



ASSESSING THE  
EFFECTIVENESS OF

**DISTRICT  
ASSEMBLIES**  
IN GHANA'S DEMOCRACY



WITH SUPPORT FROM  
EUROPEAN UNION

## ***PREFACE***

The local government system based on the District Assemblies (DA) was established under PNDC Law 207 in 1988 and strengthened by the Local Government Act 1993, (Act 462). The objective of both laws was to ensure that governance is placed at the doorstep of the ordinary Ghanaian for individual, group and community development. Some success has been made with 216 Assemblies overseeing development at the local level. It is important to solidify the gains made and steps taken to intensify efforts in making the work of the DA more effective to enable them deliver on their mandate.

Community development through local governance has been facilitated and citizens' participation in local governance promoted. However, the system is beset with many challenges such as perceived political interference, operational bottlenecks, inadequate funding and poor participation of Women and Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) among others. These have adversely affected the effectiveness of the DA in the development activities of the country.

As part of the efforts of the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) to contribute to building strong and viable state institutions, as a prerequisite for true democratic governance, NCCE decided to undertake this study. The study covered 72 selected districts across the 10 regions of Ghana. A total of 2,910 respondents were interviewed. The objectives of the study were to:

- Assess the general public's awareness of the roles/functions of the DA;
- Assess the public perception of the role of traditional authorities in the work of the DA;
- Assess the general public's view of the performance of women in the DA elections;
- Assess the political neutrality of the DA;
- Determine whether the public would prefer to elect their District Chief Executives (DCEs) or the President should continue to appoint DCEs.

According to the data gathered from the field, most Ghanaians recognize the role of the DA as the political authority of the district with the central function of providing local level development. On the functions of the Sub-Metro/Urban/Zonal/Town/Area councils, the key function identified by respondents was revenue mobilization. It was also observed that the sub-district local government structures do not currently perform their functions effectively and therefore there is the need to improve upon their performance.

It is the wish of Ghanaians that Chiefs and Traditional Authorities play an advisory role in the work of the DA, particularly, on development projects since they are the custodians of the land and other natural resources in their areas of jurisdiction. The report also indicates the need for the full implementation of the administrative directive that 50% of the quota for appointed Assembly members should be reserved for women. This will achieve equality and gender balance in the administrative system of the Assemblies. Data also reveals that citizens' participation in the Assemblies work is very low and therefore it is necessary to institute regular community interaction sessions.

The appointment of the District Chief Executives (DCEs) by the President and the perceived support given by political parties to some district assembly men/women during DA elections have given cause for many Ghanaians to view the local government system as partisan. The study reveals a high demand for the election of DCEs instead of their appointment by the President.

Another important finding from the research is the need for the timely release of the Common Fund due to the Assemblies and its upward adjustment for accelerated development.

The Commission believes that these findings will facilitate policy formulation and implementation as well as serve as a useful tool for educating the citizenry for the enhancement of the DA's work for the development of the country.

Appreciation goes to the European Union (EU) for funding this study and to respondents for their invaluable contribution in making this research project a reality. I thank and commend the effort of NCCE staff for their hard work in this research project.

NCCE is also grateful to Professor Kwamena Ahwoi for reviewing the report.

**PHILOMENA ABENA ANYIDOHO (MRS)**  
**CHAIRMAN, NCCE RESEARCH COMMITTEE**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
FOREWORD	... i
TABLE OF CONTENTS	... iii
ABREVIATION	... iv
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	... v
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS	... 1
CHAPTER TWO: KNOWLEDGE AND VIEWS ON DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES AND SUB-DISTRICT STRUCTURES	... 8
CHAPTER THREE: PERFORMANCE OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEM	... 16
CHAPTER FOUR: PARTICIPATION IN DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES' WORK/ACTIVITIES	... 23
CHAPTER FIVE CONCLUSION	... 37
CHAPTER SIX RECOMMENDATIONS	... 38
BIBLIOGRAPHY	... 43
APPENDICES	
A: METHODOLOGY	... 44
B: SELECTED DISTRICTS	.... 46

## ABREVIATIONS

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS	CSOs
DISTRICT ASSEMBLY	DA
DISTRCT ASSEMBLIES	DAs
DISTRICT ASSEMBLY COMMON FUND	DACF
DISTRICT CHIEF EXECUTIVES	DCEs
DECENTRALISATION POLICY FRAMEWORK	DPF
GOVERNMENT OF GHANA	GOG
METROPOLITAN, MUNICIPAL AND DISTRICT CHIEF EXECUTIVES	MMDCEs
METROPOLITAN, MUNICIPAL AND DISTRICT ASSEMBLY	MMDA
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR CIVIC EDUCATION	NCCE
PRESIDING MEMBERS	PMs
PROVISIONAL NATIONAL DEFENCE COUNCIL	PNDC
SUB-DISTRICT LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES	SDLGS
SUB-METRO/URBAN/ZONAL/TOWN	SMUZTAC

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) carried out this study in September, 2014 to assess the effectiveness of District Assemblies (DA) towards enhancing Ghana's Democracy for national development.

Specifically, the study sought to assess the general public's awareness of the functions of the DA as stipulated in the Local Government Act, 1993 (Act 462) as well as the role of traditional authorities in the work of the DA. The study also elicited the views of the general public on the performance of women in the DA elections. It also sought the knowledge of the general public on their role in ensuring accountability and probity of the DA projects as well as holding DA Officials accountable. The study further ascertained ways of strengthening citizens' participation in the planning and budgeting processes of the DA and ways of improving on the work of the DA among others.

The study was cross sectional and carried out as a national sample survey covering 72 districts. A total of 2,910 persons responded to the questionnaire. Each region's proportionate share of the 2010 population and housing census determined the number of questionnaires allotted to districts in the region.

It was established that 94.6% of the responses showed that the respondents knew the roles of the DA. Over 80% of the responses showed that the respondents knew the functions and the roles of the sub-structures of the DA. This is contrary to the generally held notion that most Ghanaians do not know about the sub-structures of the DA.

Again, it was established that a very high majority of respondents (87.0%) knew that the tenure of office of Assemblies is four (4) years. On the appointment of the Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Chief Executives (MMDCEs), majority of the respondents (90.3%) indicated that the President of the Republic appoints them. It was also revealed that as high as 69.4% of respondents wanted the MMDCEs to be elected. The study further indicated that a large majority of respondents (96.3%) know the roles of the MMDCEs whilst (83.6%) said they know the roles of the Presiding Members of the Assemblies.

The study further revealed that a significant section of the respondents believed that the sub-structures of the DA are not performing effectively (44.7%), while 26.4% of respondents indicated otherwise. A large segment also indicated that they had no knowledge about the performance of the substructures of the DA. Another large proportion of the respondents (68.6%) believed that the DAs are partisan in their operations. On the sources of revenue, a

high majority (81.3%) of respondents displayed their knowledge of the sources of revenue for the DA.

The study assessed the participation of Chiefs and Traditional Authorities, women and ordinary citizens in the work of the DA. It was established that as high as 69.0% of respondents believed that Chiefs and Traditional Authorities have roles to play in the work of the DA. On whether the quota for appointing women into the DA should be increased, a high majority (69.7%) wanted the quota to be increased. The study also revealed that 62.2% of respondents thought women's participation in the Assembly was low. Majority of respondents noted that citizens are not consulted on the kind of projects that should be embarked on in their communities (68.1%). The data further revealed a high appreciation of the ways respondents should be involved in the planning and budgeting processes of the Assemblies.

In relation to the improvement on the effectiveness of the work of the DA, the respondents displayed a high level of appreciation of the operations of the DA system and the challenges confronting them. Consequently, the respondents suggested a declaration of assets before and after leaving office, (30.5%); and constant monitoring and evaluation of their work, (26.0%) among others as ways citizens could hold local government officials accountable for their stewardship. Furthermore, in response to the question on how to improve on the effectiveness of the work of the DA, the respondents suggested the election of MMDCEs as foremost (25.3%); the need for the DA to eschew corruption (19.5%); the annual financial report of the Assemblies to be evaluated and persons found culpable of any form of embezzlement be fined (14.7%) and transparency in the disbursement and distribution of Assemblies Common fund (9.4%) among others.

It is anticipated that the findings will assist government, development partners, the DA, and other stakeholders improve on the effectiveness of the local government system in Ghana. For the NCCE, this will go a long way to assist in its sensitization activities for national development.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

#### **Background**

The implementation framework for a decentralized local governance system in Ghana was achieved in 1988 when the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) Law 207 was passed. This law was strengthened by the Local Government Act, 1993 (Act 462) which established the District Assembly (DA) as provided for in the Fourth Republic Constitution of Ghana, 1992.

After over two decades of establishment of the DA, there have been some successes. These include the creation of 216 Local Authorities and the transfer of some resources and responsibilities from the central government to the local level. The implementation of the District Assembly system has also raised awareness among the citizenry, infrastructure development with DA fund and increased collaboration between localities and development partners, (Decentralization Policy Framework, 2010).

The successes chalked and the benefits of the establishment of the DA system notwithstanding, there are many fundamental issues to be addressed if the system is to operate optimally and thus ensure national development. According to the Decentralization Policy Framework (2010), experiences from the implementation of the DA system have included incoherence or even contradiction in sectorised approaches to decentralization.

Another fundamental issue challenging the effective operation of the DA system is the high dependence on transfer of funds from the central government and donors. This indicates that the DA has limited authority to set local expenditure priorities. In addition, the irregular release of statutory funds from the consolidated fund has affected the overall work of the DA.

An additional fundamental challenge facing the smooth and effective running of the DA is the collection of revenue through local taxes. In most instances, the DA's internally generated revenue is inadequate and does not compare with the so called "lucrative tax fields". Taxes and levies including income tax, sales tax, import and export duties accrue to central government. The DA's ability to deliver on its mandate depends largely on availability of funds. The irregular release of DA Common Fund in the face of competing needs have put a lot of pressure on the DA in the execution of developmental programmes and projects.



Further, the DAs are challenged in respect of the participation of marginalised groups in local government. In 1998, the Government of Ghana (GoG) issued a directive that reserved 30% of the appointed membership of DA to women. A close examination of the proportions of the appointed members suggests that the DAs barely selected 30% of its members as women even though that was to be the minimum. Female representation among elected members has also been low. This situation has caused many Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and gender advocates to propose an increase from 30% to 50% and this was granted by an administrative directive during the Third Government of the Fourth Republic. It would appear that systematic support has not been provided to ensure the growth and participation of women in local governance and development as all the Presidents, Traditional Authorities and other interest groups have not adhered to the 50% quota for women.

Since Ghana's decentralization process and for that matter the DA concept is still saddled with challenges, this has raised concerns about its effectiveness towards the enhancement of Ghana's democracy. The study therefore sought to establish the appreciation of the general public of the difficulties confronting the DA and the decentralization process and to offer suggestions towards enhancing their role for national development.

### **Research Problem**

Democratic governance succeeds in meeting the needs of citizens to the extent that the governance processes and institutions function effectively. One of the banes of Ghana's democracy has been the weak institutions and processes which constrain the delivery of democratic development to the people of Ghana. The DA is one of such institutions.

As a state institution, the DA has existed and operated for over twenty five (25) years. It has chalked many successes in terms of decentralization of central government activities, acceleration of development in various communities and opportunities for individuals to build their political careers and contribute towards the improvement of their communities among others.

Despite these feats, it has been noted that the DA system faces many challenges that impede the effectiveness of its performance to accomplish its mandate. Notable among these challenges are political influence, power struggles between Members of Parliament (MPs) and District Chief Executives (DCEs), perceived weaknesses in the legal framework that provides for

non-partisan DA elections, weak revenue generation, low level of citizens' participation (especially, women and Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)), in the work of the DA.

Indeed, the appointment of Metropolitan/Municipal/District Chief Executives (MMDCEs) is believed to affect the independence of the DA and its operations, as appointees strive to satisfy the one who appoints them rather than the interest of the community and people. Also, the perceived lack of co-operation between MPs and DCEs creates tension and misunderstanding at the hierarchy of the DA. Again, political parties' infiltration in the affairs of the DA by throwing their weight behind assembly men and women during DA elections impact negatively on the cohesion needed for the Assembly's work. In addition, aside the delay in the release of the DAs Common Fund (DACF) by central government, the DA are noted to rely on low revenue sources (i.e. basic rates, property rate and market tolls among others) which make it difficult for them to operate more efficiently. Citizens' apathy, the failure to fully implement the 50% quota system of women appointees to serve on the DA and neglect of PWDs in the work of the DA are all seen to have contributed to the perceived ineffectiveness in the performance of the local government system.

The DA as an institution performs decentralized activities of central government at the grassroots for the realization of true democratic governance for the total development of Ghana. As such, this study's objective was to identify the causes of the DA's shortcomings for redress.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to assess and identify the effectiveness of the performance of the DA in the development agenda of Ghana. The specific objectives of the study include:

- Assess the general public's awareness of the functions of the DA.
- Assess public perception of the role of traditional authorities in the work of the DA.
- Determine the views of the general public on the performance of women in the DA elections.
- Ascertain the knowledge of the public about their role in ensuring accountability and probity of DA projects.
- Find ways of strengthening citizens' participation in the developmental planning and budgeting processes of the DA.
- Obtain suggestions on ways of improving the work of the DA.

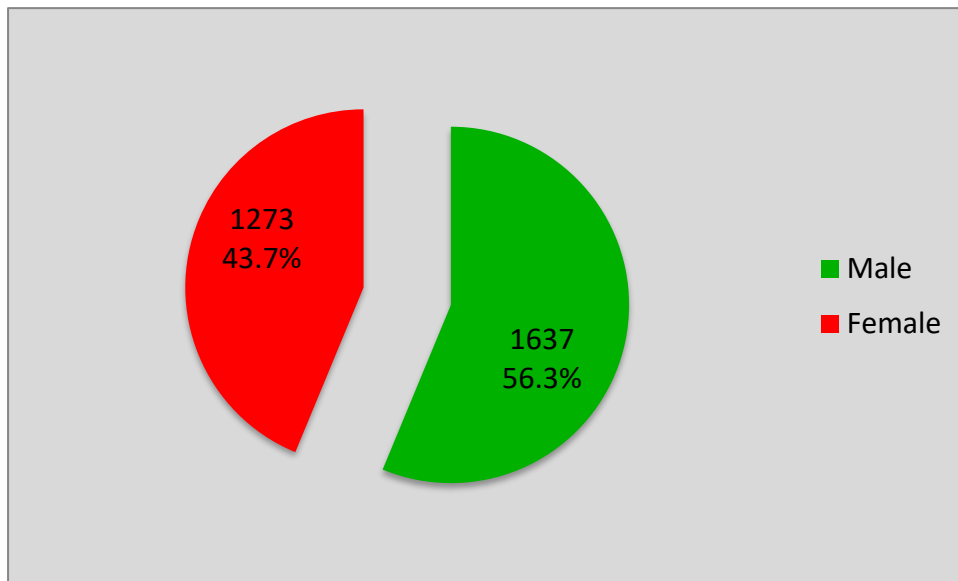
- Assess the effectiveness and the political neutrality of the DA.

## SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS

### Sex of Respondents

The data obtained from the field revealed that of the 2,910 respondents interviewed, 1,637 (56.7%) of them were males whilst the females were 1273 (43.7%).

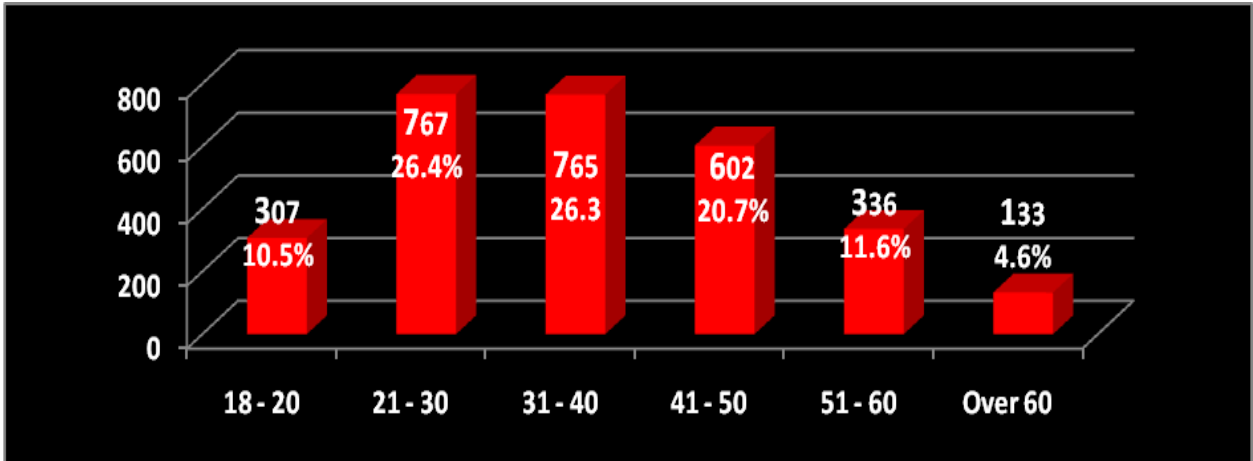
**Fig 1.1 Sex of Respondents**



### Age of Respondents

A little over a quarter of the respondents, 767 (26.4%) of the respondents were aged between 21 - 30, followed by those aged 31 - 40 who were 765 (26.3%). Those aged 41-50 were 602 (20.7%), whilst those between the ages of 51-60 were 336 (11.5%). The least number of respondents fell within the age bracket of 18-20 and those over 60 years were 307 (10.5%) and 133 (4.6% ) respectively. Please see figure 1.2 below for the detail results.

**Fig 1.2: Age of Respondents**

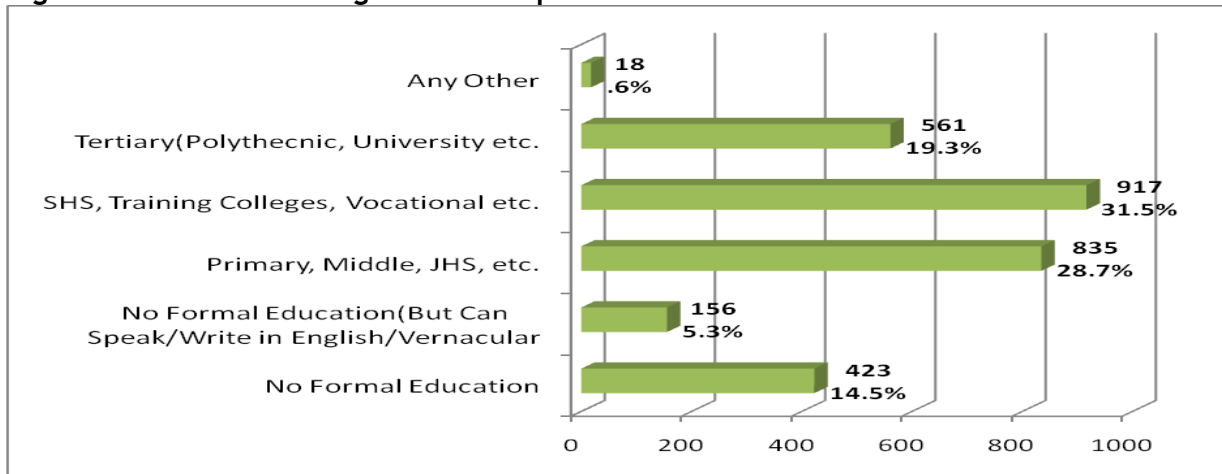


### Educational background of respondents

A look at the educational background of the respondents indicates that 917 (31.5%) of the respondents have had education up to the Senior High School level, Training Colleges or vocational level, with 835 (28.7%) having only basic education. This was followed by those with Tertiary education, 561 (19.3%). Eighteen respondents have had education through the Koranic or Bible school system.

On the other hand, 423, representing 14.5% of the respondents have had no form of formal education whilst, 156 representing 5.3% have had no formal education but can read and write in English and/or vernacular.

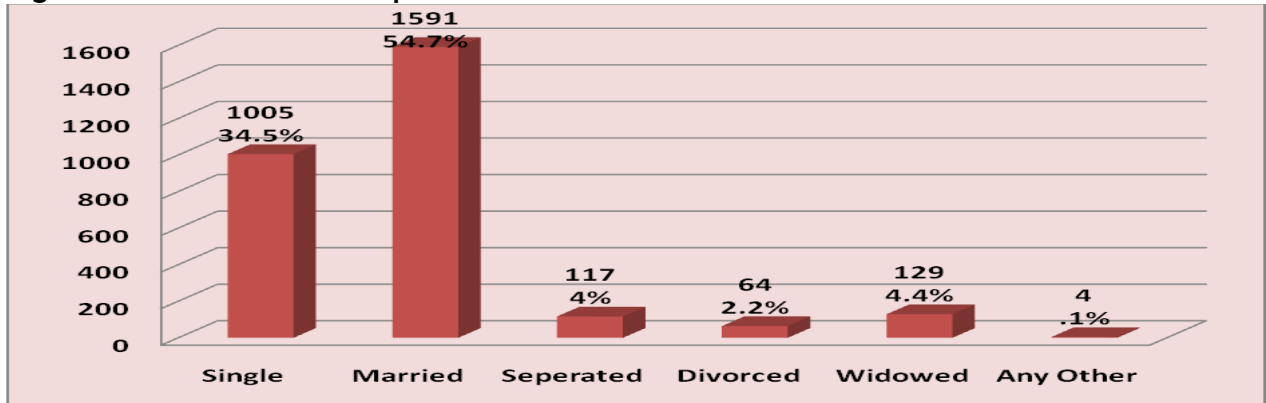
**Fig. 1.3 Educational background of respondents**



### Marital status of respondents

The data portrayed a high number of respondents, 1,591 (54.7%) of the respondents as married. 1,005 representing 34.5% of the respondents were single. Respondents who were separated from their spouses were 117 (4%) of the total number of respondents. Sixty four respondents representing 2.2% were divorced with 129 (4.4%) of the respondents widowed.

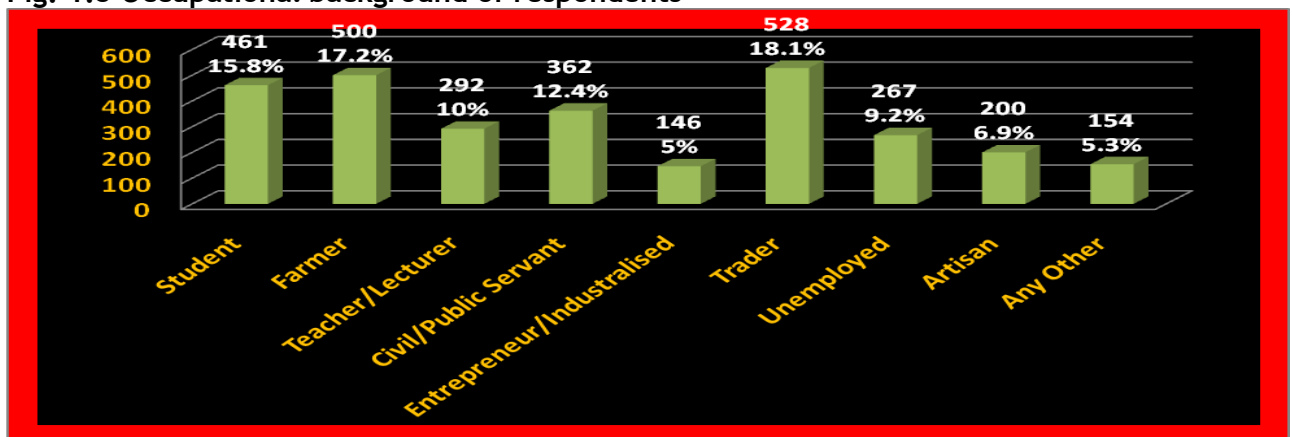
**Fig. 1.4 Marital status of respondents**



### Occupational background of respondents

The respondents interviewed indicated the occupations they were involved in. Trading was the highest with 528 respondents (18.1%). Farmers were 500 (17.2%), followed by students who were 461 (15.8%). Civil or public servants were 362 (12.4%), teachers or lecturers were 292 (10%). Artisans were 200 (6.9%) whilst 146 (5%) were industrialists. Those serving as security officers, mallams, priests and engaged in other activities not specifically stated, were duly acknowledged as 'Any other' and were 154 (5.3%). 267 (9.2%) indicated that they were unemployed.

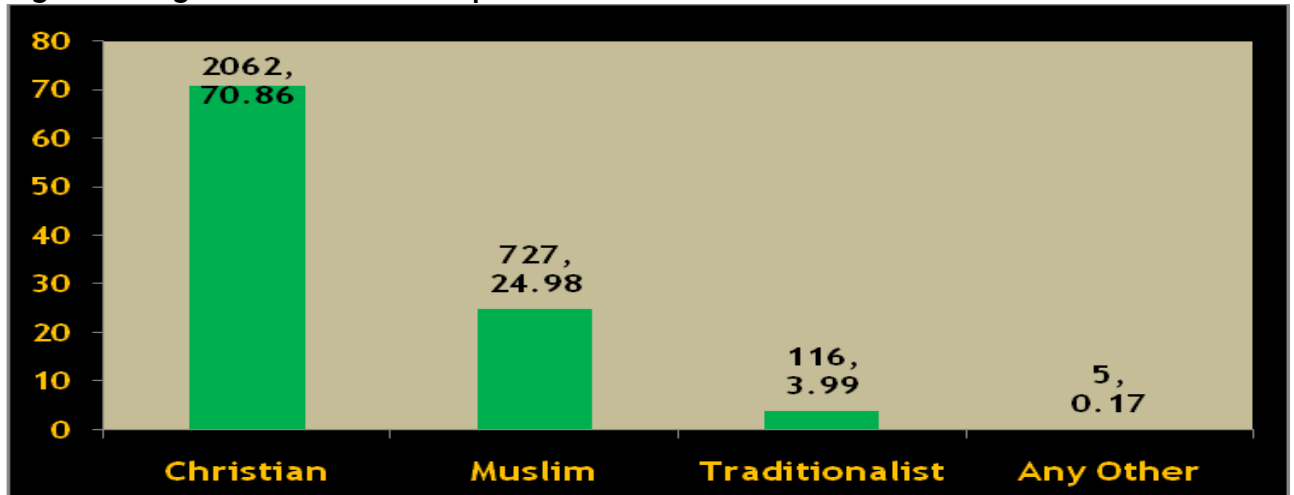
**Fig. 1.5 Occupational background of respondents**



### Religious affiliation of respondents

The findings show that majority of the respondents interviewed were Christians (70.9%), followed by Muslims (25%) and Traditionalists (4%). Among the category of 'Any other' (1%) were respondents who were Atheist and those who did not belong to any of the religious affiliations cited above.

**Fig. 1.6 Religious affiliation of respondents**



## CHAPTER TWO

### KNOWLEDGE AND VIEWS ON DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES AND SUB-DISTRICT STRUCTURES

Most respondents exhibited an appreciable level of understanding of the issues of the DA in relation to its roles, functions, sub-district structures, tenure of office, District Chief Executives (DCEs) appointments and roles of both DCEs and Presiding Members.

For questions demanding reasons for answers given by the 2910 respondents, multiple responses were obtained from the respondents. Hence, varied numbers of responses were captured by the data.

In relation to the role of the DA in Ghana’s development, the data revealed that 32.5% out of the responses indicated the DA as the political authority of the district and 26.3% indicated that the DA is the fulcrum of administrative and developmental activities in the district. Another, 23.2% linked the DA with the deliberative, legislative as well as executive role, while 15.6% specified that the role of the DA is to ensure an equitable allocation of power, wealth and geographical dispersal of socio-economic development in the district.

**Fig. 2.1: Knowledge of the role of the District Assembly**

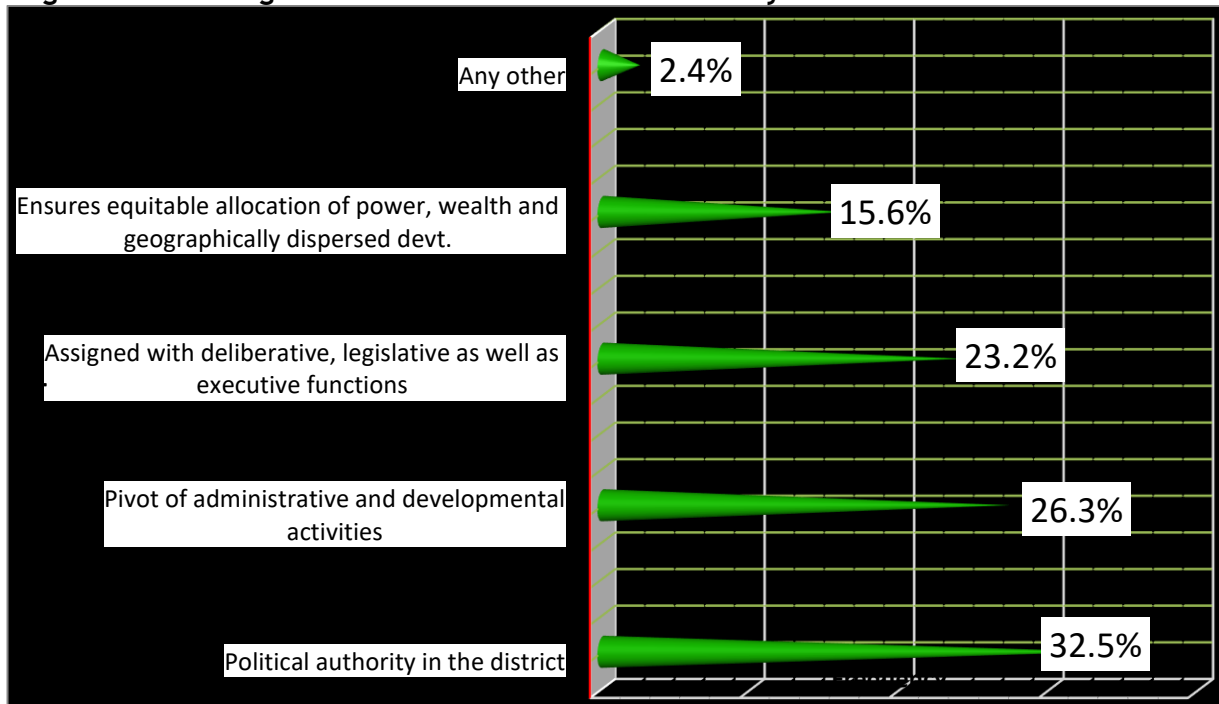
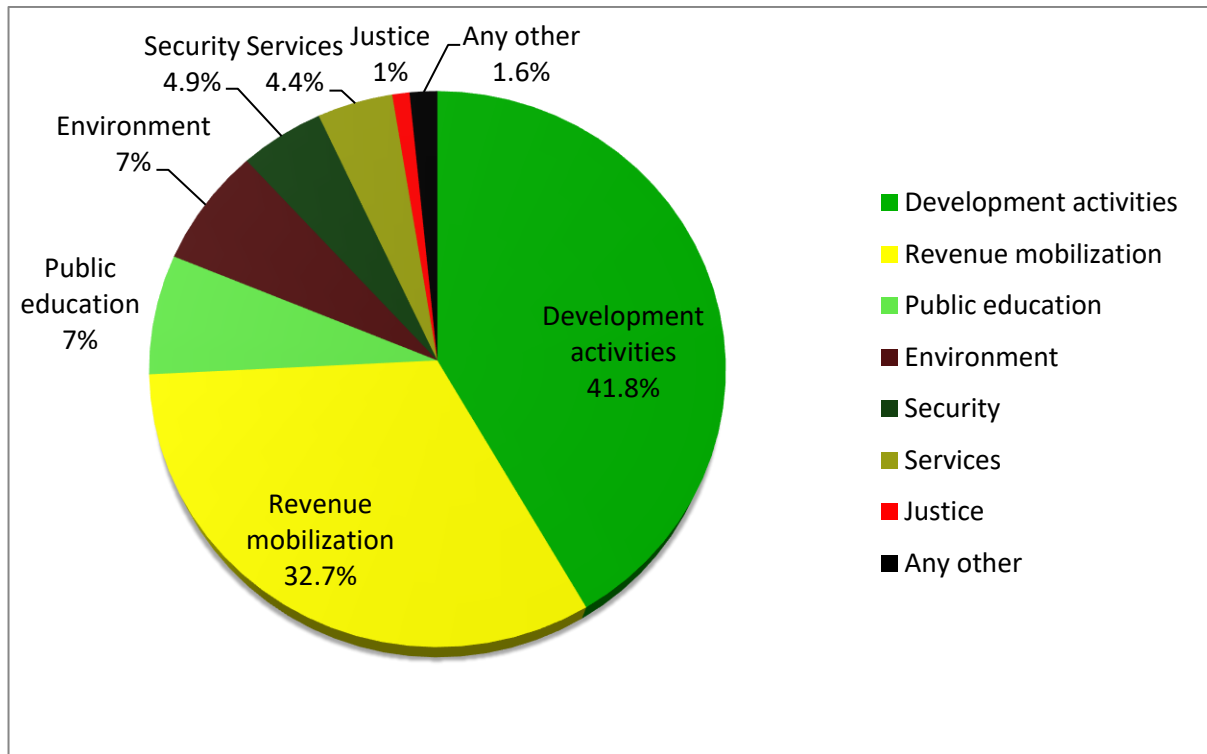


Figure 2.2 below shows respondents’ knowledge of the functions of the DA. A large percentage 41.8%, pointed to the fact that the DA undertakes socio-economic and political activities in the district. Further, 32.7% indicated that the DA mobilizes revenue for development activities and 7% showed that the DA is responsible for the management of human settlements and the

environment in the district. 7% portrayed that the DA was responsible for public education and 4.9% indicated that the Assembly is responsible for the maintenance of security and public safety in the district in collaboration with the appropriate national and local security agencies. Another 4.4% depicted the DA as the provider of municipal works and services, while 0.7% portrayed that the Assembly ensures access to the courts in the district for the promotion of justice. 1.6% captured under “Any other” did not specify any functions.

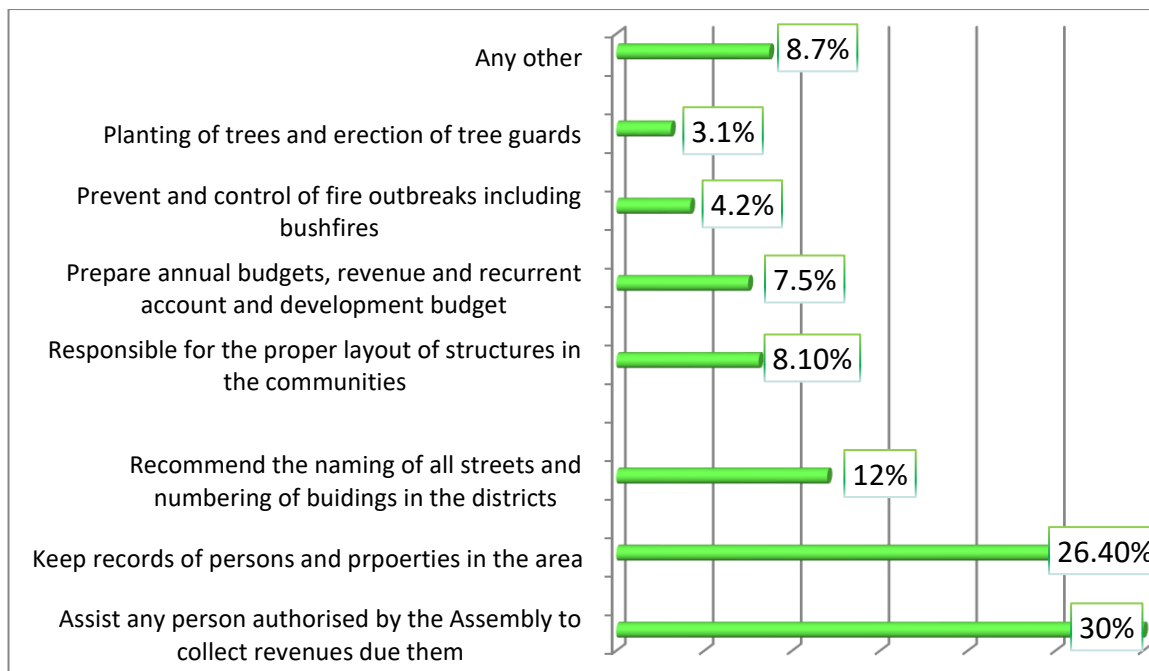
**Fig. 2.2: Knowledge of the functions of the District Assembly**



Respondents were also questioned on the functions of the Sub-Metro/Urban/Town/Zonal/Area Councils (SMUZTAC) of the DA. Out of the responses 30% indicated that the SMUZTAC assist persons authorized by the DA to collect revenues due to the DA. This was followed by 26.4% indicating that the SMUZTAC keep records of persons and properties in the area of jurisdiction and 12% pointed out that they recommend to the DA the naming of all streets and numbering of buildings in the districts. “Any other” responses recorded was 8.7%. Please see fig. 2.3 for functions of the sub-district structures.

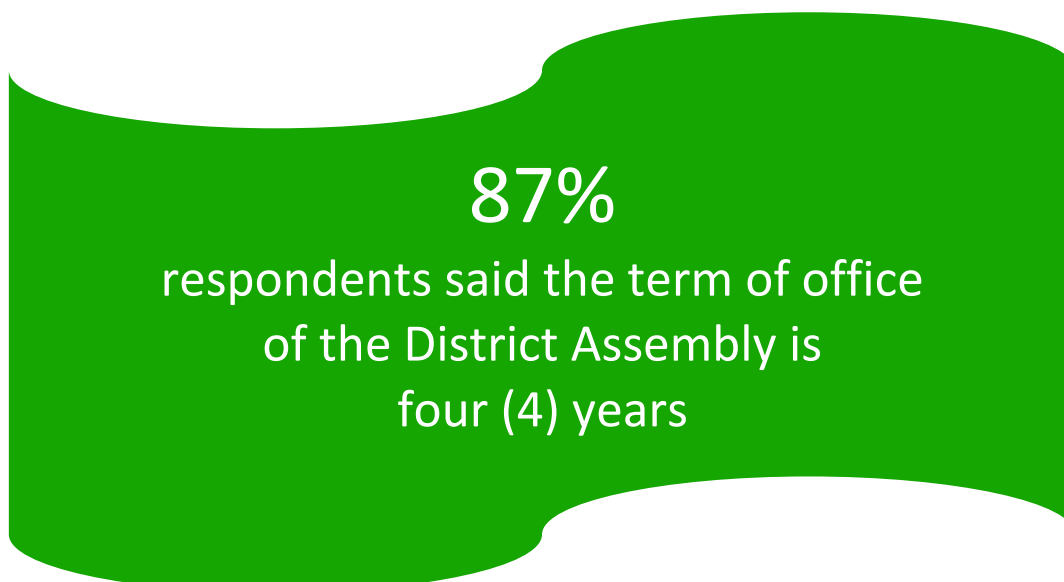
**Fig. 2.3: Awareness of the functions of the Sub - District Structures**





With reference to the term of office of the DA, a high percentage (87%) of the 2,910 respondents rightly indicated that a term is four (4) years. Those who mentioned other years such as three (3) years, five (5) years and seven (7) years etc. were a total of 7.3%. The number of responses under “Any other” was 8.7%.

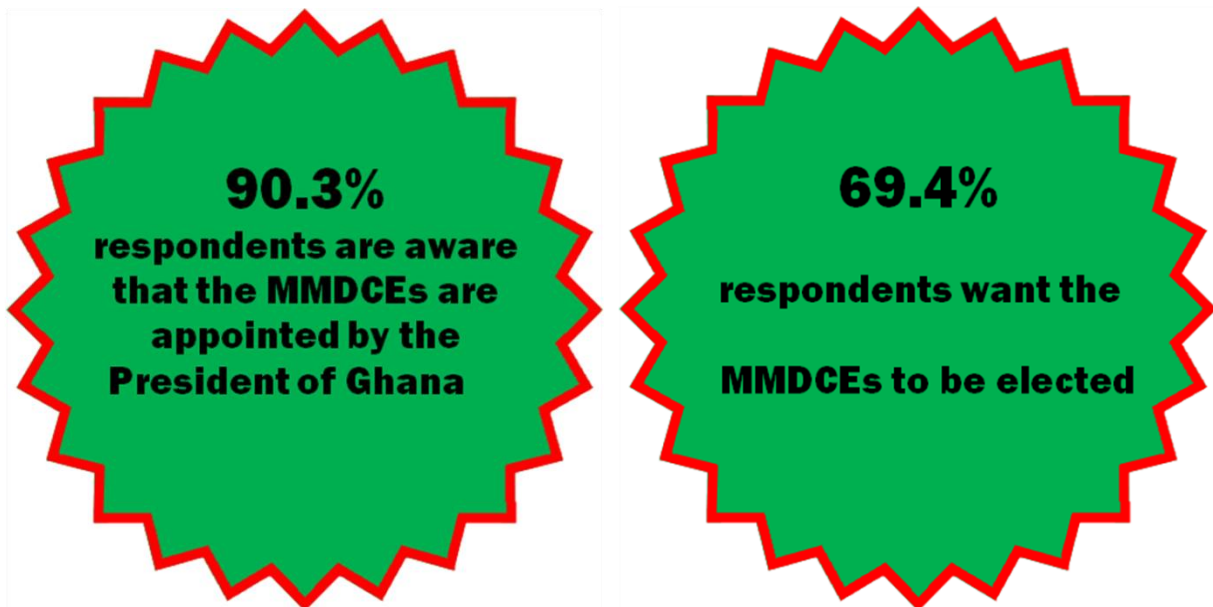
**Fig. 2.4 Awareness of the Term of Office of the District Assembly**



A high majority of respondents 2,627 (90.3%) know that it is the President of the Republic who appoints the Metropolitan/Municipal/District Chief Executives (MMDCEs), against just a few 73

(2.5%) who mentioned the Vice President, the Speaker of Parliament and the Chief Justice as the appointing authority. Those captured under “Any other” numbered 210. Out of this, 26.2% said they “Don’t know”. The remaining respondents mentioned the government, DA, citizens and parliament as the appointing authority.

**Fig. 2.5: Appointing Authority for DCEs and demand for DCEs to be elected**



One of the thorny issues currently confronting the country with regards to improving the work of the DA is whether the MMDCEs should be appointed or elected. A sizeable number 2,019 (69.4%) of the respondents want the MMDCEs to be elected by the citizenry at the respective districts, as against 891 (30.6%) of respondents who wish the country upholds the status quo i.e. MMDCEs should be appointed.

From the responses on reasons why MMDCEs should be elected, 30.7% tilted towards the view that it will give the local people an opportunity to elect their own leader. 22.1% indicated that the process will ensure democratic practice at the local level, whereas, 15.8% signified that it will minimize political influence on the development agenda of the country. 15.2% indicated that it will ensure more accountability to the electorate. Following that 10% noted that election of DCEs will instil in the people a sense of ownership and oversight responsibilities on projects, whilst 5.6% supported the view that it will repose public confidence in their elected DCEs. "Any other" responses was 0.6%. Please see Table 2.1.

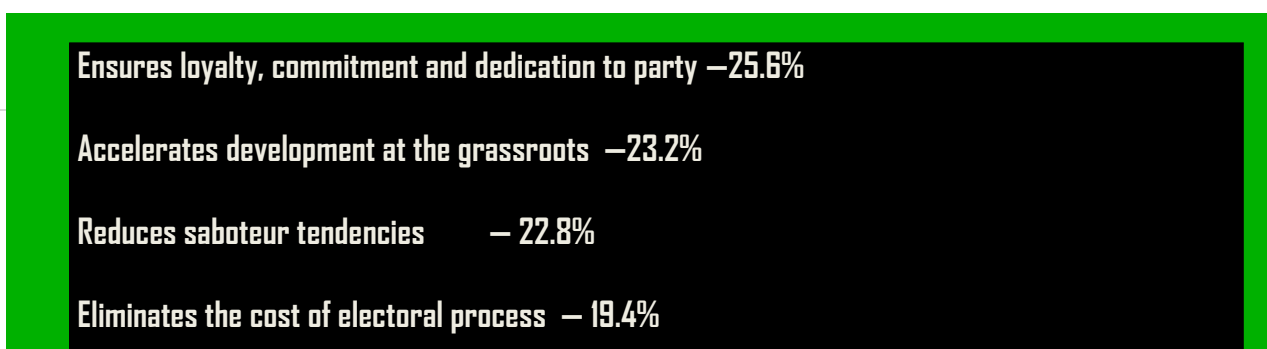
Reponses	Per cent
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Local people have an opportunity to elect their own leader	30.7
Ensure democratic practices at the local level	22.1
Defuse political tendencies in the development agenda of the country	15.8
Ensure more accountability to the electorate	15.2
Instil in the people a sense of ownership and oversight responsibility on projects	10
Repose public confidence in their elected DCEs	5.6
Any other	0.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table: 2.1: Reasons why DCEs should be elected**

On the other hand, the 891 respondents who wish the appointment of DCEs by the President to continue also gave multiple reasons for their choice. The top most reason which secured 25.6% responses was that it will ensure loyalty, commitment and dedication to the ruling party. The acceleration of development at the grassroots as a reason for the President appointing DCEs had 23.2%, closely followed by 22.8% citing that it would ensure a reduction in saboteur tendencies in officialdom. A further 19.4% favoured the elimination of the cost of electoral process in respect of election of MMDCEs, and 8.3% were inclined towards the fact that appointment of the DCEs aligns district development to the national development agenda. 0.7% "Any other" was captured. Issues that came up under this included: curbing electoral tension in the country, saving time and resources, and preventing non-performing DCEs from staying in office for a full term among others. The responses are illustrated in Figure 2.6 below.

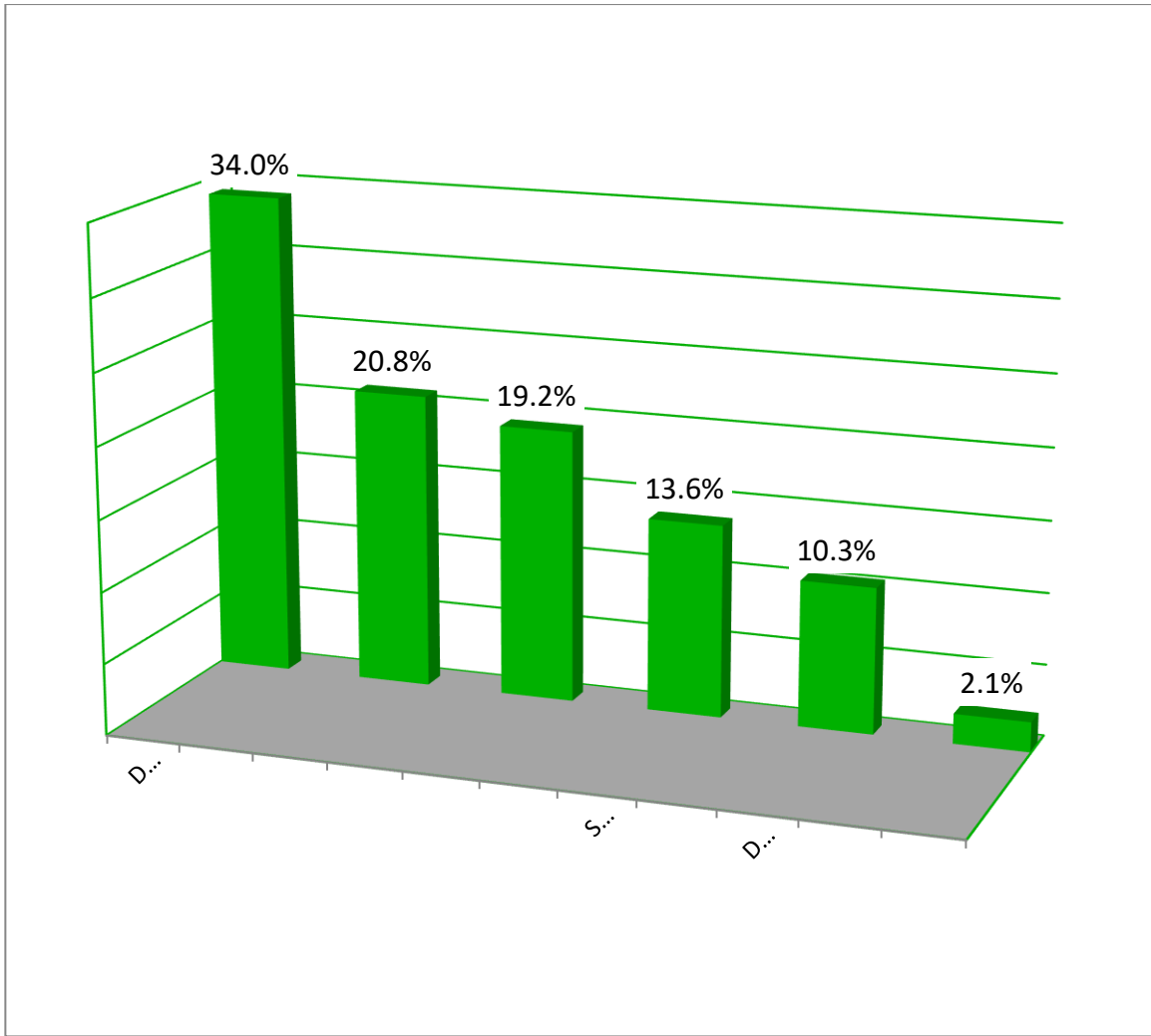
**Fig. 2.6: Reasons why MMDCEs should be appointed**



An analysis of respondents' knowledge on the role of the District Chief Executive (DCE) against the Presiding Member (PM) of the Metropolitan/Municipal/District Assembly (MMDA) showed that more respondents know the role of the former than the latter. The data revealed that out of the 2,910 respondents contacted, 2,801 (96.3%) know the role of the DCE, whereas, those who knew the role of the Presiding Member numbered 2,434 (83.6%).

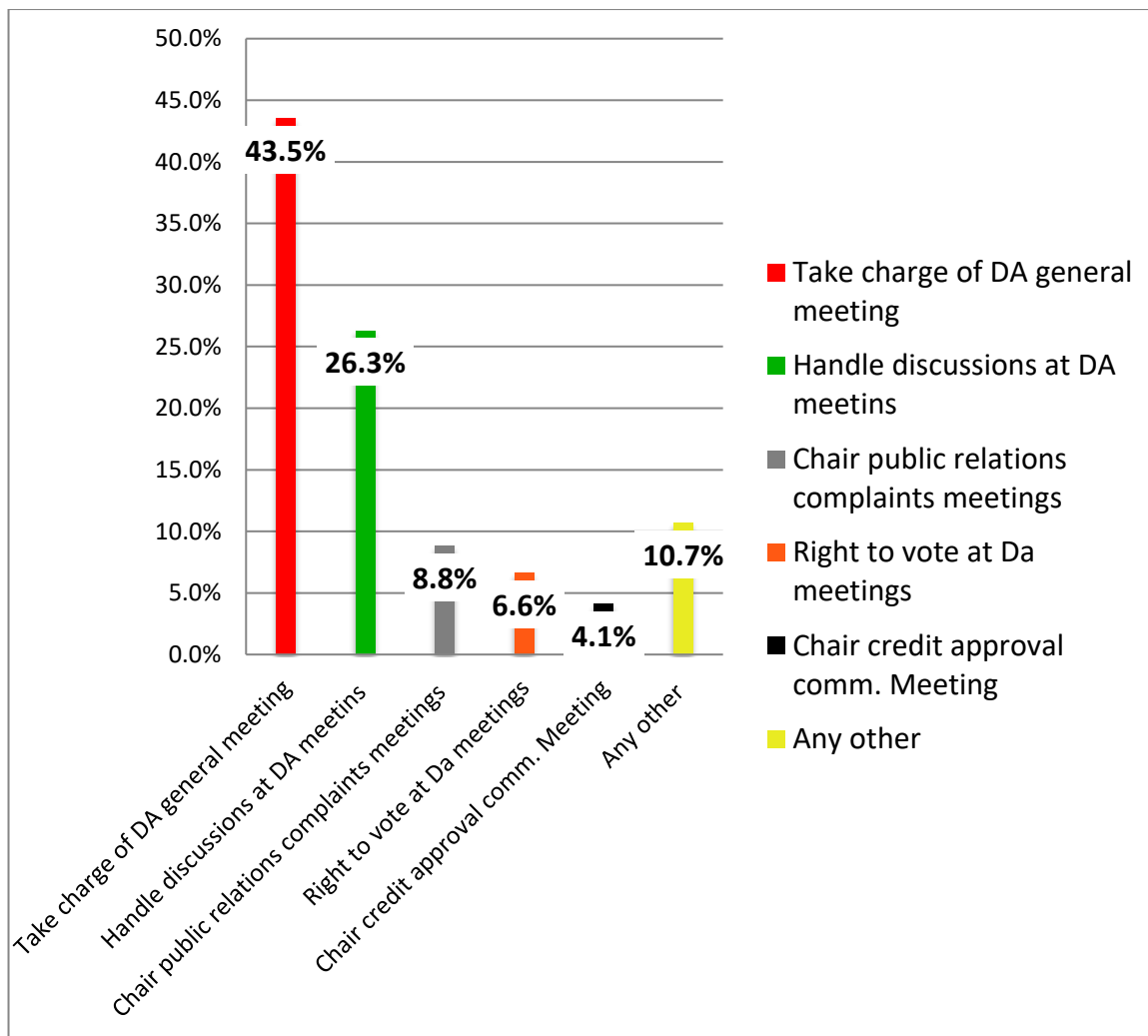
According to the data as shown in Fig. 2.7 below, out of the responses captured on the role of DCEs, 34% indicated that DCEs are responsible for the day-to-day administration of the DA followed by 20.8% stating that DCEs preside over Assembly Executive Committee meetings. 19.2% specified that DCEs represent the central government in the districts; whilst 13.6% pointed out that the DCEs supervise the decentralized departments of the DA. A little over 10.3% said that DCEs coordinate and supervise development activities in the district including the demolition of illegal structures.

**Fig. 2.7: Roles of the DCEs**



On the role of the Presiding Member (PM), a high proportion (43.5%) of responses portrayed the fact that the PM takes charge of the General Assembly meetings. A further 26.3% indicated that the PM handles discussions and ensures good conduct and good behaviour at DA meetings, whilst 8.8% represented the view that the PM chairs the Public Relations and Complaints Committee, this however is not a statutory function of the PM. More than six per cent responses indicated that a PM has the right to vote at Assembly meetings. Again, 4.2% specified that a Presiding Member chairs the Credit Approval Committee meetings.

**Fig. 2.9: Roles of the Presiding Member**



"Any other" responses were 10.7%. Fig. 2.9 above illustrates the roles of the Presiding Member.

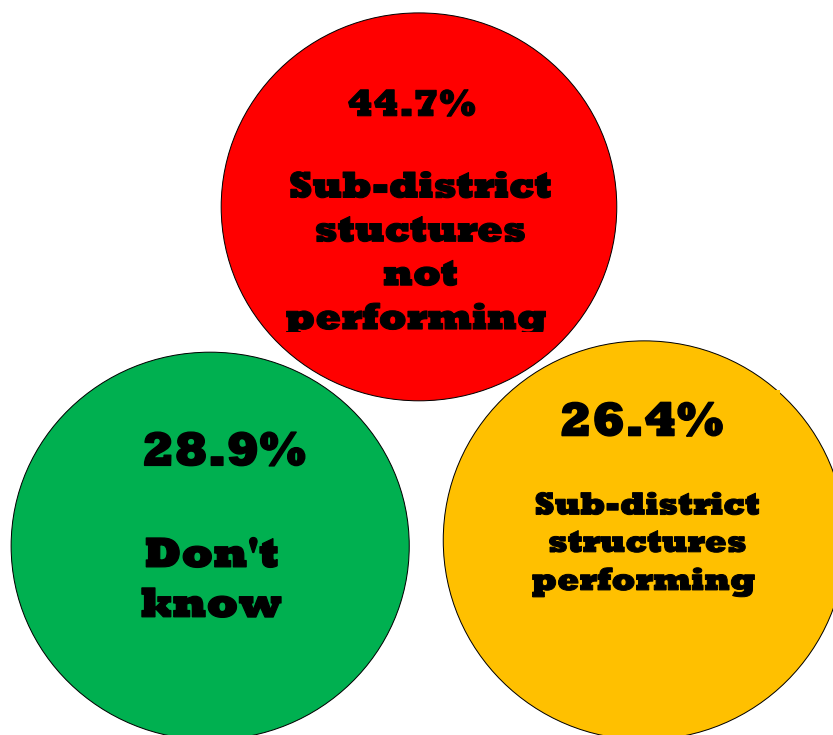
**CHAPTER THREE**  
**PERFORMANCE OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEM**

This third chapter examines the performance of the local government system through the lenses of the respondents. Most respondents expressed their dissatisfaction about the performance of the sub-district structures; they also noted partisan inclination in the work of the District Assembly (DA), and identified the DA's main sources of income for development.

In response to questions requiring respondents to give reasons for a given answer, multiple responses were obtained resulting in variation in the figures as against the sample size of the study (2910).

Of the 2,910 respondents contacted, a significant number of respondents 1,302 representing 44.7% said the sub-district local government structures (SDLGS) are not performing their functions effectively. A relatively low 767 (26.4%) respondents affirmed that the sub-district structures are performing effectively. Eight hundred and forty one (28.9%) respondents said they "Don't know". Fig. 3.1 shows the responses captured on the issue.

**Fig. 3.1: Performance of the sub-district local government structures**



A regional analysis on whether the SDLG structures are performing their functions effectively or not indicated that out of 528 respondents from the Ashanti region 104 (19.7%) said "Yes", 284 (53.8%) said "No" and 140 (19.7%) indicated "Don't know". Eastern region had 395

respondents, out of which 105 (26.6%), said “Yes”, and 183 (46.3%) said no, with 107 (27.1%) saying they “Don’t know”. Among the 352 respondents from the Greater Accra Region, 52 (14.8%) were in the affirmative, 142 (40.3%) said “No” and 154 (43.75%) said “Don’t Know”. Of the 308 respondents from the Northern region, 56 (32.5%) acknowledged the effective performance of the SDLGS whilst 142 (43.5%) felt otherwise and 74 (24.0%) had no idea on the issue. From the 280 respondents in the Brong Ahafo region, 90 (32.1%) agreed that the SDLGS are performing their functions effectively as against 129 (46.1%) who did not agree, whilst 61 (21.8%) were unaware of the performance level of the SDLGS.

From the Central Region out of 280 respondents, 55 (19.6%) said “Yes”, 97 (34.6%) said “No” and 128 (45.8%) responded “Don’t know”. With the 279 respondents from Western region, those who said “Yes” were 111 (39.8%), those of the opposite view were 113 (40.5%) and those who had no idea were 55 (19.7%). Out of 253 respondents from the Volta region, 68 (26.9%) spoke well about the performance of the SDLGS, 91 (36%) shared a contrary opinion whilst 94 (37.1%) said “Don’t Know”. Out of 144 respondents from the Upper East region, 45 (31.2%) said “Yes” 79 (54.9%) “No”, and 20 (13.9%) said “Don’t know”. From the Upper West region 33 (36.3%) out of 91 said “Yes”, 50 (54.9%) said “No”, and 8 (8.8%) “Don’t know”.

Of the reasons advanced by the respondents who said the sub-district local government structures are underperforming, 36.9% responses indicated that there was a low level of developmental activities being implemented and 24.4% showed that communal labour is not undertaken in the district. Again, 21.2% associated the underperformance of SDLGS to failure to follow up and monitor activities of state institutions under them such as the health posts, schools, and market places. Another 11.1% indicated that SDLGS meetings are not held in the districts, 2.3% specified that they do not provide disaster relief items in times of crisis and 3.2% noted their failure to prevent and control fire outbreaks including bush fires. “Any other” responses were 0.9%. Table 3.1 below shows reasons why SDLGS are under performing.

**Table 3.1: Sub-structures underperforming**

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Development is not taking place</b>	<b>— 36.9%</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>No communal labour</b>	<b>—24.4%</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>No follow up and Monitoring</b>	<b>— 21.2%</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Meetings not held</b>	<b>—11.1%</b>

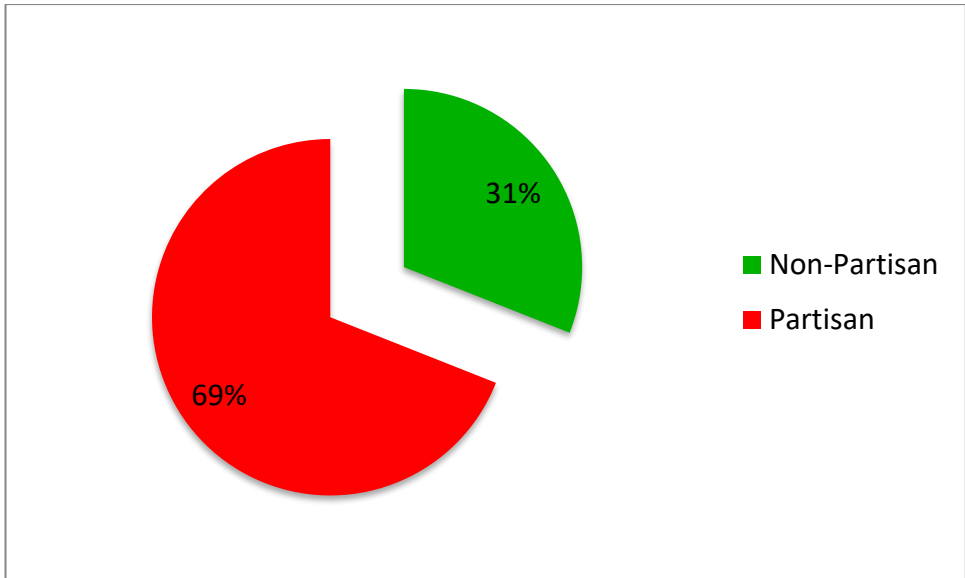
**Table 3.2: Sub-structures performing**

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Development is taking place</b>	<b>— 32.9%</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Revenue collection</b>	<b>— 21.6%</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Frequent meetings held</b>	<b>— 17.5%</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Oversight responsibilities</b>	<b>—</b>



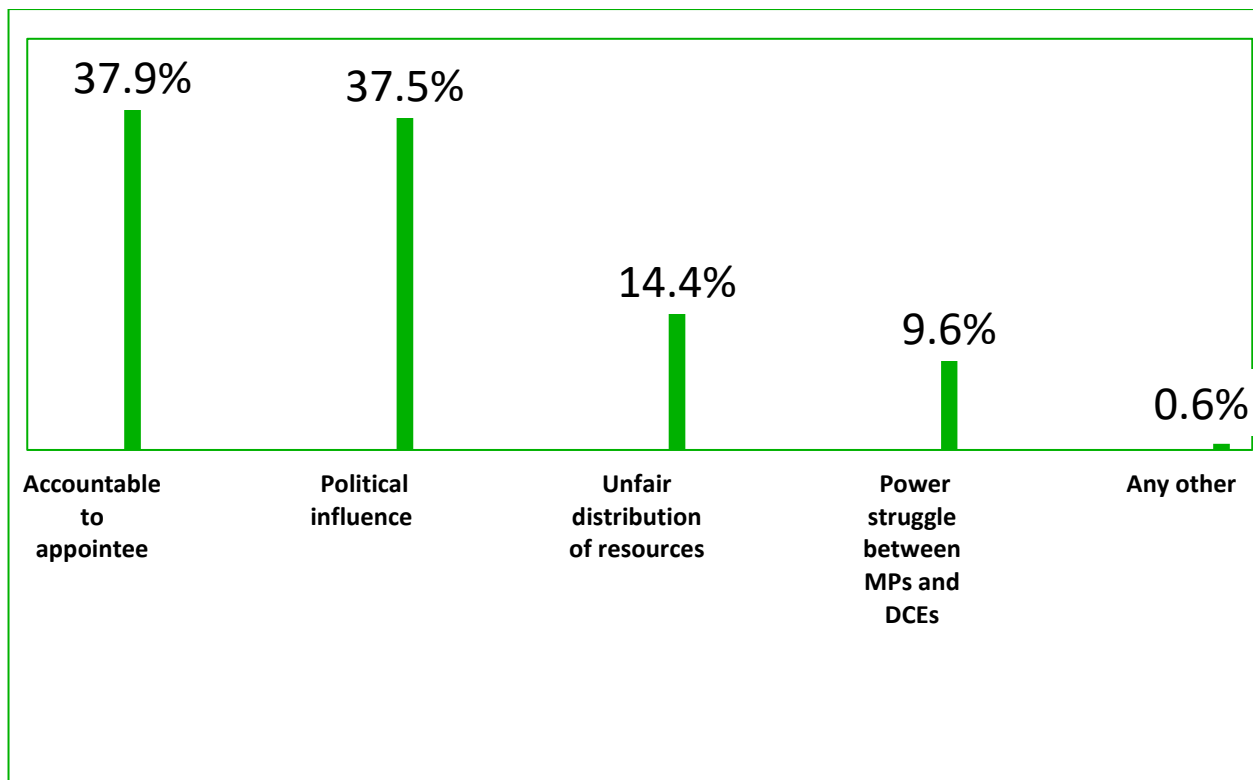
Table 3.2 above provides reasons given by respondents who affirmed that the sub-district structures are performing effectively. Of the total number of responses, 32.9% pointed to the fact that there are on-going development projects and 21.6% observed that SDLGS assist in revenue collection. The frequency of meetings held within the district had 17.5% of responses, closely followed by 17.3% indicating that SDLGS play an oversight role in education, health and social issues. Whilst, 6.4% acknowledged that the inspectorate division is always on the field and 3.2% pointed to the fact that the SDLGS help in preventing fire outbreak including bushfires. For “Any other” responses, 1.1% was captured, which included dispute settlement, development activities and cleaning the environment as part of the activities undertaken by the SDLGS.

**Fig. 3.2: Views on whether the District Assembly is partisan or not**



In recent years, it has become common to hear many Ghanaians alleging that the DAs are partisan. A question on this issue confirmed the hitherto perceived impression. As many as 1,998 (68.6%) out of the 2,910 respondents spoken to perceived this as a fact. Only a few 912 (31.4%) respondents refuted that notion. Fig. 3.2 above depicts the findings.

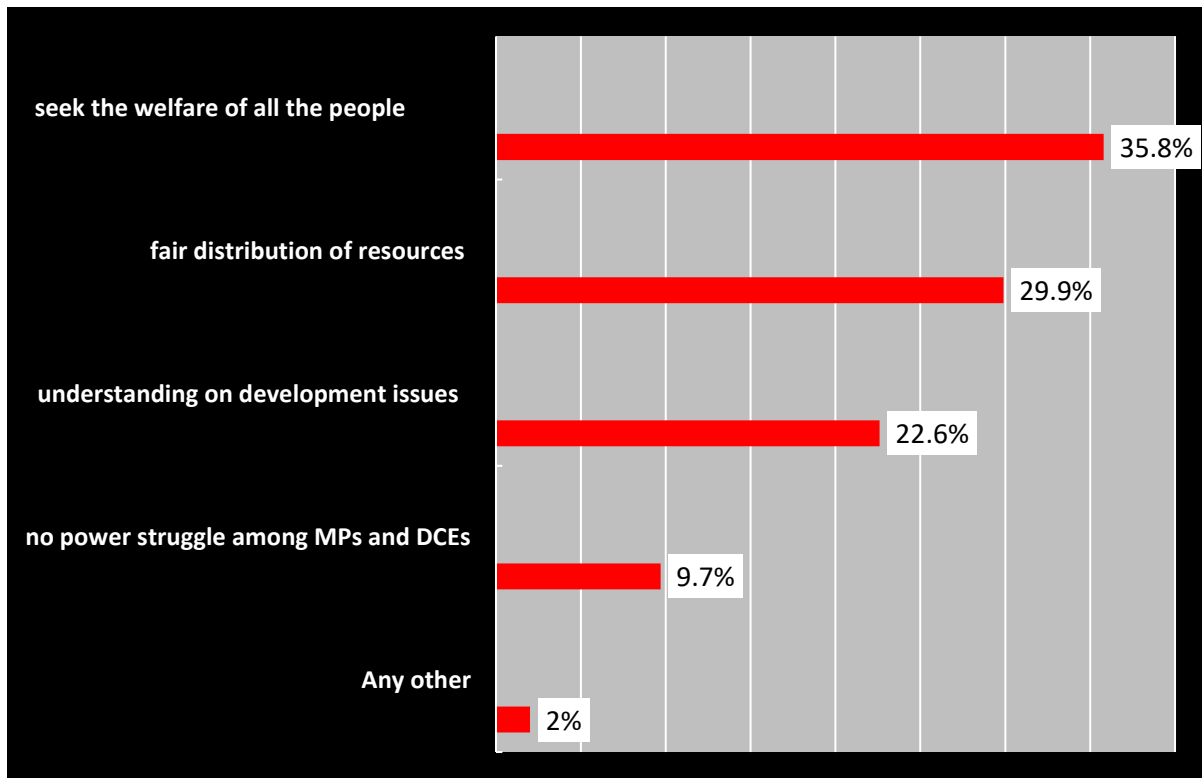
**Fig 3.3: DAs are Partisan**



From the reasons cited by respondents who held the view that the DAs are partisan, 37.9% indicated that appointees of the DAs are seen to hold allegiance to those who appointed them, whilst, 37.5% specified a lot of political influence and impositions in the scheme of affairs of the DA in the district by the executive arm of government. Further, 14.4% held the view that there was unfair distribution of resources in given districts perceived as strongholds of political opponents of ruling governments and 9.6% indicated power struggle among some Members of Parliament (MPs) and District Chief Executives (DCEs) in their constituencies/districts that impact negatively on development activities of the areas. On the “Any other” issues, nepotism and favours to political party members to the detriment of public interest came up representing 0.6%. Fig.3.3 above portrays the results.

For respondents who viewed the DA as non-partisan, from the reasons for their responses 35.8% specified that the DA seeks the welfare of all the people within the district. Another, 29.9% claimed that there is fair distribution of resources at the district level, citing central government’s release of the Common Fund to all DAs devoid of discrimination. 22.6% reasoned that there exists mutual understanding on issues concerning district development and 9.7% put forward that there is no power struggle among MPs and DCEs. “Any other” recorded 2%. Fig. 3.4 below depicts details of the finding.

**Fig. 3.4: DA are non-partisan**

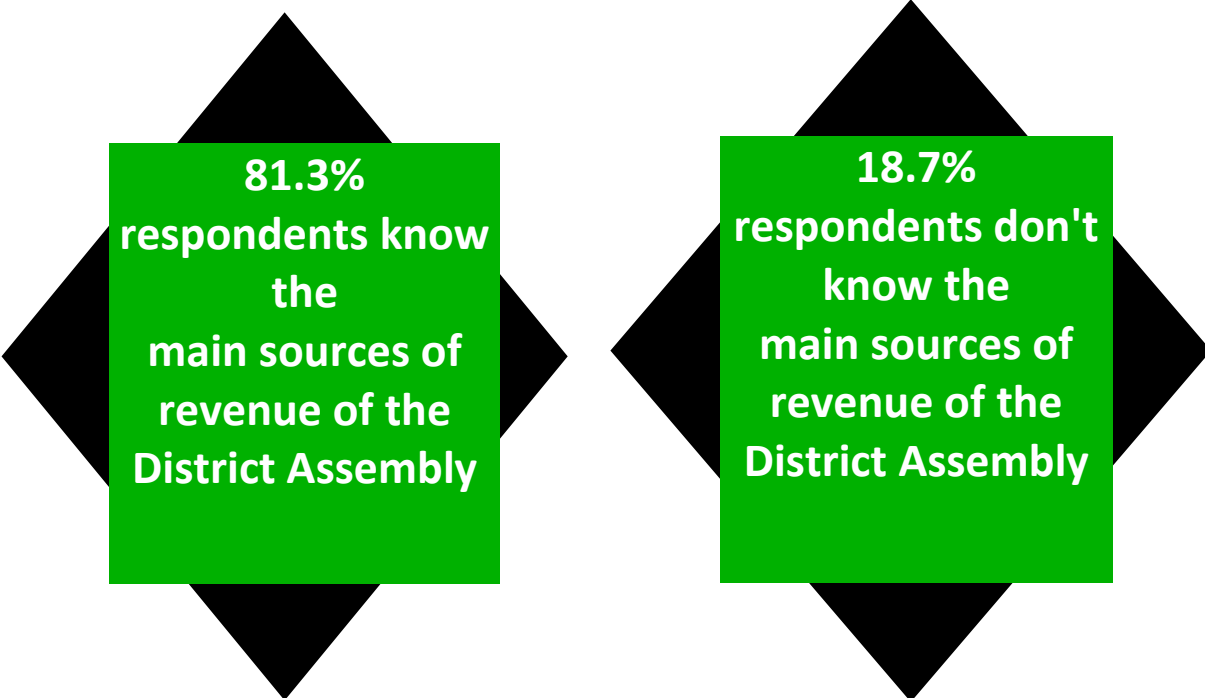


A regional analysis of the data on whether the DAs are partisan or otherwise revealed that of the 528 respondents from Ashanti region, 349 (66.1%) opined that the DAs are partisan whilst 179 (33.9%) indicated they are not. For the Eastern region, out of 395 respondents, 297 (75.2%) were of the view that the DA are partisan and the other respondents 98 (24.8%) stated that DAs were non-partisan. Out of the Greater Accra region's 352 respondents, 243 (69%) said that the DAs are partisan as against 109 (31%) who thought otherwise. In the Northern region most of the respondents 184 (59.7%) out of 308, said the DA are non-partisan while 124 (40.3%) asserted that the DAs are partisan in nature. For the Brong Ahafo region which had 280 respondents, 206 (73.6%) thought the DA are partisan and only 74 (26.4%) said they are not.

In the case of the Central region, 176 (62.9%) of its 280 respondents portrayed the DA as partisan whilst 104 (37.1%) of them disagreed. Western region had a total of 279 respondents and of this, 213 (76.3%) were certain that the DAs are partisan and 66 (23.7%) did not agree. From the Volta region, 196 (77.5%) out of 253 respondents perceived the DAs as partisan institutions whereas 57 (22.5%) did not share in that opinion. Most respondents, 126 (80.5%) out of 144 in the Upper East region said the DAs are partisan and very few, 18(12.5) stated otherwise. Upper West had the least respondents of 91. Out of this, 67 (73.6%) of them were convinced that the DA are partisan whereas 24 (26.4%) thought otherwise.

Majority of the respondents, 2,365 (81.3%) out of the sampled population of 2,910 answered “Yes” when they were asked whether they know the main sources of revenue for the DA. Just a few, 545 (18.7%) respondents indicated “No”. Fig. 3.5 reflects the outcome of the findings.

**Fig. 3.5: Knowledge on the main sources of revenue of the District Assembly**



A breakdown of responses on the three (3) main sources of revenue for the DA revealed Tax from Traders topping the list with 25.9%, followed by the Common Fund with 1,499 (21.8%) and Property Rate accounting for 21.8%. Tolls generated 15.6%, Fees and Fines yielded 7.5%, Loans, Grants, Government of Ghana (GOG) and donors generated 3%

**Fig. 3.6: Three (3) main revenue sources of the District Assembly**



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **PARTICIPATION IN DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES' WORK/ACTIVITIES**

A comprehensive framework for the implementation of governance at the local level in Ghana was attained in 1988 through the promulgation of PNDC Law 207 in 1988 under which the first

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District Assembly (DA) elections were held. The Local Government Act, 1993 (Act 462) was passed in furtherance of Article 240(1) of the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution of Ghana. This article stipulates that Local Government in Ghana should be decentralized as far as it is practicable. Subsequently, the number of DAs has increased from 110 in 1988 to 216 currently.

Participation in DA's work or activities means citizens' adequate involvement in and influence over local governance (Ahwoi 2010). Participation enhances civic consciousness and political maturity. This is supported by Chapter 20 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana which stipulates that *"to ensure accountability of Local Government authorities, people in particular local government areas shall, as far as practicable, be afforded the opportunity to participate effectively in their governance"*. Citizen's participation is thus pivotal to the decentralization programme of Ghana.

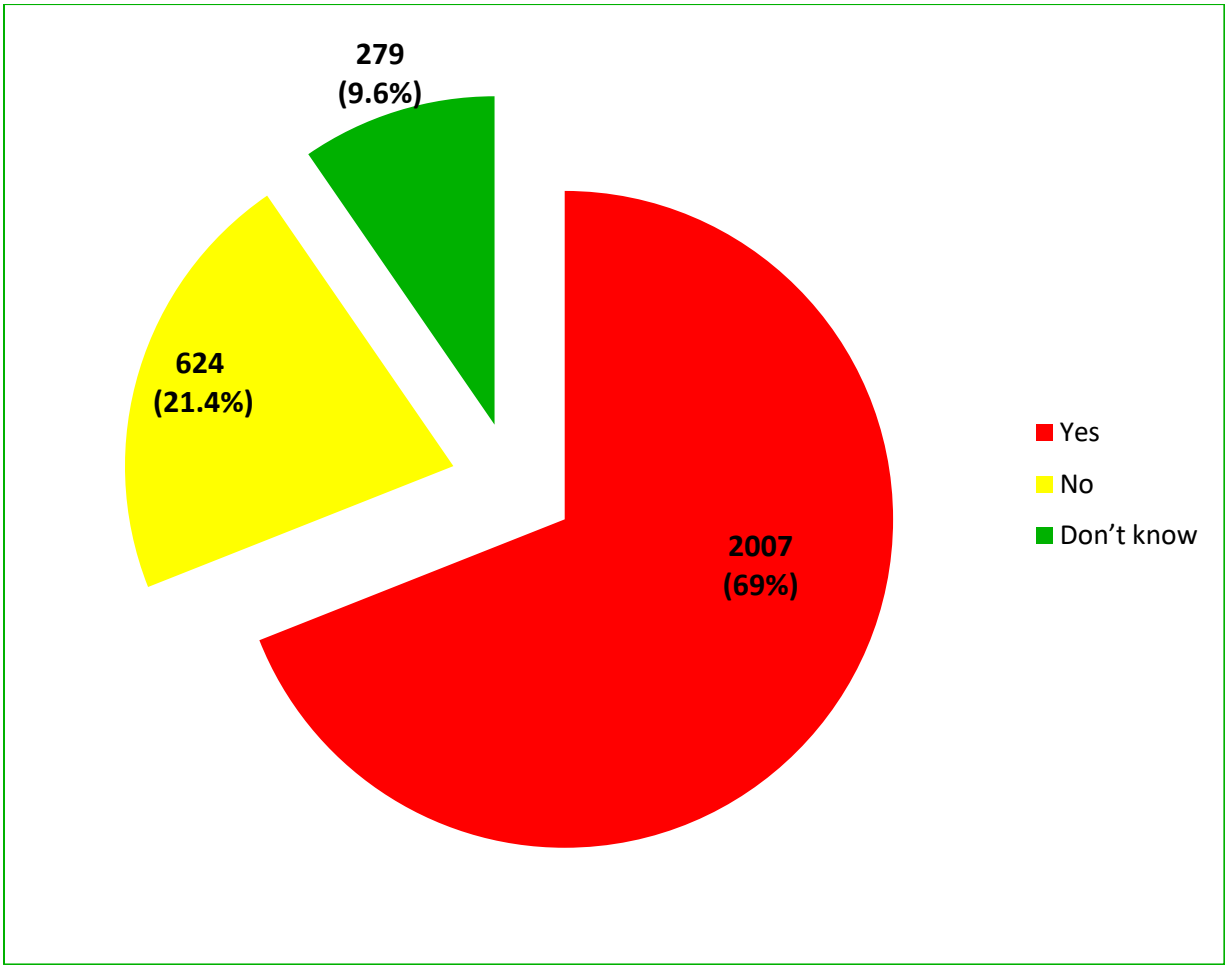
Participation may involve information sharing, consultation, service access, election, and collaboration among others. These forms of participation give the citizens the opportunity and power to engage in discussion and contribute to decision-making processes affecting their district.

In order to ensure citizens' participation in the overall development activities and programmes and the planning process of the DA, it is important for the DA to involve the citizens in identifying the socio-economic and infrastructural needs of the districts, carry out pre-budget consultations with citizens and to involve them in discussions on strategies for revenue mobilization through public meetings among others. The key players who must be involved in the decision-making process consist of Chiefs (including Queen Mothers as defined by article 277 of the 1992 Constitution) and Traditional Authorities, Members of Parliament, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Private Sector and Citizens.

Chiefs and Traditional Authorities, one of the key players in the work of the DA, have the power and authority based on customs and traditions to make legitimate decisions in their traditional areas of jurisdiction. They ensure stability in the community, and they also mobilize their communities for development projects among others.

The study's objective was to ascertain the awareness of the respondents on the roles of Chiefs and Traditional Authorities in the work of the DA.

**Fig. 4.1: Roles of Chiefs and Traditional Authorities in DA**



The data shows that in the opinion of majority of respondents (69.0%), Chiefs and Traditional Authorities have roles to play in the work of the DA. However, a sizable percentage of respondents (21.4%) believed that Chiefs and Traditional Authorities do not have roles to play in the work of the DA with (9.6%) not knowing whether or not Chiefs and Traditional Authorities have roles to play in the work of the DA.

Following the above responses, the respondents were asked to give reasons for their choices.

**Figure 4.2: Why Chiefs and Traditional Authorities have roles to play in District DA**



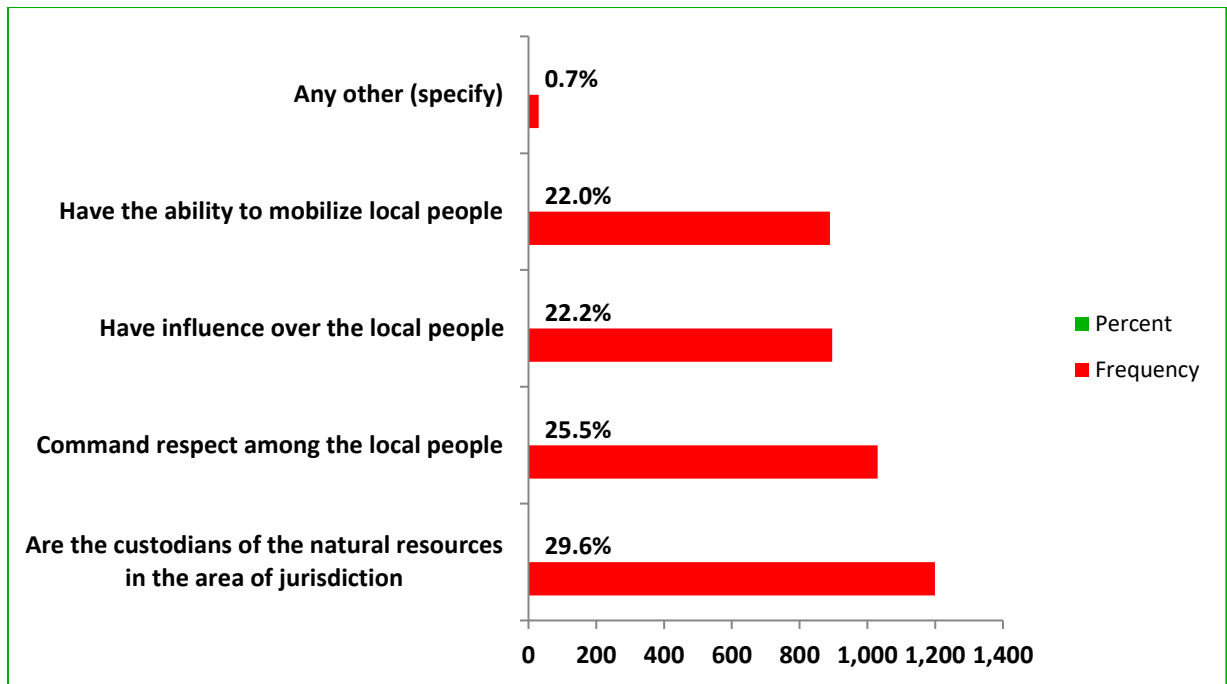


Figure 4.2 above shows a distribution of the reasons in support of Chiefs and Traditional Authorities playing roles in the work of DA. Out of the 2,007 respondents who indicated that Chiefs and Traditional Authorities have roles to play in the work of the DA, (29.6%) observed that Chiefs and Traditional Authorities are the custodians of the natural resources in their areas of jurisdiction. Another reason that drew a sizable percentage of respondents (25.5%) was that the Chiefs and Traditional Authorities command respect among the local people and therefore have roles to play in the work of the DA. Other reasons why Chiefs and Traditional Authorities have roles to play in the work of the DA are that they have influence over the local people (22.2%) and have the ability to mobilize local people (22.0%) respectively.

Some respondents also indicated other reasons why they believed Chiefs and Traditional Authorities have roles to play in the work of the DA. Prominent among them are the following:

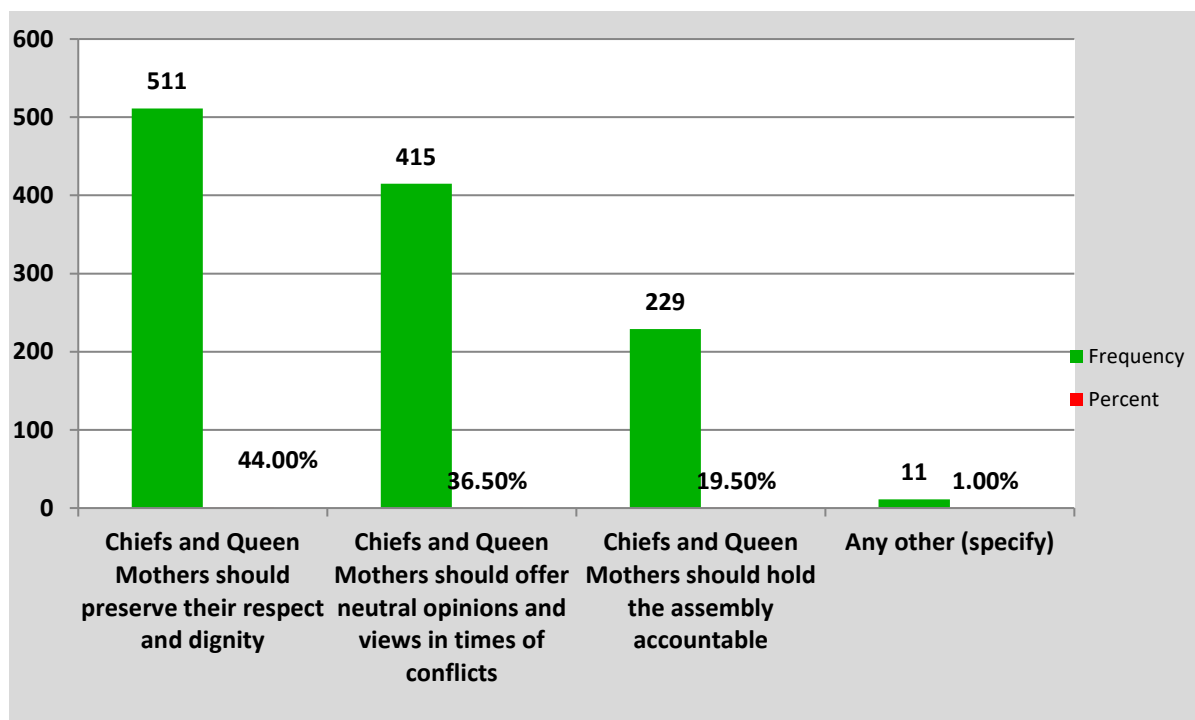
- Chiefs and Traditional Authorities live in the communities and they know the problems peculiar to their communities and thus can help the DA make very informed decisions concerning the welfare of the people
- The Chiefs and Traditional Authorities can liaise with assembly members and discuss issues affecting the community and can play the role of peacemakers in the District.

For the 624 respondents who are of the opinion that Chiefs and Traditional Authorities do not have roles to play in the work of the DA, below are their reasons;

- Chiefs and Traditional Authorities should preserve their respect and dignity
- Chiefs and Traditional Authorities should offer neutral opinions and views in times of conflict
- Chiefs and Traditional Authorities should hold the DA accountable

Figure 4.3 below shows the reasons why Chiefs and Traditional Authorities should not play a role in the work of the DA.

**Figure 4.3: Reasons why Chiefs and Traditional Authorities should not take part in DA**



Some respondents listed other reasons for stating that Chiefs and Traditional Authorities should not play any roles in the work of the DA other than those presented above. Prominent among them are:

- Chiefs and Traditional Authorities should not play roles in the DA so they can control their subjects
- Chiefs and Traditional Authorities should not play roles in the DA work so they can represent their towns and villages
- Chiefs and Traditional Authorities should not play roles in the DA so they can work towards the nation's development.

Probing further, the respondents were asked to indicate what roles they expected the Chiefs and Traditional Authorities to play to ensure the effective running of the DA. Table 4.1 below illustrates the roles the respondents would expect the traditional authorities to play.

The data revealed that of all the roles suggested, 34.4% wanted Chiefs and Traditional Authorities to suggest developmental projects to the DA since traditional authorities are agents of development in their communities. Chiefs and Traditional Authorities are custodians of land and natural resources in their areas of jurisdiction as such 30.0% of the respondents suggested that they should provide resources such as land for development purposes. Peace making is yet another critical role of Chiefs and Traditional Authorities in the community, therefore some (21.2%) of the respondents expected them to play this traditional function as a service to the DA in times of conflict. Another traditional role expected of Chiefs and Traditional Authorities is oversight of their communities and as such 13.3% of the respondents believed that traditional authorities should liaise with the DA in order to have oversight responsibility of the developmental activities of the DAs.

**Table 4.1: Roles expected of Chiefs and Traditional Authorities in Local Governance**

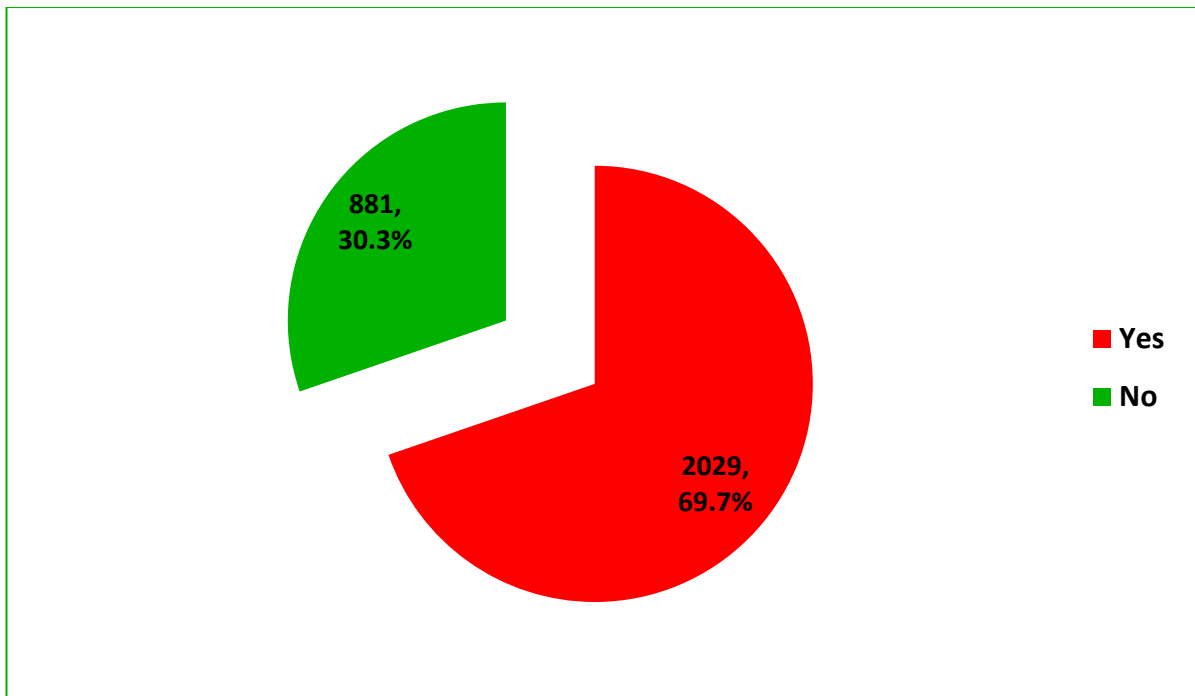
<b>Responses</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
<b>Suggest development projects to the DAs</b>	34.4
<b>Provide resources such as land for development purposes</b>	30.0
<b>Act as Peace Makers in the DA</b>	21.2
<b>Liaise with the DA to have oversight responsibility on development activities</b>	13.3
<b>Any Other (Specify)</b>	1.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

### **Women's Involvement in Local Governance**

Participation or representation of women in local government is one key challenge of the DA. Consequently, in 1998, the Government of Ghana gave a directive that 30% of the appointed membership of the DA should be reserved for women. However, a critical look at the proportions of appointed members revealed that DA appointed only around 30% even though the 30% was to be the minimum. In 2002, the government further increased the female appointed membership from 30% to 50%.

The study therefore asked the respondents whether in their opinion, the quota for appointing women into the DA should be increased. Figure 4.4 below shows the opinion of the respondents.

**Figure 4.4: Should the Quota for appointing Women into the DA be increased?**



A high majority of the respondents (69.7%) are of the view that the quota for appointing women into the DA should be increased whilst 30.3% of the respondents do not subscribe to increasing the quota of women in the DA.

For the 2,029 respondents who were of the opinion that the quota for appointing women into the DA should be increased, the study solicited the reasons for their choice. Table 4.2 below displays their reasons for advocating for the quota for appointing women to the DA to be increased.

**Table 4.2: Reasons for increasing quota for appointing Women into the District Assemblies**

Reasons	Per cent
Ensure equality and gender balance	32.2
Create more opportunities for women to partake in decision-making	28.2
Empower women	14.7
Encourage more women to seek higher education	10.0
Increase the participation of women in the work of the District Assemblies	9.0

Serve as a platform for women to seek higher political office	5.0
Any other (Specify)	0.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Many responses supported the view that increasing the quota for appointing women into the DA would ensure equality and gender balance. This attracted 32.2% of the reasons. The second most important reason assigned was that increasing the quota of women into the DA would create more opportunity for women to partake in decision-making processes and this attracted 28.2% of the responses. Another reason given was that increasing the quota for appointing women into the DA would help to empower women (14.7%). Increasing the quota for appointing women into the DA to some of the respondents would encourage more women to seek higher education and this reason accounted for 10.0% of the responses. The data further revealed that another reason is to ensure increased participation of women in the work of the DA. This had 9.0% responses. Some responses reasoned that increasing the quota for appointing women into the DA would serve as a platform for women to seek higher political office (5.0%).

Finally, additional reasons were put forward in favour of increasing the appointment of women into the DA. Prominent among these reasons are;

- Women work harder than men.
- To create a platform for women to exhibit their talents
- Women are better at administrative duties than men
- Women are more patriotic and nationalistic and
- Women cannot easily be bribed.

While a large majority of the respondents reasoned that increasing the quota for appointing women into the DA system would inure to the benefit of local governance practice, another sizable number of the respondents believed that increasing the appointment of women into the DA would not bring any gains to the local governance system. Below were the reasons this particular group put up;

- Women would be unable to handle the duties of the DA due to domestic responsibilities
- Some women are seen as incompetent
- It is believed that women are not strong enough to handle huge responsibilities

- Some women are seen as vulnerable and gullible
- Lack of higher education among women and
- Women are shy by nature.

### **Citizens' Involvement in District Assemblies' Work:**

The DA is responsible for the overall development of the district. In performing this function, preparations of development plans and budgets for the district are key processes that must involve all people and stakeholders. One of the key players who should be involved in decision-making at the local governance level is the citizen. Development activities are undertaken essentially for the ultimate welfare of the citizens. Article 1 of the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution states “the sovereignty of Ghana resides in the people of Ghana in whose name and for whose welfare the powers of government are to be exercised in the manner and within the limits laid down in the Constitution”. This article gives the citizens the right to express themselves freely and participate in the decision-making process of the nation, both at the national and local level without restrictions.

The Local Government Act, 1993 (Act 462) provides for the participation of citizens in the governance of their localities. Citizens' participation includes election of DA members, petitions, referendum, right to contact Assembly Members, opportunity to observe DA meetings among others.

Figure 4.5 shows the description of the level of participation and involvement of the respondents in the work of the DA.

“Section 16 (1) of the Local Government Act 1993, Act 462 imposes a duty on an assembly member to “maintain close contact with his electoral area, consult his people on issues to be discussed in the DA and collate their views, opinions and proposals”. Under the same section, he is required to “present the views, opinions and proposals to DA; ... meet his electorates before each meeting of the DA; and report to his electorates the general decisions of the DA and its Executive Committee and the actions he has taken to solve the problems raised by residents in his electorate area”

**Figure 4. 5: Description of the level of involvement of respondents in the Assembly's work**

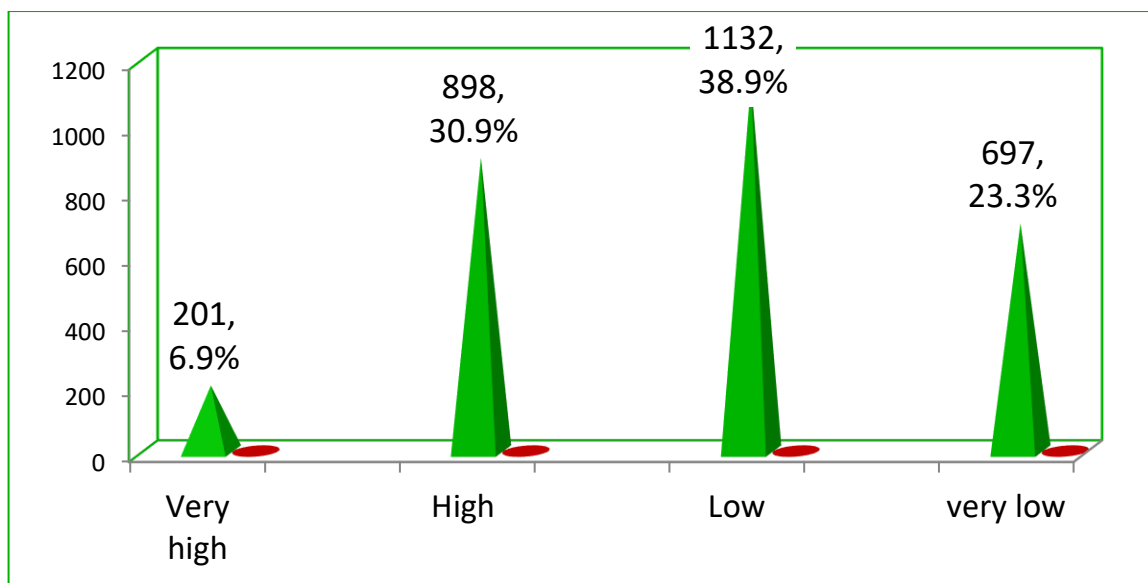


Figure 4.5 above presents a level of citizens' participation or engagement in the work of the DA. A good number of the respondents (38.9%) indicated that their involvement in the work of the DA is low. However, another sizable number of the respondents (30.9%) also indicated that their engagement in the work of the DA is high. For 697 respondents (23.3%) their involvement in the work of the DA is very low whilst 201 respondents (6.9%) observed that their involvement in the work of the DA is very high. From the data, it is obvious that the levels of citizens' participation in the work of the DA are not adequate.

The study went further to ascertain from the respondents what could be done to improve citizens' participation in the work of the DA and their various responses were given as shown in table 4.3 below.

Suggestions	Per cent
Organize community interaction sessions to solicit views from citizens	36.4
Citizens should be involved in development projects and programmes	26.8
Constant information flow from the District Assemblies to the Community	19.3
Accessibility of DCE to his/her citizens	9.5



Assembly Members should publish and paste annual financial report for the consumption of the citizens	7.0
Any Other (Specify)	1.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table4.3: What can be done to improve citizens’ participation in local governance?**

From the data, it is quite clear that respondents want community interaction sessions to be organized to solicit their views on issues. This suggestion attracted 36.4% of all the suggestions made. Citizens should be involved in development projects and programmes came second and attracted 26.8%. Constant information flow from the DA to the communities is one way to improve citizens’ participation in the work of the DA and this suggestion also drew 19.3% of the suggestions put forward. A section of the respondents believed that the accessibility of the MMDCEs would go a long way to improve the participation of citizens in the work of the DA (9.5%). Financial considerations are at the root of most cases of apathy, inaction and conflicts. Thus some respondents believed that in order to improve citizens’ participation in the work of the DA, Assembly Members should publish and make available the annual financial report for the consumption of the citizens (7.0%).

Some prominent useful suggestions, outside of those listed above, made by some respondents are as follows;

- Citizens should be educated on the need to be part of the DA’s work and the roles they can play in the work of the DA
- The DA should do away with partisanship and selectiveness
- Voting to elect Assembly officials
- The citizens should regularly honour their tax obligations to the DA and provide the DA with information on issues in their localities.

The respondents were further asked whether they or anyone or group they knew have been consulted on the kind of development project(s) that should be embarked on in their community. The responses of the respondents are below;

**Figure 4.6: Citizens consultation on the development projects**

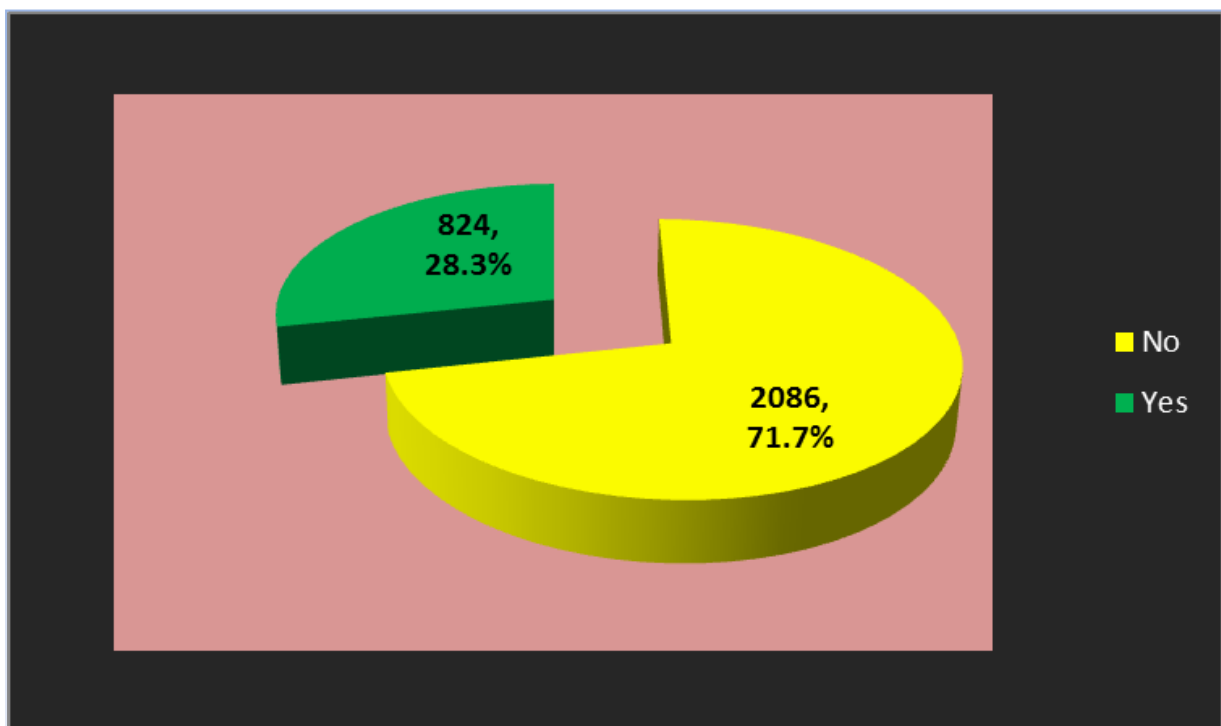
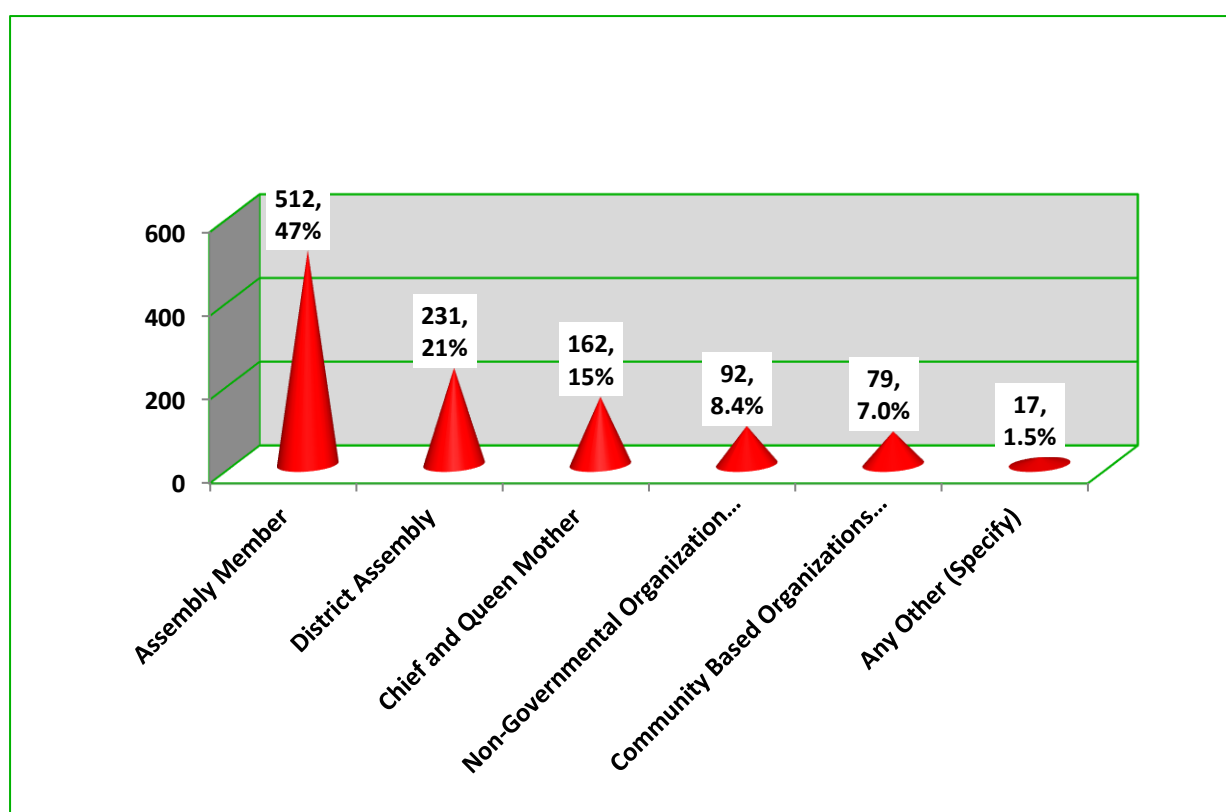


Figure 4.6 is a reflection on the level of citizen’s consultation on development projects. Majority of respondents (71.7%) observed that they or someone or group they knew had never been consulted on the kind of development project(s) that should be embarked on in their communities. However, a section of the respondents also indicated that they and some group they knew had been consulted on the kind of development project(s) that should be embarked

on in their communities (28.3%). From this data, it is clear to say that the DAs are not consulting the majority of the electorate on development projects in the communities. The DAs are to organize pre-budget consultations with the citizens in order to ensure that the priority needs of the community are captured in the budget and the development plans, (Decentralization Policy Framework, (2010)). As it stands, the DAs have woefully reneged on this function.

For the respondents who said they have been consulted, the study sought to identify who did the consultation. The figure below presents those who did the consultation.

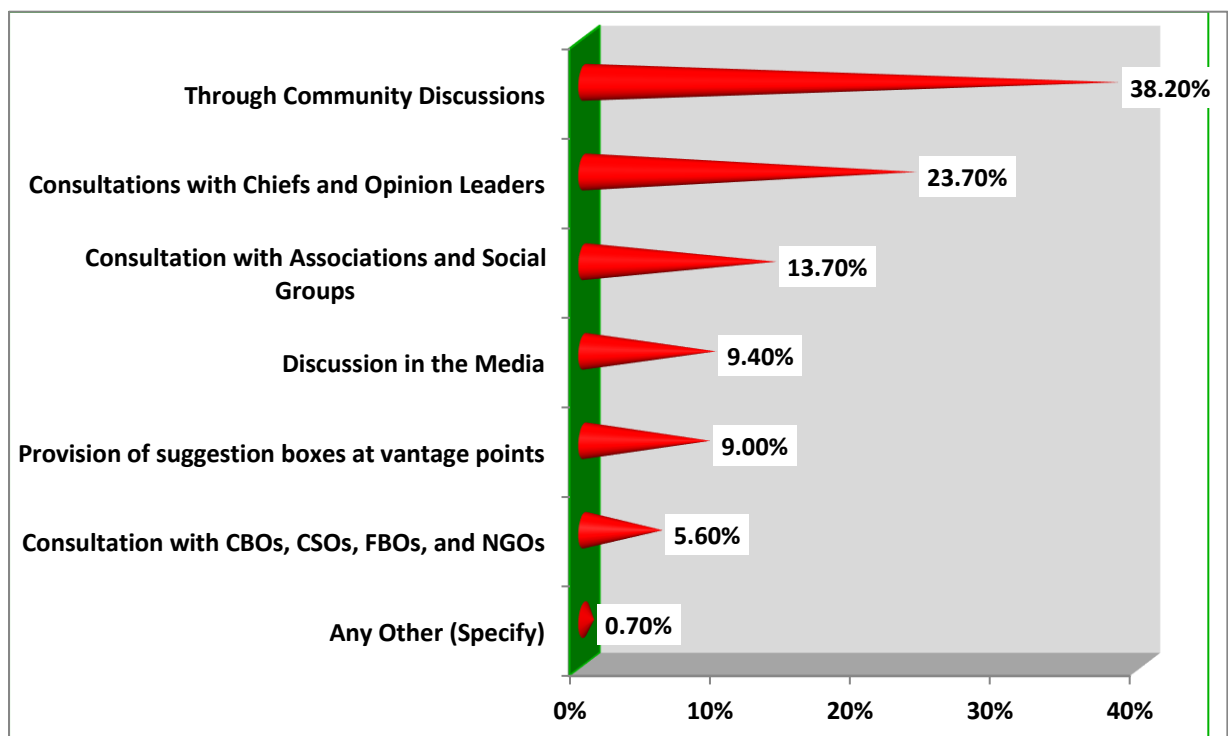
**Figure 4.7: Who did the consultation with citizens on the projects**



Assembly Members came first, with 47.0% of the responses. This was followed by DA itself which also polled 21.1% while Chiefs and Traditional Authorities came third with 15.0% of the responses. Non-Governmental Organizations were also doing a lot of consultations in the communities and they polled 8.4% of the responses whilst Community Based Organizations also polled 7.0% of the responses. From Fig 4.7 of the few consultations that were done on development projects, the Assembly Members and the DA had established a certain level of consultation with citizenry. However, it is imperative that citizen's consultation is more frequent.

To effectively carry out the overall developmental function, the DA prepares development plans for the district and related budget for approval. For such plans to lead to functional development, the citizens must participate in the planning and budgeting processes. The DA’s involvement of the citizens in the Planning and Budgeting processes of its developmental function was assessed. The respondents were asked to suggest ways they expected the DA to involve them in the planning and budgeting processes. Figure 4.8 below presents the suggestions of the respondents.

**Figure 4.8: Citizens should be involvement in Planning and Budgeting Processes of the Assemblies.**



The respondents observed that community discussions were the best way they could be involved in the planning and budgeting processes of the DA and this took 38.2% of the total suggestions. Consultation with Chiefs, Traditional authorities and Opinion Leaders is another way the respondents hoped citizens should be involved in the planning and budgeting processes of the DA (23.7%). Another section of the respondents stated that citizens could be involved in the planning and budgeting processes of DA through consultation with Associations and Social Groups (13.7%). Discussions in the media and provision of suggestion boxes at vantage points are two other ways citizens could be involved in the planning and budgeting processes of the DA and these attracted (9.4%) and (9.0%) respectively. Consultation with Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Faith Based

Organizations (FBOs) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) was also seen as ways citizens could be involved in the planning and budgeting processes of the DA (5.6%). However, the respondents also suggested the setting up of front desks for citizens' views and contacts through the Assembly Members as other ways of involving the citizens in the planning and budgeting processes of the DA.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION

After over 25 years of successfully implementing the local government system, there have been some achievements in decentralising government. These include the creation of 216 district assemblies (DAs), transfer of resources and responsibilities from the central Government to the districts, raising of awareness among citizens and competition among DAs in terms of infrastructural development.

The results show that a high majority of respondents have the requisite knowledge about the roles and functions of the DA, its sub-structures and MMDCEs. However, the study indicated that citizens were not knowledgeable with regards to Presiding Members of the DA. The study also revealed that respondents preferred that MMDCEs were elected instead of the current system of presidential appointment.

The results also portrayed that a majority of the respondents believe that the sub-structures of the DA are not effectively performing their roles and functions. The citizenry are knowledgeable on the main sources of revenue for the DA. These include revenue from taxes collected from traders, the DA Common Fund and property rates.

It was also revealed that most respondents believed that Chiefs and Traditional Authorities have roles to play in the work of the DA. Most respondents wanted the quota for appointing women into the DA to be increased. The participation of citizens in the work of the DA is generally low as established by the study. Respondents suggested ways citizens' participation could be improved in the work of the DA. Some of the suggestions for improvement were increased community interaction, citizens' involvement in development project/programmes and constant dissemination of information from the DA.

The respondents identified the ways citizens should be involved in the planning and budgeting processes of the DA. The study established ways citizens could hold local government officials accountable for their stewardship.

The respondents suggested various ways the DA could improve on the effectiveness of their work towards enhancing Ghana's democracy for national development. Prominent among the suggestions were the following:

- MMDCEs should be elected
- Corruption should be eschewed
- Annual report of the DA should be evaluated and any official found culpable of embezzlement should be sanctioned
- DA should be transparent in the disbursement and distribution of the Common Fund
- The Common Fund should be increased and released in a timely manner

These suggestions, respondents believed would help the DA to improve on the effectiveness of their work towards enhancing Ghana's democracy for national development.

This study establishes beyond reasonable doubt that the respondents have an in-depth understanding about the DA and the sub-structures, the performance of the local government system, participation of various key players in the work of the DA and the challenges confronting the DA in their work. The respondents have also displayed appreciable knowledge of ways the DA could improve on the effective delivery of their work towards enhancing Ghana's democracy for national development.

The result of this research is expected to inform the NCCE in its sensitization drive about the DA. It will also inform the DA on which areas of their roles and functions they would need to improve upon to ensure effectiveness of service delivery for national development. Furthermore, the results should inform government and development partners on how to enhance the effectiveness of the local government system towards national development. It also lays emphasis to the need to increase the quota for appointing women to the DA. The research also prompts government to ensure the timely release of the DACF to the local authorities and increasing the fund.

## CHAPTER SIX

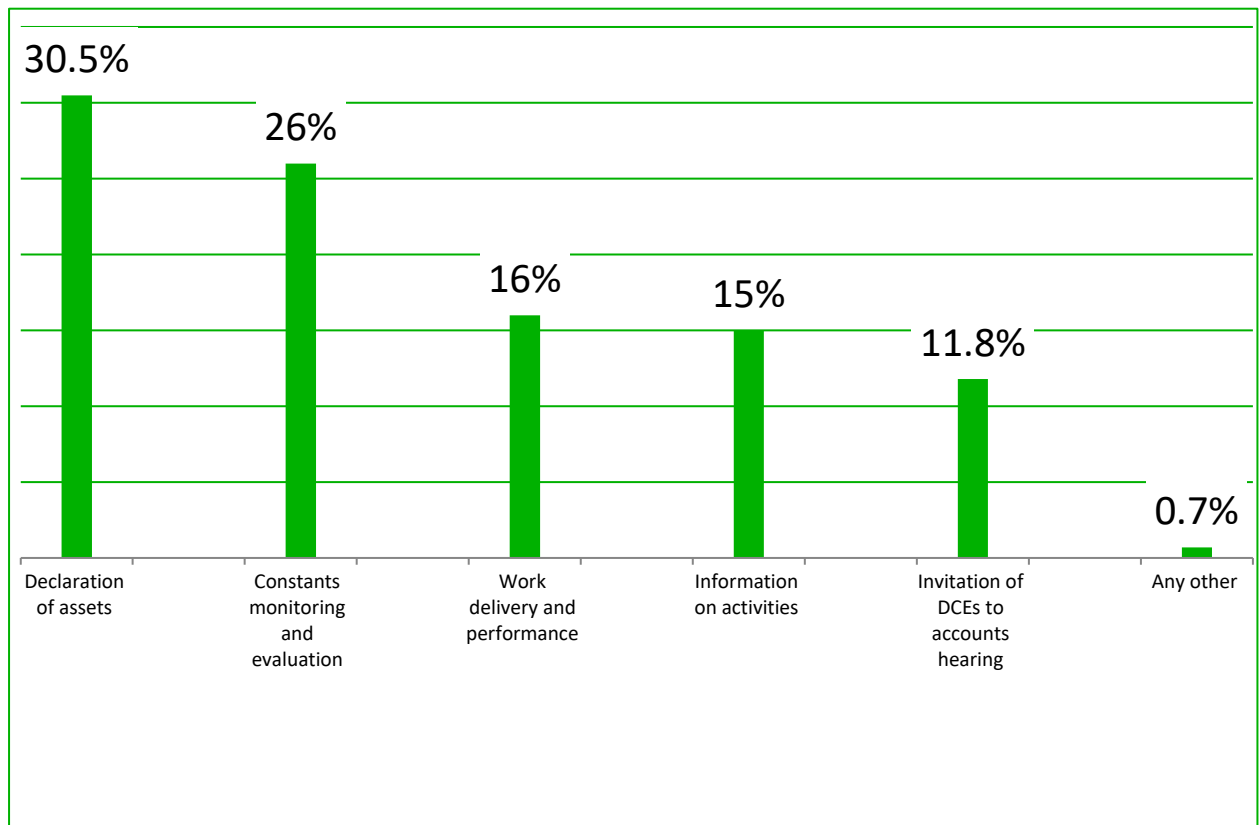
### RECOMMENDATIONS

DAs have played very important roles in the administration and development of Ghana since 1988. The current decentralized system which was established by the 1992 Republican Constitution and the enabling Act, Local Government Act, 1993 (Act 462), has chalked many successes and faced many challenges over the twenty-five years of operation. The study therefore sought from the respondents, suggestions and recommendations on how to overcome some of these challenges in order to improve on the service delivery and effectiveness of the DA.

#### MECHANISMS TO BE ADOPTED BY CITIZENS TO HOLD LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEIR STEWARDSHIP

One key area of constraint for the DA is citizens' participation in pre-budget consultations between the local government and citizens in order that the priority needs of communities are captured in the budget and development plans.

**Figure 5.1: Mechanisms citizens could adopt to hold Local Government officials accountable**





The data portrayed very limited consultations between DAs and citizens as reflected in the limited opportunity for citizens to hold local government officials accountable for their stewardship. The respondents were therefore asked ways they could hold their local government officials accountable for their stewardship.

Figure 5.1 shows some measures citizens could use to hold local government officials accountable for their stewardship. One important characteristic feature of the DA system is the opportunity it offers citizens to socially audit programmes, projects and policies of the DA thereby holding officials to account for their stewardship. Thus, declaration of assets before and after leaving office stands as the most important measure citizens could utilise to hold local government officials accountable for their stewardship (30.5%). Constant monitoring and evaluation of the work of the DA (social auditing) came as the second most important way of holding local government officials accountable for their stewardship (26.0%). Citizens could also hold local government officials accountable based on their work delivery and performance indices (16.0%). Again, citizens should demand information on activities and programmes of the DA (15.0%) and finally, inviting the MMDCEs to community account hearing was one other way citizens could hold local government officials accountable for their stewardship (11.8%).

Apart from the suggestions in the table above, "Any other" responses from respondents offered other ways citizens could hold Local Government Officials accountable for their stewardship and some of these were:

- The local people should be allowed to elect who they wanted
- Citizens should inform opinion leaders on issues of concern to them.

The study finally solicited suggestions for improvement on the effectiveness of the DA's work. The table below shows the suggestions offered by the respondents.

**Table 5.1: Suggestions for improvement on the effectiveness of District Assemblies' work**

Suggestions	Per cent
The DCE should be elected	25.3
Corruption should be eschewed	19.5
Their annual report should be evaluated and fined for any embezzlement	14.7
The DA should be transparent in the disbursement and distribution of the Common Fund	9.4
The Common Fund should be released timely	7.2
The Common Fund should be increased	6.2
The DA should organize community meetings to update members of the community on activities pertaining to the Assembly.	6.2
The Assembly Members should be paid	6.1
The DA should be proactive in the discharge of their duties	3.0
The DA should publish their programmes, activities and financial statement in the media	1.5
Any others (specify)	0.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

The need to elect the DCEs seems to be at the heart of most respondents as the surest way of improving on the effectiveness of the DA's work (25.3%). Others also believed that by eschewing corruption, the DAs would enhance the effectiveness of their work (19.5%). Another important suggestion put forward was the need for the annual report of the DA to be evaluated and anybody found culpable for embezzlement sanctioned (14.7%).

Transparency in the disbursement and distribution of the Common Fund could also enhance the effectiveness of the DA's work (9.4%). Timely release and increase of the Common Fund are two suggestions the respondents believed would help improve on the effectiveness of the work of the DA and these attracted (7.2%) and (6.2%) respectively. Table 5.1 shows a comprehensive list of suggestions made.

Besides the suggestions presented on the table, "Any other" responses from respondents also provided some useful views that could help enhance the effectiveness of the work of the DA and below are the prominent ones:

- Citizens should be given power and authority to prosecute people who misappropriate funds in the DA.
- There should be proper auditing of the accounts of DAs.

- DAs should eliminate partisanship from their work.
- The DA should employ competent officials and minimize political influence and
- Citizens should be engaged or involved in the planning and budgeting processes of the DA.

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## **APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY**

This was a cross sectional study conducted as a national sample survey. It made use of primary data from the field as well as secondary data. The study collected both qualitative and quantitative data.

A sample size of about three thousand (3000) was decided upon based on financial, time and other resource constraints. A confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval of two (2) was applied. A combination of random and purposive sampling techniques was employed in the study.

The study was conducted in all the ten (10) regions of the country. In all, seventy two (72) districts were covered. Two hundred and sixteen (216) districts made up the sampling frame out of which seventy two (72) were included in the sample for this research.

The number of districts per region was selected based on the region's proportionate share of the national population from the results of the 2010 Population and Housing Census. Regions with 10 percent and above of the national population had 44 questionnaires per district. Regions with less than 10 percent of the population but greater than 5 percent had 40 questionnaires per district while regions with 5 percent or less of the national population received 36 questionnaires per district.

Based on the above-mentioned distribution pattern, selected districts in Greater Accra, Ashanti, Eastern and Northern regions each received 44 questionnaires. Selected districts in Western, Brong Ahafo, Central and Volta regions received 40 questionnaires each while selected districts in the Upper West and Upper East regions each had 36 questionnaires per district.

Within a region however, selection of individual districts sampled were based on the purposive and random sampling techniques. Attempts were made to get a fair representation of both rural and urban areas. All regional capitals were purposively sampled while rural districts were randomly selected for the study. The Upper East regional capital, Bolga, was purposively replaced with Bongo.

The unit of analysis was the individual respondent with the household serving as the primary sampling unit.

A mobile enhanced semi-structured questionnaire was used to elicit the information from the respondents.

A pre-testing exercise was carried out on a sample of respondents in some selected districts to ensure that the questions were duly cleared of ambiguities and other forms of mistakes.

Research assistants drawn from the Commission’s staff were trained in the use of a mobile telephony system to collect the primary data.

#### Responses to Questionnaire Administration

REGION	REGIONS ALLOCATED NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRES	RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE (%)
Ashanti	528	528	100%
Brong Ahafo	280	280	100%
Central	280	280	100%
Eastern	396	395	99.75%
Greater Accra	352	352	100%
Northern	352	308	87.5%
Upper East	144	144	100%
Upper West	108	91	84.26%
Volta	280	253	90.36%
Western	280	279	99.64%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3000</b>	<b>2910</b>	<b>97%</b>

The data was edited and analyzed at the Research Department of the Commission using a combination of data analysis tools and software.

## APPENDIX B: Districts Selected

1. Ahafo Ano North
2. Ahafo Ano South
3. Amansie Central
4. Asante Akim North
5. Asante Akim South
6. AtwimaNwabiagya
7. Bosomtwe
8. Kumasi Metropolitan
9. Kumawu
10. Kwabre East
11. Obuasi
12. Sekyere East
13. Asunafo South
14. Asutifi South
15. Dormaa East
16. Jaman North
17. Nkoranza South
18. Pru
19. Sunyani Municipal
20. Abura/Asebu/Kwamankese
21. Agona West
22. Ajumako/Enyan/Essiam
23. Cape Coast Metropolitan
24. Effutu Municipal
25. Ekumfi
26. Twifo/Heman/Lower/  
Denkyira
27. Akwapim South
28. Atiwa
29. Birim Central
30. Kwaebibirem
31. Lower ManyaKrobo
32. New Juaben
33. Suhum/Kraboa/Coaltar
34. Upper West Akim
35. West Akim
36. Accra Metropolitan
37. Ashaiman
38. Ga South
39. KponeKatamanso
40. La Dade-Kotopon
41. Ledzokuku-Krowor
42. Shai-OsuDoku
43. Tema Metropolitan
44. Central Gonja
45. Chereponi
46. East Mamprusi
47. Gushiegu
48. Kumbungu
49. Sawla-Tuna-Kalba
50. Tamale Metropolitan
51. Zabzugu
52. Bawku Municipal
53. Bongo
54. Builsa South
55. KassenaNankana East
56. Jirapa
57. Sissala West
58. Wa Municipal
59. Adaklu
60. Biakoye
61. Central Tongu
62. Ho Municipal
63. Ketu North
64. Kpando Municipal
65. KrachiNchumuru
66. Bibiani/Anhwiaso/Bekwai
67. Juaboso
68. Mpohor
69. Prestea-Huni Valley
70. SekondiTakoradi  
Metropolitan
71. Tarkwa-Nsuaem Municipal
72. WassaAmenfi East