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## Livelihood Strategies in Ghanaian Slums: The Case of Effiakuma in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis

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### **Abstract:**

*Slums in Ghana like other parts of the world are resided largely by low income families and individuals. The Effiakuma slum in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis is resided mainly by low income groups because accommodation there is relatively cheaper. The residents engaged in several economic activities as strategies for their livelihoods. Using mainly the observation approach and interviews, it emerged that residents of the slum engaged in several ventures both legal and illegal for their livelihoods. These ventures include: spiritual healings, religiosity, fun centre operations, hotels and chop bar operations, barbering and kiosk businesses. Others include toilet and rubbish keeping, internet fraud, sexual services and contract, icon-ship following and alms seeking. The paper concludes with the observation that despite the low incomes by the residents, they are very industrious, and enjoy life to the fullest.*

**Keywords:** Livelihood, slum, ethnic group, business, religiosity.

### **1. Introduction**

A slum is a densely populated urban area that is characterized by a generally low standard of living. These areas may also be known as shantytowns, barrios, ghettos, or favelas, ([www.wisegeek.org](http://www.wisegeek.org)). According to this source slums were common in the 19th and early 20th centuries in the United States and Europe. And that in recent times, slums has been predominantly found in urban regions of developing and undeveloped parts of the world, but is also found in developed economies.

According to UN-HABITAT (n.d), around 33% of the urban population in the developing world in 2012, or about 863 million people, lived in slums. The proportion of urban population living in slums was highest in Sub-Saharan Africa (61.7%). In Ghana, there about 230 slums across the length and breadth of the nation Natalia (2013).

Slums form and grow in many different parts of the world, for many different reasons. Some causes include rapid rural-to-urban migration, economic stagnation and depression, high unemployment, poverty, informal economy, poor planning, politics, natural disasters and social conflicts Giok and Kai (2007). Amassaba (n.d) opined that slums known in Ghana as Zongos were formed or created by wayfarers who needed make-shift tents in the outskirts of the various villages for their security and for the sanctity of their religion.

Effiakuma is a residential town in the Western Region of Ghana. It is about 10 kilometres from Takoradi. It was built in the early 1960s by the then president of the country Kwame Nkrumah. The houses were built by the State Housing Cooperation. Effiakuma is the fiftieth most populous in Ghana, in terms of population, with a population of 34,501 people. The town is bounded to the West and North by Takoradi, to the east by Effia, to the south by Anaji. On the outskirts of the town is the Effiakuma Zongo (slum).

According to Amassaba (n.d) the word Zongo is a Hausa word (plural Zonguna) which means a camp, a stopover or a range, a transit quarters, a tent pitched as a temporal resting place for wayfarers; especially merchants and cattle dealers to repose for a while after which they commence their journey. Zangos in Ghana are said to be squatter places for Hausa wayfarers who came over to participate in the trans-Saharan trade in cola, gold, ivory and slaves. They stayed in Zongos which were usually in the outskirts of towns for security and also for the chastity of the Islamic religion and their culture. In the days of this said trade, these townships in present day Ghana were homogenous in nature-the inhabitants spoke one language and practiced a restrained and untainted culture Amassaba (n.d). Effiakumazongo is a highly populated area within the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis. It is a hub of religiosity, social activities and a scene of party jamborees. Like most slums in Ghana, (common perception) it is noted for notoriety of the youth with their motorbikes, early pregnancies, and high rate of school dropout. It is also the main area where low income earners including students seek for accommodation. This is because the suburb has several compound houses with single bed rooms which low income earners can afford to pay for. High income earners as well as successful business people also live in the suburb but in two or three bed room

flats unlike their poor counterparts. This paper looks at the various economic activities that the inhabitants engaged in as means of livelihoods.

## 2. Methodology

The main method employed in this study is observation which took place during the stay of the author in the study area between November 2010 and September 2013. The author also interviewed certain people (which spanned between February 2013 and April 2014) to speak to facts to which they (respondents) have knowledge, or add certain perspectives to issues and confirm or deny perceptions held by the author and others within the study area.

Some of the information presented in this study came from literature on related issues published by scholars.

## 3. Results

Variable	Number	Comment
Beggars	7	These are physically challenged persons including the aged.
Preachers	9	Five Christian and four Islamic preachers
Healers	10	Three traditionalists who also double as Muslims. Five Christians. Two exclusive Muslims
Suspected sakawa boys	3	They live glamorous lives without any known job
Sand gatherers	8	These also double as toilet keepers
Business people	13	These include kiosk keepers, fun centre operatives and so on
Association executives	18	These are ethnic group leaders
Opinion leaders	13	These are respected people around Ayigbe (Ewe) compound and Dagomba house

*Table 1: Socio-economic features of respondents  
Total number of respondents: 81*

## 4. Discussions

The Effiakuma zongo is a closely knitted society bursting with life and activity. People know one another much more closely than observed in other parts of the Metropolis. It is easy to know the whereabouts of a person by mentioning his name and ethnicity. The residents identify homes by names like Ayigbe compound, Mossi house, Dagomba house and so on. Members of these households know the entire membership of their various ethnicities. This way visitors looking for family members get their way much easier once they enquire from these houses. In the same vein, people suspected to be witches or internet fraudsters are easily found out as fingers are pointed at them any time. But the issue of the sakawa remains a mystery or allegation as the suspects have never been caught by any individual or groups like the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) or local security operatives. For the issue of witchery, there are instances where some people have confessed to being witches at open church services. The confessed witches and the suspects are feared and most sudden and accidental deaths are attributable to them.

### 4.1. The Peopling of the Suburb

Effiakumazongo is dense with population of both Ghanaian foreign extractions. The foreigners are largely Zamberima people from Niger who are doing various business activities including the sale of lumber at the Kokompe market, unorthodox foreign money exchange and sale of fabrics. Others prepare and sell kebabs in various drinking spots across the Metropolis. There are two, three or even more generations of the Zamberima people who are well integrated into the society. They are largely Muslim. Other ethnic units of foreign extraction include the Hausa and the Yoruba from Nigeria. According to Thomas (2009) the migration of Nigerians and other sub Saharan Africans to Ghana is motivated by the Ghanaian democratic culture, peace and security, economic pool and conducive cultural and linguistic destination for the migrant population.

The Ghanaian ethnic groups include people from the three northern regions. They include the Frafra, Dagaba, Dagomba, Mamprusi, Wala and many others. Some of the residents (including the foreign ethnic groups) are second or third generation individuals born in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis. This is what the Compulsory labour migration of the 1920s has left in its wake as people from northern Ghana, Nigeria, Benin and others were brought in to work in the mines and plantations of Gold Coast which were based largely in southern Ghana Mort (2006). Others are first generation migrants who moved into the Metropolis to seek greener pastures. Other Ghanaian groups include the Ewe, Buem and other related people from the Volta Region of Ghana who arguably are the second largest group after the Northern groups within the Zongo. The Akan groups include the native Ahanta, Nzema, and Wassa from the Western Region, Ashantis from the Ashanti Region of Ghana, Fantes from Western or Central Regions, Bono and the Ahafos from the

Brong Ahafo Region and many more. Effiakumazongo unlike other suburbs of the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis has relatively cheaper accommodation where many low income families can afford to live Emmanuel and Gyan (2012). The authors further opined that the cheaper nature of the accommodation in Effiakuma and that of Kwesimintsim both in the Metropolis is responsible for the dense populations of the poor that live in these areas. The Effiakumazongo is full of shanty structures, filthy gutters with people constructing wooden houses close to the gutters. Unlike Nima in Accra, Asewasse in Kumasi and other slums where the Hausa language is largely spoken, the language largely spoken in Effiakumazongo is Fante.

#### *4.2. Religious and Social Activities*

The residents of the zongo organize themselves in social and religious associations. There are Christian associations, Muslim associations and ethnic based associations.

The ethnic based associations are meant to bring individuals together under ethnicity to achieve certain objectives. It is observed that most of the ethnic based associations are non natives and are either from the Volta Region of Ghana or from the three Northern Regions (Northern, Upper West and Upper East). The associations help individuals in times of hardship and joy. It is therefore very common to find on a wedding ground people adorn shirts with inscription that depict ethnicity and mottos of the associations. Out-dooring of babies and funerals are part of the activities that these associations help their members to organize. When members lost family members like father or mother back in the home regions, the associations quickly move to their aid by monetary donations and representation at the funerals.

Some of the associations go to the extent of providing scholarship packages for needy but brilliant students for children in their home towns and villages. This is reminiscent of what Chinua Achebe (1960) describes of the activities of the Umuofia Progressive Union in his book *No Longer at Ease*. Names like Dagomba Youth Association (DAYA), Mamprusi Youth Association (MYA), Bolgatanga, Nangode, Bongo, Tongo (BONABOTO) Association and Volta Youth come to mind. The Zamberima people also have an association and could be said to be the most business minded group as they operate a co-operative fund. They are as co-operative as the Kwahus of Ghana as described by Awedoba (2013) for using revolving co-operate fund to start business for groups or individuals who have to repay by installments in the future.

These ethnic units also have relationship with the other groups whom they refer to as their kinsmen. This relationship can be described as quasi and may be owed to events dating back to pre colonial times, Awedoba (2002). This author further opined that quasi relationship exists between Ashanti and Fante, Dagaba and Frafra, Gonja and Sissala, Dagati and Zamberima. These relationships provide example of how unrelated people maintain ties with one another through jokes and other social activities. Arhin (1979), remarked that such quasi kinship ties between ethnicities are observed largely in the urban areas, especially in the zongos of Ghana where different ethnicities intermingle. The interethnic friendship promotes goodwill among the various groups.

Effiakumazongo is full of bustling activities including religious activities. Every time is a worship time as the loudspeakers hallo praises to the glory of God every time in the day. This worship is both Christian and Islamic. These two religions also have their adherents forming and belonging to various associations. The associations largely reflect certain philosophies that are being espoused by groups within the religions. Some of the groups are from churches such as the Christ Apostolic church International, Healing Outreach Church International, Ebenezer Methodist Church, Christ Healing Power Church, Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church and many more. The Islamic groups include Jallu Youth Association, Ahlu Faida Base, Ahlu Sunna waljama and several others that see to the social and spiritual needs of their members.

#### *4.3. Livelihood Strategies Framework*

According to the Department for International Development (DFID, 2000) a livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets and activities required as means of living. And that a livelihood is deemed sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities, assets and activities both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base. The Sustainable Livelihood Framework (SLF) presented below forms the core of the Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA) and serves as an instrument for the investigation of poor people livelihoods, whilst visualizing the main factor of influence.

According to Steinmann (2005) the SLA improves understanding of the livelihoods of the poor. It organizes the factors that constrain or enhance livelihood opportunities, and shows how they relate. The author further opined that it is a way of thinking about the objectives, scope and priorities for development activities and based on evolving thinking about the way the poor and vulnerable live their lives and the importance of policies and institutions. It helps formulate development activities that are: People-centered, responsive participatory, multilevel, conduct a partnership with the public and private sectors, dynamic and sustainable.

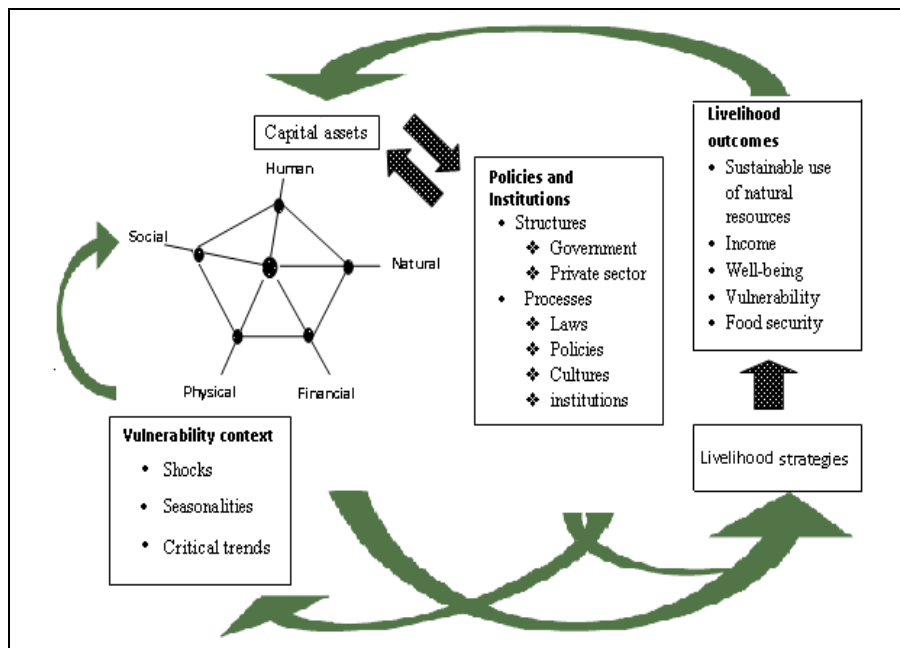


Figure 1: The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF)  
 Source: Department of International Development (DFID), (2000)

The Sustainable Livelihood Framework above shows a comprehensive picture of the various livelihood strategies and their relationship with one another. The human capital, social capital, physical capital, financial capital and natural capital are said to be the main areas that livelihoods revolves upon. These livelihoods are prone to shocks as certain conditions may affect the strategies such that they no longer support people effectively. In this study for instance, prostitution is said to be a livelihood strategy. In case of sickness or ageing, the players in this business can no longer operate thus, affecting their incomes and livelihoods. In the same vein, during dry seasons, gutter sand winning business which is a livelihood strategy in this study area will be affected as there wouldn't be running waters to deposit sand in the gutters for collection and sale. This is where the issue of policy comes in to provide support and alternative livelihoods to the vulnerable groups. The need for government and private sector including cultural institutions, religious and cultural groups to come with policies and laws to support the vulnerable cannot be overemphasized. The laws and policies are supposed to lead to livelihood outcomes which include more income, increased well-being, reduce vulnerability, improved food security, more sustainable use of natural resources and recovered human dignity.

#### 4.4. Business and Survival Strategies

Several survival strategies are engaged by the residents of Effiakuma which include legitimate business ventures and illegitimate ones. The dense population is an advantage to business people as it offers a ready market for businesses. This is why the retinue of kiosks dotted in every corner of the overcrowded streets, is always in business and showing no signs of folding up. Among the commonly seen business or survival activities include:

#### 4.5. Dispensing of Spirituality

Lots of centres known for various spiritual powers abound in the neighborhood. These include Islamic, Christian and Traditional centres. But the traditional centres are syncretic in nature as they combine Islamic or Christian activities with tradition in their operations. The centres are patronized by many because the African sees health in holistic terms. Medicine for him is not only physical but social, economic, religious, aesthetic and political. His treatment of ailments considers the body, soul and mind as functioning in a social, physical and spiritual environment Awedoba (2006). The spiritual centres dispense services such as promotion at work places, quick riches, love attractions, quick market sales, internet luck, success and breakthrough. Others patronize the centres for ailments that Awedoba (2013) refer to as unorthodox since they are spiritual in nature and patience need spiritual exorcism from the evil that witches and sorcerers have cursed them with. Walking around the zongo one can see sign posts conspicuously advertising the spiritual centres, what they offer and their locations.

The spiritual centres are patronized by people outside the community and within the community. The patronage also cuts across professions like business people (who go for success in business), civil servants (usually for promotion and protection against evil co workers), students (quick memory and success in exam), sick people (for spiritual and physical healings) couples, (for pregnancies and protection) and internet fraudsters (for success in defrauding people through the internet). The operatives are professionals and make their living through dispensing of therapeutic healings, exorcisation of evil spirits or protection of their clients. A corporate professional was asked to pay nine hundred Ghana (Ghc 900) by a Mallam (an Islamic healer) for healing to enable his wife become pregnant (personally informed by the couple). The charges vary depending on type of service being sought. The more serious the

problem, the higher the price. Usually the charges are in odd numbers and not even numbers as it is claimed to be the numbers sanctioned approved by spiritual beings.

#### 4.6. Iconship Following

Some of the youth in the zongo community make living by befriending icons and serving them as errand boys and girls. Among the said icons and popular people are those who have made a lot of money by either selling Indian hemp or are spiritualists. It is common to hear names like Shatta boys and Shatta girls, Jallo youth and so on. Not less than five of the popular spiritualists are icons commanding respect and large following. It is not uncommon to find them on occasions like funerals and festivals (usually Damba of the Dagomba people) conjuring money in both foreign and local denominations. These monies are thrown to the gathering and whoever gets hold of a portion owns it without any problem. The followers of these icons make their living by serving the later as errand boys and girls. This following attitude then becomes a survival strategy for these young men and women.

#### 4.7. Sand Gathering and Rubbish Keeping

Some of the residents make living by scooping out sand that running rain water has left in gutters. When substantial heaps are gathered, the gatherers either sell to potential buyers or mould block with it and sell.

The same category of people is also the keepers of the various rubbish sites within the slum. Four of the eight dumping sites have public toilets attached. Those who keep the dumping sites with toilets attached make the most money. Every heap of rubbish not exceeding 50 kilograms attracts a charge of 20 pesewas before it is dumped. Any heap bigger than this size will go for 1 Ghana cedis. Adults visiting the toilet pay 20 pesewas while children pay 10 pesewas. The peak periods for dumping by members of the community are morning and evenings. The operatives of the various sites cash in at these periods closing from work a little after 9 pm.

One of the public toilets is privately owned. This is close to a popular spot called Dagomba house. The owner informed this researcher that he uses the men at the public dumping sites to clean his own. But it was observed that women run the business for him unlike the public places of conveniences where men run the businesses. The private one is said to yield between Ghc 70 and Ghc100 daily. The owner said it could be more but for the fact that the operators steal the money. The toilets just like the dumping sites are also largely patronized at mornings and evenings. Though all the toilets smell badly, with customers sometimes removing their shirts before entering into the facilities, they always go back suggesting lack of toilet facilities in their homes. Public toilets especially pit latrines are the basic method of disposing fecal matter in most developing countries Darimani and Carliel (2011). The authors further opined that the latrines easily fill-up, suffer blockages, outflow and emit bad odour due to pressures from the population. This is exactly what happens in the zongo as it is usual practices to see caretakers of public toilets open the latrines to allow the fecal matter to flow out during downpours. Sometimes the downpours do not rain for long leaving the fecal materials in the gutters as the flowing waters are not strong enough. This is a usual source of conflict between the residents on one side and the caretakers and owners of toilets on the other.

#### 4.8. Kiosk and Store Operations

The slum could be described as home of kiosk businesses as kiosks are operated everywhere at the least available space. From the Achantaman Rural Bank area down to Number Nine traffic on the Takoradi Cape Coast road one can count more than two hundred kiosks where varied businesses are done. In some of the kiosks items such as provisions are sold while others sell staff for soup and other domestic consumables. Some kiosk is used as work shops where activities like furniture production, metal fabrications and television or radio repairing are done. The number of built-stores is relatively few since the area is not planned and building is haphazardly done. The kiosk is placed usually in front of the houses blocking them from view most of the time. This could explain the reason behind the seemingly crowded nature of the area. Some of the business operatives are not from the area. And so have rented the land on which they operate from the landlords.

#### 4.9. Hotel and Drinking Bars Operation

This is yet another economically viable business in the Effiakumazongo. There is only one major hotel called Western V.I.P Hotel. It is a centre of several business and social activities making the hotel almost a community centre. This is because beside accommodation the hotel operates a Parking Lot where people park their cars for safety since most of the residents do not have access roads to their homes. In the day time, the park is rented out to groups and families for social activities like wedding, meetings and funerals. It must be emphasized that only few families rent the place for funerals since there is a sizeable land lying between the wall of the park and the former residence of this author where poor household who cannot afford perform their funeral ceremonies. The hotel therefore is a centre for multi business activities as it serves food, rent out canopies, furniture rentals and many others.

The drinking bars that abound in the area are centres for joy and relaxation. Residents and even outsiders patronize the bars bringing in income and enhancing the livelihoods of the operators. The bars are also centres for social miscreants to hide out. It is not uncommon to see groups besieging bars to smoke out thieves they suspect to have broken into their homes. Quite often too, one could see patrons of the bars lying down just at the outskirts of the bars after getting boozed.

#### 4.10. Digital Satellite Television (DSTV) Operations

Some residents of the slum make living by operating DSTV channels. Usually tents are erected and fenced to provide shade and to prevent encroachment by unauthorized people. Names such as V.I.P, I Keep Long, No lateness are associated with this business and

the most popular out of the lot of eight. Each patron of the centres pays 20 pesewas to watch football matches that are played live at the world stage. The centres are always bustling with life and activities. When goals are scored the sudden burst of noise that emanate from the centres are deafening. Groans or cry of disappointments are heard also when a player narrowly missed scoring a goal. Except for the centre at the V.I.P. hotel all the seven others are permanent and full time job for the operators. They work all day through and pupils are usually sought for and beaten to school by parents from the centres as the former go to watch their favourite teams playing matches at the neglect of school.

#### *4.11. Games for Kids*

Other residents of the zongo operate games for children to earn their living. In a densely populated area like Effiakuma one need not wonder about the number of children that throng the game centres to play. Most of the time, the queue are never ending as the kids keep piling up. The games are usually computer games played on big screens. Depending on the facilities at a centre, patrons pay between 10 and 20 pesewas for a full game. For teachers and parents the children's commitments to the games and football override that for their studies. No wonder then that pupils who dodge from school or refuse to go after receiving money meant to be spent in school are always found in games and DSTV centres. But for the operators they are running their business and do not discriminate against any patron, matured or not. Money is supposed to be taken from any one anytime once their premises are visited and machines used.

#### *4.12. Artisanship*

The youth within the slum are engaged in various artisanal works. These include mason, carpentry, tiling and block molding. The professional artisans mentor the younger ones in the various trades. Standing on the streets of the slum early mornings, one could observe the artisans leaving to work in their various attires, most of them riding on motor bikes while others join public transport. Between 3pm and 4pm some of them are seen returning from work. They then converge at the park behind the V.I.P wall where they play football daily. The ball usually hit passersby or destroys goods in kiosks nearby bringing them into trouble.

#### *4.13. Barbering*

This is yet another livelihood strategy in the slum which is done in every nook and cranny. Young men construct kiosk and buy barbering equipment to work with. Usually they start by using scissors and blade moving from point to point looking for customers. When they accumulate enough money through the mobile barbering work, then they set out to open a permanent centre which results in kiosk construction. They charge between 3 cedis and 2.50 cedis per adult head as at May 2014 while children are charged one Ghana cedis.

#### *4.14. Security Operatives*

Several other young men within the zongo are security men in various stores, offices, and companies. It is important to add that some of the artisans work again as security men just to broaden their sources of income. Between 5pm and 6pm one could see the various security men moving out to posts in their uniforms. The ones working with Ghana Ports and Harbors seem to be doing well financially than the rest of their colleagues. This is seen in the type of residence rented, the time limit within which a motorbike is acquired and general purchasing power.

#### *4.15. Preaching and Religiosity*

Others make living by leading small groups of religious enthusiasts in prayer. The park that is said to be lying behind the V.I.P wall is the centre for all the religious activities usually in the nights. Both Muslim and Christian preachers organize their congregation on this park. The preachers pray, heal and foretell the future. They also receive confessions from witches while at the same time declaring others as witches. This researcher has interacted with women in a household who are all perceived as witches and so are feared to see if their mannerisms differed from others within the area. It was gathered that the women were normal for the half year that the interactions spanned. Names like Pastor Ronaldo (alias spiritual bulldozer) Mallam Alfa are popular as spiritual leaders for various religious congregation. Such men do not do any other economically viable work, but live on donations and consultancy fees gotten from members of their various congregations.

#### *4.16. Begging for Alms*

The Effiakuma slum being inhabited by lots of poor people sees some of the poor begging for alms for a living. The most commonly seen beggars are the physically challenged including amputees, blind and cripples (some able bodied individuals also beg). The physically challenged beggars sit usually in vantage areas within the suburb such as on road sides, besides mosques, and at the market centres. Some of them travel to the Takoradi Market Circle and sit in similar vantage points where passers-by can see them and give them alms. Usually the givers offer them maximum Ghc 1. There are special alms that the beggars receive which are usually substantial. These are an amalgam of odd items such as old and obsolete coins, metallic chippings, fresh cow milk and money. This category of gifts is termed special because the givers are people who have visited the spiritualists and are asked to give out such items on charity in order to prevent a calamity or accelerate the arrival of an anticipated success. This way the spiritualists are interfering in the usual occurrence of things and nature. For the beggars who on normal business day make a minimum of Ghc 12, begging for alms is a livelihood venture.

#### 4.17. Sexual Services and Contract

This could be said to be one of the illegal survival strategies in the slum. This business is done in secrecy and no one dare publicly claim to be involved. Yet there are cliques of ladies who are involved and would only do business with a man if he is introduced by a sexual service contractor. This author is aware of two contractors one of whom was introduced by friend at a food joint. At this food joint then said friend exchanged greetings with the man and demanded to know from him why he was deceived the last time. The man said 'it was because you were not serious'. The friend then told this author to see the man anytime he needed a woman. The man just smiled and went out to ride on his motorcycle. The friend then revealed that the man was a sex contractor. Any interested person needs to describe the type of woman he wants regarding shape (of buttocks and limbs), size (of breast and body), age and colour. The contractor then will charge the patron and call up the lady that fits the specifications. A meeting point is agreed and the lady is handed over to the man after the contractor has taken his share of the contract sum of 100 Ghana cedis. The contractors are always busy on their motor bikes doing this business sometimes carrying the ladies when it is night. Some of the ladies who are into sexual services are from other suburbs of the Metropolis and not necessarily from Effiakuma. For these men contractors and 'the women service providers' what they do is business and survival strategy in order to cope and participate in the hard economy of the city.

#### 4.18. Internet Fraud

This is yet another illegal business being practice in the zongo. The few guys identified as 'sakawa' boys (internet fraudsters) express surprise if one tells them that they are perceived as internet fraud stars. They simply write it off saying people are jealous they are doing well. Interacting with them they claim to have heard about sakawa and that the fraudsters even have spiritual powers with which they charm people with whom they chart through the internet for business purposes. They mentioned the use of magic finger ring that the fraudsters wear and with which they slap the faces of their potential business partners for the purpose of mesmerizing them when they are chatting through Skype on the internet. The various spiritualists mentioned earlier were mentioned to be behind the preparation of these charms. The alleged sakawa boys do not do any known work yet seem to be doing well financially as they own big motorbikes and sometimes cars. They ride in convoy playing music and showing off resources. Usually among the convoy are the spiritualists and their followers making merry in their raster hair styles.

### 5. Conclusion

Shanty or slum towns are said to be densely populated urban areas that are characterized by a generally low standard of living. Some of the reasons that culminate in slum formation include rapid rural-to-urban migration, economic stagnation and depression, high unemployment, poverty, informal economy, poor planning, politics, natural disasters and social conflicts. In Ghana alone, there about 230 slums across the length and breadth of the nation. Effiakuma is one of the slums in Ghana and the fiftieth most populous, with a population of 34,501 people. This paper took a look at the activities of the residents of Effiakumazongo which constitute their livelihood strategies. The decision to live in this shanty township is strategic in itself as accommodation is cheap and social capital is easily acquired. Beyond this, food vending, kiosk and store operations, fun centre operations, gutter sand winning all constitute means of livelihoods. Others include religious activities, healing and health care delivery, artisanship, security operations, sexual services and contract, and last but not the least icon-ship following. This paper concludes with the observation that though residents of Effiakuma zongo are largely low income earners, they are very industrious, happy and enjoy life.

### 6. Recommendation

It was observed that most of the ethnic groups have co-operative funds with which they help their members. There are also several non ethnic co-operative unions within the slum with hundreds of memberships and huge capital. It is therefore very imperative to study the operations of these various co-operative funds to ascertain their levels of wellness and whether or not the members are adequately supported by the funds. The Zongo support fund and other social interventions proposed by government and other political players could channel their interventions through these co-operative unions and the ethnic organizations to ensure proper implementation of the programmes.

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