

**The Effects of the Loss of an Adult Child to Human
Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency
Syndrome (HIV/AIDS) on the Interaction and Participation
of the Elderly in Social Activities in the North West
Region of Cameroon**

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ABSTRACT The incidence of HIV/AIDS in the North West Region of Cameroon surpasses all other regions. The aim of this paper was to ascertain the effect of the loss of an adult child to HIV/AIDS on the elderly parent's participation in social activities in the North West Region of Cameroon. Using a multistage sampling technique, a sample size of one thousand and sixty (1060) respondents were drawn from three divisions of the Northwest Region of Cameroon. Data was collected from participants using quantitative and qualitative methods, which included questionnaires, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The findings of the study showed that there is a reduced level of social participation and interaction because of either caring for grandchildren orphaned by HIV/AIDS or sick children. Participants avoided social activities because they did not have money to pay their contributions. Participants also reported that they stayed away from social gatherings for fear of stigmatization from members of the community. However, evidence from the study output showed that some respondents attended social activities. Some pertinent conclusions were drawn from the findings. The implications of these findings to social policy are discussed.