

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

**PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN
DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: A CASE STUDY OF GA WEST
MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY**

HILDA MENSAH

2010

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

**PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN
DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: A CASE STUDY OF GA WEST
MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY**

BY

HILDA MENSAH

DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENT
STUDIES OF THE FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF
CAPE COAST IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE AWARD OF MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN GOVERNANCE AND
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

JUNE 2010

DECLARATION

Candidate's declaration

I hereby declare that this is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's signature: Date:

Name: Hilda Mensah

Supervisor's declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's signature: Date:

Name: Prof. J.V. Mensah

ABSTRACT

Ghana's decentralisation policy has the agenda of socio-economic transformation which stimulate democracy, political equity and people's active participation at the local level. Local level development planning plays an important part in the decentralisation process. This study set out to examine the prospects and challenges of citizen participation in development planning in the Ga West Municipality.

The study was based on both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data were collected from 120 household heads and 10 key informants by using interview schedules. A multi-stage sampling technique comprising quota sampling, random sampling and purposive sampling was used to select respondents. Secondary data were gathered from books, journals and reports from Municipal Assembly.

The main findings of the study are that the municipality is faced with various developmental concerns, citizen participation has both prospects and challenges, and though citizen participation in the development planning is limited women representation and participation in the Ga West Municipal Assembly are low.

It is recommended that the MLGRD, NCCE and CSOs should carry out regular education about the local government processes, The main stakeholders in development planning should develop a comprehensive capacity-building programmes to ensure more women participate in local governance.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am heartily thankful to my Supervisor, Prof. J.V. Mensah, whose encouragement, guidance and support from the initial to the final stage enabled me to develop a deeper understanding of the work. My best friend and sister, Harriet Potakey also inspired me on through the tough times. I particularly also wish to thank my boss, Prof. Clever Nyathi, the Senior Governance Advisor in UNDP for the immense support, insistence and space given to enable me complete my work.

The dissertation would not have been possible without the diligent research efforts of the three research assistants namely; Intisar Siedu, Cecilia Geraldo and Samuel Cudjoe. I wish to extend a special thanks to all of them.

Furthermore, key individuals and organizations in the study area played an important facilitating role. Without their assistance, it would have been impossible for the research team to carry out the needs assessments within the limited time available. I specifically thank the Ga West Municipal Assembly, the Municipal Co-ordinating Director, Mr Addo and Assembly members, the Director of NCCE, and all selected communities. They all provided support in diverse ways to make the research successful.

Lastly, I offer my regards to all of those who supported me in diverse ways to complete this study.

DEDICATION

To my parents, Mr. Emmanuel K. Mensah and Mrs. Vinolia Mensah and daughter, Frances Chantal Cudjoe.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents	Page
DECLARATION	i
ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
DEDICATION	iv
LIST OF TABLES	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
LIST OF ACRONYMS	xii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
Background to the study	1
Statement of the problem	6
Objectives of the study	8
Significance of the study	8
Organisation of the study	10

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE	11
Introduction	11
Development planning	11
Planning process	14
Decentralisation	16
Decentralisation in Ghana	17
Organisational structure of local government	19
Decentralised planning	20
Essence of decentralised development planning	23
Participation in development discourse	25
Theory of participation	25
Importance of participation	31
Gender and participation	33
Limitations to citizen participation	37
Challenges of citizen participation	38
Critique of citizen participation	39

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	44
Introduction	44
Study area	44
Study design	47
Study population	48
Sampling technique and sample size	48
Sources of data	50
Instrumentation	50
Data collection procedure	51
Data analysis	51
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	52
Introduction	52
Characteristics of respondents	52
Availability of water and sanitation facilities	56
Awareness of district or municipal development plans	57

Information flow between the Assembly members and the citizens	58
How development planning is done	59
Involvement of citizens in the planning process	61
Stakeholders involved in planning	62
Nature of planning	64
Women’s participation in planning	65
Challenges of women’s participation	68
Challenges of citizen’s participation	70
Development challenges	72
Civil society organisations and citizen participation	73
Appreciating the nature of planning at the Municipal Assembly	74
Improving citizens’ participation in development planning	76
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	77
Summary	77
Conclusions	78

Recommendations	79
Areas of further study	81
REFERENCES	82
APPENDICES	89
Appendix 1: Interview schedule for household heads	89
Appendix 2: Interview schedule for Municipal Assembly	95
Appendix 3: GAIT II programme	101

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1	Number of household heads by Area Council	49
2	Sex and type of respondents	53
3	Age distribution of respondents	54
4	Marital status of respondents	55
5	Level of education of household respondents	56
6	Household respondents' awareness of district development plans	57
7	Involvement of citizens in the planning process	61
8	Stakeholders involved in the planning process	63
9	Challenges of women's participation	69
10	Performance of the Ga West Municipal Assembly	75

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1	The Planning process	15
2	The decentralised national development planning system	22
3	Ladder of citizen participation	27
4	Ga West Municipality in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana	45
5	Respondents' rating of the nature of planning in the Ga West Municipality	65
6	Involvement of women in municipal development planning	66

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AAG	Actionaid Ghana
ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
CSO	Civil society organisation
CHRAJ	Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice
DA	District Assembly
DACF	District Assemblies Common Fund
GAIT	Government Accountability Improved Trust
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LI	Legislative Instrument
MMDAs	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies
MLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
NCCE	National Commission on Civic Education
NDAP	National Decentralisation Action Plan
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission
PNDC	Provisional National Defence Council
PNDC/L	Provisional National Defence Council Law
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RCC	Regional Coordinating Councils
SPSS	Statistical Product and Service Solutions
UN	United Nations
WTO	World Trade Organisation

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

The essence of local governance is to offer citizens the opportunity to participate in decision making at all levels of national life and in governments. Decentralisation is premised on the assumption that development is that which allows people to identify and respond to their needs as well as to represent their goals, objectives and priorities. It is also assumed that development is a planned responsibility between central governments and local people. Good governance therefore assumes a government's ability to maintain social peace, guarantee law and order, promote or create conditions necessary for economic growth and ensure a minimum level of social security (Rondinelli, 1981; Ayee, 1991; Steffensen & Trollegaard, 2003).

Decentralisation reforms in Ghana started at the end of 1980s. Despite several years of reforms, challenges still exist that confront development. Between 1957 and 1988, efforts were made by successive governments to decentralize authority to the local level. These took the form of regional devolution and district focused public administration. Progress was minimal until the 1970s, when the decentralized system was reformulated into a four tier structure consisting of regional, district, local councils, and town and village committees (Actionaid, 2002). The District Councils were made the focal points of local government with administrative and executive power for local level development and governance.

In 1988, the Government of Ghana embarked on the implementation of a comprehensive policy to decentralize. Crucial to this was the enactment of the Local Government Law, 1988. Preparation of the policy involved in the execution of a study on the conditions of authority at the district level and the modalities of the district election process. Findings and recommendations were compiled in the 'blue book', a document used as the basis for discussions with various sections of the population regarding essential features of decentralisation in Ghana (Republic of Ghana, 1993a).

Major features of the policy included the shift from command approaches to consultative processes and the devolution of power, competence and resources to the district level. The initial implementation was supervised by a high powered Decentralisation Oversight Committee under cabinet. The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development later took over responsibilities of overseeing the implementation (MLGRD, 1996).

The 1992 Constitution and the various legislations on decentralisation including Act 462 (1993) have articulated the explicit objectives of decentralisation such as empowerment, participation, accountability, effectiveness, efficiency, responsiveness, decongestion of the national capital and the stemming of rural-urban drift. Specifically, the constitution and the legislation show that the decentralisation programme has been designed to:

- Devolve political and state power in order to promote participatory democracy through local level institutions;
- Devolve administration, development planning and implementation to the District Assemblies;

- Introduce an effective mechanism of fiscal decentralisation, which gives the District Assemblies control over substantial portion of their revenues;
- Establish a national development planning system to integrate and co-ordinate development planning at all levels and in all sectors;
- Incorporate economic, social, spatial, and environmental issues into the development planning process on an integrated and comprehensive basis;
- Create access to communal resources of the country, all communities and every individual; and
- Promote transparency and accountability.

District Assemblies were therefore put in place to give meaning to the above objectives. They are, therefore, a structure put in place to serve the needs of people at the local level. They are to ensure the participation of the general public in decision making process. Through local participation and practices such as public meetings, citizens can participate more effectively in local decision-making, gain experience in democratic processes and hold officials accountable for their decisions (Kendie, 2002).

The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana note that the state shall make democracy a reality by decentralising the administrative and financial machinery to regions and districts and by affording all possible opportunity to people to participate in decision making at all levels in national life and in government. Citizens are to take the opportunity to advocate for issues, public services and needs (Actionaid, 2002). But often times, you

rarely find citizens advocating effectively for their needs even in cases where people do not understand certain government policies.

In instances where they are given the opportunity, their level of involvement in terms of number and participation leaves much to be desired. A lot of citizens do not even understand the concept of the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) and therefore do not appreciate the roles. The 1992 Constitution charges District Assemblies to undertake planning for development in their areas of jurisdiction. Act 462 of 1993 and Act 480 of 1994 designate District Assemblies as the planning authorities charged with the overall development of the districts.

The Act 480, in particular, provides that MMDAs conduct public hearings of any proposed district development plan and consider the views expressed at the hearings before the adoption of the proposed district development plan. However, this is often not the case. MMDAs, having been established as planning authorities, are required to:

- Advise and provide the secretariat for the District Assembly planning, programming, monitoring, evaluation and coordinating functions;
- Co-ordinate the planning activities of the sector development related departments in the districts (concluding decentralised departments);
- Synthesize strategies related to the development of the district into a comprehensive and cohesive framework; and
- Formulate and update district development plans and provide information required for the planning at the national level.

In performing their planning and co-ordination functions, District Planning and Coordinating Units are required to play the role in promoting the

outward-oriented functions in order to meet the demands of citizen basic services. On the other hand, there is the need for citizens to understand that they have a civic responsibility to make inputs in decision making because the decentralisation objective is to empower local communities to be active participants at all levels in the delivery of development (Republic of Ghana, 1993a). This increases the power of communities to identify their needs, mobilise resources of their own and obtain additional resources and services when required from the District Assembly, but how can full participation of citizens in development plans of the District Assembly be achieved?

Gender concerns cannot be over emphasized in terms of participation of citizens. Various studies indicate low women participation in local governance in Ghana. Despite the efforts being made to ensure successful implementation of decentralisation, citizen participation in development planning of the District Assembly remains a big challenge while women participation remains a greater challenge (Ofei-Aboagye, 2000; Allah-Mensah, 2002; Osman, 2009).

The 1992 constitution provides the structural framework for local government and decentralisation and establishes major areas of relationship between local government and central government. Article 240 of the constitution provides that “Ghana shall have a system of local government and administration which shall as far as practicable be decentralised”. The decentralisation policies are clearly directed towards the restructuring of political and administrative machinery for development and decision-making at both national and local levels. It also includes building of institutions that would enhance public and community participation in national development,

ensure optimal resource mobilisation and utilisation for development, and promote the community involvement in the decision-making process (Steffensen & Trollegaard, 2003).

The Ga District was created in 1988 in pursuance of the decentralisation and local government reform policy. In 2008, the Legislative Instrument, LI 1743 divided the Ga District into two: Ga West and Ga East municipalities. Due to this new development, some the term “district” and “municipality” may be used interchangeably in this document to convey the relevant information.

Statement of the problem

Ghana is undergoing a process of social and economic transformation. The agenda of this transformation include the implementation of a decentralisation policy, which is expected to stimulate democracy, political equity and people's active participation at the local level, through autonomous and democratically elected local governments. This would enhance accountability, transparency and good governance. It is also expected that the decentralisation would increase management and financial efficiency and provide a better environment for public-private partnership.

The overriding importance of participation in development planning is unquestionable. Participation is known to give opportunity to people to be involved in decisions that affect their lives directly. In democracy, participation is more than periodic elections; it includes engaging citizens other than those residing in major towns and cities who are closer to arteries of power in deciding on matters affecting their daily lives (Krefetz & Goodman,

1973; Mensah, 2005). Ghana's 1988 decentralisation programme and the 1992 constitution are premised on affording all citizens opportunity to participate in the planning process, yet at the district level the effort at ensuring participatory planning still faces numerous challenges.

The argument is that any successful design, implementation, execution and sustainable project are inextricably linked to the level and nature of participation by the broad masses of the people. The dimensions of the problem raise the following questions:

- Are citizens in the Ga West Municipality effectively participating in the planning process?
- Which sections of the population at the grassroots do participate in the process and why?
- Are the existing structures conducive to grassroots participation?
- What forces or factors impede or enhance effective participation in planning at the local level?

The above questions need to be answered to make development more meaningful at the local level. Attempts have, however, been made at the district when public hearings of Municipal Assembly budget were conducted. This was initiated by the Government Accountability Improvement Trust Programme in 2005. The very first two attempts were successful but could not be sustained while that of development planning had never been done before. The study then becomes very relevant as it would also suggest measures to sustain such various attempts. This notwithstanding, there are prospects for citizen participation. Through local participation and practices such as public meetings, citizens can participate more effectively in local decision making,

gain understanding of democratic processes and hold public officials responsible for their decisions.

Objectives of the study

The general objective of the study is to examine the prospects and challenges of citizen participation in development planning in the Ga West Municipality.

The specific objectives are to:

- Describe how development planning is done in the Ga West Municipality.
- Identify the stakeholders that are involved in the planning process in the municipality.
- Determine the level of involvement of women in the planning process.
- Explain the prospects of citizen participation in development planning in the municipality.
- Discuss the challenges of citizen participation in development planning.
- Make recommendations for the purpose of improving citizen participation in development planning in the Ga West Municipality.

Significance of the study

Participatory approach to development, the most widely accepted strategy for political intervention for economic development, is being put to severe tests of fitness by practitioners. The most important question often asked in relation to it is how far it has succeeded in fulfilling the real

objectives with which the paradigm shift has evolved and the strategy has been designed. It is a matter of great concern that whether the strategy has enabled the development efforts to be geared from bottom and how far people, the real beneficiaries of the development efforts were participating in the process. Stories narrated and experience shared leave ample room for less doubts for the role that the people play in the process of development.

Most of the experts in this strategy of planning as well as the development practitioners duly emphasise on the authentic or spontaneous participation of people from the conception to implementation and maintenance of projects. The success of participatory approach depends on factors such as who participates, how and what drives them to do so. Apart from this, there is also the question of why a lot of people, particularly women and the local people, keep away from this participation. It seems that stakeholder (especially women) participation in the planning process in the district is very minimal.

This study would be of some developmental significance in that it could help development practitioners to be aware of the factors that influence citizen participation in the development planning of the Ga West Municipal Assembly, the level of involvement in the development planning process, and the prospects of citizen participation. These would help to facilitate the development process, enhance citizen ownership of development and improve sustainability of development projects and programmes.

The study would also provide background information and materials to academics and the District Assemblies in undertaking further studies that would improve the formulation and implementation of development plans.

Thus, the study would contribute literature for purpose of the improving citizen participation in development planning process at the local level.

Organisation of the study

The study is organised into five chapters. Chapter One deals with introduction, which covers background to the study, problem statement, objectives of the study, and significance of the study. Chapter Two focuses on review of literature. Issues reviewed include development planning, planning process, decentralisation and citizen participation. Chapter Three presents the research methodology. The fourth chapter focuses on results and discussion while the final chapter is devoted to summary, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to review of related literature such as development planning, planning process, decentralisation, decentralised planning and citizen participation.

Development Planning

The term “development” is complex to define. Basically, it is about the improvement in the quality of life in terms of economic growth, social improvement, technological advancement, and environmental sustainability. According to Kendie and Martens (2008), development is about the politics of achieving social justice through economic change. It is about alternative ways or perspectives or visions of producing and distributing the common wealth. It is about diverse visions and diverse solutions, and is therefore inherently political. Development implies reduction or elimination of poverty, practising good governance and ensuring healthy environment.

There are three major actors in the development process. These are the government (state), the private sector and the civil society (Mensah, 2005). Control over the levers of development has traditionally been the state. In liberal-market oriented democracies, the private sector plays a major role in wealth creation and is assisted in this effort by the state through economic policy and other support systems. In these countries, civil societies come in to

assist the needy (i.e. people left out in the development process) such as the homeless and the aged (Kendie, 2002).

In Africa, there is a rather shallow penetration of society by weak state institutions giving rise to a relatively larger realm of unoccupied political space. In many African countries, the private sector is also not very well developed. Green (1987) has detailed the extent to which the state in Ghana has stifled the progress of the private sector. The private sector is yet to establish itself as a major partner for development. The space created by the shallow penetration of state institutions and the under developed private sector has normally been occupied by the civil society organizations.

Civil society is defined as “the whole of humanity left over once government and for-profit firms are excised covering all those organizations that fill in the spaces between the family and the state market” (van Roy, 1998:1). This is the domain of citizen action- neighbourhood associations. Civil society organizations, the private sector and the state must work together if good governance and wealth creation (or poverty reduction) objectives are to be achieved.

Since development is complex and sometimes ambiguous to define, it is important to plan in order to make conscious and sustained efforts to improve the quality of life. Planning has many definitions but the commonest definition is “planning is a continuous process which involves decisions, or choices, about alternative ways of using available resources, with the aim of achieving particular goals in the future” (Conyers and Hills, 1984: 3). Planning is important because resources are scarce in relation to human needs and therefore the need to utilise these resources efficiently and effectively at

every point in time. Planning covers a wide range of activities from individual to national and international level. Plans are the outcome of planning (Mensah, 2005).

There are two main approaches to planning namely top-down (or centralised) planning and bottom-up (or decentralised or participatory) planning. The former deals with planning from the top with little or no involvement of the people at the grassroots. The top-down plans are unlikely to take into account the local conditions. The approach tends to create the culture of dependence and perpetuate underdevelopment. Indeed, the complexity of development is not consistent with planning just from the centre.

On the other hand, bottom-up planning recognises the contributions of the stakeholders, plans with them and takes into account the local needs. This approach enhances sustainability of the planned project or programme. The usual criticism levelled against this approach is that it takes a long time to be completed. The counter argument is that it all depends on what one wants because “it takes less than ten minutes to make a scrambled egg but it takes about 21 days to make a chick” (Mensah, 2005: 246). The participatory planning is likely to produce sustainable programmes and projects because it enhances stakeholder ownership.

Plans are drawn with the cardinal aim of improving upon the existing system or situation, which is unsatisfactory. A plan is to lead to the improvement of the living conditions of the target population, given the potential sustainability of the outcome of participatory planning process; the

bottom-up approach is often recommended and adhered to (Conyers & Hills, 1984: NDPC, 2002).

Development planning is a way of proceeding from where we are now to where we want to be in future. This implies that if development must be futuristic, then it must necessarily involve the very people for whom development is being carried out. According to Conyers and Hills (1984), planning involves making choices between alternatives and therefore it is important that people participate to enable the best choices to be made.

Planning process

Different writers have proposed various models of the planning process. Figure 1 illustrates the planning process designed by Conyers and Hills (1984). The model sees planning as a cyclical process involving a sequence of stages, which are designed to link the formulation of basic policy goals with the design of specific projects or programmes. The various stages are interrelated and so no one stage should be considered in isolation or a linear path for which one step should be completed before moving to the next (Mensah, 2005).

Thus, the process is in reality far more complex than the figure suggests. In practice, it may not be desirable to progress in a logical manner through all the stages of the cycle because of all kinds of practical problems related to time and data constraints and inadequate communication among the various stakeholders.

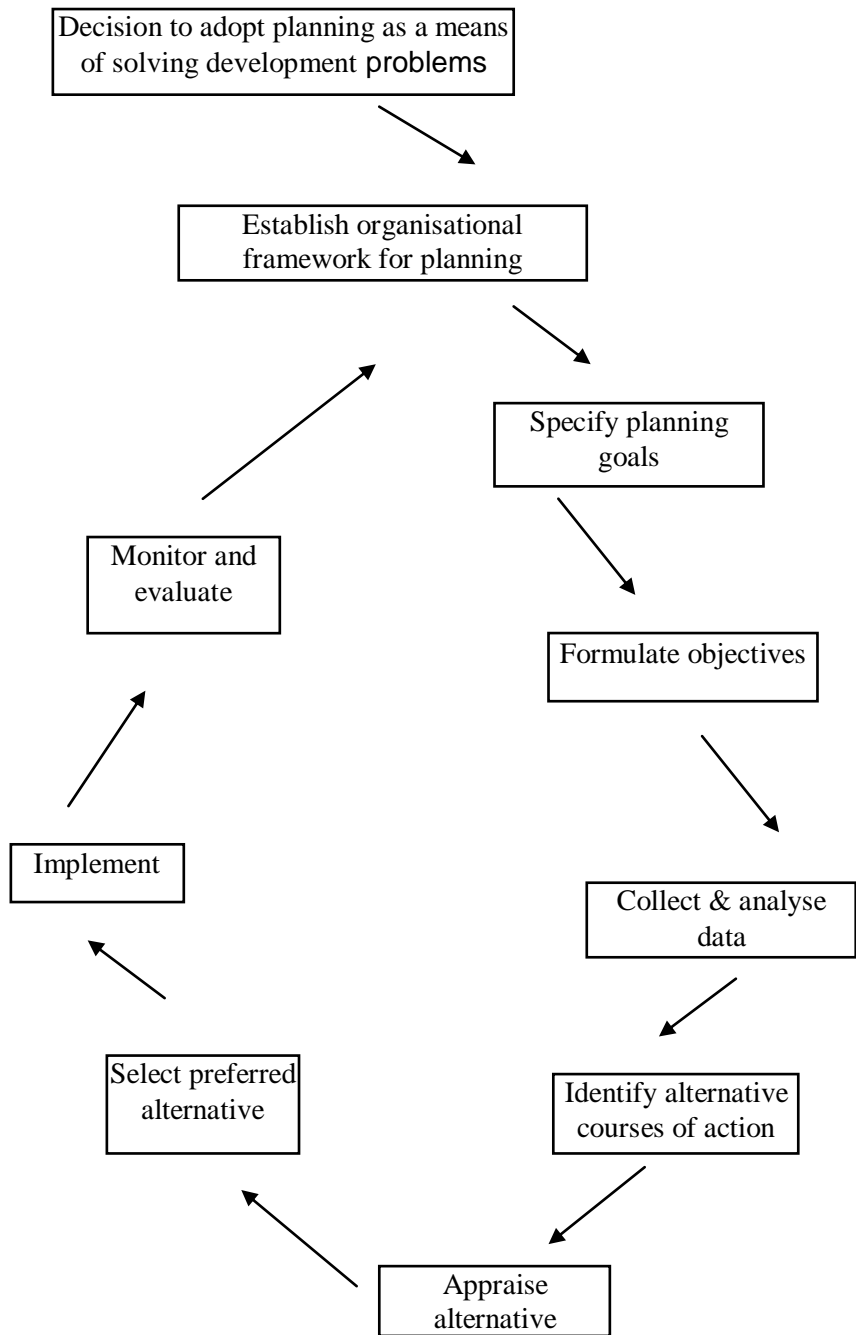


Figure 1: The Planning Process

Source: Adapted from Conyers and Hills (1984)

Decentralisation

Decentralisation may be defined as the transfer of authority or dispersal of power on public planning, management and decision-making from the national level to the sub-national levels, or more generally from higher to lower levels of government (Rondinelli, 1981). Decentralisation therefore involves changing the power relationships and distribution of tasks between levels of governments (Smith, 1985).

Decentralisation is often classified into four main forms: devolution, delegation, deconcentration and divestment (Rondinelli, 1981; Rondinelli, Nellis & Cheema, 1984). Devolution is the transfer of responsibility, resources and accountability from the central government to the local government and its sub-structures. Delegation refers to the transfer of responsibility and resources. For deconcentration, authority or responsibility is transferred but not the resources. Divestment or market decentralisation transfers public functions from the government to voluntary, private or non-governmental institutions through contracting out partial service provision or administrative functions, deregulation or full privatization. Ghana's decentralisation is more towards devolution.

Decentralisation could be categorised into three main types: political, administrative and fiscal. Political decentralisation (known as democratic decentralisation) refers to the transfer of political power and authority to sub-national political authorities such as elected village councils and state level bodies. Where such transfer is made to a local level public authority, devolution takes place.

Administrative decentralisation refers to the transfer of decision-making authority, resources and responsibilities for the delivery of selected public services from the central government to lower levels of government, agencies and field offices of the central government agencies. Such decentralisation can take the form of deconcentration, delegation, devolution and divestment.

Fiscal decentralisation means how responsibility for expenditures and allocations is distributed across the different levels of a decentralised system. In other words, it is the transfer of fiscal resources and revenue-generating powers, inclusive of authority over budgets and financial decisions to the decentralised bodies and officials. In practice, it is quite difficult to distinguish the various forms and types of decentralisation as their meanings suggest. They often occur simultaneously and dovetail into one another.

Decentralisation in Ghana

Since the attainment of Ghana's independence in 1957, successive governments have looked to a vibrant local government system to aid the country's development. Attempts at decentralisation were introduced, for instance, in 1974 under the military regime of Acheampong and again in 1983 under Rawlings' military rule. Ghana's current programme of decentralisation was initiated in 1988 when the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) government introduced the Local Government Law (PNDC Law 207), through which the number of local authorities, then 65, was reviewed and reorganised into 110 District Assemblies. The stated aim of the local government reform was to transfer functions, powers, means and competences from the central

government to the local government, and to establish a forum at the local level where a team of development agents, representatives of the people and other agencies could discuss the development problems of the district and/or area and their underlying causative factors. Ideologically, decentralisation was expected to support democratic participatory governance, improve service delivery and lead to a rapid socio-economic development.

The process of decentralisation continued and was endorsed by Ghana's first multiparty government that came into power in 1992. It consolidated the aim of decentralisation within the new framework of liberal democratic constitution. Essential democratic elements in the constitution remained compromised.

To promote the decentralisation efforts, the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD) had developed and implemented a National Decentralisation Action Plan (NDAP), which was endorsed by the cabinet in February 2004. The plan, implemented from 2003 to 2005, aimed at: strengthening political leadership and inter-sectoral collaboration; enhance policy management, implementation and monitoring; consolidating funding; strengthening financial and human resource management; strengthening functional and governance performance of the District Assemblies; strengthening sub-district governance; and promoting participation and partnerships. In 2004, the government further reviewed the number of Assemblies by creating 28 new ones in an attempt to advance decentralisation. Thus, the number of districts increased from 110 to 138. In 2008, the country was redemarcated into 170 districts.

The current local government system is backed by the provisions in the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana. Article 35 (5d) requires the state ‘to take appropriate measures to ensure decentralisation in administrative and financial machinery of government and to give opportunities to people to participate in decision-making at every level in national life and government’. The Constitution also establishes the District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF) and provides that not less than five per cent of the total revenues of Ghana are paid into it for use in District Assembly capital works.

The main legislative texts pertaining to local government are Civil Service Law 1993 (PNDCL 327), Local Government Act 1993 (Act 462), National Development Planning (System) Act 1994 (Act 479), National Development Planning Commission Act 1994 (Act 480), District Assemblies Common Fund Act 1993 (Act 455), Local Government Service Act 2003 (Act 656) and Institute of Local Government Studies Act 2003 (Act 647).

Organisational structure of local government

The Republic of Ghana is a unitary state divided into ten administrative units or regions, each headed by a regional minister appointed by the president. The principal units of local government are the District Assemblies (DAs). Between the District Assemblies and the central government are the Regional Coordinating Councils (RCCs). The RCCs are made up of the representatives from each of the District Assemblies in the region and from the Regional House of Chiefs. The role of these bodies is to coordinate policy implementation among the District Assemblies. DAs are

often sub-divided into three: Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs).

Each MMDA comprises the Chief Executive, two-thirds of the members directly elected by universal adult suffrage, the members of parliament representing constituencies within the district, and one-third of members appointed by the President in consultation with the chiefs and interest groups in the district. The Chief Executive is nominated by the President and approved by two-thirds of the members of the MMDA present and voting. The MMDA also has a Presiding Member who is elected from among members by two-thirds of all members of the MMDA.

Decentralised Planning

Planning has been seen as an essential part of decentralisation reforms, intended to strengthen local governance, enhance local voice in decisions making and empower the people. Development is necessary in order to identify institutions and assign roles and responsibilities to these institutions. There is partnership in development planning which enhances community participation, intersectional and inter-disciplinary collaboration.

The growing interest in decentralised planning and administration is attributable not only to the disillusionment with the results of the central planning and then shift to growth-equity policies, but also to the realization that development is a complex process that cannot be easily planned and controlled from the centre (Cheema & Rondinelli, 1983).

Decentralised planning can be successful only when popular participation is pursued both as an end and as a means. As an end, it is

inevitable extension of the national effort and commitment to bring the rural masses into the mainstream of development process. As a means, popular participation should serve the objectives of all components and aspects of development enabling the people to shoulder responsibilities and to command their own resources (Oakley & Marsden, 1984; Actionaid, 2002).

Generally, there are three basic approaches to popular participation, namely mobilisation, mediation and self-management. The approach largely followed in developing countries including Ghana is mediation. In this approach, people's institutions are established with statutory backing and elected representatives who manage these institutions are responsible for decision making. The technical, financial and other logistic supports are provided through the administrative infrastructure. People's participation in the development process is identified in four areas: decision making, implementation, benefit sharing, and monitoring and evaluation (Jones & Hardstaff, 2005; Mensah, 2008).

Ghana's decentralised planning process takes places at various levels as shown in Figure 2:

- Planning at the District level starts with communities' problem, goals and objectives from unit committee level through the Town/Area/Urban/Zonal Councils to the District Assembly.
- The sub-committees of the Executive Committee to the District Assembly consider the problems and opportunities, define and prioritize and submit these to the Executive Committee.

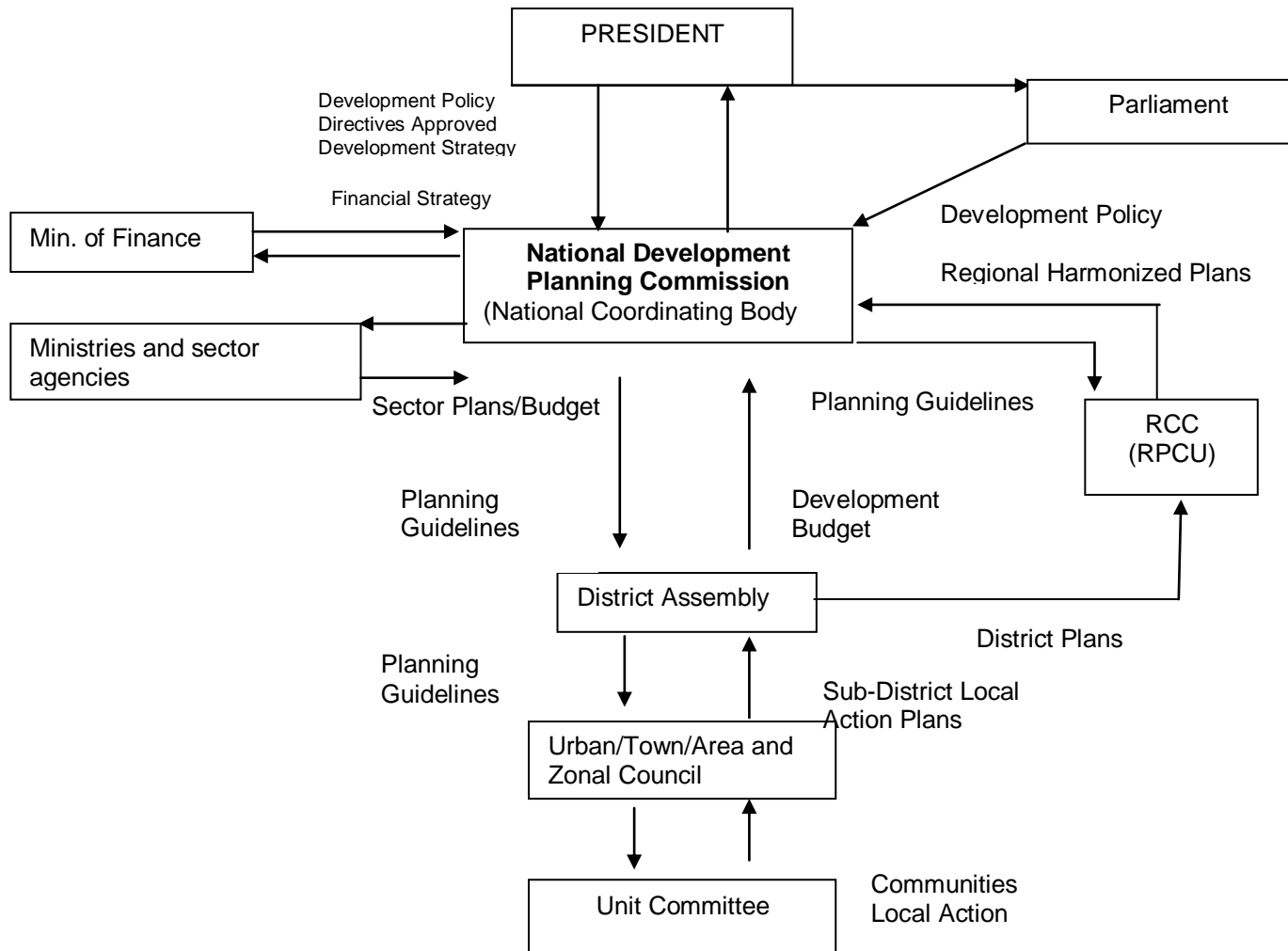


Figure 2: The decentralised national development planning system

Source: National Development Planning Commission (2002)

- The departments of the District, sectoral specialists, Non-government Organizations and other functional agencies confer and collaborate with one another to hammer out the ingredients of the District Plan.
- The District Planning Coordinating Unit integrates and coordinates the sectoral plans and annual plans for consideration of the Executive Committee and debate by the Assembly.
- Public hearing is organized at each stage to get the public to make input and comment on the plan.

The approval plan is then sent to the Regional Coordinating Council for submission to the National Development Planning Commission.

Articles 240-256 of the 1992 constitution define the principles of co-ordination of the development planning functions by National Development Planning Commission. The Local Government Act 462 of 1993 gives credence to District Assemblies and their sub-structures and RCCs to plan for development.

The National Development Planning Commission Act 479, 1994 establishes and specifies the composition, roles, and functions and designates the District Assembly as the highest planning authority. The Development Planning System also specifies institutions and agencies which are planning authority as well as procedures through which planning authorities can carry out their development planning functions.

Essence of decentralised development planning

Decentralised development planning is integrative by allowing for analysis of each development issue from various aspects such as political,

social, economic, and environmental domains into a single and holistic task. It involves institutions, people and skills at all levels of the society – from community to national level. It is participatory, thereby allowing community members to identify their problems and to formulate plans aimed at solving those problems. Programmes and projects in the plan can be rolled over and they allow for continuous monitoring and evaluation.

Planning is important because resources are limited in relation to human wants and needs. It is therefore necessary to utilise these available resources efficiently and effectively. The fact that resources are limited emphasises the need to involve people in their utilisation for the utmost benefits of the beneficiaries. In this regard, the decentralisation policy of Government of Ghana becomes very laudable as the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) are required to prepare and implement their development plans to ensure the overall development of their respective areas. Obviously, this enhances sustainability of planned projects. The implication is that for development plans to be successful and sustainable, it is necessary to ensure participation of all people at all times.

Decentralisation is acknowledged to be one of most acceptable forms of governance that allows for greater participation of the citizenry, notwithstanding critics against aspects of its operation. It has assumed greater imperative because of the emphasis on good governance, participatory development, participatory democracy and gender equity (UNDP, 1997). Gender concerns emphasise the need for some committed attention on social and political circumstances that pertain to men and women as a group and the implications of these for gender equity, political empowerment and

development planning (Parpart, 1993). If planning is to be effective then a good plan should be formulated and operationalised with all parties concerned: public officials assisted, local public governmental organizations, private organizations, field organizations, and civil society organisations. The participation of such entities in the planning process is a prerequisite, for without their active involvement, little can be achieved.

Participation in development discourse

Participation featured in development discourse since the 1980's and has currently come to take on varied meanings. For the purpose of the study participation will be defined as: the capacity and ability of the community to contribute to, share in the benefit from, diverse social, economic political or other processes of the society. Participation in development as an indicator of decentralisation involves the community. It is therefore a continuum, a permanent state which can only be achieved through providing the means for effective involvement of people in all facets of the society and actively promoting it as a matter of policy and practice. There is broad support by international NGOs for public involvement in the urban development process. It is fundamental to democratic governance and provides for an informed, empowered citizenry.

Theory of Participation

Arnstein's (1969) ladder of citizen participation presented a typology of citizen's involvement in the decision-making process that ranged from total non-participation, through various degrees of tokenism, on to the highest level

of involvement that would result in citizen control of the decision-making process. The first two levels of the ladder namely; manipulation and therapy represent non-participation (Figure 3). The next three rungs namely informing, consultation and placation show degrees of tokenism in the participation process, while the top three rungs (i.e. partnership, delegated power and citizen control) represent degrees of citizen power. Although Arnstein (1969) was concerned with citizen control of community governance, this ladder has influenced urban planning theory.

It is generally agreed that citizen involvement in the planning process provides the opportunity to enhance acceptance of a proposed intervention through information dissemination and education. However, to effectively move up the ladder, a well designed public participation programme should draw on people's skills and local knowledge. It can provide an avenue to obtain multiple perspectives on issues, needs, preferences and requirements. Perhaps the greatest benefit of enhanced public engagement is community capacity building, where local residents are empowered to influence public policy.

There are two other schools of thought on the role of participation in development and governance: the populist and the elitist perspectives. The populist believe that participation is desirable because it has positive impact on participants; it results in increased responsiveness to the needs and desires of the participants and improves participants' self image, confidence and sense of power (Gow & Vansant, 1983).

8.	Citizen Control
7.	Delegated Power
6.	Partnership
5.	Placation
4.	Consultation
3.	Informing
2.	Therapy
1.	Manipulation

Figure 3: Ladder of citizen participation

Source: Arnstein (1969)

Participation increases the information available to administrators and results in more effective programmes. The principal roles of participation are to ensure the efficient implementation of projects and the empowerment of communities to sustain projects as well as to be able to design other projects to improve the quality of life (Krefetz & Goodman, 1973). On the other hand, the elitists believe that participation is not desirable because it makes programme formulation and implementation less efficient (Krefetz & Goodman, 1973). Participation increases the number of people involved giving rise to the possibility of disagreement, which delays decision-making (Arnstein, 1969). It increases the total cost of the project because animation is quite expensive and requires expertise, which may not be easily available.

Kendie (1997) has argued that while participation has been recognised as essential to the development process in Ghana, this is not likely to happen without certain conditions. Participation requires that there should be a real

commitment of politicians and administrators to allow communities to control critical decision-making issues such as needs-assessment. The emergence of strong civil society organizations able to mobilise the people to demand both participation and the rendering of quality services by state institutions is essential for effective participation. The political context in which participation occurs must be opened at all levels. Participation at local levels may produce results, and there are many examples. But the benefits of such local level efforts are not likely to be widespread and sustainable. Sustainability will depend on how permissive macro-arenas of decision-making are to participation. Where participation takes place at all spatial levels, the efficiency and empowerment objectives may be fulfilled. Participation ought not to be only instrumental; it has to be an end in itself.

Participation is enshrined in the 1992 constitution and it is to be actualised through the District Assembly structures, parliament and a host of other institutions designed to educate people on their civic rights and responsibilities or to check excesses in the use of state power. In recent years, several civil society organisations have also emerged both to assist in the development needs of the poor and the marginalised and to build the capacity of public institutions to deliver development. By 1998, over 800 such non-profit organisations had been registered to operate in Ghana (van Roy, 1998).

It is rare to find development strategy these days which does not refer to community participation. A body of evidence confirms that community participation in the initiation, planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation lead to sustainable development (Narayan, 1995). Sustainable development is defined as “development that meets the needs of the present

without compromising the ability of future generations to meet to meet their own needs” (WCED, 1987: 43). Policies of developing countries, government and donors, including the government of Ghana have emphasized on increasing the access of the beneficiaries to development services. For communities to continue to develop there is the need to pay more attention to the strategies that will encourage and empower the beneficiaries to manage, maintain and sustain their development, in the absence of development partners.

There are different views of participation. Oakley and Marsden (1984) illustrated the direct relationship between participation and development in the following four statements:

- Participation is considered a voluntary contribution by people in one or another of public programmes supposed to contribute to national development, but the people are not suppose to take part in the programme or criticising its contents (Economic Commission for Latin America).
- With regard to rural development, participation includes people’s involvement in decision-making processes in implementing programmes; their sharing in the benefits of the development programmes and their involvement in efforts to evaluate such programmes.
- Participation is concerned with the organized effort to control resources and regulative institutions in a given social situations on the part of groups and movement of those hitherto excluded from such control.

- An active process in which beneficiaries or client groups influence the direction and execution of a development project with the view of enhancing their wellbeing in terms of income, personal growth or other values they cherish (Pearse & Stifel, 1979).

According to Barry, Stevenson, Britten and Barber (2002), participation is equal rights and justice, inclusive and responsive governance. It refers to respect of laws, together with freedom of speech, information, association and assembly as well as respect and dignity of women. Where citizens can participate in public sphere and make their own contribution towards the common good. It also means being heard and consulted on a regular and confirming basis not merely on election time. It means more than vote. It is the involvement in decision and policymaking by public agencies and officials. It involves the eradication of corruption favouritism, nepotism, apathy, neglected-tape and self-seeking political leaders and public officials. It means democracy that works for all. Much as these definitions may vary in focus and levels of community development, there are some key principles that they have in common. They all agree that participation is not sought by coercion; it is human centred, involves people in decision-making and collective sharing of the fruit of development interventions.

At least in theory and to certain extent in practice, there has been some emphasis on local participation. Emphasis was particularly given to fostering local institutions to enhance people's participation in the selection, design and management of development projects at the community level. Participation was viewed as an important end in itself; also it was linked to a number of other instrumental values (Griffin, 1989). First, participation in community

based organisations could help to identify local priorities so that development projects might better reflect grassroots needs and wishes. Participation in popular organisations and groups, co-operatives, land reform committees, irrigation societies, women organisations might assist in mobilizing local support for development projects and programmes. Thirdly, increased local participation might reduce the cost of many public services and development projects by shifting more responsibility to grassroots organisations.

Civil society has emerged as the arena in which development objectives are to be achieved civil societies, can exert organised pressure on autocratic state and unresponsive governments to ensure democratic stability and good governance. Civil society institutions have been identified as the vehicles for participation of people and empowerment of them. This has offered challenges to the top-down diffusion of state planning.

Importance of participation

The overriding importance of participation can be realised when in Africa, a charter for popular participation in development and transformation was created at a conference in 1990. Nations cannot benefit without the popular support and full participation of neither people nor can economic crisis is resolved and the human and economic conditions improved without full and effective contribution, creativity and political enthusiasm of the majority of people (Oakley & Marsden, 1984; Osman, 2009).

Popular participation, in essence, is the empowerment of people to effectively involve themselves in creating the structures, and in designing policy and programmes, which serve the interest of all, as well as effectively

contribute to the development process and share equitably in its benefits. There is therefore, the need to open up of political process to accommodate freedom of opinions, tolerate differences, and accept consensus on issues as well as ensuring the effective participation of people and their organization and associations (Pearse & Stifel, 1979).

Popular participation has a number of benefits. First, it mobilises greater resources and accomplishes more with the same programme budget. Second, it is also economically efficient in that it uses generally utilised labour, and to a lesser extent can build upon indigenous knowledge which also tends to be underutilized. Thus, more services are provided at less cost. Third, participation can result in better project design. It ensures that felt needs are served. Presumably, beneficiaries will shape the project to their specific needs in ways that outside planners cannot do. A sense of immediate responsibility and ownership by beneficiaries' puts pressure on a project is truly worthwhile. Fourth, participation can become a catalyst for mobilising further local development efforts. There tend to be greater spread effects as villagers communicate with kin and associates in other villages. Fifth, it creates local level awareness, competence and capacity where it did not exist before (Fensterbusch & Wicklin III, 1987).

Other benefits of participation include the fact that it encourages a sense of responsibility, guarantees felt needs, ensures that things are done in the right way, uses valuable indigenous knowledge, frees people from dependence on other's skills and makes people aware of the causes of their poverty and what can be done about it. Participation also increases mutual

trust and displays the potentials of the target groups and conveys to planners a better understanding of the problem (Oakley & Marsden, 1984).

Gender and participation

Gender is the socially constructed roles for men and women. Gender roles are distinct in any society. In each society, there are definitions of what women and men of that society are expected to do in their adult life. Children are socialised to internalise these roles. Girls and boys are prepared for their different but specific roles. Invariably, when a man is seen doing women's tasks, other members of society regard him as a coward, docile, or stupid. When a woman does what is presumed a man's task, such a woman is regarded as too tough or being "more than a woman. This culturally defined role of men and women informs how decisions are made in society.

Before 1970s, development theory as well as practice has been gender neutral and the role of women in development was all but invisible and women and gender relations have been virtually ignored within these frames. In other words, the society hardly distinguished between men and women assuming that development policies and programmes benefit all automatically, while special programmes were designed to benefit women as mother and child bearer as well as targets of worst ravages of poverty and malnutrition.

However, women's role in agriculture and other productive sectors was left unperceived in the frame work. Parpart (1993) observes that women were systematically excluded from various aspects of development, to the extent that they were regarded as impediments to development. Development theory and practice during the post war period ignored women presuming that

productive work was performed by men alone. Until recently, rural development strategies have neglected the role of women.

Much of the impetus for rising interest in the role of women in development came from the UN Decade for Women (1975-1985) and the events accompanied it. It has considerably promoted and legitimised the women's movements at national level as well as international level. It has forced a rethinking of development policies which began to conceptualize women as agents of productive process and identified women's marginalisation as the chief cause of their deteriorating status (Geisler, 1993).

The three women conferences organised during the last decades have delineated four major goals. Three of the goals are related to various aspects of women and development. The documents that came out of these conferences laid stress on linkages between socio-economic and political conditions and called for the need of full participation and employment of women. The rise of Women in Development approach has been the outcome of the conference which link, unlike the previous approaches, the advancement of women with improved access to employment and educational structures. It argued that in order to overcome their historical marginalisation, women must be integrated with the development process.

The evolution in policy on women and development has impacted on what is happening at the grassroots level. Many of the development agencies are gearing their programmes and projects towards empowerment of women through capacity building and ensuring women's participation at grass root level. Women's participation in grass root organisations is increasingly

recognised as crucial to their empowerment and as a way for them to help shape development policies.

The equal participation of men and women in policymaking, economic and sectoral analysis, and project design and management may be impeded by cultural and legal constraints against women's participation and by women's relative lack of time and mobility caused by their workload and multiple roles. If participatory development is to benefit from women's contributions and meet the particular needs of women, a range of strategic and practical measures must be taken to overcome these barriers. The causes are deeply embedded in social and legal institutions (Ofei-Aboagye, 2000).

Men and women play different roles, have different needs, and face different constraints in responding to macroeconomic or sectoral policy changes and to the specific opportunities and limitations provided by particular programmes and projects. Systemic gender biases often exist in the form of the following: Laws and customs that impede women's access to property ownership, credit, productive inputs, employment, education, information, medical care, customs, beliefs, and attitudes that confine women mostly to the domestic sphere and Women's workload, which imposes severe time burdens on them

Imbalances in the division of labour between men and women and in access to education and productive resources have important implications, not only for participation, but also for economic output, productivity, food security, fertility, child welfare and equity. They also profoundly affect men's and women's different capacities and incentives to participate in economic and social development. Experience in participatory development has made clear

that, unless specific steps are taken to ensure the equal participation of men and women, women are often excluded. As a result, projects fail to benefit from women's contributions and fail to meet the particular needs and interests of women (Narayan, 1995).

Women's low level of participation is due to social factors; the nature of the social structure and culture, centralized political system, nature of politics in Ghana, low level of education and limited economic power. Other factors such as lack of self-confidence, triple roles of women, apathy on the part of women, perceived roles by women themselves, and lack of solidarity and encouragement among women. Lack of sensitivity to women's issues is essential. Whereas there are many women who are not sensitized to their own problems, the situation with the men is even worse (Krefetz & Goodman, 1973; Osman, 2009) .

Gender issues are misrepresented to mean only women's issues. There is the need to tackle such basic problems if lack of support and encouragement are to be solved. The triple roles women play in the society as wage earners, as mothers and as community service providers hinders their active participation in the democratisation process. The traditional roles of women as child bearers, housekeepers and managers of the home combined with income-generating activities, leave them little time to participate actively in political fields. Women traditionally have been discouraged from taking major decisions affecting family through socialization process. The man as the head of the family has been responsible for taking the major decisions affecting the family. Since men perceive women from their own participation of view, timeless women get involved in decision positions, the object situation of

women will not change (Ofei-Aboagye, 2000; Boateng, 2009). The works reviewed so far has not approached the problem of participation of women by posing questions such as why and how women participate, what really fosters participation as well as what stand in the way of their effective participation.

Limitations to citizen participation

While participation is legislated under the Local Government Act 480 (1994), it is not without limitations. Participatory governance should not permit interference with the MMDAs rights to govern and to exercise the administrative legislative and planning authority of the district. The MMDAs, which are the products of representative democracy, have the sole legal mandate to govern their localities. More importantly, they have the political legitimacy to do so.

Participatory democracy is there to complement the politically legitimate and legally responsible structures. A community participatory structure such as Unit Committee may add to the formal structures of government, but may not replace or substitute them. However, the promotion of citizen participation must be encouraged through three interrelated elements: an open and transparent government, involving citizens in its activities and decision-making processes; a consistent and persistent flow of information from the government to its citizens and vice-versa; and efficient ways of informing citizens about their roles and responsibilities to participate as equal partners (Smith, 1985).

Challenges of citizen participation

Notwithstanding the benefits of participation in planning in recent years, it has become something of political catch-phrase and many people with interest in politics have become suspicious of it. The skepticism which is often attached to it is perhaps best summed up in the words printed on a poster displayed by French students during the 1968 disturbances in Paris. It read: “I participate, Thou participate, He/she participates, We participate, You participate, They profit” (Alterman, Harris & Hill, 1984:227). Whether it is political or local government participation, the one thing that skeptics ask is how real is it? In other words, to participate effectively must mean to be able as a consequence of participation to have some influence over any resultant decisions.

Participation can also reinforce existing inequities rather than stimulate desired system change. Participation can face political opposition in countries where most beneficiaries have not been included in the political system. Such organizing can be seen as threatening to political leaders, or as otherwise upsetting the political balance and generating demands and pressures that governments cannot or do not want to respond to. Again, it takes additional time and resources to mobilise less developed communities. Participatory programmes can slow down or run out of energy. Fragile projects may become overburdened and collapse due to organisational complexity and frustrations of those involved (Finsterbusch & Wicklin III, 1987).

Critique of citizen participation

The participation discourse had its genesis in the late 1980's in India and Kenya through the participatory approach known as Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) (Cornwall and Pratt, 2003). Since then it has come to be used in many parts of the world (developing and developed) and in a variety of contexts. But most surprising is the fact that once participatory approaches were practiced on the fringes of the political spectrum, it has now become an instrument employed by global developmental institutions (World Bank, 2005).

Beall (2005) makes a similar observation with the use of early social funds known as Social Emergence Funds. The conventional wisdom here is that by broadening client participation in the development project supported by local funds, connection to and ownership of the project is built and fostered. Participatory approaches are thought to ensure that the aims and objectives of projects match those of the people involved; that people have an impact on projects; and to increase government accountability through the active involvement of citizens.

Beall (2005) recognizes that participation was the central tenet of alternative approaches to development but has now come to inform mainstream development practice. The author also points to a new cynicism about the value and purpose of participation, as well its effectiveness to deliver the development agenda.

During the 20th century, several key advances were made in terms of citizen participation like universal suffrage in many countries (Jones & Hardstaff, 2005). However, it could be argued that the same period also saw

the creation of a range of international institutions that reduced the ability of individuals to participate in decisions affecting their daily lives; from the United Nations and its many sub-sections to the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO). The last three organisations have come under severe criticism as well as international public protest in the last few years. The IMF and the World Bank have responded to the criticisms by adopting new ways of working and by the adoption of new rhetoric such as ‘country ownership’ and ‘participation’.

Development has multiple goals and processes, which go beyond economics to address societal issues. It covers elements such as the emphasis on beneficiary participation, responsiveness to gender concerns, government ownership of projects, the role of social capital, and networks of trust and association (World Bank, 2001).

It has been shown that the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) have a new anti-poverty framework of the World Bank and IMF, which in effect replaced the previous structural adjustment programmes. They ensured that debt relief that was provided under the enhanced Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative, and concessional loans from the international financial institutions, were in fact conditional, requiring policy restructuring. To obtain concessional loans from the World Bank and the IMF, a country had to agree to a programme with economic conditions attached (Jones & Hardstaff: 2005: 5).

Sitas (2002) notes that capital accumulation, while appearing novel and dazzling has a cruel and restless dynamism on society. Society seems to have surrendered agencies to globalisation through self-regulating financial and

economic flows. Meanwhile, society seeks agencies to curtail the impact of the same forces. Whether society had the capacity to respond and shape the conditions of life in this system of global interactions or whether society was involved in a process of ‘shaping’ what was out of its control. For instance, could the participation discourse in reality be a take over of local agendas?

Williams (2005) demonstrates how the bureaucratic elites of officials and councillors at local government level impose their own ‘truncated’ version and understanding of community participation on particular communities. Political acquiescence and party political programmes may be imposed in communities through ‘think-tanks’, ‘self-styled experts’, ‘opinion polls’ and ‘media pundits’. Community participation could be managed by consultants on behalf of party programmes which are clearly not intended to empower local communities.

The desire to be part of the globalisation process could make a country to rather abandon its commitment to ‘civic virtue’ and sacrifice the many struggles for socio-economic justice during the struggle for democracy. There is also the danger of communities losing control over the development process through party driven motives and through the interventions by ‘experts’ (Williams, 2005).

Dauids, Theron and Maphunye (2005) note that citizen participation should become a way of life. The Manila Declaration has the four principles of participation:

- Sovereignty resides with the people, the real actors of positive change;
- The legitimate role of government is to enable the people to set and pursue their own agenda;

- The people must control their own resources, have access to relevant information and have the means to hold the officials of government accountable so as to exercise their sovereignty and assume responsibility for the development of themselves and their communities; and
- Those who would assist the people with their development must recognize that it is they who are participating in support of the people's agenda, not the reverse. The value of the outsider's contribution could be measured in terms of the enhanced capability of the people to determine their own future.

The above principles are re-echoed in the 1990 African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation as follows: "We believe strongly that popular participation is, in essence, the empowerment of the people to effectively involve themselves in creating the structures and in designing policies and programmes that serve the interests of all as well as to effectively contribute to the development process and share equitable benefits" (Davids et al, 2005: 207-219).

The International Association for Public Participation (cited in Davids et al., 2005) sets out the core values for participation as follows:

- The public should have a say in decisions about actions that affect their lives; public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision;
- The process communicates the interest and needs of all participants;
- It seeks out to facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected;
- Participants are involved in defining how they participate;

- Communications are put out to participants about how their input affected decisions; and
- The public participation process provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.

The Association goes a step further to formulate a framework outlining a spectrum of public participation, the levels of impact on the public and the tools necessary for such effects. This framework recognises that the participation process involves anything from simply providing information to complex forms of control in decision-making resulting in the empowerment of society. The concept of participation is broad and depends largely on what one interprets it to be and the outcomes desired. The level of participation determines the goals that need to be achieved.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology used in the study. It comprises the study area, study design, study population, sampling techniques and sample size, sources of data, instrumentation, data collection procedure and data analysis.

Study area

In 2004, the Ga West Municipal Assembly was carved out of the erstwhile Ga District which was created in 1988 in pursuance of the government's decentralisation and local government reform policy. In 2008, the Ga District was divided into two: Ga West and Ga East municipalities. Amasaman, the former district capital remains the capital for the newly created Ga West Municipality. The Legislative Instrument, LI 1743 established the Ga West Municipal Assembly. The district is the second largest of the six districts in Greater Accra Region (Figure 4). It has 162 communities distributed over six Area Councils namely, Amasaman, Ayikai Doblo, Manyera, Kotoku, Pokuase and Ofankor.

The Ga West Municipality lies within latitudes 5⁰48' North and 5⁰29' North and longitudes 0⁰8' West and 0⁰30' West. The district shares common boundaries with Ga East District and Accra Metropolitan Assembly to the east, Akwapim South, Suhum-Kraboia-Coaltar, and West Akim districts to the

north, Awutu-Senya District to the west and the Gulf of Guinea to the South. It occupies a land area of approximately 710.2km².

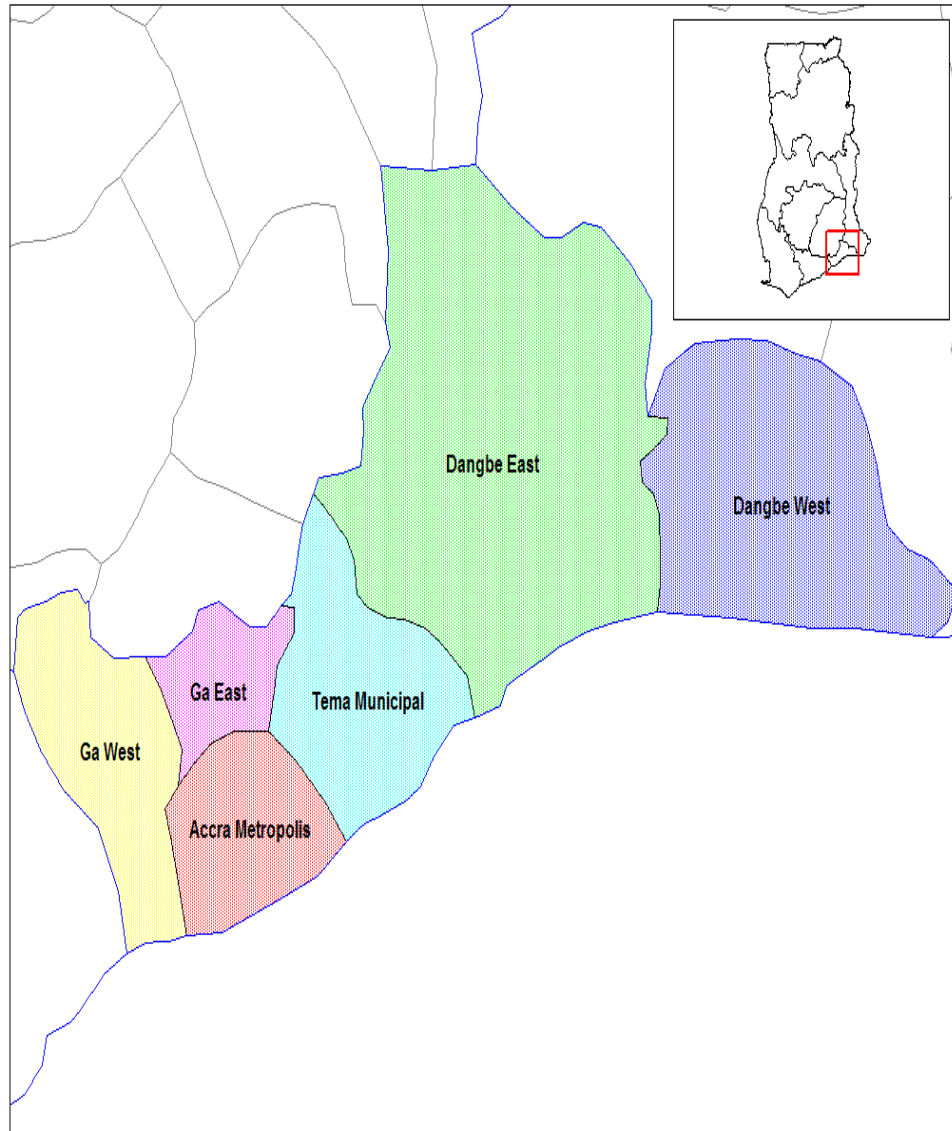


Figure 4: Ga West Municipality in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana

The land area consists of gentle slopes interspersed with plains in most parts and generally undulating at less than 76m above sea levels. There are six major rivers in the district including Densu, Nsaki and Ponpon. The largest is the Densu River, which drains from the Eastern Region.

The district lies in the coastal savanna agro-ecological zone and rainfall pattern is bi-modal with an annual mean varying between 790mm on the coast to about 127mm in the extreme north. The annual average temperature ranges between 25.1°C in August and 28.4°C in February and March. Humidity is generally high throughout the year. Average relative humidity figures are about 94 percent and 69 percent at 5:00 and 15:00 hours respectively.

In 2000, the population of Ga West Municipality was 348,926. The female population was 174,030 representing 49.9 percent of the total population and male population of 174,896 representing 50.1 percent. The inter-censal growth rate of 3.4 percent for the district compares with the regional population growth rate of 4.4 percent and the national figure of about 2.7 percent (Ghana Statistical Service, 2002). The high growth rate of the district could be a result of the district's closeness to the national capital of Accra where there is a high inflow of migrant workers. The projected population in 2006 was 426439. The population is mainly concentrated along the peri-urban areas of the district particularly on the border with the Accra Metropolis and Ga East District. The urban population constitutes about 67.8 percent of the district population.

The classification of localities as urban or rural is based on the size of the population as applied in Ghana. All localities with population of less than 5000 are classified as rural. The most populous locality is Gbawe followed by Awoshie and Ofankor. What this means is that the population is largely concentrated in Gbawe, Awoshie and towns developed around the Accra

Metropolitan Area. This is not surprising because these centres happen also to be the areas with many economic and social infrastructural facilities.

Various socio-economic activities have given rise to several land-use types in the district. The economic activities relate to commerce, agriculture, culture, civic, mining and quarrying. Other common areas of employment include carpentry, hairdressing, construction, trading, mechanics, artisan and craftsmanship.

The high unemployment rate for the district suggests that job openings are limited. The private informal sector plays an important role in the district economy as evidenced by large numbers of economically active persons in the sector. Limited formal employment opportunities compel people to create their own jobs. The large workforce in the private informal sector has economic implications for sustainable development. Although a major potential source of government revenue, collecting direct taxes from this group is extremely difficult. Human activities such as sand winning, felling of trees and absence of systemic environmental programmes to rejuvenate the land have left some lands infertile and no longer suitable for farming.

Study design

The research combined both quantitative and qualitative methods in a form of descriptive case study. It was a descriptive study because it involved collection of data on prospects and challenges of citizen participation in district development planning in the Ga West Municipality. It was a case study because the research involved studying cases (development planning and citizen participation) peculiar to the district. The case study method allows for

in-depth study of social phenomena but the results relate to the unit of analysis only and allow no inductive generalisation. Issues that need to be counted have been quantified and described appropriately.

Study population

The study population consisted of all adult population (18 years and above) as well as staff of the Assembly including the decentralised departments in the Ga West Municipality. It also covered community leaders such as traditional authorities, Unit Committee members, Area Council members and household heads.

Sampling techniques and sample size

A multi-stage sampling technique was used to select household heads including Assembly members and traditional leaders for the study. At the first stage, a quota sample of one community was randomly chosen from each of the six Area Councils due to financial and time constraints. Simple random sampling was employed to select the communities within the Area Councils. Here the names of the communities within each Area Council were written out and one was picked randomly. This technique ensured equal chances of each community being selected and also eliminated any biases in the selection process.

At the second stage, 20 household heads were randomly selected from each community as shown in Table 1. Thus, a total of 120 household heads were involved in the study. The choice of 20 household heads was due to the difficulty to get an updated number of household heads in each community.

Table 1: Number of household heads selected by Area Council

Area Council	Number of communities	of community sampled	Number of selected household heads
Amansaman	34	Amansaman	20
Ayikai Doblo	52	Ayikai Doblo	20
Kotoku	21	Medie	20
Manyera	24	Manyera	20
Pokuase	15	Pokuase	20
Ofankor	16	Ofankor Poultry	20
Total	162		120

Source: Field data, 2009

Furthermore, purposive sampling was employed to select 10 key informants from decentralised departments in the municipality. These comprised three core staff of the Municipal Assembly (i.e. Coordinating Director, Municipal Planning Officer and Municipal Budget Officer), two from the National Commission for Civic Education (Municipal Director and the Assistant), four revenue collectors and one official from the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ).

In all, the sampling techniques gave a total sample size of 130 respondents for the study, which was deemed manageable within the budgetary and time constraints and the difficulty of getting information from some respondents.

Sources of data

Data were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data were obtained mainly by the use of interview schedules for 120 household heads and 10 key informants from relevant institutions. Field observation also formed part of the study and this captured the housing conditions as well as the community facilities and services.

The secondary data were obtained from library search and information from the 2000 Population and Housing Census reports by Ghana Statistical Service and the existing Development Plans, as well as published materials from books, journals and related studies on decentralisation and citizen participation in development planning.

Instrumentation

The interview schedules consisted both open-ended and close-ended questions. The interview schedule for household heads (Appendix 1) was divided into seven sections. Section A captured the background data on the respondent, Section B dealt with how development planning is practised in the municipality. Section C focused on stakeholder involvement in the planning process while Section D dealt with the level of women's involvement in the process. Sections E and F sought the challenges of citizen participation and how to improve participation respectively. The last section solicited respondents' recommendations.

The interview schedule for key informants (Appendix 2) was made up of eight sections. The sections were quite similar to Appendix 1, except that

the questions were relevant to the specific data requirements needed from this type of respondents.

Data collection procedure

An introductory letter was obtained from the Institute for Development Studies, University of Cape Coast. Permission was sought from the Municipal Co-ordinating Director to carry out the study in the municipality. Three National Service personnel with tertiary education were trained as field assistants to help administer the interview schedules.

The instruments were pre-tested for the purpose of checking their validity and reliability. The pre-test covered nine household heads in Gbawe in the municipality and two officers of the Municipal Assembly in November 2008. It provided information to review some of the questions in the instruments and to give practical experiences to the field assistants.

The main field work took place from February to March, 2009. The interview procedure enabled the research team to collect all the instruments administered to the respondents, thereby achieving 100 percent response rate.

Data analysis

Data collected from the primary source were edited and coded. They were entered into the computer program: the Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) version 14, which facilitated the data analysis. The SPSS software was used to obtain frequency distributions, graphs, percentages and cross-tabulations, which form the basis of data presentation.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The chapter presents results and discussion of the study. It covers the characteristics of respondents, availability of water and sanitation facilities, awareness of district development plans, information flow between the Assembly members and the citizens, how development planning is formulated, involvement of citizens in the planning process, stakeholders involved in the planning process, involvement of women in planning, challenges of women's participation, challenges of citizen participation in planning, development challenges of the municipality, civil society organisation and citizen participation, and sustaining citizen participation in development planning.

Characteristics of respondents

This section deals with the characteristics of the respondents in terms of sex, age, marital status, educational background and occupation.

Sex

The respondents of the study were made up of 120 household heads and 10 key informants. About 57.5 percent of the household heads were men while 42.5 percent were female as shown in Table 2. The key informants comprised eight (80%) males and two (20%) females. The low representation of women in the District Assembly and departments supports similar findings

by Ofei-Aboagye (2000) and Osman (2009) that women representation in local governance is low.

Table 2: Sex and type of respondents

Respondent	Male		Female		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Household head	69	57.5	51	42.5	120	100.0
Key informant	8	80.0	2	20.0	10	100.0
Total	77	59.2	53	40.8	130	100.0

Note: f = Frequency

Source: Field data, 2009

Age

The potential workforce of any nation is derived from its adult population that is available to work. The modal age of both household respondents and key informants ranged from 30 to 39 years as shown in Table 3.

The age of the key informants ranged from 30 to 49 years. The mean age of the key informants was 42.2 years. Eighty-four percent of the sampled household heads were within the range of 18-49 years. About 95 percent of the households were below 60 years. The results show that the majority of the sampled household heads and key informants were within the working population.

Table 3: Age distribution of respondents

Age (years)	Household Heads		Key Informants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
18-19	5	4.2	0	0.0
20-29	30	25.0	1	10.0
30-39	39	32.5	6	60.0
40-49	30	25.0	3	30.0
50-59	10	8.3	0	0.0
60-69	6	5.0	0	0.0
Total	120	100.0	10	100.0

Source: Field data, 2009

Marital Status

Marital status of respondents is important, especially in the Ghanaian setting, where a married person is held in high esteem and is seen as one who is responsible and could be entrusted with leadership positions. Marriage is an institution that has the full backing of society and law. The majority (80%) of the household heads were married while 10 percent were single. All the ten key informants were married (Table 4).

Table 4: Marital status of respondents

Marital Status	Household heads		Key Informants	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Single	12	10.0	0	0.0
Married	96	80.0	10	100.0
Widowed	8	6.7	0	0.0
Divorced	4	3.3	0	0.0
Total	120	100.0	10	100.0

Source: Field data, 2009

Educational background

The level of education is important in a study like this. Usually, low level of education has had a dire toll on the occupational opportunities and income levels. The educational background of the sampled household heads was low as the majority (69.2%) had secondary education or lower as presented in Table 5. One-third of these respondents had either middle or junior secondary school (JSS) education. It is therefore, not surprising that most of them work in the informal sector activities such as petty trading, farming, sale of electrical and construction hardware, masonry, carpentry and auto repairs. However, all the key informants with the exception of two revenue collectors had tertiary education.

Table 5: Level of education of household respondents

Educational level	Frequency	Percent
Primary	19	15.9
Middle/JSS	40	33.3
Secondary	24	20.0
Post Secondary	5	4.2
Vocation	16	13.3
Tertiary	16	13.3
Total	120	100.0

Source: Field data, 2009

Availability of water and sanitation facilities

Information gathered from the respondents indicates that water and sanitation facilities available to various communities had been inadequate. This is consistent with the findings of Atua-Ntow (2006). For example, potable water had been inadequate. Many people depended on nearby streams and the Nsaki River, which make them susceptible to contract water-borne diseases. Some respondents use alum to treat their water. They usually purchase sachet water for drinking. Amasaman could boast of a water reservoir but with poor and irregular services and practices while Pokuase and Doblogonno had been provided with boreholes but complained that the water was salty. It was in 2008 that certain parts of Amasaman were provided with water pipelines.

Generally, many communities have few public toilet facilities and some of these have been used beyond its capacity. Some residents have

resorted to using available forests as place of convenience. Sanitation conditions could be described as quiet appreciable. This was partly attributed to the regular organization of communal labour and the recent involvement of Zoomlion (a private waste management company), which has taken over the desilting of gutters and collection of refuse in the community. The employees of Zoomlion cleaned up the environment. The services of Zoomlion were paid for by the District Assembly.

Awareness of district or municipal development plans

Since 1996, District Assemblies have been given the opportunity to formulate their medium-term development plans in line with the guidelines prepared by the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC). The respondents were asked whether they were aware of district development plans. All the 10 key informants were aware of the existence of development plans at the Municipal Assembly. However, 45.8 percent of the household heads were not aware of the district development plans as shown Table 6.

Table 6: Household respondents' awareness of district development plans

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	65	54.2
No	55	45.8
Total	120	100.0

Source: Field data, 2009

The majority of the household heads who claimed awareness of district development plans were either Assembly members or individuals that had interacted often with their representatives or the Municipal Assembly. Although the majority of the households claimed awareness of the development plans, 67.7 percent of them did not know when the plans were prepared let alone knowing the details of such plans. It is, therefore, likely that their needs and aspirations were not reflected in the plans. The implication is that information was not going down well to local people and/or there was something wrong with the planning approach.

Information flow between the Assembly members and the citizens

At the base of the new decentralized development planning system are the Unit Committees and Assembly members. The Assembly members are the representatives of their electoral areas and therefore the liaisons between their communities and the Municipal Assembly. About 68.2 percent of the sampled household heads indicated that they had been barely informed about the development plans. They asserted that their representatives should keep them informed about the development issues at the Municipal Assembly and also carry their concerns to the Assembly for redress.

Assembly members were not able to pass on information to community members as expected. According to the Local Government Act of 1993 (Act 462), Assembly members are to organise community meetings before and after Assembly meetings and inform citizens as well as collate their views. The majority of the Assembly members interviewed indicated that they were not able to do so due largely to conflicts in the communities, litigations over

lands and chieftaincy litigations. These conflicts made it difficult for community members to co-exist peacefully. One of such community was Manyera. Organising a meeting then implied that one knew which side of the divide you belonged to. Since most of the Assembly members did not want to fuel conflicts, they avoided holding community meetings.

How development planning is done

To enhance citizen participation, NDPC usually formulates detailed guidelines on preparation of district development plans. Each Assembly is expected to follow the guidelines. The potential benefits of local information and human resources could not be realised if the people at the grassroots are not made active participants in shaping decisions that affect their lives. According to the respondents from the Assembly, due to limited resources to mobilise citizens when planning, they often involved representatives from each of the six Area Councils even though they were aware that this was not sufficient since the district is large. They rather were of the view that the Assembly members and the Area Council representatives would move the process forward by engaging their citizens.

According to Oyugi (2002), local governance and democracy cannot flourish if the DAs are administratively incapacitated. Excessive central control, inadequate financial resources and poor quality staff can have destructive effects on the standing of the Assembly in the minds of the public and their ability to take on new roles with decentralisation programme.

Not only MMDAs are planning authorities but they also exercise legislative, executive and deliberative powers as conferred on them by the

Local Government Act of 1993 (Act 462). Planning at the district level entails the participation of the local communities to influence decisions that affect their livelihoods (NDPC, 2002). Accordingly, the district development planning process is expected to commence with the participation of the local communities in the identification of problems and determination of goals and objectives from the Unit Committee level through the Town/Area/Zonal Councils to the DAs. The District Planning Coordinating Units then interpret and co-ordinate the district plans into medium-term development plans for consideration of the Executive Committee of the DA and debate by the Assembly. The approved district development plan is then forwarded to the Regional Coordinating Councils for co-ordination and harmonisation.

The results of the study indicate that the citizens did not have the full opportunity to express their needs. Even in fixing fees and rates, some revenue collectors interviewed indicated that communities faced numerous challenges with very little attention from the Assembly. The citizens, therefore, did murmur a lot whenever they went round collecting revenues. Some of the selected household respondents also complained that they had not been getting feedbacks from their Assembly members. As at the time of the interview, community members from Pokuase had brought a letter to the DA indicating that they did not understand the increases in fees and rates. This implies that people were dissatisfied with the DA. People were reluctant to pay taxes because they did not see tangible benefits from the local governments.

Involvement of citizens in the planning process

The majority (85%) of the household respondents reported that they did not feel involved in the planning process (Table 7). About 10 percent of the respondents indicated their involvement on the basis that once their Assembly members were involved, it implied that they were also involved by default. This is a far cry from the ideals of local governance.

Table 7: Involvement of citizens in the planning process

Involvement	Frequency	Percent
Yes	12	10.0
No	102	85.0
Don't know	6	5.0
Total	120	100.0

Source: Field data, 2009

Good governance is regarded as one of the essential characteristics of true democracy. It is at the local level that people feel and experience the substance of democratic governance through the way they influence decisions and the way the consequences of those decisions are felt by them. The new approach is that people at the grassroots level should determine, under appropriate technical guidance, their own needs and priorities, which would serve the basis of district development plans.

There were various reasons why the citizens did not feel involved in the process. Assembly members did not organise regular meetings with the community members. Secondly, citizens had a host of development challenges

that the Assembly members and the Municipal Assembly had not addressed them.

The majority of the sampled household heads reported that the Municipal Assembly could be vital for their empowerment because it is ideal for governance at the grassroots. However, the challenge is how to translate the aspirations of the local people into reality. Most of the respondents were convinced that the Municipal Assembly was for them but only a few agreed that it served the purpose for which it was established.

The results are consistent with the assertion of the World Bank (2001) that decentralised governance could make the state institutions responsive to the needs of people at the grassroots but only if it allows poor people to hold public servants accountable and ensure their participation in the development planning process.

Stakeholders involved in planning

Generally, in Ghana, stakeholders involved in the planning process include Assembly members, staff of decentralised departments, civil society organisations (CSOs), traditional authorities and the youth. About 70.8 percent of the household respondents identified stakeholders involved in the planning process as Assembly members (60%), CSOs (5%), youth (2.5%) and others (3.3%). However, 29.2 percent of the respondents did not know the stakeholders involved in the planning process as shown in Table 8.

The representative nature of the DAs has been criticised on a number of grounds. First, the DAs have provided limited opportunities for formal participation. There are formal and informal procedures and opportunities for

popular participation in the local policy formulation process through DA meetings and DA members meeting the electorate but these have been grossly inadequate and often irregular (Oyugi, 2002).

Table 8: Stakeholders involved in the planning process

Stakeholders	Frequency	Percent
Assembly members	72	60.0
CSOs	6	5.0
Youth	3	2.5
Others	4	3.3
Don't know	35	29.2
Total	120	100.0

Source: Field data, 2009

In practice, it is usually difficult to establish the extent to which ordinary people in the local communities are aware of and have participated in decisions affecting them. In most instances, the involvement of the local community members is sought at the implementation stage when labour resources are required for manual work (Botchie, 2000). Overall, the level of participation in decision-making is low in the study area. In many communities in Ghana, the experience is that planning is considered the prerogative of local leadership (Assembly members and Unit Committee members). Thus, large segments of the local community did not participate meaningfully in the identification of needs or determination of priorities for

action. This situation may be illustrated by the nature of community participation in the preparation of district development plans.

Nature of planning

The nature of planning of the Municipal Assembly was rated using the five-item Likert scale: very good, good, average, poor and very poor. About 39.2 percent of the household respondents reported the nature of planning as average while 27.5 percent and 21.7 percent recorded good and poor respectively (Figure 5). Both the respondents who viewed the Municipal Assembly's performance as poor and very poor explained that they had not received solutions to their development challenges and they did not think that Municipal Assembly was up to solving their problems. The Assembly members usually failed to honour their promises.

To formulate the development plans in the Municipality, departments were requested to submit their programmes to the Municipal Planning Coordinating Unit for harmonisation. The Assembly members were also asked to submit their problems, needs and requirements of their electoral area based on consultations with community members but it was not clear how widespread these meetings were. However, the Assembly seemed powerless to bring the decentralized departments in the municipality under its control as required by the Local Government Act, and so these decentralized departments continued to receive instructions from their headquarters in Accra.

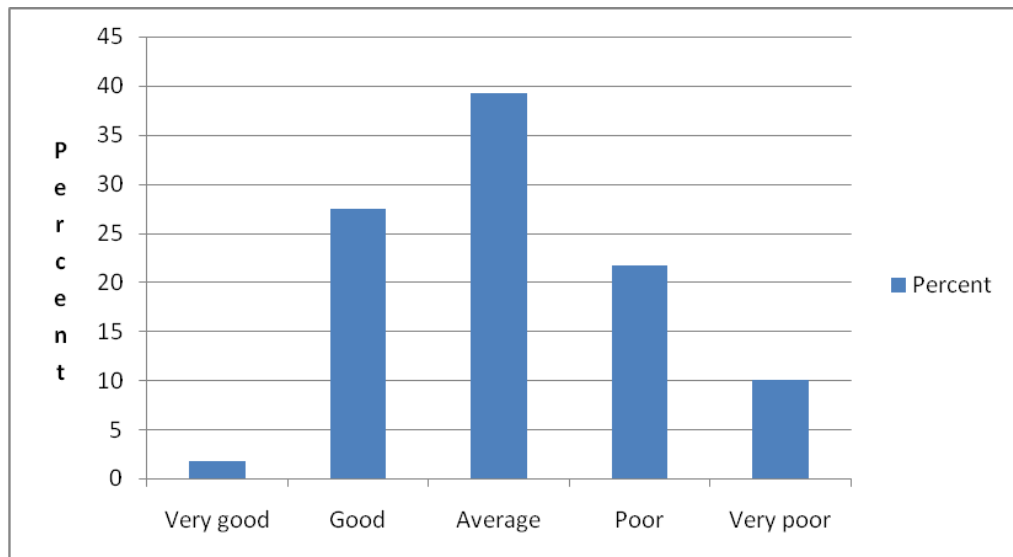


Figure 5: Respondents' rating of the nature of planning in the Ga West Municipality

Source: Field data, 2009

Women's participation in planning

Women constitute about 51 percent and 50 percent of the national and district population respectively. This implies that the involvement of women in decision-making and development planning process is very important. Such involvement would allow women's needs to be articulated and incorporated in the development agenda. The study sought to find out how women had been involved in district development planning.

The majority (74%) of the household respondents reported that women were not involved in the planning process because only two women were at the Municipal Assembly. Only 9.2 percent of the respondents indicated that women were involved in planning. About 16.6 percent of the respondents did not know whether or not women were involved as shown in Figure 6.

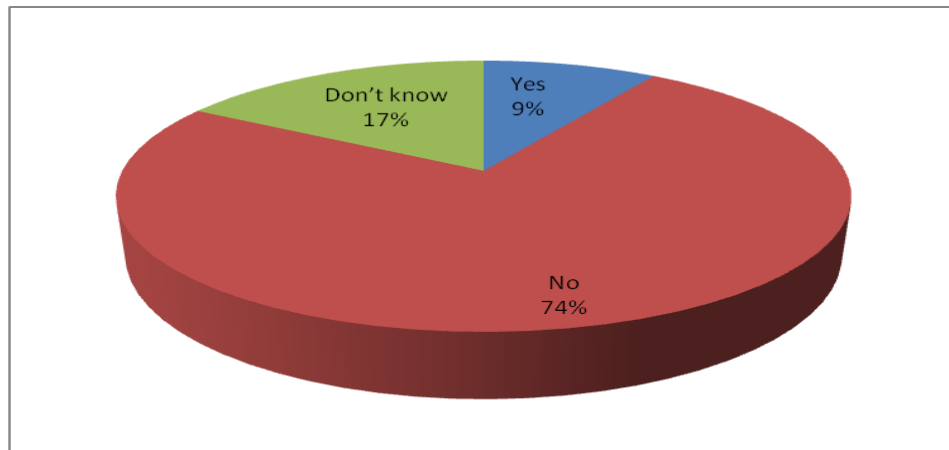


Figure 6: Involvement of women in municipal development planning

Source: Field data, 2009

According to the Assembly respondents, the Ga West Municipal Assembly has only one elected female and one appointed female while the remaining are males. Women are under represented in the Assembly. Various provisions in the design of the decentralisation process should have made the participation of women in public decision-making easier. These provisions include those for a non-partisan local government system, the freedom to use the local language for the business of the Assembly and the discretion in creating additional sub-committees.

In 1998, the Government of Ghana gave a directive that reserved 30 percent of the appointed membership of Assemblies for women (Ofei-Aboagye, 2000). Given that there was only one elected woman in the Ga West Municipal Assembly, more women would have been appointed from the 30 percent quota. However, only one woman was also appointed. Further probing on this indicated that the appointment of 30 percent membership was not the sole prerogative of the municipality. The Assembly did so in consultation with

the traditional authorities. They did not foresee any tendency for more women appointees because generally, the men did not see the value of having women in the helm of affairs. However, at the community level, quite a number (30%-40%) of women would participate in community meetings where community meetings were organized.

The low representation of women at the Assembly implies that development issues or challenges that confront women in the district would not be adequately planned for. The modern system of local government could have its basis from the colonial era. The colonial system of indirect rule, which was based on the traditional system of the local people in the Gold Coast at the time, did not give recognition to women because it was built around the male dominated chieftaincy institution (Allah-Mensah, 2002).

Geisler (1993) has observed that the UN Decade for Women (1975-85) and the events accompanied it have forced a rethinking of development policies which began to conceptualize women as agents of productive process and identified women's marginalisation as the chief cause of their deteriorating status. This expresses the critical role of women as agents of change.

The perceptions of the generality of Ghanaians about voting for a woman or a man do not deviate from the conception of politics, even at the grassroots as a predominantly male dominated business. Respondents were further asked if they would like see more women in the Assembly, the majority said yes and few said no because a woman's place is the home.

According to some key informants, women who dared to contest for Assembly positions received a lot of insults until they step out. This shows

that having more women contest for positions in the DA would only be ideal yet illusive. This kind of condition could be disturbing because the notion of gender mainstreaming to most people in the tradition-bound local communities, shares certain perceptions that recognise certain domains of social, economic, and political life to be outside the purview of women (Allah-Mensah, 2002).

Challenges of women's participation

The equal participation of men and women in policy making, economic and sectoral analysis, and project design and management may be impeded by cultural and legal constraints against women's participation and by women's relative lack of time and mobility caused by their workload and multiple roles. The study identified challenges of women's participation in development planning as inadequate leadership (33.3%), lack of enthusiasm (22.5%), inadequate knowledge of Assembly system (14.2%) as presented in Table 9. About 28.3 percent of the respondents indicate that all of the above reasons provided limit women's participation.

Other reasons given by the respondents included the cultural limitations that women generally are more focused on domestic chores and care of children and elderly rather than public issues. Low level of education was also cited as a major stumbling block towards achieving women's participation in public discourse. The respondents indicated that women who stood for local level elections were not voted for even by women because they had the opinion that politics might not be a place for women. Women candidates faced a lot of insults from the community. Such conditions could

influence their husbands who felt uncomfortable to advise the wives to withdraw from the contests.

Table 9: Challenges of women’s participation

Challenges	Frequency	Percent
Lack of leadership	40	33.3
Lack of enthusiasm	27	22.5
Inadequate knowledge of Assembly system	17	14.2
All of the above	34	28.3
Others	2	1.7
Total	120	100.0

Source: Field data, 2009

Another reason assigned for limited participation of women was poverty. According to the key informants, a lot of women have sole responsibility over the care of their children. Some men have shirked their responsibilities because they have no jobs. As a result, these women would do everything to earn a living and therefore, have no luxury of time to participate in the planning process. The causes are deeply embedded in social and legal institutions. Men and women play different roles, have different needs, and face different constraints in responding to macroeconomic or sectoral policy changes and to the specific opportunities and limitations provided by particular projects and programmes.

The constraints faced by women in the search for political career are both personal and institutional, which encompass the nature and meaning of politics, economic and cultural constraints, with many overlapping tendencies.

At the personal level, most women lack self-confidence to launch a political career. This has nothing to do with education (which is another distinct barrier) since both educated and non-educated have all exhibited this characteristic. Both Ofei-Aboagye (2000) and Allah-Mensah (2002) acknowledge that public speaking and inability to manage male intimidation have served as restraining factors.

Local governance is closely linked with the empowerment of voiceless groups such as the poor and women. Decentralisation may enable women to participate in decision-making, but unless gender equity is an explicit objective, existing gender imbalances may simply be replicated. If participatory development is to benefit from women's contributions and meet the particular needs of women then a range of strategic and practical measures must be taken to overcome these barriers.

Experience in participatory development has made clear that, unless specific steps are taken to ensure equal participation of men and women, women would continue to be excluded from the development process. As a result, projects fail to benefit from women's contributions and then fail to meet the particular needs and interests of women (World Bank, 2000).

Challenges of citizen's participation

The challenges of citizens' participation were also cited as lack of leadership, inadequate knowledge of citizen participation and lack of enthusiasm. The Local Government Act 462 (1993) requires that elected representatives consult their constituencies and collate views before going for meetings. Meanwhile, Assembly members were not able to organise

community meetings as expected due largely to conflict in the communities. Some communities interviewed were either engaged in land litigations or chieftaincy disputes.

In Manyera for instance, respondents indicated that due to chieftaincy and land disputes, there was lack of mutual respect even for chief and elders because the elders themselves are divided into two factions. The Assembly member could call for community meetings but people would not attend. The youth have also lost respect for elders in the community compounding the already fragile co-existence of the members of the community. In Ayikai Diblo, land litigations have drawn fierce fights from land guards. At the time of the interview, a lady was shot dead by land guards while cooking kenkey at dawn in her house. In Ofankor, respondents indicated that community meetings had not been held at all partly due to land and chieftaincy disputes. The Assembly member had never held any meeting with them since he took office.

Most of the Unit Committees in the municipality were not functional. They often complained of lack of motivation and some members also engaged in litigations, which made their operations quite difficult. Other factors included inadequate skills on the part Assembly members and Unit Committee members to engage in dialogue, inability of Assembly officials to visit the communities regularly for interactions with the citizens.

Some community members might communicate their challenges to the Assembly person but they did not represent the entire community concerns. In Ayikai Doblo, respondents indicated that the Chief was very proactive and would even go to the Assembly himself to present proposals to the Assembly.

Respondents from this community reported that the chief, prior to going to the Assembly, would have himself taken the first step in resolving the challenge. He was proactive in acquiring electric poles for the community and insisted that the Municipal Assembly help the community with the provision of electricity. This was how they got electricity in their community.

According to the key informants, the opportunities for popular participation exist at village or town levels where the relations between the Assembly members and their electorates are rewarding. Popular participation at the local community levels is normally conducted through meetings with village groups or individuals or through developing and implementing local projects. Through these processes, most local communities are motivated to participate in the planning process and discuss issues that affect their local areas. By this means, most communities become aware of their development problems, the causes and effects as well as how to tackle them. They are also prepared to contribute labour and financial resources through local fund-raising activities for developments, which directly affect their livelihoods.

Development challenges

A host of development challenges confront the municipality. About 70 percent of the household respondents cited some development challenges confronting them as poor roads, inadequate potable water, prevalence of Buruli Ulcer, inadequate decent toilet facilities, inadequate employment opportunities and skills, poor school infrastructure, no clinics, lack of market, land litigation and chieftaincy disputes. Most communities are also characterised by extreme poverty. Community members individually may send their proposals to the

Assembly through the Assembly member but they rarely receive solutions to them.

The lack of response from the DA is mainly due to inadequate financial, human and institutional resources available to the municipality. By far, the most significant and reliable source of development funds for the DAs is the DACF (Actionaid Ghana, 2002; Mensah, 2005). Like the other MMDAs in Ghana, DACF constitutes the major source of financing implementation of the development plans of the Ga West Municipal Assembly. Despite the clear development functions of the Municipal Assembly, the pattern of expenditure of the DACF shows significant absence of allocations to promote and support productive development. In spite of this situation, a number of local communities are undertaking local development initiatives either by themselves or with the help of NGOs and the Municipal Assembly to enhance the decentralised development planning process.

Civil society organisations and citizen participation

Participation as enshrined in the 1992 constitution is to be actualised through the DA structures, parliament and a host of institutions designed to educate people on their civic rights and responsibilities (such as NCCE) as well as to check excesses in the use of state resources (e.g. CHRAJ) (Kendie, 2002). In recent years, several civil society organisations have also emerged both to assist in the development needs of the poor and marginalised and to build capacity of public Institution to deliver development.

There is a strong relationship between a vibrant civil society and the propensity of local people to participate in the development discourse. Some

of the civil society organisations that operate in the Ga West Municipality include Government Accountability Improved Trust (GAIT) (Appendix 3), Actionaid Ghana, ADRA and World Vision. However, there seemed to be some impacts on the areas they operate. DA officials interviewed indicated that communities responded to civil society engagements and showed greater commitments to participate as measured by their attendance at public gatherings. Meanwhile, ordinary meetings organised by the DA alone did not attract high level of participation. This shows that there is a strong relationship between vibrant civil society activity at the local level and the propensity of the local people to participate in local governance.

Notwithstanding, the level of civil society activity engagement of the local communities were quiet limited. The good news was that while their activity might be limited, they did have some influence on those few areas that found their presence. Examples were Actionaid Ghana's programme on Burili Ulcer and ADRA's poverty reduction programme on agriculture. In the absence of governmental support and weakness of local people in organizing for their empowerment, the ultimate solution in filling the vacuum could become vibrant CSOs.

Appreciating the nature of planning at the Municipal Assembly

There is growing awareness that within the context of local governance, MMDAs must be able to deliver. The citizens believe that the Assembly constitutes the most appropriate institution for realising and achieving their goals. Their establishment is meant to develop local

communities. There is relationship between the ability of the Assembly to deliver and people's support and confidence given to the Assembly.

About 39.2 percent of sampled household heads reported that the performance of the Municipal Assembly was average while only 27.5 percent assessed as good (Table 10). Nearly 22 percent and 10 percent saw the performance of DA as poor and very poor respectively. Those who saw the performance as very poor and poor were those who had not seen any tangible benefit at all in the communities and personal lives.

Table 10: Performance of the Ga West Municipal Assembly

Performance	Frequency	Percent
Very good	2	1.7
Good	33	27.5
Average	47	39.2
Poor	26	21.7
Very poor	12	10.0
Total	120	100.0

Source: Field data, 2009

The Assembly was expected by the majority of the household respondents to initiate, prepare and implement district development plans that result in entrepreneurial, social, economic and community development action leading to improved standard of living. In circumstances where people lack that confidence in the Assembly, they are left with no choice but to describe Assembly's planning as poor.

Improving citizen participation in development planning

The concluding part of the interviews gave the opportunity to the sampled citizens to suggest ways of improving and sustaining citizen's participation in district development. The responses included the need for awareness creation, education about civic responsibilities, regular interaction with Assembly officials and regular community meetings.

The Ga West Municipal Assembly should activate Unit Committees, address community needs, visit community regularly, create opportunity for employment, make information readily available to ordinary people and give feedbacks to citizens when they request for assistance.

NCCE should improve public education to enhance citizen-Municipal Assembly relationship. The Assembly members should be proactive in responding to community problems and to listen to ordinary voices. The community leaders and members should strive to resolve their conflicts through Alternative Dispute Resolution rather than engaging in protracted conflicts. Civil society organisations could facilitate this process.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

Municipal Assemblies as agents of local governance in Ghana were created to generate good contacts with citizens, and to bring decision making to the local level where events take place. They were also established to help strengthen the democratic process and to lay a foundation for the emergence of autonomous institutions to promote good governance within the structure of the national state. The issue of citizen participation in development planning is a cardinal feature in the decentralisation process.

The study set out to examine the prospects and challenges of citizen participation in development planning in the Ga West Municipality. Primary and secondary sources of data were used to investigate the subject matter. Primary data were collected through the use of interview schedules from household heads and key informants. A multi-stage sampling procedure made up of simple random sampling and purposive sampling was used to select 120 household heads and 10 key informants for the study. Secondary data were gathered from books, journals and reports from institutions such as the Ga West Municipal Assembly, Ghana Statistical Service and the World Bank.

The main findings of the study are:

- The communities in the Ga West Municipality were grappling with serious developmental concerns characterized by low level of education, inadequate employment opportunities, inadequate social

amenities like potable water and sanitary facilities, taking a serious toll on the health of the citizens and to a large extent their participation in the decision making process.

- The prospects of citizen participation include improve Assembly's ability to respond to the local needs, allow better resource allocation, efficient and effective use of resources, promoting accountability and transparency.
- Low women representation and participation in the district planning process.
- There were a number of conflicts in communities in the areas of land and chieftaincy.
- Citizen participation in the district planning was quite low, which could be attributed to various factors such as community conflicts, inadequate human and financial resources of the Municipal Assembly, and low level of education of the people.

Conclusions

Citizen participation in district planning can improve local authorities' ability to respond to the needs of the local community. It allows for better allocation and usage of resources based on the articulated needs and priorities of the population, leading to more efficient use of resources. Creating channels and conditions for citizens to exercise their voice and to demand accountability can also lead to greater transparency in local government affairs. However, the Ga West Municipal Assembly lacked an established tradition of stakeholder participation in planning process at the local level,

while citizens lacked the confidence and ability to actively engage with the Assembly due to conflicts and low level of education.

The study found that participation of citizens in development planning at the district is low due to constraints such as inadequate resources and capacity of staff as well as lack of active responsibility on the part of citizens to engage local officials as well as land and chieftaincy disputes.

Women representation in the Assembly and participation in the process are low. Decentralisation is an important opportunity to increase women leadership for several reasons. Women are involved in social and grassroots development activities. These activities should build their confidence in the capacity to address local issues. Women have informal or semi-formal networks at the local level. Factors that hamper the promotion of women leadership in local governance include lack of education, societal barriers and poverty.

Citizen participation needs to be improved and this is in line with the global trend that citizen participation is a solution to many development problems. The belief is that such participation is to bring the democratic project to an end. However, citizen participation, like any other discourse, contains its own limits. The results of the study show that more work needs to be done to improve citizen participation in development planning in the Ga West Municipal Assembly.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- A comprehensive capacity-building programme should be developed for Municipal Assembly officials and other stakeholders who play major role in the planning processes at the municipality to bridge the gap between Assembly members and citizens.
- MLGRD, NCCE and CSOs should carry out regular education about Municipal Assembly processes and civic responsibilities so citizens can also hold local government officials accountable.
- The Municipal Assembly should ensure that the sub-structures are functional by training Unit Committees to improve their capabilities and effectiveness as well as providing the needed logistics and infrastructure.
- MLGRD should strengthen the capability of the Assembly, Municipal Planning Co-ordinating Units and Unit Committees to design, draw up, implement and monitor the development plans with active and full local community participation.
- The citizens and the appointing authorities should encourage more women to the Assembly to increase women representation and participation in decision making process, especially in planning for the municipality.
- The community members and leaders should give peace a chance by resolving their conflicts. Civil society organisations and the government should support this agenda.

Areas of further study

Further studies should be conducted to investigate an appropriate citizens' participation model for the municipality. Such a model must at a general level contribute to facilitating sound consultation and enhance participatory processes between the Municipal Assembly and citizens. Secondly, there should be a study towards finding lasting solution and management of land and chieftaincy conflicts in the municipality.

REFERENCES

- Actionaid Ghana (1999). *Country strategy paper (2000-2004)*, Accra: Actionaid Ghana.
- Actionaid Ghana (2002). *Local governance performance: Case study of five districts of Ghana*, Accra: Buck Press Ltd.
- Allah-Mensah, B. (1997). The gender dimension of the 1996 Elections: Implications for democratic consolidation, In J.R.A. Ayee (ed.) *The 1996 General Elections and Democratic Consolidation in Ghana*, Accra:, Department of Political Science, University of Ghana.
- Allah-Mensah, B. (2002). Gender and local governance in Ghana: The case of 2002 District Level Elections, in N. Amponsah and K. Boafo-Arthur (eds), *Local government in Ghana; grassroots participation in 2002 Local Government Elections*, Accra: Uniflow Publishing.
- Alterman, R., Harris, D. & Hill, M. (1984). The impact of public participation on planning: The case of the Derbyshire Structure Plan, *The Town Planning Review*, 55(2):177-196.
- Arnstein, S. (1969). A ladder of citizen participation, *Journal of American Institute of Planners*, 35 (July): 216-224.
- Atua-Ntow, K. A. (2006). Poverty reduction and environmental degradation in the Ga District, MA dissertation submitted to the Centre for Development Studies, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast.
- Ayee, J. R. A. (1991) The District Assemblies, Local Government and Participation, In K. A. Ninsin and F. K Drah (eds.) *Ghana's Transition to Constitutional Rule*, Accra: Ghana Universities Press.

- Barry, C., Stevenson, F. Britten, N. & Barber, N. (2002). Nursing public participation in health: An ethnographic study of patient council. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 45(1): 3-13.
- Beall, J. (1996). Urban governance: Why gender matters, *UNDP Gender Monograph Series*, No.1, New York: UNDP.
- Beall, J. (2005). Decentralising government and centralising gender in Southern Africa: Lessons from the South African experience, *Occasional Paper 8*, Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.
- Boateng, J.S. (2009). Rethinking gender in development studies, In J.V Mensah, S.B. Kendie and F. Enu-Kwesi (eds.) *Rethinking Development Studies in Africa*, Institute for Development Studies, Cape Coast: 287- 305.
- Botchie, G. (1999). Rural District planning in Ghana, A case study: A report submitted to the UK department for international Development.
- Botchie, G. (2000). Rural district planning in Ghana: A case study of International Institute for Environment and Development, *Environmental planning issues*, No. 21, Legon: ISSER, University of Ghana.
- Cheema, G. S. & Rondinelli, D. A. (eds.) (1983). *Decentralization and development : Policy implementation in developing countries*, Beverly Hills : Sage.
- CIA World Fact Book, (29.12.2005)
- <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/sf.html>,

- Conyers, D. & Hills, P. (1984). *An Introduction to Development Planning in the Third World*, New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Cornwall, A. & G, Pratt (2003) *Pathways to participation: reflection on participatory rural appraisal*, London: IT Publications.
- Crawford, G. (2004). Democratic decentralisation in Ghana: Issues and prospects, *POLIS Working Paper No. 9*, University of Leeds.
- Davids, I., Theron, F. & Maphunye, K.J. (eds.) (2005). *Participatory development in South Africa: A development management perspective*, Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Drah. F.K. (2003). Civil society and grassroots political participation in Ghana, In N. Amponsah and K. Boafo-Arthur (eds.) *Local government in Ghana*, Legon: University of Ghana.
- Finsterbusch, K. & van Wicklin II, W. (1987). *The contribution of beneficiary participation to development project effectiveness*, London: Sage Publication.
- Geisler, C. (1993). Rethinking SIA: Why ex ante research isn't enough?, *Society and natural resources*, 6. 327-338
- Gow, D and Vansant, J (1983). Beyond the rhetoric of rural development participation: How can it be done?, *World Development*. 2(5): 427-446.
- Green, R. (1987). *Stabilisation and adjustment policies and program: Country Study I, Ghana*, Helsinki: WIDER Publication.
- Jones, T. & Hardstaff, P. (2005) *Stakeholder participation in poverty reduction*, Duisburg: Institute for Development Studies and Peace.
- Kendie, S.B (2002): Operationalising the paradigm of alternative development in Ghana, *Oguaa Social Sciences Journal*, 3: 54-75.

- Kendie, S.B. & Martens, P. (2008) Governance and sustainable: An overview,
 In S.B. Kendie & P. Martens, (eds.) *Governance and Sustainable*,
 Cape Coast: Marcel Hughes: 1-15.
- Krefetz, S. P. & Goodman, A.E. (1973). Participation for What and for Whom.
 Some consideration for research, *Administrative and Society*, 5(3):
 367-380.
- Local Government System in Ghana
 (http://www.clgf.org.uk/index_profiles.htm)
- Mensah, J.V. (2005). Problems of District Medium-Term Development Plan
 implementation in Ghana: The way forward, *International
 Development Planning Review*, 27(2): 245-270.
- Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (1996). *The New Local
 Government System*, Accra: MLGRD.
- National Association of Local Authorities of Ghana (NALAG),
[http://www.iula-int.org/iula-
 acb/english/acb/acbprogrammeme/nalag.htm](http://www.iula-int.org/iula-acb/english/acb/acbprogrammeme/nalag.htm)
- National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) (2002). *Guidelines for
 the preparation of the District Medium Term Development Plans under
 the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy, 2002-2004*, Accra: NDPC.
- Narayan, D. (1995). Handbook on planning and implementing development
 assistance, *OESP Handbook Series*, New York: UNDP.
- Oakley, P. & Marsden, D. (1984). *Approaches to participation and rural
 development*, Geneva: ILO.

- Ofei-Aboagye. E. (2000). Promoting participation of women in local governance and development: The case of Ghana, *ECDPM Discussion Paper 18*, Maastricht.
- Osman, S. (2009). Participation of women in local governance in Ghana: A case study of Sissala East District in Ghana, unpublished MA dissertation submitted to the Institute for Development Studies, University of Cape Coast.
- Oyugi, W.O. (ed.) (2002). The role of Non governmental organisations in fostering good governance and development at the local level in Ghana, *Research Series 41*, Nairobi: United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD).
- Parpart, J. (1993). Who is the "other": A postmodern feminist critique of women and development theory and practice, *Development and Change* 24: 439-464.
- Pearse, A. & Stifel, M. (1979) Participatory approaches to rural development and rural poverty alleviation, *A Working Paper*, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).
- Republic of Ghana, (1992) *Constitution of the Republic of Ghana*, Tema: Ghana Publishing Corporation.
- Republic of Ghana (1993a) *Local Government Act (Act 462)* Tema: Ghana Publishing Corporation.
- Republic of Ghana (1993b) *National Development Planning Act (Act 479)* Tema: Ghana Publishing Corporation.

- Rondinelli, D.A. (1981). Government decentralisation in comparative perspective: Theory and practice in developing countries, *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 47: 133-145.
- Rondinelli, D.A, Nellis, J.R. & Cheema, G.S. (1984). *Decentralisation in Developing Countries*, Washington D.C.: World Bank.
- Sitas, A. (2002). Globalisation and participation – the South African dilemma, In G. Szell, D. Chetty & A. Chouraqui (eds.) *Globalisation, participation and culture*, Binghamton: Peter Kuge: 218-227.
- Smith, B. C. (1985). *Decentralisation: The territorial dimensions of the state*, London: Allen and Unwin.
- Steffensen J. & Trollegaard, S. (2003). *Decentralisation policies and practices: A case study of Ghana* (<http://www.1.worldbank.org/wbiep/decentralisation/africa/africa.htm>)
- UNDP (1997). *Ghana Human Development Report*, Accra: UNDP.
- UNDP (1997) Reconceptualising governance, *Discussion Paper 2*, New York: UNDP.
- UNDP (2005). *Human Development Report 2004*, New York: UNDP
- Van Rooy, A (ed.) (1998) *Civil society and the aid industry*, London: Earthscan.
- Williams, J.J. (2005). *Community participation: Promises, practices and challenges*, Cape Town: University of the Western Cape.
- World Bank (2001). *The World Development Report 1999/2000*, Washington DC: World Bank.
- World Bank (2005): <http://www.worldbank.org/participation/PRSP/PRSP.htm>

World Bank (2000):

<http://www.worldbank.org/participation/s&pa/pemresources.htm>

World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) (1987). *Our common future*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

APPENDIX 1

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR HOUSEHOLD HEADS

Interview code
Name of interviewer
Name of District
Name of community
Date of interview

Section A: Background data

1. Age
2. Sex: male () Female ()
3. Occupation.....
4. Educational background-
 - Primary ()
 - JSS/Middle ()
 - Secondary ()
 - Post Secondary ()
 - Tertiary ()

 - Nil ()
 - Others (Specify).....
5. Marital status
 - Single ()
 - Married ()
 - Divorced ()
 - Separated ()
 - Others (Specify).....

Section B: How development planning is done in the district

6. Does your district have a development plan?
 - a. Yes.....b No.....Don't Know.....
7. When was this plan developed?
 - a. Last year b. last quarter c. this year d. Don't know
8. How often is this plan developed?

a. Quarterly b. Annually c. Other (please specify)

9. Is this plan reviewed?

a. Yes..... B. No.....C. Don't Know

10. If yes, how often is the plan reviewed.

a. Quarterly b. Annually c. Other (please specify)

11. If No, why not?

12. Are citizens involved in the process of developing the plan?

a. Yes.....b. No.....c. don't know

13. If yes, who were those who participated?

a. Civil Society Organizations b. Assembly Members c. Women
d. Youth e. Other (specify)...

14. If No, why not?
.....

15. Are copies of development plans made available to citizens?

a. Yes.....b. No.....

16. If yes, how is this plan made available to citizens?

a. Notice board b. Through Assembly members c. Through the
media d. other

17. Are Assembly members aware of development planning mandates?

a. Yes.....b. No..... c. don't know

18. If No, why not?

19. Does District Assembly inform citizens of development planning
mandates?

a. Yes.....b. No..... c. don't know

20. If yes, what is the medium of information?

a. through letters b. Bill board c. Radio d. Gong gong

21. What is the response of citizens to development planning issues?

.....
.....

22. Do citizens present proposals to District Assembly?

a. Yes.....b. No..... c. don't know.

23. If yes, what kinds of proposals are presented to the Assembly?

.....
.....

24. If yes, do those proposals feed into the district plan?

a. Yes.....b. No..... c. don't know

25. How would you describe the nature of planning in your district?

.....
.....

Section C: Stakeholders involved in the planning process in the district

26. Who are the stakeholders in this development planning process?

- a. Assembly members
- b. Community members
- c. Citizen groups
- d. decentralized departments
- e. Others (Specify)

27. Are all the above stakeholders involved?

a. Yes.....b. No..... c. don't know

28. If yes, how are they involved?
- a. Through discussion
 - b. Through public hearing
 - c. Community discussions
 - d. Upon invitation
 - e. Others (Specify)
29. At what level are they involved?
- a. At the beginning of the planning process
 - b. During the process
 - c. At the finalization stage
 - d. Other(please specify)
30. Were you one of the stakeholders?
- a. Yes.....b. No..... c. don't know.
31. Was your involvement in response to an invitation or proactive.
- a. through invitation
 - b. On my own accord
 - c. Through an Assembly member
 - d. Others (Specify)
32. How beneficial has your involvement been to the District Assembly?
- a. My input was taken
 - b. Participatory discussions were held
 - C. I did not contribute
 - d. Others (Specify)

Section D: Level of involvement of women in development planning

33. Were women involved in the planning process?
- b. a. Yes.....b. No..... c. don't know.

34. What percentage of the stakeholders are women?
35. How will you describe the contribution of women to development planning in your district?
- a. Very good b. Good c. Average d. Poor
e. Very poor
36. Will you recommend the involvement of women in development planning process? a. Yes.....b. No..... c. don't know
37. How will the above recommendation be done?
- a. through affirmative action
b. Through citizen groups
c. Through mandatory delegation of women
d. Others (specify).
38. What are the challenges of women involvement?
- a. lack of knowledge of the District Assembly system
b. Lack of enthusiasm
c. Lack of women in leadership position
d. Others (Specify)

Section E: Challenges of citizen participation in development planning

39. What prevents citizens from participating?
- A. lack of knowledge of the District Assembly system
b. Lack of enthusiasm c. Lack of leadership
d. Others (Specify)
40. What prevents women from participation?
- e. lack of knowledge of the District Assembly system
f. Lack of enthusiasm
g. Lack of women in leadership position
e. Others (Specify)

Section F: How will stakeholders' participation be improved?

41. How will stakeholder involvement and participation be sustained?

.....
.....

42. How can the challenges faced in participation be minimized?

.....

Section G: Recommendations to improve citizen participation

43. What recommendations will you make to improve citizen participation in development planning in the Ga West Municipality?

.....
.....

APPENDIX 2

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY

Interview code

Name of interviewer

Name of District

Name of community

Date of interview

Department.....

Position

Section A: Background data

1 Age

2. Sex: male () Female ()

1. Occupation.....

2. Educational background-

Primary ()

JSS/Middle ()

Secondary ()

Post Secondary ()

Tertiary ()

Nil ()

Others (Specify).....

3. Marital status

Single ()

Married ()

Divorced ()

Separated ()

Others (Specify).....

Section B: How development planning is done in the municipal

4. Does your district have a development plan?

a. Yes.....b No.....

5. When was this plan developed?
 - a. Last year b. last quarter c. this year

6. How often is this plan developed?.....
 - a. Quarterly b. Annually c. Other (please specify)

7. Is this plan reviewed?
 - a. Yes..... B. No.....

8. If yes, how often is the plan reviewed?

9. a. Quarterly b. Annually c. Others (please specify)

10. If No, why not?

.....

.....

11. Did you involve the citizens in the process of developing the plan?
 - a. Yes.....b. No.....

12. If yes, who were those who participated?
 - a. CSO b. assembly members c. women d. youth e. others
(specify).....

13. If No, why not?

14. Are copies of development plans made available to citizens?
 - a. Yes..... b. No.....

15. If yes, how is this plan made available to citizens?
 - a. Notice board b. Through Assembly members c. Through the
media d. others (specify

16. Are Assembly members aware of development planning mandates?
 - a. Yes..... b. No.....

17. If No why not?

18. Does District Assembly inform citizens of development planning mandates?

- a. Yes.....
- b. No.....

19. If yes, what is the medium of information?

- a. through letters
- b. Bill board
- c. Radio
- d. Gong gong

20. What is the response of citizens to development planning issues?

- a. Very good
- b. good
- c. average
- d, poor
- e. very poor.

21. Do citizens present proposals to District Assembly?

- a. Yes.....
- b. No.....

22. If yes, do those proposals feed into the district plan?

- a. Yes.....
- b. No.....

23. How would you describe the nature of planning in your district?

Section C: Stakeholders involved in the planning process in the district

24. Who are the stakeholders in this development planning process?

- a. Assembly members.....
- b. Community members.....
- c. Citizen groups.....
- d. decentralized departments.....
- e. Others (specify).....

25. Are all above the above those stakeholders involved?

- a. Yes.....
- b. No.....

26. If yes, how are they involved?
- a. Through discussion b. Through public hearing
 - b. Community discussions d. Upon invitation

27. At what level are they involved?

- e. At the beginning of the planning process
- f. During the process
- g. At the finalization stage
- h. Other(please specify)

28. Were you one of the stakeholders?

- a. Yes.....b. No.....

29. Was your involvement in response to an invitation or proactive.

- a. through invitation
- b. On my own accord
- c. Through an Assembly member
- d. Other

30 How beneficial has your involvement been to the DA?.

- a. very beneficial
- b. beneficial
- c. average
- d. not beneficial

Section D: Level of involvement of women in development planning

31. Were women involved in the planning process?

- a. Yes.....b. No.....

32. What percentage of the stakeholders are women?

33. How will you describe the contribution of women to development planning in your district?.

- a. Very good
- b. Good
- c. Average
- d. Poor
- e. very poor

34. Will you recommend the involvement of women in development planning process? a. Yes.....b. No.....

35. How will the above be done?

- f. through affirmative action
- g. Through citizen groups
- h. Through mandatory delegation of women
- i. Other.

36. What are the challenges of women involvement?

- a. lack of knowledge of the District Assembly system
- b. Lack of enthusiasm
- c. Lack of women in leadership position
- d. Others (specify)

Section E: Challenges of citizen participation in development planning

37. What prevents citizens from participating?

- a. lack of knowledge of the District Assembly system
- b. Lack of enthusiasm c. Lack of leadership
- d. Others (specify)

38. What prevents women participation?

- a. lack of knowledge of the District Assembly system
- b. Lack of enthusiasm c. Lack of women in leadership position
- d. Others (specify)

Section F: How will stakeholders' participation be improved?

39. How will their involvement and participation be sustained?

.....

40. How can the challenges faced in participation be minimized?

.....

Section G: Civil Society Organizations/NGOs and citizen's participation

41. Are you aware of certain CSO/NGO that operates in your local area?

a. Yes.....b. No.....

42. If yes could you name any?

43. Which of the following activities have they been involved in, in your

area? a. Support to democratic governance

b. Provision of financial assistance

c. Provision of infrastructural services i.e. schools, health, agriculture

44. Do you think the activities of these NGOs have led any significant

improvement in your area? a. Yes.....b. No.....

45. Could you give an example of such improvements?

Section H: Recommendations to improve citizen participation

44. What recommendations will you make to improve citizen participation in

development planning in the Ga West Municipality?

.....

APPENDIX 3

GAIT II PROGRAMME

Government Accountability Improved Trust II (GAIT II) commenced activities in the Ga West Municipality in August 2006 with funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). GAIT II is jointly implemented by the cooperative league of the USA (CLUSA), Education Development Centre (EDC), and Institute of Local Government Studies (ILGS).

Within the past three and half years, GAIT II activities in the district focused on helping citizens/communities and local government/district education offices to work together over the immediate and long - term.

Activities focused on increasing the capacity of citizen groups and community members to advocate for the interests of their members and communities to local *government and to join in the business of governance, including service delivery* with a greater emphasis on education. Local governments, including district education offices, to involve and account to citizens and more effectively manage public resources and services.