

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

PROVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES BY THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD
CHURCH IN THE SUHUM DISTRICT OF EASTERN REGION

PRINCE OFORI APPIAH

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BY

PRINCE OFORI APPIAH

Dissertation submitted to the Department of Educational Foundations of the Faculty of Education, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for award of Master of Arts Degree in Guidance and Counselling

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

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

Candidate's Signature..... Date.....

Name: Prince Ofori Appiah

Supervisor's Declaration

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

Supervisor's Signature..... Date.....

Name: Rev. Kwasi Otopa Antiri

ABSTRACT

The fundamental thrust of the study was to investigate the social services provided by the Assemblies of God church in the Suhum District of the Eastern Region in Ghana. The study was guided by six research questions. The descriptive survey design was used for the study. The target population for the study was made up of all the church members including the pastors and leaders and non-members in the Suhum, Asamankese and Nsawam towns in the Suhum District. Stratified proportional sampling technique was used to select the 100 members from the church whereas convenience sampling was used to select the community members. However, the 50 pastors and leaders of the church were purposively selected. The instruments used for data collection were questionnaires and interview guide. Frequency and percentage scores were used to analyse the data.

The results showed that pre and post-marital counselling, contribution to healthcare and involvement in sanitation issues were the paramount social services the church provided to the community. The main beneficiaries of social services were the members of the church with occasional annexation to the needy, poor and those who ask for it in the community. The study also revealed that lack of finance as well as support from community members was the challenge that confronted the church in its social services provision. It was therefore recommended that the Assemblies of God church should consider increasing their assistance to the community in the area of education, microfinance and conflict resolution. Again, the church should solicit funds from external sources like NGOs to enable them accomplish their projects for the community.

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DEDICATION

To my church members and my dear family.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

The very first provider of social services before the introduction of Christianity on the soil of Gold Coast (now Ghana,) and which is still important in this matter is the family. Before the missionaries came to what is now Republic of Ghana, the country was divided into tribal communities. The sense of group belonging and hence responsibility for one another, was very strong within the community. The family or lineage provided social support, both physically and mentally when individuals were in need of it. Today, urbanization has weakened the family ties, which has put a large pressure on the order of social services (Cromwell, 1962). This weakening in family ties has changed the role of the church in society. That is to say, the church has replaced the family when it comes to the provision of the social services (Kodua, 2004).

Since the advent of Orthodox Christian Churches, including the Roman Catholic, Anglican, Basel (now Presbyterian) Bremen or North German (now Evangelical Presbyterian) and Wesley (or Methodist) missions, in Ghana at various times, they have contributed in varying dimensions to the central economic, moral, social and spiritual transformation of the people of Ghana. In fact, the Catholic Church is the premier Christian religion society in the country,

for it is the first mission that was established by the Europeans on the shores of Ghana precisely in Elmina in 1482 by some Catholic priest who accompanied the Portuguese to the then Gold Coast in January 1482 to build the Fort of St. Georges, the present day Elmina Castle. The presence of the Dutch in Ghana forced the Catholics into recession for two hundred and eighty years. Before the re-entry of the Catholic Church in evangelization field, other religious denominations like the Methodist and the Presbyterian had already established their bases and had started spreading (Miller & Gloria, 2007).

The Christian missions established several socio-economic institutions in Ghana as a medium of evangelization and conversion of the people to Christianity. These institutions were educational facilities of the basic and second cycle levels, health-care delivery units and industrial and economic institutions. These activities of the Christian missions had a tremendous impact on the people of Ghana positively. The Central Region is referred to as the “the citadel of education” because of the presence of many schools in the region as well the quality of education the schools in the region provide. Central Region boasts of schools such as Mfantshipim, St. Augustine’s College, Wesley Girls High and Adisadel College among others.

Today several types of Christian denominations can be found in Ghana. Omenyo (2006) has divided them into five categories, namely; mainline (historic) churches, which originated from the missions of Western origin and financial support (e.g. Presbyterianism), African Independent Churches, which have indigenous origin and financial support, mainly founded in the beginning of the

twentieth century (e.g. Africana Missions). The third category is the Pentecostal Churches, which date back from the 1910's and are of Western roots (e.g. Apostolic church). Neo-Evangelical/mission related churches are those in the fourth category. This group comprises evangelical churches with western ties from 1940's, mostly found in northern Ghana (e.g. Assemblies of God Missions). Those in the fifth category are Neo-Pentecostal/charismatic churches (e.g. Action chapel and Word Miracle church). Pentecostalism in Ghana can be placed within the period of 1900-1970 and 1970-1990 (Larbi, 2001). According to Larbi (2001) the two periods produced six major renewal movements. Spiritual movement, also known as Prophet-Healing Churches belong to the first movement. The second movement are those classified as main line or evangelical Pentecostal movement. The evangelistic activities of the Pentecostal movement contributed greatly in producing four other renewal movements namely; the charismatic movement within the main line churches, Para-Churches Movement, Charismatic Movement and the Prophet/Healer-Centred Pentecostal Prayer Camps.

Larbi (2001) states that before spiritual church emerged, there were some Pentecostal precursors, which the first period produced and the effects of their activities had impact on the historical churches. Liberian evangelist William Wadis Harris, John Swatson and Sampson Oppong were some of the major Pentecostal revivalist who appeared on the Ghanaian scene. The ministry of Harris, Swatson and Oppong appears to have emerged in reaction to a Christianity which denies or explains away the miracles and mighty works attested to in the New Testament (Bettlinger, as cited in Larbi, 2001).

Pentecostalism in Ghana is largely traced by Peter Anim and his Faith Tabernacle church. Out of this organization emerged three of the four leading classified Pentecostal churches in the country; namely the Christ Apostolic Church, the Church of Pentecost and Apostolic Church (Larbi, 2001).

It is the observation of Larbi (2001) that the development of the Pentecostal greatly influenced by two dedicated and charismatic figures, Peter Anim and James Mckeown. Anim's movement (Faith Tabernacle church) which started in 1917 entered into affiliation with the United Kingdom (U.K). The Apostolic church in 1935 sent James Mckeown to the then Gold Coast as a missionary of U.K. Apostolic church to work with Anim's group. In 1939, Anim and Mckeown parted company because of strong disagreement of divine healing and the use of preventive and curative medicine. Anim reorganized the remnants of his followers under the name The Christ Apostolic Church and Mckeown continued to work as a missionary of U.K. Apostolic church until 1953 when he broke ties with the Apostolic Church and formed his own church and named it The Church of Pentecost. The year 1953 therefore saw the emergence of 2 or 3 bodies in the country, among which were Church of Pentecost and Christ Apostolic Church. These churches and Assemblies of God became the main Pentecostal bodies in Ghana (Larbi, 2001).

Larbi (2001) opines that the Pentecostal movement came under one umbrella known as Ghana Pentecostal Council. This name was adopted on February 1981 and has now grown into national prominence as one of the

religious bodies recognized by the constitution of Ghana. As at 1999, membership of the G.P.C. had risen to 156.

Statement of the Problem

There has been a growing concern about the inability of some Christian churches to provide adequate social services to their members and the community in which they operate. Churches which are blamed the most are those which sprang up after the mainline or historical church like Roman Catholic, the Presbyterian, the Methodist and others.

The Pentecostal churches which Assemblies of God is one, are among these churches which are accused of not providing adequate social services to their members and the community in which they operate. With 93.3% of Ghana's population claiming to belong to a religion and 69% of these belonging to Christianity, much contribution in terms of the provision of social service is required of them (Omenyo, 2006). At present, the largest Christian group in Ghana are the Pentecostals/Charismatic (24% of the 69% of the Christians), Protestant (18.6%), Catholics (15.3%) and miscellaneous Christian groups (11%). There is a perception that majority of the Pentecostal churches in Ghana, do not contribute much in terms of social service provision to their members and the communities in which their operations are centred. It has however been found that the mainline churches like the Roman Catholic, the Presbyterian and Methodist are doing well when it comes to the provision of social services like schools, hospitals, agriculture and providing financial support to their members and those in the communities they find themselves (Baah, 2001).

A couple of key differences between the mainline and the Pentecostal churches is the focus on personal accomplishment, the liveliness of worship, the importance of the bible, the importance of tithe and often lack of social engagement, since it is believed that, God solves problems (for example, a person's or country's economical problems) and not man making prayers and financial contribution to the church more encouraged than dealing with problems on a non-spiritual level (Schenk, 2004). Be that as it may, less or no empirical study has been done to find out the role of some of these Pentecostal churches in the provision of social services. The concentration has been on the mainstream churches. In light of this, the study is to unearth the role of Assemblies of God Church in Suhum District of the Eastern Region in the provision of social services.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to find out what kind of social services Assemblies of God churches in the Suhum District provide. In particular, the study was interested in finding out whether the great commission by Christ is holistically carried out or partially done. Specifically, the study purported to:

- i. Find out the conditions in which social services are provided by the church in the district.
- ii. Find out the extent to which the community benefit from the social services of the church.
- iii. Investigate the kinds of social services are provided by the church.

- iv. Find out the beneficiaries of the social services provided by the church.
- v. Highlight the challenges associated with the provision of services by the church.
- vi. Find out the impact of social services provision by the church on the community.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. Under what conditions are social services provided by the church in the district?
2. To what extent does the community benefit from the social services of the church?
3. What kinds of social services are provided by the church?
4. Who are the beneficiaries of the social services provided by the church?
5. What are the challenges associated with the provision of services by the church?
6. What has been the impact of social services provision by the church on the community?

Significance of the Study

The findings of the study would give information on the contribution of the Assemblies of God churches in the Suhum District in the provision of social services to its members and the communities in which they operate. The study

could thus serve as an impetus for a scientific research into the activities of the Assemblies of God in the Eastern Region to find out the role of the whole region in the social services provision.

Again, the outcome might inform the national executive of the Assemblies of God, Ghana, about the strength and the weakness of the Assemblies of God church in social services provision. Pastors, counsellors, deacons might also use the outcome of the study to improve on the social services within the church.

Delimitation of the Study

The study aimed at finding out the role of the Assemblies of God Church in the provision of social services in Suhum District of the Eastern Region. This included the provision of education, health facilities, counselling services and other humanitarian services. It also looked at the problems encountered, sources of fund, the beneficiaries of the social services and the benefits the community derive from the social services provision by the church.

The study did not consider the development of the spiritual support of the members or the community. It also did not consider the role the social service provision is playing in the numerical growth of the church.

Limitations of the Study

Various limitations existed in this study and could possibly influence the results. The sample was skewed in that there were a significantly greater number of male participants than there were female participants. This could possibly be due to the sampling technique used by the researcher. In addition to the skewed

sample, the result of the study could also be influenced by whether or not the participants answered the questions honestly.

Again, the non-response rate from the questionnaires could affect generalization of the findings since the sample size would be affected. Finally, the descriptive aspect of the data could have several meanings and could therefore be subject to other interpretations other than those of interest to the study.

Definition of Terms

Social Service: Activities of helping individuals, groups or communities to enhance or restore their capacity for social functioning and creating societal conditions favourable to its goals.

The Local Church: A circle of believers in some definite locality, irrespective of the question whether these believers are or not assembled for worship.

Holistic Ministry: Activities of helping individuals, groups or communities to attain their spiritual, mental, psychological, emotional, and educational or needs

Missionaries: They are people who have been sent to a foreign country to teach their religion to the people who live there.

Organization of the rest of the Study

Chapter two consists of the review of literature related to the study. It examines the views of authors and researchers on issues related to the study. Specifically, it addresses issues like what social services are, conditions under which social services are provided, providers of social services, challenges

confronting social services provision in Ghana and the place of Assemblies of God church in the provision of social services and their benefits to society.

Chapter three describes the methodology used for the study. Specifically, the research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, research instrument, the procedure for data collection and the data analysis are discussed.

The fourth chapter contains the results and discussion of results obtained from the field survey. It examines the trends that emerged from the data by using descriptive statistics specifically frequency and percentages.

The concluding chapter, chapter five, presents the summary, conclusions, and recommendations as well as suggestions for future research related to the topic.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter reviews literature related to the research topic under investigation. The significance of this is to survey the pool of knowledge on the subject under study and more importantly to create a context for analysing data. Specifically the theoretical review deals with The Religious Experience of Mankind (Ninian Smart's Dimension of Religion) and the concept of Pentecostalism. The empirical review is categorized under the following sub-headings: what social services are; conditions under which social service are provided; providers of social services; challenges associated with the provision of social services and the place of assemblies of God church in the provision of social service and their benefits to the Society.

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

The Religious Experience of Mankind

In the 20th century, social-scientists stopped searching for the origin of religion and focused their attention more on analyzing and explaining the functions of religion. They spoke more about the social functions of religion than the prehistoric development.

One of such social-scientists who focused analyzing the functions of religion is Ninian Smart's (1968) theory: *The Religious Experience of Mankind*. Ninian Smart has established six dimensions or structures in a way to find the existing common grounds between all world religions. These are classified into thought, "mind", dimensions which are the doctrinal, mythical, and experiential dimension, and then the multi-sensory dimensions which are the ritual, ethical and social dimensions. These dimensions of religion as espoused by Ninian Smart's *Religious Experience of Mankind* are discussed as follows:

Doctrinal dimension: Doctrine is "an attempt to give system, clarity, and intellectual power to what is revealed through the mythological and symbolic language of religious faith and ritual" and "the world religions owe some of their living power to their success in presenting a total picture of reality, through a coherent system of doctrines many religions have a system of doctrines - beliefs about the nature of Divinity or ultimate reality and the relationship of humans to that ultimate, real, divinity (Smart, 1968).

Mythological dimension: Myths are the sacred stories which pass from generation to generation. They are sacred because they reveal and explain what that tradition believes to be the ultimate nature of gods, humans and the universe ((Rennie n.d.; Smart, 1968).

Ethical dimension: This dimension refers to the code of ethics of the dominant religion that controls the community. However, according to Smart (1968), between the ethical teachings of a faith in every tradition, you will find sets of rules, behavioural precepts or guidelines for conduct according to which the

community judges a person good or evil depending on the level of conformity to those precepts.

Ritual dimension: This is the way in which the community re-enacts its myths and confirms as well as expresses its beliefs through action. Ritual is meant in the sense of some form of outer behaviour (such as closing one's eyes in prayer) coordinated to an inner intention to make contact with or to participate in the invisible world.

Experiential dimension: This is one of the most attractive dimensions of religion. The capacity of ritual, prayer, worship to evoke feelings of security and comfort or on the other hand feelings of awe, inexplicable presence, mystery and ecstasy.

Social dimension: The mode in which the religion in question is institutionalized, whereby, through its institutions and teachings, it affects the community in which it finds itself. A religious tradition implies some sort of social organization through which it perpetuates itself. There can be individuals who exemplify the religious tradition, and who live outside of society, but the teachings and the tradition itself is preserved and passed on through the social organization of churches, temples, mosques or monasteries (Rennie, n.d; Smart, 1968).

Concept of Pentecostalism

While Opoku (1990) attributes the rise of Pentecostalism to nationalistic feelings of self-expression and independence from Western missionaries which were favourable at a time when Africa thought she should be allowed by the Colonialists to manage her own affairs, Anquandah (1990) associates the origin of Pentecostalism with the failure of orthodoxy in the historic Churches to recognize

those elements of African Traditional Religion and culture which gave true identity to African Christians as well as the failure to test the spirits of gifted members of their flock and to utilize these gifts for the benefit of their Churches.

Recent records by Larbi (2001), however, indicate that Pentecostalism in Ghana had an indigenous origin. Larbi argued that it is true that some of the Western missionary mainline churches were suspicious of the Pentecostal stirrings in some of their members; but some of the missionary Churches were greatly helped in their growth by the young Pentecostal movement.

Larbi (2001) asserts that Pentecostalism emerged as a result of a longing for a true Christian religion that is capable of answering humanity deepest yearnings. The Pentecostals believe they have inaugurated a full gospel movement where God is present in power with his people, not only in the future but also in the present; to heal their diseases, calm the fears, protect them from the wicked spirit, and provide for their needs in the context where death, decay and depravation abound. Miller and Gloria (2007) state that unlike the mainline churches which provide both the spiritual and social needs of the people, the Pentecostal churches seem to have a different focus. They preach prosperity and parade the accumulation of wealth as a sign of God's blessings. The Pentecostal churches have tremendous appeal for people, particularly; young men and women who desperately seek to make progress in life.

However, unlike the mainline churches which provided both spiritual and social needs of the people, other churches like the Pentecostals, which Assemblies of God is not exempted, was perceived to have a different focus. These churches

link prospects of prosperity with deliverance from evil forces such as witchcraft, ancestral spirit and other demons (Miller & Gloria, 2007).

Empirical Review

What Social Services are

Social services are the provision of welfare service to the people when their capacity for responding to the demand of life is strained, when capacity growth seems unattainable, and when important decision elude resolution (www.wikipedia.org). Provision of health care, education, financial assistance, helping people in areas of marriage counselling, conflict resolution and stress management are some examples of social services.

Naturally when people are confronted with challenges, they look for help. Usually, they think they do not have capacity to solve their problems unless someone helps them do so. And even when help comes, they expect the helper to produce magic which will solve their problems. The main objective of social service provision is to assist people in need to deal with life, engaging in growth-producing activities and make effective decision. Vulnerable and marginalized groups such as children and young people, the elderly, the physically challenged, the unemployed, the needy family and the sick and injured are those who need social services the most (www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki).

Hodges (1973) observed that church is primarily a spiritual entity of a union of men and women who have been born anew by the spirit of God, and thus become the body of Christ in the earth, representative of the kingdom of God. The church objectives and ministries are primarily spiritual. Hodges (1973) says that the

church is made up of individuals and families who are bound together in a common faith and purpose. Thus, the church is also a social entity. Individuals and family relate to each other within the church, which becomes a Christian society. This relationship bring with them social responsibilities. Social services such as education, health care, stress and conflict management which the Christian churches provide will be issues under discussion.

Education

The Christian missionaries were the next group of people after the European merchants companies to champion formal education in Ghana. Their arrival brought with it an apostolic vigour into the system. It must be noted, however, that there was great variation in the purpose and methods of education these various mission adopted. That is to say the methods these missionaries adopted relatively reflected the missions and philosophies of these Christian bodies. Notable among these missions included the Wesleyans, Basel, Bremen, German and Catholic. Each mission made efforts to broaden the scope of its curriculum and train teachers for its schools. For instance, the Basel mission established the first teacher training college at Akropong-Akuapem. A conscious attempt was also made by each of the missions to procure relevant teaching and learning resources for their schools. According to Eyiah (2004) not only were the mission regarded as the right bodies to manage education but they have more money than the government to do so.

According to Graham (1971), the developments of education became an official government policy only from 1850s onwards (p.106) with the introduction

of education ordinances by the colonial government. This period saw the centralization proper of education in Ghana. Under the Education Ordinance of 1852, the Gold Coast schools were to finance by annual sum of \$ 1,000, which was mainly derived from the proceeds from the Poll Tax. The ordinance also provided for a Board of School Visitors and in 1856, Rev .C.S. Hassels was appointed Superintendent and Inspector of schools and was charged to oversee the requisite supply of teachers of good quality by his own training (McWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1975). The Acting-governor during this period, Connor, could thus report that education had a separate department with its own head.

Comparatively, while the government's efforts in the provision of schools declined, the missions progressed steadily in their endeavours. Therefore, after 1874, the government decided to channel its money spent on education to helping the mission in their efforts in the form of grants. Consequently, the 1882 education ordinance established a Board of Education for both the Gold Coast and Lagos to control and supervise the system. The principal of Fourah Bay College in Sierra Leone, Rev. M. Sunter, was appointed Inspector of Schools, who was to report to the board as to whether those managing the schools observed the conditions on which the grant were given. To solve the problem, this system posed in 1890, a Director of Education was appointed for the Gold Coast alone.

With regards to secondary education, the first Methodist church secondary school, Mfantshipim School, was founded in Cape Coast in the Central Region of Ghana in 1876 (McWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1975). The school was modelled on English Wesleyan schools (Quist, 2003). Again, Quist noted that by 1930, the

Anglican and Catholic churches, in competition with the Methodists, had respectively founded at Cape Coast Adisadel and St. Augustine's Colleges. It was not until 1924 that the colonial state under Governor Gordon Guggisberg (1919-1927) made an initial attempt to participate in the provision of secondary education in the country. Guggisberg's administration thus established the Achimota School in Accra. Nevertheless, it was the Mfantsipim model which most especially provided the models for secondary education in the country which were invariably adopted by other schools, notably Accra Academy founded in 1937 in Accra (Boahen, 1996; Quist, 2003) Wesley Girls High established in 1935 and Holy Child Schools established in 1946, both in Cape Coast, are the two notable and most prestigious female institutions founded by the Methodist Church and the Catholic Church respectively. This educational enterprise embarked on by the Christian missions southern Ghana in fact, indubitably placed the south of Ghana, on a course that enabled it to take "...an early lead in the political development of Ghana by producing the first crop of highly educated elite who were mostly professional in law, medicine, journalism, teaching but also ardent nationalist contesting colonial rule on a regular basis" (Quist, 2003, p.11). Notable among these nationalists as cited by Quist were John Mensah-Sarbah and Joseph E. Casey-Hayford.

Be that as it may, the Christian church has, therefore, indubitably been responsible for creating a pool of qualified people with the knowledge and skills to contribute significantly to economic development, to be entrepreneurial, to

develop science and technology, to deliver basic services, and enlightened leaders in future. Its role thus needs not be overemphasized.

Health Care

Before the coming of the white missionaries, most sick people depended for cure upon mystic and other unscientific methods and diagnosis. Preventive medicine included talisman, magic rings and beads (Buah, 1998) According to Kyeremateng (1978) the missionaries practiced orthodox medicine in the castles. He writes that Danish, Dr Peter Issert extended health facilities to the natives between 1783 and 1786. He went on to mention that one Dr Ernest Mahly amputated the leg of Mrs Huppenbaner who developed complications in the leg after giving birth (Kyeremateng, 1978).

The Presbyterian missionaries started a clinic at Aburi in the latter part of the 19th century. Debrunner (1967) asserts that medicine developed after the Second World War. This increase in medical work according to him was carried on with approval of government.

Prominent hospitals like, Agogo, Wenchi, Offinso, Jachie Pramso, Atibie Kwahu, Agona-Asante and many others were built by Christian churches. Debrunner (1967) wrote that in 1963, the Catholic Church run five hospitals in Cape Coast Diocese alone, seven hospitals and one orphanage in the Accra Diocese, five hospitals in the Keta Diocese, eleven in Kumasi Diocese and others. The Assemblies of God established two dispensaries and maternity units at Saboba and Nanpkandure in 1962. The Anglican has a hospital at Mampong and the Salvation Army operate a hospital at Wiemoase (Manso, 2007). From what

has been said, it is clear that Christianity played no mean role in the provision of health care in Ghana.

Marriage

Marriage is a complex affair that encompasses economic, social and religious aspect that often overlap so firmly that they cannot be separated from one another. Marriage is the focus of existence. In it, the whole drama of history is repeated, renewed and revitalized (Mbiti, 1993). In this light, marriage becomes a duty and requirement from the corporate society and a rhythm of life in which everyone must participate. The Christian church does not see marriage to be only a social obligation but also a binding religious institution by means of which the individual contributes the seed of life towards human kind's struggle against the loss of original immortality (Mbiti, 1993).

Marriage has several definitions depending on the background orientation of the author and what he or she wants to convey.

Olson and Defrain (2000) define marriage as "The emotional and legal commitment of two people to share emotional and physical intimacy, various task and economic resources.

A religious definition from the Christian perspective could be the following: marriage is a union or a covenant between a man and a woman as a couple who legitimately share their bodies in the physical (sexual) intimacy, have emotional, social, economic and spiritual commitments or relationships aimed at the total fulfilment of each spouse as a whole being (body, soul and spirit). The union is sacred because it is brought about by God (Essuman, 2008). The

institution of marriage is the sole prerogative of God. He saw it was not good for a man to be alone and made a companion-a woman for him (Gen. 2:18). That was the beginning of family on earth.

Fisher (1978) writes that a healthy marriage leads to a society which eventually leads to a healthy nation. Healthy marriage is therefore very essential in societal and nation building. The Christian church perceives marriage to be God's plan to meet the human need for companionship, love, mutual encouragement, practical help and sexual satisfaction. According to the General Council of Assemblies of God (2009) it is God's plan that children should be born and raised in the security and love created by one man and one woman who are committed to each other for a lifetime in marriage. Through the physical union between Adam and Eve, God planned for the human race to be continued (Gen. 1:27, Gen. 2:24). It is in this light that the church sees it to be one of its cardinal duties to initiate and nourish marriage as well as rehabilitate it when the need arises. In an age when family values are under severe attack and the traditional foundation of the family seems to be crumbling, Fisher (1978) recognizes the need for strong teaching on the biblical view of marriage and the family (The General Council of the Assemblies of God, 2009). The Christian Church believes marriage is a sacred, holy and monogamous union between a man and a woman. It involves a lifelong covenant, a solemn, purposeful, wilful, binding agreement made before God, a man, and a woman (Gen. 2:24; Malachi 2:14). Swindoll (1999) observes that because marriage forms the foundational element for a healthy society, the church believes low marriage standards are hurtful to

individuals, to the family, and to the cause of Christ. Marriage is God-ordained. “The Creator made them male and female, and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’ (Matthew 19:4,5). God’s design for marriage goes back to mankind’s beginning. The family, as God’s means of propagating His creation, grows out of this primary human relationship.

The marriage relationship encompasses the deepest unity of man and woman in its social and physical expressions. The first woman was declared to be a suitable helper for the man (Gen. 2:18), the perfect compliment (Gen. 2:23). God intended them to share both blessing and responsibilities. Mutual esteem and self-giving love strengthen the marriage relationship. God intended this physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual union to be focused on one partner only. Marriage is to be an exclusive relationship, a lifelong faithful union with one’s spouse. “What God has joined together, let man not separate” (Matthew 19:6). The Old Testament recognized the existence of polygamy (marriage to multiple partners), but still declared that monogamy was the ideal (Psalm 128:3, Proverbs 5:18; 31:10-29; Ecclesiastes 9:9). “Lifelong” means monogamy and sexual fidelity until the death of one partner. Sexual expression with more than one partner violates the holiness of biblical marriage and thus is sin in God’s sight. Marriage is a covenant, a solemn binding agreement made before God and man. The religious ceremony of the wedding before church and community emphasizes that marriage is more than a legal agreement between two individuals. The church has a responsibility to support and nurture the marriage that has been affirmed by

public vows (The General Council of the Assemblies of God, 2009). This view of marriage in the Assemblies of God church is not different from many other Christian denominations. Havey (1907) opined that a Catholic theologian, d'Amboise, for example had the following to say:

“Marriage is a covenant, a relationship established through the free, informed consent of both parties. It happens when two people who are free to marry and are physically and emotionally capable of marriage give themselves to each other, understanding that marriage means openness to life and commitment to faithful love till death. When that happened between two unbaptized people, a natural marriage bond is formed and is greatly respected by the Catholic Church. When it happens between two baptized persons, the Holy Spirit is poured out and the natural bond is elevated to a super natural sacrament. The natural blessings of marriage are the companionship, mutual support and intimacy of the spouses plus the possibility of sharing in God’s creative, life-giving work-the procreation and education of children. In a sacramental marriage, there is an additional goal-the spouses accept the vocation to be a prophetic, visible sign of the unbreakable covenant between Christ and His Church (p. 233).”

Fisher (1978) observed that, ideally, the relationship between husband and wife should parallel the relationship between Christ and the church (Eph. 5:23-30). The husband should love his wife “as Christ love the church and gave Himself up her” (Eph. 5:25). The wife should submit to her husband as the church

should submit to the Lord (Eph. 5:22-24). But it is misreading of scripture, however, to conclude that the husband can become dictatorial. The entire passage is introduced by the admonishing, “Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ” (Eph. 5:21). It is after each spouse submits one to another from a heart of love that the head/submission relationship will work. The husband has special responsibility for the spiritual leadership and welfare of the wife and family (Psalms 78:5-8, Eph. 5:23). Thus, it guarantees care, provision and protection for the woman throughout her life (Col. 3:12-13; 1Pet. 3:7). While the woman has responsibility as a parent, God has called the husband to the leader in the home. The woman is not inferior to the man. Both have full dignity and equal standing before God. Strong spiritual training is essential for children to develop spiritually (Prov. 22:6).

A happy and complete marriage is realized as both partners make Christ the centre of their marriage relationship. With Christ as the head, the marriage has an excellent chance to succeed. Only through strong teaching on the sanctity and permanence of the marriage relationship will the church reverse the current tragic trends in broken marriages and shattered families. The Assemblies of God church urges every couple who is contemplating marriage to seek Christian counsel and to address the important questions that eventually affect the marriage (The Council of the Assemblies of God, 2009). According to Kenneth J. Bosse, Pastor of New Life Assemblies of God in Raymond, New Hemisphere, the pastors of seven Assemblies of God congregations in the city of 12,000 signed a “community marriage covenant” to hold each other accountable. A couple who

want to wed in one of Raymond's churches must give the pastor six months notice and participate in at least four premarital counselling sessions (Bose, 2007). As well, the church encourages honest discussions of key issues long before the wedding, and preferably before the engagement. Such discussion focuses on key life issues such as: career aspiration, family plans, and life-style expectations, relationships with extended family and friends and financial management.

Yet the prevalence of divorce in our culture demands that the church deals with this tragic issue. The Christian Church discourages divorce with strong teaching on the sanctity and permanence of marriage. This stand is obviously more stringent than the permissive attitude of society in general and the judicial system's interpretation of the law of the land. The strong feeling of the church against divorce grows out of the clear statement in the bible that God hate divorce (Malachi 2:16) and that no human being should separate two persons joined together in holy matrimony (Matthew 19:6). Yet reality of divorce forces the church to draw from scripture guidelines for instance when God's ideal is not maintained (Johnson, Stanley, Glenn, Amato, Nock & Markman, 2002).

Scripture regulate divorce as it pertains to Christians by providing guidelines for two separate groups: marriages in which both partners are Christians; and marriage where only one spouse is a Christian. In the first case, where both husband and wife are professing Christians, neither party is ever to seek divorce (1 Corinthians 7:10, 11). In the second case (the mixed marriages) the Christian husband or wife should never initiate or seek a divorce from an unbelieving spouse (1 Corinthians 7:12-14). There are only two exceptions that

allow for this initiative. A Christian may divorce a spouse only when his/her partner is repeatedly committing the sin of adultery (Mathew 5:32; 19:9), or if the spouse refuses to leave with him/her and departs (abandonment) (1Corinthians 7:15). Both exceptions present the believer with an option; but never a mandate. It is better whenever grace enables it is to forgive marital infidelity and seek healing in the marriage.

This choice is especially desirable in cases where children will be further hurt and the family destroyed through divorce. Abandonment (a long-term physically withdrawal from the home with neglect of the responsibilities, support, and duties required of one partner within a marriage) would also prove the spouses sinful conduct and could eventually allow for a divorce. Abuse poses another threat to marriages. Thousands of women and in some cases men face serious battering and other forms of abuse from their spouses. God is concerned with the physical safety and well-being of all. He does not look lightly upon such actions within marriage or families. In such circumstances period of separation without divorce may be justify and useful in the healing of persons. If after serious attempts of counselling and reconciliation the abusing spouse departs (abandonment) rather than turning from action of abuse, 1 Corinthians 7:12-15 permitting divorce would apply.

The church has adopted various ways to solve marriage problems and save the institution from collapsing. A practical example is the Assemblies of God Marriage Encounter (Assemblies of God Marriage Encounter) programme in the United States. It is a weekend programme focused on helping couples have better

marriages through effective communication techniques they grasp during a weekend in a hotel setting. It is an opportunity for the couple to spend a weekend away from the distance and tensions of everyday's life to grow together. Here, in a comfortable, secluded environment, a couple is guided in the discovery of a new way of communicating that will help them know each other better (Assemblies of God Marriage Encounter, 2008).

It is a programme designed to give couples the opportunity to examine their lives together, their strength and weakness, and their attitudes towards each other and their families. Assemblies of God Marriage Encounter are based on the belief that the marriage relationship is the most significant, most intimate relationship on earth (Assemblies of God Marriage Encounter, 2008). In 1981 a group of Assemblies of God people felt the burden to develop an expression of the Marriage Encounter Ministry. Under the leadership of Mark and Becky Rhoades they worked diligently to craft a vision and implement a format that would complement the spiritual values and practices of Assemblies 'folks'. Now, close to 37,000 couples have had an encounter during the weekend through Assemblies of God Marriage Encounter. It has become a force that has put couples closer to each other and households closer to God (Assemblies of God Marriage Encounter, 2008).

Sessions begin on Friday evening and run through Sunday afternoon. At each session a team of three or four Assemblies of God couples and an Assemblies of God clergy couple who are trained to present the Marriage Encounter Weekend give an informal talk on various aspects of marriage. Time is

set aside following each presentation for couples to discuss privately, away from the group, their relationship as it is related to the topic presented. The weekend is structured, orderly, and informative (Lorain County free-Net Chapel, 2005).

Marriage Encounter is for any couple who desire to enrich their relationship and improve their communication. Marriage can be improved; even the best marriage can find new meaning and deepened joys through Weekend Marriage Encounter. Marriage Encounter is open to couples of all ages who have been married for at least a year. Couples married for only a few years as well as couples married for more than 40 years have attended and found Weekend Marriage Encounter rewarding (Assemblies of God Encounter, 2008). The marriage Encounter Weekend is conducted from an Assemblies of God perspective but couples of all faith or no faith at all, are welcome. Juanita Thayer, a facilitator of Assemblies of God Marriage Encounter says couples who are going to court on Monday to divorce have been able to work their differences on the weekend, and also cases of people already divorced have gotten back together (Bose, 2007). Eighteen years ago, Godzich, an associate pastor at Phoenix First Assemblies of God, began teaching marriage Sunday school class at the church. Today, Phoenix First has become one of the few mega churches in the United State to virtually eliminate divorce among its members. “We believe every Christian marriage can be saved”, says Godzich (Bose, 2007). For the past 13 years, the National Association of Marriage Enhancement (NAME) has hosted an annual international marriage conference. The organization has opened more than 200 NAME centres by offering biblically based training to husband-wife marriage

counselling teams for according to Godzich, founder and chairman of NAME, “Often a husband and wife are more willing to open up to a lay counselling couple in the church than to their pastor” (Bose, 2007, p.25). Lichi says Emerge Ministries, in conjunction with local churches, is now training couples to be marriage mentors (Bose, 2007).

The leadership of the Anglican Church of Ghana has reported to have worked with literally hundreds of couples on the brink of divorce over the last six years. In this drive several key principles that dramatically change relationship have been identified by the church. Over time, the therapist working with the church have translated these principles into life changing marriage programmes that takes a biblically-sound look at the marriage relationship and how each person within it contributes to the health of the marriage.

This programme is designed for Pastoral Staff, Christian Counsellors, Military Chaplains, Marriage Mentors, Small Group Leaders, etc. The therapist have worked with hundreds of couples using this material and through presentation and interactive question and answers sessions they help others understand how to make a difference in the relationship of the couples in their care. Participants will learn different methods of intervention that are providing couples with the results they so desperately need (Schenk, 2004). According to Martin (2002), marriage in the Christian Church has helped a lot in reducing the rate of divorce. He specifically observes that if a husband and wife were married in the church, attend worship service together weekly, pray together daily and

study the Bible together, the rate of divorce drops dramatically to 1 in 1,100 couples.

Stress Management

Religions all over the world are aware of stress situation and try to find ways of alleviating people undergoing stress. Agyemang (2003) identified two ways used by religious people to alleviate people from stress: rational explanations and practical solutions. The rational explanation appeals to the intellect by giving reason why people go through stress and indicating the importance of such situations to the individual and society at large. One important explanation, according to Agyemang, is as to why humans suffer. Christians are at pains to explanations most probably because disasters make people question the power and care of God. Stress thus retards faith. Koranteng-Pipim (2003) has in this regard observes that God allows people to suffer as: (a) a result of ignoring basic law (b) the result of accident or natural disaster (c) a result of power in the hands of evil men (d) a result of God remedial judgements (e) the result of dedication to Jesus Christ.

Koranteng-Pipim (2003) recommended longsuffering and enduring patience as the sure ways in which suffering people will find peace through God: The Bible teaches that in order to be saved we need stamina of patience that will go all the way to the end of race. We need a staying power-an indefatigable determination. But 'he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.' He pointed Jesus as a role model in this course. Agyeman (2003) again asserts that religious rituals such as prayers, sacrifice, pilgrimage, the sacraments and funeral

rites are ways employed by religion to help people adjust to stress. In fact, Christian communities are aware of the fact that most stress situations involve material loss and thus attempt to make provision for this by offering material assistance to enable people cope with their unfortunate situation. This is what Agyeman has called the practical solutions employed by religious people to stress. In this drive Christian communities not only help their members but also the larger society.

Humanitarian services such as providing relief to people undergoing stressful experience, hospitals, schools among others are all practical ways of adjusting to stress. Examples are the activities of the Catholic Relief Agency (CRA) and the Adventist Relief Agency (ADRA). In addition, it is an indubitable fact that church leaders also offer real counselling services to people undergoing stress. Croucher (2009) identifies four categories of stressors who came to Christian leaders for counselling:

1. Bio-ecological factors related to poor diet and poor exercise habits. They include noise and air pollution.
2. Vocational factors including career uncertainty; role ambiguity, role conflict, role overload, lack of opportunities to 'derole' and be oneself, for a change; loneliness, time management frustrations and many more.
3. Psychological factors relating to principally the great life change stressors from the most stressful (such as the loss of a spouse), through divorce, death of a close family member, personal injury or illness, all the way to getting ready for Christmas or handed a speeding fine.

4. Spiritual causes of stress may include temptations of all kinds; sexual, despair, jealousy of the success of others, anxiety over financial problems, anger, and even prayer can be stressful according to one study.

Conflict

The Christian church involvement in conflict management and peace building in the world is based on the social teaching of the church. The social teaching of the church encapsulates what the church believes and preaches with regards to social questions such as the dignity of the human person, human rights, human labour, social justice, peace building, the use of the material goods of the earth, the environment, international relations, socio-economic development and good governance (Derry, 2009). The church's position on these was derived from the Bible especially, in the Old Testament portion which condemns violence. For instance, Cain slew Abel out of envy and this was condemned by God, thus: "Why have you done this terrible thing? Your brother's blood is crying out to me from the ground..." (Gen. 4:10 GNB). Likewise when King Ahab killed Naboth for his vineyard, God condemned him: "after murdering a man, are you taking over his property as well? ... In the very place that the dogs lick up Naboth's blood they will lick up your blood" (1 Kings 21:19, GNB). Amos was called the "social prophet" because he stood out for Justice (Derry, 2009). Thus, he criticised and condemned the cheats of his day who become rich by making the poor poorer. His exhortation is for all to "seek good and not evil. To hate evil and to love good and establish justice in the gates" (Amos 5:14, RSV). It is explicit in the gospels that Christ was concerned of the dignity and the right of man. He was

concerned with the weak, needy and victims of injustice. Following this biblical tradition of bringing peace to the oppressed, the Assemblies of God church, like other Christian churches, see it an obligation to actively participate in conflict management and peace building in the world in which it has to preach the gospel.

The Assemblies of God Church through the Assemblies of God Relief and Development Service (AGREDS), a Church based non-profit development NGO that coordinate all the development and relief programmes of the Assemblies of God Church, Ghana, seeks to minister to the material and social needs of the poor and underprivileged in society and to emphasize and live the truth of the biblical teaching concerning caring for the needy, alleviating of suffering, social justice and stewardship of resources (Muni, 2005). AGREDS, in carrying out its developmental programmes in deprived communities considers advocacy and conflict resolution as very fundamental to any effective development. AGREDS over the years has been the voice for the voiceless, particularly in deprived communities.

AGREDS, since 1994 has been deeply involved in various kinds of peace building initiatives and conflict resolution programmes, all aimed at creating peaceful atmosphere for effective development (Muni, 2005). The rights of a child has been one major area that it has championed over the years and is currently championing the course of street children, particularly the “Kayaye” through the life line street children project at Agbogbloshie in urban Accra (Muni, 2005). A series of peace workshops have been held in partnership with other relief agencies in part of the Northern region that were affected by the 1994 ethnic

conflict. AGREDS was also part of the consortium of NGO's that facilitated peace talks between the warring factions in the Bawku conflict that led to the signing of a peace pact at Damongo, now known as the Damongo Declaration (MUNI, 2005).

AGREDS have since 1999 been supporting over 500 yam farmers in six communities in the Zabzugu-Tatale and Yendi district under the seed yam support programme as part of 1994 ethnic conflict rehabilitation process to support farmers who lost their yam seeds to regain their pre-conflict production levels (Muni, 2005). AGREDS was responsible for the distribution of foods and other relief items to over 180,000 internally displaced persons in 1994 ethnic conflict in Northern Region of Ghana. It was also responsible for the distribution of food and relief items to 80,000 Togolese refugees at the Klikor refugees camp in the Volta Region of Ghana in 1993, and also responsible for health and sanitation and skills training at the Liberian refugees camp at Gomoa-Budumburam in the Central Region of Ghana between 1994 and 2000 (Muni, 2005).

The organization has also provided support in the areas of micro credit for women and skills training at the Liberian refugee camp in Gomoa-Budumburam in partnership with the United Nations High Commission of Refugees (UNHCR). Over 300 refugee women have benefited from the micro credit scheme since January 2003 and over 600 have benefited from various practical skills training between June 2004 and December 2005 and about 800 more in 2006 (MUNI, 2005). The pursuance of this social responsibility bequeathed Christians are obviously not restricted to the Assemblies of God Church alone.

According to Adama (2005), the Christian Council of Ghana does a lot in conflict management and peace building specifically in Northern Ghana. It trains people on early warning of conflicts and it advocates prevention of conflicts. It also offers relief and rehabilitation service to the people affected by the conflict. The Christian Council of Ghana addresses human right issues; create space for negotiations and dialogue; organizes mediation courses for people of various categories and talks about forgiveness in conflict transformation; gives non-violence education to communities and schools and deals with conflicts related disaster management (Dery, 2009).

The Catholic Church is also in forefront of conflict management and peace building in Northern Ghana. It has consistently provided food, clothing, medicine, and shelter to victims of violence conflicts. Examples include its intervention in the Gonja-Valga-Konkomba in the Tuna Bole area and Nanumba-Konkomba conflict in 1981; Gonja-Nawuri conflict and Konkomba conflict in Kpandai-Salaga area in 1992 Dagomba/Nanumba/Gonja-Konkomba conflict in 1994. Other instances include the church's assistance to the Yendi conflict victims in 1992, 1994 and 2002 as well as the refugees in Paga and Nakolo in 1990 (Dery, 2009). The Tamale Ecclesiastical Province Pastoral Conference (TEPPCON), a Catholic institution, has organized civic education seminars and addresses other socio-economic issues in the province. TEPPCON has also organized workshops on the constitution of Ghana, human right and civic responsibilities for five times.

It has as well organized workshops for District Assembly members on decentralization and good governance in order that politics can be practice

without violence (Gandaa, 2005). The Northern Ghana peace project (NGPP) of the Catholic Church has also established a peace study centre known as the Centre for Conflict Transformation of Peace Studies (CECOTAPS) the aim of which is to develop it into a University by awarding degree on peace building studies and other related disciplines. NGPP has trained chiefs, youth leaders, women groups and associations on conflicts management and peace building. It has also established satellites peace centre in the Archdiocese of Tamale and Dioceses of Wa, Navrongo-Bulgatanga and Yendi (Dery, 2009).

Conditions under which Social Services are provided

One does not need theological training to understand that the Bible places responsibilities on Christians to go beyond the provision of spiritual needs of humankind to meeting their social need as well. Both the Old and the New Testament attest to this assertion. For instance, in Job 22, Eliphaz, one of the friends who visited Job during his trying moments charged that the real reasons for Job's suffering was related to his attitude towards the poor and needy. It had, Eliphaz said, to do with his failure to cover the naked, give drinks to the thirsty, his withholding bread from the hungry, and acting unjustly in the division of his land and not caring for the widows and orphans. In other words, drawing his conclusion from the law as illustrated in Leviticus 19:9-10 and 25:35. To Eliphaz, Job failed to provide the social needs of the people with all he had received from God. God had, therefore, implies Eliphaz, withdrawn from every part of job's life (Cheyne, 1987).

What transpired between Job and Eliphaz is clear indication that God's people who lived in the Old Testament era were very much aware of the responsibility of helping people meet their social needs. Isaiah confirmed this when he prophesied that the true devotion to Yahweh is to "...remove the chains of oppression and the yoke of injustice, and let the oppressed go free. Share your food with the hungry and open your homes to the homeless poor. Give clothes to those who have nothing to wear..." (Isaiah 58:6-7, GNB).

In the New Testament, evidence are there to show that the Lord Jesus Christ and the Apostles did not limit their ministry to only the spiritual needs of the people but provided social services as well. This is to say that the ministry of Jesus Christ and the apostles was holistic. (Samuel & Sugden, 1999). The Lord Jesus, in establishing the church laid down the principle of shepherding. He made it clear that He is the "Good Shepherd" who takes care of His sheep, to the point of laying down His life for them (John 10:11-15). In the Luke 15-17, He used the parable of the lost sheep to illustrate the need to care for the sheep, seeking their welfare so that none is lost. Jesus demonstrated to the world what it means to be a shepherd. His ministry of three years on the earth is a clear evidence of the care he had for both believers and unbelievers. He cared for the spiritual (Mark 8:36), health (Matt. 8:1-4), mental (Mk. 5:1-20), material (Matt. 14:15-21), educational (Matt.6:5-15), social (John 2:1-10) and emotional (Luke. 7:11-17) needs (Essuman, 2008).

The Lord wants the same to happen in the church and that is why He commanded Peter "Feed my Lambs". "Take care of my sheep". "Feed my sheep".

(John 21:15-17). No wonder then that Peter told the elders of the church to be the shepherds of the flock that was under their care (1 Pet. 5:1-4). The church should, therefore, be an institution which cares for its members and the people in the communities within which they operate in every aspect of their lives; including their social needs, that is holistically (Collins, 1998).

At the very beginning of Christianity, the apostles saw the need to appoint others (deacons) to see the daily distribution of food (Acts 6:1-6). In other words the apostles were seeing not only to the spiritual needs of the people but also the material needs of the people (Acts 4:32-35). The apostle James wrote on this thus: What God the father considers being pure and genuine religion is this: to take care of orphans and widows in their suffering.... (James 1:27, GNB). It behoves on the church today to learn from the laid down examples of the Lord Jesus Christ and apostles (Cloe, 1993). It is in line with this challenge of the church to deal with humankind holistically that the missionaries who introduced Christianity to Ghana treated the provision of social services with all the seriousness it deserved. Well before the missionaries came to what is now the Republic of Ghana, the family provided social support, both physical and mental when individuals were in need of it. Urbanization has weakened the family ties, which has put large pressure on the order of social services (Cromwell, 1962).

This weakening in family ties has changed the role of the church in society. The church has replaced the family roles when it comes to the provision of social services (Kodua, 2004) It can therefore be said that provision of social

services are necessitated by the fact that some people do not have the capacity for responding to the demands of life and have to be helped.

Providers of Social Services

Several Christian denominations have been contributing to the socio-economic advancement of Ghanaians from the very beginning of the history of the country called Ghana. Christian missionaries such as the Wesleyan mission, the Catholic mission, Basel mission and AME-Zion mission laid the solid foundation for formal education in this country. Today, many more Christian organizations are providing social services in diverse ways to various groups in Ghanaian society. For instance, from 1985, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), Ghana, the humanitarian arm of the Seventh-day Adventist broadened its mission from relief to include sustainable community development programme (ADRA, 2009). Its activities are designed to contribute to poverty reduction through improved social services, education, economic development, health, agriculture and natural resources management, water and sanitation and disaster prevention and control. With development assistance from USAID and other donors, ADRA Ghana has been assisting rural people, urban and suburban dwellers to overcome the shackles of poverty, diseases, illiteracy and suffering. ADRA provide support to the needy and vulnerable irrespective of their ethnicity, religious or political affiliations. ADRA has worked in all the ten regions of Ghana. ADRA Ghana's primary business is improving the living conditions of rural Ghanaians and enabling them to live whole lives by helping and working with those in need to address their problems. ADRA complete scope of work is

summarized in five core portfolios, namely, Food Security, Economic Development, Basic Education, Primary Health Care, and Disaster Response and Preparedness (ADRA, 2009).

ADRA, in 2005, presented four bales of used clothes and blanket valued at 10 million cedis to 32 blind farmers and their aides at Karni in the Jirapa/Lambussie District. Apart from that, ADRA had since 2002 also granted the blind farmers small scheme loans up to the tune of 27.6 million cedis to expand their agricultural activities (Ghana News Agency, 2009).

In addition, the Presbyterian Church is contributing to the socio-economic development of Ghana through the building of schools, hospitals and providing agricultural extension services (Ghana News Agency, 2009) among others. On April 20, 2009, the Ghana News Agency (GNA) reported that the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) was to put up a GH¢ 12,000 and 30-rooms guest house at Osu to serve the hospitality needs for its members and the public which would comprise dining halls, offices, conference rooms and a parking lot, among other facilities to enhance the growth and development of the tourism industry. The Right Rev. Dr. Yaw Frimpong-Manso, Moderator, said the development of the hospitality industry should be a shared responsibility and “not the responsibility of government alone”. Rev. Dr. Frimpong-Manso noted that the provision of such facilities were another area of contributing to the socio-economic need of the country (Ghana News Agency, 2009).

Besides, the Catholic Relief Services (CRS), a US based Catholic humanitarian agency, and its partners promote and support access to quality basic education for all. CRS implement or supports education activities in three areas:

1. Crisis areas
2. Areas that are transitioning from a crisis to stability
3. Relatively stable areas (CRS, 2009)

CRS has supported school feeding programme since 1958. In the mid-90s, CRS expanded its programme by combining school feeding with education activities that focus on improving the quality of education, girl's access to education, support for teachers, health/hygiene education and services for students, school infrastructure improvement, and increase parental and community involvement in schools. The participants in these expanded school-feeding programmes are mostly pre-school and primary school students in rural, food insecure regions. School feeding activities have a special emphasis on drawing girls to school.

In the short-term, school feeding encourages children to enrol in school and attend regularly because they receive a meal at school. Through the school meal, children receive essential nutrients which improve their ability to learn. This meal is also an incentive for parent to send their children to school because they know their children will eat well at school, and that they will not have to use limited family funds and time to prepare a midday meal. School feeding programme also help meet long-term education and food security objectives. Over the years, investment in education, especially for girls, has been shown to

improve family health and incomes and help ensure food security for future generations (CRS, 2009).

Through its diocesan partners, CRS health initiatives reach out to people living with HIV. CRS projects that support water and sanitation, agri-business, and peace building reach some of Ghana's most vulnerable communities. CRS Ghana currently partners with the Department of Social Welfare, the Ghana Health Services, Catholic dioceses and hospitals, and other to provide food to people living with HIV, orphaned children, people who are mentally ill, the elderly and disabled. CRS Ghana has used private resources to meet water and sanitation needs, especially in the three northern regions. By helping communities build water facilities and household latrines, CRS Ghana has improved access to clean water and hygienic sanitation in 26 communities (CRS, 2009).

CRS Ghana is working with the Diocese of Navrongo-Bulgatanga to increase profit and production of peanut farmers in two districts in the northern region. In the project's first year, groundnut (peanut) profit increased by 50 percent. CRS Ghana and the Diocese of Damongo are reaching out to five dioceses in the three northern regions. Satellite peace centres have been established where community-led peace initiatives have the opportunity to root and thrive (CRS, 2009).

Provision of Social Services by Non-Christian Non-Governmental Organizations

The roles played by NGOs in Ghana cannot be over emphasized. As part of the measures aimed at addressing the conditions of the people, and as a means

to redress the imbalances between rural and urban areas in terms of development, NGOs are playing a vital role in that respect. Many NGOs are undertaking a number of activities in Agriculture, Health, Education, Science and Technology, Research and most importantly women development. The activities of some of the local and foreign NGOs operating in Ghana have transformed whole communities and have been beneficiary to a lot of the rural dwellers (Bob-Miller, 2005)

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in partnership with UN Agencies such as UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP, UNESCO, WHO, ILO, The World Bank is assisting the socio-economic development of Ghana in the areas of Girl-Child Education, Poverty Eradication at Old Accra and Eradication of Guinea worm.

At the national launch of 5th Child Health Promotion Week at Karaga in the Northern Region of Ghana under the theme ‘Good nutrition: A key to child growth and development’ in July 2008, Dr Joaquim Saweka, the World Health Organization representative to Ghana, reaffirmed the Organization’s commitment and support for the survival of children in the country. Dr Saweka observed that through interventions such as promotion of exclusive breastfeeding, appropriate complementary feeding, micronutrient supplementation with vitamin A, use of iodized salt and other strategies to reduce the burden of malaria during pregnancy have been widely made available by World Health Organisation.

NGOs very often served an advocacy role to ordinary Ghanaian citizen. One effective way of doing this is through the formation of coalition committees. For instance, Mr. Patrick Apoya, Executive Secretary of Coalition of NGOs in

Water and Sanitation (CONIWAS), observed that the aim of the coalition was to ensure that government made provisions for good standard of living such as food, clothing, housing, health care and other necessary social services (Ghana Business News, 2009).

The U.S. Agency for International Development Mission to Ghana (USAID/Ghana) sees economic growth as the chief factor affecting development in Ghana. It is the essential element for raising living standards, including the improvement of education and health, and ensuring the success of democracy. USAID/Ghana focuses on strengthening markets, improving basic education and combating the spread of HIV and STDs.

Another humanitarian services nongovernmental organization (NGO) in Ghana, PAAJAF, provides schooling and support to Ghana's orphans and Other Vulnerable Children (OVC), teens and illiterate adults. It also develops various health care and social services. Currently, PAAJAF's programmes are Education, Community Clinics, Sponsor-a-Child, Children's Network, International Programmes, Teen Centre, Microfinance, and Small Business Programmes (PAAJAF, 2009).

Ghana Fatherhood Initiative Foundation is as well promoting responsible fatherhood. Ghana Fatherhood Initiative Foundation events enable fathers to improve their relationships and reconnect with their children and help to overcome obstacles that often prevent fathers from being the most effective and nurturing parent possible. While the primary goal of Ghana Fatherhood Initiative Foundation is promoting fatherhood in all of its various forms, an essential point

is to encourage fatherhood within the context of bridging gap between fathers and children (www.ghanafatherhoodinitiative.com).

Role of the Government of Ghana in the Provision of Social Services

It goes without saying that it is the prime obligation of the government of every nation to provide social amenities and services to its citizens. In this light, the government of Ghana is the chief provider of social services to the people of Ghana. It is also responsible for controlling, monitoring and assisting other agencies and organisations which share with this primary duty. Very often, the government has been the executer of the projects of several International or foreign Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

One major social service provided by the government is the education of its citizens. The government has been preoccupied with education for a very long time in the history of the country even though the Christian Missionaries made the first attempt in this enterprise and has competed with the government steadily. With the introduction of the Accelerated Development Plan in 1951 by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, primary education expanded rapidly as a result of the massive infrastructural development that came with it. Thus, 132,000 children were enrolled in primary school in 1952, more than twice the previous year. By 1957, there were over 450,000 children in the primary schools and they were taught by about 15,000 teachers (McWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1975). In order to ensure equal access to education for all Ghanaian children, attempts were also made by the government to monopolise the management of education in the country. Likewise no mission or private individual was allowed to open a new school

except otherwise permitted by the local authorities. This was as a result of the fact that mission schools tended to give priority to children whose parent were members of their various religious denominations in their enrolment. However, missions were later permitted to manage the already existing denominational schools. Today, the government of Ghana, according to its Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) II document, "...has absorbed the most important lesson of contemporary economic history...that the single most crucial key to the attainment of success is the education quality of a nation's workforce" (National Development Planning Commission, 2005, p.vi) Subsequently, education has been made a pivotal issue in Ghana's goal to accelerate the growth of it economy towards the attainment of middle income status (National Development Planning commission, 2005). In this drive, recent attempt has been made to improve the quality and standard of basic education in Ghana. Prominent among these are the introduction of the Capitation Grant; School Feeding Programme; Free Compulsory Basic Education (FCUBE); improving the quality of human resource by upgrading all teacher training colleges to Diploma Awarding institutions, retraining Certificate A and B teachers through sandwich and distance learning programmes as well as giving professional training to untrained basic school teachers in the country. On infrastructural development, about 4,000 units of new primary and Junior High school blocks have been built over a period of four years as at 2005 and thousands older ones have been rehabilitated (National Development Planning commission 2005).

Similarly, the government's efforts in providing technical education to the Ghanaian youth and the unemployed cannot be underrated. In statement delivered by Honourable Stephen Amoanor Kwao, Minister of Employment and Social Welfare on Tuesday, 18th August, 2009, he observed that the National Vocational Technical Institute of the ministry currently operates 37 centres nationwide. These centres offer demand-driven employable skills in School-based apprenticeship, Clerical/Secretarial training, Instructor training, Master-craft persons training, Driver Instructor-training, Receptionist training, Information and entrepreneurship training. Additionally, the NVTI provides services such as trade testing, registration of new vocational institutes, co-ordination of registered vocational institutions and supervises apprenticeship training. From January to July 2009, trade test have been conducted for 20,000 trainees and there are 5,000 trainees enrolled in various vocational training programme.

The Integrated Community Centres for Employable Skills (ICCES) were established under the Ministry of Employment and Social welfare to implement the Government's Policy of Poverty Alleviation through the provision of mass rural level Vocational Skills Training and Employment Generation (Kwao, 2009). Trainees are equipped with employable skills for self employment in their communities thereby stemming the tide of rural-urban migration.

There are 65 training centres nationwide offering short, medium to long-term courses in the following skills areas, building and construction, electronic and electrical trades, metal and auto general works, vocational and agro based training. From January to June 2009, 2,102 trainees have benefited from various

short courses. In addition to their core operations, ICCES also provides complimentary contractual training to people living with HIV/AIDS, trafficked and vulnerable children, unemployed youth in mining communities, training for teenage mothers, and head porters (Kwao, 2009).

In addition, the government of Ghana, the Opportunities Industrialization Centres (OIC-Ghana) offers vocational educational and technical skills training programmes together with basic business development and management skills training. In 2002, one thousand two hundred and eighteen (1,218) trainees completed training and were awarded certificates. Out of the total number were 104 non-literate and semi-literate trained in employable vocational or technical skills through a special outreach programme in partnership with master craftsman/women in a project sponsored by the European Union Commission (EUC). Currently, a total of nine hundred and forty-five (945) disadvantaged youth (J.S.S. & S.S.S. dropouts and graduates) have been enrolled at the O.I.C in Accra, Kumasi Sekondi-Takoradi. In addition, one hundred and five (105) non-literate and semi-literate youth have been enrolled in an outreach improved apprenticeship-training programme in partnership with Master craftsmen/women, which is been sponsored by EZE of Germany (Ministry of Information and National Orientation, 2007).

Besides, according to a WHO (2009) document, on 25th July 2008, the Eastern Region Co-ordinating Council presented school items to a group of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and their parents in Koforidua. These children were among 300 OVC who are benefiting from the activities of the

District Response Initiative (DRI) care and support programme for those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. The DRI is implemented by the Regional Coordinating Council in partnership with WHO and funded by the Royal Nederland's Embassy (RNE). Its aim is to strengthen the multisectoral approach to HIV/AIDS care and support at the District and Community levels. The initiative was in recognition of the fact that among people affected and infected with HIV, the support of family members living with the disease, as well as the care and education of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) places a heavy toll on a family income.

Similarly, according to the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II) document the government of Ghana through the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, has rescued and rehabilitated more than 3,000 'street children', including many young girls, who had been living and sleeping in Ghana's principal cities (National Development Planning Commission, 2005).

The government has also been committed to rescuing its citizens from the fangs of malaria. Intensive government efforts at controlling malaria in Ghana dates back to 1957 when a malaria control unit within the Ministry of Health was established in the Volta Region in collaboration with WHO to train personnel in geographical reconnaissance, malariometric and entomological surveys, and to conduct trials of indoor residual insecticide application in the control of adult mosquito population (National Development Planning Commission, 2005). Ghana followed-up this in 1961 with the creation of a National Malaria Services when the country adopted the global Malaria Eradication Programme, which used

residual spraying and larvicides to control malaria parasites. The programme had to be discontinued in 1967 due to technical and financial reasons. In 1992, the country launched a 5-year (1993-1997) National Malaria Control Action Plan with the focus on capacity building for improved disease management in health facilities. Drawing on past experiences and lessons, an accelerated malaria control programme piloted in 30 districts, was launched in 1997, again with a focus on case management. Since 1998 Ghana has committed itself to the Roll Back Malaria (RBM) Initiative of WHO, which builds on the Global Malaria Strategy with a focus on Africa. The goal of the Roll Back Malaria initiative is to have the world's malaria burden by 2010. Consequently the country drew up a 'Medium Term Strategic Plan for Malaria Control in Ghana' (1998-2002), which sought to improve the coverage of malaria control activity by adopting an inter-sectoral approach involving other government sectors and partnership with the private sector and the community. It has also committed itself to the Abuja Declaration on Roll Back Malaria in Africa, which similarly seeks to achieve specific targets on malaria prevention and control with time limit. The Ministry of Health produced a Roll Back Malaria (RBM) Strategic Plan in 2000 with the overall goal of facilitating human resource development by reducing the malaria disease burden (National Development Planning Commission, 2005).

Challenges of the Provision of Social Services in Ghana

A growing number of social welfare agencies are expressing their concern about the impact of the global financial crisis on the provision of social services. In Australia, a coalition of church welfare agencies have commissioned an Access

Economics discussion paper on the topic, which states demand for services, already operating beyond capacity in a prolonged period of economic growth, is certain to rise further (Infoxchange, 2009). The paper states that low-income households and Australia's disadvantaged will be directly impacted by slowing economic growth as rising unemployment together with continued pressure on housing costs-and the cost of living more generally-increase the incidence of financial and social stress. "As a consequence, the demand on the nation's already overstretched social services sector will significantly increase" (Infoxchange, 2009, p.19).

The efforts by various Christian ministries to sustain marriage and reduce the rate of divorce do not go without challenges. Many churches offer marriage counselling, resources, support groups and seminars and on the surface church couples may seem happy but the rate of divorce tells the truth as there is no difference in the divorce rate between Christian marriages and marriages outside the church (O'Donovan, 1996). It has been observed that two major problems have prevented marriage ministries from fully succeeding in its mission. The first has to do with overworked ministry leaders and counsellors very often as a result of low ratio proportion between ministers and clients. The second challenge concerns troubled couples avoiding counselling as they feel ashamed, alone or that they will be judged by other attendees. With regards to the provision of health services, the main constraining factors affecting access to health care despite the efforts of various relief and development agencies as well as the government include geographical and financial barriers, services delivery and broad socio-

cultural barriers including gender. Factors contributing to poor geographical access include low capital investment in health facilities, poor feeder road systems in the country, poor location of facilities and lack of communication facilities. Service delivery barriers that have constrained access to quality health care include organizational and management constraints; weak support systems such as transportation and equipment for service delivery; human resource constraints (National Development Planning Commission, 2005). Again, the exodus of critical health professionals in recent years is undermining efforts to improve access. The ‘cash and Carry System’ of paying for health care at the point of service had sometime past been a key financial barrier to health care access for the poor. To remove the financial barrier to health services, the government initiated the National Health Insurance Scheme in 2001 aimed at abolishing this system and limiting out of pocket cash payment at the point of service delivery. Nonetheless, the National Health Insurance Scheme does not go without challenges. Some of the challenges to the successful implementation of the NHIS are (a) how to increase enrolment of members into the district schemes and the NHIC plans to intensify education to improve this, (b) costing of various types of services at the different health delivery points in order to fix tariffs / fees with health-care providers (National Development Planning Commission, 2005).

The Place of Assemblies of God Church in the Provision of Social Services and their Benefits to Society

The major focus of the Assemblies of God Church, Ghana, in establishing the Assemblies of God Relief and Development Services (AGREDS) is to

minister to the material and social needs of the poor, by mobilising resources both in the local congregations of the church and through sister agencies and churches abroad (Muni, 2005; UNHCR , 2009).

Working with refugees and other victims of natural or man-made disaster by providing immediate relief items including food, clothing, medical-care and rehabilitation has been one of the specialized services of AGREDS which has gone a long way to alleviating the suffering of hundreds of thousands of the vulnerable in society since its inception over a decade ago. AGREDS has played and continued to play leading roles in emergency relief and rehabilitation operations throughout the country in times of disasters such as floods, drought and conflicts. Through the Inter-NGO Consortium for Relief and rehabilitation, AGREDS has played significant roles in the provision of relief items to displace persons in all the major flood disasters that have hit Accra and other part of Ghana since 1995 and is currently hosting the secretariat of the Inter-NGO Consortium for Relief and rehabilitation, an umbrella organization of all NGOs, both local and international operating in the areas of emergency relief and rehabilitation in Ghana (Muni, 2005).

The HIV/AIDS Awareness Education Programme of AGREDS which started in 1999, has made gainful strides in awakening the seemingly “Thou art holy” attitude of the church to the reality of the epidemic. It was initiated to build the capacity of the over 1,500 Assemblies of God local churches throughout Ghana to respond effectively to the problem posed by the epidemic. The programme focuses on awareness education among the youth, other identifiable

bodies in the church, the church leadership, and the host communities. On the capacity building aspect, AGREDS is providing skills training on techniques for effective and biblically balanced HIV/AIDS counselling for Pastors Counsellors, other church leaders and workers, with emphasis on support and care for people infected and affected by the diseases (Muni, 2005). Through this programme, AGREDS is also supporting an association of People Living With HIV/AIDS (PLWHAs) financially, morally and spiritually to live positively with the disease; and Trainer of Trainers workshops for other churches and Christian base organizations in Ghana. In all these programmes, the emphasis is on abstinence (for singles) and faithfulness (among the married/couples). Now that no cure has been found to the disease, the Assemblies of God Church believes that the solution and hope now lies in the Church to demonstrate the Christ-like compassion, love, support and acceptance towards the infected and affected and to halt the moral degeneration, particularly among the youth. The fact that the numbers of those infected and affected are not just mere statistical figures but names of people with faces, many of who belong to the church, poses a greater challenge to the Church now than ever before and for which AGREDS, through Assemblies of God Church, Ghana and its partners have demonstrated that the church of Jesus Christ through a concerted effort can bring real hope to this generation and those yet unborn (Muni, 2005).

Within this period of implementation, the awareness level among the congregation, particularly the youth and Ministers is now very high, as demonstrated by the number of church initiated community awareness

programmes the churches have been organizing and the fact that HIV/AIDS messages now feature prominently on the pulpit of most churches. It is expected that the Church throughout Ghana would wake up from their seemingly deep slumber to the realities of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and to confront it with all the “arsenals” at their disposal to restore the seemingly lost hope.

In ensuring that the deprived rural communities are lifted out of their current level of deprivation, AGREDS community development programmes over the years have centred on infrastructural development, with emphasis on education, health and sanitation. Being aware that the greatest legacy society can give to its children is the creation of opportunities for learning, AGREDS in partnership with World Servants, Europe (WSE) over the last (10) years have been involved in the construction and rehabilitation of school blocks in many other communities throughout out Ghana (at least 4 projects in 4 communities each over the last ten years). A few of the communities that have benefited from this collaboration include Senya Breku in Central Region, Langbinsi, Binchantanga, KukpaliguMakayili, Jirapa, Techiman and Kajebi. AGREDS has also supplied books, teaching and other learning materials for these schools to improve upon teaching and learning. These developments and initiative have gone a long way to create an enabling environment for learning and thus increasing basic school enrolment by over 150% in these communities. The church established the Yendi Vocational Institute for Girls based in Yendi and its Satellite Centres at Bimbila, ZabzuguGushiegu all in the Northern Region. It has also initiated the Nanumba District Child Development Programmes that

sponsored over 1,600 children in basic schools in 8 communities in the Nanumba District (Muni, 2005).

Being the oldest among the programmes and one of the specialised departments using up more than 50% of AGREDS entire staff strength of 107, Health services provide community based preventive and curative health care in 113 outreach communities in two districts. AGREDS programmes in preventive health care include community-based health education, Traditional Birth Attendants and Village Health Committees training, Maternal and Child Health Services and Outreach Clinics. The Saboba and Nanpkandure Primary Health Care Unit is responsible for the preventive health care services and has since 1996 trained 96 TBAs, 213 VHCs and maintained 20 Outreach Clinics in the Nanpkandure, Bimbaagu, Naswam Zone of the East Manprusi District, and 110 TBAs, 210 VHCs and maintained 44 Outreach Clinics in the Saboba-Sub District in the Saboba-Chereponi District, all in the Northern Region.

The curative aspects of AGREDS health services delivery include the operation of a hospital at Saboba, which now serve as the secondary Referral Centre for the Saboba-Chereponi District whose services extend to the Zabzugu-Tatale and Nanumba District as well as some communities in neighbouring Republic of Togo. With the support of its partner and the communities, a modern Surgical Theatre, female and children's wards have been constructed to provide all basic and specialized services, which hitherto were referred to the Yendi, Tamale or Nalerigu Hospitals. In the heat of the 1994 ethnic conflict when the entire Saboba-Chereponi District was cut off from the rest of the Northern region,

the Saboba Hospital remained opened with its full complement of staff to provide Medicare for the many internal displaced persons. The hospitals were one of the 40 selected to pilot the National Health Insurance Scheme in 2003.

The Nakpanduri Health Centre is AGREDS second health facility that provides the curative healthcare needs of communities in the Nakpanduri, Bimbaagu, and Naswam Zone. It also serves as the centre for AGREDS PHC outreach clinics in 20 communities in the Nakpanduri-Naswam Zone. Established in the 1950s by the Assemblies of God church, the Nakpanduri Health Centre made a great impact in the health care delivery system in the East Manprusi District and beyond reaching out even to communities down the Gambaga scarp such as Worikambo and Denigo areas in the Upper East region. It has the full complement of the infrastructure and personal required of a Primary referral Centre (Muni, 2005).

AGREDS as an agency is also affiliated to a number of associations/Networks including Ghana Association of Private Voluntary Organization in Development (GAPVOD), Christian Health Association of Ghana (CHAG), Inter-NGO Consortium for Relief and Rehabilitation and Ghana AIDS Network (GHANET), West Africa Network for Peace building (WANEP), Ghana Network for Peace building (GHANEP), Association of Churches in Development Projects (ACDEP) and Ghana Micro Finance Institute Network (GHAMFIN).

In June, 2009, the Youth Wing of the Glad Tidings Assemblies of God Church in Sunyani Christ Ambassadors, donated items valued at over GHc500 to

the Compassion Is Love Action (CILIA) Orphanage at Yawhima and also weeded some parts around orphanage to prevent animals from invading the place (Boateng, 2009). Assemblies of God Family Services Agency has also been preoccupied with rescuing children, youth, young and women and infants from harm's way and restoring families, children, youth and women facing an unplanned pregnancy or bulimia (AG Family Services Agency, 2009).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methods and techniques employed to collecting and analysing data. These include the research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, research instrumentation, pre-testing procedure, data collection procedure and data analysing plan.

Research Design

The descriptive survey design was used to collect the relevant information concerning the topic under consideration which is “provision of social services by the Assemblies of God church in the Suhum District of the Eastern Region”. Amedahe (2002) citing Gay (1992) defines descriptive research as “research which specify the nature of a given phenomena. It determines and reports the way things are.

Descriptive research thus involves collecting data in order to answer research questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study. The descriptive research was chosen for this study because data were collected through questionnaires and guided interviews to answer research questions concerning the role the church is playing in the provision of social services and report on them.

Some of the challenges associated with the use of research design for the study included making sure that the questions to be answered were clear to and well understood by the respondents, getting thoughtful and honest answers from respondents as well as getting sufficient number of questionnaires completed and returned in order to do meaningful analysis. To reduce the above mentioned challenges to the barest minimum, the researcher tried to make the questions as simple and understandable as possible, advising and pleading with respondent to try to be very objective to help the researcher not to operate on wrong premises which will be detrimental to the authenticity of the work.

Population

Amedahe (2002) defines population as the entire aggregation of elements in which the researcher is interested in gaining information and drawing conclusions. The target population of the study consist of all the Assemblies of God churches in the Suhum District as well as the non-members in the town within the District. There are twenty four Assemblies of God churches in the District according to the Assemblies of God Suhum District report (2009).

Due to the large size of the population universe, a target population of three (3) towns in the district were considered. These were selected as they were identified as the major towns in the district. The town are Suhum Asamankese and Nsawam. Two churches each was selected from each town namely Restoration Assemblies of God and Glory Assemblies of God churches in Suhum, Asamankese Central Assembles of God church and Amazing Grace Assemblies

of God church in Asamankese, and then Nsawam Central Assemblies of God church and Adoagyiri Assemblies of God church in Nsawam.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

A total of 300 respondents were sampled for the study. This was made up of 150 (i.e. 50 leaders and 100 members) members from the church and 150 non-members of the church from Suhum, Asamankese and Nsawam districts respectively. The respondents in this category (church leaders) were sample from two churches each from each town, according to the strength and size of the church.

The sample for the study comprises six selected Assemblies of God Churches in the Suhum District. According to the annual report of the Assemblies of God church in Suhum District (2008), there are 24 Assemblies of God churches in the Suhum District. According to Amedahe (2002), in a sample survey of a very large population, for statistical analysis, a sample size of thirty or higher is considered too large. In line with this suggestion, the researcher used six churches representing 25% of the Assemblies of God churches in the Suhum District as an accessible population and used it to generate the target population. This is how the sample was calculated.

With regard to the selection of the members from each church, the systematic method, particularly the sampling function method will be used to pick respondents from the churches. This was done to give each of the six selected churches equal representation. The sample distribution is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Sample Distribution for the Study

| Name of Church | Congregation size | No. of members selected |
|---|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Nsawam Central Assemblies of God | 310 | 25 |
| Adoagyiri Assemblies of God | 194 | 25 |
| Suhum Glory Assemblies of God | 205 | 25 |
| Suhum Restoration Assemblies of God | 270 | 25 |
| Amazing Grace Assemblies of God | 186 | 25 |
| Asamankese | | |
| Asamankese Central Assemblies of God | 298 | 25 |
| Total | 1463 | 150 |

Sixty church leaders and ninety church members totalling one hundred and fifty respondents from the six churches were used. The researcher selected six churches and one hundred and fifty respondents. Different sampling techniques were used for the different groups in the study. With the church leaders purposive sampling technique was used. With purposive sampling, the population are uniquely suited to the purpose of study. That is to say there were specific people who had the information the researcher wanted and so he contacted those people. Stratified proportional and simple random sampling techniques were used for the church members. The technique helped the researcher to select a specific number of people from each church.

The reason for stratified proportional technique for the church members was that there was no existing sample frame and was difficult if not impossible to construct one. In dealing with community members who are not members of the Assemblies of God church in the Suhum district, convenience sampling technique was applied. By using this technique, the researcher decided on a specific number of people he wanted to interview, stood at a vantage point and interviewed anyone he came across.

Instruments

Questionnaires and guided interview guide were the main instruments that were used for the study. A self-designed questionnaires consisting of open-ended and closed questions were used for the church leaders, members and non-members of the Assemblies of God church in the Suhum District who are literates.

Interviews were also conducted for the respondents who could not read and write. Both the questionnaires and the guided interview schedule were made of open-ended and close ended to enable the researcher collect both subjective and objective data. The two option categorical scale of YES or NO type was used to measure some of the responses to the closed-ended questions. The questionnaire and the interview guide had two parts and the first part was on personal particulars which asked the respondents of demographic data such as age, sex, marital status, educational background and years of association with the selected churches. The second part of the questionnaire was on the provision of social service and had six questions labelled research questions 1, 2,3,4,5 and 6.

Research question 1 was made up of two questions and sought to find out conditions under which social services are provided. The respondents were required to indicate their preferences by circling the appropriate answer. The research question 2 sought to investigate the extent to which the community has benefitted from the social services provided by the church. The research question 3 dealt with the kind of social services provided by the church and the respondents were asked to give answers to some close-ended and a few open-ended questions to enable the researcher find an answer to the question raised. There were seven questions under research question 3.

The research question 4 focused on beneficiaries of the social services provided by the church and consisted of eight questions. The research question 5 dealt with the challenges associated with the provision of social services. Research question 6 tried to find out the impact the social services provision has made on the community. The respondents were asked to suggest ways of improving social services provision by the church. In all, this part was made up of thirty five separate questions for Pastors and leaders, church members and the community.

An interview guide was designed based on the six research questions and used to collect data from church members and the community members who were illiterates. The questions were made simpler and clearer for them to understand and answer. Details of the questionnaires and the interview guide are attached (See Appendix A, B, C, & D).

Pilot-Testing of Instruments

Research instruments were pre-tested at Nankese, a town in the Suhum Kraboa Coaltar District in the Eastern Region. Nankese is about twelve kilometres from Suhum. The reason for selecting Nankese emanates from the fact that it has similar cultural, ethnic, occupational and religious characteristics as that of the town selected for the research by the researcher.

The reason for the pre-testing was to find out the validity and reliability of the instrument that was to be used for the data collection. The pre-testing tested the questionnaire on a small number of people who have the same characteristics as the population before using it for the actual study. By pre-testing, the appropriateness and practicability of the data instrument was realized.

Another benefit of the pre-testing was that it enabled the researcher to find out if the items were easily understood and there were no problems to do with length, sequencing of question and sensitive items among others. It can, therefore, be said that the pre-testing helped to improve questions, formats and scales. Fifteen respondents from Nankese Assemblies of God church and fifteen members from the community who are not Assemblies of God members were selected as sample for the pre-testing, using the random sampling method. Ten questionnaires were given out to both the church and the community members. Five people from both the church and the community were interviewed using the interview guide. The researcher personally administered the questionnaires and conducted the interview. Four days after giving out the questionnaires, the completed copies were collected in four days to avoid losses or misplacement.

Data Collection Procedure

An introductory letter was first collected from the head of the Department of Educational Foundations to introduce the researcher to the pastors and leaders in the selected churches (See Appendix E). The questionnaire was then administered to the selected churches and the members of the community in each case the researcher explained of anonymity and confidentiality of whatever information they provided. Copies of the questionnaires were given to the respondents and the researcher then took the respondents through the questions by briefly explaining each section to them. They were allowed to ask questions on anything in the questionnaires they do not understand. An agreed date for the collection of the questionnaires was fixed between the researcher and the respondents. After collection, each copy of the questionnaire was checked to make sure that each had been properly filled. If some questions were skipped or not answered, the researcher assisted the respondent to complete it before collection.

Furthermore, selected church members and community members who could not read and write were met personally for the structured interview guide. The purpose of the study, the interview guide and the importance of obtaining the information was explained to each respondent. Each respondent was taken through the interview session and allowed to ask questions for clarifications. When everything was completed, letters of appreciation were sent to the pastors whose churches were selected as well as all respondents for their assistance.\

Data Analysis

Simple analysis involving frequencies and percentages were used to analyse the data since the study is descriptive. The researcher tallied the scores of the various items in each section and frequency distribution table drawn. Percentages were then calculated from the frequency values and the results obtained then became very useful to enable interpretation to be done. Conclusion drawn on the study was limited to the data collected about respondent in some selected Assemblies of God churches in the Suhum District as well as some members of the community.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter is devoted to the results and discussion of the findings for the study. Data were collected from 150 (i.e. 50 leaders and 100 members) members, and 150 non-members of the Assemblies of God churches in Suhum District respectively. Out of the 150 instruments that were administered to the church members and leaders, 85.3% of the instruments were retrieved by the researcher. Again, 81.3% of the instruments administered to non-members of the Assemblies of God Churches in the Suhum District were retrieved. The researcher used six (6) research questions to guide the study.

In the analysis of data, frequency and percentage tables were constructed to illustrate and support the results. The chapter therefore is subdivided into four sections based on how the research questions were presented:

1. Conditions under which the church provides social services.
2. Community's benefit of social services.
3. Kinds of social services provided by the church.
4. Beneficiaries of social services provided by the church.
5. Challenges associated with the provision of social services.
6. Impact of social service on the community.

Research Question One: Under what conditions are social services provided by the church in the District?

In order to determine the conditions under which the Assemblies of God church provides social services in the Suhum District, responses to items 1 and 2 for the main data on the questionnaire for pastors and leaders, church members and community members as well as the interview guide for members and non-members were used.

The first part of research question 1 sought to find out participants' level of knowledge as far as social services are concern. Percentages are computed based on the multiple responses. Table 2 presents the outcome of the multiple responses provided by participants.

Table 2: Knowledge of Social Services

| Knowledge | Pastors& Leaders F (%) | Church Members F (%) | Community Members F (%) |
|--|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Giving money to people in need | 18(40.0) | 43(45.3) | 31(38.7) |
| 2. Giving interest free loan | 6(13.3) | 7(7.4) | 7(8.8) |
| 3. Providing free community health service | 8(17.8) | 15(15.7) | 25(31.2) |
| 4. Provision of counselling service | 13(28.9) | 30(31.6) | 17(21.3) |
| Total | 45(100.0) | 95(100.0) | 80(100.0) |

Field survey, 2011

It can be observed from Table 2 that majority of the pastors and leaders (40.0%), church members (45.3%) and non-members (38.7%) showed their level of knowledge of social services as “giving money to people in need.” On the contrary, giving interest free loan as the meaning of social services recorded the lowest response of 13.3%, 7.4% and 8.8% for the pastors and leaders, church members and non-members respectively. However, providing free community health service as a response to what social services is all about had 8(17.8%) of the pastors and leaders affirming their agreement. Like the response solicited from the pastors and leaders of the church, 15.7% of the church members as well as 31.2% of the community members agreed to the same response as the meaning of social services.

It could be deduced from the discussion that giving money to people in need, provision of counselling services, provision of health care and giving interest free loans to people is what social services is all about. This is in concord with the assertion of Samuel and Sugden (1999) who opined that the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Apostles did not limit their ministry to only the spiritual needs of the people but also provided social services as well.

The responses from the interview guide on the question “What do you understand by social services?” had majority of the church members (40%) interviewed saying giving money to the people in need. This was immediately followed by 11(22%) who asserted that building schools was their understanding of social services. Nevertheless, 8(16%) indicated their understanding to the question as giving needy but brilliant students scholarship. The rest had 7(14%)

and 4(8%) saying helping people to pay their hospital bills and giving loan to people without interest respectively. On the other hand, the outcome of the responses sought from non-members of the church with respect to their knowledge on social services had the majority (28.8%) giving their understanding to social services as “giving needy but brilliant students scholarship”. This was followed by 19(26.0%) and 16(21.9%) of the respondents indicating their knowledge on social services as giving money to people in need and building schools respectively. Finally, 9(12.3%) and 8(11.0%) of the respondents supposed “giving loan to people without interest” and “helping people to pay for their hospital bills” respectively as the answer to the question. The result from the interview guide discussion show that giving money to people in need, building schools and giving scholarship to brilliant but needy students were the understanding of respondents with respect to their knowledge on social services.

The second aspect of research question 1 solicited respondents view on the factors that necessitated the provision of social services by the church. The percentages were calculated based on the multiple responses provided by the respondents. The result as given by participants is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Factors that necessitate the provision of social service by the Church

| Factors | Pastors& Leaders F (%) | Church Members F (%) | Community Members F (%) |
|--|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. When the church identifies a need | 17(48.6) | 44(50.6) | 38(55.1) |
| 2. When the church is informed | 14(40.0) | 27(31.0) | 20(29.0) |
| 3. When it is on the church's calendar | 3(8.6) | 7(8.0) | 10(14.5) |
| 4. Others | 1(2.8) | 9(10.4) | 1(1.4) |
| Total | 35(100.0) | 87(100.0) | 69(100.0) |

Field survey, 2011

Table 3 required respondents to indicate the factors that necessitated the provision of social services by the church. The first factor (when the church identifies a need) recorded the highest percentage among the pastors and leaders (48.6%), church members (50.6%) and community members (55.1%) respectively. This was followed by factor two which had 14(40.0%) from the pastors and leaders, 27(31.0%) from the church members and 20(29.0%) from the community members.

Again, factor three in Table 3 had 8.6% from the pastors and leaders, 7(8.0%) from the church members and 10(14.5%) from the community members respectively. Finally, the other factors recorded 2.8% from the pastors and leaders, 10.4% from the church members and 1.4% from the community members. The results of the analyses of the responses regarding factors that

necessitate the provision of social services by the church show that, overall, the church provides social services when it identifies a need as well as when it is informed of a particular need. This is in agreement with Cheyne's (1987) assessment of Job's suffering in the Old Testament portion of the Bible from Eliphaz' perspective that the primary reason for Job's suffering was related to his attitude towards the poor and needy. Thus, his failure to cover the naked, give drinks to the thirsty, his withholding bread from the hungry, and acting unjustly in the division of land and not caring for the widows and orphans.

In addition to the factors that necessitated the provision of social services by the church, the researcher interviewed participants who could neither read nor write on the question "Do you think it is necessary for the church to provide social services?" Out of the 37 church members that were interviewed, 35(97.2%) said yes whereas only 1(2.8%) said no. However, all the community members, 59(100.0%), interviewed affirmed their agreement to the question. Thus, the responses show that there was the necessity for the church to provide social services to its members and the community as well. In line with the findings, Collins (1998) opine that the church should be an institution which cares for its members and the people in the communities within which they operate in every aspect of their lives, including their holistic social needs. This he said is supported by what the Lord said in John 21:15-17 that "Feed my Lambs, take care of my sheep and then feed them"

Research Question Two: To what extent do the community benefit from the social services of the church?

This research question sought to find out the extent to which the community benefited from the provision of social services by the Assemblies of God church. The responses provided by respondents are discussed as follows.

With respect to the question “Does your church provide social services to members of the community?” The responses gathered from the pastors and church leaders indicated 22 (73.3%) agreeing that their church provided social services to the members of the community with only 7(23.3%) disagreeing. However, out of the 60 church members that responded to the question under discussion, 38(62.3%) asserted that the church provided social services to the members of the community. On the other hand, 22(36.1%) of the church members disagreed. Moreover, members of the church who could neither read nor write were interviewed on the same issue. The response gathered from the community members revealed that majority (47) representing 75.8% asserted that the church provided social services to the community members with the minority (13) representing 21.0% saying otherwise. Thus, it is worth saying that the church provided social services to the members of the community advancing from the responses given by the participants.

The researcher further asked respondents to indicate the type of social services (support) the church provided to the community members. The result is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Social services provided by the church to the community members

| Item | Pastors & | | Church | | Community | |
|----------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| | Leaders | | Members | | Members | |
| | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| | F (%) | F (%) | F (%) | F (%) | F (%) | F (%) |
| 1. Financial | | | | | | |
| support | 16(57.1) | 12(42.9) | 32(52.5) | 29(47.5) | 27(45.0) | 33(55.0) |
| 2. Educational | | | | | | |
| support | 12(42.9) | 16(57.1) | 17(27.9) | 44(72.1) | 17(28.3) | 43(71.7) |
| 3. Micro | | | | | | |
| financing | 28(100) | 0(0.0) | 2(3.3) | 59(96.7) | 0(0.0) | 60(100.0) |
| 4. Conflict | | | | | | |
| resolution | 3(10.7) | 25(89.3) | 7(11.5) | 54(88.5) | 4(6.7) | 56(93.3) |
| 5. Marital | | | | | | |
| counselling | 2(7.1) | 26(92.9) | 0(0.0) | 0(0.0) | 0(0.0) | 60(100.0) |

Field survey, 2011

Table 4 shows the kind of social services the church provided to the community members. The first item in Table 4, financial support, had 16(57.1%) of the pastors agreeing. That of the church members had 32(52.5%) saying yes whereas 33(55.0%) said yes.

Again, educational support, had majority of the pastors and leaders (57.1%) saying no with only 12(42.9%) saying yes. That of the church members also had the majority (72.1%) disagreeing that the church provided educational

support to the community. The same trend was recorded by the community members who had 43(71.7%) disagree.

It could be deduced from Table 3 that apart from financial support which had majority of the pastors and leaders as well as the church members agreeing as a social service provided by the church, the rest including educational support, micro financing, conflict resolution and marital counselling recorded a low response from the respondents. Besides financial support, the findings contradict the activities of ADRA designed to contribute to poverty reduction through improved social services, education, economic development, health, agriculture and natural resource management, water and sanitation and disaster prevention and control (ADRA, 2009).

Again, the researcher sought to find out from respondents the length of time involved in the provision of social services by the church. The response gathered from the participants is presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Length of time involved in the provision of social services

| Duration | Pastors & Leaders F (%) | Church Members F (%) | Community Members F (%) |
|----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. 6 months- 1year | 2(8.3) | 9(17.6) | 5(10.0) |
| 2. 2-5 years | 7(29.2) | 9(17.6) | 6(12.0) |
| 3. 6 years and above | 8(33.3) | 17(33.3) | 32(64.0) |
| 4. Others | 7(29.2) | 16(31.0) | 7(14.0) |
| Total | 24(100.0) | 51(100.0) | 50(100.0) |

Field survey, 2011

Table 5 depicts the length of time involved in the provision of social services. Majority of the pastors and leaders (33.3%), church members (33.3%) and community members (64.0%) indicated 6 years and above as the length of time the church uses to provide social services for the community. Thus, it is clear that the church takes some time to provide social services to the community members.

In addition to the length of time the church takes to provide social services, the researcher also decided to find out from participants the frequency of social services provision by the church. The result as provided by the respondents is shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Frequency of social services provision by the church

| Period | Pastors & Leaders F (%) | Church Members F (%) | Community Members F (%) |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Every month | 3(11.1) | 2(3.6) | 8(15.4) |
| 2. Every 3 months | 0(0.0) | 0(0.0) | 4(7.7) |
| 3. Every 6 months | 0(0.0) | 0(0.0) | 2(3.8) |
| 4. When the need arises | 23(85.2) | 49(89.1) | 33(63.5) |
| 5. Others | 1(3.7) | 4(7.3) | 5(9.6) |
| Total | 27(100.0) | 55(100.0) | 52(100.0) |

Field survey, 2011

The data in Table 6 illustrate the frequency of social services provision by the church. From Table 6, it can be seen that majority of the pastors and leaders

(85.2%), church members (89.1%) and community members (63.5%) agreed that the church provided social services only when the need arises. It is worth concluding from Table 6 that the church mostly provided social services to the community only when the need arises.

Again, when asked the question “Do you think the social services provided by the church are benefiting the recipients and should therefore be encouraged?” The responses gathered from the pastors and leaders of the church had the majority (26) representing 96.3% affirming that the services were beneficial to the recipients. On the contrary, only 1(3.7%) responded ‘no’ to the question. The following reasons were given by the pastors and leaders concerning why they said yes to the question: (a) it goes a long way to help meet their needs; (b) it has helped brilliant but needy students to further their education and (c) it shows the care and bond of unity in the church.

In addition to the responses elicited from the pastors and leaders of the church, the concern of the church members was also solicited on the same question. Fifty-two representing 92.9% said yes whereas only 4(7.1%) said no. The following reasons were given by those who responded yes to the question under discussion: (a) provides access to education by all; (b) it has helped won souls to the kingdom of God; (c) it helps improve the standard of living of members and (d) it motivates members to serve in the church. However, those who said no gave the following reasons in support of their response: (a) the beneficiaries do not testify about the benefit they have received and (b) i have not seen the church providing social services to the community.

Finally, when the community members were asked the question “Do you think the provision of social services by the church to the community should be encouraged?” The majority (57) representing 98.3% agreed that the social services provided by the church was really beneficial to them. Nevertheless, only 1(1.7%) argued that he/she does not see any benefit from the social services provided by the Assemblies of God church. The following responses were given by the respondents who constituted the majority: (a) it is the responsibility of the church to care for the poor and needy in society; (b) it is a strong tool for evangelism in that the beneficiary sees the need to be a member of the body of Christ; (c) it creates employment opportunities for members and (d) provides access to education for the brilliant but needy students in that community and elsewhere. On the opposing end, the community member who said no gave the reason that it is the responsibility of the church to teach members how to be independent on their own rather than feeding them always.

The interview guide was used to elicit additional information from respondents on the usefulness of social services to the community. First, respondents were asked the question “Do you know if Assemblies of God church provides social service to the members/community?” The outcome of the response from the church members had 26(70.3%) saying yes with only 11(29.7) saying no. However, the response of non-members of the church was close, 34(56.7%) agreed that they know some social services provided by the Assemblies of God church in their communities whereas 26(43.3%) disagreed to the question.

The researcher further asked the participants whether the services provided were indeed helpful to the community or not. The following responses were obtained from the participants. Out of the 29 members of the church that were interviewed, 28(96.6%) indicated that the services were indeed helpful with only 1(3.4%) saying otherwise. Nevertheless, the responses from the non-members of the church had 36(94.7%) saying yes while 2(5.3%) said no.

Finally, the researcher wanted to ascertain the extent to which the services provided have changed the lives of the beneficiaries. The majority of the members from the church representing 96.6% said yes whereas the minority representing 3.4% said no. On the other hand, the responses from the non-church members had 34(87.2%) saying that the services provided by the church have changed the lives of the beneficiaries whereas only 2(5.3%) had an opposing view.

Research Question Three: What kinds of social services are provided by the church?

In order to answer research question three, the responses of the pastors and leaders, church and community members as well as the views gathered from the semi-structured interview guide on the sub-heading: the kinds of social services the church provide were used. The outcome of the response gathered is presented in Tables 6 and 7 respectively.

Table 7: Kinds of social services the church provide

| Items | Pastors & | | Church | | Community | |
|--|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|
| | Leaders | | Members | | Members | |
| | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| | F (%) | F (%) | F (%) | F (%) | F (%) | F (%) |
| 1.Provision of microfinance to SME in the district | 3(11.5) | 23(88.5) | 17(30.9) | 38(69.1) | 21(35.6) | 38(64.4) |
| 2.Involvement in sanitation issues | 13(44.8) | 16(55.2) | 30(51.7) | 28(48.3) | 46(75.4) | 15(24.6) |
| 3.Provision of pre and post marital counselling | 28(93.3) | 2(6.7) | 55(96.5) | 2(3.5) | 54(88.5) | 7(11.5) |
| 4.Contribution to health needs of the community | 27(90.0) | 3(10.0) | 45(76.3) | 14(23.7) | 43(70.5) | 18(29.5) |

Field survey, 2011

Table 7 presents the kind of social services the church provided to the members of the community. The first item in Table 7, provision of microfinance to SMEs in the district, had 3(11.5%) endorsement from the pastors and leaders. That of the church members was 17(30.9%) and finally, 21(35.6%) from the community members.

The second item, involvement in sanitation issues, received a minimum 13(44.8%) agreement from the pastors and leaders. This was followed by a maximum agreement response rate, 30(51.7%), from the church members and 46(75.4%) from the community members as well.

The third item, provision of pre and post marital counselling, had majority of the pastors and leaders (93.3%), church members (96.5%) and community members (88.5%) giving their agreement to the item. Responses to item four from Table 7 followed the same pattern as that of item three. From Table 7, it is worth concluding that provision of pre and post marital counselling and contribution to health needs of the community as well as involvement in sanitation issues were the paramount social services that the church provided to the community members. The finding that pre and post marital counselling is one of the paramount social services provided by the church is in support of Bose (2007) assertion that a couple wanting to wed must give the pastor six months notice and participate in at least four premarital counselling sessions before the final wedding ceremony and also counselling should be offered after the wedding day. Again, with respect to health care, the findings is in support of the assertion by Debrunner (1967) that prominent hospitals like Agogo, Wenchi, Offinso, Jachie Pramso, Atibie Kwahu, Agona Asante and many others were built by Christian churches for the sole purpose of providing healthcare to the needy in society.

Again, the researcher decided to find out from respondents the contribution of the church to the health needs of pastors, members and the

community at large. The outcome of the response solicited from participants is presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Contributions by the church to the health needs of pastors, members and the community

| Contribution | Pastors & Leaders F (%) | Church Members F (%) | Community Members F (%) |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Payment of hospital bills | 17(70.8) | 15(31.3) | 16(38.1) |
| 2. Payment of NHIS contribution | 3(12.5) | 7(14.6) | 5(11.9) |
| 3. Provision of free medical care | 2(8.3) | 10(20.8) | 12(28.6) |
| 4. Building of hospital/clinics | 2(8.3) | 16(33.3) | 9(21.4) |
| Total | 24(100.0) | 48(100.0) | 42(100.0) |

Field survey, 2011

Item one in Table 8 sought to find out from participants, the church's contribution to the payment of hospital bills. From the data, 17(70.8%) of the pastors and leaders affirmed their agreement. This was followed by 15(31.3%) and 16(38.1%) of the church members and community members respectively.

The second item, payment of NHIS contribution, had 3(12.5%) agreement from the pastors and leaders, 7(14.6%) from the church members and 5(11.9%) from the community members.

Item three in Table 8 had 2(8.3%) of the pastors and leaders agreeing. This was followed by 10(20.85) and 12(28.6%) from the church members and community members respectively. Finally, item four recorded an agreement rate

of 2(8.3%) from the pastors and leaders, 16(33.3%) from the church members and 9(21.4%) from the community members respectively. Thus, from Table 8 it is worth concluding that payment of hospital bills was the major contribution of the church to the health needs of pastors, members and the community as well.

Again, when respondents were asked whether or not there were other social services provided by the church apart from the already mentioned ones, 14(53.8%) of the pastors and leaders said yes whereas 12(46.2%) said no. Those who said yes gave the following as the list of the other social services the church provides: (a) provision of accommodation and education, (b) donations during marriage ceremony, outdooring and funerals, (c) giving helping hands to widows and (d) caring for those in prisons.

Nevertheless, the response gathered from the church members varied from that of the pastors. Thus, the majority (34) representing 68.0% said that there are no other social services provided by the church, apart from the already mentioned ones while 16(32.0%) said the opposite. The following are the list of other services the church provided according to the members: (a) building school blocks and equipping them with the needed resources, (b) providing scholarship for brilliant but needy children, (c) donation to orphanage homes, and (d) blood donation to the hospitals and clinics. With respect to the church members, 22(41.5%) said yes where the majority (31) representing 58.5% argued that there are no other social services the church provides besides the ones already mentioned. The members who agreed that other services are provided by the church besides the already mentioned ones provided the following list (a)

provision of clothes and food items to prisoners, widows and the aged in society, (b) donations to members during marriage and burial rites and (c) payment of school fees for church members.

With respect to the interview guide, respondents were asked series of questions pertaining to the social services the church provided. First, respondents were asked whether the church helped in keeping the community clean. Seventeen representing 45.9% said yes the church helps in keeping the community clean. On the other hand, 20(54.1%) alleged that the church never helped in keeping of the community clean. However, the non-members had 25(41.7%) saying yes whereas the majority (35) representing 58.1% said disagreed. Also, with respect to the church helping people in their area of needs, 73.0% of the church members that were interviewed agreed that the church is good when it comes to helping people in their area of needs with only 10(27.0%) of the members saying otherwise. The response from the non-members of the church had the majority (33) representing 55.9% saying no to the question with only 26(44.1%) agreeing to the fact that the church helps people in their area of needs.

Yet still, when respondents were further asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement as to whether the church do counsel people before and after marriage, 35(94.6%) as against 2(5.4%) of the members agreed by saying yes. Also, 44(73.3%) as against 16(26.75) of the non-members said yes to the same issue under discussion.

Finally, when asked the question “Do the church provides classroom blocks and give scholarship to needy but clever students?” Majority of the

members of the church representing 62.2% said no with only 14 (37.85) saying yes. Also, the response from the non-members had 45(77.6%) disagreeing as compared to only 13(22.4%) agreeing to the question.

Research Question Four: Who are the beneficiaries of the social services provided by the church?

Research question four sought to find out from respondents the main beneficiaries of the social services provided by the Assemblies of God church in the Suhum District. Respondents were made to answer certain questions and the outcome of their responses is presented as follows.

First, the researcher asked respondents to indicate whether they have personally benefited from any social service provided by the Assemblies of God church. With respect to the pastors and leaders, 21(72.4%) indicated that they have personally benefited from a social service the church provided whereas only 8(27.6) disagreed that they have not had any benefit from the provision of social services by the church. However, the response gathered from the church members were in variance to that of the pastors and leaders. Two-eight representing 48.3% said yes whereas the majority (30) representing 51.7% said no. Again, the response from non-members followed the pattern of the church members with 25(42.4%) saying yes while the majority representing 57.6% held different view.

The researcher further asked the respondents who claimed that they have personally benefited from the provision of social services by the church to indicate the period of time they did receive those benefits. The result as provided by respondents is illustrated in Table 9.

Table 9: Period of time benefited from social services

| Response | Pastors & Leaders F (%) | Church Members F (%) | Community Members F (%) |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. 3 months ago | 4(19.0) | 13(39.4) | 3(11.1) |
| 2. 4-6 months ago | 2(9.5) | 2(6.1) | 3(11.1) |
| 3. 1-2 years ago | 9(42.9) | 7(21.2) | 16(59.3) |
| 4. 3-5 years ago | 2(9.5) | 2(6.1) | 3(11.1) |
| 5. Others | 4(19.0) | 9(27.3) | 2(7.4) |
| Total | 21(100.0) | 33(100.0) | 27(100.0) |

Field survey, 2011

Table 9 shows the responses given by respondents who claimed to have benefited from social services provided by the church. With respect to the pastors and leaders, majority (9) representing 42.9% indicated 1-2 years ago as the period they have benefited from social services provided by the church. However, responses gathered from the church members had the majority (13) representing 39.4% indicating 3 months ago as the period they benefited from social service provision by the church. Finally, that of the community members had 16(59.3%) of their respondents saying that they benefited from social services provided by the church some 1-2 years ago. Thus, from the foregoing discussion, it could be deduced that the period most respondents benefited from social services from the church was between 1-2 years ago.

Nonetheless, the researcher gave the respondents who said otherwise the opportunity to indicate their reasons for disagreeing. The 8(27.6%) of pastors and leaders who said no gave the following reasons in defense of their answer: (a) because they are not in difficulties and that if it comes to when the church must help, they will help, (b) by God's grace, they are protected under His care and (c) they have no such needs as yet. On the other hand, the 51.7% of the church members who responded 'no' the question gave their reasons as follows: (a) because God is in control, (b) no social problem has befallen me, and (c) personally I have been able to meet all my needs by the help of my family. Finally, the responses given by the 57.6% of the community members (non-members of the church) who said no are presented as follows; (a) because I am not a member of the church, (b) because I have not sought for that solution to my need, (c) the church does not extend the social services to the community and, (d) because there are a lot of people in the church who are in need and yet have not been cared for.

Again, the researcher asked respondents the question "Do you know of anyone who has benefited from social services provided by the church?" the result is shown in Table 10.

Table 10: Knowledge of beneficiaries of social services by the church

| Response | Pastors & Leaders F (%) | Church Members F (%) | Community Members F (%) |
|--------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Yes | 24(80.0) | 50(86.2) | 40(67.8) |
| No | 6(20.0) | 8(13.8) | 19(32.2) |
| Total | 30(100.0) | 58(100.0) | 59(100.0) |

Field survey, 2011

From Table 10, out of the 30 pastors and leaders that responded to the question, 24(80.0%) said yes while only 6(20.0%) said no. Again, out of the 58 church members that responded to the question, 50(86.2%) said yes as against 8(13.8%) who said no. However, the response rate of the non-members indicated 40(67.8%) saying yes as against 19(32.2%) saying no. Thus, majority of the respondents indicated that they know of someone who have benefited from the social services provided by the church.

More so, the researcher further asked respondents who affirm that they knew a beneficiary of social services provided by the church to indicate who the beneficiary was. The outcome of the response given is presented in Table 11.

Table 11: Beneficiaries of social services provided by the church

| Contribution | Pastors & Leaders F (%) | Church Members F (%) | Community Members F (%) |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Church member | 13(54.2) | 41(82.0) | 31(77.5) |
| 2. Church leader | 7(29.2) | 1(2.0) | 2(5.0) |
| 3. Financial contributor | 1(4.2) | 4(8.0) | 2(5.0) |
| 4. Others | 3(12.5) | 4(8.0) | 5(12.5) |
| Total | 24(100.0) | 50(100.0) | 40(100.0) |

Field survey, 2011

As shown in Table 11, the beneficiary of social services provided by the church as indicated by majority of the pastors and leaders (54.2%), church members (82.0%) and community members (77.5%) was a member of the church. Thus, it could be deduced that with respect to beneficiaries of social services, everyone else comes second to the member of the Assemblies of God church in the Suhum District as indicated by respondents.

Besides, the study sought to find out from respondents whether the social services were provided for only church leaders and members. From the responses gathered from the pastors and leaders of the church, 14(46.7%) said yes while the majority (16) representing 53.3% said no. Also, the members of the church had, 24(41.4%) of them agreed whereas the majority, 34(58.6%) disagreed to the question under discussion. Nevertheless, the response from the community members had 13(22.0%) saying yes while the majority (46) representing 78.0%

said no. Thus, from the discussion, it could be deduced that social services are not only provided for church leaders and members but to other beneficiaries too.

The study further sought the views of respondents who said no to the preceding question to indicate in their view who they think qualify in the community to benefit from the social services the church provided. The result as given by respondents is presented in Table 12.

Table 12: Qualified beneficiaries of social services provided by the church

| Response | Pastors & Leaders F (%) | Church Members F (%) | Community Members F (%) |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. The needy | 11(68.7) | 21(61.8) | 34(53.1) |
| 2. The poor | 1(6.3) | 7(20.6) | 12(18.8) |
| 3. Those who ask for it | 3(18.7) | 5(14.7) | 16(25.0) |
| 4. Others | 1(6.3) | 1(2.9) | 2(3.1) |
| Total | 16(100.0) | 34(100.0) | 64(100.0) |

Field survey, 2011

Table 12 reveals that 11(68.7%) of the pastors and leaders, 21(61.8%) of the church members and 34(53.1%) of the community members indicated that social services provided by the church is for the needy rather than the pastors and members of the church. Also, 3(18.1%) of the pastors and leaders, 5(14.7%) of the church members and 16(25.0%) of the community members said that social services provision is for those who ask for it. However, 1(6.3%) of the pastors and leaders, 7(20.6%) of the church members and 12(18.8%) of the community

members indicated that they are provided for the poor in society. From the responses given by participants, it is worth concluding that the utmost beneficiaries of social services provided by the church were the needy, even though the poor and those who ask for it are not left out. This is consistent with the prophecy of Isaiah the Prophet in the Old Testament that true devotion to Yahweh is to "...remove the chains of oppression and the yoke of injustice, and let the oppressed go free. Thus, share your food with the hungry and open your homes to the homeless poor as well as give clothes to those who have nothing to wear..." (Isaiah 58:6-7, GNB).

With respect to the interview guide, the researcher asked the respondents some questions in connection with the beneficiaries of social services. First, respondents were asked to indicate a yes or no response to the question "Are you a beneficiary of any social service provided by the church?" Out of the 37 church members that were interviewed, 20(55.6%) indicated that they are beneficiaries of social services provided by the Assemblies of God church whereas 16(44.4%) said that they have not receive any benefit from the social services provided by the church. Nevertheless, the responses from the community members had the majority (51) representing 89.5% saying no whereas only 6(10.5%) said yes they are beneficiaries of social services provided by the church.

The researcher followed up the prior question with another calling on respondents to indicate the period of time they became beneficiaries of the social services the church provided. The answers drawn from the respondents are presented in Table 13.

Table 13: Period beneficiaries received social services by the church

| Response | Church Members | Community Members |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| | F (%) | F (%) |
| 1 month | 2(10.0) | 1(12.5) |
| 6-12 month | 7(35.0) | 2(25.0) |
| 1-2 years | 2(10.0) | 0(0.0) |
| 2 years and above | 9(45.0) | 5(62.5) |
| Total | 20(100.0) | 8(100.0) |

Field survey, 2011

Table 13 presents the period of time beneficiaries received social services by the church. The answers drawn out from church members who claimed to be beneficiaries had 2(10.0%) saying that they benefited a month ago. Also, 7(35.0%) indicated that their benefit came some 6-12 months ago whereas those who benefited some 1-2 years ago were 2(10.0%). Finally, the majority (9) representing 45.0% pointed out that they benefited more than 2 years and above. Also, the community members who affirmed that they were beneficiaries of the social services the church provided had the majority representing 5(62.5%) saying that they benefited some 2 years ago. This was followed by 2(25.0%) who had their benefit some 6-12 months ago and finally 1(12.5%) indicated that he/she had a recent benefit of a month ago.

Again, the researcher asked the beneficiaries to indicate their identity as recipient of social services from the Assemblies of God church. Out of the 78 participants that were interviewed, 33(42.3%) revealed that they were members of

the church. However, 45(57.7%) of the beneficiaries revealed their identity as members of the community.

The researcher further asked respondents to specify the kind of social services they benefited from the church. Out of the number of church members that were interviewed, 12(75.0%) said they benefited from financial support or assistance given to them by the church. Again, 2(12.5%) said that their benefit was in the form of marital counselling. This was followed immediately by 1(6.3%) who claimed to have benefited from micro financing and conflict resolution respectively. That of the community members that were interviewed had the majority (5) representing 62.5% claiming to have received financial support from the church. This was followed by 1(12.5%) who claimed to have benefited from micro financing, conflict resolution and marital counselling respectively.

In addition to the social services respondents benefited from, they were further interviewed by the researcher to indicate how regular they benefited from the social services. The majority of the church members representing 17(65.4%) that were interviewed specified that they did not benefit from the social services regularly whereas only 9(34.6%) said that they received regular benefit from the church in the form of social service provision. The response from the community members was no different from that of the church members interviewed. Out of the 36 members of the community that were interviewed, 32(88.9%) indicated that the rate at which they benefited from the church in terms of social services

provision was not regular. Only 4(11.1%) pointed out that they benefited from the social services the church provided regularly.

Research Question Five: What are the challenges associated with the provision of social services by the church?

This research question sought to find out the views of respondents with respect to the challenges associated with the provision of social services by the church. The outcome of their responses is discussed as follows.

With respect to the challenges associated with the provision of social services by the church, the researcher first sought to find out from respondents whether the church was able to provide social services to all who needed them. The result as provided by respondents is illustrated in Table 14.

Table 14: The church’s ability to provide social services

| Response | Pastors & Leaders F (%) | Church Members F (%) | Community Members F (%) |
|---|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. The church is unable to provide social services to all who are in need | 23(79.3) | 46(78.0) | 51(87.9) |
| 2. The church is able to provide adequate social services to meet the needs of the people | 6(20.7) | 13(22.0) | 7(12.1) |
| Total | 29(100.0) | 59(100.0) | 58(100.0) |

Field survey, 2011

Table 14 discusses the respondents view on the church's ability to provide social services to all those in needs. From the table, the responses provided by the pastors and leaders revealed the majority of them, 23(79.3%), saying that the church is unable to provide social services to all who are in need. On the contrary, only 6(20.7%) of the pastors and leaders affirmed that the church was able to provide adequate social services to meet the needs of the people. However, the response from the church members was no different from that of the pastors and leaders of the church. Forty-six representing 78.0% said that the church was unable to provide social services to all its members. On the contrary, only 13(22.0%) claimed that the church was able to provide social services to meet the needs of all its members. Finally, the response of the community members was also solicited for the study. Out of the 58 respondents that responded to the question, 51(87.9%) said no while only 7(12.1%) said yes. It can be concluded from the responses provided by participants that the church was unable to adequately provide social services to all who were in need in the Suhum District.

However, the researcher further asked the few respondents who indicated that the church was able to provide social services to all its members to state how the church was able to do that. The following reasons were solicited from the pastors and leaders of the church: (a) through welfare contributions and church assistance, and (b) through contributions from members of the church. With respect to the church members, the following reasons were given in support of their assertion that the church was able to provide social services to all its members: (a) through welfare and general contributions by members, (b) through

fund raising by the church and (c) through individual support from the church members.

On the other hand, respondents who said no to the question “Is the church able to provide social services to all its members?” were made to indicate the challenges that confront the church in the provision of social services to its members. The response gathered from the pastors and leaders as well as the church members is shown in Table 15.

Table 15: Challenges confronting the church in social services provision

| Challenges | Pastors& Leaders F (%) | Church Members F (%) |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Lack of finance | 20(87.0) | 35(76.0) |
| 2. Lack of personnel | 1(4.3) | 1(2.2) |
| 3. Lack of support from the community | 2(8.7) | 5(10.9) |
| 4. Others | 0(0.0) | 5(10.9) |
| Total | 23(100.0) | 46(100.0) |

Source: Field survey 2011

Table 15 presents the views of the pastors and leaders as well as the church members who said that the church is unable to provide social services to meet all of its members. From Table 15, lack of finance was the number one challenge of the church as indicated by 20(87.0%) of the pastors and leaders and 35(76.0%) of the church members respectively. The second challenge was the lack of support from the community with a response of 2(8.7%) from the pastors

and leaders and 5(10.9%) from the church members. This was followed by the lack of personnel as indicated in Table 15. It is, therefore, realistic from the discussion that lack of finance and lack of support from the community members are the two prominent challenges confronting the church in social services provision to the Suhum District. The finding that lack of financial support and lack of support from the community members are prominent challenges confronting the church in its social services provision are in agreement with National Development Planning Commission (2005) that service delivery barriers that have constrained access to quality health care include financial barriers and weak support systems such as human resource constraints.

Again, the researcher endeavoured to find out from the respondents how the church generated funds for the social services provided to its members. The result solicited from the pastors and leaders as well as the members of the church is presented Table 16.

Table 16: How the church generate funds for social services provision

| Fund Generation | Pastors & Leaders F (%) | Church Members F (%) |
|--|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Contribution by members | 27(90.0) | 57(95.0) |
| 2. Contribution to social fund by non-members | 3(10.0) | 2(3.3) |
| 3. Donation from individuals from outside the church | 0(0.0) | 1(1.7) |
| 4. Sponsorship from NGOs and other institutions | 0(0.0) | 0(0.0) |
| Total | 30(100.0) | 60(100.0) |

As shown in Table 16, contribution by members as means by which the church generated funds for social services provision had the highest score of 27(90.0%) and 57(95.0%) from both pastors and leaders and church members respectively. This was followed by contribution to social fund by non-members of the church with 3(10.0%) response from the pastors and leaders and 2(3.3%) from the church members. Thus, from Table 16, it could be concluded that the greatest means of the church's generation of funds for social services provision is through contributions made by members.

Responses gathered from respondents with the help of the interview guide are presented as follows. First the researcher asked the question "Are you aware of problems the church is facing in providing social services to the members/community?" Out of the 36 members of the church that were interviewed, 21(58.3%) said yes whereas 15(41.7%) said no. On the contrary, 33(56.9%) of the community members that were interviewed said no with only 25(43.1%) saying yes.

Again, the researcher provided respondents with certain options and then asked them to indicate those that to their best knowledge constitute part of the problems confronting the church in providing services to the members and community. Responses from the church members, 14(66.7%), pointed out "money" as the topmost part of the problem. This was followed by 4(19.0%) of the respondents who chose the option "whether priority should be given to church members or the community" as part of the problem confronting the church in its social services provision. Again, 2(9.5%) and 1(4.8%) of the respondents

interviewed selected the options “people to help provide service” and “difficulty in identifying a person with a real need” respectively as part of the church’s problem in social service provision. However, with respect to the community members interviewed, 18(72.0%) voted money as utmost part of the church’s problem. This was followed by 5(20.0%) of the respondents saying “people to help provide service” and 1(4.0%) saying “difficulty in identifying a person with a real need” and “whether priority should be given to church members or the community” respectively. Thus, financial difficulty coupled with who priority should be given to as well as the needed personnel were the challenges confronting the provision of social services by the church as indicated by respondents.

Finally, the researcher asked respondents to indicate their knowledge on how the church raises funds to carry out the provision of social services. With respect to the church members that were interviewed, the majority representing 60.0% said they knew how the church embarks on social services provision. On the contrary, 7(20.0%) of the respondents equally responded “no” and “don’t know” to the question. Nevertheless, that of the community members had the majority (19) representing 35.8% saying they don’t know while 17(32.1%) responded yes and no to the question respectively.

Researcher Question Six: What has been the impact of the social service provision on the community?

Researcher question six sought to find out from respondents the impact of the social services the church provides in the community. The views of the pastors

and leaders, members of the church as well as community members were sought after in answering this question.

Firstly, the researcher posed the question “Why is the church involved in the provision of social services?” to the pastors and leaders as well as members of the church. The principal reasons provided by the pastors and leaders included (a) because it is the responsibility of the church to help the needy in the community as shown in the Bible in Matthew 25: 35, (b) to win the community to Christ, and (c) because the church is part of the community and anything that happens to the community equally affects the church. On the other hand, the key reasons provided by members of the church are given as follows: (a) because it is the social responsibility of the church to cater for the needy in the community, (b) to encourage people to go to church and to be won for Christ, (c) to maintain a strong family in Christ, and (d) to help church members and family to ensure that children grow up to become responsible adults in future.

It is worth concluding that the prime reasons for the church’s involvement in social services provision to the community as indicated by respondents were because it was the social responsibility for the church to cater for the needy as well as fulfilling the great commission by Jesus Christ. The findings are consistent with Cloe (1993) assertion that it behooves on the church today to learn from the laid down examples of the Lord Jesus Christ and apostles. Again, the finding is in concord with Apostle James writing that “What God the father considers to be pure and genuine religion is this: to take care of orphans and widows in their suffering” (James 1:27 GNB).

More so, the study sought to find out from the respondents the extent to which the social services provided by the church have impacted positively in the community. The responses from the pastors and leaders had 22(88.0%) saying yes to the question with only 3(12.0%) disagreeing. However, the response rate from the church members also followed the same pattern as their pastors and leaders. Out of the 56 members that attended to the question, 51(91.1%) were of the view that the social services provided by the church had positive impact on the members of the community while 5(8.9%) of the members of the church indicated otherwise. Again, out of the 57 community members that responded to the question, the majority representing 84.2% agreed whereas only 14.5% disagreed. Thus, from the discussion, it is crystal clear that the social services provided by the church in the Suhum District have impacted positively in the community.

Yet again, the researcher asked respondents who agreed to the preceding question to indicate their reasons in support of their assertion. With respect to the 88.0% pastors and leaders who agreed to the question, the following major reasons were provided;

1. The provision of social services has impacted the community positively because it has enhanced the financial status of members and also helps alleviate their suffering.
2. The provision of social services have given joy to members and encouraged them to come to church regularly.
3. The provision of social services has improved the sanitation and health conditions of the people in the community.

4. They concluded by saying that many schools have been built and needy but brilliant students have also been supported by the church.

All the same, the 51(91.1%) of the church members who asserted that the provision of social services by the church has impacted the community positively gave the following reasons: (a) it has enabled the members to know that they have a family that cares and is ready to support in times of crisis; (b) the provision of social services has brought joy, hope, happiness and better future for the needy in society; (c) through the provision of social services, the membership strength of the church keeps on increasing; (d) that has helped in improving the standard of living of the needy and (e) it has supported members in the area of education as well as health care. Lastly, the following reasons were given by the, 84.2%, community members who agreed that the social services provided by the church have positively impacted the community: (a) through the provision of social services by the church, a lot of people have been attracted to the Christian religion; (b) through social services provision, it has helped raise the standard of living of members of the community; (c) it has helped develop the community in the area of sanitation; (d) the provision of social services has helped reduce the rate of social vices in the community; (e) through the provision of social services, the brilliant but needy in the community have had the opportunity to fulfill their dreams in life and, (f) the provision of social services by the church has helped improve the health conditions of individuals in the community.

On the contrary, the 12.0% pastors and leaders who did not agree to the positive impact of social services in the community gave the following two

essential reasons: (a) the provision of social services by the church was insignificant and therefore more needs to be done before the impact can be felt and (b) the church needs to generate enough funds so as to be able to provide for social services in the community. Again, the views of the 8.9% church members who said other wise to the positive impact of social services in the community are provided as follows: (a) the provision of social services by the church are done seldom and the beneficiaries are those closer to the leaders of the church and (b) because members are reluctant to contribute to the church, the church is unable financially to provide social services for the community. With respect to the 14.5% respondents from the community who did not acknowledge the positive impact of the social services provided by the church, the following reasons in support of their position were given: (a) beneficiaries of social services provided by the church were mainly members from the church (b) instead of the church channeling their finances into social services provision to the community, the funds are rather geared towards funeral services which had minimal benefit on the community as a whole and (c) in most instances, only the select few benefit from the services provided by the church.

Once more, the researcher asked respondents the question “Do you think the church should be encouraged to continue the provision of social service?” With regard to this question, all the pastors and leaders, 28(100.0%), who responded said yes with none, 0(0.0%), saying no to the question. However, that of the church members had the majority (57) representing 98.3% agreeing with only 1(1.7%) of the respondents disagreeing. Again, the trend of the response rate

from the community members did not differ from that of the church members. Majority of the respondents representing 91.9% said yes. On the contrary, only 1(1.7%) responded no to the question. The responses solicited from participants as discussed above implies that the church should be encouraged both financially and physically to continue the provision of social services.

Finally, the researcher asked respondents to suggest ways they think can help the church to provide social services to the community. The comments provided by the pastors and leaders are presented as follows: (a) the church should solicit assistance from external sources such as benevolent individuals, NGOs and donor agencies to enable them impact greatly in the community; (b) the need to create a common fund in support of the social services provision; (c) the church should be encouraged to contribute to the social needs of its members as well as the community also; (d) the need for the church and community to forge alliance in helping the needy in society, and (e) the church needs to educate its members on the blessings that follows when they help others. Also, the following suggestions were solicited from the members of the church: (a) attention should not only be given to brilliant but needy children but also those learning trades so as to encourage them do well in their respective fields of trade; (b) the provision of social services should not be discriminated among members but also should consider the needy in the community; (c) the church should create other sources of income to enable it sustain the provision of social services to its members; (d) efforts should be made by members to pay their contributions regularly and sometimes stretch their amounts contributed so as to be able to cater

for a large number of needy people in society, and (e) the church should venture into job creation for the youth without work in the community. Lastly, the following suggestions were given by the community members with respect to how the church can improve its social services delivery; (a) the church should endeavour to provide the needed social services that will help reduce dependency ratio and social vices in the community, (b) denominations in the community should come together as one in order to raise their financial and material support to help the poor and needy in the community, (c) social services provision should be regular and not a nine day wonder, (d) the need for adequate counselling services and assistance to widows and widowers by the church, and (e) the church should institute an educational fund which can help send children who are not in school for one reason or the other to attend and complete at least basic education.

The outcome of the interview guide on the impact of social services is further presented by the researcher. First, the researcher asked the question “Do you think the church’s social services have helped the members and the community?” The result of the response gathered from the church members had 28(90.3%) agreeing while only 3(9.7%) disagreed to the question under discussion. However, the response rate from the community members did not differ from the pattern of the church members. Out of the 46 participants that were interviewed, 40(87.0%) affirmed their agreement to the question whereas only 6(13.0%) disagreed.

“How has it helped the members and the community?” was the next interview question to participants. From the members of the church interviewed,

7(31.8%) opined that marriage have become stable due to counselling. This was followed immediately by 5(22.7%) of the respondents who gave their responses as (a) needy children are supported to go to school and (b) people are supported to trade respectively. Again, 3(13.6%) of the respondents said that conflicts are resolved quickly. Finally, 2(9.0%) of the respondents interviewed asserted that hospitals and clinics are built and health insurance contributions are paid for the needy as well. On the other hand, responses from the community members on the same question had 15(39.5%) of the respondents saying that marriages have become stable due to counselling. This was immediately followed by 11(28.9%) of the respondents who affirmed that needy children are supported to go to school. Also, 8(21.11%) of the respondents said that people are support to trade. Finally, 2(5.3%) of the interviewed respondents equally claimed that hospitals and clinics are built, and conflicts are also resolved quickly.

“What do you suggest the church should do more?” was the last question posed to participants by the researcher. With respect to the members of the church that were interviewed, 15(50.0%) claimed that the church should provide more schools. This response was followed by 7(23.3%) who said that the church should provide more financial support for business. Again, 5(16.7%) of the respondents interviewed said that the church should support agriculture in the district and finally 3(10.0%) also said that the church should help more in the area of conflict resolution. With regard to the same question, the following responses were solicited from the community members that were interviewed. First, 31(53.4%) asserted that the church should provide more schools in the community. This was

followed by 20(34.5%) who said that more financial support for businesses should be made available by the church to the members of the community. Nevertheless, 4(6.9%) of the community members interviewed claimed that the church needs to provide support in the area of agriculture. The final response from the members of the community interviewed was 3(5.2%) saying that the church should provide more help in the areas of conflict resolution.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter summarizes the study and the major findings of the study. It also looks at the conclusions drawn out of the main issues concerning the analysis of data collected, and further makes recommendations.

Summary

The purpose of the study was to investigate the provision of social services by the Assemblies of God churches in the Suhum District of Eastern Region. That is to say, if in addition to the provision of spiritual services, other specific social services such as schools, hospitals, financial support and counselling services are provided.

In the light of this assertion, the thrust of the study was guided by six research questions. The research questions were:

1. Under what conditions are social services provided by the church in the District?
2. To what extent do the community benefit from the social services of the church?
3. What kinds of social services are provided by the church?
4. Who are the beneficiaries of the social services provided by the church?

5. What are the challenges associated with the provision of services by the church?
6. What has been the impact of the social service provision on the community?

The sample size of 300 was made up of 150 members and non-members of the Assemblies of God churches in the Suhum District respectively. Stratified random sampling techniques were used in selecting the church members whereas convenience sampling was used for the non-members for the study. Again, purposive sampling technique was used to select all the pastors and leaders in the Assemblies of God churches in the Suhum District. Frequency scores and percentage tables were used in analyzing the data obtained from the study. Three set of questionnaires were used to collect the data for the study. In addition to the questionnaires, an interview guide was used to collect data from the church members and community members who could neither read nor write. From the data analysis, it was found that:

1. The church provided social services to the community when there was an identified need, when the church was informed of a particular need and when it was on the church's calendar.
2. The utmost benefit of the community from the social services provided by the church was financial support unlike educational support, micro financing, conflict resolution and marital counselling. This happened some 6 years and over and was provided by the church only when the need arises.

3. Pre and post marital counselling, contribution to health needs of the community as well as involvement in sanitation issues were the paramount social services the church provided to the community. Again, the contribution to the health needs of the community by the church was done through the payment of hospital bills.
4. As far as beneficiaries of social services are concern, everyone else came second to the member of the Assemblies of God church. Nevertheless, the study also revealed that social services were not only provided for church leaders and members but also to other beneficiaries such as the needy, poor and those in the community who asked for it.
5. Lack of financial support and lack of support from the community members were the typical challenges that confronted the church in its quest to provide social services to the community. Nevertheless, the main means by which the church generated funds for its social services provision was through the contributions made by the church members.
6. The social services provided by the church had a positive impact in the community. In support of this, the following suggestions were made:
 - a. The church should solicit funds from external sources like NGOs, donor agencies and philanthropists to supports its agenda.
 - b. The need to create a common fund in support of the social services provision.
 - c. The church should institute an educational fund to support needy but brilliant students in the community.

- d. The need for the church and community to forge alliance in helping the needy in society.

Conclusions

Based on the outcome of the findings, the following conclusions are drawn from the study.

1. It can be concluded that the church provided social services to the community only when there was an identified need, when the church was informed of a particular need and when it was on the calendar of the church.
2. It can also be concluded that the critical benefit of the community from the church was financial support which occurred only when the need arose.
3. It can further be concluded that the paramount social services provided by the church to the community were pre and post marital counselling, contribution to health needs of the community and involvement in sanitation issues.
4. It can again be concluded that the main beneficiary of social services was the member of the church with occasional annexation to the needy, poor and those who ask for it in the community.
5. It can further be concluded that lack of financial support and support from the community members were the distinctive challenges that bedeviled the church in its social services provision.
6. Finally, it can be concluded that the social services the church provided had a positive impact in the community.

Recommendations

In the light of the findings and conclusions drawn from the study, the following recommendations are made.

1. In the planning and implementation of social services by the church, the community's paramount needs should be adequately considered and catered for.
2. It is also recommended that besides financial support, pre and post marital counselling, contribution to health needs of the community as well as involvement in sanitation issues, the Assemblies of God churches in the Suhum District should consider increasing their assistance to the community in the areas of education, microfinance and conflict resolution.
3. It is again recommended that specific emphasis with respect to social services provision should be focused on the needy, poor and those who ask for assistance in community since it is the social responsibility of the church as indicated by Christ Jesus in the Bible.
4. It is further recommended that the church should educate its members on the importance of their financial contributions in the provision of social services to the community. Again, the church should forge alliance with the community so as to get the needed personnel to support in times of work in the community.
5. Since the social services provided by the church have positive impact in the community, the church should go beyond members' contribution to

solicit for funds from external sources like NGOs as well as philanthropic organizations in the country.

6. Finally, it is recommended that the church create a common fund to support their projects and also an educational fund to support brilliant but needy children in the community to further their education.

Suggestions for further Research

Assessment of the impact of social services in the community should be conducted by all churches in the Suhum District and beyond. It is also recommended that a study be conducted to examine the church's contribution to the moral and spiritual advancement of the members of the church and their impact in the community.

Finally, a study can also be conducted to look at the impact of social services provision by the church to the community on the numerical growth of the church.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PASTORS AND LEADERS

The questionnaire is aimed at collecting information on the provision of social services by the Assemblies of God church in the Suhum District. Information provided will be treated private and confidential. Answer each question by writing your answer in the space provided, or by circling the alternative(s) of your choice.

Background Information

Please tick [] the appropriate box:

1. Sex: Male [] Female []
2. Age: 15-25 [] 26-35 [] 36-45 [] 46-59 [] 60 and above []
3. Occupation: Student [] Unemployed [] Self-employed []
Government employee [] Pensioner []
4. Marital status: Single [] Married [] Divorced [] Widowed []
5. Educational Level: Basic [] Secondary [] Tertiary [] Training
(specify)..... None []
6. Town of Residence: Suhum [] Nsawam [] Asamankese []

Conditions under which social service are provide

1. What are social services?
 - a) Giving money to people who are in need
 - b) Giving interest free loan
 - c) Providing free community health service
 - d) Provision of counselling service
 - e) Any other (specify).....

2. What calls for provision of social service?
 - a) When the church identifies a need
 - b) When the church is informed of a need
 - c) When it is on the church's calendar
 - d) Any other (specify).....

The Extent the Community Benefit From the Social Service Provision

3. Does your church provide social service to members of the community?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
4. Do you know of any member of the community who has benefited from the social service provide by the church.
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
5. If yes, when did he/she benefit from the social service?
 - a) A month ago
 - b) 6 – 12 months ago
 - c) 24 years above
 - d) Any other (specify).....
6. What social service was he/she provide with?
 - a) Financial support
 - b) Educational support
 - c) Micro financing
 - d) Conflict resolution

e) Any other (specify).....

7. How long has the church been involved in the provision of social services?

a) 6 months – 1 year

b) 2-5 years

c) 6 years and above

d) Any other (specify).....

8. How often does the church provide social services to the community and the church?

a) Every month

b) Every 3 months

c) Every 6 months

d) When the need arises

e) Any other (specify).....

9. Do you think the social services provided by the church are benefiting the recipients and should therefore be encouraged?

a) Yes

b) No

10. If yes why do you say so? (Specify).....

11. If no, state your reason(s).....

.....

The Kinds of Social Services the Church Provide

12. Does the church provide micro financing to small and medium scales operators?

a) Yes

b) No

13. Has the church been involved in the sanitation issues in the community?

a) Yes

b) No

14. Does the church contribute to the health needs of the pastor/leaders of the church?

a) Yes

b) No

15. If yes, how?

a) Payment of hospital bills

b) Payment of NHIS contribution

c) Building of hospital/clinic

d) Supply of hospital equipment

e) Any other (specify).....

16. Does the church provide pre and post marital counselling to its leaders?

a) Yes

b) No

17. Are there other social services provided by the church apart from those mentioned above?

- a) Yes
- b) No

18. If yes, what are they? (Specify).....

Beneficiaries of the Social Service Provided

19. Have you personally benefited from any social service provided by the church?

- a) Yes
- b) No

20. If yes, when did you benefit from the social service provided?

- a) 3 months ago
- b) 6 years ago
- c) 1-2 years ago 3-5 years ago
- d) Any other (specify)

21. Do you know of anyone who has benefited from social services provided by the church?

- a) Yes
- b) No

22. Who was this beneficiary?

- a) Church members
- b) Church leaders
- c) Financial contributor

d) Any other (specify).....

23. Are the social services provided for only church leaders?

a) Yes

b) No

24. If yes why is it limited only to church leaders?

a) To attract people into the church

b) To maintain membership

c) To encourage member to contribute

d) Any other (specify).....

25. If no, who qualifies in the community to benefit from the social service provision?

a) The needy

b) The poor

c) Those who ask for it

d) Nay other (specify).....

Challenges associated with the Provision of Social Services

26. Is the church able to provide social services to all who need them?

a) Yes

b) No

27. If yes, how is it able to do that? (Specify).....

28. If no what challenges confront the church in the provision of social services.

a) Lack of finance

- b) Lack of personnel
- c) Lack of support from the community
- d) Any other (Specify).

29. How does the church generate funds for the social services provision?

- a) Contribution by members
- b) Contribution to social fund by non members
- c) Donation from individuals from outside the church
- d) Sponsorship from NGO's and other institutions.
- e) Any other (specify)

The Impact of the Social Service in the Community

30. Why is the church involved in the provision of social services (Give reasons).....

31. In your own estimation do you think the social services provided by the church have impacted positively in the community?

- a) Yes
- b) No

32. If yes, state how.....

33. If no, state how.....

34. Do you think the church should be encouraged to continue in providing social service to the community?

- a) Yes
- b) No

35. Any other suggestion or comments that will help improve the social service provision by the church.....

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CHURCH MEMBERS

The questionnaire is aimed at collecting information on the provision of social services by the Assemblies of God church in the Suhum District. Information provided will be treated private and confidential. Answer each question by writing your answer in the space provided, or by circling the alternative(s) of your choice.

Background Information

Please tick [] the appropriate box:

1. Sex: Male [] Female []
2. Age: 15-25 [] 26-35 [] 36-45 [] 46-59 [] 60 and above []
3. Occupation: Student [] Unemployed [] Self-employed []
Government employee [] Pensioner []
4. Marital status: Single [] Married [] Divorced [] Widowed []
5. Educational Level: Basic [] Secondary [] Tertiary []
Training (specify)..... None []
6. Town of Residence: Suhum [] Nsawam [] Asamankese []

Conditions under Which Social Service are Provide

1. What are social services?
 - a) Giving money to people who are in need
 - b) Giving interest free loan
 - c) Providing free community health service
 - d) Provision of counselling service

e) Any other (specify).....

2. What calls for provision of social service?

a) When the church identifies a need

b) When the church is informed of a need

c) When it is on the church's calendar

d) Any other (specify).....

The Extent The Community Benefit From The Social Service Provision.

3. Does your church provide social service to member of the community?

a) Yes

b) No

4. Do you know of any member of the church who has benefited from the social service provided by the church?

a) Yes

b) No

5. If yes, when did he/she benefit from the social service?

a) A month ago

b) 6 – 12 months ago

c) 24 years above

d) Any other (specify).....

6. What social service was he/she provide with?

a) Financial support

b) Educational support

c) Micro financing

- d) Conflict resolution
- e) Any other (specify).....

7. How long has the church been involved in the provision of social services to its members?

- a) 6 months – 1 year
- b) 2-5 years
- c) 6 years and above
- d) Any other (specify).....

8. How often does the church provide social services to the members and the church?

- a) Every month
- b) Every 3 months
- c) Every 6 months
- d) When the need arises
- e) Any (specify).....

9. Do you think the social services provided by the church are benefiting the recipients and should therefore be encouraged?

- a) Yes
- b) No

10. If yes why do you say so? (Specify).....

11. If no, states your reason(s).....

The Kinds of Social Services the Church Provide

12. Does the church provide micro financing to members who operate small and medium scales businesses?

- a) Yes
- b) No

13. Have the church members been involved in the sanitation issues in the community?

- a) Yes
- b) No

14. Does the church contribute to the health needs of the members of the church?

- a) Yes
- b) No

15. If you yes, how?

- a) Payment of hospital bills
- b) Payment of NHIS contribution
- c) Building of hospital/clinic
- d) Supply of hospital equipment
- e) Any other (specify).....

16. Does the church provide pre post marital counselling to its members?

- a) Yes
- b) No

17. Are there other social service provided by the church apart from those mentioned above?

- a) Yes
- b) No

18. If yes, what are they? (Specify).....

Beneficiaries of the Social Service Provided

19. Have you personally benefited from any social service provided by the church?

- a) Yes
- b) No

20. Have you personally benefited from any social provided by the church?

- a) Yes
- b) No

21. If yes, when did you benefit from the social service provided?

- a) 3 months ago
- b) 6 years ago
- c) 1-2 years ago 3-5 years ago
- d) Any other (specify).....

22. If no, why (Give reason).....

23. Do you know of anyone who has benefited from social services provided by the church?

- a) Yes
- b) No

24. Who was this beneficiary?

- a) Church members
- b) Church leaders
- c) Financial contributor
- d) Any other (specify).

25. Are the social services provided for only church members?

- a) Yes
- b) No

26. If no, who qualifies in the community to benefit from the social services provided by the church?

- a. The needy
- b. The poor
- c. Those who ask for it
- d. Any other (specify).....

Challenges associated with the provision of social services

27. Is the church able to provide social services to all members who need them?

- a) Yes
- b) No

28. If yes, how is it able to do that? (Specify).....

29. If no what challenges confront the church in the provision of social services to its members?

- a) Lack of finance
- b) Lack of personnel

- c) Lack of support from the community
- d) Any other (Specify).

30. How does the church generate funds for the social services provision to its members?

- a) Contribution by members
- b) Contribution to social fund by non members
- c) Donation from individual from outside the church
- d) Sponsorship from NGO's and other institutions.
- e) Any other (specify)

The impact of the social service in the community

31. Why is the church involved in the provision of social services (Give reasons)

.....

32. In your own estimation do you think the social services by the church have impacted positively on the members?

- a) Yes
- b) No

33. If yes, state how.....

34. If no, state how.....

35. Do you think the church should be encouraged to continue in providing social services to the members?

- a) Yes
- b) No

36. Any other suggestion or comments that will help improve the social service provision by the church?

.....
.....

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COMMUNITY

The questionnaire is aimed at collecting information on the provision of social services by the Assemblies of God church in the Suhum District. Information provided will be treated private and confidential. Answer each question by writing your answer in the space provided, or by circling the alternative(s) of your choice.

Background Information

Please tick [] the appropriate box.

- 1. Sex: Male [] Female []
- 2. Age: 15-25 [] 26-35 [] 36-45 [] 46-59 [] 60 and above []
- 3. Occupation: Student [] Unemployed [] Self-employed []
Government employee [] Pensioner []
- 4. Religion: Islamic [] Christian [] Traditionalist [] Any other []
- 5. Marital status: Single [] Married [] Divorced [] Widowed []
- 6. Denomination: Pentecost [] Methodist [] Assemblies of God []
Presbyterian [] Roman Catholic [] Any other []
- 7. Educational Level: Basic [] Secondary [] Tertiary [] Training
(specify)..... None []
- 8. Town of Residence: Suhum [] Nsawam [] Asamankese []

Conditions under which social service are provided

1. What are social services?
 - a) Giving money to people who are in need
 - b) Giving interest free loan
 - c) Providing free community health service
 - d) Provision of counselling service
 - e) Any other (specify).....

2. What calls for provision of social service to the community?
 - a) When the church identifies a need
 - b) When the church is informed of a need
 - c) When it is on the church's calendar
 - d) Any other (specify).....

The extent the community benefit from the social service provision

3. Does your church provide social service to member of the community?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No

4. Do you know of any member of the community who has benefited from the social service provide by the church?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No

5. If yes, when did he/she benefit from the social service?
 - a) A month ago
 - b) 6 – 12 months ago

- c) 24 years above
- d) Any other (specify).....

6. What social service was he/she provided with?

- a) Financial support
- b) Educational support
- c) Micro financing
- d) Conflict resolution
- e) Any other (specify).....

7. Since when has the church been involved in the provision of social services to the community?

- a. 6 months – 1 year
- b. 2 – 5 years
- c. 6years and above
- d. Any other (specify).....

8. How often does the community benefit from the provision of social services by the church?

- a. Every month
- b. Every 3 months
- c. Every 6 months
- d. When the need is reported to her
- e. Any other (specify)

9. Do you think the provision of social services by the church to the community should be encouraged?

a. Yes

b. No

10. If yes, why (specify).....

11. If no, give reasons(s).....

The kinds of social services the church provides

12. Does the church provide micro financing to small and medium scale business operators in the community?

a) Yes

b) No

13. Does the church provide any assistance in area of pre and post marital counselling to the community?

a) Yes

b) No

14. Has the church been involved in the sanitation issues in the community?

a) Yes

b) No

15. Does the church contribute to the health needs of the community?

a) Yes

b) No

16. If Yes, how?

a) Payment of hospital bills

b) Payment of NHLS contribution

c) Building of hospital / Clinic

- d) Supply of hospital equipment
- e) Any other (specify).....

17. Are there other social services provided by the church, apart from those mentioned above?

- a) Yes
- b) No

18. If yes, what are they? (Specify).....

Beneficiaries of the social services provided

19. Have you personally benefitted from any social service provided by the church?

- a) Yes
- b) No

20. If yes, when did you benefit from the social service provision?

- a) 3 months ago
- b) 4 – 6 month ago
- c) 1 – 2 years ago
- d) 3 – 5 years ago
- e) Any other (specify).....

21. Do you know of anyone who has benefitted from social services provided by the church in the community?

- a) Yes
- b) No

22. Who was this beneficiary?
- a) Church member
 - b) Church Leaders
 - c) Financial contributor
 - d) Any other (specify).....
24. Are the social services provided for only church leaders and members?
- a) Yes
 - b) No
25. If yes why is it limited to only leaders and members?
- a) To attract people into the church
 - b) To maintain membership
 - c) To encourage members to contribute
 - d) Any other (specify).....
26. If no, who qualifies in the community to benefit from the social service provision?
- a) The needy
 - b) The poor
 - c) Those who ask for it
 - d) Any other (specify).....

Challenges associated with the provision of social services

27. Is the church able to provide social services to all community members who need them?

- a) Yes
- b) No

Impact of social services in the community

28. In your own estimation do you think the social services provided by the church have impacted positively on the community?

- a) Yes
- b) No

29. If yes, state how?.....
.....

30. If no, state why?.....
.....

31. Do you think the church should be encouraged to continue in the providing social service?

- a) Yes
- b) No

32. Any other suggestion or comments that can help the social service provision by the church.

.....
.....

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE CHURCH AND COMMUNITY

MEMBERS

Background Information

Please tick [] the appropriate box

1. Sex: Male [] Female []
2. Age: 15-25 [] 26-35 [] 36-45 [] 46-59 [] 60 and above []
3. Occupation: Student [] Unemployed [] Self-employed []
Government employee [] Pensioner []
4. Religion: Islamic [] Christian [] Traditionalist [] Any other []
5. Marital status: Single [] Married [] Divorced [] Widowed []
6. Denomination: Pentecost [] Methodist [] Assemblies of God []
Presbyterian [] Roman Catholic [] Any other []
7. Educational Level: Basic [] Secondary [] Tertiary [] Training
(specify)..... None []
8. Town of Residence: Suhum [] Nsawam [] Asamankese []

Situation that make social services provision important

1. What do you understand by social service?
 - a) Giving away to people in need
 - b) Giving loan to people without interest
 - c) Helping people to pay for their hospital bills
 - d) Building schools
 - e) Giving seedy but clever student scholarship

2. Do you think it is necessary for the church to provide social services?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No

The Usefulness the Social Service to the Community

3. Do you know if Assemblies of God church provide social service to the members/community?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
4. Are the services they provide helpful to the members/community?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
5. Have the service changed the lives of the beneficiaries?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No

Social Services Provided By the Church

Does the church do the following?

6. Helping to keep the community clean
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
7. Helping people in area health needs
 - a) Yes
 - b) No

8. Counselling people before and after manage
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
9. Building classroom blocks and giving scholarship to needy but clever students?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No

Beneficiaries of the Social Services

10. Are you a beneficiary of any social service provided by the church?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
11. When was it?
 - a) One month ago
 - b) 6-12 months ago
 - c) 1-2 months ago
 - d) 2 years and above
12. Who are you?
 - a) Member of the church
 - b) Member of the community
13. What social service did you benefit from
 - a) Financial support
 - b) Micro financing
 - c) Conflict resolution

d) Marital counselling

14. Do you benefit from the social services regularly?

a) Yes

b) No

15. Do you know anyone who has benefited from the social services the church provide?

a) Yes

b) No

16. When did he/she benefit from the social service

a) One month ago

b) 6-12 months ago

c) 1-2 years ago

d) 2 years and above

17. What social service did he/she benefit from?

a) Financial support

b) Micro financing

c) Conflict resolution

d) Marital counselling

Difficulties in Social Service Provision

18. Are you aware of problems the church is facing in providing social services to the members/community?

a) Yes

b) No

19. Which of the following is part of the problems
- a) Money
 - b) People to help provide service
 - c) Both (a) and (b)
20. Do you know how the church raises money to carry out the services they provide?
- a) Yes
 - b) No
 - c) Don't know
21. Do you think the church's social services have helped the members and the community?
- a) Yes
 - b) No
22. How has it helped the members and the community?
- a) Needy children are supported to go to school
 - b) People are supported to trade
 - c) Hospitals/clinics are built
 - d) Health insurance contributions are paid for the needy
 - e) Conflicts are resolved quickly
 - f) Marriages have become stable due to counselling.
23. What do you suggest the church should do more?
- a) Provide more schools
 - b) More financial support for businesses
 - c) Support agriculture
 - d) Help more in area of conflict resolution.

APPENDIX E
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

RESEARCH WORK

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Mr. Prince Ofori Appiah is a student pursuing Master of Arts (Guidance and Counselling) programme in this department. As part of his degree requirements, he is expected to work on a research entitled PROVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES BY THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD CHURCH IN THE SUHUM DISTRICT OF EASTERN REGION.

He has opted to make a study at your institution for the research. We would be most grateful if you could afford him the opportunity to make the study.

Any information provided will be treated as strictly confidential.

Thank you.

(DR. E.K. GYIMAH)

HEAD

APPENDIX F

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS

Questionnaire for Pastors and Leaders

Sex

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid male | 20 | 66.7 | 66.7 | 66.7 |
| female | 10 | 33.3 | 33.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 30 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Age

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid 15-24 years | 1 | 3.3 | 3.3 | 3.3 |
| 25-34 years | 3 | 10.0 | 10.0 | 13.3 |
| 35-44 years | 14 | 46.7 | 46.7 | 60.0 |
| 45-54 years | 7 | 23.3 | 23.3 | 83.3 |
| 55+ years | 5 | 16.7 | 16.7 | 100.0 |
| Total | 30 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Occupation

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid student | 1 | 3.3 | 3.6 | 3.6 |
| unemployed | 2 | 6.7 | 7.1 | 10.7 |
| self-employed | 9 | 30.0 | 32.1 | 42.9 |
| government employee | 16 | 53.3 | 57.1 | 100.0 |
| Total | 28 | 93.3 | 100.0 | |
| Missing System | 2 | 6.7 | | |
| Total | 30 | 100.0 | | |

Marital status

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | single | 5 | 16.7 | 16.7 | 16.7 |
| | married | 23 | 76.7 | 76.7 | 93.3 |
| | divorced | 1 | 3.3 | 3.3 | 96.7 |
| | widowed | 1 | 3.3 | 3.3 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 30 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Educational level

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | basic | 3 | 10.0 | 10.0 | 10.0 |
| | secondary | 8 | 26.7 | 26.7 | 36.7 |
| | tertiary | 14 | 46.7 | 46.7 | 83.3 |
| | training | 5 | 16.7 | 16.7 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 30 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Town of residence

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | suhum | 4 | 13.3 | 13.3 | 13.3 |
| | nsawam | 10 | 33.3 | 33.3 | 46.7 |
| | asamankese | 16 | 53.3 | 53.3 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 30 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Questionnaire for Church Members

Sex

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | male | 38 | 62.3 | 62.3 | 62.3 |
| | female | 23 | 37.7 | 37.7 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 61 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Age

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|--------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | 15-24 years | 13 | 21.3 | 21.3 | 21.3 |
| | 25-34 years | 29 | 47.5 | 47.5 | 68.9 |
| | 35-44 years | 9 | 14.8 | 14.8 | 83.6 |
| | 45-54 years | 6 | 9.8 | 9.8 | 93.4 |
| | 55 and above | 4 | 6.6 | 6.6 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 61 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Occupation

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|---------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | student | 16 | 26.2 | 27.1 | 27.1 |
| | unemployed | 3 | 4.9 | 5.1 | 32.2 |
| | self-employed | 18 | 29.5 | 30.5 | 62.7 |
| | government employee | 21 | 34.4 | 35.6 | 98.3 |
| | pensioner | 1 | 1.6 | 1.7 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 59 | 96.7 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | System | 2 | 3.3 | | |
| Total | | 61 | 100.0 | | |

Marital status

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|---------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | single | 34 | 55.7 | 56.7 | 56.7 |
| | married | 24 | 39.3 | 40.0 | 96.7 |
| | widowed | 2 | 3.3 | 3.3 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 60 | 98.4 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | System | 1 | 1.6 | | |
| Total | | 61 | 100.0 | | |

Educational level

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | basic | 9 | 14.8 | 14.8 | 14.8 |
| | secondary | 20 | 32.8 | 32.8 | 47.5 |
| | tertiary | 30 | 49.2 | 49.2 | 96.7 |
| | training | 2 | 3.3 | 3.3 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 61 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Town of residence

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | suhum | 19 | 31.1 | 32.2 | 32.2 |
| | nsawam | 19 | 31.1 | 32.2 | 64.4 |
| | asamankese | 21 | 34.4 | 35.6 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 59 | 96.7 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | System | 2 | 3.3 | | |
| Total | | 61 | 100.0 | | |

Questionnaire for community members

Sex

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | male | 35 | 56.5 | 60.3 | 60.3 |
| | female | 23 | 37.1 | 39.7 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 58 | 93.5 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | System | 4 | 6.5 | | |
| Total | | 62 | 100.0 | | |

Age

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|--------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | 15-24 | 25 | 40.3 | 40.3 | 40.3 |
| | 25-34 | 22 | 35.5 | 35.5 | 75.8 |
| | 35-44 | 5 | 8.1 | 8.1 | 83.9 |
| | 45-54 | 6 | 9.7 | 9.7 | 93.5 |
| | 55 and above | 4 | 6.5 | 6.5 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 62 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Occupation

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|---------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | student | 20 | 32.3 | 33.3 | 33.3 |
| | unemployed | 4 | 6.5 | 6.7 | 40.0 |
| | self-employed | 13 | 21.0 | 21.7 | 61.7 |
| | government employee | 21 | 33.9 | 35.0 | 96.7 |
| | pensioner | 1 | 1.6 | 1.7 | 98.3 |
| | others | 1 | 1.6 | 1.7 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 60 | 96.8 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | System | 2 | 3.2 | | |
| Total | | 62 | 100.0 | | |

Religion

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | christian | 61 | 98.4 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Missing | System | 1 | 1.6 | | |
| Total | | 62 | 100.0 | | |

Marital status

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|---------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | single | 38 | 61.3 | 63.3 | 63.3 |
| | married | 20 | 32.3 | 33.3 | 96.7 |
| | widowed | 2 | 3.2 | 3.3 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 60 | 96.8 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | System | 2 | 3.2 | | |
| Total | | 62 | 100.0 | | |

Denomination

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | pentecost | 8 | 12.9 | 13.1 | 13.1 |
| | methodist | 8 | 12.9 | 13.1 | 26.2 |
| | assemblies of God | 11 | 17.7 | 18.0 | 44.3 |
| | Presbyterian | 17 | 27.4 | 27.9 | 72.1 |
| | Roman Catholic | 7 | 11.3 | 11.5 | 83.6 |
| | others | 10 | 16.1 | 16.4 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 61 | 98.4 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | System | 1 | 1.6 | | |
| Total | | 62 | 100.0 | | |

Educational level

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | basic | 2 | 3.2 | 3.3 | 3.3 |
| | secondary | 24 | 38.7 | 39.3 | 42.6 |
| | tertiary | 31 | 50.0 | 50.8 | 93.4 |
| | training | 4 | 6.5 | 6.6 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 61 | 98.4 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | System | 1 | 1.6 | | |
| Total | | 62 | 100.0 | | |

Town of residence

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | suhum | 22 | 35.5 | 36.7 | 36.7 |
| | nsawam | 25 | 40.3 | 41.7 | 78.3 |
| | asamankese | 13 | 21.0 | 21.7 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 60 | 96.8 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | System | 2 | 3.2 | | |
| Total | | 62 | 100.0 | | |