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**The Status of Rural Women Farm-household Systems. A Case Study in  
Ngie Clan in the Northwest Province of Cameroon**

**By**

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**A DISSERTATION**

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **THE STATUS OF RURAL WOMEN FARM-HOUSEHOLD SYSTEMS. A CASE STUDY IN NGIE CLAN IN THE NORTHWEST PROVINCE OF CAMEROON**

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Ngie is characterized by environmental degradation. This translates into low agricultural production and low-income generation, which has failed to keep pace with the increasing trend of the population growth. In fact, the inhabitants work hard all the time and they still live below the limit where basic human needs are satisfied. The Cameroon government and non-governmental organizations have realized their problems and have organized some development projects to boost productivity. Unfortunately, most of the projects have failed.

This research focuses specifically on farm-household systems of women in the Ngie Clan of Cameroon. Farm-household systems are made up of the household, farm, and off farm activities. Research was conducted that examined the three environments that surround the farm household. These are the physical, socio-cultural and policy/institutional environments that determine to a large extent the constraints, needs and opportunities for developing farm-household systems. The role of the rural women farmers was an important factor that was described.

It was a descriptive case study. A total of 40 rural women farmers' households in two villages, Andek and Etwii, in the Ngie clan were interviewed. Since the region is a polygamous society, a total number of 44 women from 40 households were interviewed. The research was undertaken to discover the character of the existing system in Ngie women farm household systems. This was accomplished by asking questions to the respondents. Group meetings, farm visits, and discussions were conducted. Observations were made through participation in village activities. During the research process, the researcher asked the women to identify their problems, needs, and their coping strategy.

These women suffer from many constraints. These include natural acceleration of population growth; marginal hilly land susceptible to erosion, land slides, earth movement, and soil infertility; crop destruction by vagrant animals; deeply ingrained gender bias and cultural practices that hinder the role of rural women; lack of household technology which impaired women's efficiency. In addition, they have uncertain access to land and to common property resources. The women also have lower levels of education. With these environmental constraints therefore, the rural women must depend successfully upon the evolution of a productive system in which environmental management, social institutions, good administration, good income generating activities and good agricultural practices are closely linked

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**Dedicated to cherish the loving memory of my dear mother Elizabeth lyungdong to whom I stand to honor her for her loving care and encouragement that led me to the path of education.**

**May her Soul Rest in Perfect Peace.**

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# Chapter One

## 1.1 Introduction

The seriousness of food crises in Africa has created the need and urgency to increase food production and to re-evaluate policies relating to agricultural development, especially those policies concerning women who are the main food crop producers. African women have been very active and have made important contributions to rural economies in agriculture, fishing, and livestock production (Pala, 1976). Their activities are spread over various sectors of the society, productive as well as reproductive (Ostergaard, 1992). The Economic Commission for Africa estimated that women do between 60 and 70 percent of work in agriculture across Africa. Statistics provided by the World Bank portray African women producing three quarters of all food grown on the continent (World Bank, 1996). They also perform most of the activities of the family. African women have been active in trade, especially in the selling of agricultural produce and cottage industry goods in rural marketing centers. As workers and managers of human welfare, they are central to the ability of households, communities, and nations to tackle the current food crisis for survival ( Sen and Crown, 1987)

Even though African women have been vital partners in agricultural production, goods for trade and income generation in sub-Saharan Africa, the output has not kept pace with the population growth since the mid-1970s (Due & Flavianus, 1989). This may be in part because women face different constraints, for example, lack of adequate research and extension services (World Bank,



1984). As such, they have not been able to enhance their low productivity. Women are also victims of development. Research workers have identified that instead of benefiting from projects aimed at economic growth of a country, women have often been forgotten (Waghmare and Chaudhari, 1989). In addition, women's uncertain access to land, credit, and education limits their access to and control of new technologies that would have increased production (Tinker, 1979).

Currently, it is estimated that the sub-Saharan population is receiving only 90 percent of the Food & Agricultural Organization/World Health Organization estimated calories needed to meet the minimum recommended requirement per capita (Ibid. 278-9). Due & Flavianus (1989) suggested that,

"If minimum caloric input per capita falls below 90 percent recommended level (2,400 calories per person per day), energy and work level will decrease, and people will be more vulnerable to disease, parasites, and malnutrition. And they receive fewer benefits from education and training programs. If the caloric input fell to 80 percent of recommended minimum requirements per capita, then stunted growth, brain damage and severe health risks result."(P 1)

An assessment of the perspectives as stated by various experts gives support for evaluating in greater detail the role of women in African agricultural production.

"The prosperity and growth of a nation depend on the status and development of its women as they not only constitute nearly half of its population, but also influence growth of the remaining half of the population" (Varma, 1992). 13 - 14.

Women in developing countries may face a variety of constraints due to **different** cultural or socioeconomic and geographic factors. Though both men and **women** are involved in agricultural production in Ngie (Northwest Province of **Cameroon**), the proposed research focuses specifically on farm-household **systems** of women in the Ngie Clan of Cameroon. The households of Ngie **women** were chosen because they have low productivity and the household is a **basic** structure of the society. So it must be maintained to ensure continued **production** (Gallin, 1998). Secondly, household management is relevant to all **aspects** of development work because reaching and improving the life of the **individual** household in Ngie is the ultimate goal of every development effort (**Ostergaard**, 1992). Thirdly, Swaminathan (1994) asserted that food has become a **symbol** of collective human endeavor that creates a better world for everybody. **Women** farm household are chosen because they produce food.

For development to take place in Ngie, the role of the rural women in farm **household** systems are selected as the focus of the study because they are the **main** food producers for their families. (For food is a base for any development.)

Furthermore, this region was chosen to explore those factors that assist **farm** household members primarily the Ngie women, in assuming new roles in a **changing** society. Ingrid (1975) said,

"The advancement of agriculture requires not only the adaptation of farm structures to meet the demand for increased agricultural production but also to assist the farm household members to assume new roles in a changing society and to provide supporting policies." (P 1)

**Thus**, one cannot assist the women or help them to adapt farm structures and **provide** supporting policies without first identifying and describing their needs, **opportunities**, and constraints. Since the goal includes improved living standards, **and** eradicating hunger and poverty, it is important to start with women since, **they** are the backbone of the African society. Helping them find solutions to their **problems**, will contribute to solving the problems of the clan.

## **1.2 The Ngie Clan Background information**

The Ngie clan is located in the savanna grassland in the northwestern part of **Cameroon**. Some villages are found in the transitional zone consisting of forest **and** grassland. In the savanna region, sporadic gallery forest is found in the river **valleys**. In the transitional zone both savanna grassland and forestland exist. **Ngie** is a seasonal rainfed agricultural-based region with two seasons, the rainy **and** the dry. The rainy season starts in April and end in October. This is the **farming** season. During this season, there are torrential downpours. The runoff **produces** erosion that changes the rivers to a red color. As a result swift red **rivers** bleed down the river valleys like big freshly cut wounds carrying the topsoil **and** debris from the hill slopes. The dry season starts in November and continues **until** March. During the dry season, it is cold in early morning and at night. The **harmattan** wind brings cold air from southern Italy through the Sahara to the **Northern**, Western and Northwest provinces of Cameroon. This cold, dry air is so **penetrating** that the lips of the people crack.

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Ngie is a hoe culture region whose farming practices are labor intensive.

**Most** of the region is hilly with terraced hills. The hills are very beautiful during **spring**. During this time, streams or small rivers run down the hill valleys, **characterized** by cataracts and waterfalls. The hills are adorned with wild flowers **of all** colors; green, red, purple, orange, yellow, pink etc. In between the flowery **hills**, streams flow like sparkling snow falling from hillcrests. The sunrays make **the water** look sparkling white. These streams could be called white streams. The **blending** of water flow and flowers makes for beautiful scenery. Additionally, the **streams** sing an endless song of “wa wa wa” as they tumble down to the main **streams** in the valleys. This endless noise comes as a result of the rapids and **waterfall**. The villagers are used to this water music.

During the dry season, the scenery is rather dull. The grass dries up. **Smoke** intermittently covers most of the hills as hunters or farmers burn the **grass**. The atmosphere looks black and dull, full of particles of ash blown by the **wind**. The hills look naked and lifeless. The white streams continue to sing but **with** a weaker voice.

Today, due to suspected global warming, some streams that were flowing **continuously** year round have become intermittent streams. During the dry **season**, some river valleys are without water. In these streams, water flows only **during** the wet season. A few rivers or streams also are considered to be unfit **streams** whose velocities have greatly reduced to base flow and in some places, **the streams** are almost not flowing or look dry in certain places.

### **1.3. Types of Farming Systems**

There are two types of farming systems in the region. One is a small-scale commercial mono-cropping system done mostly by men. In this type of system, energy flow is high and recycling ratio is low. In other words, there is high input and the crops are mostly for export. Some of the crops are coffee, cocoa, and palm. The second is a small-scale mix cropping system done by women. Farming is at subsistence level or inward-oriented production with high recycling ratio and low energy flow (Axinn and Axinn, 1979). Some of the crops planted by the women are maize, cocoyam, and "collocoshia," (commonly known in the clan as Anan-ukara, and Anan-ngie), cassava, beans, yams, groundnut (peanuts), Barbara groundnuts, sweet potatoes, and vegetables. Cocoyam constitutes the staple food. One of their favorite cocoyam dishes is "anan-namai." Cocoyams are peeled. They are washed and are cut into slices. The sliced cocoyams are boiled. Bitter leaves (type of vegetable), water, palm oil, meat or fish or crayfish and other spices are added to it. It is cooked until is ready.

### **1.4. Agriculture in Cameroon**

In Cameroon, agriculture is one of the main contributions to gross domestic product, foreign exchange and employment. Facing declining output per capita, the government has invested heavily in agricultural research throughout the country in order to increase productivity and to meet the expanding demand for food (Dimithe, 1994). Unfortunately, Ngie people have not benefited yet from research investment. Ngie women like many African women, are mixed crop farmers and little or no research has been done on their mixed cropping system.

Ngie in pre-colonial days was self-sufficient in food production. As the population increased, this brought about food insecurity. The government and NGOs recognized this problem. They wanted to boost domestic production and increase income by instituting some development projects in the region. Unfortunately, most of these development projects have failed, partly because indigenous knowledge and empowerment of the women was ignored, and partly because of lack of compatibility between the technology and the social environmental setting in which it is used. (Kujeke1993).

### **1.5 Problem Statement**

Africa south of the Sahara is facing food insecurity. This has created the need to increase food production, improve farm-household systems and to re-evaluate policies relating to agricultural development. Policies concerning the role of women and agricultural development are a vital concern. Rural women farmers in Africa work hard to increase food production but their production seems to be always low. Many governments and non governmental organizations (NGOs) are now carrying out some policies and projects to boost agricultural development in order to increase agricultural production. Cameroon is not an exception.

There is a lack of research pertinent to the role of Ngie women, their productive systems, their relationship to governmental and non governmental policies and projects. Nor has any study been carried out in Ngie to know and understand how constraints are perceived and addressed by the women.

Ngie can be classified as a problem region for its odds are many and diversified. The researcher has visited the region several times, and observed that physically, there is soil infertility, gullies erosion, landslides, earth movements that characterize the whole region. The basic problem that prompted this research is that the inhabitants live below the limit where basic human needs are satisfied " without access to sufficient nutrition, basic education, and primary health care" (Ostergaard 1992).

They are suffering as compared to other regions in the country. For example, Cameroon is self-sufficient in food production. It produces about 96 percent of its food, but Ngie women cannot produce even enough for themselves, and they do not have money to buy food from other optimal regions. In short, they lack food security. There is no published research on their socio-cultural, physical and policy/institutional environments and little about the women's farm household needs. However, this research has identified these issues in order to help develop farm-household systems in the Ngie Clan on a sustainable basis. In addition to the above problems, Ngie is hilly, and it is characterized by environmental degradation. This translates into low agricultural production; and low-income generation, which has failed to keep pace with the increasing trend of the population growth. Indeed, a study in Cameroon indicated that population was growing between two and three percent or more per annum, while the corresponding increase in food production was running between one and two percent or less (Riddell, 1986). Given the rapidly growing population in Ngie and



continued degradation of the natural resources, the opportunity to increase production through area expansion would be cutting down the forestland at the expense of the natural habitats. Irrigation schemes that could help the inhabitants to grow more food during the dry season are non-existent. In fact, the inhabitants work hard all the time and they still live below the limit where basic human needs are satisfied.

### **1.6 The purpose of the study**

1. To study Ngie women's farm-household systems as a whole to learn and understand connections and interactions between individual components, made up of household farm and non-farm activities.
2. The study will provide a database of information, which will help further research in the region.
3. The research will provide information, which will help Ngie women and others rural women in a similar situation to increase and sustain their production and income generating activities.
4. The study will provide understanding of how women in Ngie overcome socio-economic constraints

### **1.7. Importance of the study.**

1. This study will enable government officials and non-governmental organizations to understand Ngie women's constraints, needs and opportunities and develop programs that will suit their needs in order to improve their farm-household systems. In short, the research will provide

information that can help decision makers design and implement policies aimed at meeting women's needs to improve their standard of living, reduce hunger, poverty and boost economic growth in the clan as a whole.

2. Information obtained from this study could contribute to the development of rural women's farm households in general.
3. The research result will orient other research, extension, support services and policy maker's ideas such as policy formation, program adjustment, project analysis etc.

### **1.8 Objective of the study**

- .1. Identify the role of Ngie rural women in their farm-household systems.
2. Describe the demographic characteristics of women in terms of age, marital status, health, birth and death, size of household and level of education.
3. Investigate the perceived needs of the Ngie women.
4. Identify constraints in the women's farm-household systems.
5. Examine support services like projects, extension system and policy formations, that support the Ngie women in agricultural production and income generating activities.
6. Describe their coping strategies.

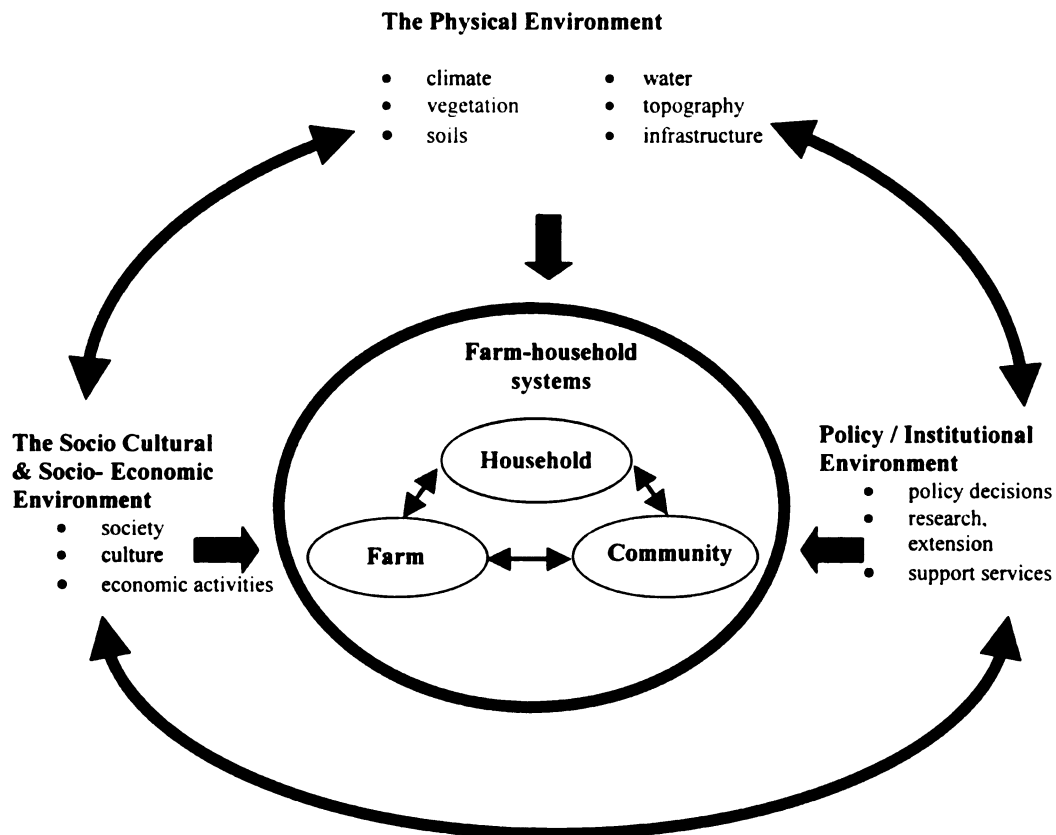
### **1.9 Definition of terms**

1. **The farm household systems** comprise the farm, family members,

and off-farm activities. Farm-household systems do not operate in isolation. They interact with exterior forces. This includes the physical, socio-economic, socio-cultural and policy/institutional environments. These factors, to a large extent, determine both constraints and opportunities for developing farm-household systems. Figure one below shows farm household systems and its surrounding environments.

**Figure 1**

**The Three Environments that Surround the Farm-Household Systems**



Source: Adapted from FAO 1989 and modernized

- 2. Household:** a compound with one or more houses, where a person or group of people live together, sharing some economic and cultural ties that bind them together. This might include, husband, wife or wives, children and other relatives or friends that live in that same compound.
- 3. Perceived Needs:** defined as things that people want that are necessary in their life or their well-being. This includes physiological and psychosocial necessities
- 4. Household needs:** refers to basic needs such as money, medicine, and health care, time, food, clothing, storage containers, farm tools etc.
- 5. Ngie woman:** any rural female farmer in Ngie Clan who is not a student and is between the ages of twenty-one and sixty-five and any female below twenty-one who is or has been married.
- 6. Productivity:** refers to the results of many production processes, which include any combination of inputs a farmer uses to produce an output. Productivity processes include labor, storage, preservation, transportation, farming, selling or trading, fertilizing, extension training etc.
- 7. Institutional environment:** These are institutions that attempt to help the farmers to increase their production. These include extension agents, adult education, training programs, home economics, demonstration farms, support services etc.
- 8. Sustainability:** the ability of that farm to produce products that will continue to satisfy the farmer's basic needs over a specified period of time or as long as the land is in use.

- 9. Cocoyam:** is a tuber crop commonly eaten in the region.
- 10. Hoe culture:** refers to farming culture in which the hoe constitutes the major tool farmers use for cultivation.
- 11. Culture:** refers to beliefs, values, attitudes and practices of a cultural group and which are handed down from generation to generation. How people perceive the world around them reflects their culture. Culture differs from tribe to tribe and from ethnic group to ethnic group.
- 12. Policy Environment:** These are government or non-governmental organization's policies that have brought positive or negative change in the region. Examples include policy formation, subsidies, farmer's credit banks, policy of making the target population the center of every development, Policy of adult education programs to help the rural people's productive systems, tariffs, loans to farmers, etc
- 13. Marketing Systems:** buying and selling basic household needs like clothing, medication, meat etc. Input, like farm tools, fertilizer, labor, and seeds. Outputs like sales of crops, and cottage industrial goods.
- 14. Marriage Mate:** refers to women married to one man.
- 15. Akara:** method of putting manure in the soil in Ngie and some parts of the Northwest Province of Cameroon. By this method, the farm is cleared. The grass is put on the furrows to form beds. The grass is covered with the soil. During covering the grass, a small area is left uncovered. Fire is then lit on the uncover portion of the bed. The grass is burned and the topsoil

baked. The baked soil is left to cool for some days, after which crops are planted.

**16. Unfit Streams:** These are streams whose velocities have been greatly reduced to a base flow and in some places the streams are almost not flowing or look dry in certain areas.

**17. Connect:** These are things which fit the norm. On the other hand, disconnect are things that do not fit the norm. If there is no connection, then there is no communication. And if there is no communication then things are unconnected.

**18. Traditional doctor:** Is a man or a woman who treat patients using herbs found in their localities. The herbs may be medicinal grass, tree leaves, tree barks or roots.

**19. Elite women:** These are women who have been to college, women who have had some special training, or women who had good experience or good knowledge of the environment and some development aspects.

**20. Disease of cultural origin:** This is a belief that a particular disease or illness is not natural. It comes as a result of either witchcraft, black magic, or from the ancestors. People suffering from these illnesses or diseases go for treatment to the traditional doctors. The Ngie people believe in superstition.

**21. Convocation:** It is a written invitation inviting a person to appear at a specific time, date, day and place by the writer. The reason for the

invitation is included. The convocation may come from the office of the gendarmes, police, chief etc.

#### **1.10. Limitation of the study**

1. The study is limited to two villages in Ngie subdivision in the Northwest Province of Cameroon. The two villages are Andek and Etwii.
2. The research duration was 11 months starting from June 2000 to April 2001.
3. This study is concerned only to Ngie women farm-household systems. Taking into account the structure of Cameroon rural production systems, which is diversified in various regions of the country due to cultural, and geographic factors, an authentic generalization of the result of this study to the rest of the country would be difficult.
4. Only women were being surveyed, husbands were not included in the study except those whose husbands were pastors and elders.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

No research that was identified that is specifically related to the needs, constraints and opportunities of Ngie women and their role in managing farm household systems. However, chapter two contains a synthesis of selected literature and research that is applicable to the study. These are research findings and other relevant documents on women in their environment in some selected developing countries, including some parts of Cameroon. The information was obtained by reviewing books, agricultural development articles, dissertations and journals. Literature related to the study is presented under the following headings: - farming systems and development, women and socio-economic conditions and needs assessment, women and extension systems, women and forestry resources, health and development, women and policy/institutional environment, women and development projects, women and rural agricultural development.

#### **2.2 Farming Systems Development (FSD)**

The evolution of agricultural systems comes as a result of the deterioration of the natural resource base. This has induced innovations in approaches to agricultural and rural development. Farming System and Development's (FSD) main objective as suggested by the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) (1989) is

" the improvement of farm-household systems and rural communities on a sustainable basis". (P4)



Ngie rural women's natural resource base had deteriorated, causing their production to be low. Since one of the purposes of the research was the improvement of farm-household systems of Ngie women, research efforts were based on farming systems and potential developments.

Farming systems or agro ecosystems is defined by Conway (1994) as

"An ecological and socioeconomic system, comprising domesticated plants and /or animals and the people who husband them, intended for the purpose of producing food, fiber or other agricultural products". (P 3)

This research effort was based on these criteria.

A farming system is defined by Shaner, Philipp, & Schmehl (1982) and Bawden (1995) as,

" A unique and reasonably stable arrangement of farming enterprises that the household manages according to well-defined practices in response to physical, biological and socio-economic environments and in accordance with the household's goals, preferences and resources". (P2)

FAO added that the approach emphasizes the understanding of farm-household and communities in their physical, socio-cultural and institutional/political environment. These factors when combined influence both output and production methods. Many authors have also similarly defined farming systems. Among those are Axinn & Axinn (1979). Bawden R (1995), Caldwell J (1983), Dillon J.L. (1976). Caldwell J. and Archer C.H. (1996) suggested that farming system research should use the systems approach. That is, a holistic approach of the

system. This research effort is focused on the Ngie women's farm household systems using the holistic approach.

Hildebrand (1982) defined an agro-ecological zone as

" an association between a set of natural conditions (climatic, topographic, soil) and agricultural activity (farming, herding) utilized to exploit that environment. The usefulness of zone resides in the possibility for extrapolation, since conditions within zones are more similar than between zones, and farmers living in the same zone would have similar problems and technological needs." (P 91)

The definition of farming systems was used to develop specific questions for interviewing the rural Ngie women farmers.

Nancy Axinn (1982) said,

"It is important to learn what the system is before suggesting changes. The best way to learn what the system is is to diagnose, by asking questions, observation and participating in village activities with the people involved. We need to learn from the people, what their concerns, their problems, their needs, and their resources are". (P 5)

The researcher used the above method during the research.

Storck H, Emanu, Berhanu, Andizej, & Shimelis (1991) conducted research in the highland of Hararghe, Ethiopia. They concluded that, to do good research on small farm holders, one must not separate the production and marketing systems from the household and consumption system as both are closely linked to each other. An incomplete picture would exist if one were to try and understand the production system on its own. And added that the farm-household system has a multitude of interactions with exterior forces, which include physical, social/institutional and market environments. These forces

constrain or support the farm household system. They explained how the market environment has influences on the farm household system through prices of input and output, through input shortages and quotas and through output quotas such as selling obligations. Factors like provision and credit may also be crucial for the alleviation of cash shortages.

### **2.3 Socio-cultural & Economic Conditions and Needs Assessment of Women**

Needs are the things which human beings require for their continued existence. Husen & Postlethwaite (1985) and Monette (1977) have the same definition of needs as defined by Browne (1989) as

"a discrepancy between an existing situation and some changes or desired set of circumstances. One aspect of need is tied to the concept of necessity, which implies an image of what is necessary for some one to be fully human. This includes physiological and psycho-social necessities" (P 9)

In order to help the women eradicate hunger and poverty, one must know their needs.

Benbella Ndiva (1991) suggested that many government and international projects in Cameroon face many types of problems. Some of these problems are, lack of current empirical research on farmers, particularly on women problems and their needs. Among these are inappropriate technology, like equipment to till the soil, plant the crops, weed the parasites, harvest the crops, transport the crops, store the produce, process food, and preserve the

food. The investigator used these factors to see if they are applicable in Ngie also. The researcher went further and asked the women how they want to be helped for them to be more productive.

Quisumbing et al (1995) in the food policy report of the International Food Policy Research Institute summed up the constraints which women face in developing countries. These were, weak land rights, limited access to common property resources, lack of equipment and appropriate technology, gender bias and property rights, limited contact with agricultural extension agents, lack of access to credit, and lower levels of education. The researcher used the above issues and constructed questions that looked for these factors because these are constraints, which the researcher wanted to know if they were also applicable in the region.

Hansan and Von (1977) in a World Bank report affirmed that,

"approximately 85% of all absolute poverty is in the rural areas. Rural poor are often ill-nourished and forgotten since they are powerless, have less contact with outside world and very often they do not have land or enough capital for a decent life." (P 2)

The women constitute the majority of the rural poor. They are unable to help themselves. The researcher during her research looked into these factors to see if they are applicable to the Andek sub-region. Most of the factors are evident in Ngie rural women. The women are not forgotten in Ngie but they are ill-nourished. Ngie women have adequate land as compared to other areas in developing countries, but their land is infertile.

Huston (1979) undertook some studies in six developing countries. One of his findings was that women expressed greater need for women's organizations that could help them to develop. Another finding was that women indicated that they were interested in training or education. According to the author, the reasons behind these choices are two fold. First, the women want to improve their families' health; second, they thought that training and gaining new skills would help them to earn the money necessary to improve their families' health and living standard. The researcher used this idea in her research to see if they are applicable in the region of her research. Agricultural training was one of their needs. The women have group meetings and farming is also group work. So, group work is very crucial for them.

Hoskins (1980), as well as Piepmeir (1980), Berger, Ettang & Gatara (1975), conducted similar studies, which focused mainly on educational institutions. Piepmeir reported that, Women's organizations are sort of resources for development.

Browne (1989), and Piepmeir (1980) added that

" Women have begun to demand a greater voice in the decision-making processes within their own societies and to ask for assistance in solving their own problems."  
(Browne p 33) (Piepmer, P 6)

Piepmeir (1980) stated that,

" needs assessment is an important first step in planning development programs. However, if philosophies and perceptions of development specialists and funders are based on a stereotyped concept of women's role and functions, then, not only is the real need of women missed, but there can be no understanding of the dynamic of the particular society." (P 9)

He concluded that listening to women will help to discover the areas where they have the greatest needs. He ended up by saying that development programs can be successful if they are based on the people's needs. Since needs assessment is an important first step in planning development programs, the researcher during her research asked the women their needs. She examined some development projects in the region to see if they were implemented according to their needs and if the project executors listen to the women.

In the research, which Risseew et al (1980) conducted in Sri Lanka the focus was related to women development. Their purpose of the study was to identify their needs. The researchers proceeded to identify the women's needs by looking at topics, like health information, education, income, property and political power. The researchers also looked at the cultural aspect of the people in the given region. In this respect, they looked at the perceptions and beliefs which have created inequalities in the society and which have contributed to limit women's options in life. One of their findings was that women lacked independent income to be able to provide life needs. The study also identified other women's needs like medicine; food; money for fees, books and uniforms for the children; housing and increased mobility between villages. Risseew's ideas were used in this research to see if the Ngie women have similar needs.

Blumberg (1992) talked about gender and African agriculture. She commented that their societies are gender biased. She said,

"In recent decades, the women who produced food typically have faced deteriorating conditions in land quality and quantity and

labor availability. They have been excluded from programs of extension, agricultural education and training, credit, and subsidies for fertilizer, seeds and other inputs; and they have seen their resource base erode and their workload increase. Gender-blinded development projects sometimes have inadvertently undercut the viability of women farmers. When these projects have diverted women's returns while counting on their labor, women have rebelled actively or passively – and the projects' goals have suffered."(P 3)

The researcher during her research asked questions on gender, agricultural education credit, fertilizer and extension agents to learn more about the rural women farmers. This gave the researcher an insight about support services in the research region.

Tshatsinde Mmakgomo, (1990), conducted research in the rural areas of Lebowa to determine factors that lead to low productivity. Some of the findings from low productivity include shortage of land and irrigation water; women's limited decision-making power over productive resources and the unavailability of credit. The researcher also used these factors to see if the factors lead to low productivities in the research area. The researcher went further than Tshatsinde Mmakgomo to ask ways the women think they could be helped to make their production more sustainable.

Tshatsinde Mmakgomo, 1993 wrote of some constraints that affect rural women's economic productivity. Some of these constraints are: - shortage of land, the unavailability of labor-serving devices to reduce the burden of house chores, and lack of adequate health-care facilities in rural areas.

According to some studies carried out in Namibia by lipinge (1997), as well as, Sen (1984), and Beneria (1982), come to the same conclusion regarding

subordination of women in the third world. Margarete Leahy, (1986), did a similar study in Mexico. The findings were that men dominate in their homes and are independent in their out of home relationships. Leahy (1986) said that

“The female, in contrast, is expected to restrict her outside contacts and submit to male judgement in all disputed matters. “Women believe that man’s ideal woman would be traditionally submissive and place home and family above achieving outside the home”. Because women are socially conditioned to expect and desire marriage. They attempt to present a demeanor that will attract a husband. The media is especially adept at portraying this message and in defining those traits that will allow a woman to gain a good husband-passivity, dependence, domesticity”. (P 61)

The researcher during her research framed some questions on subordination of women like the above authors suggested. She went forward to ask ways in which the women could be helped or treated to bridge the gap between men and women.

Lack of suitable farm and household technology impairs women's efficiency, restricts their time and saps their energy for participating in extension and other development programs (Schultz, 1982). Von Braun and Webb conducted an example of this type of research in parts of Gambia in 1987. Women's labor productivity in individual farming has been estimated to be consistently 70% less than men's. This is said to be due in part to the fact that women tend to grow crops with technologies that result in lower net returns to their labor time. But women also exhibit lower average labor productivity levels than men do for the same crops and broad technology groupings. These differences are partially explained by women's limited access to laborsaving



implements and their constraints, which usually result in women cultivating smaller land parcels, causing diseconomies of scale (Von Braun and Webb, 1987) This research compared women and men who farmed the same crops. The researcher discovered that men do not do the same things like the women, in Ngie so, the researcher did not do any comparison but she looked at other aspects of why women have lower returns and if any of the factors listed above is one of them.

Lack of education was a constraint that was identified as facing African women. The World Bank study in Gambia has demonstrated the critical link between farmers' efficiency and education supported this idea. Jamison and Lau in 1982 examined 18 studies conducted in developing countries involving 37 sets of farm data. Controlling for other variables, they estimated the effects of education on farmers' production efficiency. They concluded that farm productivity increased on average 8.7 percent if a farmer had completed four years of elementary school. They said that the effects of education were much more likely to be positive in "modernizing agricultural environment" than in traditional ones, thus supporting Schultz's earlier findings. One of the few studies to compare the efficiency of male and female farmers concluded that both men and women farmers in the Vihiga Division of Western Kenya achieved higher maize yields when they had four or more years of education (Mooock 1973). The findings of this study are based on illiteracy and farming. The researcher used these ideas but did not compare with the males. The study was not based on whether or not these illiterate women can still learn and adopt new technology.

Illiteracy and low educational levels are not necessarily barriers to learning technical skills. NGOs in South Asia, for example have demonstrated that illiteracy and low education do not hinder learning how to improve agricultural production. They added that illiterate rural women have learned to give poultry vaccinations, run power tillers, and maintain pumps and sell water to cultivators. In Andhra Pradesh cooperatives, illiterate poor women are competently carrying out artificial insemination, fat testing and record keeping (Axinn 1990). Most of the Ngie women farmers are illiterate. Since Mook, Jamison and Lau identified illiteracy as one of the constraints faced by women, the researcher went further and constructed some of her research questions directed toward finding what the women can do at their standard to meet their agricultural household needs.

Koopman (1992) in her paper said that in all Africa farming systems, men and their wives manage some on-farm or off-farm enterprises separately. This statement was confirmed by some authors who had conducted research in Africa, e.g. (Abu, 1983, Guyer 1988, Fapohunda 1988, Saul 1989, Clark 1989, Quisumbing et al 1995. Some studies were carried out in Africa by different researchers on women and agricultural households. The finding was that most women have less access to credit and information technology. (Schultz, 1988). The researcher use this factor in her research but went further to find out why the women have limited assess to credit.

Guy Hunter (1982) who conducted some research in Lesotho concluded that

“small and marginal farmers need special attention  
because they are less able to face financial or social

risk. They find it difficult, some times unpleasant, to deal with officials. They are often dependent upon richer, more influential figures in the village and are often treated as inferiors. They are sometimes ignorant, not of their existing land and circumstances, but of new technical or earning potential. They are very frequently neglected by extension staff. They are often suspicious not only of strangers, but of each other". (P 11)

He also talked of decentralization of the ministry of agriculture as a prerequisite for agricultural development. The researcher looked at the type of loan given to rural women in the two villages and whether the women are considered for loan and if they are independent.

Wooten, S (1997) conducted research in rural Bamana in Mali. One of his findings is that in Bamana village, there are no full-time traders, merchants, craft people or herders and that the most of the food consumed is obtained through direct cultivation of the soil and women are the main producers. The researcher looked into this idea of finding out if there are some rural women who do trading only.

In another study in the Caribbean by Janet Momson, (1991), indicated that one third of household heads are women. She continued to say that the proportion ranges from 50 percent in St Kitts and 44 percent in Montserrat to less than 20 percent in Guyana. (P 25 – 26). Momson, also said that,

"Third world parents actively seek education for their children as the best means of improving their income-earning options, but over-burdened mothers may be forced to take daughters out of school to assist with childcare and household chores". (P 35)

The researcher during her research in Ngjie asked if some women had withdrawn their children from school to assist with childcare and household activities.

## **2.4 Women and Extension System**

Agricultural Extension has historically been perceived as a function of low status performed by poorly qualified and poorly equipped persons who deal with poor and frequently illiterate farmers in remote areas. This perception has been supported by facts: low salaries, unclear job descriptions, poor supervision of performance, and poor quality of work by extension personnel. (World Bank 1985, P 61)

The Investigator looked into the above characteristics of extension agents to see if those applied to the extension agents in Ngie,

Following some research, which Tchouamo (1986) carried out in Cameroon, he asserted that,

“Agricultural extension organizations because of their successful achievements in the United States of America, and elsewhere, have been seen as having the potential to address the priority. Unfortunately in Cameroon as in many other nations, dreams of the decision makers have not yet come through and nobody knows when they will. Failure to achieve rural development through agricultural and extension education is related to key problems, recognized world wide” (P 2)

This means that women also have not gained much from agricultural extension systems. He also found that the effectiveness of extension agents in Cameroon was hindered by the centralization of the ministry of agriculture. The researcher used this idea to learn if women are benefiting from extension agents. The researcher also studied the extension agents' knowledge of women's work. She looked in the research area for what hinders the work of extension agents.

In Malawi, agro economic survey data show that women farmers do 50-70% of the agricultural operations in the smallholder sector According to the findings of the national sample survey of agricultural data, men receive most of

the extension visits and training as well as such services as credit, and technical information (The Ministry of Agriculture, Government of Malawi, 1983). (Saito & Weidemann 1990 P 5). This study did not indicate the reasons why women did not receive extension visits, training and credit. The researcher conducted research using the same method in Ngie, to identify why the women are left out from such benefits.

Saito K. and Weidemann J. (1990) said that women farmers work under more constraints than the men do. They added that women have less access to information technology, land input, market and credit. Their advice is that

"To ensure more effective delivery of the extension message to women, there should be concerted efforts to increase the number of female extension agents." (P 1)

The researcher did not compare but she went further and asked the women the sex of the agricultural agent, which they would prefer.

Schultz (1988) carried out a similar study in some parts of Cameroon in the early stages of the MIDENO project. Under this project, extension agents were encouraged to meet with farmers' groups but individuals could also ask the extension agents to visit their farms. Farmers who bought inputs were always visited and the males were the only ones who bought inputs. According to Schultz, analysis indicated that farmers who experienced farm visits and group meetings understood the recommendations better and were more likely to adopt them than those who only attended group meetings. He added that while assistance was supposed to be the same for men and women, the survey revealed that men received eight times more individual farm visits than did the

women. This was because the male farmers had always asked extension agents to visit their farms. Since only farmers who purchased inputs were visited and women never purchased these inputs, they were never visited. Women on the other hand believed that their farms were "too small," "too poor" or "too far away" to merit a visit. For that reason many women did not think they could or should ask for a visit. Others indicated that visits were reserved for farmers who purchased inputs. The extension agents concluded that women did not ask for visits because they were not interested. It was evident that the strategy of asking farmers to step forward to request visits was not as appropriate for women as for men (Walker 1989). The researcher, in her study, asked the women why they did not ask for extension visits.

## **2.5 Women and forest resources.**

Women in developing countries are substantial users of forestry resources. Forestation makes fuel wood available all the time, and it also reduces soil erosion. In addition, the leaves can be used as manure. Some authors see this as an important aspect in the women household systems. They therefore have taken some initiative to look at women and forestry in different regions in the third world. They concluded that women have important roles in relation to natural resources, including forests in rural community. Hopkins (1980) conducted research on women in Upper Volta, Senegal, Cap Verde, El Salvador, and the Honduras whose livelihood also depends on forest resources. She cited Cap Verde, and El Salvador, which participated in forestry conservation programs through the planting of trees in their respective countries. Based on her

observations, she recommended that women should participate in forestry programs if meaningful gains from these programs are to be realized. (Lungu, Gatian and Sinyangwe 1988). This implies that if they take part in forest regeneration, they will have a continued supply of wood. Skutsch (1986), in her paper "Participation of Women in Social Forestry Programs", supported the idea of women taking part in forestation. She cited from her research in Gujarat, Tanzania and Burkina Faso where forestry programs involving tree planting had been successful. She added that these forestry programs have saved women's time, as they may engage in other productive work instead of going to distant places to look for firewood. The researcher asked the women in the research area if they have forest regenerating programs because they all depend on wood

## **2.6 Health and Development**

In the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Adebayo Adedeju puts it that the health of the population has a major bearing on development possibilities and prospects (P63). The health of women who are food producers is very important. Some research in Africa was conducted and the ECA was alarmed by the results of maternal mortality rate. The estimated finding was that

"This is 200-600 per 100,000 live births while that of Denmark, for instance is 10 per 100,000 live births. It is our view that Socio- economic factors have a direct bearing on this situation and poverty constitutes a high risk factor in the survival of women. What is tragic is the fact that if only basic and elementary health care could be provided, over 80 percent of these maternal death would be avoided. Furthermore, the poorer women are the more vulnerable to harmful traditional practices with which this meeting is concerned. Thus, it seems to me that health and economics are inextricably linked together". (P 63)

The researcher did not calculate live birth per thousand but she asked each woman in the focus group the number of live children each has and the number dead. The researcher also found out where the women and family go for their treatment.

Health is very important in any development. For this reason, the World Bank (1981) proposed some programs that could be instituted to meet the basic needs of women and children. Some of these are: - nutrition and supplemental feeding, day-care centers, education in health and nutrition, family planning, village water supply, health care for women and children, sanitation, increasing farm production to sell the surplus or increasing cash crops to have more money to buy food. DAWN (1985) also supported these basic need strategies. The researcher used most of these factors suggested by World Bank during her research.

Pinstrup (1985) suggested that an appropriate approach should be taken towards nutritional matters in the context of general economic development. He suggested four major factors that influence nutritional status of an individual.

These are: -

- Food availability
- Ability of the household to obtain available food
- Desire to obtain available food
- Utilization of available food to meet nutritional needs.

The four factors above provide useful tools in addressing the questions of how best to increase food consumption and improve nutritional status. Pinstrup added



that the economic availability of food is the constraining element and thus, an effective solution is developing means of getting food for the needy poor household. He gave some examples and these are: a reduction in prices or increase in incomes, and giving nutritional education.

Quisumbing et al (1995) talked of three pillars of food security. These are: -

- Food availability or adequate food production
- Economic access to available food
- Nutritional security, which often depends on the availability of nonfood resources such as childcare, health care, clean water and sanitation.

Brent McCusker (1997) conducted research in Kwazulu-Natal in South Africa on the coping mechanisms of rural households during food shortages. He said that food insecurity is caused by environmental, social and political conditions. His finding of how the people coped during food shortages was that during drought, for example, the coping mechanisms used by the people were basket making or handicrafts, buying food in shops, use of stored food and trading. He added that during food shortages, there is increased mobility. The researcher in one of her question asked the women their coping strategy during hunger times.

## **2.7 Policy Environment**

A study was undertaken in Kenya by the Office of Women in Development (1987), on government policies on agricultural development, because growth in production and rural income can rise quickly when the government establishes supporting policies that promote and encourage production. One of the findings of this research is that although government

supports agriculture in the form of research, extension programs, and state investment in agriculture, the government has not been able to raise the farmers' selling prices. Secondly, instead of the government encouraging production through good policies, it levies heavy taxes on rural and urban producers. This slows the expansion in the marketed surplus.

The United Nations, and the Economic Commission for Africa, 1994, have conducted research on women in different parts of African countries, from their summaries, they indicated that in Zimbabwe after independence, the government adopted policies to arrest poverty and uplift the standard of living of the majority of the poor. This was a good intention but the report continued to say that there was an absence of policies for promoting sustainable agricultural practices and that has resulted in a vicious circle of poverty. In her research, the researcher examined some government policies especially those geared towards Ngie to see if there are policies specifically geared towards sustainable agriculture in the region. She also found out if the policies were implemented in Ngie and if the people have gained as a result the policies.

## **2.8 Development Projects**

El-Bakri & Basha (1989) conducted some research in Eastern Africa on women's economic projects in the region. They found out that income-generating projects have helped women to some extent to gain some income. Misrak Elias, (1981), during his research identified some important issues from the so-called

income generation projects in Eastern Africa. He pointed out that those projects are usually small and mostly have not proven to be economically viable, and the level of technology used in these projects is generally low. He went ahead to say that the level of income gained from such projects has generally also been low. There has been a manifestation of continued dependency on outside persons. He remarked that there has also been a marked lack of management skill and marketing skills on the part of those women who are participating in income generating projects, as well as those who are in the agencies, which provide assistance. He added that there has been lack of sufficient technical skills, which are necessary to run the projects effectively, and lastly that assistance provided from outside agencies, be it government or NGOs, has tended to be small and for short periods of time. Rogers (1978) and Dhamija (1981) have a similar view of craft projects. The results of these projects and the issues identified are very important. For a project to run successfully, these issues identified by Misrak must be prevented.

In Libya, the Kufra Resettlement project was started to improve the standard of living of the rural people. In the new project area, household duties became easier: there was water, electricity, and in this region, men do the farming. So, this reduced women's activities to housekeeping only. In this project, women were taught for nine months in home economics and in skills like sewing and knitting. Frarida Allaghi (1984) conducted research in Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. The aim was to see if the project has improved women. One of her findings was that there were no opportunities for the women to market the

products they made as a result of training. She continued that the women knit and sew at the Kufra oasis where the weather is hot throughout the year. These women did not have the facility to transport and market the goods to cities that need their products. She added that the sewing machines given to the women during graduation do not last long. The end result is that the women did not gain from the project. She concluded that, this is probably because the government that instituted the project did not find out what the needs of the people are.

Jennie Dey (1981) carried out research in Gambia, in which she examined three agricultural development projects. One of her findings was that those who institute the agricultural development projects channeled input to male household heads on the assumption that they control the land, labor, crops and finances. Meanwhile, in these regions, women cultivate rainfed rice, and they have the ownership of rice land, while the men control the upland and produce peanuts and millet. Both cultivate household and personal crops. In these three development projects, irrigated rice was introduced to men only. She said that as the women were not included in these development projects, this has not only increased their economic dependence on men but is also a major reason for deficiencies in these projects, resulting in low national rice production.

The researcher used the idea of projects and examined most of the projects in the Ngie that women were involved in. She found who is the beneficiary of the project, and if the women were empowered. She also found out the type of project the women would need to make them more sustainable.

## **2.9 Women and Development**

Development is growth and change towards a positive direction. Sharon

A. Browne (1989) defined development as

"a process by which human communities strive to achieve basic levels of material goods, social services and human dignity for each individual in an attempt to improve economic, social, and political condition of the society. This implies that there are stages of development and development is continuous".(P 35)

The concept of women in development started in 1970 during the United Nations decade for women. WID was concerned with how to involve women in development strategies at both the local and national level, and how to bring equality between women and men. (Schuster, 1982). Some of the issues that the practitioners talked about are women's access to income and the feminization of poverty; social cultural and structural deterrents, etc. Women, Environment and Development (WED) suggested that development should include both human and non -human resources (Harcourt, 1997). Axinn (1979) said that development should come from within, not from an outsider and that the farmers should be at the center of any agricultural development. Speth (1994), Dixon,` (1996), Mhlanga, Seidman, & Semboja (1988), Axinn 1997) had the same idea that Development could bring food security only if it is people-centered, environmentally sound, participatory approach, and if it builds local and national capacity for self-reliance.

During her research, the researcher will examine on going projects to see if the people were placed at the center of the projects, and if participatory approach was followed.

Bawden R. (1995) suggested that development of relevant and viable technology for small farmers must be grounded in a full knowledge of the existing farm system. The researcher looked into the projects that were carried out in Ngie to see if the people were placed at the center of these development projects.

Biggelaar (1991) said that little has been done to develop indigenous technology generating and diffusing capacities already present in the rural areas. He suggested cooperation and collaboration between the exogenous and indigenous knowledge systems leading to a synthesis of the two. He went on to say that the

"ultimate solution for rural development is not the dumping of more scientists upon rural people (of whatever discipline) to make exogenously-generated technologies more adaptable and in line with people's problems, but to strengthen, empower, and legitimize indigenous capacities for identifying problems and developing solutions for these problems". (P 25)

Empowerment here means letting the women spearhead their development themselves as he explained. For example, in Gambia, the government is focusing on participatory development with women at the center, under its poverty alleviation strategy (UN Economic Commission for Africa, 1994). He explained that an extension agent is just supposed to guide them in a way so that if the extension agent leaves, the women will be able to carry on their own project

with no difficulties. The researcher looked into some projects that have been instituted in the region to see if the women were empowered and if the indigenous knowledge was ignored.

. Khasiani Shanyisa A (1992) said that every development program has an initiator, beneficiary and objectives. They concluded that the achievement of the goal calls for the participation of the target population. In conducting a research in Ngie, the researcher examined some of the projects that have been instituted in the region by government and non governmental organizations to see who initiated the development projects, who are the beneficiaries and whether the target population is involved in planning, implementation and evaluation. This is a participatory approach, which is one of the best approaches to development.

Due, Mudenda, Miller (1978) conducted research in Zambia. The purpose of the study was to assess how rural women in Zambia homemaker -oriented programs perceived development. One of their findings was that women needed more than just the homemaking role.

Joyce Moock (1986) carried out some research in some parts of Africa. One of her observations was that small farmers in developing countries did not adopt many of the technologies developed from station research programs. She cited one reason for the lack of adoption was that the technologies being produced were not consistent with the circumstances of many small farmers. She went ahead and suggested reasons why the technologies were inappropriate. She said that

" the natural circumstances (soil, topography, and climate)  
facing small farmers in specific situations vary from location

to location and are generally different from those in the research station. The institutional support services supplied inputs which were either nonexistent or unreliable. The costs and risks of using the new technologies were too high for small farmers relative to benefits." (P 73)

The researcher found out if the women are using any new technology in their production systems and if they would like to adopt any new technology.

Koopman (1992) conducted some agro-economic and historical research on farming systems in Southern Cameroon. One of her findings was that an agricultural household does not operate as a single unit of production. That is, each member of the household conducts separate activities, earns individual incomes and manages separate budgets. Ruthenberg, (1980), Koopman (1992) again affirm that men help clear women's farms, and women help weed and harvest men's cocoa. She also commented that men use the mono cropping system mostly the cash crop production of cocoa, while the women practice mixed cropping systems at subsistence level. She added that commodity markets for basic food items are vastly underdeveloped. The researcher instead asked the women ways in which the men support them and ways they think their husbands could help them to make their work easier and more sustainable.

Delbert Myren (1970), with the collaboration of the international maize and wheat improvement center, carried out research in some parts of North Africa, Asia and Central America. They suggested that small farm holders could increase their production by use of fertilizers, an improved package of cultural practices, including better land management and a favorable relationship between the cost of fertilizers and other inputs and the price the farmer received



for his product. They also found out from their research that the green revolution has moved ahead with new varieties and technology, but those who gain from it are those engaged in commercial agriculture, well-established farmers, and areas where production risks are lowest. They added that not all the farmers benefited from it. The small farm holders are excluded. They cited some examples in Central America. For instance, in Guatemala, modern corn production techniques tend to be used more in the Pacific low land coaster areas, yet most of the rural Guatemalan corn-eating people live in the highlands where they struggle to produce their own food out of meager subsistence. In Columbia, the rich valleys like Cauca and lowland plains of the northwest have tremendous potential for food production using the new science-based technologies. Most of the rural people live in the highlands. Their argument is that, in most Latin America countries, they concentrate the new technologies production package and investment in the favorable areas with the better farmers. The poor rural farmers who really need the development are never reached. They suggested that development should be taken to those that really need it. The researcher used this idea. She asked if the women use fertilizers in their farms and if not whether they would want to use them. She also found out from the women if the government had given them some subsidies and if they had borrowed money from the Farmer's Bank to buy fertilizer.

James F. Eder, (1999) undertook some research in the upland region of rural Philippines. One of his findings is that the household used some strategies that brought about economic change in the region. Some of these household

strategies are agricultural intensification, under conditions of growing market opportunity, and technological change; reduction in birth rate and immigration; government production subsidies and increased use of various subsidies to the production process; use of fertilizers and pesticides; labor intensity; crop specialization; fallow intervals; marketing and market demand; growing of trees; off-farm activities; a change in cultural notion, and in family planning and decision making. The researcher used the above factors to construct some of her questionnaires and she asked the rural women if any of them has used any strategy that had brought her any change in her farm or market.

The Cameroon government is realizing the fundamental role of women in agricultural production, and has advocated that development in agricultural production should be extended to women. For this reason, the University Center of Dshang (UDC), Cameroon's agricultural training institution, wanted a curriculum that will prepare graduates to work with rural women. They needed help to accomplish this task. As a result, in 1986, UDC invited the University of Florida to conduct a needs analysis with them, and some government representatives were included in establishing a program and priority areas of training that would prepare graduates to work with rural women (Gladwin, 1991). The students, with the help of the teachers from the University of Florida, sat in class and came up with some specific needs of Cameroon rural women in general. The needs that they identified are health and welfare; income generating resources; land and credit; agricultural technologies; household technologies like labor saving; marketing skills; adult education; and influence on household

decision. The UDC and the University of Florida staff sat in class and came up with a list of women's needs, but the researcher went to the field to collect the women's needs from the women themselves. The researcher also found out if the UDC list of women's needs are also applicable in the researcher's research area.

## **2.10 Summary**

Some review of literature has indicated that for good research in small farm holders, one must not separate the production and marketing systems from the household and consumption system as both are closely linked to each other. It might be difficult to understand the production system in isolation. In addition, the farm-household system has a multitude of interactions with exterior forces. These forces include physical, social/institutional and market environments. These forces constrain or support the farm household system. This is one of the reasons that the researcher is using a holistic approach to investigate the Ngie women's farm household system.

The literature review on women covers the following areas:- farming systems, needs assessment, socio economic conditions, forestry, policy/institutional environment, environment and projects. The review of literature has provided the theoretical background and the rationale for inclusion of some selected concepts in this research study. Though literature review has given information on other research, no information has been given about Ngie women's needs. Since regions and activities are not homogeneous, needs and

opportunities may differ from place to place. These may be motivated by different drives, stages in life cycle and physical conditions.

## **Chapter 3**

### **3.1 Research method**

#### **3.1. 1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the method of implementing research strategies is outlined. The research process is defined as an ethnographic case study. Using this method, the researcher is the primary research tool (Jonathon Landeck, 1991). In addition, the researcher attempts to understand a situation from the point of view of the participants. The ethnographic method relies on many approaches. In this particular research effort, the researcher used a number of ways to collect data not restricted to the main instrument only.

The research was descriptive and qualitative in nature. Exploratory diagnosis was used. Exploratory diagnosis is based on dialogue and farm visits with the primary subjects and also with some key informants (FAO 1989). It is important to know the existing system before suggesting any changes. The researcher endeavored to discover the character of the existing system. This was accomplished by asking questions to the respondents. Group meetings and discussions were conducted. Observations were made through participation in village activities. During the research process, the investigator asked the women what their problems, needs, and their coping strategy are.

Selected data was processed using the computer. The sequence of operations chosen for data processing was as follows: -

- Completing the field survey
- Checking the questions for errors

- Transferring of data to computer
- Coding the responses
- Validation of data
- Analyzing data

Some selected data was processed without using the computer.

The research was organized in to three phases; introductory, data collection, and data analysis and reporting.

### **3.1. 2 Introductory phase**

During this phase, efforts were taken to become familiar to Ngie people and their culture. The researcher resided in Ngie Clan beginning June 2000. Government agricultural services, agro-service centers, the district office, the rural council office, the traditional rulers of the region, and congregations or churches were contacted. The main objective during this phase was to establish rapport and to explain the purpose of the research. The researcher also asked the people for their cooperation and to give assistance when necessary. Government agricultural authorities were asked for insights that would help in the research process. This approach was recommended by Casley & Lury, (1986). Some government officers wanted self serving questions to be asked that would benefit them personally. Their request was respectfully declined as the content was not relevant of the purpose for the research.

### **. 3.1.3 Population and Sampling**

The study population was composed of forty farm-households selected from two villages in Ngie Clan, twenty from each village. There are nineteen villages in Ngie Clan. The sampling unit was households and the sampling frames were the lists of households in the two villages. The population sample in the villages was a random sample that was chosen entirely by chance in such a way that every element of the population had a known chance of being selected (Poate & Daplyn, 1993). The list of households was not available in the local council office and the district office. The list was generated from an interview with the Chiefs in the sample villages. The systemic or skip interval method was used to select the population sample by household until the sample size was obtained. Ngie clan falls in two main vegetation belts; savanna grassland and the transitional zone (forestland and grassland).

The two villages chosen were Andek and Etwii. The reason for choosing these two villages is that Andek falls in the transitional zone, which is located in lower Ngie. Etwii is in the grassland region in upper Ngie. The two villages represent a purposive clan sample in the sense that they are purposively chosen based on a stratification variable, which is vegetation. The sample is known to be representative of the whole population in the clan and information obtained from these two villages, can be generalized to apply to all nineteen villages in the clan. Another reason for choosing two villages out of nineteen villages of the clan is to limit the research to a manageable level.

The population sample was rural women farmers from farm-households. They were between the ages of 21 to 65 including females age less than 21 who were married or who had been married. Women who were students were not included.

### **3.1.4 Instrument Development – Reliability and validity**

The instrument used in this study was a list of questions developed following an extensive review of literature on farm-household systems. Other researchers with similar interests provided some questions that were modified and adopted to the purpose of this study.

Questions were both unstructured and structured. In all cases they were carefully phrased to ensure consistency of inquiry. Open-ended, close-ended, or multiple-choice questions were used. Questions were written down to guide the researcher. At times the nature of the interview prompted ad-hoc questions. The questions were pre- tested with six experts, and again pilot tested with four representatives from the region for reliability. That is, did the questions have the same meaning when repeated with many individuals? During pilot testing, notes were taken when respondents hesitated to answer, laugh at, or asked for clarification etc. When the testing was completed, a group discussion ensued to identify problem questions. During the group discussion, the following questions were asked as suggested by Foddy, (1993)

1. Did any of the questions seem to make you uncomfortable?
2. Did you have to read any question over and over to understand it?
3. Did you misinterpret any questions?



4. Which questions were the most difficult or awkward for you to read?
5. Have you come to dislike any specific questions? Why?
6. Were there any sections in which you felt that the respondents would have liked the opportunity to say more?

Validity was also tested to see if the instrument measured what it was supposed to measure. Several open-ended questions were changed to multiple choices questions following the pilot testing. Some questions were also rephrased. In addition, questions were asked to clarify any point raised by a respondent. The questions were also tested before starting interviews with the target population. Respondents were asked to rephrase questions in their own words if clarification would be improved. Respondents were also asked to give the meaning of the questions as precisely as they understood. This is to ensure that the subjects to be interviewed understood the questions.

### **3.2. The Phase of Data Collection**

Since this was a case study research and no primary data existed for the area under study, six major ways were implemented for data collection.

There was a survey of forty household women from the Ngie clan (Andek and Etwii villages). The women in these two villages were the primary focus group. Questionnaires were given to those women who were literate to fill and circle the right answers and they were encouraged to ask questions where they did not understand. The researcher read the questions to each woman in her dialect who was unable to read. The answers were checked when given by respondents.

Responses to open-ended questions were written with the intention of accurately representing the respondents intended meaning. The women were asked questions pertinent to gender integration, decision-making, family, nutrition, socio-economic, socio- cultural constraints, needs, and to discover their coping mechanisms.

The second focus was to collect data from specific informants knowledgeable of the role of the women or conversant with the activities of the women in the clan. For example, two extension development workers were asked about local structures, strategies, general farming situations, and knowledge of women activities. Questions included:-

- a) What do you know about the role of women in agricultural activities?
- b) What problem do they encounter?
- c) What type of services do you render to them?
- d) Why are most of the women not exposed to extension agents in Ngie?

Four village elders, two from each focus village were interviewed. Questions focus on historic development, traditions customs, and perception of the women's role and conditions. Some questions that were asked are: -,

- a) How have changes in tradition affected the role of women?
- b) What factors have influenced crop production? Is it better now than in the past?
- c) Is there any extinction of any animals, trees, or crops due to man interaction in the environment?
- d) What complaints do women have regarding existing cultural problems?

Two local businesswomen were interviewed about marketing mechanisms, banking, loan conditions, and prices. Two progressive farmers were interviewed. Development opportunities, preconditions for adaptation were explained. Two religious leaders were asked about women's religious obligations, women's Christian groups, beliefs, and perception of the women's social conditions. Two meetings were held with women's groups to ascertain the benefit gained from group meetings. Permission was granted to attend their meeting and group work activities. This allowed for several questions to be asked: -

- a) How does your group help each other? Or what do you gain from group work or meetings?
- b) What activities are performed in your group?
- c) Is this group very helpful to you? If yes, how?

Third, the researcher was a participant observer by joining the women's farming group project called "Abang women's group". Group members individually work their own farms. The investigator visited individuals in their farming activities. Observation involved direct and extensive participation in various activities. The merit of this approach is that the observer can make a judgment of the situation as experienced by the people involved. (World Bank, 1988) During participation and observation, questions were asked for clarification.

The fourth activity involved data collection from archives. Included were documents on government policies, development projects and related topics. Officials of the local council, district office, delegation of agriculture, project

operators and office of women's work provided documents on projects and policies related to socio-cultural and agricultural development. Libraries and agricultural institutions were visited to look for documents on projects and policies related to the role of women.

For the fifth activity, a meeting, involving selected rural women and elite women was held on issues related to forestry, gender integration, decision-making, family nutrition, socio-economic and socio-cultural constraints, which affected them as producers were discussed. Invitations were sent explaining the objective of the meeting, date, place and time. Questions asked were: - Are there forestry programs in the region that involve women? If yes, where? How does it benefit the women? Are there other forms of fuel than firewood in the region? Are there traditions that prevent you from being more successful and how would you like it changed? Are there community groups in the region that are advocates for women's rights? What other factors, other than traditions, hinder your efforts in agricultural production? What can help to reduce these constraints? What are the critical problems of the region? For those of you who have married mates, how do your mates support or constrain your activities? Why do some men marry more than one wife?

Finally, data was collected on farm visits and at the markets. There were multiple visits to farms and markets. Some of the questions that were asked during farm visits were:

- a) How does "good land" differ from poor land?
- b) What does "taking care of the land," mean to you?

- c) What does “ruining the land,” mean to you?
- d) What does “improving the land” mean to you?
- e) What does “soil infertility” mean to you?
- f) What makes taking care of farmland difficult for you?
- g) What would make farming easier for you?
- h) Do your farming techniques and that of your parents differ?
- i) Why did you learn to farm?
- j) Why do you plant your crops? Why this way?
- k) Suppose an NGO offers you a gift 120.000 CFA Francs (\$200) and tells you to use the money exclusively for the improvement of your farm. What would be your improvement priorities?

Questions that were asked during visits to the markets:

- a) What does “gain” mean for you?
- b) Do you make a specific amount from selling every week?
- c) About how much is your total sale per week?
- d) About how much gain do you make per week?
- e) Do you meet your basic needs through the sale of your crops?
- f) If no, why not?
- g) When do you get the highest prices for your crop?

### **3.2.1 Interview Procedure**

Government agricultural services, agro-service centers, the district office, rural council office, some traditional rulers of Ngie, and congregation or churches were visited. The main objective of these visits was to establish rapport and to

explain the purpose of the research. They were also asked to encourage the study population to participate in the research process. The chiefs were asked to influence the village men to allow their wives to freely answer questions without interception. The husbands were informed that their wives would be interviewed in their absence. Household interviews were conducted at the respondent's home in the absence of her husband or other women. Some interviews took place where there were village meetings. Interviews also took place on farms during farm visits.

Before interviewing the women, the purpose of the study was explained. The researcher also ensured confidentiality of the information provided by the respondent. Each respondent was informed that her participation was strictly voluntary. Interviews began with a conversation to build rapport, before proceeding to ask specific questions. This method instilled ease and comfort in the respondents. In the course of interview, several husbands insisted on being present at the interview, when this occurred the interview was terminated immediately. The researcher selected other women in the same region whose husbands accepted that their wives be interviewed in their absence. Only women whose husbands allowed their wives to be interviewed freely were interviewed. The women were assured that the results of the interview would be kept confidential and that only the investigator would have access to it. Respondent's names were not placed on answer sheet.

### **3.3 Supervision**

Overall supervision of the study was performed entirely by the researcher. These included: planning, implementation, evaluating, data analysis, editing the completed questionnaires for misunderstandings and recording errors, document control and record-keeping, and revisiting respondents to clarify unclear answers.

### **3.4 The phase of Data analysis**

#### **3.4.1 Data preparation and processing or data validation**

Data preparation and processing was planned from the beginning of the research. Questionnaires were pre-tested; interviews conducted and completed questionnaires edited. Summary data was checked each day to correct any irregularities. This action reduced the volume of data to be coded at a later time. For example, each question was read to identify answers that were not related to the intended questions. Errors were compiled for each question. Recall interviews were held to clarify the irrelevant data. This is to assure the relevant application of the information collected. At every stage in the information gathering processing, information was transferred to a suitable form for analysis. The information was examined for completeness and consistency. As suggested by Poate et al, (1993), information gathered was evaluated to satisfy the criteria of magnitude and logic and to scrutinize for purposes of identifying fabricated data. During this stage, coding and recording was done. A numeric codebook was created. During data entry, records were edited to clean the data totally avoiding errors.

### **3.5 Data Analysis:**

Some data collected were jotted down in a book. Responses from the subjects were analyzed and written and arranged according to the different topics. Some responses from the main instrument that needed to be analyzed using computers were entered into the computer. When the data were entered, the researcher did the following things before analyzing the data: provided clean, secure storage of master copies of the data. Following this, the data was analyzed. The researcher's basic objective in analysis is to describe and summarize the result of the research to bring out facts through judgment and then draw conclusions. SPSS data soft ware files are used to some extent. Descriptive statistics were mostly used. Some percentages and numbers were used to describe what percentage or number of women that favor female extension agents; most output was in the form of frequency distributions. Frequency distribution was used in the following way: - the different ages of the sample population, needs, problems, fallow period, number of women who have heard of birth control and number or percentage of those who have practiced birth control method. Some estimates means totaled such as average live birth, average houses in a compound, average land owned, average fallow land, and average breast-fed in the region.

### **3.6 Summary**

The problems were identified, objectives stated and a survey of the literature completed in preparation for continuing the research activities. A survey instrument was prepared for gathering data. Compilation of data and tabulation of



results followed. The research results provide a foundation for assessing the continuation of extension, support services and policy-makers' ideas such as policy formulation, program adjustment, and project analysis to the success of the African women farmers

## **Chapter Four**

### **Data Analysis**

#### **Findings and Results**

The findings presented below represent a synthesis of interview data gathered from rural women farmers from two focus villages by means of individual contact, group meetings, farm visits, participant observation, government officials, chiefs, extension agents, pastors, elders and some staff of non-governmental organizations. Care has been taken to ensure that the integrity of perceptions of the rural women farmers has been maintained. The opinions of the focus groups, and meetings from the Andek and Etwii villages have been chosen as general perceptions of the clan. In this research, factors were examined that influence the women's activities either positively or negatively. Women's needs, constraints, factors that support their systems and coping strategies have been identified. The results portray a significant disconnect of the women from extension, non-governmental and governmental resources. Results obtained by other researchers on rural women's farm household systems in Africa and other developing countries were also seen in Ngie ( Andek and Etwii villages).

Data collecting procedures, took place from June 2000 to May 1, 2001. A total of 40 rural women farmers households in two villages in the Ngie clan were interviewed. Since the region is a polygamous society, a total number of 44 women from 40 households were interviewed. More women would have been interviewed in the household but some women told the researcher that their

married mates are living in the urban region with their husbands. They added that they are at home to take care of their house and land. Some others said their married mates are dead. Some told the researcher that they are poor, and their married mates have many children, so they had gone to the Southwest Province with the children where farming is more productive. In this way they can sell their farm produce and educate the children. Farming in Ngie is mostly for consumption. It is difficult to farm and educate the children. Migration from the villages to other more fertile regions is one of their coping strategies to alleviate hunger and poverty.

Group meetings were held with women in the villages. The women were very interested in the research discussions. This made group meetings last long. When gender issues were discussed, they wanted the meeting to continue. They perceived the meeting as an opportunity to express their feelings towards the way that their rural society treats them. Gender issues were left to the end of the agenda. Other people who were interviewed fr focused were agricultural extension agents, pastors, and elderly men in the villages who were also husbands, two village chiefs, and some elite women.

The findings are reported in five sections. (1) the general condition of women, which includes the description of the demographic characteristic in terms of age, marital status, health, birth and death rate, size of household and level of education; (2) physical condition of the region; (3) cultural and socio-economic condition of the women, which include their role in the society, how they are treated, income and income generating activities; (4) policy institutional

environment, which include policies geared towards women, extension agents, training programs, subsidies and support services; (5) Summary of the women's problems, perceived needs and coping with the problems and ways they desire to be helped.

## **Section One, General information of the women**

### **Nature of Compound**

The villages in Ngie are made up of compounds. The number of houses in a compound ranges from one to five. See table 1.

**Table 1. Number of houses in each compound**

Number of houses	Number of women	Percent	Mean
1	10	22.7	
2	21	47.7	
3	12	27.3	
5	1	2.3	
Total	44	100.0	2.1

Table 1 above indicates, that the average number of houses in the compound is 2. 10 women indicated that they have only one house in their compound. 21 women said they have two houses in their compound. One woman indicated that they have five houses in their compound. Polygamous homes tend to have more than two houses in the compound.

### **Description of Houses**

Many of the houses in the compounds have mud floors. Few houses have cement floors. The entire households interviewed had pit toilets and most do not have tap water. The roofs of houses are either thatched with raffia palm leaves, grass, or roofed with zinc. Hailstones have perforated some of those houses

roofed with zinc. As a result, during the rain these roofs leak, causing household members to be uncomfortable. They continually place containers from one spot to the other to trap the water. The cheaper zinc is soft and it is easily perforated by hailstone. Poorer people buy the cheaper zinc. When grass or thatched roofs get old, they leak like the cheap zincs roofs.

### **Women's Conditions**

The Ngie women constitute the majority of the rural poor, as other research in Africa and other developing countries had discovered. The women do not possess enough farm tools for farming and they have limited household needs. They all use fuel wood in a three stone fireplace. As a result of uncontrolled smoke, every thing in the kitchen is blackened, ceilings, pots, walls, etc. Kerosene stove or gas cookers are not common. Some houses are not separated from the kitchen, so the smoke penetrates into the sleeping rooms. This also gives a poor appearance to their clothing. They wash their clothing on stones in nearby running streams. Some use home made soap and the poorer ones use some type of leaf that produces foam. A few use solid laundry soap made in industries. It is commonly called "savon".

### **Women and Communication**

The churches are the main agent for communication in the clan. Most households do not own radios or televisions. A few household own radios and a few elites in the region own television, which require a parabolic receiver. Communication of innovative ideas by radio or TV never reaches the women. The few that own radios never receive the Cameroon news except those who live

at higher altitude. The news that most of them receive is from neighboring countries with Cameroon, like Nigeria, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Central African Republic. The news and information from Cameroon seldom reaches them because the NW province radio station is weak and uses old transmission equipment. Even if the transmission equipment is strong enough for people to get the news, the news and innovative ideas are often reported in French and English, which the rural farmers do not understand.

### **Women and health**

The health of the women has an important bearing on the development of their household, as also suggested by Adebayo (1989). The women have to be healthy in order to be productive. Women complained of sickness that weakens their power and reduces production. Malaria fever is very common among the women. This might be due to mosquito bites. Many indicated that they suffer from high blood pressure. Some women indicated that they sometimes accidentally cut their legs, feet and hands with thorns, sticks, cutlasses and hoes. Some cuts can keep a woman home for weeks without going to the farm to do some farm work. Most of the women do farm work bare footed. One woman cut her feet and lost a lot of blood. The woman fell on the floor in front of the investigator and was crying. The investigator advised her to go to the clinic, which was just near for treatment. The woman replied that she has no money to go to the clinic. The women do not have even free basic first aid treatment of any kind.

There is no hospital or resident doctor in the Ngie clan. There are no programs instituted to meet the basic health needs of women and their children. The few women that go to the clinic receive some limited education on child welfare from the nurses. Day care centers, nutrition education, children sanitation and proper family planning does not exist. Women tend to give birth to many children. This increases their burdens.

Labor from the children are not consistent because most of them go to school. Baby-sitting is not readily available. Women tend to take their babies to the farm. The majority indicated that they had never withdrawn the older children from schools to take care of the young. This factor of carrying their babies when farming is inconvenient and reduces the amount of time to work in the farm.

A question was asked about the number of children they have. Table 2 provides their responses. The table also shows the number of living birth of the women who responded to that question.

**Table 2. Number of living children for each respondent**

Number of children	Number of women	Percent	Ave # of children born
1	1	2.3	
2	5	11.4	
3	7	15.9	
4	6	13.6	
5	6	13.6	
6	7	15.9	
7	8	18.2	
8	4	9.1	
Total	44	100.0	5.0

The average number of living children born to women in Ngie is five. Six women indicated having four children each and six other women indicated that they each have five children. Four women shared that they each have eight children.

The birth rate is high. The women indicated that they like children but have problem bringing up the children because they are not able to provide all their needs. The women during the interview also told the researcher that there are lot of deaths in the clan and that when it occurs, they do not go to the farm but they go to the relative who has lost a family relative. The many deaths reduce farming days adding to Sunday and traditional Sundays in which they are not allowed to work. They are then left with just a few days in a week to farm. For these reasons, the women work too hard to cover up. This helps to sap their energy. Death attendance therefore is one of the reasons for decreased productivity.

Looking at table 3 below, out of 44 women interviewed, 18 of them had not lost a child. One of the women lost five children. 7 women lost 2 children and 7 women lost 3 children each. The diagram suggests that though there is significant loss of children, death rate is declining. The significant deaths may occur because of lack of hospitals, medications and poor sanitation practices.



**Table 3 showing number of women that have lost children**

how many children	Frequency	Percent
0	18	40.9
1	11	25.0
2	7	15.9
3	7	15.9
5	1	2.3
Total	44	100.0

The women were asked if they would like to give birth to more children. Some said they would like to have more children. Some others refused to have more children. Table 4 shows their responses.

**Table 4. Desire for more children**

Answers	Number of women	Percent
Undecided	1	2.3
No	24	54.5
Yes	19	43.2
Total	44	100.0

Out of forty-four women, only one woman was undecided. Twenty-four of them did not like to have more children and nineteen desired more children. The researcher asked those that said no why they did not want another child. Three of them said they would like to have more but are past the childbearing age. Ten women said that they do not want more children because they have lost their husbands. Eleven women said that they already have many children whom they cannot educate and so they do not want more. Those who wanted more children responded that they need the children to help with the farm work. This would indicate that they lack labor to manage their farm. A woman commented "a child is a walking stick that supports the mother when she is old". Having many

children means more support. Another said, "My mother gave birth to 11 children. I am the only living one. I want many children to increase my family". Some women said their husbands want them to have children until they cannot produce any more.

The next question asked about their knowledge of birth control. Table 5 below indicates their responses

**Table 5. Those who heard of birth control**

Responses	Statistics	
	Number of women	Percent
No	22	50.0
Yes	22	50.0
Total	44	100.0

Fifty percent heard of birth control and fifty percent of the women had not heard of birth control. The women were asked if they know of birth controlled and had practiced any method of birth control. Ten of the women said they had practiced birth control method (table 6). Though twenty-two women (22) said they had heard of birth control, only 10 women used contraceptives. Thirty-four did not use contraceptives. Twenty-two women had no idea of birth control and the twelve women had heard of birth control but were not using contraceptive. See table 6 below.

**Table 6. Birth control method practiced**

Responses	Number of women	Percent
No	34	77.3
Yes	10	22.7
Total	44	100.0

Nine women expressed that they did not go to clinic to learn about birth control. Neither did they have someone come to their home or village to educate them. Twelve women, who know of the concept of birth control share that “their husbands did not want to hear them speak of or discuss the word contraceptive”. This might be construed to mean that their husbands did not want their wives to use contraceptives. One woman said, “ I have seven kids and my husband is not supporting me. He does not like me to use contraceptives. He wants me to have children until I can no longer have a baby. There is nothing I can do but to obey him. If I do not obey him, I will get into trouble with him. Having many children is a problem for me, to work hard and to feed them all by myself”.

Another woman said, “My husband does not want me to use contraceptives. He told me that if I use contraceptive, that would make me to be cheating on him or that would be my “passport” for cheating on him”.

Those women who were or had been involved in birth control method were asked what methods they had used or are using. Table 7 indicates their various birth control methods used.

**Table 7. Birth control methods used**

method used for birth control	Number of women	Percent
Did not practice birth control	34	77.3
have an injection	4	9.1
use condoms	1	2.3
abstinence	1	2.3
the doctor turned my wumb	2	4.5
coil	2	4.5
Total	44	100.0

Thirty-four women did not use birth control methods. Only ten women use birth control methods. Since most of them do not use any birth control method, this may account for the, high birthrates.

The women were asked if they had given birth to any of their babies at home without going to the hospital. Thirty-five of the women said they had given birth at home. Table 8 below shows their responses. Only nine of the women had given birth to all of their babies in hospitals or clinics.

**Table 8. Births given at home**

Responses	Statistics	
	Number of women	Percent
No	9	20.5
Yes	35	79.5
Total	44	100.0

The women who have their babies at home were asked why they took the risk, since many African women might have lost their lives during childbirth. Twenty-one of them said the clinic or hospital was too far from their compound. They were not able to cover the long distance on foot during labor. Seven said that there were no means other than walking to the hospital. Five of them said that they had no money to pay the hospital or clinic bills. One woman said that the baby came too fast. She did not have time to go to the clinic, even though it was close to her compound. Another woman shared that she decided to have her baby at home because she had no good baby dresses and wraps for the baby and she added that the nurses would have mocked her if she went with very old

baby dresses. So for fear of shame she had her baby at home. The investigator saw a woman in labor being pushed in a wheelbarrow to the Andek clinic. However, she did not make it to the clinic. She was removed from the wheelbarrow and had her baby on the roadside. Mother and child were then taken to the clinic where they were still charged clinic fees.

Since hospital and clinics are located at far distances from most women, the tendency is for the women to have their babies at home. This practice is very risky both to their health and that of the babies.

### **Breast Feeding Practices**

Breast-feeding practice is a very important in Ngie. It is the best way an infant can get the nutrients they need for physical and mental development. Children who are not properly fed frequently have kwashiorkor, a protein deficiency disease, which makes children to have big swollen stomach and small butts. There are instances of children with kwashiorkor in the two villages, Andek and Etwii. Women with children suffering from kwashiorkor were asked why the children were looking sick. They replied that they were sick and the doctor told them not to breast-feed the child any more. These mothers did not have money to give their children alternative food. Many women do not know how to provide a balanced diet to the baby if breast-feeding is not an option. Such children become weak and are easily prone to diseases. Because of fear of baby diseases and the desire to have strong and healthy children, all the women who were interviewed breast fed their children. Women tend to breast-feed for

average age of two years. Table 9 shows the numbers of years that they breast-feed their children.

**Table 9. Number of years that Ngie women breastfeed their children**

number of years of breastfeeding	Statistics		
	Number of women	Percent	Ave. # of years of breastfeeding
1.11	1	2.3	
1.50	4	9.1	
1.70	1	2.3	
2.00	22	50.0	
2.20	1	2.3	
2.50	11	25.0	
2.75	1	2.3	
3.00	3	6.8	
Total	44	100.0	2.1

Twenty-two women breast-fed their children for two years. One woman indicated that she breast fed her baby for one year. Three women indicated that they breast fed their children for 3years.Those who indicated that they breast feed for three years were older women. According to women who were interviewed, they indicated that earlier generation of mothers used to breast feed children for three to six years. They did this because there were many diseases and if a child was not well breast-fed, the chances for an early death were highly likely. Most women indicated that they abstained from sex during the breast-feeding years. The reason given for this decision was the belief that woman's breast milk during pregnancy is no longer good for the feeding baby. The women believe that if the baby drinks milk from the pregnant woman's breast, the baby will have a "running stomach" and other illness from which the baby could easily

die. A visit was made to a compound to interview a woman. The woman to be interviewed had gone to the farm leaving the young child with an elder sibling to baby sit. The mother had prepared a bottle to feed the child, which was found on the ground covered with dust. When the baby started crying, the elder sibling picked the feeding bottle from the dust without proper sterilization and gave it to the baby. This type of behavior is unhealthy and it might be one of the causes of infant mortality.

### **Medical Treatment**

The women were asked where they go to get treatment when they are sick? One woman told the researcher that “ some times we go to the clinic, some times to the hospital and some times to a traditional doctor depending on the type of sickness”. Another said, “ if I find out that the sickness is of a cultural origin, either that some one used witchcraft or when my ancestors are angry with me, or when some one poisons me, then I go to the traditional doctors”. Another other said “I go to the traditional doctor only because the hospital and clinic is far from my house”. Table 10 below produces their responses.

**Table 10. Places where women go for medical treatment**

Different places of treatments	Number of women	Percent
traditional doctor	4	9.1
go to clinic	14	31.8
go to hospital	6	13.6
traditional doctor & hospital or clinic	18	40.9
private pharmacy	2	4.5
Total	44	100.0

The women use both Western and traditional medicine for treatment. Four of the women said they go to traditional doctor for treatment. Fourteen women indicated that they get their treatment from clinic only. Eighteen women said they go to both traditional doctor and hospital or clinics. This means that they use both traditional and western medicine for treatment. There is no hospital located in the Ngie clan, which is made up of nineteen villages with an estimated population of about thirty-five thousand. A few clinics are located un-evenly in the region. These clinics are concentrated almost near the center of the clan. The villages that are far away do not have ready access to these clinics. The clinics are generally ill equipped, lacking sufficient beds, cupboards or even diagnostic equipment with no beds sheets, blankets etc. Most clinics have inadequate or no lights. Medication to sell to the population is insufficient and some times unavailable. The clinics are under staffed. The concentration of the clinics in one area is due to politics and some villages' effort. The nearest hospital is a Presbyterian hospital, which is about ten to fifteen miles away from the nearest village in Ngie. To some other villages the distance ranges from twenty to thirty-five (56km) or more Km to the nearest hospital. This idea poses a big problem in the region.

The investigator observed patients being carried on other's backs to clinics or the hospital. Some people spend hours traveling to the hospitals or clinics. Roads are in bad condition during the rainy season. Some areas have steep hills and deep valleys that make it difficult for relatives to carry the sick ones on their backs to the hospital. Some villages dug their road with no money



to build bridges. Lack of roads, hospitals and convenient means of transportation contribute to a higher death rate. Those with money hire horses to take their sick ones to the hospital or clinic. It is a significant challenge as some sick ones are too weak to control themselves on the horse. The Bororos (Fulani) who live on the hillcrest take their sick ones to the clinic on horses. It is difficult to descend and ascend steep hills with the sick ones.

Many women do not go to the hospital in the early stages of sickness. They wait until the illness worsens before they think of going to the hospital. A sick woman was asked why she had not gone to the clinic or hospital. She said, "I would only go to the hospital when the sickness becomes serious. If admitted now, I will have to pay for those days. On the other hand, I might get well without spending any money". Another woman was asked why she is very sick and had not gone to the hospital? She replied, "I was admitted to the Presbyterian hospital six months ago. I had no money to pay the hospital's bill. When I was feeling better, I sneaked out of the hospital to avoid payment. If I go back now, they would want me to pay for the first bill. I do not have any money to go to the hospital. I would rather die in the house". Poverty is a prevention for going to the distant hospitals.

A woman was interviewed who lived on the hill slope. On arriving, the woman was seated on a little stool outside her house. She was asked why she had tied a rope around her neck? She said, "she had neck pain and the rope will help to heal her". She expressed that she had no money to go to the clinic. She added that the terrain also is too steep for her to descend to the clinic. She then

showed a big wound on her leg caused by falling on her way back from the farm. She was using traditional herbs for treatment because the hospital was far or because treatment was costly. Increased death rate tends to be the result of this type of behavior.

### **Traditional Doctor – An Experience**

There are traditional doctors who have had success curing patients. There are others, who are limited in their abilities to diagnose and cure but would claim the expertise of curing every sickness because of their quest for money. Some of the women really believe in the traditional doctor's treatment and would prefer to go to them. One woman Martha (a name used to protect her identity) told the investigator that she took her sister to a traditional doctor and that she would be going there next week to see if the sister was improving. Arrangements were made to go with "Martha" to see precisely how the traditional doctors practiced medicine. The trip took more than two hour walking. On arrival, the sister was lying helplessly on a mat. The traditional doctor said the sister has refused to eat. That is why she is so weak. The traditional doctor added that the sister had quarreled with another woman. The other woman had cut part of her hair and performed black magic for her to die. He continued that he was waiting for "Martha" to come so that he would make some traditional magic to bring back her hair that was magically thrown in to the bush. The investigator asked the traditional doctor if he would be able to cure the girl. He replied in the affirmative. He said that if "Martha" gives him a cock, he would send the cock to go and look for the hair that was thrown in the bush near where the sick girl was living. The

place was about three hundred miles away. He added, "if the hair is found, the girl will get well". The sick girl said, " sister Martha, take me out of here". The Martha yelled at her. The traditional doctor said, the girl does not know what she is talking about. Martha was advised by the researcher to listen to the sister and that she is saying some thing reasonable, so she should take the girl to the hospital. Martha responded that the sister was in the hospital for two weeks and her sickness was getting worse. "That is why I brought her to the traditional doctor who had told me that it was not a natural illness". "Martha" gave money for the cock. The traditional doctor asked some one to bring in a cock. When the cock was brought, he gave it to "Martha" to follow him outside. He had pre dug a hole under a tree and the hole was muddy, "Martha" was asked to put the cock in the hole. So she did and the cock was covered with a basket. Everybody returned to the house. The traditional doctor said, "The cock has gone to look for the hair". He continued, while waiting for the cock to do the work that it had been assigned, "Martha" should buy them some beer". "Martha" gave them money for the beer. The beer was brought and it was shared among the members of his household. After so many sips, the traditional doctor said, "some thing has stroked me that the cock is back from the journey". Everybody went out to where the cock was placed. The traditional doctor lifted the basket up and secured the cock, and then gave it to another man. He gathered some wet soil from the hole. Since it was dark, he directed every one to get back into the house. He said, "I will have to find out if the cock saw her hair". He threw the mud on the floor and used his finger to look for the hair in the mud. Everybody was quiet and all

attention was on the doctor. Everyone was eagerly watching to see what will come out of the mud. After searching for about a minute, he smiled and said, "it has found the bundle and that the girl will be well". He then washed the bundle. The investigator looked at it. It was wrapped with black thread. The doctor took a sip of his drink and untied the bundle. It was actually hair. The investigator asked the doctor if the girl would be treated now. He said "oyeah. Since the hair that was thrown is found, if you come here tomorrow morning, she will get up and be doing things for her self". "Martha" felt happy and relived. She was again encouraged by the investigator to take the sister to the hospital that very night; all of this activity is faulty. "Martha" said, "Let's see what her condition will be tomorrow" "Martha" went with the investigator to her relative's house seven miles away for the night. Towards the break of the day, "Martha" heard some one knocking at the door. The investigator went and opened the door' It was the traditional doctor standing sorrowfully at the door. He came in and said," the girl is dead. She died around four am".

Some rural people and children loose their lives this careless way by going to some fake traditional doctors. Maybe "Martha's" sister would have been saved if she had left her sister in the hospital.

### **AIDS – Presence**

AIDS patients are increasing in Ngie Clan. This has an effect on the health of women in Ngie. Fortunately none of the women interviewed admitted to having AIDS. Some did however have children or relatives in their care who were AIDS patients. All of these AIDS patients were living in urban regions. That is,

those who have AIDS in the region are mostly migratory groups who are either students who attend school in urban areas or some urbanites who have returned home to wait for their last days. These AIDS patients are in the denial stage. They do not want to accept that they have the sickness. For this reason, they tell lies. For example one said, "When my father died, the family accused me of changing his will. They want to share everything that belonged to my father. They do not care about us, his real children. They followed me in witchcraft and have made me to be sick". Another said, "I was a progressive business man in the urban area, but some one was jealous of me and had poisoned me. That is why I came to the village to receive traditional medicine". One other said, "I fell in love with one woman's husband. The woman discovered it. She became angry and poisoned me". Caring for these sick ones reduced the productive time for women farmers. The investigator saw a woman who spent her productive time for couple of months taking her daughter that had AIDS from one traditional doctor to the other. At last, the daughter died.

### **Age and reproduction**

In the Ngie clan, the people do not regard age as an important factor. Most people do not know their year of birth, especially the illiterate ones. When asked when they were born, most would say, "I don't know". Those who have an idea will connect it to an event that had taken place around when they were born. For an example, one would say, she was born when the first airplane flew over Ngie. Or, she was born around the time the late chief died. One woman said that

she was born the year when locust destroyed crops. Another woman said, “I was born the year of the landslide in Atona”.

During the research, the women were asked how old they were? Most of them did not know their age. Table 11 provides responses of the women to the question of age.

**Table 11. Ages of respondents**

Respondents' age range	Number of women	Percent
15-20	2	4.5
20-25	5	11.4
26-30	3	6.8
31-35	2	4.5
36-40	2	4.5
41-45	1	2.3
Total	15	34.1
I don't know	29	65.9
Total	44	100.0

29 out of 44 women did not know their age or even the year they were born. Most of those that did not know their ages were older women and some illiterate ones. Those who knew their ages are those who have been to school or those who have elder relatives who had been to school and had told them when they were born. Those that were baptized when young have their ages from their baptismal cards.

Since most women do not know their ages, they do not connect it to birth or reproduction. Therefore even if they are told about “risky pregnancy” which is after forty years, it would not have any meaning since they cannot allocate the period in their ages.

## Women and Level of Education

Lack of education as suggested by Quisumbing et al (1995) and supported by World Bank is a constraint that is also facing Ngie rural women. Most of the rural women are illiterate or dropouts from primary school or elementary schools. Table 12 below indicates their level of education.

**Table 12. The Women Farmers Educational level**

Women educational level	Statistics	
	Number of women	Percent
did not go to school at all	19	43.2
did not complete primary school	15	34.1
completed primary school	8	18.2
drop out of secondary school	1	2.3
completed secondary school	1	2.3
Total	44	100.0

Nineteen of the women interviewed had never been to school. Fifteen are primary school dropouts. Eight of the women completed primary school. Only one woman had graduated from secondary school. The women were asked why they dropped out of school. Four women said that they got pregnant in school and so they dropped out of school. Four said they had to baby-sit for their mothers. One woman said that her father wanted her to marry so that he could get the dowry to pay the fee for her elder brother in a secondary school. Three of the women expressed that their parents were not able to pay their school fees, tuition and buy the books and uniforms. The women who never went to school were asked why they never went to school? The older women said school in their days was only for men. Other women said their fathers never saw the need of

sending girls to school. They were considered as belonging to another family. That is, when a woman is married, she becomes a member of the husband's family and the fathers then did not see the need to educate their daughters for some one else. Furthermore, all the schools in the region were mission schools requiring school fees. Parents preferred to send only the boys to schools and not to waste money educating the girls who would be other people's property. Another reason that daughters were not educated was the fact that women's work is farming and daughters were to go to the farms to help their mothers. Today, more parents send their girls to school. In addition, most schools now are government schools where education is free. The parents still have to buy books and provide clothing. Some parents still cannot cope even with free education.

## **Section 2. The Physical Environment and the Women**

### **Agro-Forestry**

Forestation provides firewood. It also reduces soil erosion and acts as a windbreak. In addition, the leaves are used as manure. The women were asked if they were participating in an agro-forest program by planting of trees on their farms or growing trees as fuel as a group. There is no program of growing trees for fuel wood in the two villages. They had to go long distances to fetch for fuel wood. Corncoobs, cornstalks, dry kennel, bamboo, and raffia palm tree branches were also used for fuel.

In the two villages Andek and Etwii, there was some form of agro-forestry. During farm visits, an unfamiliar plant on some few rural women's farms was observed. Inquiry was made as to what plants they were. The women explained



that the plants were of two varieties -: Acacia and Luciana. A Peace-Corps representative from the United State of America introduced them. The women explained that the seeds were planted on the Andek Presbyterian secondary school farm. The women obtained seedlings from this source. They added that the plants helped to enrich the soil, acts as windbreaks, and check erosion. The branches or the stems of the plants were used for staking beans. Women did not need to go far to look for stakes. They affirmed that crops do well as they have planted the trees on their farms. The women were asked how the plants were used to enrich the soil. They said that they planted the plant in every six row of beds. When the plants reach certain maturity, the leaves are cut, and placed on the uncultivated beds. The decay of the leaves formed manure. The leaves were covered with soil and the crops planted. Inquiry was made to find out if the plant helped to increase crop yield. They were also asked why they had not planted them in the infertile location and those areas prone to erosion? The most frequent answer was “they do not have time to plant them on all the farms”. Another reason given was that women do not have time to attend group meetings where they can gain knowledge and apply new technology. Most women who did not plant this plant were reluctant to accept any new technology.

Another Peace Corps representative trained the Executive of the Ngie Union of Farming Groups (NUFAG) to help educate women farmers on the benefit of agro-forestry. She told farmers to go and learn from the NUFAG how to plant these trees on their farms. The NUFAG executive took the initiative to visit farmers and encouraged them to plant the trees. The NUFAG executive made a

schedule for visits. When the Executive arrived at most group meetings, the women farmers were never there. Farmers did not trust the Executive. Furthermore, farmers complained that the Executive was not skilled teaching them methods. The women farmers preferred to have an outsider teach them. They never asked the Executive for advice. Contributing to the problem was the fact that the experts who introduced the new technology did not remain in the area to educate the women and assist in the adopting of the new technology.

### **Land Acreage per woman**

The average acreage of land owned in the region is 3.37 hectares. The table 13 below indicates this.

**Table 13. Acreage land owned by rural women farmers in Ngie**

Acreage owned	Number of women	Percent	Ave. acreage of Land own
2.00	4	9.1	
2.50	11	25.0	
3.00	4	9.1	
3.10	3	6.8	
3.50	9	20.5	
4.00	4	9.1	
4.50	2	4.5	
5.00	6	13.6	
6.00	1	2.3	
Total	44	100.0	3.4

The average acreage of land owned in the region is high when compared to other third world countries whose average acreage is two. Availability of farming

land is not a problem for the majority of the population. Their major problems here are soil infertility, the dry spells during the rainy season and lack of labor.

The villages also have communal farmland, on hill slopes and hillcrests. Cocoyam disease (Panama) has reduced cocoyam production. The women farmers have looked for another farming area for better soil fertility. They now farm cocoyams in the virgin and gallery forestland located far a way along boundaries with other clans. Most who farm in these distant farms travel fifteen miles or more on foot to reach the forestlands. The women affirmed that Panama disease is minimal in these virgin lands. The long distant poses a problem for those younger women with children and older women who cannot make the journey easily to the forest. As a result, labor is reduced. More importantly, traveling these distances saps energy and wastes useful production time.

### **Physical Condition of the Land**

Physically, the region is hilly and it is prone to soil erosion, landslides and earth movement. Many women indicated that their crops do not do well due to soil infertility. Most of them complained that landslides destroyed their crops. Many also indicated that during dry spells, the sun dries up their crops and the corn borer destroys their corn. Visits to the farms revealed that most of the corn was affected by corn borer. When there is a dry spell, corn borer contributes to the reduction in the amount of corn grown in the region. This poses a big problem for the women. Some women were putting wood-ash on the corn as treatment for corn borer. This was one of the ways they tried to solve the corn borer problem. When the ash is applied, the young corn leaves look dry. After a week or two, the

crop growth improves. Some corn plants take a longer time to recover after the wood ash is applied. Agricultural agents were selling chemicals for treating corn borer. Only a very few women purchased it. Many complained of not having money to buy the chemical. The women also complained of insects that destroyed beans, plantains, cocoyams, sweet potatoes and yams

During the rainy season, farm to market roads are generally in poor condition with some being impassable. There is mud, landslides, and instances of broken bridges to navigate. Floodwater sometimes carries bridges away. In some cases erosion destroys parts of the road. Vehicles and bicycles get stuck in mud creating loss of time and frustration. Accident rates are higher during this time. Rivers cannot be used for navigation as an alternative means of transport. It is difficult to go to distant markets because transportation costs are high. Aridity, infertile soil and landslides are a hindrance to food crop production and income generating activities and marketing is negatively affected. Bad roads make it difficult to sell crops and also buy some of their needs in urban centers.

### **Grazing Problem or Animal Crop Destruction**

Uncontrolled animal grazing is a big problem. This is one of the greatest problems the women are facing. For this reason many women farmers farm several parcels of land. Every woman complained that straying domestic animals like pigs, cows and goats destroyed their crops. Women in Etwii and Andek were asked if they have experienced animal crop destruction. All the 44 women who were interviewed affirmed. One of the reasons that the women farm several

pieces of land is to have some food. If the animals destroy some farms, they could have some productions from the other farms. Some women really wept when they narrated their experiences. At one quarter of Andek's village meeting, a woman came and threw herself down rolling and crying. She was asked why she is crying. She said some goats had eaten all her beans. She added that she needed help to get some compensation from the owner. She was advised to see the village council. She replied that the village council would not do anything. The investigator asked what action the village council takes when crops are destroyed by animals? Other present said that, they reported to the District Officer. He asked the agricultural extension agent to go and evaluate the destruction. They continued that most agricultural extension agents asked the rural women farmers to pay for their transportation to the farm and the extension agent also asked them to cook food and buy drinks, in addition to transportation the money. Consequently, most of them gave up the idea of compensation since they had no money to meet the extension agents' demand and those of the government officers. Others complained that when they did give food and spend the money, nothing was done. Others said before the administration would take any action, money for transport was requested even when there were no roads to their farms. One woman commented that, " the district office took action, the cattle man had paid the money, but the district worker who took the money has not given it to me". Other women took action by catching the animals and taking them to the rural council to be locked up. The animals would not be released until the owner paid for the damage. The Andek Rural Council also charged for each

day the animals were contained within the council's fence. The women further said that even though the owners paid the council's fee and the council gave their animals back to them, the women were still not compensated. Instead, the Andek Rural council made money from the animals that were brought to them by the women. The women said that the village council, where the grazing problem should have been solved, consisted of men who did not want to address this problem. This was because most of them had domestic animals that had also strayed on others' farms. One village counselor advised the investigator that she should not mention the idea of animal crop destruction in her dissertation writing and that they the counselors would try to solve the problem in the near future.

Another village council had taken action regarding the grazing problem. They said that if domestic animals had destroyed crops, the animals should be brought to the village council. The action of bringing the animals to the village council however became a serious problem because the owners still never controlled their animals. The village council then told the women to kill any domestic animal that destroyed their crops. The village council thought that this new rule would encourage people to restrain their animals. The women started killing straying animals. A straying goat was killed and the owner went to the gendarme's office and reported the matter. The gendarmes gave convocation to the woman who killed the animal. The village women and their chief went to the gendarme's office on the day of her convocation. The gendarme asked the woman to pay for killing the goat. The women said that the woman acted on their behalf and that she will not pay any thing. The village chief told the gendarmes

that his village council had ordered women to kill any domestic animals that destroyed their crops because animal crop destruction has become too rampant. The gendarmes told the chief that he has no right to ask women to kill straying domestic animals because animals are important, for the owners pay taxes to the government. Gendarmes threatened to put the chief in jail. The action of these officers weakens the law of animal crop destruction in that village, yet this practice continues.

Some village councils could not do anything about grazing issues because they have many other problems. There is mismanagement of village council funds and inadequate records of spending decisions. There is gossip and jealousy among the council members. Some of the members are motivated by selfish reasons. Consequently, the village councils do not work as one body. Even when decisions are to levy fines, they would let their favorites or family members go free. In this way, many village laws are not enforced. Most villages had fines for straying animals, but they do not enforce the laws because they might become victims. The weakness of the village council has placed the women farmers in the disadvantaged position. As a result, men let their animals feed freely on the women's farm. On many occasions cows, goats, and pigs were seen feeding on cropped land.

The issue of the grazing problem is far too politicized in the Ngie Clan. The District Office, the rural council, and the traditional councils have failed to put an end to this destructive practice of domestic animal by owners. A few experiences have been shared to demonstrate what many rural women farmers

go through in the clan. While narrating their experiences, some wept. They were serious in their behavior. A group of women narrated that a cattle man had let his cows feed on the women's crops one Saturday night because he thought that the women would not come to farm on Sunday. By the time they would come on Monday, he would have removed his cattle off their farms. The road to the village passed through the farms. A man who happened to be passing at night observed the cows feeding on the women's farms. He alerted some women. The women alerted other women. These women went up the hill very early Sunday morning and found the cows still feeding on their farms. The women herded the cattle to the village chief's compound. The chief chastised the women for bringing the cattle to him. He ordered the women to take the cattle to the owner. The women took the cattle to the owner and asked him to compensate them for lost crops. The man and his sons came out with canes and start beating the women and telling them to leave his compound. The weaker and older women ran away. A few young and strong remained to fight back but were overpowered by the men. They went home with injuries. They lost their crops and received a beating. Nothing was done about it.

In another instance, goats destroyed crops on one of the farms. The owner of the goats refused to compensate the rural woman farmer and not even saying he was sorry. She went to another farm the next day and found cows eating her crops. This time she got angry and decided to wound the cows. She wounded a few of the cattle. The man reported the matter to the gendarmes (police). The gendarmes told the woman to pay a fine for wounding the cows or



she will be put in jail. The woman asked for compensation. She was told to shut her mouth. She ended up paying the fine.

One old woman narrated that she caught some cows of a government worker on her farm. She brought them to the District Officer (D.O.) to settle the problem. The D.O. told the woman to release the cows since the owner was known. He also asked her to make a report for him for a follow up. This woman traveled about ten miles on foot to ask the daughter to write the report. The daughter wrote it and followed the mother to the District Office. The report was given to the District Officer. He refused it and asked them to go and type it because it would be put on file. The D.O. knows that there were no typewriters available. He just decided to trouble this old rural woman because he did not want to go investigate the matter. He ordered them to leave his office. The daughter told the D.O. that it is his place to solve the problem. He then asked the daughter "if you want me to solve the problem, then where are the cows?" The daughter said, "you had asked the mother to return the cows since the owner is known". The D.O. ordered them to stand outside the office. The women went out and were out for two hours. The D.O. came outside and saw them still standing there. He asked them to leave the office premises. The women went home frustrated.

There is no person in authority interested in solving the grazing problem. Further more no mention was made of any husband taking up the cause for his wife. Men don't care. They are not in a hurry to give up the bad practice of uncontrolled grazing. Farming is the woman's job.

## **Women Farm Traditional Practices**

### **Farm Fallow**

Women cultivate from six to fifteen parcels of land a year. Those who farm one to three pieces a year are working class. The several parcels of land cultivated by the women reduce the fallow period.

The average fallow land in the region is 3.57 years. Land is left fallow from zero to six years according to the responses from interviews. This figure would indicate that the women do not fallow their land long enough to regain the soil's fertility. The short fallow period comes as a result of cultivating too many pieces of land in one year. Some farmland has no fallow periods, especially those located around village centers, valleys and plains. For example in the Andek Village valley or plain at Ibah, it is cultivated every year. Crops do well here because erosion washes the fertile topsoils from hills into the valley. In addition, cow dung are washed from the hills to these valleys. These center village lands are small in size. These village center farms could be more productive if the women would fallow them. Reduced fallowing brings about soil infertility and land degradation. The government has reduced the amount of this fertile plain by building schools, and offices. If the government had not taken the level fertile land, Andek villagers would have had sufficient fertile land for food production to feed the family and reduce hunger. More so, these village center lands are now used as a resettlement area. Landlords are now selling plots for building houses.

The women were asked why they farm many pieces of Land a year? They gave the researcher two main reasons for cultivating several parcels of land. The first reason they gave was animal destruction, as discussed previously. The second reason is soil infertility. They explained that since the land is not fertile, they must cultivate several parcels of land in order to gather adequate food for the family. A visit to some of the farms gave evidence that cultivating several pieces of land a year is disadvantageous to the women farmers and, a waste of time and labor. First, most of the farms are not well cared for because the women rush to finish one and so start another. They have no time to fertilize. Weeding is sacrificed. Crops are left in the bush for animals to destroy. Sometimes weeds over take the crop before the women get there. Secondly, crops have seasons and prescribed time to be planted. The women cannot coordinate all their parcels of land at the right time. Some farms are cultivated at the right time while others are cultivated late. Crops that are cultivated late do not do well. Those that are farmed too early, sun and corn borer destroy them. The women were asked if they knew that they were farming some crops late? Did they also know that the crops would not do well? If so," why then do you still farm at this late time"? One woman said " I have to keep myself busy. Because if you are not busy, your husband or other women will say you are lazy". Another said, "I do not like to just sit home doing nothing. I feel sick if I stay at home".

## **Food Preservation**

During the dry season, when little or no agriculture is done, the people live on dry reserved food. Most of the food spoils because there are no storage facilities. When cocoyams are harvested, most women bury them in the ground as a means of storage. What they do first is to dig a big hole in the ground. They lay leaves in and around the hole. The cocoyams are placed in the hole. The cocoyams are covered with leaves and then soil to resemble a constructed bed or ridge. This prevents rain or too much heat from making contact with the tubers. Some will still decay due to extreme heat. In most cases, half of what they bury spoils. Others put their harvest in barns or in their houses. Regardless of which alternative is used, some of the tubers still decay.

Inadequate storage is one of the causes of hunger in the region. If the food did not rot, the people would likely have enough to eat during the dry season. The women were in agreement that they needed adequate storage facilities. Complicating the food shortage is the need for tubers and grain to be used as seeds for planting new crops. This practice also contributes to food shortage. Food prices are high during planting season. Since the region depends solely on agriculture for livelihood, many people do not eat satisfactorily during the food shortage. This results in malnutrition. Infections are prevalent. There is a higher mortality rate. Body weight declines. This becomes both the "hungry and sick season". (Chambers 1983).

## **The Beans Season**

The women plant dry season beans in September, which is harvested in December. When the women plant the dry season beans, corn is also planted in the same beds. This procedure is called "mixed crop farming". The corn often does not do well. Frequently it withers or is affected by the corn borer. The women farmers have realized that the corn does better if planted near rivers or streams. But year in and year out they continue to plant the dry season corn on sloping terrain. During farm visits, observation was made that the corn does not do as well as the beans. The women farmers were asked why do they continue to plant corn if it does not do well? Some said they hoped to harvest some corn so that it could be cooked with the beans. Other women said, "it will be wasteful if we only plant beans".

## **Akara Practice**

Some women cope with soil infertility by making "Akara". This is the burning of the topsoil prior to planting crops. The grass is cleared, put on the furrows then covered with the soil to form the beds. A small portion of the bed is left open or uncovered. Then, a fire is lighted on the open portion. The grass inside the bed is burned and the topsoil is baked. The topsoil that is baked is called akara. This baked soil is left to cool for several days, after which the crops are planted. The optimum growing regions are the places of the akara. Crops that are planted in the akara do well but only for that year. In order to increase yields during the next farming period, the process of creating the akara is done at another location. This process allows women to increase the food supply, but the creation of the akara

kills the soil nutrients and other organic matter in the soil. The end result is soil infertility. While run-off causes soil infertility, the women's akara practices also causes soil infertility.

### **Coping strategies against hunger**

In the past, the village people fed the pigs with green bananas. Only a few ate ripe bananas. As the population increased and the soil became infertile, the people introduced boiled green bananas as food. Green bananas are widely eaten as substitute for plantains. Another coping strategy is eating more rice. In the past when people had enough cocoyams to eat, rice was only eaten once a year, on Christmas day. As the traditional staple foods became less available, the Ngie people had to purchase rice. Rice that was eaten once a year has almost become a daily meal. The reason for eating more rice is because it is less expensive and is available. A few cups of rice can feed a whole family as rice expands when it is cooked.

Another coping strategy is that the rural women depend on relatives that live outside the Ngie clan. Money, soap, clothing, bread, food, etc are sent to the rural villages. Most of the relatives live in the urban region. Some work with the government or private agencies. Others are traders. Some relatives live in other rural areas where agriculture is more productive and are able to support their relatives back home with the sales of their farm produce.

Some women cope with hunger by engaging in petty trading to augment their needs. Unfortunately, most of the women are involved in low income generating activities.

Some others rural farmers cope with hunger by reducing their rations and eating unsatisfactorily, thereby creating conditions of malnutrition.

Some rural families add eating of nuts as snacks. In school, during break time, some children have nothing to eat, but they go under palm trees to look for palm nuts and palm kennels. They crack the kennels with stones. Some harvest nuts from the forest like bush mangoes, (wild forest mangoes) monkey cola, cola nuts, cashews nuts and many others types of nuts.

In summary, food shortage is occurs due to -: soil infertility, long dry spells, pythium root rot commonly known as panama, corn borer, animal grazing problem or animal crop destruction, short fallow periods shortage of labor, poor storage facilities and bad farm practices.

### **Section 3. Cultural and Socio Economic Conditions of**

#### **Rural Women Farmers**

##### **Gender Problems**

Culturally, there is societal inequality in the clan. Margaret Leahy (1986) made this observation during research in Mexico. This comes as a result of perceptions and beliefs of the people. In Ngie, the belief is that women should traditionally be submissive and respectful of husbands and men are in position of authority. They believe that women who are not submissive and respectful of the males would create problems for her family. No man want to be married to a disrespectful wife for fear that the woman's behavior would transfer to others in the family. Mothers, mother- in- laws, and other women also are affected by this

inequality of treatment. This results in women being placed in an inferior position both socially and economically.

Women do not have a say in family planning. The man dictates to the wife what she has to do and he may decide to punish her, if she disobeys. Most men take family decisions without consulting their wives. A woman becomes a victim of abuses and suppression. As a result, she becomes submissive and dependent on her husband. She does what the husband wants her to do, for she is not allowed to make any decision of her own.

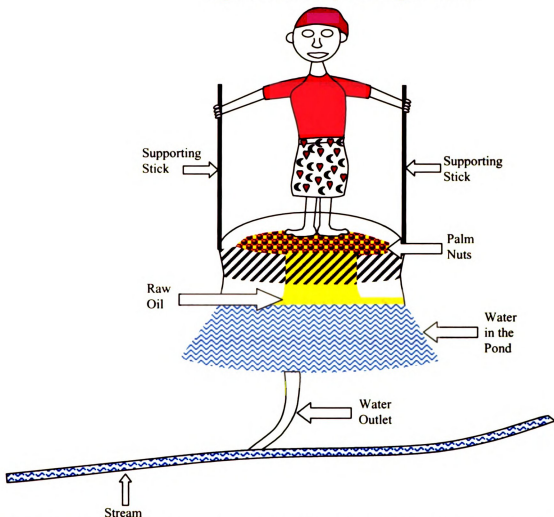
Culturally, the female children are expected to be good in order to have men marry them. Mothers whose daughters were married were asked if they, as mothers, gave them advice before going to marry? They said they did. One woman said, "I told my daughter to work hard on the farm and in the home. Men do not like lazy women and she must obey her husband and do what ever he tells her to do". Another woman said, "I advised my daughter not to go get into any argument with the husband. She must respect the husband and his family members". In addition "she must provide food for the children and the husband every day, and to do this, it requires hard work". While the men initiate this inequality, mothers also contribute. Mothers try to make their married daughters practice behavior that is not in conflict with the male culture, especially when they are going to get married. In order words, both males and females cause gender subordination in the culture. When females get married they are expected to follow the advice of their mothers so they are in submission to their husbands. Many women call their husband "Masa" (Master).



## **Palm Oil Processing and Marketing**

When processing the palm nuts, the male cuts or pays someone to cut the nuts. The woman cooks the nuts for making the palm oil. Making palm oil is hard and time consuming. Crude, local ways are used in processing the palm oil. See figure 2 below. The nuts are cooked. The cooking takes much firewood. The woman takes them to the place where the nuts are processed. This place is usually near a stream locally called "ishim". The ishim is constructed with stones on which the nuts are placed and mashed. Below the stones is a hole or pond filled with water for the raw palm oil to settle. The raw oil is yellow in color. This hole has an outlet for the water. This outlet during processing is covered with palm nut chaff. The woman uses her bare feet to mash the cooked palm nuts. Then she uses the water in the hole to water the nuts so that the raw oil drains into the hole below. She separates the nuts from the chaff. She then gathers the raw palm oil floating on the water. Two women may jointly do the processing. One might be mashing the nuts with her feet, while the other woman waters the nuts, separates the chaffs from the nuts and remove the raw palm oil. Figure 2 shows how palm nut is extracted.

Figure 2. Palm oil processing in “Ishim”



When finished she lets the water out for the next woman. She carries the raw palm oil to the house and cooks it till the oil turns red. This process requires a large quantity of firewood and time also. Kernels the inner part of the nuts are cracked and eaten as nuts. Oil is made from it too. Palm nuts kernel is also used as fuel. The chaff of palm nut is used as fuel and also for lighting fire.

The palm oil is carried to the market. Money earned is given to the husband. The wife is not allowed to use part of the palm oil money to buy beef or food that the household needs. She might be bullied or beaten if she uses part of

the money. The women intimated that they suffer physically during the palm oil processing. They indicated that they needed an oil mill that will help them to process their palm nuts. This would provide additional time to go to the farm instead of wasting time processing the palm nut for the men.

### **The Husband and Women's Money**

A husband expects his wife to give him money whenever she has it. Women said they have meeting groups where they deposit money for others in need. Money may be borrowed from these deposits. At the end of the year, each woman's share of money is given back to her including the interest. When she arrives home, she gives the money to her husband. Some husbands, to be sure that the wife gave them the right amount of money, go to other meeting group women to verify the amount of money their wives got from the meeting. If the amount is less, the wife will be in big trouble.

One woman was depressed because she did not contribute anything to the family. She said, "My husband always abuses me verbally and tells me that I do not contribute anything to the family. I am so sad and poor that I am unable not contribute anything" For her and the husband contributing to the family well-being is only giving money to the husband. Most of the women indicated giving money to their husbands whenever they have money. The general concern was that women must give money to their husbands. They give the money to their husbands to pay the children's school fees. One woman said, "her husband buys palm wine for himself with the money she gives him. Nothing is purchased for the household". The practice of women giving the little money

they have to their husbands leaves them poor and dependent on the men. This aspect of the culture treats the women as slaves.

### **Women and Economic Condition**

The women are involved primarily in low income generating activities. The low-income activities are-: buying and selling palm wine, groundnuts (peanuts), and rice. These goods are purchased in small quantities because they do not have enough money to buy in large bulk. For this reason, the women indicated that they needed increased capital to do better business and to improve their living standard.

The women were asked if any of them had borrowed money this year. Many affirmed they had done so. Next they were asked from what source did they borrow the money? Most of them said from their village group meetings commonly known as cell, and from women's group meetings. A few of the women said they had borrowed money from loan schemes. They were also asked if they had ever borrowed money from the government's farmer's bank? Not one had borrowed money from this source. When asked what they do with the money that they borrow from their meetings, some said they gave it to their husband to pay the children's school fees; other borrowed the money for health reasons. A few women borrowed money for trading. Group meetings in this culture are good because they support the women. Apart from borrowing money, group-meeting members help each other socially and/or are supportive in times of happiness or sorrow. Most women's groups have farming groups where each

day they farm and plant each other's farm. This gives the rural women the spirit of teamwork, socialization, stress reduction and reduction of burden.

### **Control of Plantains.**

Culturally, the men control plantains. Plantains are planted at the immediate surrounding of the house. Women weed grass and put manure under the plantains. The men pin down sticks to support the plantain from falling. Most women complained that they are not allowed to cut plantains or bananas even when there is no food in the house. Furthermore they have no right to cut and sell in the market to buy household needs without permission from their husbands. One woman volunteered, "if the husband gives her the plantain to sell, she must bring back all the money or she gets into trouble with him". Widows whose sons live in urban areas, and, their mothers are at home, sell and keep the money.

### **Control of Fowls**

In the villages, the people rear local fowls for personal consumption and to sell. The men have total control over the fowls. Fowls are not killed for family meals. A man kills a fowl when receiving important guests, marriage and traditional celebrations. When there is no important purpose for killing any fowl, the fowls keep accumulating until fowl disease kills most of them. Even when the fowl disease is present, the men will still not kill the fowls even for home consumption. They would rather leave the fowls to die than to consume them. The men hope that one or two will survive to generate more. During the disease

period, some men only try to treat the disease with local herbs. As a result, most of the fowls die.

During group meetings, the women told the investigator that, in the past, women were not allowed to eat fowl. Women can now eat fowl, but the man is the one who processes the chicken and gives it to the woman to cook. When fowl is cooked, only the man shares it. During a group meeting with the women, one woman shared that her husband asked her to cook a fowl, which he had cut into parts. The woman informed the husband that the food was ready. The husband asked if she had put enough salt in it. The wife affirmed. Her response infuriated the husband. The husband said, "So you tested the food. You weren't supposed to do that". Another woman commented that she went to the market one day and purchased a small young hen. She brought it home and reared it. The hen became mature, laid eggs and hatched both hen and cocks. She decided to kill one of her cocks. She started chasing the cock. A neighbor asked her why she was running after the cock? She told them that she wanted to cook it. The neighbor told her that "women do not cook fowl for their own use and that it should be the husband who does that". The woman told the neighbor that the husband is not home and the children were hungry. The neighbor asked her to look for another man in her family who would kill the cock, cut it in parts and share it when cooked. The woman who narrated the story said that she grew up in an urban area where women kill, cook and share fowls. She said to the neighbor, " I suffered, went to the market and bought a young hen, then reared it alone. When it comes to eating, you will tell me to ask a man to share my fowl?"

The woman caught the cock, killed it and cooked it for the children. She ended by saying that the village composed a song about her and they made her miserable and unhappy. She ended that “many husbands in the village are not comfortable when she is friendly with their wives, for they think that she would teach their wives to do the killing of fowls”. Usually in the clan, when anybody does an unusual thing, his or her name is put in a song. This aspect of the culture puts stress on the individual and the women feel ashamed.

### **Rural Women and Polygamy**

Most women expressed that men do not help them to do any house or farm work. The village man spends his time drinking palm wine from morning till night. When he returns home he bothers his wife or wives and in some cases beat them up. The women complained that their husbands spent their money drinking and did not contribute food money. The action of some husbands makes the woman stressed, unhappy and over loaded with work. The cultural aspect of men's behavior is not supportive of the women's production systems. The women bear the majority of the burden.

Women were asked if their husbands have other wives. Table 14 indicates their responses. Though polygamy is an accepted practice in the clan, thirty of the women interviewed their husbands had just one wife. Fourteen women were married to husbands who had other wives. A man is influenced to marry multiple wives depending on his wealth and the amount of land he possesses.

**Table 14. Husbands having more than one wife**

Has your husband another wife?	Number of women	Percent
no	30	68.2
yes	14	31.8
Total	44	100.0

The women interviewed are more in support of monogamous marriages. They reasoned that many problems could be avoided that were generated in polygamous marriages. One woman commented, "One husband can not love two wives the same. My husband loves the other wife more than me and he shows her more favors. I am always angry when I know of it. This keeps me unhappy most of the time". Another woman said, "Some problems faced in a polygamous home are caused by other women. I am the first wife. I have seven children with my husband. My husband decided to marry a second wife. When this woman came in, she told our husband not to have any sexual dealings with me because I am old. She told our husband that if he continues to have dealings with me, she would leave. Since our husband loves the younger wife more and was afraid that he might loose her, he stopped all dealing with me. I have to do everything alone as a single woman"

The idea of many wives adds more burdens and stress on the women. Most men show favoritism. They do not have enough money to care for their children. This causes great suffering to raise the children. This makes the woman work too hard and her energy is reduced. Too much work makes them look older than their age. They are weighed down with much work, thereby making them



less productive. In some cases, the wives do not live in peace. They quarrel most of the time and do not have peace of mind.

On the other hand, polygamous marriage can be advantageous as some women explained. They said when one is sick or just had a baby, the other wife cares for her. Others commented that when they are too busy, the other wife cooks for all the children. If one of the wives does not have children, the wife with children would let the children help the barren one. In some cases they share each other's farm work. Some women, when they are out of needed items like salt which they cannot buy at that time, would ask to borrow from the other wife. Some married mates develop mutual understand among themselves.

The women were asked what advice would they give their husbands that would help to ease their work?

### **Suggested Advice from the Women to their Husbands**

The husbands should -:

1. Not drink too much raffia wine or beer because it causes problems.
2. Help in the farm work, clearing, weeding, tilling, and staking of beans.
3. Provide food money especially during times of hunger.
4. Always provide meat.
5. Baby-sit while the wife is on the farm.
6. Cook for and feed the children when the wife is on the farm.

7. Give the wife some cooked food to eat.
8. Allow the women to control their own money.
9. Equally consider them for bride price when their daughters are getting married.
10. Share drinks and food equally and join women during wake service.
11. Stop marrying many wives. They can never love all their wives equally.
12. Plan with the wife ways to meet family needs.
13. Be educated and encouraged to learn more about family planning. Many do not want to practice birth control.
14. Help as much as possible to prevent their domestic animals from destroying the women's' crops.
15. Help make fences on their wives' farm to prevent animals from destroying their crops.
16. Love their wives as they love themselves.
17. Treat their wives with respect.
18. Allow women to eat meat, chicken as the men do.
19. Give women their rights of freedom-freedom of expression and speech.
20. Allow women to have equal opportunity and roles in community, for there are more men in village councils.

## **Women and Land Tenure**

The women have no heritage rights over property. They do not have property rights when they are in their parent's household or when they are married. Land heritage is patrilineal in Ngie not matrilineal. During group meetings the women indicated that they want the culture to start considering women in heritage issues. Some women expressed the opinion that they can take care of the family land as well as men do. The women cultivate their husband's farmland but when there is a divorce, the ex-husbands will not allow them to cultivate on the land, even if the women take care of the children. On the other hand, when they return to their fathers compound, they have to beg their fathers or brothers for some land to farm. Usually, land is loaned to them on a temporary basis. In some cases their brothers will complain that there is no land to farm.

## **Socio-Cultural Interaction Between Men and Women**

When a rural Ngie man and his wife attend a tribal celebration for example, death the man walks ahead of the wife. He is well dressed, carrying nothing but his walking stick or cane. The woman follows behind him carrying the baby on her back. On her head is the husband's jug of palm wine for the celebration. On her arm is a basket of food for the celebration. When there is a tribal ceremony, men bring palm wine while women bring food. Even during leisure time activities the women still carry the "load". One woman shared that

she watches to see if man will carry a baby when both husband and wife are going to a celebration or friendly visit.

Several death, birth and marriage ceremonies were attended to observe the interaction between men and women. In a death ceremony, a man stood up to give a response to the host who just finished speaking. In his response, he gave a contrary perspective to what the host had said. What he was saying was not appropriate. A woman then asked him to sit down. The man became furious and said "who are you to tell me to sit down, a woman talking to a man! Women are only to be seen, not heard. A woman has the nerve to ask me to sit down, this culture is changing for worse. If you talk to your husband the way you talked to me, then do not take that bad behavior out of your house. Do not open your fangs any more. You must learn to respect a man".

In that death ceremony, meat and fowl were cooked. The meat was shared among women. And the men ate the chicken. In another instance, also a death ceremony, people were conversing. A woman who was sitting nearby disagreed with a speaker and tried to give her opinion. The speaker that she addressed became angry and asked her to be quiet. "Who are you to intervene when a man is speaking"? He concluded, "a woman has no voice to speak to a man and that she should learn to respect a man". The attitude of men still suggests that women are being suppressed in the clan. This attitude frustrates the women. They are never given opportunity to express their views. Most women, for fear of being bullied by a man, prefer to keep quiet to avoid unhappy confrontations.

During group meetings women complained that when someone is dead, it is only the women who are the mourners and will spend several days at the place where the death occurred. When it comes to food and drinks however, the men take the largest share. Another death celebration was witnessed where there was palm wine, beer and sweet drinks (pops or sodas). The men were given their choices. The women were given a bottle of soda or sweet drink to be shared by two or three women. The women were never asked their preference.

Women complained that they are not pleased with the way they are treated when their daughters get married. One of them said, "I alone carried the baby in my stomach for nine months. When the baby was born, it was I who looked for food to feed the baby, when the baby was sick; it was me who went to the traditional doctor or hospital. When our daughter was getting married, my husband and family members arranged for dowry. Money was given to family members and my husband got the largest share. The only promise given me was more land to cultivate". The women argued that they should be considered equally as men. The women who raised the children are never considered as equals even during the paying of bride price. This is one more act of suppression found in the culture.

Women did not want to say anything bad about their husbands. When the women were asked how was the relationship with their husbands, most of them indicated that their relationship was good. Table 15 indicates their responses.

**Table 15. Women's relationship with husbands**

Women rating husbands attitude	Statistics	
	Number of women	Percent
very good	1	2.3
good	37	84.1
bad	5	11.4
very bad	1	2.3
Total	44	100.0

Thirty-seven women said that their relationship with the husband is good. Only five women interviewed said the relationship with the husband is bad. When asked about other things that portray good relationship with the husbands, the responses did not match up with "the good husband relationship". Forty-one of the women responded that their husbands had compelled them to do work for them. Table 16 shows their responses.

**Table 16. Women compelled by husbands to do work for them**

Responses to question	Number of women	Percent
No	3	6.8
Yes	41	93.2
Total	44	100.0

In response to the question "Has your husband bullied you?" there was a hundred percent yes to the answer. When asked if your husband has beaten you? Nearly seventy percent (30) women said yes. Fourteen women said their husbands had never beaten them. Table 17 below indicates their responses.

**Table 17. Women beaten by husband**

Responses to question	Number of women	Percent
No	14	31.8
Yes	30	68.2
Total	44	100.0

In general, the Ngie clan experiences gender-based subordination. This behavior is deeply entrenched in the consciousness of both men and women. The women talk of good relationships with husband when in fact most of them are bullied, forced against their wills and perhaps beaten. For the women, it is normal for a man to do these things. One woman said, "If some one does something wrong, that person deserves to be beaten". She did not "blame her husband" for beating her. Another said, " my husband always told me, he bought me with his money. Therefore I must always obey him. He is the one who decides for everything. I was beaten sometimes for opposing him". Most men never treat their wives the way they want the wives to treat them. This cultural behavior has striped power from the woman. The culture treats the woman as a slave and makes her dependent on the man. Women have been weakened and made powerless. The women have no confidence and sense of creativity. This might be one of the reasons why many of them continue to farm the very same way that their great-grand mothers did. Farming is done without thinking of ways of changing their methods of farming in a changing society. When one is depressed, one cannot think to be more creative.

### **Men's Perspective about Women and Culture**

An elderly man, whose wife was interviewed earlier, believes that some aspects of the role of women in the culture have changed. He believes that the change is in a negative direction. "Today women are eating fowls whereas in the past women did not. This practice is going against the tradition". He further replied that the men are responsible for giving the women fowl. He said,

“women who come from urban areas grumble when you do not give them their share of fowl. The rural women now insist on eating fowl too. Women are trying to gain the right to talk to men rudely. They do not have respect for men as in the past. My wife sometimes does not control the way she speaks to me. They are supposed to be seen only. Today, there are more marriage problems than in the past. This is because women want more rights. Left to me alone, the original good tradition should be maintained and women should be put in their right places. The traditional society is now turning to the White man’s culture. There is no more respect for men and there is no good order in the society as it was in the past, even children no longer obey their parents. Oh! The old good days are gone”

Another man said, “ When men are drinking sometimes they talk about women. Men don’t like women who are lazy and men do not like women who talk to them disrespectfully. The culture expects women to respect men, obey, and do what is required of them. Some women instead of giving money to their husbands give the money to their brothers or relatives. This is wrong” Another commented, some women argue with their husbands forgetting that they were bought with the money. Anything that a woman has belongs to the husband. The man is the head of the family and he makes decision for the family. The present generations of women don’t seem to understand this and they try to create problems ”



## **Decision Making**

Women have no power to make decisions in their family. Only the man decides for the family. This has made the women lose the sense of taking decisions even for things that concern them. For example, the Cameroon President's wife gave some farm tools to women of different tribes in Cameroon through CEERAC, a non-governmental organization created by the President's wife based in Yaounde, Cameroon. Those for Ngie women were given to some Ngie women representatives. The women representatives called women leaders from different villages to come and decide how the things could be shared. The investigator attended the meeting to see the decisions that the women would make. During the meeting, some women suggested that since the gift was too small to be divided, the Ngie union of farmers office could keep the things for needy women to borrow. After using the farm tools, she could return them to NUFAC. Other women insisted on taking the tools to the Administrator to let him to decide how to share them. The tools they had were hoes, cutlasses, and wheelbarrows. Some other women said the women on their own couldn't decide on what to do with the farm tools. After some discussion, the tools were left for the District Officer to make the decision. The tools were at the end shared at the direction of the District Officer. Before the tools were shared, the District Officer, the Mayor of Andek rural council, the member of the economic council and the Ngie CPDM representative, each of them took a hoe and a cutlass. These men were richer than the women but they got the biggest share of the little gifts. If the women had taken decision to share the gift, those men would not have taken

anything. The women took the tools to the District Officer to direct the sharing because the women lost their decision making power.

### **The Role of Women and Religion**

In the Ngie clan, there are three main religions, the pagans, Muslims, and the Christians. Andek and Etwii women are mostly Christian. The Borolo (Fulani) women in these two villages are Muslims. The women regard the church more for social reasons rather than spiritual. Some women see the church as a place where God would heal their wounds. They see the church as a coping mechanism for addressing the socio cultural and socio economic problems that they face. Women make more than three quarters of the members of each congregation. When interviewed, some women said, "The words from the Bible help them to forget a lot of the things they go through". One woman commented, " the Bible teaches us not to put our heads on earthly things. I do not care much for what I am going through on earth, for the world is just a passing place". Most women join church groups like: Christian women fellowship (CWF), Catholic women association (CWA), Baptist women union (BWU), choir groups and Christian Youth Fellowship (CYF). They saw these groups as a sort of comfort. When they or their immediate family dies these groups would come to give the bereaved family members comfort. They would sing and dance the whole night. One woman commented, " I belong to the Hallelujah Choir. When my husband died, the choir sang and contributed food and money to my family. This is a way we help other group members". Another woman said, "I attend BWU group meetings because we learn how to solve some of our problems that we face in

our society. Whenever I am in the group meetings we talk, discuss and sing. I forget my problems. The group activity keeps me happy. Some of the things we discuss gives me comfort". One woman said, "I have learned a lot from CWF. For example, today, I am able to make soap which gives me a small income". Another woman said, "When my husband died, the group came to sing and contributed food and money to my family. At least this helped me for sometime". Another woman shared, "When I die, the CWF will come and stimulate the environment with Christian song". Only one woman said that, "Since the world is against her, the only person she looks up to for everything is God. The church can be seen as one of the ways women try to solve their problems.

### **Pastors Perceptions of the Role of Women**

Two pastors from the research focus region were interviewed. As religious leaders, both affirmed that the culture is suppressing the women. One said "The church preaches love to people and tells them to love others, including the wives as they would love themselves". The other said, "In our churches, we have formed Christian Men Fellowship (CMF). The men are taught many of things including their behavior towards their wives. The pastors do their best to reach everybody". The Christian religion has been preaching for many years. "Why is it that the men have not abandoned this bad aspect of the culture"? One pastor said, "A few people cannot change a culture. It will take the whole clan to change it. It seems people are not yet ready to give up this aspect of the culture. Men are benefiting more from the old culture than the women". The other said, "we do preach on bad aspect of the tradition, but we cannot put an end to such

practices". While the pastors see the church as spreading the word of God and teaching people good habits, the women see the church as a social entity that helps them to solve their problems or heal their wounds. The church is helping the women socially and economically. It taught women craft, needlework, knitting and cooking to generate income. It also helps them to "behave" when in difficult situations.

### **Income Generating Activities**

Some activities of the rural women may contribute to low income while others may reduce their power of production. The rural women tend to be involved only in low-income generating activities. Some women leave their home early in the morning for the raffia bush to carry raffia wine. They cover a distance of five to ten miles or maybe even more, on foot. They carry about twenty liters of palm wine home to those who buy and sell in bars before going to their farms on that same day. Carrying the heavy jug of wine for long distances saps their energy. Going to farm to work that same day reduces their power of work and reduces valuable time that could have been spent on the farm. Some women leave Etwii or Andek for Mengum market. They buy palm oil from twenty to thirty liters, and carry them on their head or back, climbing and descending steep-hills. They trek for three to four hours to the market to buy the oil. When they bring the oil home, they go to the Tad market located outside of the clan, carrying this heavy load on their heads and trekking for three to five hours to the market. Others walk long distances to the Ngwaw market to buy cocoyams or groundnuts (peanuts). One woman bought raffia wine for 1300 francs (about \$1.50) and sold

it for 1500 francs (\$2.00) Her gain was about 50 cents. The women were asked if they subtracted the cost of the food they ate, time and energy? One woman replied that she did not buy the food but she harvested it from her farm. She could not subtract it from her gain. Another woman said, “we think about the cash gain only. The little money gain helps me to buy some magi to put in my food”. She thinks that she has gained something. The time spent on the business, the energy wasted, and food that she ate on the way is not calculated in the gain. In fact she did not gain anything. This type of business does not generate income.

The women were asked why they could not do business that would give them more money and less suffering? Most of the women replied that they do not have the money to do bigger business. Capital is what they need. There was no woman in the rural area functioning as a full time trader. The women are “jack of all trade but master of none”. They would like to do everything and not specialize in anything. This idea is also seen in their mixed crop farming system. They want to plant all the crops she needs whether the soil is good or is not good for that crop. There is no specialization in crop farming.

## **Institutional Environment**

### **Governmental and Institutional Relationships Projects**

In Ngie, there are several projects instituted with the aim of helping the rural people alleviate hunger and poverty. These projects were designed to aid in the development of the rural people. The projects have faced a variety of problems. Observation and comments from those interviewed supported the notion that there is a level of disconnectedness among governmental and non-governmental

Organizations' interactions with the Ngie rural women farmers. Income generating projects have not helped the women. These projects made the women poorer and more dependent. Some projects are too small and have not proven economically viable. Women have not gained from most of the projects. If there was any gain, it was inadequate. One of the failures of the projects is mismanagement and lack of technical skills, especially by those who executed the projects. Each project is described and related problems are identified.

### **1. Ngie Integrated Rural Development Project (SNV-NIRDP)**

The Netherlands Development Organization (SNV) sponsors this project. The project was started in Ngie in July 1997 and covers the entire Ngie Sub-division.

The main objective of the project is to improve the social and economic situation of the rural population in Ngie with special emphasis on improving the economic conditions of the rural women. The project has four components; agriculture, marketing, institutional development and gender.

#### **a) Agricultural Component**

SNV has very good intentions. Interviewing women who took part in this project, revealed many disconnected factors. During one meeting, the project staff told the women that they were going to help them improve their living standard. This would be done by working with them in their group farming activities. Most women had formed farm groups. SNV-NIRPD conducted fact-finding activities with the women to ascertain what types of crops did well in their region. The women provided this information. Furthermore, production would be

improved if treatment for the disease that destroyed cocoyams and plantains was utilized. The women were asked to plant the crops that do best in their localities. The women complied and planted one or two of the following crops:- plantain, cocoyams, plantain/cocoyams, cassavas and Irish potatoes. The project officers, when interviewed, said that when they were about to start the project, the farmers told them that they instead needed fertilizers. The farmers, on the other hand had a different story. Many shared that they needed medicine to treat panama and fertilizer for their crops rather than growing the crops that SNV-NIRDP suggested. The SNV-NIRDP authorities did not have confidence in the judgment of the farmers therefore they did not listen to the farmers' complaints. Failure to listen to the women again illustrates a disconnect factor. SNV-NIRDP staff dictated to the women farmers rather than involving the women in the decision-making processes, thereby compounding this "disconnect" factor.

In preparation, tillage, and planting, the SNV-NIRDP staffs dictated what was to be done. The women farmers group that took cocoyams was told to plant big edible cocoyams. The women informed that the SNV authorities that "In Ngie we don't plant the big edible cocoyams, we plant suckers and small cocoyams". The SNV-NIRDP officers told them that they had to listen to SNV-NIRDP representatives and do what they were told. When the cocoyams were purchased, the farmers called SNV staff to come and inspect the cocoyams before planting. The women brought the big cocoyams for inspection and the project officers approved them before planting. When the cocoyams were planted, the crops did not do well.

Women who planted plantains were asked to plant very small suckers. They were also told to take off all the roots of the plantain sucker before planting. The farmers reluctantly planted small suckers. The farmers commented that it was not the practice to cut off all the roots when planting plantain suckers in Ngie. Again, they were told what to do even though it was against their long time practice.

Cassava stems were brought from the SW province of Cameroon, which has a hot climate, to Ngie in the Northwest province of the country, a cold climate. These two regions have contrasting climates, flora, soils and methods of farming cassavas are also different. The SNV-NIRDP directed them to plant the cassavas without ridging and when the cassava starts to grow, soil should be added. This is what is done in the Southwest. The farmers told them that beds are prepared before planting the cassavas. The farmers did as they were told. The cassavas did not do well in most places. They did well in two places, Teze and Angong, for these places had a coastal climate. Most of the plantain group farms did not do well especially those of Etwii; but it did well in Azem, a region that falls in the hot forest zone.

When the project staff saw that most of the crops were not doing well, they asked the women from each different group to sign a paper. The women signed the papers without knowing what they were signing, since most of the women were illiterate. When the women's groups had signed these papers, the SNV project officers then levied each group an amount to pay. The women questioned why they should pay this money. They were then informed that the



cassava, plantain suckers, cocoyams and Irish potatoes that they planted were a loan, it had to be paid back. The women group farmers told them that they did not know that it was a loan and have not money to pay back. The SNV project officers threaten to take them to court.

The women saw the author of the research as one who has come to solve their problems and they contacted her. Many farming groups complained to the investigator about the loan. They pleaded that they were never told from the beginning that it was a loan. They wanted the investigator to intervene. The investigator told them that she had come to study their farming practices and not as an advocate. The women were unhappy with the researcher's response. Eventually, a meeting was held with all the groups involved in the SNV projects. The project coordinator brought in two gendarmes (police) to the meeting. During this meeting, the farmers were asked to pay their loan. The farmers replied that they were not informed at the beginning that it was a loan. Furthermore, the crops did not do well enough for them to sell. The farmers refused to pay the loan. One woman requested to speak, a gendarme command her to sit down, "you are not here to quarrel but to pay your loan". Women were intimidated by the presence of the gendarmes and refused to express their views for fear that the gendarmes or the law officers would put them in jail. When the intelligent bold women put up their hands to speak the SNV project coordinator ignored them. When these women realized that he was doing that on purpose, they stood up to talk but the coordinator and the gendarmes hushed them. The project coordinator told the women that they had money in the Ngie credit union. He insisted that

group representatives must withdraw the money and give to him today, not tomorrow. As the gendarmes were present, farmers were afraid to speak or to resist making the payments. The women told the investigator that they were afraid of the law officers who could put them to jail if they continue to resist payment. With fear, the group leaders quickly signed for the withdrawal. The SNV coordinator, the gendarmes and the women went to the credit union to withdraw the money and gave it to the SNV project coordinator.

Individual farmers groups had opened their account many years before. They had raised money by individual yearly registration and by doing various activities such as molding of blocks for builders, work in farms for others, clearing farms and doing various jobs. Some had opened their accounts as far back in 1993 and 1994 before the coming of SNV project. All that they had suffered for years to accumulate was taken in one day. The women were so disappointed. One woman told the researcher that, "all our labor all these years is in vain". Women's groups that did not have money in the credit union but individuals, who had private accounts in the local farmer's bank, had their money confiscated for payment of the group loan. Farmer groups that had no money to pay for the loan were threatened. When the SNV-NIRDOP project officers saw that these groups were firm on not paying the loan, and that this might call unwanted attention, perhaps scandals, announced that they "forgave" the loan. Those groups forced to withdraw their bank money and money confiscated from private savings were never refunded. Some of the women were asked if the money that was confiscated was ever refunded. Their response was, "not even a franc or cent."

This action brought weakness to the farmers. Some groups ended their existence. The Ngie union of farmers found it difficult to bring the farmer's groups together again.

The aftermath of the SNV-NIRDPA's actions was devastating. Those farms that did not do well were standing almost empty. For example, the Bonanyang farmer's group cocoyam and plantain farm was almost empty. In some places, two years old cassava grew well. When you uproot them, there is no tuber under them. In one farmer's group farm in Etwii, two years old plantains plants were just like those at three months, taunted and brownish as if they lacked fertilizer. Most plants did not bear plantain. Those that did had only one or two fingers plantains on them.

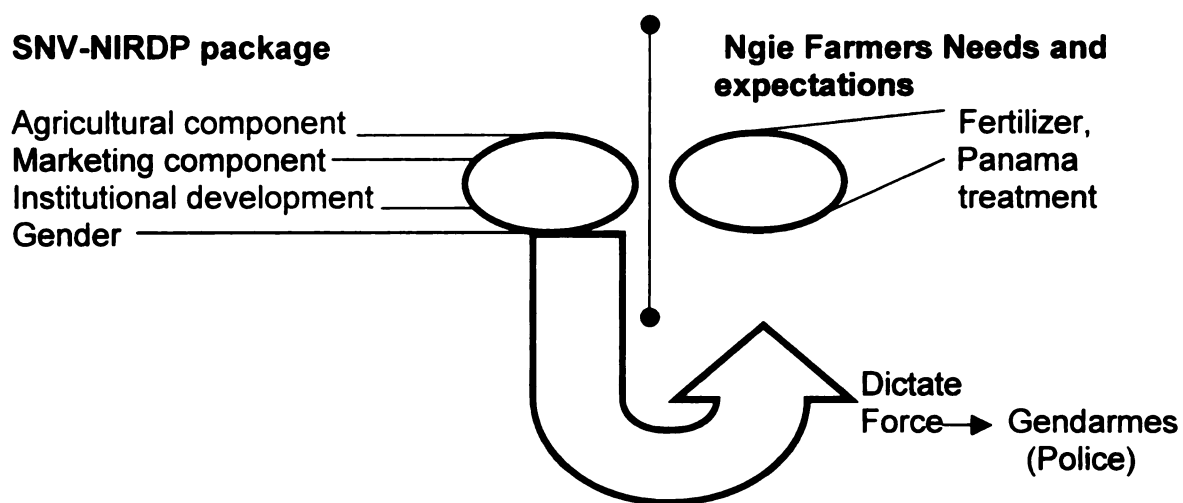
Tinakok farmer's group that planted Irish potatoes said potatoes did well. Unfortunately, they did not have a market to sell the potatoes since it is not a staple food of the region. The SNV project officers promised to help them find markets. They took some potatoes to sell and brought back just part of the money. One of Ajei farmer's potato group said that the Irish potatoes plants did well but when harvesting found that most were rotten.

The Angong women cassava group farm did well. The cassavas were still in the farm when the investigator left the region. They were never harvested because they had no machine for processing. The SNV-NIRDPA promised to bring them a grinding machine but failed to bring it. The chief went to see another Non governmental organization in Bamenda in the Northwest province to rent their processing machine. The cost was too much for him or his women to pay.

Consequently, the cassavas were abandoned on the farm. The women had wasted their time and energy for the project.

SNV-NIRDP behavior is indicated in figure 3 below.

**Figure 3. Diagram Explaining the Experiences of SNV and The Rural Farmers in Ngie**



The straight line in the middle is the boundary between SNV-NIRDP and the Ngie farmers. There was no meaningful communication between the two parties for change and development to occur. None of the ideas crossed the line. There was dissonance or there was no connection for communication and development to take place. So the project failed. What is left in the minds of the farmers is force by the use of gendarmes by SNV-NIRDP coordinator to get money from the poor farmers from their accounts in the local credit union. This left the farmers poorer than they went in.

### **Marketing Component**

The SNV involvement in the market component according to some respondents was positive. The farmers gained marketing skills as they were taught many things, including record keeping. One respondent said, “the marketing training is good but what can I market when crops are not doing well? The training would have been more profitable if I had something to sell”.

## **Road Construction**

The SNV undertook a road construction project. Before the road construction project, the roads were very bad and in most places impassable. One British person who visited the region in 1997 described the roads as cow tracks. The few roads they reconstructed increased the rate of interaction with the urban region for some time. During the rainy season, the roads go bad.

## **Introducing the use of Donkeys**

SNV-NIRDP also introduced the use of donkeys. It was a good idea but not without its frustrations. Five donkeys were brought in the region. From the beginning, four out of five donkeys were not doing their job. One donkey user would put a load on the donkey's back. The donkey would not move. When the load was removed from the donkey's back, the donkey would start moving. Another woman complained that her donkey would stop at every bridge or stream and refuse to cross. Speculation was that the donkeys had been kept for more than two months before putting them to use. The result, they probably forgot their job. Authorities realized that the donkeys were not doing the work they were supposed to do. A donkey's "expert" was called to retrain the donkeys. Most of the donkeys eventually did what they were supposed to do.

The SNV-NIRDP sent out letters to the people that there would be a "stocktaking" seminar. The Ngie integrated development project had finished the first phase and was moving to the second phase in June 2001. The stocktaking seminar was supposed to be an evaluation meeting. During the meeting, the SNV staff members gave talks on the different components of their project. There

were four areas; one talked on agriculture, another on marketing, and another on gender, and the last one talked on the road construction network. Pictures were put on the wall of different components. The population was asked to look at them and comment. At the end, a time was given for questioning. Each question was written down. Reading and explanation came later.

A woman put up her hand and asked, “what were they going to do now that the project has failed?” That woman’s question was evaded. This was an important question however, for them to answer. An evaluation would have been the better thing to do since they were moving from the first phase to the second. They lost a good opportunity to hear what went wrong and how to approach the second phase. Evaluation is good at all stages of a project. The second stage may be less successful unless there is a proper evaluation of the first. Some of the things they were saying were not consistent with the outcomes. For example crops like cocoyams, plantain, cassava and Irish potatoes were presented as doing well, whereas the project did not achieve expectations. Their evaluation was just to brainwash the population. When asked to give examples of success as they claimed, they identified a few individuals who had some success. This obscured the fact that the SNV-NIRDP project involved many farmers’ groups in the clan, not just few individuals.

This project did not meet expectations for several reasons. First, there were no pre planning and evaluation guidelines. Secondly, SNV-NIRDP ignored the indigenous knowledge of the people by bringing cassava stems from the Southwest part of the country to the Northwest each with different fauna, flora

and climatic zones. Bonatu was one of the quarters that planted cassava stems from SNV-NIRDP. Bonatu was one of the places that produced the best cassavas in Ngie. Those of SNV-NIRDP did not do well. SNV-NIRDP staff would have improved the local cassava variety that is used to the climate and soil of the region instead of importing cassava from outside. Thirdly, SNV project staff refused to listen to the farmers. The women told them that they needed fertilizer more than the varieties that they were told to plant. The SNV did not listen to their demands or needs. Fourthly, the SNV project staff dictated how the women were to plant. The communication was top down, a one-way channel. When the women were asked to plant cassava, cocoyams and plantain in a certain way the women informed them that in Ngie our planting methods are different. The reply was, "do what you have been told". The women were not empowered. Fifthly, follow up of the project was not appropriate. For example some groups cleared two or three farms before approval was given. Women were asked to clear a farm fifty by hundred feet or the size of a football (soccer) field. Most women did not know measurements. When they cleared one farm, the project staff would refuse to let them use the farm since it did not comply the predetermined measurements. The poor farmers would look then for another farm to clear. If the project staff knew that the poor farmers did not know how to measure why didn't they define the size before they start clearing? One group cleared a farm on a slope. The project officers would not accept the farm because it was on a slope. The group was asked to clear another farm. This was the third farm cleared before approval was given. This idea of clearing many farms with only one

accepted wasted women's time and discouraged many groups. Some women gave up group work. More significantly, the women were not properly educated about the project. The project officers asked the women to pay for the seeds or suckers. This the women resented. They were not told at the beginning that the seeds provided by the project for planting are a loan. The loan issue brought an end to further involvement by many groups. The idea of confiscating their money and forcing the women to withdraw what little money they had in the bank was devastating.

Another reason that the project failed was greed on the part of project staff. Prices were inflated in favor of project staff, for example, the cost of transporting cassava, the amount of money spent on the mini agricultural show and the amount of money each group paid for their seeds. The project executors did not do experiments to plant the crops first see if the crops would do well before giving them out for the women to plant. Finally, the project executors never welcomed suggestions from the women. Such information would help the project be more effective. In the end, the center fell apart. The project helped to scatter women's groups and it discouraged women from further group work.

From the role of the women, they also contributed to the failure of this project. The women did not work with all their hearts because it was a "group thing". Many preferred going to their own farms on group-farming day. As a result, when groups gave up, the cassava stems were left unplanted. One group not caring for group farming failed to protect the cassavas. The result was that goats ate it up. In some cases there was lack of interest, gossip and jealousy



among the women and lack of trust for each other. This killed the spirit of teamwork.

## **2. Women Information and Coordination Office (WICO)**

This organization is sponsored by Germany. This NGO is based in Batibo. Although it is in a different district, it extended their project to some groups in Ngie. As the authorities put it, "WICO is an autonomous rural development NGO that focuses on liberation and development of rural women and other disadvantaged groups". Their main objective is to empower women by education and helps to boost their market business through loans.

Several members of this project were interviewed. Some thought it would have been a beneficial project but certain conditions made it unfavorable. One interviewee said "the first thing the project officials did was to have meetings with each group to learn what they wanted. Secondly, the women were trained in business management before money was given to the groups". She continued, "Money is given according to one's need. For example, a woman who wants to trade in the buying and selling of palm oil, the cost of all the materials needed ( tins, funnels, etc) was added. The cost palm oil plus transportation to the market plus feeding, was calculated to determine the amount of money given to the group or an individual".

This idea in theory is good. On the other hand, the group must first pay ten percent of the total amount to be borrowed. This is where the problems begin. The women are poor and most frequently are not able to raise this ten percent up

front fee. Another said that her group got a loan from WICO. She added that WICO gives borrowers a three-month grace period. This is adequate time to start to pay back. If your group borrows \$100 (72, 000 CAF Francs) for example, the group will only pay half of the amount and the other half is put in the group's account. The loan is paid quarterly till the loan is completely paid off.

Another woman shared that there is an annual fee to be paid to the project organization. Those who had borrowed money pay an annual charge of Five thousand Francs and those that had not taken the loan pay an annual charge of 2,500 Francs. The loan is usually not given until the group pays the annual dues. Often groups struggle to pay the annual fee. When a group needs money to do business, this money may not always be given in a timely manner. WICO deals with five women's groups in Ngie.

The idea of WICO giving three months grace period is a good practice. Making the women pay an annual fee makes the women poorer. Only those groups that pay the annual dues are given a loan. It was hardship for women to pay ten percent of the loan before the loan is awarded.

The objectives of this project are often not achieved, as it is difficult for those who do not have money to pay ten percent of the loan before the loan is given. If one WICO's aim was the liberation and development of rural women, then the project has failed. Those who took part in this project were women who did not fall in the disadvantaged group.

## **BERDSCO**

The Canadians sponsored a non-governmental organization called Benevolent Education Rural Development Society and Community Organization. (BERDSCO). One of their aims was to help women alleviate poverty by providing loans to do business. The activities of this project experienced “disconnect factors”. To be a member of BERDSCO, the registration fee was 2,500 CFA francs. In addition, every member was asked to pay an insurance fee and encouraged to open a savings account with the project. The registration and insurance fees strained the finances of the women who were already poor. Interviewees that had taken part in the project related that the project did not fulfill its promise. For example, if a participant became a member and paid her insurance fee, and she dies, the bereaved family was to receive 100,000 CFA francs (about 70 dollars). Reports from those interviewed were that, members had died but families did not receive death benefits as promised. Furthermore, the deceased woman’s savings were never returned to the family. One woman farmer who was in the project with her mother related that when the mother who had paid the insurance fee died, she asked the project to give the 100,000frs that they had promised to the deceased’s family. The money was not given. The daughter then asked the project coordinator “if you refuse to give the insurance money, then you should give back my mother’s saving”. The daughter continued “the project staff encouraged me to continue to deposit more money in my deceased mother’s account until a reasonable amount of money was accumulated before I get it. I stopped making deposits in my mother’s saving

account. When the project coordinator resisted giving my mother's saving, I became angry and left the group project".

The project officers printed T-shirts for 2,500 FRS and forced the members to buy. They did not tell the members that they were going to print T-shirts from the beginning. If a member did not buy the T-shirt, when a loan was given the value of the T-shirt was deducted from the loan amount.

. From the beginning the women were never told of a development fee. When obtaining a loan, a 2,500frs was deducted as development fee from each member. If a woman applied for a loan of 20,000frs, 5, 000frs was subtracted as the development fee and T-shirt, leaving her with a balance of only 15,000frs. This amount was inadequate to do business.

The women were told that the interest on their savings would be shared. According to the women this never happened. Members savings deposits were used to loan to other needy members. When a large group applied for a loan, the group members were asked to create sub groups consisting of three to four members. The main group might have five sub groups. On the day that they were promised to receive the loan, all the members of the group would go to the BERDSCO office to receive the loan. The loan might only be given to one of the sub-groups. The remaining four sub groups were asked to come next week. When the remaining sub groups returned the following week, they might wait for almost a whole day. Often the project staff would then tell the farmers that the money had not arrived from their head office. They were told again to come next week. A whole day was wasted. This practice of go and come next week caused

the farmer to be unproductive. This going and coming might continue for more than three months. During this time the project coordinator would tell those who had not received the loan to start paying interest against the “promised” loan. The rationale being that when the loan is given, they would not pay much interest. These members kept paying interest for a loan which they had not received. This practice increased the financial burden on the poor farmers. Instead of improving their financial capability, their impoverished condition was worsened.

Some members finally realized that instead of gaining something from the project they were actually losing. They decided to leave the organization and requested BERDSCO to return their accumulated savings deposits. BERDSCO would tell them that if they withdrew from the project they would have to pay back the entire loan. When the loan is paid back the insurance fee, interest gained and savings deposit would be returned. Members would struggle to pay back the entire loan to receive their savings. Even when they did this, their savings were never refunded according to some of the women interviewed. This practice frustrated members to the extent that they withdrew from the project anyway and counted their lost insurance fee and savings deposits as “bad debt”.

Some respondents said that when the project officers did give them a loan, they had only one week of grace period before they must to start pay back the loan. Another group of women said, “they gave us a loan last week and this week they ask us to start paying back even when we have not been to the market to sell something”.

One day, the BERDSCO coordinator reported one farming group to the gendarmerie (who are like police) because they had not paid their loan. The gendarmes asked the group to appear at their office. One of the women interviewed said that the group had received money from BERDSCO. She added “these women were supposed to have regular group meetings to discuss issues on business or share experiences. It was also an opportunity to meet the project staff that collected loan payments. Regular group meetings were not held because the loan to the group was full of deductions and the money was inadequate for doing business. Whenever the BERDSCO staff came to meet us where we were supposed to have regular meetings. The women were never there”. She continued, “when a woman asked for a loan, they would deduct 2,500frs for the development fee and 2,500 for the T-shirt leaving the woman practically with little money remaining in her hands. The money is not enough to do business. So most of the women used the money for other things like paying their children’s school fees or buying household needs. Finally, they have no money to pay back. That was the reason why BERDSCO reported us to the gendarmes”.

Another woman who was the president of the BERDSCO group in her village offered that they have regular meetings in their own group. When the women were not able to pay back their loan, they explained it to the staff during the group meeting. Usually the staff will ask them to pay it next week or to bring in any amount that they have. She added that BERDSCO’s loan condition is “difficult to manage” and that she never wants to borrow money from BERDSCO.

She did have a saving account with them. However, many times when she tries to withdraw money from her savings, they will inform her that there is no money for withdrawal. The project is draining valuable financial resources from the women instead of helping them. Many farmers realized this leading to withdrawal from the project.

The project appears to be a failure because BERDSCO gives only seven days grace period. If a loan is given on Monday that Monday is a market day, they expect the woman to start paying the loan the next Monday. The region has eight days in a week instead of seven. The next market day falls on Tuesday not Monday. Asking a woman to pay when she has not even been to the market to sell is not realistic. One week is a short period of grace. Furthermore, there is no proper follow up after the loan is given. This may be due to lack of good management and supervision. This may be the reason why some women took advantage and use the money for “ personal things” instead of investing it in their business endeavors. Those who invest by putting only a deposit so that other needy women can borrow are discouraged from contributing. Interest is not paid as some women complained. The idea of deducting money from such a small loan makes the amount too small for supporting business activities. The project was out to make money from the women not help them. The women came out poorer than when they initially participated.

#### **4. Heifer Project international (HPI)**

HPI is a non-governmental organization with sponsors in the United States of America. In Ngie, it deals mostly with animal agriculture with some aspects of crop farming and gender education. HPI give species of domestic animals like rabbits, goats, bees and pigs to groups to rear free of charge on condition that the first siblings of the animals will in turn be given to another group free also. This project is the only one in the region, which seems to connect with the needs of the women farmers. When interviewed, some women told the investigator that groups choose what they wanted from the different groups of animals like pigs, goats, sheep, chicken and rabbits.

The aims of HPI are to eradicate hunger and reduce poverty, provide families with food, improve nutrition and supplement income for low-income families. They also aim at empowering women through education and special training. Most women have responded favorably towards this organization. One group was asked why they liked the organization? The group members volunteer that "the organization is really out to help the poor because no money or loan are involved and that the animals are provided at no charge". The leader explained how the organization works. The interested group sends a request for assistance to HPI. HPI sends the group a form requesting information about the group. This information is used to assess their eligibility for assistance. Once the form is returned, a project staff member visits the group and project site to verify authenticity of the group's existence and to verify the group's needs. If needs are verified, a letter of agreement is signed with the farmer's group. Once a group is



accepted for assistance, HPI begins a training program for group members. Topics for training include animal husbandry, integrated and sustainable animal agriculture, project management, nutrition education, public awareness and market promotion.

Members of another women's group were given livestock training. A contract was signed by group and HPI to ensure that the livestock were managed according to the rules of the contract. Before the animals were given to the group, HPI made certain that the livestock infrastructure was adequately controlled to avoid animal crop destruction. A conducive place for the animals to live was also available and made HPI criteria. With appropriate livestock infrastructures in the place, usually two animals, male and female were given to each member of the group. The first female and male offspring were given to another needy group when it reached reproduction age. This was known as a "passing on the gift". (POG). POG is also done with "knowledge gained". Acquired knowledge and newfound skills are passed to new farmers in their own localities. The investigator witnessed some of the "passing over the gift" ceremonies.

Women are taught how to vaccinate and give medications to their animals. One woman farmer was proud that she could inject her animals. In the past, only veterinary agents were able to do that. She complimented HPI staff for making visits to see how her rabbits were doing. When a woman was not skilled to give medication to her animals, HPI made veterinary agents available to

provide assistance. The many visits and on-site supervision ensures that the animals will remain healthy.

The women farmers liked the project best because it did not involve money. The women told the researcher that they never paid for any registration fee, like the other projects in the area. When they had to go for training, the project would pay for food and lodging if needed. Round trip transport money was also provided. During training sessions, elites of the villages were invited to come for the training so that they could help educate the illiterates and those slow to understand.

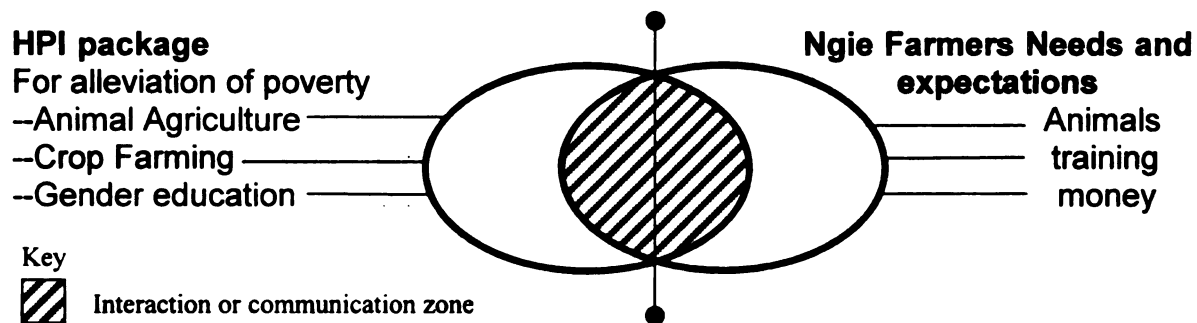
Several group meetings were attended. In their group meetings, those who had gained experience dealing with their livestock taught others. In one meeting, group members taught each other how traditional herbs could cure some animal diseases. These herbs really worked because they taught their members from their own experience. The project members also have inter-group meetings where members share their experiences and learn new techniques of improving production.

HPI also has a policy of "extension" follow up. The extension staff visits farmers that have been trained and those who have received livestock to see that they are following proper procedures. Most of the time, HPI used government extension agents to assist the farmers. There is a continual follow-up. That is why the project is perceived to be so successful.

The project is limited due to the presence of SNV-NIRDIP who had greater sphere of influence in the region. HPI did not want to have conflict of interest, as

explained by one of their officials. The women like this project. Some women's groups even asked the researcher to see the project officers to increase their spheres of influence and to increase their activities in the clan. This is the only project that is succeeding in Ngie. The project is succeeding because the project does not involve money. Animals are given free on no charge. Drugs for treatment of the animals are given free. More so, the farmers are visited and trained on regular basis. There is proper supervision. The authorities listen to the women's complaints and address the issues immediately. The farmers are given proper education. There is a two-way communication channel. Communication is lateral, not top down. Figure 4 adds more information to their success.

**Figure 4. Diagram Explaining the Interaction of HPI with The Rural Farmers in Ngie**



The straight line in the middle is the boundary between HPI and the Ngie farmers. Here there is a connect factor. The shaded area is the intersection region where there was interaction, dialogue and meaningful communication between the two parties for change and development to occur.

**MIDINO** is another non-governmental organization operating in the region. It gives loans to farmers. Their aim is to alleviate hunger and poverty through loans that could be used to improve farms or do business to raise living standards. Villagers have to apply for the loan. If the loan is approved, one must

first pay one quarter of the amount needed before the loan is given. Loan payback begins eight months after receiving the loan. The rural women in Ngie did not apply for the loan because they lack money to pay a quarter of the requested loan. This project is not beneficial to the rural poor women farmers. Only a few men were involved. Again the poor women farmers were never reached. This type of project is only good for the progressive farmer. MIDNO used to be more helpful in the past but activities that could have helped rural women farmers had been reduced due to inadequate funding from the donors.

### **Sustainable Livestock (SLS)**

Sustainable Livestock (SLS) is another non-governmental organization that is operating in the region. The SLS gave out animals on loan and farmers paid back with matured offspring. Farmers are trained on how to raise the animals. Only a few groups are involved in this sustainable livestock farming in Andek area and Etwii. Those participating are doing well.

There appears to be one factor of the project, the business aspect that is not functioning as well. Farmers were asked to form groups, which they did. The project coordinator would arrange meetings to talk to farmers before giving them loans. Many women farmers shared that the project staff would not come as arranged. Farmers would spend a whole day waiting, but in vain. When staff did come excuses were always given. This happened many times. The farmers kept coming and waited because they desperately needed some money. When a meeting was at last convened, he promised to give loans to the people. The representative gave a sample form for farmers to complete and send to his SLS

office before the day the loans would be give. The farmers filled the forms and handed them in as directed. On the day of the meeting as the farmers narrated, forms had been typed with the information sent prior to the meeting. Individuals, both men and women, were asked to sign the forms and hand them in immediately. Many signed without reading the content. Some more literate women farmers said that they read the form. In it, was written, "sign here for the amount that you have received". Some women questioned the project coordinator," you have written sign here for the amount that you have received", but, you have not given us the money. "Why should we sign for something that we have not received?" The coordinator replied, "Other people have signed without comments, why should you be asking me this question? Sign if you like. If not, then you should leave in peace. You want to show that you know more than others?" As the women needed money they signed the form with the expectation that he would give the money right there at the end of the meeting to make his work easier. When each person signed, he or she would wait to get the money at the end. Every body was so excited. People waited for more than four hours. When everybody had signed for receiving the money, the project coordinator then told the farmers that he would give the money another day. He would inform them of the day. This incident happened before the research was conducted. At the time of the research the farmers still had not received money for which they had signed. Consequently, the people lost interest in projects that involved money. Some women suspected that the project coordinator must have presented their signatures to the donor organization, received the money for the

amount signed, and diverted the money to his personal account. Questions were raised. "Did the donors give the money and the project staff use the money for some other purpose?" Why were the farmers asked to sign for receiving the money before they received it? These questions remain to be answered.

There is another disconnect factor of SLS project. The coordinator of the project had a meeting with grazers in the Ngie. Women representatives attended the meeting too because women were victims to the grazing problems. The coordinator's aim was to help grazers to build fences to contain their cattle and reduce animal crop destruction, which is a big problem in Ngie. The SLS project coordinator had a good aim. Women farmers and grazers alike welcome the idea. The project coordinator told them that to make a good strong fence to contain the cattle needs good iron fence. The fence is expensive. He suggested that all grazers should contribute 5thousand francs each toward the building of their fences. Most grazers contributed 5thousand francs each. The coordinator added that he would take the money to the donors of his project and tell them that the grazers are willing to construct fences for the cattle to eradicate grazing problem. But the grazers have not enough money and that the donors should fund the project. The women told the investigator that they were very happy and were hoping that one of their major problems would be solved. One of the chiefs who was interviewed, said that the project coordinator collected the money and nothing was done. Nothing was done with the money collected and no explanation given to the grazers and women till end of research. Some women and grazers asked the investigator to mediate in the matter. The investigator told

them that the research was not to judge cases but to learn and gather information. Questions were still raised about this issue. Did the coordinator take the money he collected to the donors as he told the women and grazers? If his ideas did not work, why did he not return the grazer's money or give them feedback? These questions too are still to be answered.

### **Why Projects are a Failure in Ngie**

In careful evaluation of the various projects in the Ngie area, one might conclude that most of the projects failed due to failure to research the problems of the women farmers and their needs. Implementation methods were lacking in substance. Project executors had selfish aims, wanting to enrich themselves. There was lack of integrity, and lack of transparency. Most of the project staff and project coordinators were not qualified well-trained staff to manage and direct the projects. Traditionally, women fear men in Ngie. The population involved in the projects or the participants were mostly women and there was not even one project coordinated by a woman. This hampered freedom to discuss freely. This does not provide a model for women to aspire to search for positions. There was no board of directors to evaluate and monitor the projects. The donors might have failed to evaluate their investment projects. Consequently, some project coordinators were able to manipulate the process to their advantage. Requiring the women farmers to pay part of the loan before the loan is given made it difficult for poor women to participate. Preventing the women from withdrawing their own deposits had a damaging effect on women farmers' participation. Lack

of proper education for the farmers was another reason why various projects have failed.

## **B. Extension Agents**

In Cameroon, the government uses extension systems. Extension agents are trained and they work for the government. The government uses the teaching and visit (T&V) method to promote the extension system. The agents are taught an innovative technique and then, they go and visit the farmers. Extension agents attend training courses continually. After receiving training, they go to the field and practice. The T&V method is used because most extension agents are not highly educated.

Extension system had extended to Ngie. Agents were however sent to the region long ago. Agricultural education, through extension, has not yet succeeded in Ngie. As a result, the women have not benefited much from the agricultural extension system. There are six government agricultural extension agents unevenly located in the Ngie clan with an estimated population of more than 35,000 inhabitants. The number of extension agents is too small for the population. However, the area has been divided into zones and each has a specific zone to oversee. All six government extension agents are male. SNV-NIRDP also had extension agents too.

### **Women Farmers' Perception of Extension Agents**

The women farmers in Andek and Etwii were asked if extension agents had visits to their farms. More than ninety percent of the women said an



extension agent had never visited their farm even though extension agents have been in the region for many years. Several women commented that extension agents only visited their farms for evaluation when animals destroyed their crops. They were sent to assess the crop damage. In doing this, the extension agents had formed the practice of demanding compensation. The women said that before an extension agent will evaluate a farm, one has to cook him food, buy him beer or wine and give him money for transportation. The women complained that even when they meet the agent's demand, most of the time the agent never gets back to them. The women farmers concluded that they ended up spending valuable resources for the extension agent while losing their crops.

One hundred percent of the women indicated that they want the extension agents to visit their farms. Over Ninety-three percent of the women preferred female extension agents to males. See table 18 below.

**Table 18. The women's farmers preference of sex of Extension Agents**

Women's preference of sex	Statistics	
	Number of women	Percent
male extension agent	3	6.8
female extension agent	41	93.2
Total	44	100.0

Three women indicated that they prefer a male extension agent. One of the three women expressed that there is no need asking of preference because all extension agents are always males and even if they choose female, they will never have one. Another woman commented that if she chooses a female agent, the government might be angry and withdraw the few men agents from the

region. This implies that these women see themselves as being powerless, unable to influence policy to their own advantage. A woman said she preferred a male to female agent because a woman extension agent would feel proud to teach another woman. Consequently, she would tend to look down on the women farmers.

The women were asked why they preferred a female extension agent to a male. Some said a female extension agent who has likely experienced what rural women are going through is in a better position to understand the women's problems and would be able to help and attend to them better than the male. Others said that the male extension agent has "no patience" dealing with women. The women farmers believe that women extension agents would be more considerate and understanding. Other women said the female extension agent knows farm operation better than the males. Therefore, they prefer a female as the male do not understand farm operations. They have never been farmers themselves. A few said they couldn't talk freely or say their problems to a male extension agent for fear of it being shared with other males.

Extension agents are supposed to help the women to increase their production. They do not however give the support that the women need. Some of them had stayed in the Andek zone for a long time but their work had not been effective. Other women commented that there are some extension agents in Ngie that have been there for donkey years and they did not do anything for the women till the previous year when they "woke up from sleep" and started practicing demonstration techniques. They continued that the male agents are

trying to work because the government might have given them a warning. The women concluded that the male extension agents spent their time drinking beer and palm-wine and get drunk everyday. During group meetings, some women commented that those extension agents who are outsiders do better job than those who are from Ngie. They continued that those who are from Ngie spent most of their time doing their private work in their homes than doing their extension job. Some are involved in activities that are not beneficial to farmers. The Ajei women farmers said that the extension agent in their zone was very active with the women. He did lots of farm visits.

### **Extension Agents' Work and Perception of Women**

Several extension agents were interviewed. They were asked what type of work they do with the women farmers. One told the investigator that he taught the women how to grow tomatoes and cabbages. He was asked if it was the women who asked him to teach them to grow the crops he mentioned. He replied that the government Research Department asked him to teach the women how to grow the crops. In addition, he said that the crops are important source of vitamin intake, and they could also sell the tomatoes and cabbage to generate income. It has been investigated that the women have many farm problems. Why haven't they taken their problems to the Research Department? He replied that they would be having a meeting shortly where women farmers' problems will be collected and presented to the researchers. In some places, he continued, some women's farm problem had already been taken to the researchers. Another extension agent told the researcher that he had taught

groups how to grow ginger. He added that he tried to solve one of their problems and the women refused to listen. He was asked what problem and how did he want it to be solved? He replied that he wanted to help them treat cocoyam disease, which is pythium root rot, commonly known in the region as "Panama". He continued that he was informed about some chemical that treats the cocoyam sucker or the cocoyams seeds to be planted. He explained that the suckers or seeds are put in the chemical for two days. When the soil is prepared the treated suckers are planted. The treated cocoyams will not be affected by Panama disease. He had a group meeting with the women and told them of this treatment. He said he told them to bring money for him to buy this chemical. Some women brought him money for the chemical. A man in the village told the women that if they do as the extension agent had explained, then the chemical will help to degenerate the soil even more, so that next time when crops are planted, they will not do well at all. Those women who had given the extension agent money asked for their money back. They did not want the chemical any more. He complained that the women were not willing to learn new ways of doing things. The women probably refused because the whole idea was abstract in nature. There were no demonstration farm for the women to see and compare the treated crop with the untreated ones. The extension agent was asked why most women have not been exposed to extension agents? One responded, "Women never invited them to visit their farms". Another said, "Women are not interested even when they are invited for farm demonstration. They never show up. Only very few would show up". The agents were asked what advice they

could give the women that would help increase their agricultural production? They gave the following advice:- “women should be willing to accept innovations. They should group themselves to attract loans, and be timely to carry out agricultural operations. They should buy and apply input in their farms. They should always attend farm demonstrations”. None of them mentioned that the women should feel free to invite them for a farm visit.

The extension agents are supposed to be a link between farmers and the researchers. They are supposed to take the women's problems to the researchers and the researchers solve the problem. The extension agents then take the solution back to the women. From the description above, one can see that top down management is still alive in the region. The research center tells the extension agent to come and teach the women how to grow cabbage, ginger, tomatoes without asking the women farmers' opinion.

### **Perceived Problems of Extension Agents**

The extension agents on the other hand explained the problems that they face in doing their work. They expressed that each agent has big zones to control and they do not have transportation to facilitate their work. They go mainly on foot. This makes their job difficult and less effective. Furthermore, they are not given enough material to run a good demonstration farm. The women are not interested in what they are doing. When they call the women to attend demonstrations only few attend. This is probably because the demonstration is not the women's interest or it might have been scheduled when the women are too busy with their multitude jobs.

There is little linkage between the farmers and the researchers. The communication is one-way from top down. The women are seldom if ever involved in planning. Generally, information is just “dumped” on them.

### **Why Extension Agents, Work is a failure**

There are many reasons for failed extension activities in the region. The practice of government centralization of activities is a deterrent to client participation. Every activity is controlled from the Ministry. Another reason for extension failure is absenteeism, lack of duty consciousness, lack of supervision and a strong corrupt system of government. For an example, a sub-divisional delegate for agriculture was sent to Ngie. The sub-divisional delegate came and got his certificate of resumption of duty and left the area. There was no one to question him why he was not on duty. He was supposed to be in charge of the extension agents and supervise their work. He became an absentee sub-divisional delegate for agriculture. The Momo Divisional delegate could not sanction him. Even if she did, every decision is made only from the headquarters and not by her. If a complaint is filed against him, the sub-delegate could go to the headquarters to bribe some one in the ministry who would take the complaint file from the file and trash it so that nothing could be done to the man. But, if there was decentralization, the divisional delegate could take some measures to discipline the delegate. The idea of leaving the region and not fulfilling responsibility would not have occurred. His absence gives advantage to the extension agents to do what they like at their own pace. This makes their work ineffective without direct supervision.

Another reason for extension's failure is doing multiple jobs. Most of the extension agents do not do the work they are supposed to do. Sometimes even the government uses them to perform duties other than extension ones, duties that are not of direct benefit to the women farmers. For example, some agents campaign for the government in the rural areas for up coming elections. During elections they are used as polling officers.

On the other hand, the government does not pay the extension agent very well. Some of them because of poverty want to get money and food from the poor women to supplement their income. The evaluation of crop damage gives them this opportunity to pinch money from the poor women. This practice makes the women to have hatred for them and would not want to deal with them. The agents do not have direct supervision and evaluation. They have an absentee sub-divisional delegate. This is one reason why significant changes have not taken place with the rural women farmers.

Another failure of the extension agent is that they have not enough equipment to do their work, no tools, no fund allocated for demonstration and no means of transport to go around to make their work easy. They are few extension agents and they have big areas to control with no transportation.

On the other hand, the women farmers do not trust the extension agents primarily because the agents have never been farmers. The little innovation they taught the women was not put it into practice. The women would learn best through practical demonstration methods.

## **Government Policy on Agricultural Development.**

Growth in agricultural production can be increased if the government establishes supporting policies that will promote and encourage production. For this reason, government policies were examined to find those geared toward the development of women in agriculture. The Cameroon government had made policies aimed at helping the rural poor. One of the aims was to increase agricultural production. The government then introduced a concept of Rural Development. Consequently, government opened farmer's banks so that farmers could borrow money to increase agricultural production. Even though these banks were closed down due to mismanagement, their loan policy did not particularly favor the women because they do not have landed property, which is usually required by those financial institutions as collateral security for loans. Only the commercial farmers gained from these banks.

During interviews, interviewees were asked if they had applied for a loan from banks. The rural women farmers in Andek and Etwii said that they have not applied for any loan from any bank. They also indicated that they had not had any subsidies from the government.

A government agricultural official in the delegation of agriculture was asked what the government was doing to increase agricultural production? He said, "The government has done a lot and has made policies aimed at helping the poorest of the poor. For example, the government has opened farmer's banks for farmers to borrow money to increase their production. As a result, there is a lot of food in the market, like Irish potatoes, cabbage etc.



Today, Cameroon produces 96 % of its food". The information the government officer gave was not current. The government farmers' banks he talked of were closed down in the eighties. The farmers in Santa, which he mentioned that they had borrowed money from the farmers' bank, in actual fact, they borrowed money instead from a non-governmental organization. The official was informed that most rural women at the subsistence level had never been given a loan.

The government made policy decisions to support and increase production through research, extension programs and state investments. The government then failed to equip the extension agent so they could do their work effectively. Extension agents have no money to organize effective farm demonstrations. They have no effective equipment to work with and inadequate transportation. As a result, most extension agents could not perform their work effectively. The government realized this and sent a sub divisional delegate of agriculture to coordinate the activities of agricultural extension agents in Ngie. The officer came and took his certificate of assumption duty and left the region. When there was a census of active government workers, the officer returned for the census. The administrative officer of the region observed this but he did not take any action. He allowed the sub-divisional delegate for agriculture to be counted as having been active. After the census, the sub-divisional delegate for agriculture again left the region. During the yearlong study in the region, this sub-divisional delegate of agriculture did not put in two months of active service. As a

result, there was no direct person to coordinate and supervise the activities of the extension agents. The government did nothing to make an agricultural investment in the Ngie. An absence of policy implementation promoting sustainable agricultural developments resulted in women continuing in hunger and poverty. One policy that was somewhat useful was a mini agricultural show that took place in the Ngie Subdivision. There was competition of crops among farmers. Those who won were given prizes as incentives. The government did not inform the women early about the agricultural show. Many women did not participate. A few women bought crops from other farmers and presented because of the short notice. Some results were not genuine because the crops that some women presented were not from their farms. The Green Revolution policy was preached in the country but most of the women in the region had no access to fertilizer and other inputs to promote the green revolution, which the government preaches.

In another instance, the government sent some money to help rural women. One such amount sent to Ngie was partially taken by the parliamentarian that represented the region in parliament. The government gave Ngie women farmers 200,000francs (about U.S \$ 140). Though this money was a small amount, the parliamentarian gave the women 150,000francs with an explanation that he had taken 50,000 francs for his transportation and for "fighting for the women's cause". People who are well to do in the community even squeeze out the little that is given to the women. The women's suppression comes from all angles of the society.

## Section Five Summaries

### Summary of the Ngie Women Farmers' Problems

Ngie women encounter a lot of problems. Table 19 below shows some of the problems, which the women farmers indicated during research.

**Table 19. Summary of the Women's Problems**

Women's Problems	Number of women
animal crop destruction	44.00
gender inequality	41.00
cocoyam, plantain disease (panama)	40.00
pythium&cosmopolite soil infertility	38.00
insect, weevils & stem borer	37.00
sickness	36.00
death	35.00
shortage of labor	32.00
problem of baby-sitting	14.00

Forty-four women farmers were asked if they had experienced animal crop destruction. All the women affirmed. This is the most acute problem facing the Ngie woman today. Forty-one women farmers complaint bitterly of gender inequality. They shared that subordination is a big hindrance to their progress. "Panama" is a root rot disease that affects cocoyams and plantains. This root rot disease causes starvation in the region.

Other problems that women face are shortage of labor, weak land rights, limited access to family property, limited contact with agricultural extension agents, lack of access to credit, lower levels of education, and lack of storage facility.

## Summary of the Women's Perceived Needs

### Individual needs

Table 20. Summary of the Women's Needs

Women's Needs	Number of women
money	44.00
farm tools	35.00
grinding mills	30.00
pesticides & insecticide	29.00
fertilizer	26.00
medications	25.00
chicken, animal, fish	24.00
pots and house equipment	21.00
hybrid seeds	10.00
agricultural. training	10

All the forty-four women said they needed money. If the money were available, they would be able to provide their needs. They would also be empowered and be less dependent. Farm tools were their next need. Most of them do not have enough farm tools and they do not have money to buy the farm tools. The women also indicated they needed grinding mills. There are a variety of grinding mills they want. Some of them are: - oil mill, corn mill, cassava mill, blenders etc. If their needs were provided, they would be more productive.

### Community Needs

The women need the following: - hospital, well-equipped clinics, good roads, donkeys, wheelbarrows, oil mills, cassava grinding machines, storage facilities, grinding mills, tap water, day care centers.

Most families in Andek and Etwii and Ngie in general carry their drinking water from streams or springs. Most of the water they drink is contaminated either by human or by domestic animals. This causes water-borne diseases.

### **Summary of Coping Strategists**

1. Cocoyams, the staple food has been affected by cocoyam disease commonly known as "panama". The people now have introduced rice eating. Rice in the past was eaten once a year and only on Christmas day. Now it is eaten almost daily.
2. In the past banana was given to pigs and the people sometimes ate only ripe bananas. Now the people have introduced boiling and eating green banana for food.
3. The women depend on relatives living in urban areas or other productive agricultural regions. These relatives send food, clothing and money to their families back home.
4. Migration to urban or other productive agricultural region is another way of solving the problem of hunger and poverty.
5. The women are involved in low-income generating activities to solve the problem of hunger and poverty.
6. The church and its activities is another way women try to solve their problems.

## Summary of chapter four

#	Aspect	Belief	Attitude	Practice	Remarks
1	Birth control	They are against birth control	Husbands have negative attitude towards birth control	Only 22.7% of women interviewed practice birth control	Lack of education on birth control. Husband should be educated along side with his wife on birth control.
2	Breast feeding	Women belief in breast feeding	Breast feed children	Average years of breast feeding in Ngie is 2	The women take longer time to breast feed because they do not know nutritional education. Most have strong and healthy children due to breast-feeding.
3	Education	Fathers or guardians see no need educating their daughters	Women have positive attitude towards education	More men were educated in the past than women	Many women are illiterates. But now many female children are sent to school.
4	Grazing	Traditional free grazing way	Men have less value for crops since crops are grown by women and not accessed for tax.	Men practice uncontrolled grazing. Consequently, their animals destroy women's crops.	Women are victims. The practice frustrates women and cause women to cultivate many pieces of land in order to survive.

5	Soil fertility	The women belief that soil fertility increases out put.	Positive	Burning of the topsoil to increase soil fertility (akara). Practice short fallow. . Deforestation for farming.	Bad farming practices that increases soil erosion, renders the soil infertile. The women practice agriculture expansion at the expense of the natural habitant and depleting the forestland.
6	soil erosion	Women belief that soil erosion is a natural process	negative attitude	Farming alone slope & burning of grass. Grazing	The land is sloppy. It accelerates soil erosion. Soil erosion is so rampant.
7	Land tenure	Women belief that they cannot own land.	Women hate the land tenure system.	Land is patrilineal. Women don't own land	Women want to own land. The land tenure system makes them to be dependable.
8	Gender	Women are brought up to belief that they are inferior to men.	Women fear and respect the men	Subordination of women by men in all aspects.	Women are powerless. They have no decision making power. Women are born free, but, everywhere in Ngie, they are in chain.
9	Credit	Money is power	Always looking for help. They crave for money and work hard but gain little.	Women always looking for help. Women are involved in low income generating activity	They are always poor, frustrated and dependable.

10	Polygamy	The women have mixed belief of polygamy.	Women hate the idea of polygamy	Polygamy is practiced in Ngie	The women do not like the practice. It brings problems to families
11	Land cropping	The women believe that farming is their traditional profession for livelihood.	The women have the attitude of farming the way their grand and great grand used to farm. No change or diversifications.	They have the practice of farming many pieces of land and not caring for all farms at the right time.	The vicious circle continues. Traditional farming, bad farm practices, soil erosion and low productivity. The women work too hard in the farm all year round.
12	Extension agents	The extension agents believe that the women know very little.	Dumping of knowledge	Teaching the women. They also have the practice of exploitation. That is asking for compensation before evaluating crop animal destruction.	Women have gain little from extension agents. Extension system is top down.
13	SNV-NIRDP	They thought that the women know nothing	They had the attitude of dictating to the women	They never listened to the women. Communication is top down	They did not tell the Women from the beginning all about the project. Women came out poorer from the project than they went in.
14	HPI	Women are not blank	Dialogue	They listened to the women. Communication is a two way channel	Women were well educated about the project and they gained a lot. The gift of animals without loans



							has helped to change the life of those farmers that were involved in the project.
15	BERDSCO		They belief that the women are desperately in need of money	They had attitude of deceit	Making money out off women		Their grace period was short. They did not keep to their promise. The women were drained of their money
16	Credit schemes		They belief that the women are desperately in need of money	They had the attitude of planning without involving the women	They have the practice of making their own rules and regulations		The women were not able to meet with their rules and regulations. These credit schemes projects are not helping the women. They make them poorer.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Conclusions, Recommendations, Suggestions for Further Research and Reflections.**

#### **Introduction**

The research was undertaken to study Ngie women's farm-household systems to know the connections and interactions between individual components, and to understand why Ngie women's farm-household systems are not satisfying their needs. Examined were three environments that surround the farm-household systems: the physical; socio-cultural and socio economic; and policy institutional environments each of which influences women farmers' productive systems. Also identified was the role of women in Ngie, their problems and needs. Development of existing and future programs to help improve the living conditions of the Ngie women, their needs and problems encountered must be identified and assessed. The findings of the study presented were written in Chapter four. In Chapter five, the major findings are outlined and explained with recommendations based on the research that was carried out in Ngie in the North-West Province of Cameroon.

#### **Conclusions and Recommendation**

From the findings obtained from the research in Ngie, there were several important elements of dissonance identified. Dissonance, or factors of disconnection were discovered which hindered effective interactions between the rural women farmers and several agencies whose reason d'etre was to interact

with the women farmers to affect desired positive change in the women's lives and consequently the community at large.

**Poor communication:** This is the inability of the intervening institution to effectively communicate their ideas, rules and regulations, and translate their aims and objectives practically according to the situation of the women. For example, when SNV-NIRDP insisted that the farmers should plant large edible cocayams, the farmers insisted, based on personal experience, that small cocoyams seeds and suckers did best. SNV-NIRDP did not listen to the women farmers. They believed that the women farmers had no knowledge to offer. Methods of planting were dictated. The women obeyed, but the crops did not do well.

**Recommendation:** There should be a two-way communication channel between the project executors and the farmers involved in the projects. Both sides should listen to each other and put their ideas together, perhaps conduct research efforts to verify degree of success. When any innovation is proposed, it should be discussed with those who are involved in the farming operations.

**Unfulfilled expectations of the farmers:** The farmers were given to believe that there would be cash available for farm investments and cash for petty trading. The cash was not available but the criteria for obtaining the financial support prevented most of the women farmers from benefiting. For example, women in cooperating with BERDSCO put money in their savings account for the purpose of getting more interest at the end of the year. The interest was not realized.

Those who had saved money discovered in time of need that the money was not always available.

BERDSCO would ask women to pay for insurance as part of their financial package. When any member who had the insurance died, a hundred francs CFA (70 dollars) would be given to the bereaved family. This promise was never fulfilled.

Another example is that SNV-NIRDP asked Agong farmers groups to plant cassava and SNV-NIRDP promised to bring a machine to grind the cassavas. Angong women farmers cassava farm did well but SNV-NIRDP failed to bring the group the grinding machine. The group could not afford to buy a processing machine to make products like garri. As a result, these cassavas were abandoned in the farm.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the project executors should make certain that expectations are clearly understood by the women farmers. Farmers need to ask questions for clarifying expectations. Adjustments should be made possible if things are not going well. Evaluation procedure should be used at every stage of the project. The project executors should maintain the integrity of the rules and regulations giving guidance to the projects. The project staff should not make promises if they cannot be fulfilled. The Agong women on the other hand should be flexible and utilize other methods if project promises are not kept. Instead of abandoning the cassava farm or waiting for SNV-NIRDP to provide a grinding machine the women could make water fufu for sale, instead of leaving the cassava to rot in the farm.

***Participatory Endeavors:*** In a participatory approach, the farmers could have an influential role in the project's success. They should be permitted to take part in the initial planning, implementation, decision-making process, monitoring and evaluation. This is the participatory approach. Unfortunately, all the projects in Ngie, with HPI as an exception, were planned and executed by using the top down approach. For example, the loan schemes in Ngie failed because the rules and regulations governing the loan schemes were not formulated involving the women farmers. The BERDSCO's grace period was one week before beginning to start paying back the loan. WICO asked each woman's group to pay annual dues of 2,500 francs CFA for those that had not taken the loan and 5,000 francs for each group that had taken the loan. These conditions placed an extreme hardship on the poor women to pay up front fees.

***Recommendation*** Since the proposed scheme is created considering the best interests of the women, the women should be invited to participate in formulating the rules and regulations governing the loan schemes. This would enable them to formulate rules that they would be able to execute effectively.

***Timeliness or Transparency of information:*** This is a crucial policy formation procedure that was not disclosed to the women at the beginning of several projects. The women discovered this information when it was being executed latter in the project. The women had no power or means to reject it even if they found the process to be unproductive. For example, SNV-NIRDPA gave seeds to farmers to plant. The women farmers thought the seeds were a grant but to the NGO, it was a loan that was only disclosed to the farmers after planting.

BERDSCO did not tell the women from the beginning that they had printed T-shirts for sale as part of the package for loan. When women came to borrow money, a T-shirt was given and 2,500 francs CFA subtracted from their loan as payment for the T-shirt.

***Recommendation:*** When implementing a project, it is advised that the project staff should provide preparation opportunities for the women. Explain everything about the project so that they can decide whether to take part in the project or not. Let them choose what they need. Let the women talk. The project staff should listen to the women. In other words, the project staff and the concerned women should meet and discuss all issues about the project before it is started. Even when the project is underway, discussions should be done periodically. Evaluation of the project should take place at each stage of the project. This gives way for correction and adjustment that will make the project more successful. Project officers should not hide facts about the project. Surprises, as SNV did with the loans, should be minimized and avoided if possible. During evaluation stages, let those who are taking part in the project offer feedback. They would be able to say what they have achieved, what they have not yet achieved and what can be done for a successful completion of the project. Let them freely ask questions about the project. There should not be any hidden facts. Let those involved pilot the project, if this is done there will not be any hidden agenda that might generate problems.

***Fraudulent or Deceptive or Questionable practices:*** It is falsehood. This was seen in Ngie during the execution of projects where project executors inflated

project prices of materials. SNV-NIRDP inflated the cost of seeds given to each women's groups to pay the cost of buying and transporting cassava from Southwest to Northwest and the amount spent at the mini agric show.

The Sustainable Livestock Project coordinator prepared forms with specific amounts of money that those individuals have indicated to borrow. Members signed forms that they had received the money, which they did not receive.

Extension staff and some administrators, asked women to pay transportation costs to the farm when evaluating crops destroyed by domestic animals or when settling land disputes. When women farmers sought compensation from the Rural Council for domestic animals that had destroyed their crops, the council charged the owner for each day that the animals were kept contained in the council fence. When the owner paid the council charge, the owner takes his animals away without even compensating the women for destroyed crops. The council gains the money, not the women who suffered the crop losses.

**Recommendation:** Any worker dealing with the rural women farmers should honestly execute his or her duty without asking for tips and bribes. They should be patriotic and serve with dignity. They should not inflate prices for materials. There should not be any mis-management of funds for that would reduce the amount of money needed to run the projects effectively. Those involved in projects should be allowed to take part in decision- making, implementation and evaluation. Such action would reduce misunderstandings and practices that might be considered unfair to the women farmers.

The women, on the other hand should refuse to give bribe. Ngie Union of Farmers Association (NUFAC) could form a board of directors to take care of the women farmers' problems. This board should take all women's farm problems to the government administrator to solve.

***Lack of Clear Institutional Vision:*** Not having a clear vivid mental picture of what the executors of the project want to achieve in a given community. Clarity of purpose helps to define the methodology to be used in project implementation. For example, SNV-NIRDP's action did not reflect the assessment of community needs in order to choose the correct strategy to execute the project. This failure results in project failure.

***Recommendation:*** Study the society. Learn about the people, their culture and needs. Create demonstration farms presenting different crops and determining their value to the farmers. The women have been farming certain crops for ages. They have some useful farming techniques. The women are not totally ignorant of farming processes. The project coordinators should incorporate their techniques with those of the women. Listen to the women. Do not dictate to them without testing beforehand the evidence supporting a new crop or farming technique.

***Indigenous Knowledge Ignored:*** Indigenous knowledge is very important in any development project. Indigenous knowledge and practice of the women was ignored, suggesting that the intervening institutions did not conduct community studies. For example, SNV-NIRDP asked different groups to plant the crops that does best in their region. Bonato was one of the regions that produces the best



cassava in Ngie. SNV-NIRDP, instead of using the local variety of cassava stems in Bonatu brought cassava stems from Southwest of Cameroon to the Northwest of the country. Southwest of Cameroon and Northwest of Cameroon have contrasting climates, a significant factor influencing which varieties grow best in each climate. Then the women were told how to plant the cassava stems. The women's group explained to the project staff their own way of planting cassava. The local method of planting the cassava stems was not compatible with the new technique. The project staff ignored the indigenous knowledge. The women's group followed the SNV-NIRDP procedures but the crops did not do well.

**Recommendation:** The local Cassava does well in Bonato. SNV-NIRDP should have worked with the Bonato women's group farmers to test the existing variety with the proposed cassava stems from the Southwest. If SNV-NIRDP insisted on planting the imported cassava stems, an experimental cassava farm could have been established. If the crop did well, it provides evidence for accepting a change in farming practices. The project staff should have listened to the farmers and tested to see which way of planting cassava was better. The same thing applied to the method of planting plantains.

**Gender Conflict or Gender Attitudes:** The different roles that the Ngie traditional society has ascribed to men and women places the women in a status inferior to the men. This concept remains very much alive in the Ngie research region. Consequently, the role of women in leadership is diminished. All

coordinators of the various projects were men. All government extension agents working in the Ngie area were men.

Locally, the men also dominate the women causing them to feel inferior and without decision-making power. For example, a man and his wife cannot do any family planning together. Women have no rights to an inheritance. Women are regarded as property of men. Women do most of the household tasks including nursing, taking care of children, etc. Men never accompany their wives to birthing rooms. Gender inequality is very dominant in Ngie. Men pay a dowry on women before marrying them. As property of their husbands, women are expected to do every thing the men want them to do. Anything that the woman has belongs to the husband. Subordination is entrenched in sub-conscious of both men and women. For this reason, even mothers would advise their daughters before marriage to be good to their husbands. Obey them and work hard to please their husband. Even when daughters are ill-treated by their husbands, the mothers and other relatives would advise the daughters to stay in the marriage. They should accept suffering because of the children.

***Recommendation:*** Educational workshops, seminars and informal meetings are needed for both men and women to address the traditional roles and gender differences. When both parties meet, each group should jot down the household work they perform for the betterment of the family. The men might realize visually that women perform more duties. Hopefully, they both would seek ways to reduce the burdens placed on the women. To get men and women to attend such a meeting in greater numbers, it is suggested that it would be helpful to

offer food and drinks at the end of the meeting. Husbands and wives should play an equal role in household management. Clarification of husband and wife roles is essential to family improvement. Eder (1999) had suggested that husband and wife might powerfully influence household's internal functioning and choice of economic strategy.

Government and non-governmental organizations, on the other hand, should consider placing women in responsible positions and especially those that involve working with women. Rural women have been suppressed in the society and have been made to fear men. Some women could be appointed as project coordinators or project directors in Ngie. Women would feel more comfortable working with women. Village men should share responsibility for child caring. One of the ways to encourage them to have love and equal treatment for their wives and children is to begin by having husband be present when the woman is in labor. The husband should be encouraged to touch the wife and say comforting words to her during labor. When the birthing act is completed, the nurses should give the baby to both the mother and father to hold.

Men and women should be encouraged to work together in a variety of jobs. Men should hoe in the farm, cook and fetch wood for their wives. There should be no distinction between masculine and feminine jobs. Mothers should equally start teaching their sons how to perform household tasks.

***Faulty economic principles:*** Doing business without practicing viable economic principles is unprofitable. Women farmers should be encouraged to make a profit in business. In Ngie women participated in projects that caused them to be

poorer than when they began. For example, seeds that the farmers thought were given to farmers as a grant, they were later told that it was a loan. The women farmers were forced to pay for the seeds. In some instances, force using gendarmes (police) was used to get money from the farmers. Several of the farmers groups had acquired money from contracts; molding of sun bricks, clearing farms, farming, etc. The groups had opened savings accounts in the Ngie credit union. SNV-NIRDIP forced the farmers to withdraw their money leaving them with nothing.

BERDSCO, on the other hand, did not give full value of the loans made to the farmers. For example when a farmer borrowed 20,000frs to do business, 2,500frs was withheld for a development fee, and 2,500 were withheld for a T-shirt, which they forced the farmers to buy. The farmer was then left with inadequate money to do business. As a result, some used the money for other things than business and were not able to pay back their loans.

**Recommendation:** One of the main aims of the loan schemes is to help alleviate hunger and poverty. The project managers should see to it that this aim is fulfilled. One way of doing it is by giving the farmer the right amount she needs in order to help her operate her business. It is suggested that there should be continual follow up of their activities to help the women succeed. Give the women the training they need to be more efficient in using financial resources. Also let them start paying back the loan after they start making profit.

**Role of the Extension System:** Most of the women had not been made aware of governmentally supported extension programs. Extension agents' presence in Menghom and Azem areas was almost non-existence. Most of the extension agents did not utilize their working hours with the women. Worse, those indigenes from Ngie spent some of their working hours doing their private work at their homes. Those who are outsiders did better than the indigenes. The government used some of the extension agents to do work that is not beneficial to the women.

Agricultural extension agents complained that their work is made difficult because they lack transportation. Most travel is by foot. There is no direct supervision of the extension agents' work. A Sub-divisional delegate for agriculture was not available who could have been directly involved in supervising the activities of the extension agents. Extension agents who were not from Ngie did better job than those whose origin is Ngie.

**Recommendation:** The district officer representing the government in Ngie and the Divisional delegate of agriculture could have periodic meetings with the extension agents to discuss and evaluate the extension agents' work. Lack of transportation was one of the main complaints so the government could provide inexpensive means of transportation. Another alternative might be that the government could provide each extension agent with a horse to facilitate his work.

The office of the divisional delegation for agriculture could provide seeds for farm demonstrations and experimentation. Since most of the women are

illiterate, participating practically in these demonstration farms would help them to learn by doing. Lecture only is not a solution. There should be more demonstrations and personal interaction with the women. Furthermore, the extension administration could see to it that every extension agent is doing his or her job well through constant evaluation.

Almost all women in Ngjie are farmers who depend on agriculture for their livelihood. To make agriculture and extension system more effective, government should avoid sending the extension agents who are indigenes to their own clan to work. If they are sent to their clan or village to work, the tendency for them is to do their private work at their home rather than doing the extension work effectively. The government should consider decentralization of the ministry of agriculture. If this is done then each province would supervise its extension system better and there will be effective agricultural development. The government should also consider employing more women as extension agents. Women farmers will feel free working with female extension agents. The female extension agent would do a better job for most of them have worked in the farms. They would understand women's agricultural problems.

For the government to make the extension agents' work more effective, during their training programs, the government should include topics like extension program planning, program development, program evaluation, public relation with farmers, and good communication technique.

## **Other Findings and Recommendations**

***Agricultural Production:*** The government and non-governmental organizations have tried to boost agricultural production in Ngie with a mixture of results. For example, the government organizes mini agricultural shows and sends extension agents to work with the women. The non-governmental organizations on the other hand instituted development projects in the region. This was an innovative approach, but it did not take into account the cultural back-ground of the women farmers.

***Recommendation:*** The government or non-governmental organizations could help the women farmers to associate with the Ngie Union of Farmers Association (NUFAC) by developing a culturally based curriculum focusing on increased food production. Extension agents should be encouraged to use such a culturally based curriculum in their extension work. Reading ideas from books or furnishing the women with information from the department of research only is not a practical solution. It is essential to help the women by first using the local traditional knowledge and materials indigenous to their environment. Once this approach is fully engaged then new technologies could be introduced.

***The Role of HPI:*** The only project that is succeeding in Ngie is Heifer Project International. One of the reasons for its success is that their project does not involve any money. Secondly, the farmers are well trained before animals are given to the farmers. There is a good communication system between the project administrators and the farmers. Each group is inclined to listen to one another.

The people are interested in the project and desire to be more involved. The NGO is committed to help the poorest poor.

**Recommendation:** HPI's involvement practices seem to be successful. An expansion of their programming effort would be significant. Meat in Ngie is more expensive than in urban areas. The women eat more "Maggie" cubes rather than eating meat because meat is very expensive. Many women indicated that they have high blood pressure. Maggie might be one of the contributors to high blood pressure because it contains a high level of sodium. The HPI activities are more progressive and profitable for people. More families should participate in the project. If this is done then there would be many families producing one of the following: - rabbits, pigs, goats etc. Consequently, meat would be less expensive in Ngie and many families would increase their protein intake and also reduce the eating of Maggie cubes.

**The Practice Of Cultivating Many Pieces of Land:** The women work several pieces of farm within a growing season. Crops have planting seasons and all the crops could not be planted at the right season and the right time. Therefore, the tendency is to start farming early in the growing season and continuing into a late season. Consequently, crops do not do as well when farmed late in the season. In addition, most of the farms are not well cared for because of distance and numbers of land parcels to manage. For example, manure frequently is not applied and weeding is often done too late. Planting too early or too late has an adverse effect on crop output.



**Recommendation:** The women should abandon farming late in the season. This wastes labor and valuable time. They should reduce the number of land parcels (farms) to about three. If they cultivate a few parcels at a time, they would be able to give appropriate care. They could harvest more food than someone who cultivated six to eight parcels. Cultivating a few parcels will let them start work on time and end planting at the right time. They would be able to do other essential farm management procedures like applying manure, weeding in time, molding the tuber plants, and looking for sticks for fencing and staking. They would have time to restore their energies and engage in trading activities to generate more income. Preventing weeds would have a positive effect. One way to prevent weeds is by mulching. When many farms are cultivated it is not possible to mulch each farm. When the women work yams, they should mulch the yams immediately so when working other farms to plant corn, beans and other crops, they would not have to bother to weed the yam farms. The mulch would prevent weeds. Corn planted in the mulched yam farm would grow without them weeding.

Non-governmental organizations could help by providing weed prevention chemicals. Weeds share the manure available for crop growth. If weeds were contained, there would be increased crop production.

**Unproductive Activities by women:** Women waste time in doing some unproductive activities. If there were proper planning, they would have time to engage in other productive activities. For example, beans are an important crop in the region. Beans are worked twice yearly. Most of the beans need staking. The women waste time by going far and wide to look for bean stakes. If stakes

were provided that did not decay and could be used on a recurring basis much time could be saved.

**Recommendation:** Since women have many pieces of farms, it is suggested that one farm be devoted to growing trees. Tree branches could be cut and used for staking. Better still, they could plant acacia trees in all their farms, whose branches could be readily used for staking and the leaves used to enrich the soil. This would save time for other productive activities. American Peace Corps has already introduced this tree in the region

Another unproductive activity is seen during bean planting season in October, when women plant corn together with the beans. Planting corn in dry season beans farms is not appropriate especially on slopes. The corn does not do well.

**Recommendation:** They should not plant corn on sloping land during the dry season. The corn shares the manure with the beans thereby reducing the amount of manure for the bean nutrient. The corn withers due to inadequate water in the soil.

**Lack of irrigation schemes in Ngje:** There are no irrigation schemes that could help the women farmers produce fresh food during the dry season. As a result, the population lives mostly on dry food during the dry season. The women could grow more food during this season to increase food production.

**Recommendation:** In order to enable the people have fresh food all the time, the villagers or the government or any non-governmental organization could

introduced irrigation systems to be used in the valley during the dry season for more crops.

During the dry season, brick makers direct water from hillsides to the site where blocks or bricks are made. Households could also redirect water from streams or from hill slopes to the plains during the dry season to farm in order to increase crop production. This would ensure a continuous supply of fresh food. It would also help to eradicate hunger and poverty. This would be the beginning of a primitive irrigation scheme. The Chiefs could organize the villagers to redirect the water. During the rainy season, these passages could be blocked to prevent soil erosion and reopened during the dry season.

***The Practice of Grass Burning:*** Although this is a banned practice in the country, grass burning is rampant in Ngie. This is because there is no supervision instituted after the ban. Burning of grass exposes the soil to erosion. The result is soil infertility. Burning of grass is done for two reasons. Some household members cannot afford to buy meat from the market. They hunt wild animals for meat in the grassland. In the grassland, hunting is dominant during the dry season. When hunting, they would use fire to chase animals to hunters. Cattle grazers also burn grass to get the young green shoots for the cattle. The grass is burned every year. If the grass were left without burning for four to ten years, the hills would be very fertile and erosion contained. For example, if the first year the grass were left during the dry season, the grass would dry up. When rain falls, the dry grass would form manure and enrich the soil. The new grass would be healthier. More manure would be generated. If the land is fallow for ten

years without burning, the manure would accumulate to make the land more fertile. Erosion would be reduced and the topsoil would not be carried away.

**Recommendation:** There should be an “Against Grass Burning” supervisory committee made up of the District Officer, the gendarme or police chief, the mayor of the Andek rural council and the village Chiefs. The purpose should be to seeing that the ban is respected in all parts of the villages. The administration and the local Chiefs should work hand in hand to see that the practice of grass burning is stopped. Those caught burning should be punished accordingly. During each dry season, the Chiefs should organize men in their villages to watch the hills to prevent the hunters and the herd’s men from burning the hill. They should have a 24 hours watch. This would be a type of community work done in shifts. Violators should be fined as a deterrent.

**The Practice Reducing the Fertile Arable Land:** Valleys and plains have fertile soil. Unfortunately for the women, building schools, government offices, and resettlement areas reduces the fertile land.

**Recommendation:** The women could start looking for other alternatives to augment their out put (Business practices). For example, they could be involved in high income generating activities that would give them a good income. Most of them are involved in low income-generating activities. They lack the experience of entrepreneurship. If done, this would give them opportunity to carry out more income generating activities, which will benefit the whole family. This could take place through leadership training or small business management training within the villages organized either by government or non-governmental organization.

**Forest Utilization:** The forest trees are slashed and burned for agriculture by the women farmers. This practice might produce acid rain, which might be a deterrent to crops and drinking water. These forests have lots of nuts grown in them. The nuts are harvested in an uncontrolled manner.

**Recommendations:** The women and the population should control the harvest of the nuts. They should not cut down the forest for agriculture. This would give them surplus nuts to eat and sell some in the market for extra cash. The harvest time should be arranged by different Chiefs and care be taken that during harvest that the forest canopy is maintained. This would encourage evapo-transpiration in the region, which would bring rain. The rain would be very helpful to farmers, plants and animals. Animals from these forests are being made extinct due to agriculture and hunting.

**Akara: or Baking the Soil:** One practice for increasing food production is making Akara. This is baking the topsoil before crops are planted. This method kills the soil nutrients and other living organisms in the soil, which help to enrich the soil.

**Recommendation:** The women should stop using this procedure. Women farmers should use more compost manure and cow dung. The village Chiefs and agricultural agents should discourage women from using the Akara method. To completely eradicate this practice, the violators should be punished.

**Transportation Challenges:** Farm to market roads is very bad in Ngie especially during the rainy season. Torrential downpours and heavy run-offs create difficult conditions at times being almost impassable. One British man

visiting the region described the roads in Ngie as “cow tracks”. This greatly hinders transportation to and from urban regions where crops could be sold. Household needs and products essential to farm production are difficult to secure.

**Recommendation:** The rural council should continuously maintain farm to market roads to make communication between regions easier. Women farmers would have the best opportunities to sell their produce in urban areas. On the other hand, traders from the urban and other regions that need Ngie women’s products would come to Ngie markets. If adequate capital is generated they can buy farm tools, seeds, household products and other nutritional foods to supplement their diets. More so, if the roads are accessible, Ngie women can grow crops that are not consumed at home for urban consumption to generate more income. SNV implemented Irish potatoes project in Tinakoh. The potato production was successful but there was no market locally. The population that needed this food production was far away. It was impossible to carry the potatoes to these needy places because of bad roads. Trucks carrying food from rural areas sometimes spent one week or more before getting to distribution points. This was a distance of only thirty-five miles.

**Women with Babies:** Women perform many duties. One is carrying their babies on their backs to the farm. Babies are care intensive and a distraction to productive activities.

**Recommendation:** Since the women are too poor to send their children to day care centers, women’s farming groups could maintain day care centers and

share responsibilities. Each woman could take some portion of work time and share in the caring responsibility. The women could make a schedule for each participant. Each mother would bring food for the feeding of her child.

The men could also assist in the village day care centers. Most men do not work in the farms. This idea would require a change in cultural ways. Men are not inclined to accept the role of “babysitters”. Also, an alternative would be for the government or non-governmental organization to maintain free day care centers or perhaps accept a portion of the structure as compensation. That is, they can provide the women with some structures and equipment for running the day care centers.

***Impact of Corn Borer:*** Corn borer is one of the major problems in Ngie. Corn that is planted early is most often affected by the corn borer. Some women start cultivating corn farms two to four weeks before the rains begin. Some plant corn after the first rain. Some women apply wood ash to control the corn borer.

***Recommendation:*** The women might consider stopping the planting of corn early. Production is highest when the rain has fallen a couple of times, generally in April. They women should wait for the rain to fall a couple of times before they plant the corn or plant when there is a continuous rainfall. Often, wood ash is applied but the growth of corn is negatively affected. A program experimenting with the appropriate amount of wood ash is critical. The government extension or any non-governmental organization should conduct some research to determine what amount of wood ash would best control the corn borer or what quantity of wood ash be put on the corn stem to control the corn borer. Agencies could

subsidize the purchase of insecticides so that the women would be able to eradicate corn borers and other insects, (ants, caterpillars) which are harmful to their crops.

**Soil Fertility:** The best soil nutrients are essential to grow healthy crops. The women are too poor to buy fertilizer.

**Recommendation:** Creation of a compost heap would provide an inexpensive source of fertilizer. When the grass is decomposed, it could be used as manure. Since many of the women farm too many parcels of land, time and energy prevent them from practicing a single task that would assist in keeping the soil fertile. With fewer farms to maintain, this idea could work.

Another way they could enrich the soil is by paddock farming. Cattle owners would be allowed to feed the cattle on the women's farm after harvest. The dung from the cattle would fertilize the soil. This would require fencing the farm to contain the cattle. The women farmers should work hand in hand with the grazers towards a successful paddock farming. This would also reduce the grazing problem in Ngie.

Another good way is to practice longer fallowing, to allow the soil to become rich. Average fallow in the region is 3.5years. This fallow period is too short. They should let the land lie fallow from six to ten years for best results. This would work if the grass is not burnt at all.

**Food Storage:** There is more food available during the harvest season than can be used, especially if market accessibility is not available. Therefore, food stored in bans or buried in the ground to be eaten during hunger time, frequently rots.



**Recommendation:** The women need storage facilities where food can be stored safely and for longer periods of time. A big storage facility could be built in each village. The women could share the rooms. They could be asked to share in the cost of maintaining the facility as a form of cooperation. NGOs whose aim is to help the rural poor to eradicate hunger and poverty could take responsibilities to provide the villagers with these storage facilities.

**Grazing Problem:** Animal crop destruction is the most serious problem the women in Ngie are facing. All the women interviewed in the region had experienced crop destruction caused by animals.

**Recommendation** Government intervention to reduce animal destruction is possible. It would require making and enforcing rules to guard against animal destruction. The village Chiefs and village councils could levy fines on the defaulters. This would discourage animal owners from letting their animals run uncontrolled, especially in areas where crop production is taking place. The Andek Rural council should take action to see that the women are properly compensated from the fines collected. The government and the village Chiefs should work together to resolve this problem. The government can help by respecting and strengthening the laws that village Chiefs and their councils have put in place to eradicate or prevent the grazing problem. Animals could be pastured on empty grassland, not farmland.

The district office and the extension agents should not ask for money from the women before evaluating crop damage caused by the roving animals. Instead, they should see to it that the women are properly compensated and the

defaulters appropriately punished. The village council and government should provide subsidies to assist in defraying the cost for fencing the farms.

The cattlemen on the other hand should be required to keep their cows in a fence. The government should have to see that every cattleman has a fence for his cattle. Pigs or goats should be tied when crops are still on the farm. Husbands should play active role with their wives in controlling animal crop destruction. Husbands should not leave their wives to tackle this problem alone. When they become active in demanding compensation from the defaulters, they themselves would become conscious of the problems for some of them have some domestic animals. They will then learn to control their animals.

***Access to Farm Tools:*** The Cameroon President's wife gave some farm tools to women in different tribes in Cameroon through CEERAC, a non-governmental organization created by the President's wife based in Yaounde, Cameroon. Women leaders from different villages in Ngie had a meeting to decide how the tools could be shared. During the meeting, some women commented that the gifts were too small to be divided. A suggestion was made that the Ngie union of farmers' office could keep the tools for needy women to borrow and return after use. Others insisted on taking the tools to the administration and let them decide how to share them. It was agreed that the tools would be placed in charge of the administration. On the day of sharing, the following people were present, women representatives from different villages, the administrative officer, the mayor of Ngie rural council and some top politicians in the region. Each of these officers took a hoe and a cutlass. The rest were given to the women to share. The

women decided to bring in the administration because the culture had placed women in an inferior position and they had no decision making power.

**Recommendation:** The women of Ngie should organize themselves by creating an executive group that can oversee women's affairs. The women should be the ones to make decisions on anything given to the women. If such a women's group existed, they could have divided the tools among the women instead of sharing with the administration. The women's representatives should be given chances to write to the donor and explain in detail how the tools were distributed. An inventory should be kept of every tool distributed. This would eradicate the bad practices of "you chop I chop".

**Methods of Financial Assistance:** The women complained that they never borrow money from the farmer's banks. The government in the past had agricultural banks where farmers could borrow money to increase their production. Most of the farmers' banks were located in cities or large towns. Those who gained from these banks were mostly commercial farmers who were well-to-do people. Those who most needed money from these banks were the rural poor farmers who needed to increase their production. Unfortunately, seldom, if ever, were they benefited from these potential financial resources. Due to mis-management, the government run farmers' banks are no longer in existence. What is in existence now is a nongovernmental organization loan program. Most are located in urban centers. Most of these loan schemes formulate rules and regulations, which are very unfavorable to rural women farmers. Those operating in Ngie are focused on money making and not on

helping to improve farming operation or income generating activities for the women farmers.

**Recommendation:** These loan programs should work to provide financial resources at reasonable costs to help the women. Rules and regulations should make the scheme more profitable to rural poor farmers, rather than to increase financial burdens. Women should be involved in the meeting of making the rules and regulations of the loans.

If the government would reopen the farmer's bank, rural poor farmers would be able to increase their production without incurring unreasonable financial debt. The banks should have branches located closer to the people who need it most. Farmer's banks should be created in all sub-divisions and districts so that the poor rural women would have access to them. Some women commented that they had never heard that such banks existed. The government should educate the women about farmer's banks and loans. Women farmers should be encouraged to obtain loans from these banks. The practice of "you chop I chop" (bribe) should not be practiced when lending money to the women farmers. (When a farmer wants to borrow money, a percentage of the money to be borrowed is given as a bribe before the loan is approved. Women also should not be asked to first pay a percentage of the loan before receiving the loan.

**Educational Opportunities:** Agricultural training is vital to increasing agricultural production. Very few women in Ngie have received some sort of agricultural education. The women participating in the study indicated that they would like to have agricultural education. Most of the rural women farmers are illiterate.

**Recommendation:** Agricultural and home economics training centers could be established in Ngjie. Unfortunately for the rural women farmers in Ngjie, training centers are located only in large towns. Transportation to such centers brings great challenges. If agricultural training centers were located in the rural areas closer to the women and where agriculture is practiced the women could participate. Business training should be included in the curriculum. The food crisis could be reduced if the women receive relevant agricultural education and business principles.

There should be a mass adult literacy program for the women. Since most of the women attend church and belong to many church groups, the church could take responsibility to create some time from their group meetings for adult education.

**Women Extension Agents:** The women interviewed preferred female extension agents to male agents. Cultural practices place the rural women farmers in conflict situations with the male extension agents. The male dominant behavior towards the women farmers presents dialogue critical to hearing and accepting new practices.

**Recommendation:** More females should be recruited as agricultural extension agents. Women are more patient and understand the women's problems better than the male agents. Woman-to-woman relationships would create a more effective communication system. Teaching and learning would be more effective and cordial relationships would be established. To this end, food productivity could be increased.

**Women and Birth Rates:** Women in the research region tend to have many children. There are higher birth rates. This is probably because families have not been given sufficient education on family planning. Having many children is a responsibility for the women that takes away time from her farm. Furthermore, the males do not accept the role of being a baby-sitter. Responses from the rural women farmers indicate that family planning is not understood nor practiced.

**Recommendation:** The women and their husbands should be involved in family planning practices. Such practices would include use of contraceptives or abstention during ovulation. Both the mother and father should be taught childcare practices. Men should be present when the wife is in the birthing process. Perhaps observing what the women encounter in the birthing process might change the men's attitude towards their wives and childcare responsibilities. The men could be encouraged to accept responsibilities in the household management. They should be helped to understand the disadvantages of having so many children.

**Rural Women's Health Needs:** Women's health is an essential component for rural development. Good health is vital to the Ngie Clan and the nation's growth in general. If a woman is continually confronted with bad health, she cannot achieve necessary production levels. There is no hospital in the Ngie clan. A few clinics exist but they are inadequately equipped.

Currently, the rural women have access to medicine stores managed by untrained nurses. These medicine stores disperse drugs with expired dates. Some pity traders carry fake drugs from Nigeria on their heads in market places

for sale. The poor women buy them because the prizes are cheap. Frequently these drugs are more harmful to their health. Some of the women indicated of having adverse effect after taking these fake drugs.

When some women are sick they waited until the illness becomes serious before they decide to go to the hospital.

**AIDS Factor:** In Ngie most of those who are AIDS patients are the migratory groups who lived in the urban area and return to the village when they are affected. They never disclose that they are AIDS patients. They continue to be sexually active. This behavior presents major health crises for the rural women.

**Recommendation:** Health care of the women could be improved by adding more health clinics. Rural women must not travel long distances to find a clinic. Furthermore, the government should give the region a full-equipped hospital with subsidized medication benefits. In short, the women need a hospital, more equipped clinics, and some resident doctors and high quality medicines.

The hospital should be located in the sub-division headquarters in Ngie. With time, other hospitals could be opened in other villages since the distance to Andek is quite far from some other villages. Since there is no hospital in the clan, the people now need ambulance services for medical emergencies. When Andek would have a hospital and resident doctors, these ambulances could be controlled by the hospital.

Pregnant women should be admitted to maternity wards a week or a few days before delivery. This would avoid the idea of having a baby at home or possibly on the roadside. This would also eliminate transporting women in labor

by wheelbarrow and or on horseback. Most of the time they cannot make it to the distant hospital. The Fulanis (bororos) live on the hillcrests. No clinics exist in these regions. Some of the Fulani children could be trained as nurses. The trained nurses could go from hill to hill to care for the sick ones. The terrain is too steep for the sick to walk to the clinic because the hills are too steep to navigate.

Women who are sick should go for treatment immediately when they realize the symptom. They should not wait until the sickness becomes serious. It might be late when they wait for seriousness. Prevention is better than cure.

Women should avoid getting medication from village medicine stores. If they do, they should have someone check the medication for expiration date. The government should have a constant check of the medicine store to see that no expired drugs are sold. The government could consider opening a pharmacy training program. Licenses should be offered. Only those who have gone to these training schools should be allowed to sell in medicine stores. The government should encourage medication to be sold in original sealed bottles showing their expiration dates.

Women should stop buying medicine from those pity traders carrying fake cheap medicine on their heads on market days. These medications are not good for their health. That is why they are cheap. These are imitation medication shipped from Nigeria.

The women should start practicing safe sex. They should take precautions when associating with the migratory groups. Government or non-governmental



organizations should provide sex education and subsidize drugs that can help prolong the life of AIDS patients.

***Traditional Medicine:*** Some women go to traditional doctors for treatment. Traditional medicines can treat some sickness. But because of the quest for money, some traditional doctors would advertise that they can treat all illnesses. In fact the traditional doctor might know only how to treat one or two illness.

***Recommendation:*** Women should be careful in selecting a traditional doctor. Some family members have died from receiving inappropriate treatment from the traditional doctor. The traditional doctors should only treat the illness for which they are trained and they should cease from deception. The Chiefs of the villages and administration could help to control these false traditional doctors by requiring them to obtain certification or licenses from well-known traditional doctors. The traditional doctor should verify their expertise.

***Poultry as Food:*** Fowls are raised in the Ngie but are typically not used for family food. The men kill fowls occasionally for special celebrations. This is a deeply ingrained cultural practice.

***Recommendation:*** Men should start to allow their family to prepare chicken for general consumption. This would be an inexpensive substitute for more expensive meat and make more protein available for the family. The men should encourage their wives to cook and share the chicken. Fowls are susceptible to disease. Most of the fowls die during this time. Instead of just allowing these fowls to die from the diseases, the husband should give the fowls to the wife to prepare for meal.

The government extension agents could help the villagers by providing vaccines that would help to control the fowl disease. An increase in chicken production would enable the men to provide fowls for every day meal and not just for special occasions.

**Oil Palm Processing:** The women take a long time to process palm oil in crude places. Time, which they could have saved to do other productive activities, they use it in making palm oil. They used local crude ways in making the palm oil.

**Recommendation:** The places where palm oil is made (ishim) could be modified. The hole where water is put for the raw palm oil to settle before collection could be cemented. Some pipe water could be brought at "ishim" to make the work of water easy for the women. Government or any non-governmental organization could provide each of the villages that make palm oil with an oil mill.

**Coping Strategy:** The rural women farmers use many coping strategists to solve their problems. One is rice eating. Rice in the past was eaten once a year. Now, rice is eaten almost as a daily meal. All the rice eaten is bought.

**Recommendation:** Ngie is hilly. Upland rice farming could be introduced in the region to help solve the problem of hunger and poverty. Both men and women should be involved in the cultivation of the upland rice when introduced

### **Summary and Conclusion**

The "poorest of the poor" in Ngie are the rural women farmers. These women are the backbone of the family. They perform all household tasks for the well-being of the family. The women work too hard, their energy is sapped and

they have no time for leisure. Educating and developing them is educating and developing the whole family.

In order to improve their condition and raise their living standard, the rural women farmers need the following things: - reasonable financial credit; farm tools and appropriate modern farming equipment; storage facilities for food' awareness of cultural issues pertaining to land and to common property resources; hospitals or adequate health care facilities; a more active role in the decision making process,

Ngie women have been victims of development programs. Instead of benefiting from these projects that were aimed at alleviating poverty and hunger; they have often been made poorer and powerless.

These women suffer from many constraints. These include natural acceleration of population growth; marginal hilly land susceptible to erosion, land slides, earth movement, and soil infertility; crop destruction by vagrant animals; deeply ingrained gender bias and cultural practices that hinder the role of rural women; lack of household technology which impairs women's efficiency. In addition, they have uncertain access to land and to common property resources. The women also have lower levels of education. With these environmental constraints, therefore, women must depend successfully upon the evolution of a productive system in which environmental management, social institutions, good administration, good income generating activities and good agricultural practices are closely linked.

This implies increased support for women in agriculture and income generation activities, re-evaluation of policies, and promotion of activities that would provide higher living standards for women. Any non-governmental organization or government program should aid the developmental process through careful planning, implementation, evaluation and procedures. Rules and regulations governing the projects should have the best interest of the women farmers. Empowering the women and making use of their knowledge should be a primary objective. Policies makers should reassess their goals and strategies to include participatory development. The women farmers at the center of development should be involved as major participants in rural agricultural development. The women should spearhead their development path. These women are not blank. They have been working for ages to feed their families. They understand culturally based agricultural techniques. Therefore it would be beneficial to listen to them. Listening to them would help to discover the areas in which they have the greatest needs. Development programs for Ngie women would be more successful if based on needs assessment. This is an important first step in planning any development program. These women are poor small and marginal farmers. With their low educational standard, they need special attention because they are less able to help themselves.

### **Significance and Implications**

- The study identified opportunities for action to involve rural women in agricultural development.

- This study serves as database and opportunity to further study in the areas of rural women's development.
- This study can serve as a point of reference for rural women's issues worldwide.
- The study adds to the breadth of research in rural development in developing countries.
- This study identified lack of women's ability in fertility management.

### **Recommendation For Future Research**

1. Conduct a study assessing the relationship between rural women and men and how you could bridge the cultural gap that made the women inferior to men.
2. `Grass and tree burning is too rampant in the region. Research could be done on topsoils in different regions to determine what is lacking in the different soils and seeking means to increase soil fertility.
3. An investigation into the perceptions of the males in Ngie clan as to what motivates their contribution to the household activities.
4. A study to identify determinants that prevent governmental agencies from providing adequate assistance to the rural women farmers.
5. A further study of the cultural behaviors that prevent increased farm productivity.

6. A time and motion study to determine maximum production from multiple farm parcels.



## **Appendix A**

### **Survey Instruments**



**The main Instrument**  
**Questionnaires for the research in Ngie**

I will like to ask you some questions about your family land or land for growing crops or cattle.

**Section A:**                    **Access to land**

Answer Yes or No question 1 to 4

1.1. Do you have adequate land for your present level of production?    Yes    No

1.2. Can you always get additional cultivable land for farming if you want to increase production?    Yes    No

1.3. Would you want to have more land for cultivation?    Yes    No

1.4. Does inadequate access to land influences your production? Yes    No

Circle the ones that are applicable

1.5. What are the total pieces of land you?

Total acreage in  
Hectares

- a) Own ---
- b) Rented in ---
- c) Rented out-----
- d) Sold ---

Circle the ones applicable

1.6. Ownership of family land is in whose name?

- a) Family head
- b) Family
- c) Husband
- d) Wife

Circle one

1.7. Do you have communal land?    Yes    No

Put either H for husband or W for wife or B for both

1.8. Who makes decision on the following family land?

- a). Family own land ----
- b) Rented in land -----
- c) Rented out land ----
- d) Communal land -----
- e) Sold land ----

1.9. Has your land ever has been taken by the government or local council?    Yes    No

a) If yes, where is the land located?

- a) Valley
- b) Plain
- c) Slope
- e) Hill crest

1.10. Can the members of your household have right to cede or transfer land to some one else?    Yes    No

**Section**

2.1. At

2.2. Ho

2.3. Is

2.4. Is

2.5. If

2.6. At

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d) No

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**Se**

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3.2

3.3

3.4

## Section B: Type of dwelling

2.1. At present, do you have a good storage facility? Yes No

2.2. How many houses have you in your compound?

2.3. Is the house roofed with zinc? Yes No

2.4. Is the house built with stone or cement block? Yes No

2.5. If no, what type of house is it? -----

2.6. Are the floor of the house cemented? Yes No

2.7. Are there any rooms in your house given out for rent? Yes No

2.8. If yes, how much do you receive for rents each month? ----

2.9. What type of toilet do you have?

a) flush toilet

b) pit latrines

c) Stream

d) No toilet

Others (specify)

2.10. Is the toilet outside or inside the house? Inside Outside

2.11. Which of these do you have in your household?

a) Radio

b) Record player

c) TV

d) Music box

e) Bicycle

f) Motor cycle

g) Car or truck

2.12. Which of the following animals do you have in your household? State the number

a) Cattle

b) Goats

c) Pig

d) Rabbits

e) Fowls or hen and cocks

f) Fish pond with fish in it

2.13. Name three above most consumed in your household? Start from the most consumed. 1. 2. 3.

## Section C: Health Issues

3.1. Have you been pregnant before? Yes No

3.2. When pregnant, do you go to the PMI or maternity clinic Yes No

3.3. How many children have you?-----Children

3.4. How many dead? (specify)-----

3.5. Have you had any miscarriage?      Yes      No      State the number.

3.6. If yes, what caused the abortion?-----

3.7. Would you want to have another child?      Yes      No

3.8. If no, why not?

- a) my husband does not want more children
- b) I don't want more children
- c) I am at my menopause
- d) I am barren
- e) Other (specify) -----

3.9. If yes, why? -----

3.10. How many more children do you intend to have? -----

3.11. Have you heard of birth control?      Yes      No

3.12. Have you and your husband used any method to keep you from getting pregnant?

Yes      No

3.13. If no, why not? -----  
-----

3.14. If yes, which method?

- a) Natural method avoiding sex during ovulation
- b) Take some pill
- c) Have an injection
- d) Use condoms
- e) Abstain from sex
- f) Other (specify) -----

3.15. Would you like to use contraceptives in future with your husband?      Yes      No

3.16. . Have you ever given birth to a baby at home?      Yes      No

3.17. If no, where?

- a) hospital
- b) village maternity clinic
- c) Others (specify) -----

3.18. Who assist you at birth?

- a) Ward servant
- b) Midwife
- c) Nurse
- d) Doctor
- e) Others (specify) -----

3.19. If yes, how many children? -----

3.20. Did you breast-feed your child?      Yes      No  
insufficient

3.21. b) If no, why not?

3.22. If yes, how many years? ----

3.23. Do you wish to have a hospital in the village?      Yes      No

3.24. If any member of your household is sick, where does he/she go for treatment?

- a) Traditional medicine
- b) Go to clinic
- c) Go to hospital
- d) Go to a witch doctor
- e) Other (Specify)

Circle one

3.25. How will you rate the services rendered in your clinic?

- a) Very good,
- b) Good
- c) Bad
- d) Very bad
- e) I don't know

3.26. Which is your drinking water source?

- a) Well
- b) Spring
- c) Stream
- d) Rain
- e) Tap
- f) Other Specify)-----

3.27. How does your household dispose most of its garbage?

- a) dumped behind the house
- b) Buried
- c) Burned
- d) Others (specify)-----

#### **Section D: Household Assert**

4.1. What is the main source of lighting in your household?

- a) Light from firewood
- b) Kerosene lamp or oil lamp
- c) Generator
- d) Gas light
- e) Others (specify)-----

4.2. What type of fuel do you use in your house for cooking?

- a) Wood
- b) Dried palm leaves
- c) Corn stock
- d) Gas
- e) Others (specify) -----

4.3 Who collect the wood? Circle those applicable

- a) Husband
- b) Wife
- c) Children
- d) B and c
- e) Others (specify) -----

4.4. Where do you fetch wood?

- a) Around the house
- b) Far from the house

- c) From scrubs on the hill
- d) From planted forest
- e) Others (specify) -----

4.5. How many of the following tools are own by your household?

- a) Hoes----
- b) Cutlass ----
- c) Axes ----
- d) Wheel barrow ----
- e) Other (specify)

4.6. Who decides what is to be eaten in your household? Circle the ones applicable

- a) Wife
- b) Husband
- c) Children
- d) Others (specify)

**Section E: Prices and Government policies**

5.1. Has the government or the council subsidies any food?    Yes    No

5.2. Have you received food aid from the government or NGO during bad time

Yes                  No

5.3. IF yes, how many times last year? Specify ----

5.4. What do you want the government to do to increase your food production?-----

-----

5.5. Do you pay either in cash or kind for any services that is suppose to be free?

Yes                  No

5.6. If yes to who?

Circle the one applicable

- a) Teachers
- b) Police
- c) District office
- d) Nurses in the clinic
- e) Extension agent
- f) Others (specify) -----

**Section F: Socio-Economic**

Circle the ones applicable

6.1. Which time of the year is food more expensive?

- a) Planting season
- b) Rainy season
- c) Dry season
- d) All the time

6.2. For the past 12 months, has any member of your household worked for his/her self other than farm work?                  Yes                  No

6.3. If yes, Who?

- a) Husband
- b) Wife
- c) Adult children
- d) All of the above
- e) Others (specify)

6.3. Has any household member worked in a garden belong to a group? Yes No

6.4. If yes, who?

- a) Husband
- b) Wife
- c) Children
- d) Other (specify) -----

Circle the ones applicable

6.5. When you were in need of money, whom did you contact?

- a) Relatives
- b) Friends
- c) Group meetings
- d) Bank or co-operative society
- e) Others (specify)

6.6. Have you tried to borrow money at any time this year? Yes no

6.7. If no why -----

If yes, Circle the ones that are applicable

6.8. For what purpose did you borrow money?

- a) For farm use
- b) For children school fees
- c) For health purposes
- d) To help a relative
- e) For food

6.9. Did you sell some of your farm produce this year? Yes No

6.10. If no, why not? Because

- a) I did not harvest enough
- b) Markets that will need my goods are far away
- c) Transport cost to the markets are expensive
- d) I have no time to go to the markets
- e) Others (specify)

6.11. If yes, where did you sell your goods?

- a) Village market
- b) Neighboring village market
- c) In a different Clan's market
- d) In cities like Bamenda
- e) Other (specify)

6.12. Estimate your total sales or crops income for this year. -----CFA

6.13. Do you do any off-farm activities? Yes No

6.14. If no, why not?

- a) There are no job for employment
- b) I have no time
- c) No body to take care of my child
- d) Other (specified)-----

- 6.15. If yes what off-farm activities are you involved in?
- 6.16. About how much money you think you make per month?
- 6.17. Do you some times receive money from a family relative living out of the village?                      Yes                      No
- 6.18. Who? Circle the ones applicable
- a) Husband
  - b) Son
  - c) Daughter
  - d) Sister or brother
  - e) Others (specify) -----
- 6.19. In terms of money, how much do you receive per year from the named person above?
- 6.20. Below is a list of 10 production resources. To each of these, assign a numerical value, 1 to 10 in order of importance, indicating the ones you need most in your production systems.
- Land
  - Labor
  - Farm tools
  - Credit
  - Agricultural input (e.g. fertilizer, hybrid seeds, insecticide etc.)
  - Storage facility
  - Transportation
  - Market
  - Agricultural training
  - Household technology (e.g., improves cooking stove, tap water, grinding mills)

### Section G : Socio Cultural Environment

#### Cultural Values

Put H for husband W for wife and B for both

- 7.1. Who makes the final decision on the following
- a) Numbers of kids to have
  - b) Quantity of land for farming
  - c) Sales money from farm produce
  - d) Household expenditure

Circle the ones applicable

- 7.2. Who makes decision on which land to be farmed next season?
- a) Village council
  - b) The village chief
  - c) Family head
  - d) Spouse
  - e) The chief and village council
  - f) Husband and wife
  - g) The family

- 7.3. How can you rate your husband's attitude towards you?

- a) Very good
- b) Good
- c) Bad
- d) Very bad
- e) I don't know



7.4. Does your husband compel you to do some work for him? Yes No

7.5. If yes what?-----  
-----

7.6. Has your husband bullied you? Yes No

7.7. Has your husband beaten you? Yes No

7.8. Is there some food that only men eat them? Yes No

7.9. If yes, then name the foods-----

7.10. Does your spouse give you money to buy some household needs? Yes No

7.11. Does your spouse cook when you are sick or still in the farm? Circle one

- a) yes
- b) Sometimes
- c) No

Circle those applicable

7.12. Do you give him money to

- a) Pay his tax
- b) Pay children fee
- c) Pay church contribution
- d) For pocket allowance
- e) Others (specify) -----

8713. Which of the following duties do you do?

- a) Cook for the family
- b) Do farm work
- c) Fetch firewood
- d) Child care
- e) Domestic cleaning
- f) All of the above

7.14. Do you get tired when you do all these activities? Yes No

7.15. If yes, what ways do you think your husband or household should do to reduce this burden? -----  
-----  
-----

7.16. Name at list five things you need most in life? Start naming from the most important. -----  
-----

7.17. Who takes care of your baby when you are gone to the farm?

- a) I carry the baby alone with me
- b) My husband baby sit for me
- c) Have one of my children baby-sit for me.
- d) Have an elderly person care of the baby
- e) Other specify)

7.18. Have you ever taken one off your children out of school to take care of the junior ones? Yes No

7.18. Has your husband another wife? Yes No

7.19. Do you love her?

7.20. Which ways is she helpful to you? -----  
-----  
-----

**Section H. physical Factors**

Circle the one

8.1. Have you experienced?

- |                     |     |    |
|---------------------|-----|----|
| a) Soil erosion     | Yes | No |
| b) Land slight      | Yes | No |
| c) Drought          | Yes | No |
| d) Soil infertility | Yes | No |
| e) Flood            | Yes | No |

8.2. Did any of these reduce your production that year? Yes No

8.3. IF yes, how did you cope with the situation?

8.4. Where are most of your farms located?

- a) Valleys
- b) Hill-slopes
- c) Hill crest
- d) Plain

8.5. How do you prevent soil erosion? -----  
-----

8.6. How do you fight against drought? -----  
-----

8.7. How do you cope during hunger times? -----  
-----

**Section I: Access to Extension Agents**

Circle one

9.1. Have you heard of the extension services? Yes No

9.2 Are you aware that an extension agent comes regularly to the village? Yes No

9.3 How many times did the extension agent visit you last year?

- a) None
- b) 1 to 2 times
- c) 3 to 4 times
- d) 5 to 6 times
- e) Above 7 times

9.4. If yes, what sex? F M

Choose one

9.5. Which would you prefer more to work with you if you were to be given an option

- a) Male extension agent
- b) Female extension agent

9.6. State the reason behind your choice. -----  
-----  
-----

9.7. Did you pay an extension agent for any service? Yes No

9.8. If yes, which services did you pay for? Circle the applicable ones

- a) Farm visit
- b) Training session
- c) Fertilizer delivery
- d) Others (specify) -----

9.9. Would you like to be visited? Yes No

9.10. If no, why not? -----

9.11. Does extension agents work equally with all farmers both male and female?  
Yes No

9.12. Do you know where extension agent conducts demonstration? Yes No

9.13. Have you participated on any demonstration farm Yes No  
Circle the ones applicable

9.14. If yes, was it for  
a) A mono cropping system?  
b) Mixed cropping agriculture?

9.15. Did you benefit from it? Yes No

9.16. If no why?-----  
-----

9.17. If no, why not?

- a) The location was too far
- b) I did not have enough time
- c) I was not interested
- d) Don't know place or time
- e) others (specify) -----

9.18. Has any member of your household attended a demonstration farm this year?  
Yes No

9.19. If yes, who? Circle the one applicable  
a) Wife  
b) Husband  
c) Both husband and wife  
d) others (Specify) -----

Section J: Institutional Environment

**Agricultural Training**

10.1. Are you aware of different types of agricultural training program? Yes No

10.2. Have you attended agricultural programs, which are important to your production?  
Yes No

10.3. If no, why not? Circle the ones applicable  
a) Training site is too far from home  
b) There are no accommodations if you have to bring your child?  
c) The timing of agricultural training programs is inappropriate  
d) Your level of makes it difficult to take advantage of available training programs.

- e) The knowledge (including skills) you need to perform your agricultural activities is not provided in most training programs.
- f) Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

10.4 Identify from the list below the following agricultural training organization programs that you have attended. Circle the ones applicable.

- a) None
- b) Extension service training programs
- c) Young farmers training programs
- d) Home-economic training programs
- e) NGO training program
- f) Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

10.5. If you attended home-economic programs, what were you trained for? Circle those applicable

- a) Cooking, or baking or frying
- b) Knitting
- c) Sewing
- d) Others (specified) -----

**Section K: Farming and Access to labor**

11.1. Below are specific agricultural production tasks perform on your farm. Please indicate by circling those applicable

Activities	Group					
	Myself	Husband	Children	work	Relatives	others
Land preparation	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hoeing	1	2	3	4	5	6
Planting	1	2	3	4	5	6
Weeding	1	2	3	4	5	6
Harvesting	1	2	3	4	5	6
Transporting	1	2	3	4	5	6
Processing	1	2	3	4	5	6
Marketing	1	2	3	4	5	6
Storage	1	2	3	4	5	6

11.2. Do you require more labor on your farm?      Yes      No

Circle the appropriate one

11.3. Is your farm burned before farming season?      Yes      No

11.4. If yes, who burns the farm?

- a) Husband
- b) Wife
- c) Hunter
- d) Cattle raisers

11.5. Why is the farm burnt?

- a) to make work easy for farming
- b) To drive snakes
- c) To know the boundary
- d) To use the ash as manure

11.6. Do you use any manure when farming?      Yes      No

11.7. If yes, which one?

- a) fertilizer
- b) Grass manure
- c) Cow or chicken dung

- d) Non of the above  
e) Others (specify) -----
- 11.8. Do you buy fertilizer? Yes No
- 11.9. If no, will you like to buy some? Yes No
- 11.10. If no, why not?
- a) I do not have money  
b) I do not know how to use it  
c) I don't like fertilizer  
d) Other (specify)
- 11.11. Who controls when to harvest the crops on the farm?
- a) Husband  
b) Wife  
c) Both husband and wife  
d) Others (specify) ----
- 11.12. Do you usually sell your agricultural products in the market? Yes No
- 11.13 How do you get to your local market?
- a) On foot  
b) By bicycle  
c) By horse  
d) By bus  
e) Other (specify) -----
- 11.14. Which other places apart from the village market do you sell your crops or goods? -----  
-----
- 11.15. How do you get to the distant markets?
- a) On foot  
b) In a bus or taxi  
c) On a bike  
d) On a horse  
e) Others Specify -----
- 11.16. How long does it take you on foot to get there?
- 11.17. Who decides what to be sold?
- a) Husband  
b) Wife  
c) Both husband and wife
- 11.18. Which crops did you plant this year?
- a) Corn  
b) Coco yam  
c) Cassava  
d) Yam  
e) Beans  
f) Sweet potato  
g) Irish potatoes  
h) Other (specify)
- 11.19. Do you fallow your plot? Yes No

- 11.20. If not, why not? Because  
a) I don't have enough land  
b) I need to feed many mouths  
c) Other (specify)

- 11.21. If yes, how long do you fallow your plot? Circle one  
a) Six months  
b) One year  
c) Two years  
d) Three years  
e) 4 years  
f) Others (specify)

#### **Section L: Farm Tools**

- 12.1. Presently, do you have adequate farm tools?          Yes          No
- 12.2. Is your production low because of lack of improves farm tools?          Yes          No
- 12.3. Are you aware of farming tools that are more efficient than the ones you have?  
Yes          No
- 12.4. Are you using one or some of them?          Yes          No
- 12.5. If yes, which ones? Name three.    1.                                  2.                                  3.
- 12.6. Are these improved tools available in the market? Yes          No
- 12.7. Has an extension agent or any organization taught your how to use new tools?  
Yes          No
- 12.8. Would you like to get some improved farm tools?          Yes          No
- 12.9. Do you have money to by the improved farm tools?          Yes          No
- 12.10. Apart from using your hoe for farming, do you have a plough or tractor?  
Yes          No

#### **Section M: General production**

- 13.1. Do you belong to any farmer's club?          Yes          No
- 13.2. If yes, which one? Specify -----
- 13.3. If you should have one, What are the most important activities that your farmer's club should undertake?
- a) Supply fertilizers
  - b) Supply seeds
  - c) Supply credit
  - d) Help market your goods
  - e) Provide storage facilities to members
  - f) Rent out farming tools
  - g) Others (specify) -----
- 13.4. Where do you get the seeds for planting?
- a) Reserve
  - b) Buy from the market
  - c) From relatives

- d)
- 13.5. Which
- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)
- e)
- f)
- g)

13.6. Did t

13.7. Whe

13.8. Doe

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13.10. W

13.11. H

13.1.2. M

13.13. M

13.14. M

13.15. M

13

13

13

1

1

- d) All of the above
- 13.5. Which of these production inputs is used on your farm? Circle those applicable
- a) traditional seed variety
  - b) improved seed variety
  - c) Fertilizer
  - d) Manure animal dung
  - e) Herbicide
  - f) Insecticide
  - g) Others (specify)
- 13.6. Did the government or NGO given you any hybrid seeds to plant last year?  
 Yes      No
- 13.7. Where do you store your crops for consumption during the bad season?
- a) Ban
  - b) Ceiling
  - c) Buried in the soil
  - d) All of the above
  - e) Others (specify) -----
- 13.8. Does some of the food get rotten before the time of consumption?    Yes    No
- 13.9. Would you like to get a storage house to reserve your food so that they don't get bad?    Yes      No
- 13.10. Which is the worst time of the year?
- a) beginning of planting season
  - b) Rainy season
  - c) Dry season
- 13.11. How do you cope during this bad season? -----  
 -----
- 13.1.2. How can the government improve the bad season? -----  
 -----
- 13.13. Were year yields better this year than last year?    Yes    No
- 13.14. If no, Why?
- a) I farm plot that has not been followed
  - b) The soil is not fertile
  - c) I did not apply manure
  - d) There was more drought this year
  - e) Other (specify)
- 13.15. If yes, what factor contributed to this positive change?
- a) use of hybrid seeds
  - b) Use of manure
  - c) Use of fertilizer
  - d) Use of prolong fallow
  - e) Others (specify)
- 13.16 .Has your cropping patterns changed?    Yes    No
- 13.17. Do you wish it to be changed?    Yes    No
- 13.18. If yes, how do you want it to be changed?
- 13.19. Have you ever experienced bad harvest?    Yes    No
- 13.20. If yes, When?    Say the year
- 13.21. Tell me why it happened?



- a) drought
- b) Erosion
- c) Flood
- d) Locus
- e) Animals (like cows, goats pigs etc.)
- f) Others (specify)

13.22. If animals have destroyed your crops, did the owners compensate you?  
 Yes                      No

13.23. How many times do you farm in a year?      A) One    b) two    c) three

13.24. Do you do any farming during the dry season?    Yes    No

**Section N: Projects**

14.1. Have you taken part in any village project?    Yes    No

14.2. If no, why not?

- a) not interested
- b) Not enough time
- c) No money to buy needed tools or requirement
- d) Your spouse asked you not to participate
- e) don't know

14.3. If yes, which one?

14.4. How would you rate the way the project was implemented?

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Disagree
- d) Strongly disagree
- e) No opinion

14.5. Was any new technology introduced in the project?    Yes    No

14.6. Did you have some difficulties in obtaining some input?    Yes    No

14.7. If yes, which one?

14.8. Were you involve in the planning of the project?    Yes    No

14.9. Before implementing this project, did the authorities concern ask for your needs?  
 Yes                      No

14.10. Did you benefit from the project?    Yes    No

14.11. Was the project implemented from beginning to the end?    Yes    No

14.12. If no, what do you think is the cause of failure? -----

14.13. How would you want the project be implemented? -----  
 -----

14.14. What type of project do you think it would have benefited you more?

14.15. Do you have any other suggestions about projects?

**Section O: Household Demographic**

15.1. How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_

15.2. Are you...

- a) Single
- b) Married
- c) Married with the husband elsewhere
- d) Widow
- e) Divorced

15.3. How many wives have your husband?

- a) Just me
- b) Two
- c) Three
- d) Four
- e) Five and above specify) \_\_\_\_\_

15.4. Who is the head of your household?

- a) Myself
- b) Husband
- c) Son
- d) Brother in-law
- e) Older relative
- f) Others (specify)

15.5. How many children do you have that are...

- a) not in primary school (0 to 5) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Primary school (6 to 14) \_\_\_\_\_
- c) Secondary school (15 to 20) \_\_\_\_\_
- d) High school \_\_\_\_\_
- e) University and other professional school \_\_\_\_\_
- f) Drop out from school \_\_\_\_\_

Circle those applicable

15.6. How many of your children are ...

- a) Married \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Working on their own \_\_\_\_\_
- c) Living with other relative \_\_\_\_\_

15.7. Do you have any relative living in your household? Yes No

15.8. If yes name their ages \_\_\_\_\_

15.9. What is your education level?

- a) Did not go to school at all
- b) Did not complete primary school
- c) Completed primary school
- d) Drop out of secondary school
- e) Completed secondary school
- f) Completed high school
- g) Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX B**

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**MICHIGAN STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

May 9, 2000

TO: Frank L. BREWER  
409 Agriculture Hall

RE: IRB# 00-284 CATEGORY:1-C  
APPROVAL DATE: May 2, 2000

TITLE: DEVELOPING RURAL WOMEN FARM-HOUSEHOLD SYSTEMS. A CASE  
STUDY IN NGIE CLAN IN THE NORTHWEST PROVINCE OF CAMEROON

The University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects' (UCRIHS) review of this project is complete and I am pleased to advise that the rights and welfare of the human subjects appear to be adequately protected and methods to obtain informed consent are appropriate. Therefore, the UCRIHS approved this project.

**RENEWALS:** UCRIHS approval is valid for one calendar year, beginning with the approval date shown above. Projects continuing beyond one year must be renewed with the green renewal form. A maximum of four such expedited renewals possible. Investigators wishing to continue a project beyond that time need to submit it again for a complete review.

**REVISIONS:** UCRIHS must review any changes in procedures involving human subjects, prior to initiation of the change. If this is done at the time of renewal, please use the green renewal form. To revise an approved protocol at any other time during the year, send your written request to the UCRIHS Chair, requesting revised approval and referencing the project's IRB# and title. Include in your request a description of the change and any revised instruments, consent forms or advertisements that are applicable.

**PROBLEMS/CHANGES:** Should either of the following arise during the course of the work, notify UCRIHS promptly: 1) problems (unexpected side effects, complaints, etc.) involving human subjects or 2) changes in the research environment or new information indicating greater risk to the human subjects than existed when the protocol was previously reviewed and approved.

If we can be of further assistance, please contact us at 517 355-2180 or via email: [UCRIHS@pilot.msu.edu](mailto:UCRIHS@pilot.msu.edu). Please note that all UCRIHS forms are located on the web: <http://www.msu.edu/unit/vprgs/UCRIHS/>

Sincerely,

  
David E. Wright, Ph.D.

DEW: rj

cc: Agheneza Zipporah  
1537 B Spartan Village  
East Lansing, MI 48823



OFFICE OF  
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AND  
GRADUATE  
STUDIES

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Fax: 517/353-2976  
[ucris@msu.edu](mailto:ucris@msu.edu)  
[ucris@msu.edu](mailto:ucris@msu.edu)

## **Introductory and Consent Form for literate and officials**

**Department of ANR Education & Communication Systems**

**Agriculture Hall, Room 409,**

**Michigan State University, MI 48824**

**May 16, 2000.**

**To whom it might concern**

**My name is Agheneza Zipporah from Michigan State University in USA. I have come to conduct a research in the Ngie women's farm-household systems. The aim is to learn constraints, needs and opportunities for developing farm-households and also learn some coping strategist in their farm-household systems. The result of the survey will help policy makers implement or reshape policies that will help develop the Ngie women productive systems in order to raise their living standard.**

**I am asking for your permission to use any information that you will give me in my research. I am assuring you that your information or responses will remain completely confidential. Your name will never be placed on the answer sheet or be used at any time. Your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law. Your participation is strictly voluntary. You may choose not to participate. You may also choose not to answer any particular question or withdraw your participation at any time. After the research, I will call a meeting to give you some briefing on the findings.**

**If you have any question, you could contact me or any of the two persons below.**

**1. Dr. Frank Brewer**

**Committee Chair and Supervisor**

**410 Agriculture Hall,**

**Michigan State University, MI. 48824.**

**Phone # (517) 355-6580 Extension 204.**

**2. David E. Wright, Ph.D.**

**Chair, University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects**

**Michigan State University**

**Phone # (517) 355-2180**

**Are you willing to participate?**

**Yes**

**No**

**If no, interview terminates**

**If Yes, Sign below**

**Signature \_\_\_\_\_**

**Date \_\_\_\_\_**

**Sincerely,**

**Agheneza Zipporah**

**UCRIHS APPROVAL FOR  
THIS project EXPIRES:**

**The researcher**

**MAY - 1 2001**

**SUBMIT RENEWAL APPLICATION  
ONE MONTH PRIOR TO  
ABOVE DATE TO CONTINUE**

# A Research on Ngie Rural Women's Farm Household Systems

## Research questionnaires

Enumerator

Respondent code

Date of interview

Time started

Time ended

### Verbal Consent

This research is focus on the Ngie women's farm-household systems. The aim is to learn from you women what your constraints; needs and opportunities are and also learn some of your coping strategist. The result of the survey will help policy makers implement or reshape policies that will help develop your productive systems in order to raise your living standard.

Your name was drawn in a random sample of farm-household from two villages in Ngie, Andek and teze. In order that the results accurately represent the whole clan, it is very important that you give the responses to the entire question to the best of your knowledge. Responding will take less than 30 minutes of your time, but it will be crucial to the success of this study.

I am asking for your permission to use any information that you will give me in my research. I am assuring you that your responses will remain completely confidential. Your name will never be placed on the answer sheet or be used at any time. Your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law. Your participation is strictly voluntary. You may choose not to participate. You may also choose not to answer any particular question or withdraw your participation at any time. After the research, I will call a meeting to give you some briefing on the findings.

If you have any question about the study, contact me at Mr Essem's house where I reside.

Are you a female resident of this household who is between the age 21 and 65?

Yes No

Are you a female below 21 married or had had been married? Yes No

Are you willing to participate in this survey? Yes No

If no, interview will be terminated

If yes, I will go to the next page.

UCRIHS APPROVAL FOR  
THIS project EXPIRES:

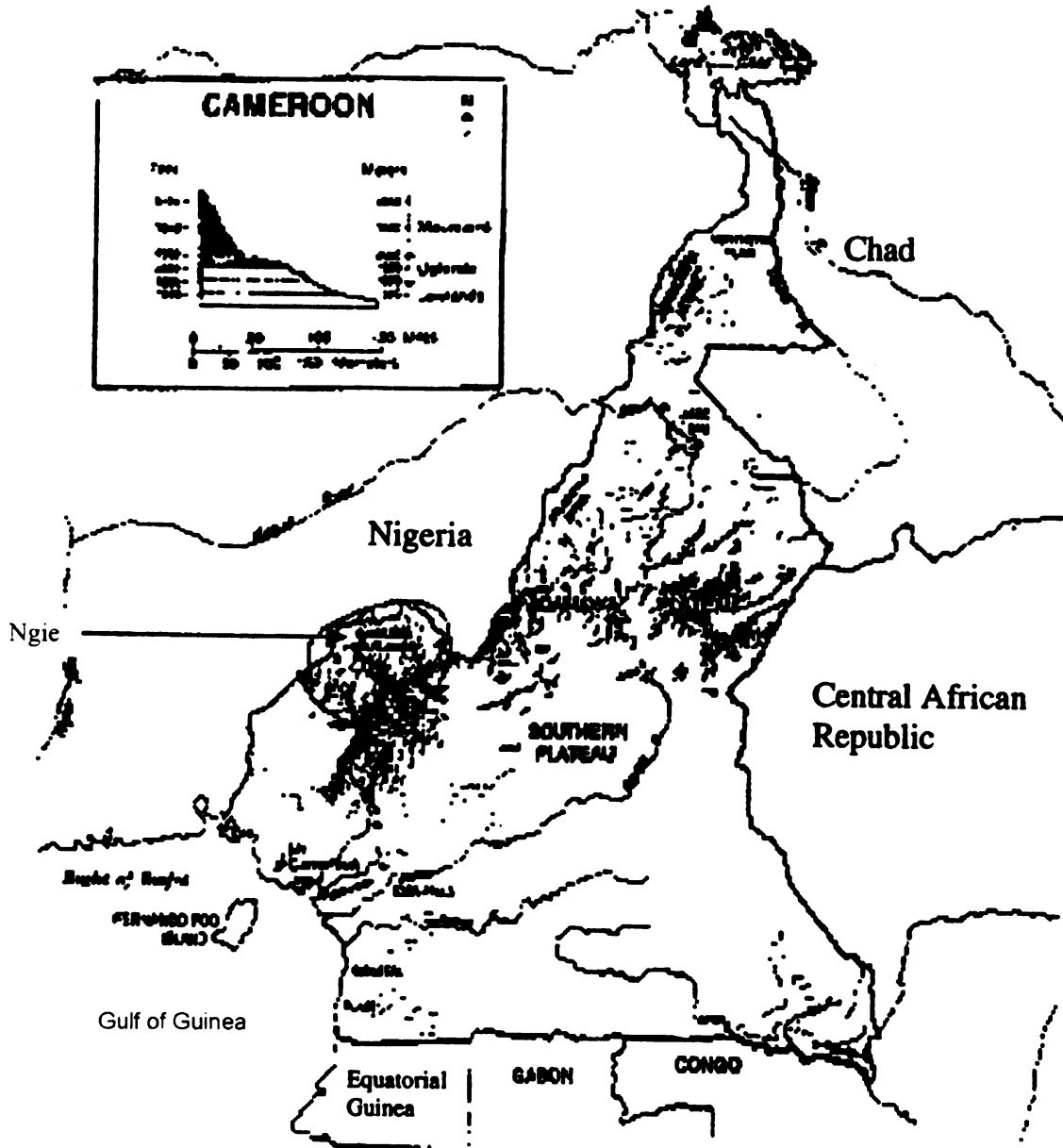
MAY - 1 2001

SUBMIT RENEWAL APPLICATION  
ONE MONTH PRIOR TO  
ABOVE DATE TO CONTINUE

## **APPENDIX C**

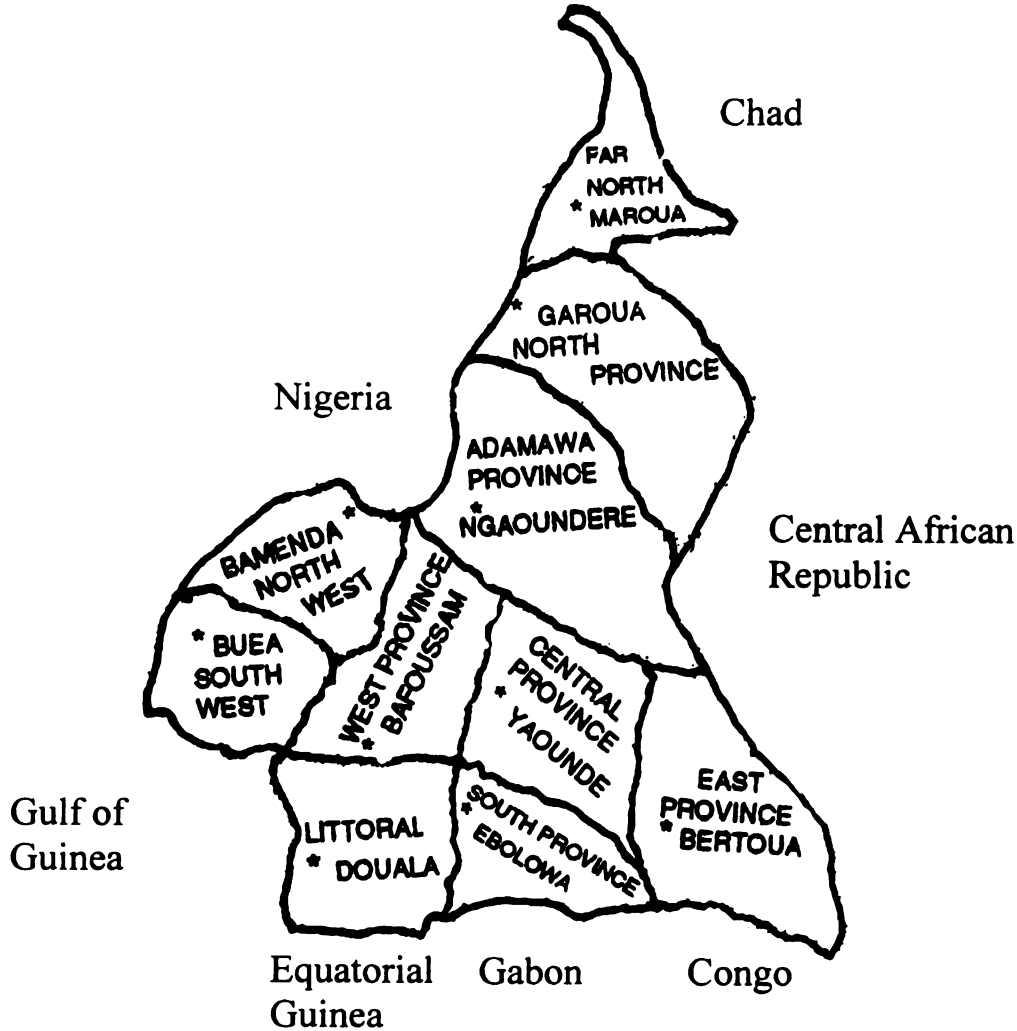
### **MAPS**

# Cameroon Topography

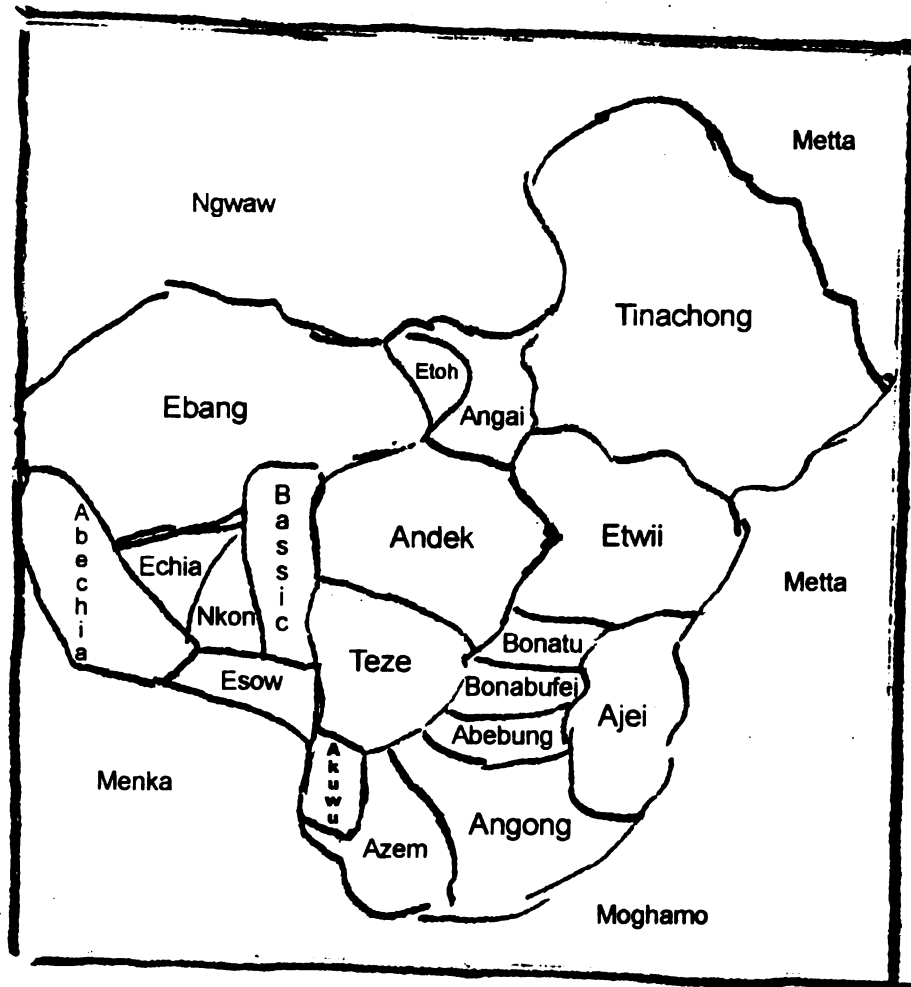




# The Ten Provinces Of Cameroon And Their Capitals



# Map Of Ngie Villages



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