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Original Article

## Contribution of Compassion International to the Livelihood of Smallholder Farmers in Bushenyi District

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The study was to assess the contributions of Compassion International to the livelihood of smallholder farmers in the Bushenyi district of western Uganda. The specific objectives were to; (i) assess the household livelihood changes resulting from smallholder participation in Compassion International programs; (ii) assess the level of beneficiary participation in Compassion programs, (iii) analyse the contribution of Compassion International to food production and security, and (iv) examine the challenges being faced by Compassion International that hinder their operations in rural settings of Uganda. The study adopted a descriptive survey design that applied both quantitative and qualitative approaches for data collection. Data was captured from 206 respondents using both a questionnaire and an interview schedule. Data was analysed using SPSS version 16 to generate both descriptive and inferential statistics. The study found that smallholder participation in Compassion International programs has resulted in livelihood changes such as; enhanced child education, household economic and spiritual empowerment, increased access to agricultural inputs, income-generating projects, and enhanced household capacities. The study also found that beneficiaries participated in compassion programs by attending organisation outreaches, seminars, and annual meetings, mobilising local resources towards the cause, participating in project activities, paying annual membership fees, and giving feedback on project activities and operations. Compassion International has contributed towards household food production and security of the household across the district by setting up agricultural support projects, mobilising farmers, providing agro-inputs, and facilitating extension service delivery. The study further established that; poor funding, corruption and misuse of funds, competition and poor power relations with the local government are the key challenges hindering Compassion International's operations in the Bushenyi district. The study concluded that though smallholder farmer participation in compassion programs has resulted in improved livelihood changes for member households, there remains a huge socio-economic gap in the Bushenyi district. The organisations'

operations are still hampered by a number of challenges. The NGO needs to tackle poverty reduction dynamically, strategically, and comprehensively. This is because poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon that needs a multidimensional approach. There is a need to look at other categories of needy people in society such as the elderly, widows, and disabled persons, rather than placing emphasis on a category.

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## INTRODUCTION

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) have emerged as an important element of contemporary society and act as a link between grassroots peasants and civil society (Ogaboh et al., 2014). In the last two decades, there has been a great deal of interest in agriculture and livelihood improvement. NGOs have taken the lion's share in promoting and implementing different development activities in social welfare services. NGOs, mostly those operating at the grass-root level, complement government efforts by providing certain basic amenities to their communities of operations (Bekele et al., 2019).

In Africa, NGOs are not a new phenomenon (Kassie & Fellizar, 2017). The number of non-governmental organisations working in Africa has mushroomed, and the resources they control have grown significantly. The philosophy behind the formation

of NGOs arises from the need to bridge the poverty gap created by low levels of development across the region. Although the NGO sector has expanded enormously, its contribution to social, economic, and political changes remains a subject of inquiry (Yona & Mathewos, 2017) as they are fundamentally constrained by regime impediments. For instance, NGOs are discouraged from performing roles that are considered "politically sensitive". This so-called "sensitivity" limits their role in working for meaningful change in the political arena.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, NGOs act as vehicles for promoting socio-economic economic development by helping vulnerable societies solve common problems such as; food security, water scarcity, agricultural inputs, limited technical knowledge, and marketing of produce (Uganda National NGO forum, 2012). All these services aim to improve

developmental activities by enabling households to gain economic benefits to sustain their well-being (Obvious & Propel, 2008).

Uganda is still faced with very numerous problems of development and some of these problems are fundamental in that they threaten the survival of the country (Daina, 2012). These problems confront the biggest part of the population on a daily, if not hourly basis. Whereas some authors trace the origin of NGOs in Uganda to the colonial period, these organisations gained popularity in the 1980s and have since been working alongside government programs in Uganda (Muhumuza, 2007). Their popularity is based on the argument that NGOs improve not only local people's participation but also use appropriate approaches to development. The increased number of NGOs in Uganda is largely attributed to the influence of foreign aid (Obvious & Propel, 2008).

Since the government's capacity to facilitate the provision of basic services to the poor and engenders self-reliant, sustainable development has been severely constrained by a number of factors, NGOs like Compassion International have emerged to improve the livelihoods of vulnerable groups in the community. The organisation focuses on households or individuals in extreme poverty as its beneficiaries. It supports these households through their children in a variety of ways, by basing on chronically poor indicators such as orphanage, displacement, destitution, neglect, landlessness, child-headed households, single-headed households, people living with HIV/AIDS, and physical disabilities (Uganda National NGO forum, 2012).

In the Bushenyi district, the organisation started in 2002 under the West Ankole diocese to address the same issues. In the greater Bushenyi district, Compassion International has 5 projects under the West Ankole Diocese, one project under the Pentecostal Ministry of Uganda Churches and four projects under Full Gospel churches. Although the

organisation came to fill the gaps and cover the weaknesses of the state and improve livelihoods, a lot of effort is still needed in her process of improving livelihoods (Uganda National NGO forum, 2012). While it is being praised for being responsive to the needs of the people by using a bottom-up approach to poverty reduction, still many households are said to be wallowing in abject vulnerability to poverty even when they have been under NGO service provision for years. This study therefore seeks to understand the contributions of Compassion International towards the livelihood improvement of beneficiaries. The study will focus on the work of Compassion International at the household level in the greater Bushenyi District.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Compassion International is a non-governmental organisation that is taken to be vital in reducing poverty among the absolute poor people in resource-constrained areas like Bushenyi district through providing voluntary services such as religious, educational, literacy, social or charitable to the community. It has presented the capacity to reach people at the lowest level and work closely with the poor in communities (Uganda National NGO Forum, 2012). With its primary mission being relief and rural and social development, it is applauded as a catalyst for poverty reduction across the district. Though it is supposed to be a catalyst for development, her contribution towards poverty reduction and household livelihoods remains wanting. For instance, Compassion International assistance is unevenly distributed and only operates in ten sub-counties with each project serving only 2–3 parishes. This uneven distribution of projects creates a huge gap in service delivery creating a big poverty gap in the district.

Bushenyi is on record as one of the districts with some households looming in poverty in western Uganda (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2018). Some of the areas of Compassion International operations still have relative levels of poverty, high illiteracy,

poor access to education, and health services, despite such services being top priorities on Compassion International's agenda (Mugambe, 2008). 14.5% and 22.9% of the district population who are chronically poor and vulnerable to poverty appear to be an overwhelming population that raises concern regarding whether NGOs like Compassion International contribute towards the livelihood and why despite her increasing donor funding over the past two decades, poverty levels remain high. Given the mismatch between increasing Compassion International projects and deteriorating livelihoods in the district. A study is needed to assess the contributions of Compassion International to the livelihood of smallholder farmers in the Bushenyi district of western Uganda.

The study was undertaken to assess the contributions of Compassion International to the livelihood of smallholder farmers in the Bushenyi district of western Uganda. The specific objectives were to; assess the household livelihood changes resulting from smallholder participation in Compassion International programs, assess the level of beneficiary participation in Compassion programs, analyse the contribution of Compassion International to food production and security and examine the challenges being faced by Compassion International that hinder their operations in Bushenyi district.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The study was conducted across Compassion International beneficiaries in the Bushenyi district. The organisation works under the belief that every child is a unique creation of God and has been given the opportunity to realise its potential. Compassion International was founded in 1952 by an American Evangelist, Rev. Everest Swanson, in response to the orphan crisis which had been created by the American war in Korea. In Uganda, it started in the Masaka district in 1982 with a focus on improving the welfare of children and their households by reducing poverty and vulnerability. By 2006, there

were 150 projects covering different districts with 40,013 households supported through Compassion's Ministry in Uganda (Uganda National NGO forum, 2012). It was estimated that by 2012, around 50,000 households in Uganda were benefiting from Compassion International. The choice of Bushenyi district was because 14.5% of the district population is chronically poor and 22.9% vulnerable to poverty despite the existence of different NGO livelihood-centred programs.

A descriptive survey design employing qualitative and quantitative approaches was used to gather and analyse responses from beneficiary households and other key informants. The qualitative approach was used to gather respondents' views, feelings, knowledge, and opinions on the phenomena using interviews, while the quantitative approach was used to capture quantifiable responses using a questionnaire. Data was gathered from 206 respondents.

A multistage sampling technique was used to select the sample of respondents across different parts of the district. The first stage involved a purposive selection of 4 beneficiary sub-counties across the district. The second stage employed a stratified random selection of respondents from parishes and villages of the selected. In this case, beneficiaries of Compassion International programs were grouped based on the parish of residence. Parishes were considered as strata (groups) for the research to select the required number of respondents from each cell. In the third stage, a systematic probability sampling technique was applied to select respondents from each of the selected parishes to make a total of 206 respondents. This was achieved by obtaining a farmers list from Compassion International assisted projects offices. In the fourth stage, a convenient (purposive) sampling technique was used to get other key informants who provided supplementary knowledge and information required for the study.

A semi-structured questionnaire with both closed and open-ended questions was designed and used to capture data from the target respondents (heads of beneficiary households). The questionnaire was translated into local languages to make the questions simpler, clear, and more understandable for the farmers/respondents. The tool was checked for completeness, coded, and entered SPSS version 21 software for cleaning and analysis.

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were generated and used in interpreting results. Descriptive statistics (frequency and %age) were computed to summarise participants' responses to their household characteristics like (age of household head, sex, education status, family size, source of income and livelihood); and Categories of care and support services carried out by Compassion International as an NGO. Binary

logistic regression was performed to assess the influence of Compassion International projects on the livelihoods of the households as well as the challenges faced by Compassion International that hinder her operations in rural settings at  $p$ -value  $<.05$  which indicated a significant statistical difference. Data outputs were presented in tables.

## RESULTS

As shown in *Table 1*, the majority (58.3%) of the respondents were male and 47.2% female. More than half (75.7%) of the respondents were married, 15.5% were non-married, and 8.8% were separated and divorced. Farming was the main source of income for the majority (80.1%) of the respondents, followed by business 13.6%, and salary 6.3%.

**Table 1: Distribution of respondents by socio-demographic characteristics**

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	86	41.7
	Female	120	58.3
	Total	206	100.0
Marital status	None married	32	15.5
	Married	156	75.7
	Others	18	8.8
	Total	206	100.0
Source of income	Farming	165	80.1
	Salary	13	6.3
	Business	28	13.6
	Total	206	100.0

The mean age of the respondents was 35 years, with a minimum of 16 and a maximum age of 69. The minimum number of years in school was 0, a maximum of 16 and an average of 10 (see *Table 2*). The average members of a household were seven (7)

members. Average landholdings stood at 3 acres per household with a minimum of an acre and largest holder of 18 acres.

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of age, education, household size and agricultural landholdings**

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev.
Age in years	16	69	35.08	11.671
Educational in years	0	16	10.21	4.341
Size of the household	4	14	7.89	2.235
Farming experience	1	18	7.65	2.168
Size of your farm in acres	1.0	18.0	3.016	4.6452

The majority (70.4%) of the respondents revealed that Compassion International applied a bottom-up approach in her operations; 25.7% talked of a top-down approach, while 3.9% mentioned other approaches.

**Table 3: Approaches used by Compassion International**

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Bottom-up approach	145	70.4
Top-down approach	53	25.7
Others	8	3.9
Total	206	100.0

In terms of livelihoods services offered by Compassion International, 27.8% of the respondents reported sponsorship of child education, 22.1% religious education and spiritual training, 16.2% sponsoring household income generating projects, 10.4% support of agriculture projects, 7.4% talked of education and training services, 6.2% shelter construction, 5.3 buying land from gifts and 4.7% mentioned building household capacity in different livelihood aspects.

**Table 4: Livelihoods services offered by Compassion International (multiple responses generated)**

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Religious education and spiritual training	75	22.1
Education and training services	25	7.4
Income generating projects	55	16.2
Shelter construction	21	6.2
Buying land from gifts	18	5.3
Capacity building	16	4.7
Support of agriculture projects	35	10.4
Child sponsorship	94	27.8
Total	338	100.0

Results on household livelihood changes resulting from participation in the Compassion International program are presented in *Table 5*. 19.2% of the respondents revealed that the organisation offers child sponsorship services, 14.6% talked about household economic empowerment, 13.7% about spiritual empowerment, 12.6% about access to agricultural inputs, 12.4% talked knowledge acquisition and household income generating activities respectively, 7.9% mentioned access to education and training services and 7.1% reported enhanced household capacities.

**Table 5: Household livelihood changes resulting from smallholder participation in the Compassion International program (multiple responses generated)**

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Knowledge acquisition	45	12.4
Economic empowerment	53	14.6
Household income-generating activities	45	12.4
Access to inputs	46	12.6
Enhanced capacities	26	7.1
Spiritual empowerment	50	13.7
Education and training	29	7.9
Child sponsorship	70	19.2
Total	364	100.0

As shown in *Table 6*, the majority (24.5%) of the respondents participated in compassion programs by involving in organisation outreaches and seminars, 20% attended annual meetings, 18.7% mobilising local resources towards the cause, 14.3%

involving in program activities, 9% group information sharing, 7.5% providing feedback on organisational operations and 5.7% talked membership contribution.

**Table 6: Level of beneficiary participation in Compassion International programs (multiple responses generated)**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Membership contribution	15	5.7
Attending meetings	53	20
Participating in community outreaches and seminars	65	24.5
Group information sharing	24	9
Involving in CI program activities	38	14.3
Local resource mobilisation	50	18.7
Providing feedback on organisational operations	20	7.5
Total	265	100.0

About 23% of the respondents reported that the organisation had supported household food production and security by setting up agricultural support projects, 15% mentioned mobilising farmers for an agriculture cause and capacity building, 13.4% talked of supporting households

with agro-inputs, 12.9% offering training and advisory services, 10.5% facilitation of extension service delivery, 10% advocating for agricultural policies, 9.2% information service provision and 5.9% talked offering financial services.

**Table 7: Contribution of Compassion International to food production and security (multiple responses generated)**

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Provision of inputs	32	13.4
Financial services	14	5.9
Setting up agricultural support projects	55	23
Advocating for agricultural policies	24	10
Farmer mobilisation and capacity building	36	15
Providing training and advisory services	31	12.9
Facilitation of extension service delivery	25	10.5
Information service provision	22	9.2
Total	239	100.0

The analysis in *Table 8* presented a binary logistic regression output for the challenges hindering Compassion International's operations in rural areas. Adjusted odd ratios were calculated, and significant challenges were interpreted at a 95% confidence interval and a 5% level of significance. Nine (9) challenges were hypothesised, and only five (5) challenges remained significant. These

included; poor funding (AOR = 1.012, 95% CI: .406 - 2.521; p = .001), corruption and mis-use of fund (AOR = 1.950, 95% CI: .761 - 4.996; p = .004), competition from other NGOs (AOR = 2.786, 95% CI: .934 - 8.306; p = .000), poor community reception and participation (AOR = 1.321, 95% CI: .129 - 2.797; p = .014), poor power relations with

the local government (AOR = .256, 95% CI: .106 - .618;  $p = .002$ ).

**Table 8: Challenges hindering Compassion International operations**

Variables	AOR	95.0% C.I. for AOR		Sig.
		Lower	Upper	
Model				
Poor funding	1.012	.406	2.521	.001*
Corruption and misuse of fund	1.950	.761	4.996	.004*
Competition from other NGOs	2.786	.934	8.306	.000**
Over-dependence on donor funds	1.290	.370	4.499	.690
Poor community reception and participation	1.321	.129	2.797	.014*
Lack of government support	1.486	.573	3.851	.415
Lack of Coordination among members	.604	.248	1.472	.267
Poor power relations with the local government	.256	.106	.618	.002**
Un-favourable policies	.749	.263	2.129	.123
Intercept				.120

\*, \*\*, \*\*\* statistically significant at 10%, 5% and 1% significance level

Source: computer output (SPSS) analysis, 2019

## DISCUSSIONS

The study found different household livelihood changes resulting from smallholder participation in Compassion International programs. Through a holistic approach, the organisation has supported the community with a wide range of services including child sponsorship, religious education, spiritual strengthening, promoting household income-generating projects, shelter construction, buying land from gifts, support of agriculture projects, and capacity building. Results indicated that there were household livelihood changes resulting from participation in Compassion International programs such as; child sponsorship services, economic and spiritual empowerment, access to agricultural inputs, knowledge acquisition, shelter construction, income-generating activities, and enhanced household capacities. This study finding is comparable to the findings of the World Bank (2012), which revealed that NGOs are important in promoting empowerment through self-help initiatives. Empowerment is a multifaceted process which involves transforming the economic, social, psychological, political, and legal circumstances of the currently powerless. It has been alleged that empowerment is possible because

NGOs have the potential to reach the grassroots levels of the communities.

In the education aspect, Compassion International provides necessary school fees and scholarships for children's formal and informal education. This has been important in equipping children with all the necessary educational knowledge in their lives so as to grow up as responsible citizens. Compassion International supports children of key beneficiaries from primary to university level. The major aim of this is to acquire knowledge and skills to use for self-reliance. In addition, the data provided by key respondents revealed that there was a provision for children beneficiaries to attend vocational training courses if they found it hard to continue up to the university level. This finding is comparable to findings by Oyinbo & Olaleye (2016) who revealed that NGOs have widely differing goals and activities ranging from community mobilisation to service provision, but there are many areas of mutual concern. These areas present opportunities for new partnerships with the government, donors, and beneficiaries. Regular fora for building such partnerships and sharing experiences need to be established.



The study discovered different ways in which beneficiaries are participating in Compassion programs in the Bushenyi district. Study findings revealed that beneficiaries had participated in Compassion International programs by involving in organisation outreaches and seminars, attending annual meetings, mobilising local resources towards the cause, being involved in program activities, sharing information in groups, membership contributions, training and providing feedback on organisational operations. For instance, participation in outreaches, seminars, and attending annual meetings has given beneficiary households a chance to feel a sense of membership which has been key for program operations, community acceptance, and sustainability. These study findings are comparable to findings by Stark et al. (2015) who cited that beneficiary's participation encourages effective representation and this positively influences the social climate of programs and projects. They stated that none or under-representation leads to timidity, conformity, apathy, and rebelliousness by the recipient communities rather than respect for the project and its activities. This means that for organisational projects to support reducing poverty, fair representation of all beneficiaries is very crucial. This is because equal participation allows beneficiaries to contribute to the decisions and management of projects hence being responsive to them.

The study found out the different roles Compassion International has played towards household food production and security in the Bushenyi district. Results indicate that Compassion International has supported food production and security through a wide range of activities, including setting up agricultural support projects, mobilising farmers for an agricultural cause, advocating for agricultural policies, capacity building, agro-input provision, training and advisory services, facilitation of extension service delivery, information service provision, and financial support. For instance, training and advisory services offered have enabled

farmers to obtain the required information and technology needed to boost production hence meeting food demands at the household level. In addition to child sponsorship and spiritual strengthening, the organisation has partly played a role in encouraging the community to engage in commercial agricultural activities so as to boost their household food needs and income, distributed production inputs, facilitated rural technological extension to allow smallholder farmers transform themselves into small-scale industrialist, stimulating local and community enterprise development across the district. These study findings are in line with Quisumbing and Pandolfelli (2010), who argued that NGOs have widely differing goals and activities ranging from community mobilisation to service provision. Waddington (2012) revealed that the major activities of agricultural base NGOs include the mobilisation of the masses to engage in commercial agricultural activities so as to boost their household incomes, distribution of production inputs equitably and timely to boost production and productivity at the household level, facilitating rural technological upgrading to allow smallholder farmers to transform themselves into small-scale industrialist, stimulating local and community enterprise development across the country, and facilitating infrastructure development, particularly in rural areas.

The study found that overreliance on foreign aid has created a culture of dependence syndrome for Compassion International. It was found that the biggest proportion of Compassion's funding comes from abroad, especially from western donors and governments. Although attempts to obtain the exact amount of aid received by Compassion International every year were futile, analysis of the budget of some of the project centres revealed that foreign donations were the most significant source of its funds. Many of its activities were financed by sponsors from the USA, Europe, and Australia and donor agencies. This finding is comparable to

findings by the World Bank (2012) who reported that lack of funds limits the quantity and quality of NGO work; hence, dependence on grants and donations from donors is accepted. These donor funds were noted to come with restrictions which inhibit the autonomy of NGOs to choose which program activities to undertake and to select the most effective intervention strategies to achieve sustainable program goals.

Poor funding or limited funding forces the Compassion International assisted projects to limit the radius for the area of coverage and limiting the number of households to benefit from Compassion programs. Similarly, corruption and misuse of the fund was a significant constraint in Compassion International operations at a 10% level of significance. It was observed that Compassion International with corrupted officials, were losing millions of funds through embezzlement. This not only affects the organisation's image but equally affects operations given that they depend on funds for day-to-day operations and project implementation. This study finding concurs with Ogaboh et al. (2014), who asserted that it is a matter of fact that some unscrupulous elements have made fortunes by floating NGOs for their personnel gains and managing grants from the government. It is a common experience that there have been serious charges of misuse and misappropriation of funds received as granting aid from the government and foreign donors and raised through their own resources by most of the NGOs. These NGOs may reflect their image to other NGOs who are working with dedication and commitment.

Competition from other NGOs was another predictor of Compassion International operations at a 5% level of significance. An increase in competition from other NGOs was seen to decrease organisational operations by 2.7 chances. The study established that there was unhealthy competition among the NGOs and poor power relations with the local government authorities, yet they are supposed to congregate and cooperate for a common purpose.

For instance, the study discovered that Compassion International in the district had not had any joint programs with other NGOs in the district since its operation in the district. The attitude of Compassion officials towards other NGOs clearly indicated that there was a tradition of rivalry among Uganda's NGOs.

Poor community reception and participation were also a significant challenge to Compassion International operations at a 10% level of significance. The operations of the organisation were likely to be upset by poor community reception and participation. Community reception and participation are key in promoting NGO operation and sustainability. Therefore, a lack of community reception and participation affects project support and success. This study finding is comparable to Mugambe (2008), who stated that the involvement of local communities could promote sustainability by building a base of support and fostering a sense of local ownership of programs, as working through local communities makes it easier to take advantage of traditional organisations and indigenous practitioners and benefit from their knowledge of what may work or not work in a society. NGOs are meant to provide opportunities to the citizens for democratic participation, but they have not been able to fulfil this obligation due to the method and manner in which they function, and they have failed to attract people interested in construction work and develop channels for people's enthusiastic participation.

Poor power relations with the local government presented a significant challenge to CI operations. Interviews conducted among compassion employees and the district authorities revealed that many of them are oblivious to one another's programs to reduce poverty in the district. The working relations between Compassion and the district authorities were characterised by poor coordination, worsened by the failure to implement laws concerning NGOs and the local government. This finding is in line with the argument of Obvious

and Prospel (2008), who confirmed that NGOs in the same field, like empowering communities to reduce poverty, perceive each other as rivals- all because of donor funds. The attitude of Compassion officials towards other NGOs and the local government clearly indicated that there was a tradition of rivalry between them, the local government, and other NGOs. Specifically, the working relations between Compassion and the district authorities were characterised by poor coordination, worsened by the failure to implement laws concerning NGOs and the local government. This was confirmed when one of the organisation's employees revealed that the district officials check on them once a year or even two years.

## CONCLUSIONS

The study confirmed that smallholder participation in Compassion International programs has resulted in livelihood changes, especially for some member households such as; enhanced child education, household economic and spiritual empowerment, increased access to agricultural inputs, income-generating projects, shelter construction and enhanced household capacities. Organisational programs, however leave a bigger part of the population unserved creating a huge socio-economic gap in the area.

Member beneficiaries participate in Compassion International programs by attending organisation outreaches, seminars, and annual meetings, mobilising local resources towards the cause, involving in project activities, paying annual membership fees, and giving feedback on project activities and operations. Level of beneficiary participation in the programs differed by geographical location and economic status.

The organisation has potentially contributed towards household food production and security for some member households across the district through setting up agricultural support projects, mobilising farmers for an agriculture cause and building their

capacities, providing agro-inputs, offering training and advisory services, facilitating extension service delivery, advocating for agricultural policies, and offering financial services. However, due to critical issues like inadequate funding, some households remain unreached, causing a hiccup in food production and security.

The study further concludes that poor funding, corruption and misuse of funds, competition from other NGOs, poor community reception and participation and poor power relations with the local government are the major significant challenges hindering Compassion International operations in the Bushenyi district.

## Recommendations

Compassion International needs to intensify its socio-economic empowerment programs so that beneficiaries can be equipped with the knowledge to reduce poverty. The organisation needs to improve vocational and life skills training such as in carpentry, crocheting, tailoring and bakery and higher education.

There is a need for Compassion International to meet all the monetary expenses related to projects and programs executed. In case of need for local raw materials, beneficiaries should contribute locally available materials such as labour, stones, and sand in case there is a need for constructing a project office or kitchen or any other project that may deem to need their efforts, rather than demanding for money from beneficiaries.

There is a need to increase the coverage area per Compassion International assisted project to a radius of more than 5 km as funding increases. This means that Compassion International must put more effort into getting funders or sponsors. There is a need for the organisation to allow for full and meaningful beneficiary participation. Involving beneficiaries in active participation allows them to make the right choices of intervention and become responsive to such interventions. Consequently, the sustainability of organisational projects may be

enhanced and promoted, leading to poverty reduction.

NGOs need to expand the number of beneficiaries in order to reduce poverty in the areas of their operation. For example, it considers at least one beneficiary from each household considered as poor. In addition, such members should be living within a short distance from the project centre. However, it was established that some of the households had around 15 members per household. This meant that it might be hard for one beneficiary to help in reducing poverty in such a large family, even if the principle of the trickledown effect were to apply.

Compassion International need to ensure even distribution of its assisted projects in any district of operation if the great impact is to be realised. Proper coordination between the district local government and CI is paramount in the poverty alleviation process since poor coordination between the organisation and local government could lead to duplication of projects. Therefore, both parties should expose their work plans to each other to avoid or minimise the problem of duplication.

The NGO needs to tackle poverty reduction dynamically, strategically, and comprehensively. This is because poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon that needs a multidimensional approach. There is a need to look at other categories of needy people in society such as the elderly, widows, and disabled persons, rather than placing emphasis on one category. Children that Compassion supports, for instance, just comprise a single element among many that need to be supported to realise the meaningful achievements of the NGO in reducing poverty in the country.

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