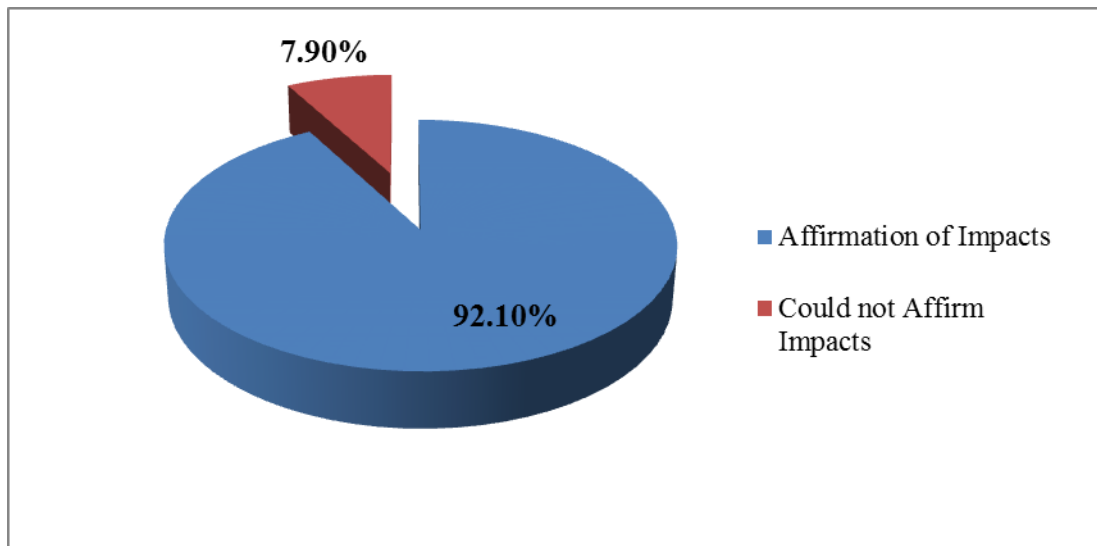
Source: Author's Field Survey, 2014

*"I know of COMBAT and even my wife is one of the members. It is ActionAid's quest to ensure peace and violence free environment for people especially, women and children that is why they supported the community to establish COMBAT to settle some minor differences between people and report those of criminal dimensions to the police for the law to take its course. Recently in this community, some boys who were noted to be harassing girls and women were stopped. On one occasion COMBAT people called them to order but they did not listen to them. Then they called in the police who came and arrested them. Since then the community has enjoyed some sort of peace as the trouble makers fear COMBAT and the arrest of the police. These days one can hardly hear of wife battering and its related cases. I can say that all these are results of COMBAT activities. We are grateful to ActionAid for the efforts."*

#### 4.5.5 Impact on Agriculture

The survey revealed that AAG has as one of its main goals of fighting poverty in the study communities as promoting food rights and climate change. In the quest of fighting poverty, AAG helps to redress some of the plight of rural women through increase productive in small holder farmers related activities, climate mitigation and adaptation. About 92.1 percent of the respondents affirmed that the impact of AAG on agriculture has been great whilst only 7.9 percent of the respondents thought otherwise. This is due to the fact that AAG has used farmers field school to introduced modern agricultural practices to farmers in five communities. The impact of AAG's activities on agriculture production have been increase access to agriculture extension services and secure land holding rights for women. AAG's support for farmer network activities led to 581 small holder farmers (245 men & 336 women) benefitting from the government's block farming mechanization programme which provides agricultural inputs like fertilizer, improved seed and mechanization services to farmers on credit. Increased access to extension services by 45 smallholder women farmers in Kenyasi No.3 enabled them to increase their yields from an average of 3.5 to 4 bags of maize per acre to 6.5 to 7 bags of maize per acre. At least 30 more women now farm on 0.5 to 3 acres of secured land devoid of any land litigation by signing a tenancy agreement in 2012 with their landlords in the study communities.

**Figure 4.6: Respondents Views about the Impact of AAG on Agriculture in the Study Communities**



Source: Author's construct, 2014

**Plate 2: A Beneficiary of AAG's Agriculture Programme**



Source: Author's Field Survey, 2014

- Case Study of the Livelihood Project to support women in the Asutifi district

As discussed earlier, ActionAid has carried out a number of projects/programmes in the Brong Ahafo tailored towards poverty reduction. This section of the analysis seeks to conduct a comprehensive review of the livelihood project (one of AAG's projects) and give some of its impacts. According to ActionAid, the main objective of the project was to address women's low income status in the communities by creating avenues to generate income to support the families of the beneficiary women and their communities. It was also assumed that the project would increase women power and boost their confidence in order to stand for their rights.

The project was mainly about raising animals for a later resale to raise capital to support their livelihoods. As provided by ActionAid, the details of the project are as follows:

- ***Training and construction of pen***

All women selected undergo three (3) days training by MoFA. All the women trained are supported to construct a pen. After the construction of the pen, it is inspected by the group leaders, MoFA, AAG Partner and AAG staff. Upon recommendation of inspection team, the woman is allowed to search for animals she wishes to rear. The group leaders will then pay for animals with funds from ActionAid. Each woman is given three animals. (One male and two females).

- ***Project design***

The project is design in such a way that each woman who benefit from the project will pay back two animals to another women in the same community. This will create the opportunity for other women in the communities to also get animals to rear. The women are also link to the Vertenary service personnel to support in vaccinating the animals. The women who have benefited from the project are in a group and meet regularly to share experiences and discuss issues affecting them.

- ***Impacts of the Project***

In Asutifi 140 women have benefited from the project and additional 19 benefited from animals paid back by some of women beneficiaries. This implies 159 women benefitted from the project in Asutifi district.



The project has improved the income levels of most of the women who are committed to implementing what was taught at the training. Among the host of impacts of the project include:

1. One of the women beneficiaries has had best women in livestock rearing award during the celebration of farmers' day in Asutifi district 2012. This is a woman who had no resources of her own but now has more than twenty goats. She keep her records and follow all the modern way of rearing animals.
2. Income level of women who benefited have improved since most of them (51 women in Asutifi have sold out some of their animals and invested into other ventures like farming and petty trading.
3. Five of the women in Asutifi district have sold the animals to support their girl child to learn trade (seamstress).
4. A number of the women especially in Donkorkrom in Asutifi district have sold some of their animals to buy land for their farming activities.

### ***An Impact story***

In Ghana, studies have shown that women have low income and are the most poor due to the fact that they normally work on their husbands' land. They are mostly engaged in unpaid work. In Asutifi district for instance the story there is similar, most of the women work on the family lands just to provide food for the family. Their husbands own the farms and mostly control how money will be spent in the house. As a result, most of the women there are poor.

Madam Pokuaa from Donkorkorm mentioned how the livelihood project of ActionAid has reduced her poverty and has increased her income. According to an interview with her, this was what she said:

*"I am among the women who have benefited from ActionAid livelihood project for women in Asutifi district. I was selected and had the three (3) days training by MoFA. They supported me to construct a pen. After the construction of the pen, it is inspected by, MoFA and AAG staff. Upon recommendation of inspection team, I was asked to search for animals that I wanted. I wanted*

*sheep so they gave me three- one male and two females.*

*As at now I had 18 animals and I sold three of them to buy a sewing machine and paid for my daughter to learn a trade in sewing. I also sold some of the animals to assist me in my farming work.*

*I really thank Action Aid for the support; I have money and animals of own and can sell them at any time I am in need. My poverty has reduced due to these animals that I had. My husband now respect me because I now contribute to the family, I pay school fees of my children. The project has really contributed to liberate most women who had nothing and depended on husband to a position where we now have animals which has given us income.*

*I wish to thank ActionAid for their programmes that focus mostly on women. They have come to make us women know that we have the ability to be on our own. I thank MOFA for coming to treat my animals and finally I thank ActionAid people for their support”.*

***Plate 3: A beneficiary of the Livelihood Project introduced by AAG (Madam Pokuaa happily feeding her animals)***



Source: Author's Field Survey, 2014.

#### **4.6 Challenges of AAG in the Study Communities**

The major challenges facing AAG from the survey include:

- Unwillingness of government to allocate resources for the effective functioning of bodies (such as DOVVSU) which are responsible for upholding women's rights in the face of violence and any abuse.

The survey revealed that one of the challenges facing institutions such as DOVVSU, the Police, teachers, etc in the study area is the unwillingness of government to allocate funds for these bodies to carry out their mandate. This is usually at the pretext of lack of financial resources. As a result the effectiveness of these institutions at the local level is compromised. This is because they lack basic resources such as good accommodation, office equipment's and logistics such as vehicles to move around in carrying out their mandate. To add to that, highly qualified personnel refuse posting to these deprived areas due to the poor conditions in these areas.

- Low skill of the respondents which makes it difficult to track progress

The study revealed that the level of education of the respondents is low. That is majority of the respondents either completed school at the JHS level or never went to school at all. This makes it very difficult for them to track and measure the outcome of interventions of the programmes which are introduced by AAG. This is because measurement of interventions such as measuring the level of poverty in the study is a complex activity which requires certain level of skills which the respondents do not have.

- High Demand for Interventions with Corresponding Low staff capacity and Inadequate Funding

Again it was observed that the respondents in the study area constantly demand that AAG increase its scope of interventions such as school buildings, supply of agricultural inputs such as fertilizer. However AAG is highly constrained in terms of staff capacity and financing. This puts a lot of pressure on the staff and resources of AAG. This has led to the AAG working in twenty five (25) communities in Asutifi district.

- Approach of AAG –Human Right Based Approach to Development.

Community expect more service delivery services like providing more tangible things like schools, teachers quarters, farm inputs and processing centers but AAG approach deal more with empowerment, providing knowledge through training and facilitating for the community members to demand their right from duty bearers. This approach of AAG takes time and community members want to see solutions now spearheaded by AAG.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS 5.1**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter is the last chapter for this study. It summarizes the findings from the survey in the previous chapter. The chapter moves on to talk about recommendations that can be used in fighting poverty using right based approaches in line with the objectives of the study. The chapter ends with a general conclusion to the study rooting for the right based approach to poverty reduction.

#### **5.2 Summary of findings**

In sum, the findings of the study have revealed the connection between poverty and key factors, namely; human rights, education and employment or economic empowerment. Thus, as an

essential component of poverty reduction, AAG seeks to empower the poor and excluded to demand their rights and live a life of dignity. The study revealed that, many people in the study area have become conscious of their intrinsic human rights due to the numerous advocacy roles and sensitization programmes organized by AAG. The formation of COMBAT- an advocacy group for fighting against domestic violence in the district, has helped in resolving several domestic violence cases and also, helped in advancing women's rights through economic empowerment. Moreover, it has immensely contributed to abolishing old and inimical cultural practices such as the one that prevents women from giving birth in the house.

Another strategy employed to tackle poverty under the HRBA is increasing agricultural production especially for women through secured land holding rights and the supply of extension services and farm inputs. The study has shown how AAG has helped about five hundred and eighty one (581) farmers including 336 women farmers to have access to land and extension services leading to increase in production, which by and large has led to an improvement in their livelihoods.

Moreover, since education creates the opportunity for enhancing social mobility, AAG in its quest to fight against poverty has spearheaded the promotion of education in the study communities especially for girls. The study has brought to light how AAG had initiated several actions including: strengthening of school governance, campaigning on rights to and in education as a fundamental right and challenging violence against girls in school. In addition, media advocacy, mobilizing organizations and like-minded activists and groups have been pursued rigorously by AAG focusing to help the vulnerable children such as disabled and girls. AAG has over the years contributed to the supply of supplementary reading books, building of school blocks, holiday camping of girls and empowering parents especially mothers through alternative livelihoods.

Despite the achievements of AAG in poverty reduction in the study area, the organization encounters several challenges. These include the unwillingness of government and allied agencies to effectively collaborate with the AAG largely due to resource constraints and among other factors. Also, high illiteracy levels tend to be a major barrier to AAG and the study shown that, many of the respondents in the Asutifi district are illiterate. Again,

### **5.3 Measuring the Impacts**

The dimensions impacted by the HBRA could be conveniently viewed under social and economic terms. Though it's difficult giving a vivid account on the impacts of the strategy due to the

qualitative nature of the study; however, the study has shown how the HBRA had led to a decline in domestic violence cases, increased human rights awareness, promotion of education, abolishing of outmoded and inhumane cultural practices and customs etc- all under the social impacts of the HBRA approach.

Under the economic impacts, there has been a considerable improvement in livelihoods due to increased access to land, extension services and farming inputs.

## **5.4 Recommendation**

5.4.1 There should be effective collaboration between AAG and other stakeholders in the study area.

AAG together with other institutions- governmental, parastatals, NGOs and other stakeholders interested in the fight against poverty should collaborate effectively in terms of information sharing, provision of technical assistance, pooling of resources and logistics (if possible) and among many others in advancing the cause of poverty reduction.

### **5.4.2 Training of Beneficiaries in Evaluation and Projects Appraisal**

As part of strengthening the accountability process, AAG should train the respondents in the study communities with monitoring, evaluation and appraisal skills. Human Rights Based Approach to fighting poverty requires attention to be paid to both outcome and processes to properly assess its effectiveness. However this type of measurement requires certain level of skill which the respondents do not have due to low level of education. As a result, AAG should train the respondents in how to prepare blueprints for their areas. That is the respondents should be trained on how to draw plans, implement and monitor/evaluate their own plans. AAG should select five persons in each of the study communities, in a form of a workshop, the respondents should be explain to the programmes of AAG including the Human Rights Based Approach to poverty reduction. Again the respondents should be trained to appraise these programmes not only as an outcome but as a process activity.

## **5.4 Conclusion**

In conclusion, HRBA aims to support better and more sustainable development outcomes by analyzing and addressing the inequalities, discriminatory practices (de jure and de facto) and unjust power relations which are often at the heart of development problems.

Though the impacts of the HBRA could not be explicitly measured owing to the qualitative nature of the approach, yet the benefits or results produced by the strategy cannot be underestimated. The study has apparently demonstrated how the HBRA has been used by AAG in tackling poverty and also, how the inherent weaknesses in the approach could be straightened moving forward in the fight against poverty.

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## **Appendix I**

**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING**

COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING

KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND  
TECHNOLOGY, KUMASI

**Topic: An Assessment Of The ActionAid Rights-based Approach to Poverty Reduction in the Brong Ahafo Region: A Case Study of the Asutifi District**

**Institutional Questionnaire**

*This Research Instrument is structured to seek for primary data for the conduct of the aforementioned academic work. Your support and co-operation is very much expected and your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality.*

Name of Institution: **Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ)**

Name of Respondent: .....

Position of Respondent: .....

Date of Interview: .....

1. What roles does the Commission play in an attempt of alleviating poverty especially among women in the district?

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2. Do you know about the activities of the ActionAid Rights-based Approach of poverty reduction in the district? .a. [ ] b. [ ]

3. If yes, what are the contributions/effects of the ActionAid Rights-based Approach in improving the quality of lives of the people in the district?

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4. What are some of the challenges impeding the implementation of the ActionAid Rightsbased Approach in alleviating poverty?

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5. In what ways does the Commission supports the ActionAid Rights-based Approach?

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6. Who are the stakeholders involved and their roles in the implementation of the ActionAid Rights-based Approach in reducing poverty in the district?

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7. What are the difficulties the Commission faces in collaborating with the other stakeholders in reducing poverty in the district especially ActionAid?

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8. What strategies can be employed to improve the activities of the ActionAid Rights-based Approach in improving the quality of lives of people?

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**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING**

**COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING**

**KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY,**

**KUMASI**



**Topic: An Assessment Of The ActionAid Rights-based Approach to Poverty Reduction in  
the Brong-Ahafo Region: A Case Study of the Asutifi District**

## Interview Guide

*This Research Instrument is structured to seek for primary data for the conduct of the aforementioned academic work. Your support and co-operation is very much expected and your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality.*

Name of Institution: Centre for maternal health and community empowerment (CMCE)

Name of Respondent: .....

Position of Respondent: .....

Date of Interview: .....

1. What roles does the Association play in an attempt of alleviating poverty especially among the rural communities in the district?

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2. What activities do your Association undertakes in promoting the ActionAid Rights-based Approach in the district?

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3. What are the benefits/effects of the ActionAid Rights-based Approach on poverty reduction?

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4. What are some of the challenges impeding the implementation of the ActionAid Rightsbased Approach in alleviating poverty?

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5. Who are the stakeholders involved and their roles in the implementation of the ActionAid Rights-based Approach in reducing poverty in the district?

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6. In what ways does the Association collaborate and coordinate with other stakeholder in promoting the Rights-based Approach in the district?

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7. What are the difficulties the Association faces in collaborating with the other stakeholders in reducing poverty in the district?

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8. What strategies can be employed to improve the activities of the ActionAid Rights-based Approach in improving the quality of lives of people?

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**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING**

**COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING**

**KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY,  
KUMASI**



**Topic: An Assessment Of The ActionAid Rights-based Approach to Poverty Reduction in  
the Brong Ahafo Region: A Case Study of the Asutifi District**

**Institutional Questionnaire**

*This Research Instrument is structured to seek for primary data for the conduct of the  
aforementioned academic work. Your support and co-operation is very much expected and  
your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality.*

Name of Institution: Domestic Violence Victims Support Unit (**DoVVSU**)

Name of Respondent: .....

Position of Respondent: .....

Date of Interview: .....

1. What roles does the DoVVSU play in an attempt of alleviating poverty especially among women in the district?

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2. Do you know about the activities of the ActionAid Rights-based Approach of poverty reduction in the district? .a. [ ] b. [ ]

3. If yes, what are the contributions/effects of the ActionAid Rights-based Approach in improving the quality of lives of the people in the district?

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4. What are some of the challenges impeding the implementation of the ActionAid Rightsbased Approach in alleviating poverty?

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5. In what ways does the DoVVSU supports the ActionAid Rights-based Approach?

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6. Who are the stakeholders involved and their roles in the implementation of the ActionAid Rights-based Approach in reducing poverty in the district?

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7. What are the difficulties the DoVVSU faces in collaborating with the other stakeholders in reducing poverty in the district especially ActionAid?

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8. What strategies can be employed to improve the activities of the ActionAid Rights-based Approach in improving the quality of lives of people?

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**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING**  
COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING  
KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND  
TECHNOLOGY, KUMASI



**Topic: An Assessment Of The ActionAid Rights-based Approach to Poverty Reduction in  
the Brong-Ahafo Region: A Case Study of the Asutifi District**

**Household Questionnaire**

*This Research Instrument is structured to seek for primary data for the conduct of the  
aforementioned academic work. Your support and co-operation is very much expected and  
your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality.*

Name of Community: .....

Name of Respondent: .....

House Number: .....

Date of Interview: .....

1. What is your highest level of education attained? A. primary [ ] B. J.S.S [ ]  
C. secondary [ ] D. Technical/Vocational [ ] E. Tertiary [ ]
2. Sex of respondent male [ ] female [ ]
3. Age of respondent A, 15-20 [ ] B. 21-25 [ ] C. 26-30 [ ] D.31-35 [ ] E. Above  
36 [ ]
4. What is your marital status? A. Married [ ] B. Single [ ] C. Divorced [ ] D. Widow [ ]  
E. Others [ ]
5. What economic activity are you engaged in? A. Service [ ] B. Commerce [ ] C. Agric [ ]  
D. Industry [ ]
6. Are you aware of the ActionAid Rights-based Approach in reducing poverty? A. Yes [ ] B.  
No [ ]

7. If yes, what is it about?  
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8. What are benefits of the ActionAid Rights-based Approach in reducing poverty in the  
district?

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9. What roles does the ActionAid Rights-based Approach play in an attempt of alleviating  
poverty especially among the rural communities in the district?

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10. What are some of the challenges impeding the implementation of the ActionAid Rightsbased Approach in alleviating poverty?

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11. Who are the actors/institutions/groups involved in the implementation of the ActionAid Rights-based Approach in reducing poverty in the district?

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12. What are the difficulties the ActionAid International faces in collaborating with the other stakeholders in reducing poverty in the district?

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13. What strategies can be employed to improve the activities of the ActionAid Rights-based Approach in improving the quality of lives of people?

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