

EXAMINING INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS (INGOs) ROLES IN ENHANCING GIRL' EDUCATION IN RWANDA: A CASE STUDY OF BUGESERA DISTRICT

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Abstract: Although, the number of educated children has in the past 20 years in some countries increased, boys have proportionally fared much better than girls. In 1990, 130 million children had no access to primary school; of these 81 million were girls. Two-thirds (65 per cent) of the world's 176 million illiterates are women. This can be attributed to such customary practices as child labour, early marriages, lack of funds and inadequate school facilities, teenage pregnancies as well as cultural and traditional practices. Bugesera district has its own share of this problem and as a result, many Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are concerned and are in the district working hard to bridge the gender educational gap between the boy and the girl-child. It is in this regard that this study was designed to examine the impact of the NGOs in bridging the gender educational gap between the boy and the girl-child in the Bugesera district. The study examined the service delivery approach of the NGOs, nature of service of the NGOs, the level of coverage of the services of the NGOs, whether the services of the NGOs meet the appropriate needs of the girl-child, and finally, the areas the NGOs need to improve upon in the delivery of their services to the girl-child. This study adopted a quantitative approach of both descriptive and correlation designs. The study employed the secondary source of data in which the efforts of several studies on the history, causes and effects of discrimination, perceptions, traditions and negative cultural practices that deepened the gender educational gap. It employed the primary source of data in which questionnaires were used to make the finding scientific. Also included in this social survey which has a sample size of 270 respondents was participant observation to gather data directly from the local people in the district. The study revealed that the activities of the NGOs within the district have an impact in minimizing the gender educational gap between the boy and the girl-child. The study also revealed some of the challenges such as personnel, financial and logistical constrains that the NGOs face in the delivery of their services in the district. The study concludes that even though the NGOs normally deliver their assistance to their beneficiaries at different times within the academic year, beneficiaries still consider it useful irrespective of the time they get it but were also of the views that since individual families have different financial problems, their views should have been sought as to the time within the academic year they will wish the assistance be delivered to their wards. The issue of girls' education has been approached from various angles, and the key in moving towards a better standard of girls' education is to have a clear understanding of all the constraints that prevent girls from attending school and to tackle them individually. The researcher believe that it would be important to take a closer look at the chores that girls are laden with at the house and see how this impact their ability to access education; whether they are simply physically demanding or time consuming.

Keywords: interventions of INGOs, Sustainability of the services, NGO roles, Bugesera district.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Basic education is a human right and has been recognized as such since the 1984 adoption of the universal declaration of human right. Since then, numerous human right treaties have reaffirmed this right and have supported entitlement to free, compulsory primary education for 'all' children. In 1990, the education for all (EFA) commitment was launched to ensure

that by 2015, all children particularly girls who are in difficult circumstances and particularly those in ethnic minorities, have access to and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality.

According to Gyimah and Duodu (2006), girls or women with some formal education are more likely to seek medical care, ensure their children are immunized, be better informed about their children nutritional requirement, and adopt improved sanitation practices. As a result, their infants and children have the higher survival rate and tend to be healthier and better nourished. According to the International Centre for Research on Women (an independent women's education and research institute based in the United States), June 2008, the education that a girl receives is the stronger predictor of the age she will marry and is a critical factor in reducing the prevalence of child marriage. The World Bank (2008) estimates that an additional year of schooling for 1000 women helps prevent two maternal deaths.

Also, each additional year of formal education that a mother completes translates to her children staying in school an additional one-third to one-half of a year. It is however unfortunate to state that though education is very important to the girl child just as their male counterparts, there is a limited access to education of the girl-child. According to Brukum (2005), while notable progress has been made in the category of enrolment, much progress is still needed, especially in addressing the gender parity and equality in education that addresses the socioeconomic problems of all in society. Even though the millennium development goal three (MDG 3) aimed to reduce the gender gap in education, the problem still persists due to the following reasons; high level of both urban and rural poverty, socio-cultural issues, level of illiteracy and ignorance in society, early marriage which keep the girl-child out of school, premature pregnancy, difficult child birth, obnoxious widowhood rite, male preference and other harmful traditional practices. In order to safeguard the interest of these children and to bridge the gender gap, many Non-Governmental Organizations work in this area in order to complement the government effort in various countries. For instance, the British Department for International Development (DFID) through the program partnership agreement (PPA) is actively engaged in the support and promotion of the girlchild education in various countries in Africa including Zimbabwe, Kenya Rwanda and Mali. They are also engaged in the distribution of school uniforms, bicycles, school bags, sandals, exercise books, pens and pencils to the girl-child in the various schools in Ghana. UNICEF is also involved in a similar exercise of promoting girl-child education in order to reduce the gender gap in education. Also, the Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED) is also a non-governmental organization whose main activity is to work to improve the disparity that exists between the boy and the girl-child in formal education. There are other local and international NGOs working in this area, yet the gap still exists if not widening.

The past few decades have seen tremendous social, economic and environmental changes the world over. In Africa, persistent political and ethnic conflicts, the rise in oil prices and deterioration in terms of trade have placed huge economic burden on governments, local communities and individuals. This has resulted in high rate of unemployment, poverty and increased external or foreign debts. Various international organizations, individual countries and NON-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have tried to assist Africa to overcome these challenges in the form of grants, loans and donations

Like other developing countries, Rwanda's socio-economic development has depended largely on agriculture. However, the country experienced a devastatingly horrific destruction of the entire socio-economic fabrics that left all state infrastructure and human resources in shambles exacerbated by the 1994 genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi. In rebuilding the state, the current government set an ambitious vision 2020 to propel the country's development through a holistic approach. The vision 2020 was also responding to global millennium development goals (MGDs) and prioritised a Knowledge based economy. Rwanda's Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS) provided a medium-term framework for achieving the country's long-term development aspirations as embodied in Rwanda Vision 2020, the seven-year Government of Rwanda (GoR) programme, and the Millennium Development Goals. The strategy builds on strong achievements in human capital development and promotes three flagship programmes. These flagships serve to prioritize actions by the GoR, mobilize resources for development and improve policy implementation through more coordinated interventions across sectors. NGOs have been critical to helping the state in many areas or fields, ranging from health and education to livelihood sustainability. NGOs intervention in education sector played a vital role in the realization of the MDGs and helping the government achieve the universal 9-year basic education and of recent the 12-year basic education to help Rwandan children complete a cycle of secondary education. Their contribution in infrastructure development and capacity building for teachers has been remarkably recognized. The universal primary and secondary education program has enthused a tremendous rise in the enrolment of both girls and boys in school. However, the question of dropouts has been so significant among girls than boys as they advance further into higher levels of secondary schools. Factors such as poverty, parents' ignorance, culture that pushes more for the education of boys than girls, early marriages and pregnancies as well as management of the menstruation periods and menstruation cycle among others account to the shortfalls.

Also, Rwanda as most developing countries has ratified several conventions for the protection of the rights of children (girls and boys). Basic education is a human right and has been recognized as such since the 1984 adoption of the universal declaration of human right. Public demand for education and increased level of poverty in most African countries means provision of education for both genders is critical (Abagi, et al. 2017). In 2008, the government of Rwanda enacted the Universal Basic Education to enable both girls and boys access basic quality education where legislations enabling a compulsory education for all school going age children were enacted (MINEDUC, 2008). In this initiative strategic plans to implement a successful free basic education were put in place including the education sector strategic plan (ESSP, 2013-2018). However, a number of issues pertaining to positive response towards education especially for the girl child still exist.

Recently, the Global Gender Gap Report (GGGR) ranked Rwanda sixth in closing gender gaps around the world. To arrive at the conclusion, the 2015 report considered economic opportunity, political empowerment, health and education for both men and women. In education, the report found that 68 per cent of females in Rwanda are literate as compared to 73 per cent males but across the different levels; primary education has the biggest enrolment of girls at 95 per cent higher than 92 per cent for boys. However, for those above 25 years, 26 per cent of females attain primary education as compared to 35 per cent of males. Also, males at 59 per cent dominate the figure of students who are supposed to be in primary but are out of school as compared to only 41 per cent of females.

In Rwanda, the enrolment rate for girls was surpassing that of boys in both primary and lower secondary school but slowly receding at higher secondary (MINEDUC, 2013). It however reported a substantial improvement on the part of girls' responsiveness to education but still acknowledged the geographical disparities between regions.

Civil Society role in education is now more crucial than ever. As the Government is taking education and training, human resource development as a priority now so that it can support other sectors, private sector and civil society need to do the same, Public Private Partnership (PPP) at all levels with special attention on (TVET and Higher Education). This study will therefore examine the role of International NGOs to enhancing girl education in Rwanda.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The rapid growing economy characterized by changing socio-economic and cultural aspects demands highly competent human capital to match global trends of economic growth and development (Lifanda, et al. 2004). In this regard, Rwanda has embarked on human resource development as a basis for this development through developing a knowledge-based economy where it has initiated Universal Primary and Secondary education, with initial 9-year basic free education for all boys and girls (Abagi et al. 2012; MINEDUC, 2008).

Despite enormous gains in enrolment of girls into the universal 9-year basic education, serious problems still persist in regard to their retention and completion of the basic education cycle. The gender analysis for USAID Rwanda's learning enhanced across Rwanda Now project (2014) reveals that Rwanda has achieved gender parity in access to education at the primary school level since 2001 (in 2001, net enrollment was 76.1% for girls, and 74.5% for boys). In 2013 net enrollment in primary school was 97.5% for girls, and 95.7% for boys but observed that although Girls progress through primary grades with less repetition and dropout than boys and tend to complete primary school in greater numbers at the correct age (MINEDUC, 2014), males account for a higher percentage of students than females at upper secondary school and beyond

According to the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC, 2013), the enrolment rate of girls in schools was higher than that of boys but completion rate of boys is higher than that of girls. In addition, UNESCO (2009) reported higher enrolment and low completion rates in primary and secondary school for girls than boys. This clearly indicates that more girls drop out of school while boys persist to the end. MINEDUC (2013) associates this backdrop to early pregnancy, early marriages, lack of sanitary pads, and poverty. Although previous studies have shown high dropout rate for girls and the associated causes, the role of INGO projects in enhancing girl education has not been emphasized. Currently, there is insufficient documented information on the role of INGO projects in enhancing girl education in Rwanda. This study will therefore focus on examining the role of International Non-Government organizations in enhancing girl education in Rwanda.

1.3 Objectives of the study

1.3.1 General objective

The general objective of this study was to examine the International NGO roles in enhancing girl' education in Bugesera district.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives were:

1. To explore the specific and relevant interventions of INGOs to enhance girls' education
2. To assess the sustainability of the services of the NGOs and how long they can keep the girl-child in school.

1.4 Research questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the specific and relevant interventions of INGOs to enhance girl's education?
2. What are the sustainable services that can keep a girl child in school the NGOs have provided?

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A conceptual framework is used in research to outline possible courses of action or to present a preferred approach to an idea or thought (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2008). The purpose of a conceptual framework is to clarify concepts and propose relationships among the concepts in a study. It provides a context for interpreting the study findings and to explain observations. A conceptual framework may be represented as a schematic or mathematical model (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The conceptual framework of the study is presented on figure 1. The independent variable of the study is the role of NGO represented by these constructs (Motivation, monitoring and supervision, Awareness, Guidance, Support and Stimulation, Training) as exemplified by Colquitt (2001). The dependent variable is Girl' Education measured through three dimensions namely; Attendance, Performance, Commitment, Hard work and Attitude as construed by Meyer and Allen (1990). Policy and cultural context are included in the model as a moderating variable.

This conceptual framework has been developed for this study and it indicates how variables interact.

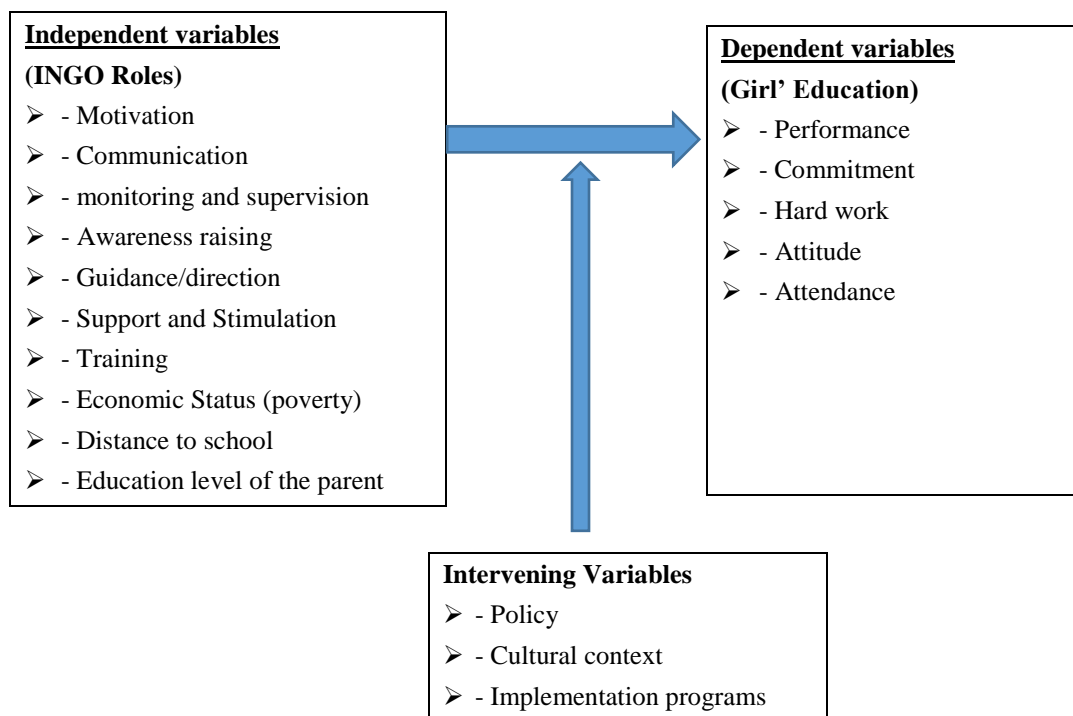


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

3. TARGET POPULATION

According to Ngechu (2014), a population is a well-defined or set of people, services, elements, and events, group of things or households that are being investigated. This definition ensures that population of interest is homogeneous. Population studies are more representative because everyone has equal chance to be included in the final sample that is drawn according to Mugenda and Mugenda (2013). The study population included school children, girls in villages who already drop out of schools. Also, parents and teachers participated in this study. Officials from MINEDUC, and local leaders both at district and community level also participated in the study.

3.1 Sample size and sampling procedure

Kombo & Tromp (2009) and Kothari (2014) describe a sample as a collection of units chosen from the universe to represent it. Marczyk, *et al.* (2015) and Yang (2008) define a sample as subset of the population to be studied. Its main advantages are cost, speed, accuracy and quality of the data sampling technique is the strategy used to select study participants or respondents (Kothari, 2014). Sampling is defined as the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that they represent the larger group from which they are selected (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013).

A total of 350 respondents participated in this study. The study employed simple random sampling to select 187 respondents mainly the children from selected schools in Bugesera District. They participated in the study through interview administered questionnaire. This method was used because it is simple to understand, easy to use and interpret (Yin, 2011). Furthermore, purposive sampling was used to select 100 key respondents who included (20 employers from MINEDUC, 10 head teachers of various selected schools, 30 teachers from selected schools, 20 members from area/local leadership, 20 participants from civil society organizations or NGOs working with children rights and education) were selected to participate in the study through in-depth interviews. Sampling was done in such a way that there was a fairly uniform distribution of interviewees from all schools within Bugesera district.

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 The Role of the NGOs in Girl-Child Education.

In all, the research tried to examine the way and manner by which the NGOs are carrying out their activities and their impact on the girl-child education in the Bugesera district. In order to examine their activities and their impact comprehensively, the research tried to examine things such as the “Service Delivery Approach”, the Nature of services of the NGOs, the level of sensitization among the parents of the beneficiaries, the extent of coverage of their services and sustainability of their services. The main aim of this research was to find out the following among others; how the NGOs go about the selection process of their beneficiaries. In other words, the NGOs go about the selection process of their beneficiaries through embarking on community education programmes, explaining the importance of education and identifying the potential beneficiaries of their programme. Also, the research looked at the support type, support coverage, support duration and factors influencing the support package.

4.1.1 How Beneficiaries are Identified

With regards to how the beneficiaries are always identified, various responses were given as in Figure 4.3.

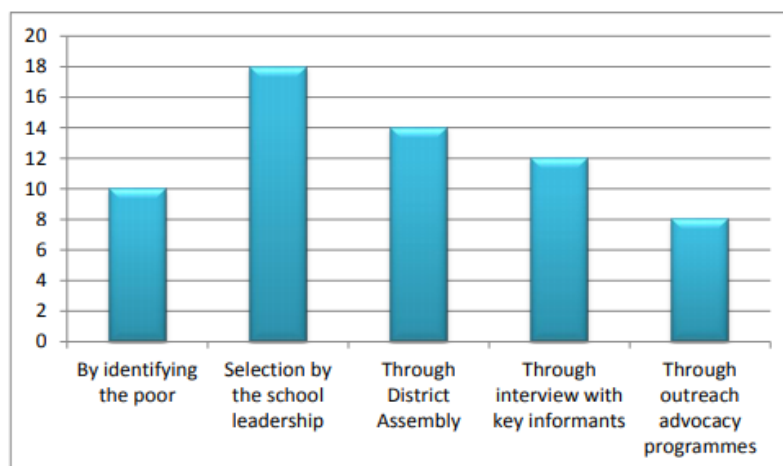


Figure 2: Beneficiaries Identification of Respondents

These responses included identifying the poor (16%), selection by the school leadership (29%), through District Assembly (23%), through interview with key informants (19%) and through outreach advocacy programmes (13%). With the identification of the poor, the school heads and the staff of the school in charge are normally tasked to investigate the family and the financial background of all the girl-children in their various schools in order to furnish the NGOs as to those who are actually needy. In line with this, the school heads are not asked to identify only the needy but also how brilliant are those identified because the target is not the girl-child in general but those who are needy but brilliant. The school Heads identify the brilliant children through the conduct of written examination, oral interview to ascertain the

communication skills of the potential beneficiaries and the verification of the terminal reports of these girls to ascertain their level of academic performance. Responses from the school authorities also showed that the District Assembly is also at times engaged in the identification of the girl-child who is needs support. The Bugesera District Assembly like any other Assembly normally receive applications from all manner of students including that of the girlchild which give the Assembly the opportunity to study the poverty profile of the various female students in order to provide the NGOs with an information as to who qualified to benefit from their assistance. There are people in various communities who by their experience seem to know so much about the communities in which they live including financial and poverty profile of individual family members within their communities and can serve as sources of knowledge and information to researchers and people who require information about those communities. This category of people known as key informants is another group the NGOs normally rely upon to obtain information regarding the poverty situation of individual families and for that matter those qualified to benefit from the services of the NGOs. The staffs of the NGOs also normally embark on outreach and advocacy programme to eradicate, sensitize and to call on parents to send their girl-child to school and through this an opportunity is normally created for them to identify and pick their beneficiaries.

The school Heads also expressed their views on the question of their involvement in the actual selection process of beneficiaries after giving information on the suitability or otherwise of potential beneficiaries. All the sixty-two (62) of the school Heads and staff representing 100 percent stated that they take part in the selection process of their beneficiaries. This could be due to the educational background of the school Heads and their staff as all of them have some level of education. The school Heads however stated that other stake holders to the Girl-child education such as parents, Traditional Authorities, opinion leaders and the village Committees do not normally take part in the selection of the girl-child who should be assisted. This suggests the non-involvement of some stake holders when the NGOs are selecting those to benefit from their services.

Views were also expressed by the school Heads and their staff on the fairness or otherwise of the mode of selection of beneficiaries and also the idea of focusing on only the needy, brilliant ones instead of the girl-child in general. With the issue of mode of selection, sixty (60) of the school Heads and staff representing 97 percent agreed that the processes leading to the final selection of the respondents are fair. To support their position, they stated that a thorough investigation is done concerning the financial background of the families with which the beneficiaries are coming from after which the performance of the pupils is verified through sometimes a written examination, an oral interview and the verification of their terminal reports. To them this could have been one of the best ways by which the NGOs could pick their beneficiaries without discrimination. On the issue of dealing only with needy but brilliant girlchild, 44 of the school Heads representing 71 percent agreed that dealing with only brilliant girlchild is fair, stating that resources are limited and must be used judiciously rather than “wasting” it on those who may not be successful at the end of the day. There was a divergent view coming from the rest of the Heads who were mainly women to the effect that the NGOs should not discriminate against some of the Girl-child and must find a way of helping the girlchild in general since there is the need to prioritize the education of the girl-child. Their passion though understandable, might have been influenced by their gender as women. On the question of the determination of the support type for the girl-child, all sixty-two (62) representing 100 percent of the school Heads however stated that they have never been consulted in that direction.

In simple terms, the selection process included the use of the terminal reports of the girl-child to select the needy, conducting interviews to select those who are qualified for this support or selection done through advocacy and outreach programmes. The implication is that the girl-child was taken through a vigorous selection process to be able to determine their level of needs and the kinds of assistance required. This is where the discrimination as to who is in need as well as brilliance comes in

4.1.2 Views of Girl-Child on the Type of Support Offered by the NGOs

The study sought views of Girl-Child on the Type of Support Offered by the NGOs.

Table 1: Views of Girl-Child on the Type of Support Offered by the NGOs

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Payment of School Fees	62	33.1
	Provision of Bicycles & Uniforms	41	21.9
	Provision of Books & Learning Materials	36	19.2
	Do not know	17	9.1

	Provision of sanitary pads and other hygienic materials	17	9.1
	Food Assistance	14	8.6
	Total	187	100.0

From Table 1, when all the girl-children were asked about the nature of assistance for the Girlchild, eight (8) of them representing 9 percent indicated that they do not know. This answer was based on the level of education of beneficiaries since most of them have not been in school before. Sixteen (16) of them representing 17 percent indicated that beneficiaries were given food assistance, eighteen (18) of the Girl-child representing 19 percent indicated that they were given books and other learning materials. Twenty-eight (28) representing 30 percent indicated that NGOs provide sanitary materials such as pads, Twenty (20) of the Girl-child representing 22 percent said that the NGOs give bicycles and providing school uniforms for the Girl-child in the Bugesera District. Majority, thirty (30) of the respondents representing 33 percent mentioned that the NGOs undertake to pay the school fees of their beneficiaries. Items given the girl-child as the responses from table 4.3 indicated include food materials, food assistance, sanitary pads, provision of school needs including bicycles, school bags, sandals, textbooks, school uniform and paying of school fees for and on behalf of parents or guardians. The decisions by the NGOs to provide these items might have been influenced by the fact that most of the girl-child in the District encounter so many challenges in their education including the ability to pay their school fees, provision of the needed learning materials, books, uniform etc .A survey of the Bugesera District during the conduct of this research revealed that most school children including the Girlchild do not normally attend school regularly due to hunger and lack of what to take along to eat in school and might have influenced the decision of the NGOs to provide take-home ration and food assistance to the girl-child. It was also noted during the conduct of research that many more school children including the girl-child walk very long distances from their villages to their various schools and might have been the reason why the NGOs decide to provide the girl-child with bicycles. Absence of school materials and needs of the girl-child normally remain one reason for which the girl-child is not in school. Also, the girl-child is often asked to stop school due to lack of funds to pay her school fees. Once these are taken up by the NGOs, the girl-child would now have the opportunity to remain in school.

When the question was posed as to whether the items given the girl-child was their priority, 86 percent of the girl-child with almost all those who have been given bicycles answered yes, emphasizing on how they enjoy riding their bicycles to school every morning. Their answers could have been based on their age as almost all of them (92%) were between the ages of 10 and 20 which are associated with youthful exuberance of high interest in items such as bicycles. The rest of the 8 percent who were from twenty-one (21) years and above rather indicated that priorities of the girl-child are not the same and that the NGOs have the responsibility of assessing the needs and priorities of the individual girl-child before taking decisions as to who to be given what. Wholesale provision of the items to the girl-child without finding out their individual needs seems to suggest that the needs and problems of the girl-child across the District are the same and do not differ in any way but young as they may be, the girl-child thought doing things this way is appropriate. The girl-child further stressed that those items provided are those when lacking, they are always asked to remain at home. The girl-child thought that it does not matter whether the NGOs asked them to provide them with information regarding the kind of support they individually required. The implication here is that some of the girl-children may be given items they already have thereby threatens the effort of the NGOs in their assistance. The NGOs must always verify the needs of individuals to avoid duplication in their effort to assist the girl-child.

4.1.3 Views of the Girl-Child on the Contribution of the Support to Their Education

When the Girl-child was asked about to the contribution of the items they receive from the NGOs to their education, the following responses were elicited from them as in the Table

Table 2: Views of the Girl-Child on the Contribution of the Support to Their Education

	Frequency	Percent
Do not have to stop school because of school fees	48	25.6
Do not have to stop school for lack of school materials	28	15.0
I am not affected by expenses on siblings and funerals	66	35.3
I am not longer engaged in petty trading	35	6.0
I am now regular and punctual in school	31	17.0
Total	187	100.0

Twelve (12) of them representing 13 percent answered that they were now regular in school. Interaction with the Girl-child and other community members from the District during this research revealed that as a result of cultural and financial issues affecting the girl-child education, the girl-child attendance in school is not always regular and this is the reason why the Girl-child thought that providing them with the support by the NGOs now make them regular in school. Ten of them representing 11 percent indicated that they no longer do petty trading for their school needs. This is an indication that the Girl-child now has enough time on her hands in order to concentrate on her education. Fourteen of the Girl-child representing 15 percent indicated that their education is no longer affected by lack of school materials. It was also revealed during the conduct of this research that as a results of lack of school materials such as books, school bags, uniform and other learning materials, the girl-child dropped out of school even though they would have still been interested in education and this account for the reason why the girl-child now think that with the provision of those items and materials by the NGOs now keep them in school. 24 of them representing 26 percent answered that they are no longer asked to stay home for lack of money to pay their school fees. Thirty-two of the Girl-child representing 35 percent actually stated that they are no longer affected by their parents' expenses on their siblings and that of funerals.

4.1.4 Views of Parents on the Relief Provided by the Assistance

The study further sought to determine the views of parents on the relief provided by the assistance among the respondents.

Table 3: Views of Parents on the Relief Provided by the Assistance

	Frequency	Percent
I can now save for farming activities	48	25.6
I now have extra funds to cater for her siblings	28	15.0
It makes it easy for me to provide her other needs	66	35.3
I can now save some money for my business	35	6.0
Total	187	100.0

When the question was asked especially to the parents concerning how the assistance has relieved them of their burden, all of them representing hundred percent (100%) agreed that they have been relieved. They stated different areas where they have been relieved by the assistance offered by the NGOs as in Table 4.5. Whereas the farmers numbering twenty-nine (29) and representing 53 percent of the total number of parents stated that the assistance offered by the NGOs to the Girl-child reduces financial pressure on them and therefore they can now save some money for their farming activities, the traders (11 percent) on the other hand stated that they can now save some money for their business activities. The rest of the parents representing 36 percent indicated that they now have extra funds to cater for the siblings of the beneficiaries. This indicates how important the assistance is for both the girl-child and the parents. Responses from the parents suggest that they are no longer worried as the needs of their girl-child are provided by the NGO. Responses from the parents suggest that they no longer worry themselves in the provision of some of the school needs of their children such as school bags, uniforms, bicycles, books, payment of school fees or any other materials provided by the NGOs. The implication is that the parent will now be able to educate these children comfortably. Also, there would be funds now set aside to educate other children who are not being assisted. The parents as farmers will now have some extra income to invest in their farming activities and those in business will also do same.

On the issue as to whether parents are always consulted especially on the determination of support type for their Girl-child, all the fifty-five (55) representing 100 percent of parents interviewed stated that they are not consulted in the determination of the support type for their children. On the question as to whether there is the need for them to always be consulted in the determination of the support type; twenty-eight (28) of the parents representing 51 percent agreed that they should always be contacted in the determination of the support type for their children. They stressed that they are the parents of these children and for that matter know best what they individually can provide for their children and what they cannot and therefore need to be contacted in this regard. The rest of the 49 percent who are mainly the uneducated however thought that it was not all that necessary to be contacted stating that the NGOs can only give what they have no matter what anybody suggests them. Responses from the field suggested that the NGOs should have been contacting the stakeholders (parents, traditional authorities, educational authorities, assemblymen, and NGO staff) to ascertain the needs of their wards. They indicated that democracy in service delivery should be the yardstick with which the NGOs should work. People live with their wards and know them so much and that their inputs should always be sought during the determination of the support type for their wards by the NGOs.

When the question was asked as to whether the parents have any idea as to how long the assistance given by the NGOs normally remain with a particular group assisted, the following responses were elicited; forty-nine (49) of the parents representing 89 percent indicated that they know how long the assistance will last. Whereas six (6) of them representing 11 percent however stated that they did not have any idea as to how the assistance of the NGOs will remain for a particular group of the Girl-child assisted. They mentioned the period for the assistance for a particular group as spanning between one and three years. Forty-three (43) parents representing 78 percent thought that the time period was woefully inadequate. The parents did not think that the period or the duration for the support of the girl-child was enough in solving the problem of the girl-child. They think that the duration for the support should have been more than the periods stated by respondents so that the gender gap in education would be closed.

5. CONCLUSIONS

From the findings of this study several conclusions can be drawn.

In sum the study brought up a lot of revelations in relation to the role of the NGOs in girl-child education in the Bugesera District. It showed that the assistance given by the NGOs has a great impact on education in the District in the following ways; The girl-child now attend school regularly, have the items they need to make their studies easy, get to their schools on time with their bicycles and can at least afford a day's meal while at school. The parents of the girl-child are also relieved of their burden of providing school needs of their girl-child, acquire some education on the management of the education of their girlchild and more importantly have their girl-child educated to an appreciable level. All these ensure that the girl-child gets enrolled and does not drop out of school as used to be in some time past.

The study also identified negative cultural practices, ignorance, discrimination, tradition and financial issues as factors militating against the girl-child education. Some of the stake holders such as the parents and the chiefs who are the indigenes in the District do not take part in the selection of beneficiaries even though they are normally contacted for the background information of the beneficiaries which they think is not all that fair. Even though the beneficiaries and their parents recognize the contribution of this support to the Girl-child education, they are not consulted in the determination of the support type which is not right since the girl-child and their parents know best what they need at any particular period of time.

The study also revealed that the selection of only brilliant but needy children serve as a disincentive to all those who are needy but not so brilliant. Also, issues of coverage of the assistance package in the District emerged as one of the areas of concern to the inhabitants in the District. It was found out that the package covers only some selected communities leaving a greater portion of the District unattended to. Because of this, the girl-child assisted constitutes the minority there by leaving majority of them unattended to. It is also clear that the beneficiaries and their relations do not know how long the programmes of the NGOs will remain with them in the District there by leaving them wondering as to how to prepare themselves against the withdrawal of the service providers.

It was found out that their programme duration does not always see the girl-child to any reasonable level of their education since it normally ends at the basic level and even those who are assisted at the senior High level are not assisted beyond that level. Even though the NGOs normally deliver their assistance to their beneficiaries at different times within the academic year, beneficiaries still consider it useful irrespective of the time they get it but were also of the views that since individual families have different financial problems, their views should have been sought as to the time within the academic year they will wish the assistance be delivered to their wards. In view of the above, some recommendations were made towards the effective delivery of the services to the beneficiaries by the NGOs.

5.1 Recommendations

From the conclusions drawn, the researcher made a number of recommendations which are briefly discussed below;

From the findings it is clear that the NGOs get into contact with their beneficiaries through the school leadership, the District Assembly, and key informants and through outreach programmes. Even though the process ignores parents as sources of information, those who were contacted only provided information and were not involved in the actual selection process. In view of this, steps should be taken by the service providers (i.e. NGOs) to involve all the stake holders i.e. the school leadership, the District assembly the key informants and more importantly the parents not at the information gathering level only but in the actual selection process. The decision as to who is more qualified to benefit based on the information gathered from the grounds should not be hidden from the stakeholders in order to make the process as transparent as possible.

In a situation where the NGOs are not able to be so transparent in the process, they should send publications to the key stakeholders, i.e the chiefs, local officials, village committee members, the educational authorities and parents indicating the criteria used based on the information gathered from the field. The NGOs should exercise strong will in terms of making their selection process as transparent as possible. It is also clear from the findings that the motive of the NGOs is to sponsor or take care of the 'needy' but 'brilliant' Girl-child instead of all Girl-child in. Respondents especially the parents from the responses felt that the programme of the NGOs is discriminatory against the not so intelligent and focuses on only the needy but brilliant children.

In view of this, steps must be taken by the NGOs to bring on board all the Girl-child by developing strategies to raise additional funds in that direction in instead of only the intelligent ones. Most of these girls who are considered not so intelligent could be in such situations because of poor financial backgrounds and the apparent lack of school materials and needs. The NGOs if possible should expand their budgets to cover the girl-child who are considered not so intelligent.

Still on the issues of the approach to service delivery by the NGOs, some education was given to the stake holders, i.e. the chiefs, the local authorities, the village committee members and parents of the girl-child education especially strictly on the issues of the management of the support and the items given with little being done on the issues of the negative practices that affect the Girlchild at home. The issues of cultural practices, ignorance, tradition and the share discrimination that affect the education of the Girl-child deserve as equal attention as the issues of managing the items or support given the Girl-child and due to this, the N GOs must as well do enough education and sensitization on such issues as negative socio-cultural practices, the dehumanizing traditional practices, the shear discrimination against the girl-child as well as the ignorance on the part of parents and the society in general to help reduce the dropout rate of the girl-child in school

On the issue of the support type for the girl child education, various types of items were mentioned as food and food materials, payment of school fees, sanitary materials and the provision of school needs such as books, uniforms and the school bags which respondents agreed are so useful but it was found out that the stake holders especially the parents were not consulted by the service providers bin the determination of the support type for their wards.

As per the above, the NGOs should see the need to involve at least the parents in the determination of the support type for their wards. Different families have different socioeconomic problems and for the NGOs to lump up different families under a single assistance package will not be so beneficial to some families like others. Again, since parents and family members know much about their own financial problem, their views should be sought as to the determination of the support type for their wards

Also, the Girl –child out of school who are assisted also have different ideas as to how to continue with life after school and therefore have different needs with regards the assistance and should also be contacted for their opinion when the NGOs are about to support them. Also, on the issue of the support type still, there is nowhere Guidance and counseling support service was mentioned as part of the support package. It is worth noting that most of these children drop out of school because of their ignorance about what awaits them in life and the appropriate support for such a group would have been guidance and counseling. It is therefore recommended that guidance and counseling services be organized for the Girlchild in the District to help them realize the importance of education. The Data gathered indicated that because most of the assistance package is largely financial, most potential beneficiaries are not covered and if most of the financial packages are converted to services such as the guidance and counseling will have a wider coverage, hence it is so recommended.

The said groups can also undertake ventures that will make it possible for them to gather enough resources to ensure that they are able to finance the Girl-child education. They can also engage in communal labour by helping individual families undertake ventures that will make it possible for them to contribute to fund of such a group. Similarly, the NGOs can help the local communities to develop community strategic Development plan aimed at tackling and solving problems concerning the Girl-child education. Furthermore, the NGOs should assist the local community members to set a common fund known as the Girl-child education common fund with purpose of taking care of the Girl-child education. Such common fund must not be for the parents of the Girl-child only, but all community members must have some financial obligation towards the fund. The District Assembly must be made to allocate part of its common fund to this special fund so that the continuity of the assistance to the Girl-child education is assured. Finally, the NGOs must engage in advocacy and lobbying with other NGOs, the District Assembly, Corporate bodies and the Government.

5.2 Areas for further Research

Finding from the NGOs indicated that resources, financial and logistics constraints are the reasons why they are not able to do much in terms of their coverage of the district. They sighted difficulties in raising funds and the expensive nature of the items provided to the girl-child as some of the reasons.

The issue of girls' education has been approached from various angles, and the key in moving towards a better standard of girls' education is to have a clear understanding of all the constraints that prevent girls from attending school and to tackle them individually. The researcher believe that it would be important to take a closer look at the chores that girls are laden with at the house and see how this impact their ability to access education; whether they are simply physically demanding or time consuming.

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