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*The Impact of Decentralized Land Administration in the Western Region: The Case of  
Tarkwa Municipality*

By

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degree of

**MASTER OF SCIENCE**

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work towards the Msc. Project Management and that to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of the University, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text. However, it is likely for readers of this work to identify some errors or omissions. In view of this, I duly accept being responsible in that regard.

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## **ABSTRACT**

Decentralizing land administration is vital since land is an essential factor of production. The Lands Commission in its quest to become the center of excellence for land services delivery set up a district office in Tarkwa Municipality in 2007 to ensure that land services are accessed at the district level. This has however been subject to criticisms in recent times by some of the staff of the Lands Commission and the general public. The aim of the research was to investigate the extent to which land administration has been decentralized in Tarkwa Municipality while the objectives of the study were to identify the reasons responsible for the establishment of the Tarkwa Municipal Lands Commission Office, to identify the structure and mode of operation of the Tarkwa Municipal Land Commission office, to seek the views of land owners in Tarkwa Municipality on the extent to which they can initiate and complete a service application at the Tarkwa Municipal Lands Commission and to identify the challenges associated with the decentralization of land administration in Tarkwa. The study revealed that the objectives for setting up the Tarkwa Municipal Lands Commission was among other things to bring land administration closer to the doorstep of the people within the municipality and increase revenue mobilization. It also revealed that the people within Tarkwa Municipality were unable to initiate a service application at Tarkwa Lands Commission, specifically P.V.L.M.D due to the absence of a Client Service Access Unit (CSAU) to serve as an interface between the Staff of the Lands Commission and the general public in Tarkwa. It also revealed that the Division had been recording decreasing revenues in terms of ground rent from 2011 to 2016. In conclusion, decentralized land administration in the Tarkwa Municipality needs to be revised with regards to the provision of logistics and statutory powers to operate as this has the potential of increasing the revenue base of the Lands Commission and truly bringing land administration closer to the doorstep of those within Tarkwa Municipality.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

CSAU	Client Service Access Unit
LAP	Land Administration Project
LC	Land Commission
LVD	Land Valuation Division
PVLMD	Public & Vested Land Management Division
SMD	Survey and Mapping Division
SPSS	Statistical Package and Service Solutions

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this research to my husband, Julius whose patience and encouragement has seen me through this Programme.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

Currently the traditional measures of a project success extend well beyond “on time, on budget and to specifications” to include criteria such as “Delivery of anticipated benefits, engagement of stakeholders, and organizational adoption” (Peterson, 2005). Undoubtedly, land is an essential factor of production and information about its ownership and use is often of great importance to investors and would-be property owners. Although land administration is characterized by complex processes and procedures, it requires static and dynamic components to achieve sustainability (Molen 2002). Land administration is a complex process and often associated with Decentralization. In recent years, there has been increasing interest in the importance of Decentralizing governance in land administration systems (Samsudin, Lim, & Mccluskey, 2014). According to UNECE (1996), land administration refers to a processes of determining, recording, and disseminating information on land parcels and it is particularly related to land rights, land use and the value of land. According to Dale & McLaughlin, (1999) land administration functions includes four main components, namely: juridical, regulatory, fiscal, and information management. It also includes categories such as: land registration, cadastral surveying and mapping, fiscal, legal, multipurpose cadastres, and land information systems (Enemark, 2003).

Consequently, the broad issues in land administration contribute to the improper use of land resources and they create inflexible and overly comprehensive land regulatory and legal frameworks (Firman, 2004). In addition, some developments are poorly designed, poorly administered, and in the wrong location (Bennett et al., 2008).

With regard to institutional arrangements, the land administration system has been controlled by different regulations, processes and standards than those governed by multiple organizations with limited collaboration (Bangsal & Lebrilla, 2008). The separation of various organizations in land management has become a major international problem, even though it is supported by new technology (Williamson et al., 2010). Land administration has become a substantial obstacle to the development of land management activities that can deliver sustainability. Correspondingly, sustainable development can be enabled by interconnected elements that use a decentralization approach (Robertson 2002) and good governance strategies (Wallace 2009). The Ghana's National Land Policy (1999) acknowledges weak land administration system as one of the constraints confronting land reforms in Ghana.

Currently, the registration center for every instrument in the Western Region is the Regional Office of the Lands Commission (Sekondi) although by virtue of Section 32 of the Lands Commission Act 2008, Act 767 a sub-office has been established within Tarkwa Municipality to bring land administration to the doorstep of those within the municipality and its environs. In a bid to improve the efficiency of service delivery to the Ghanaian populace, the second phase of the Land Administration Policy gave birth to the Client Service Access Unit (CSAU) to serve as the interface between the general public and the staff of Lands Commission. Unfortunately, this unit is located at Sekondi, making it impossible for land services to be initiated and completed within Tarkwa municipality.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

Land administration in developing countries currently faces a number of problems, including: limited collaborations; over centralization; poor coordination between land management institutions; and, an imbalance between national policy and local decision making (Enemark, 2004). As variously defined by Zaney (2007) and Aryetey et al. (2007) as cited in Forkuor (2013), the Land Administration Project emphasizes on the fact that the structure of land administration should establish the policies, guidelines and operational pathways for the management of lands in any community. Land administration as cited by Wily-Aiden (2003) encompasses institutions and processes associated with land rights, regulation among which the recording of rights is prominent. The mandate of recording these land rights is vested in the Lands Commission by virtue of the Lands Commission Act, 2008 (Act 767). In a bid to fulfil this mandate, the Lands Commission has established two district offices in the Western Region, one at Tarkwa and one at Bibiani to augment the operations of the main office at Sekondi. The selection of these areas was primarily based on the fact that a chunk of State lands at Tarkwa and Bibiani and for that matter having district offices in these areas would bring land administration closer to communities outside Sekondi-Takoradi metropolis and increase revenue mobilization as well. The aim of increasing revenue mobilization appears not to have been realized as since 2007 the Tarkwa Municipal Lands Commission was established, mobilized revenues from ground rents in Tarkwa Municipality had been reducing from 2011 to 2016 making reference to the rent ledgers for Tarkwa. Moreover, the existing structures at the Lands Commission district office at Tarkwa do not allow property owners outside Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis to initiate and complete a service application. The ripple effect of this is that the workload at the Sekondi office keeps

increasing and eventually increases the turn-around time for recording these land rights. It is for this reason that the study is being conducted to ascertain the reasons why attempts made to decentralize land administration has not yielded results and to suggest strategies to improve its efficiency.

### **1.3 Research Aim**

The aim of the research was to investigate the extent to which land administration has been decentralized in Tarkwa Municipality.

### **1.4 Specific Objectives**

1. To identify the reasons responsible for the establishment of the Tarkwa Municipal Lands Commission Office
2. To identify the structure and mode of operation of the Tarkwa Municipal land commission office.
3. To seek the views of land owners or users in Tarkwa Municipality on the extent to which they can initiate and complete a service application at the Tarkwa Municipal Lands Commission.
4. To identify the challenges associated with the decentralization of land administration using the case of Tarkwa Municipality.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

According to Forkuor (2013), several studies have been conducted into enhancing land administration through the decentralized local government system. However, even decentralizing land administration to the local government level without the requisite

logistics and expertise to manage it to serve its purpose would not improve on the efficiency of land administration in the Western Region.

The benefits that stem from the establishments of district offices are immense and cannot be over emphasized. This translates into the need for an effective and efficient district office. The study is therefore useful, as it points out the weaknesses impeding the performance of the district office and make workable recommendations to improve on its performance. The study also gives some policy guidelines which when implemented will boost the image of Lands Commission in general. This study also contributes to the knowledge on decentralization discussed in relation to land Administration by using the Tarkwa Municipality as a case study.

### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The research focused on land administration and in the strict sense of improving land service delivery through decentralization. Although two sub-offices have been established by the Lands Commission, the study only focused on that of Tarkwa Municipality with much focus on services rendered by the Public and Vested Lands Management Division of the Lands Commission (P.V.L.M.D).

### **1.7 Structure of the Study**

The study has been organized in five chapters. Chapter One deals mainly with the introduction to the study. This includes a background to the study, the statement of problem, objectives and significance of the study. It also features the scope, methodology and the limitations of the study. Then also, it shows how the chapters of the study have been organized. Chapter Two covers a review of literature relevant to the study. Chapter



Three encapsulates a description of the study area and the methodology used in the study. Chapter Four is the analyses and presentation of the data gathered from the respondents, and finally Chapter Five is the summary of findings, recommendations and conclusion.

### **1.8 Methodology**

Semi-Structured questionnaire and interviews were used to gather the requisite information for the study. This included key staff of the Western Regional Lands Commission and Land owners or users within Tarkwa Municipality. Both Qualitative and Quantitative approach were used in the study and Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data which was expressed in the form of tables. A review of appropriate literature was also used as a guide to support the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Literature review provides a description, summary, and critical evaluation of research works in relation to the research problem being investigated. In this regard, this chapter describes decentralization, factors needed for effective decentralization, land administration in Ghana, decentralization of land administration in Ghana and project evaluation.

#### **2.2 Decentralization**

The policy of decentralization has become topical in development parlance in recent times. Its use in reference to development and underdevelopment has led gradually to its assumption of specific meanings (Awortwi, 2010). Even though different authors define it in diverse ways, the concept is best explained in terms of the form it takes.

According to Conyers (1989), decentralization is defined as the transfer of responsibility for planning and decision making from the central government to local governments. The aim is to ensure that the local residents participate in decision making processes at the local level in a more profound way than envisaged in centralized programmes. A growing number of studies including Parker (1995) has indicated that decentralization as a concept has diverse dimensions. These dimensions encompass transfer of power, authority and responsibility and resources from the central government to the local government for shaping public policy and programmes.

Decentralization has been defined in many ways on the basis of what the policy aims to achieve: transferring responsibility for planning, management, and resource-raising from the CG to field units of CG ministries or agencies (Rondinelli, 1981); changing relationships of power and subordination between central and sub-national levels and redefining the functional roles of units at each of these levels (Elcock & Minogue, 2001); and creating open, responsive, and effective LG systems for decision- making (United Nations Development Program [UNDP], 1998). Falleti (2005) defines Decentralization as “a process of state reform composed by a set of public policies that transfer responsibilities, resources, or authority from higher to lower levels of government in the context of a specific type of state.”

Falleti (2005) defines it the following distinguishing features:

- i. Decentralization is conceived as a process of public policy reform and not as a description of the state of being of a political or fiscal system at a point in time;
- ii. Lower levels of government are recipients of the transferred responsibilities, resources, or authority;
- iii. Because decentralization is a process of state reform, the transition to a different type of state necessarily implies commencement of a new decentralization sequence; and
- iv. The degree of authority devolved to LGs determines the levels and types of administrative, fiscal, and political decentralization policies.
- v. enabling of citizens to recall their councilors for under- performance or vote them out during elections; and
- vi. autonomy of local councils to hire, motivate, manage and fire local bureaucrats without CG interference.

## **2.3 Appropriate conditions for successful decentralization**

Decentralization is a multifaceted concept. As a means, it can enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of public goods and services delivery. As an end in itself, it can improve the key guiding principles of democratic governance (Cheema & Rondinelli, 1983). However, in practice, it is argued that without sufficient management authority, adequate management capacity, adequate mechanism for accountability, sufficient autonomy of local governments and citizen participation, decentralization could lead to inefficiencies, elite capture, and mismanagement of local resources and loss of citizenry trust in the local government systems (Arthur, 2017).

### **2.3.1 Sufficient Management Authority**

Authority of the local officials to exercise influence in decentralization is critical to the success of the policy; it can act as a trigger for effective participation, mobilization and utilization of local level resources. As noted by Rondinelli & Ascher (1999), decentralization can be successful if it is implemented in the environment where the central government gives the management authority to the local officials and political leadership. Authority is explained as the right to carry out functions such as regulatory, revenue generation and other activities in connection with local development. These rights are derived from constitutional powers, statutes or administrative guidelines as well as political legitimacy (Rondinelli & Ascher, 1999). Sufficient management authority by local government officials is critical primarily because it empowers the local officials in the decentralized institutions to carry out their responsibilities to support local level development.

### **2.3.2 Adequate Management Capacity**

One of the most commonly cited conditions to support the reasons why many governments in Third World countries often fail to implement policies through the local government staff is that they lack the capacity to administer the responsibilities assigned them (Cheema & Rondinelli, 1983). Capacity has multifaceted connotations. This has made it very difficult to get a concise definition for it. However, Shafritz (1986) conceptualizes capacity as the ability, competency and efficiency of the local government officials to design, implement, manage and evaluate plans and programmes assigned them to the local government units. Corroborating the above position, Fiszbein (1997) summarized three strategic factors that influence capacity. These include physical facilities, incentive systems and human capital. Fiszbein (1997) & Rosenbloom (1986) observed that physical facilities are a basic dimension to the effectiveness and efficiency of local governments. It is an important tool for measuring the success of the local government system. Fiszbein (1997) & Rosenbloom (1986) further underscored that local government can have access to high quality personnel, resources and sufficient political authority, but the organization's effectiveness can only be shaped through its access to the physical facilities such as telephony, computers for keeping records, computer systems and transport systems. Along the same line of reasoning, Work (2002) argues that the quality of human capital is critical to the achievement of organizational goals. It leads to innovation, increased organizational performance, collective problem solving, organizational learning and adaptability. It also enhances inventiveness and shapes individuals' attitudes towards work and competitive advantage (Wen, 1998; Work, 2002). As a result, local governments' policies should be appropriately designed, efficient capacity programmes should be provided for the local government staff and

incentive schemes (include rules about promotion and conditions of services) need to be provided to the civil servants (Work, 2002).

### **2.3.3 Accountability Issues**

Accountability is a complex concept. It can be defined as either the nature of the political process or the outcomes induced. It is a driving force that influences the stakeholders in public institutions to be answerable to their subjects in order to help to ensure the effectiveness of public goods and services delivery (Paul, 1995). According to Prezeworski, Stokes & Mann (1999) study of Democracy, Accountability, and Representation, accountability is conceptualized as follows: Governments are accountable "if citizens can appreciate the representative governments and can sanction them appropriately, retaining in office those who perform well and ousting from office those who do not". One critical question is, to whom is the public servant accountable? According to Prezeworski et al., (1999) in all political regimes, public servants are expected to be accountable to the citizens. However, the level of accountability differs in practice based on the type of relationship that exists between the political system and the public servants. For instance, in the democratic system, there are a number of means through which public service performance can be monitored and political pressure can be applied. In the non-democracies, consumer groups, chambers of commerce and religious bodies can put pressure on public officials to respond to them directly or indirectly. Conventionally, accountability refers to the answerability of one's actions or behaviour. It however, entails the development of objective standards and the evaluation of how work is carried out in an organization, as well as the means by which organizations and their leaders are held responsible for their actions in the use of public resources and

authority (Olowu, 1999). In line with this definition, Olowu (1999) categorized three main elements underpinning accountability as follows: a clear definition of responsibility, reporting modality and reward system. In addition, he identified a number of advantages of accountability as follows: First, accountability helps the citizens to acquaint themselves with the decisions that are made by elected politicians and bureaucrats to address local needs, preferences and aspirations; second, it also acts as a trigger to enable the citizens to familiarize themselves with the financial information of the local governments- financial reporting both to the local users and to independent audit agencies and third, it helps to provide citizens with a realistic set of information about what government can do and cannot do.

#### **2.3.4 Sufficient Autonomy of Local Government**

Sufficient autonomy of local government is critical in decentralization. This includes the autonomy in determining the quantity and quality of public goods and services and sources of financing local developmental projects (Bill, 2008). According to Bill (2008), autonomy helps local government to enjoy a level of flexibility and independence to react to more pressing issues of their environment without external control. It is when this is done that devolution as a form of decentralization becomes real in the state.

#### **2.4 Land Administration in Ghana**

Since the passage of the Ghana National Land Policy in 1999, land administration and management institutions have struggled to improve on land recording system and in particular that of bottom-up local land administration at the local customary land areas (Biitir, Nara, & Ameyaw, 2017). The administration of lands in Ghana has evolved

through ambiguous processes over the years. Kasanga (2006) was therefore right to have described the administration of lands in Ghana as having a chequered history. Tracing the administration of lands before the colonial and through the colonial days to the end of the twentieth century leads to a conclusion that the administration of lands was fragmented by complex processes during these periods.

Land administration and management before the colonial period was the responsibility of occupants of stools and skins who were the administrative and political heads of the various groups, clans or tribes (Busia, 1951). Such individuals, traditionally called chiefs, administered the lands in the interest of their subjects in accordance with laid-down procedures contained in the customary laws (Josiah-Aryeh & Armah, 2005). Though there were no written laws on land during this era, the laws were imprinted in the minds of the natives like other customary laws (Josiah-Aryeh & Armah, 2005). It is also worth noting that the demand for lands during this period was basically for subsistence farming and documentation of land transactions was virtually absent.

With the onset of colonization in the mid-1870s (Dickson & Benneh, 1988), attempts were made by the British in terms of laws and building infrastructure to streamline the processes of land administration. Bills like the Public Lands Ordinance (CAP 134) to vest and regulate the acquisition of lands in the then Gold Coast in the British Crown and the land bill of 1897 to declare all unoccupied lands in Ghana as public lands were passed (Kasanga, 2006). Again, institutions like the Lands Department, Survey Department and the Town and Country Planning Department were established by the colonial rulers to perform specific aspects of the land administration process. At the



close of the colonial period in 1957, traditional authorities still maintained their strong hold on lands in Ghana in terms of ownership and allocation of lands.

Under the 1969 constitutional review, the Lands Department was changed into a Lands Commission under the Lands Commission Act of 1971 (Act 362), (Kasanga & Kotey, 2001). With the exception of the allocation of lands, land use planning and surveying and mapping, the Lands Commission performed all the other component responsibilities [recording, documentation, valuation, and revenue mobilization] of land administration. This continued till the mid-1980s and early 1990's when three land institutions were established to reduce the functions of the Lands Commission and also to make the Commission function effectively. The newly established institutions were the Land Title Registry and the Lands Valuation Board both established in 1986 and the Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands established in 1994. This brought the number of government land institutions to six, all of which were performing specific aspects of the administration process. It is important to note that whereas the government portion of land administration was fragmented among six institutions, the traditional authorities since the colonial period, or even beyond, maintained their unity with respect to their hold on lands as owners and the principal institution that allocates lands to developers including the government in some cases. This made them strong, powerful and more focused. To this end, Kasanga (2000) described the traditional sector as "strong, seems more open, more responsible and equitable to the silent majority."

It is important to point out that because all the six government land institutions were established by different Acts until December 2008, they existed as autonomous institutions with weak coordination among the various institutions (Forkuor, 2009). The weak coordination and autonomous status of the land institutions resulted in problems in

the land market which included tenure insecurity, haphazard spatial development, land disputes and litigation, encroachment of government lands, deficit in human resource, financial and logistical challenges to the institutions themselves (Bortei-Doku et al., 2007).

It was out of these problems that the Ghana Land Administration Project proposed and pushed for the passage of a Lands Commission Act 2008, Act 767 that brought together four of the six government land institutions under one Commission. The integrated institutions were the old Lands Commission, Survey Department, Lands Valuation Board and the Land Title Registry. The major objective of this initiative was to integrate the activities of the government land institutions in order to attain a holistic and coordinated structure of administration.

The existing framework for the administration of lands in Ghana as is headed by a Commission with its Chairman appointed by the President of the Republic. A secretariat of the Commission has been created and it is responsible for the day-to-day administration of four core departments. There are ten other units that provide various supporting services to assist the secretariat in its day-to-day supervision of the four Divisions of the Lands Commission namely the PVLMD, LVD, SMD and LRD. This new structure still allows traditional authorities to be responsible for the allocation of lands. But to make the traditional authorities effective in performing their role in the administration process, the Commission provides professional and technical assistance to interested traditional authorities to establish Customary Land Secretariats (Land Administration Project, 2010).

A critical assessment of this framework for land administration reveals a problematic situation. First, the model excludes units or departments that should be responsible for spatial planning, monitoring of spatial development and revenue mobilization. Rather, the District Assemblies have been made responsible for the spatial planning and monitoring aspects of land administration process. Likewise, revenue mobilization has been left to the Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands to perform. These two bodies perform the above functions outside the formal structure as spelt out by the Lands Commission (Land Administration Project, 2010).

However, spatial planning, monitoring of spatial development and revenue from lands are critical aspects of land administration especially in sub-Saharan Africa and therefore must of necessity be an integral part of any model of land administration. Also, land owners (traditional authorities) who allocate lands to developers are not represented in the framework of administration. The exclusion of these four (spatial planning, monitoring, revenue mobilization and land allocation) critical aspects of land administration in the framework means that the head of the Lands Commission does not have direct and total command and control over these functions of land administration and therefore, to a large extent, defeats the objectives of the new structure of land administration as stated above (Land Administration Project, 2010). Furthermore, in terms of decentralization of activities within itself, the structure adopts the deconcentration type of decentralization. This is because all the Regional and District offices depend on the Head Office in Accra for personnel, logistics, finance, instructions and direction. In this respect, the model is not too new from the old structure of land administration. Theoretically therefore, it can be asserted that the new structure of land

administration in Ghana is a re-clothing of the old system of land administration and may not offer an answer to the problems (power play, multiple sales of lands, haphazard allocation and spatial development, financial and logistics difficulties, etc.) in the land market of Ghana (Land Administration Project, 2010). It is out of these limitations that the researchers want to explore an alternative structure for the administration of lands whereby the districts shall be directly responsible for the administration of lands as it is being practiced in some African countries. As it stands in Ghana, the District Assemblies play a passive role in the administration of lands. Their principal role is to prepare layout plans and enforce the plans. Major aspects of the administration and management processes [allocation, records keeping, revenue mobilization, and management of state lands among others] are outside the domain of the District Assemblies (Land Administration Project, 2010).

Land administration requires the setting of principles of good governance as a direction towards balancing social, economic and environmental issues. Accordingly, Antonio (2006), Arko-Adjei et al. (2009), Grover et al. (2007), Sewornu (2010), Zakout et al. (2006) have established the principles for good governance in land administration. For instance, Zakout et al. (2006) highlights the principles of efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, consistency, predictability, integrity, accountability, subsidiarity, autonomy, depolitization, civic engagement, public participation, equity, fairness, impartiality, legal security and rule of the law as the important good governance principles in land administration. In addition, according to Buchanan (2008; cited by Wallace 2009), the principles of good governance can be usefully clustered around three outcomes, which are: responsibility, empowerment objective legal framework.

## **2.5 Decentralization and land administration**

Land administration arrangements are commonly influenced by national culture (Dale and McLaughlin, 1999) while the institutional arrangements in land administration that are influenced by the system include decentralization and centralization (Williamson, 2001). Decentralization has recently received more attention because it has been used to enhance public services in developing countries. It requires the transfer of land administration operational functions to the local or departmental level (Barnes 2003) and requires that delegation is made between governmental levels (Enemark 2004). A decentralised system reduces the need for co-ordination (Roy & Tisdell, 1998), creates more opportunities to the local people in the decision making processes (Sarker 2003), promotes participatory and encouraging sustainability (Ouedraogo 2005) offers more efficient and effective administration and management (FAO 2007), and replaces inappropriate centralization management (Jusoh et al.,2009).

In Ghana, the government with the assistance of her foreign development partners established the Land Administration Project (LAP) in 2003. The project was charged with the mandate of coordinating and harmonizing the various components of the land administration process. The first phase of the project ended in December 2010 and the major achievement of this phase was the passing of a new Lands Act 2008, Act 767 that has unified four out of the six government institutions that were responsible for the administration of lands. Since 2009, the Lands Commission which is the embodiment of the new structure has been largely responsible for the administration of lands in Ghana. Land Administration has been variously defined (Zaney, 2007; Aryeetey et al., 2007). The emphasis in all these definitions is that the structure of administration should create

the institutional framework that should establish the policies, guidelines and operational path-ways for the management of lands in any community (Forkuor, Kyei, & Wusu-adjei, 2013). For the purpose of this research, land administration should be considered from the perspective of Wily- Alden (2003), that 'land administration covers institutions and processes associated with land rights, regulations among which the recording of rights is prominent'. According to Kasanga, (2006) and Kyei, (2008), administration of lands and the practice of the concept of decentralization have a chequered history in Ghana.

## **2.6 Decentralization of Land Administration in Africa**

In Africa, reforms to empower local governments to be directly involved in land management is emerging and this paradigm shift is stronger in Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Swaziland and some Sahelian countries of Africa (Toulmin et. al. as cited in Wily-Alden, 2003). In urban cities such as Rwanda, local authorities are responsible for the demarcation and registration of plots for spatial development. Chiefs in cities have no active role in the management of lands and this system has been in operation in the country since 1998 (Rurangwa, 2004). Botswana has since 1968 devolved land administration to local boards that have been responsible for land use planning, allocating lands for development and adjudicating over land disputes. Though there are chiefs (traditional authorities) in Botswana, they do not have any role in the administration of lands even though 70% of lands in Botswana are held under customary tenure. According to Jacobs & Chavunduka (2003), the structure of land administration in Botswana was developed to circumvent the powers of traditional chiefs who hitherto were creating problems for the smooth administration of lands. This system of land

administration has worked perfectly for the southern Africa country since 1968 and it is perceived to be the most successful land administration structure in Africa (Jacobs & Chavunduka, 2003). In Tanzania, as explained by Jacobs and Chavunduka, land is a state property and chiefs or traditional authorities do not own land, and the central government is solely responsible for the administration and management of lands in the country.

## **2.7 Functions of the established District Office**

The Lands Commission Act, 2008 (Act 767) gives the Lands Commission the mandate to set up district offices. The functions of the district shall be under the direction and supervision of the Regional Lands Commission and they are:

1. To provide land registration services at the district level
2. To provide valuation services to the district
3. To receive applications in respect of state lands and process same for the approval of the Regional lands Commission
4. To manage state and vested lands in the district, including development control, enforcement of covenants, rent collection, etc.
5. To provide surveying and mapping services to the district.
6. Any other function to be determined by the Lands Commission.
7. In coordination with the appropriate district Assembly/Assemblies assess the land needs of government agencies and facilitate the acquisition of lands for the agencies

## **2.8 Project Evaluation**

Evaluation involves the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristic and outcomes of an activity or action, in order to determine its worth or merit (Dart et al, 1998). It is a major part of learning, and can provide a wealth of useful information on the outcomes of a project or action, and the dynamics of those who undertook the work. Through the identification of the highlights and lowlights of the project, evaluation draws conclusions which can inform future decision making, and assist to define future projects and policies (Patton, 1997).

Evaluation can take place at any time in a project. However, the most appropriate timing will be governed by the nature of the project, and the reason for carrying out the evaluation. It will be most effective when it is built in as a fundamental part of your overall project, and should be considered while the project is being designed.

You may decide that you will:

- carry out an initial baseline exercise against which to compare progress at the end of the project
- refine the project on an ongoing basis; therefore, evaluation will be part of your regular project activities

OR

- evaluate the project at agreed milestones, for example on a tri-monthly basis.

Apart from required reporting on the project, the timing and intensity of a project's evaluation is up to project participants.



## **2.9 Evaluation Methods**

The following have been identified as methods by which a project could be evaluated.

### **2.9.1 Questionnaires**

Questionnaires can be conducted in person, by telephone, or by mail. They are used to quickly obtain information from a wide variety of people. Questionnaires are typically inexpensive, can be completed anonymously, and are easy to compare and analyse. It is possible to involve many people, although it may only appeal to a certain section of the community, and responses from certain sections of the community may be limited (De Vaus, 1995).

### **2.9.2 Evaluation Stories**

Evaluation stories are based on collecting and reviewing stories of significant change associated with the activity or action being evaluated. Stories are collected from those most directly involved in the project.

Example question before the project: What is the proposed project area like at the moment? How could the project area be improved?

Example question after the project: What was the project area like before the project was undertaken? How do you believe it has changed?

### **2.9.3 Photographic History**

A photographic record of the site can be used to evoke memories of what a place used to be like and what it is like today, and prompt comments and discussion useful for

evaluation. Recording may be in the form of an evaluation story or benefit an interview situation (Patton, 1990).

#### **2.9.4 Participant Observation**

Data is collected by listening, watching, and documenting what is seen and heard. Through asking questions, and by noting comments, behaviours and reactions, useful information is provided to the evaluation process. The participant observation method gathers accurate information about how a group and project operates in the field (De Vaus, 1995).

#### **2.10 Summary**

Decentralization is the transfer of responsibility for planning and decision making from the central government to local governments. The aim of decentralization is to ensure that the local residents participate in decision making processes at the local level in a more profound way than envisaged in centralized programmes. Decentralization has recently received more attention because it has been used to enhance public services in developing countries. Decentralization of land administration involves the transfer of land administration operational functions to the local or departmental level and requires that delegation is made between governmental levels. Decentralization of land administration has been implemented in several African countries. Botswana has devolved land administration to local boards that have been responsible for land use planning, allocating lands for development and adjudicating over land disputes. Chiefs in Botswana, do not have any role in the administration of lands even though 70% of lands in Botswana are held under customary tenure. In Tanzania, land is a state property and

chiefs or traditional authorities do not own land, and the central government is solely responsible for the administration and management of lands in the country. In Ghana, the Lands Commission Act, 2008 (Act 767) gives the Lands Commission the mandate to set up district offices. The functions of the district shall be under the direction and supervision of the Regional Lands Commission and they are:

To provide land registration services at the district level, to provide valuation services to the district, to receive applications in respect of state lands and process same for the approval of the Regional lands Commission, to manage state and vested lands in the district, including development control, enforcement of covenants, rent collection, etc, to provide surveying and mapping services to the district and any other function to be determined by the Lands Commission. Project evaluation is a process that critically examines a project. It involves collecting and analyzing information about a project's activities, characteristics, and outcomes. Its purpose is to make judgments about a project with respect to whether the project achieved its deliverables or objectives, to improve its effectiveness, and/or to inform decisions.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Research methodology provides pertinent guides in the proper and meaningful conduct of an investigation. In this regard, this chapter describes the methods and procedures employed in the conduct of this study. This procedure is presented in the study are the study area, research design, the target population, sampling procedure, data collection instruments and data analysis.

#### **3.2 Study Area Profile**

The population of Tarkwa Municipality, according to the 2010 Population and Housing Census, is 90,477 with relatively more males (51.6%) than females (48.4%), giving a sex ratio of 106.5. The population of the Municipality is youthful with about two-fifth (38.1%) aged below 15 years and the elderly persons (aged 60 years and older) in smaller proportion (4.4%).

More than two-thirds (67.8%) of the population aged 15 years and older are economically active while nearly one-third (32.2%) are economically not active. Of the economically active population, 93.1 percent are employed while 6.9 percent are unemployed. Of the unemployed population, 70.4 percent are seeking work for the first time. For those who are economically not active, a larger percentage of them are students (45.4%) and 29.5 percent perform household duties. Of the total workforce in the Municipality, 31.5 percent are engaged as Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers, 24.8 percent are engaged as Plant and machine operators and assemblers and

18.7 percent are in Service and sales work. In terms of sector of employment of the workforce, about a third each is engaged by the Agriculture (32.2%), Industry (33.9%) and Services (33.9%) sectors. Whereas more males than females are employed by the Agriculture and Industry sectors, more females (49.4%) than males (21.1%) are employed by the Services sector. Of the population 15 year and older 56.6 percent are self-employed without employee, 25.8 percent are employees and 7.3 percent are contributing family workers. The proportion of male employees (37.4%) is more than twice the proportion of their female counterpart (11.7%). The private informal sector is largest employer in the municipality, employing 78.9 percent of the population followed by the private formal sector with 16.7 percent.

Tarkwa was chosen to accommodate the municipal office of the WRLC because of the following reasons: it being the focal point for most of the remotest districts in the Northern part of the Western Region such as Bogoso, Prestea, Bibiani, Wassa Akropong, Asankragua, Enchi, Juaboso, Bia, Sefwi Wiawso, Bekwai etc. Its proximity to the above communities will save prospective clients of the LC the trouble of having to travel long distances to Sekondi to initiate any land documentation process. It has the second largest concentration of government lands after Sekondi–Takoradi metropolis representing 15% of the state lands in the region. Land transactions in this area are therefore much frequent and brisk than most of the districts. Its location is more convenient in promoting public education on land documentation and registration. It being a prosperous mining town with a booming economy coupled with large influx of people into it resulting in its elevation to a municipality. These and other factors have led to an increasing demand for

land and landed properties, which has brought about the emergence of a vibrant property market to meet industrial, commercial and residential uses.

### **3.3 Research Design**

According to Borg & Gall, (1989) research design is a process of creating an empirical test to support or refute a knowledge claim and refers to all procedures undertaken by a researcher in investigating a particular set of research questions or hypotheses. In order to provide a meaningful guide to research activities, a good research design, as depicted by Wiersma (1986), should be appropriate for the hypotheses to be tested, feasible within the limits of available resources, free from bias, free from confounding effect, and statistically precise. Research design is the framework that is created to seek answers to research questions. The researcher resorted to descriptive research design. Descriptive research method is used when the researcher wants to describe specific behaviour as it occurs in the environment to reveal and measure the strength of a target group's opinion, attitude, or behaviour with regards to a given subject. Another common use of descriptive research would be the surveying of demographical traits in a certain group (age, income, marital status, gender, etc.). There are a variety of descriptive research methods available (observation, case study and survey), however in order to meet the research objectives, a case study would be carried out. A case study gives an in depth study of a particular situation. It is a method used to narrow down a very broad field of research into one easily researchable topic. It is a useful tool for investigating trends and specific situations.

Descriptive research is conclusive in nature, as opposed to fact-finding. This means that descriptive research gathers quantifiable information that can be used for statistical inference on your target audience through data analysis.

### **3.4 Target Population**

The study population consisted of key staff of the Western Regional Lands commission as well as land owners and users within the Tarkwa municipality.

### **3.5 The Sampling Procedure**

According to Lohr (2010), sampling is the procedure by which elements of a population are selected as representation of the total population. Purposive sampling was used to select key staff of the Lands Commission office while simple random sampling was adopted in selecting land owners and users in the Tarkwa municipality. A purposive sample is a non-probability sample that is selected based on characteristics of a population and the objective of the study. Purposive sampling is judgmental, selective and subjective. Criteria for inclusion and exclusion was based on the level of experience, skills and attributes of the staff out of which four (4) key staff were selected. These were the Chairman of the Western Regional Lands Commission, the Divisional Head of the Public and Vested Lands Management Division of the Lands Commission (P.V.L.M.D), a Senior Land Administration Officer and the Land Administration Officer in charge of Tarkwa P.V.L.M.D.

The forty (40) land owners or users were randomly selected. They consisted of those who acquired land from the State, Stools, families and private individuals. At the time of the research, the researcher did not have a complete list of all the elements in this population because some land owners were in the process of getting their instruments registered and their details had not yet been captured by the Lands Commission although they had built on the lands they had acquired from stools, families and private individuals. More so, the data available on lessees of State lands did not capture those who had encroached on State lands at Tarkwa whose leases were yet to be regularized for them.

### **3.6 Data Collection**

The researcher conducted data collection by administering the questionnaires to some of the selected key staff of the Lands Commission (that is, the land administration officer in charge of Tarkwa Lands Commission) while informal interviews were held for the rest. The land owners or users were contacted in their homes and upon completion they submitted the completed questionnaires to the researcher on the spot. This ensured 100% recovery. The structured questionnaires were given to only willing respondents.

### **3.7 Data Collection Instruments**

The main purpose of this study was to assess the extent to which land administration had been decentralized in Tarkwa Municipality. Data for the study was gathered through the use semi-structured questionnaires and informal interviews with the other selected key staff of the Lands Commission other than the Officer in charge of Tarkwa. The survey instrument featured: respondent profile, to identify the structure and mode of operation



of the Tarkwa Land Commission office, the reasons for the establishment of the Tarkwa Municipal Office, to seek the views of land owners in Tarkwa Municipality on the extent to which they can initiate and complete a service application at the Tarkwa Municipal Lands Commission and to identify the challenges in the decentralization of land administration in the Tarkwa Municipality. The semi-structured questionnaires provided relatively straight forward information to analyze. An interview guide provides an opportunity to probe for more information in relation to the topic of study to collect qualitative data (Njagi, 2016).

### **3.7.1 Primary Data**

Primary data was collected from respondents via semi-structured questionnaires. They were developed to provide relevant insights that gave a clear direction in helping meet the research objectives.

### **3.7.2 Secondary Data**

Secondary data used for this study was gathered from numerous sources including relevant previous research conducted, Journals, scientific articles, unpublished thesis and other sources on internet such as annual report, forums etc.

## **3.8 Data Processing and Analysis**

The data collected for this study was sorted, edited, coded and analyzed to ensure that errors and points of contradiction are eliminated. The objective of coding was to categorize the responses to different questions into meaningful constructs in order to bring out their relevance. Quantitative data for each research question was tabulated and

the purpose was to present a clear a picture of how the data looked like and assisted the researcher in identifying the trends. This was realized by ensuring that the data was accurately entered with scores of high or low and how many in each category, frequency and percent distribution constructed. This was achieved with the help of the Statistical Package and Service Solutions (SPSS) version 23.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

Results and discussion provides an overview of the key findings that were found out during the study. In this regard, this chapter presents the findings in consonant with the objectives of the study. Results presented are the reasons responsible for the establishment of the Tarkwa Municipal Lands Commission, the structure and mode of operation of the Tarkwa Municipal Land Commission office, the views of land owners within Tarkwa Municipality on their knowledge of the existence of Tarkwa Municipal Lands Commission and the extent to which they can initiate and complete a service application at the Tarkwa Municipal Lands Commission and identification of the challenges associated with the decentralization of land administration.

#### **4.2 Objective 1: to identify the reasons responsible for the establishment of the Tarkwa Municipal Lands Commission.**

Before staff of Lands Commission are posted to the Tarkwa Municipal office they are oriented about their duties as well as the reasons behind the establishment of the office in their preliminary trainings. At the end of gathering data the following were the reasons given by the key staff of the Western Regional Lands Commission for the establishment of the Tarkwa Municipal Office:

1. Making available the services of the Lands Commission especially PVLMD closer to the doorstep of the clients in the Tarkwa Municipality and its environs.
2. Regularization of encroached state lands.

3. Redeem the image of the Land Commission (LC) in and around the Tarkwa Municipality
4. Generation of revenue in that area
5. Simplify the registration of land and other documents in the area
6. Reduction of land litigation to the barest minimal in the area
7. Reduce the stress involved in the registration of land documents in the area

The responses given by the staff were in line with the core mandate of the Lands Commission. It can also be deduced that, the objectives for setting up the Tarkwa office was not different from the role of the Lands Commission meaning the Tarkwa office is just like a replica of the regional office at Sekondi and is mandated to do virtually everything.

#### **4.3 Objective 2: to identify the structure and mode of operation of the Tarkwa Municipal Land Commission Office.**

The structure and operation of Tarkwa municipality Land Commission (Figure 1) consist of three divisions namely Public & Vested land management division, land valuation division and survey and mapping division.

##### **1. Public & Vested Land Management Division (PVLMD)**

This division facilitates the acquisition of government land on behalf of the state and subsequently sees to the management thereof (The Lands Commission Act, 2008, Act 767). When it comes to management of government land, the division is mandated to ward off encroachments of government lands, prepare and distribute rent demand notes to occupant or lessees of government lands so as to generate revenue for the State. An additional role performed by this division is to see to the registration of instruments (as

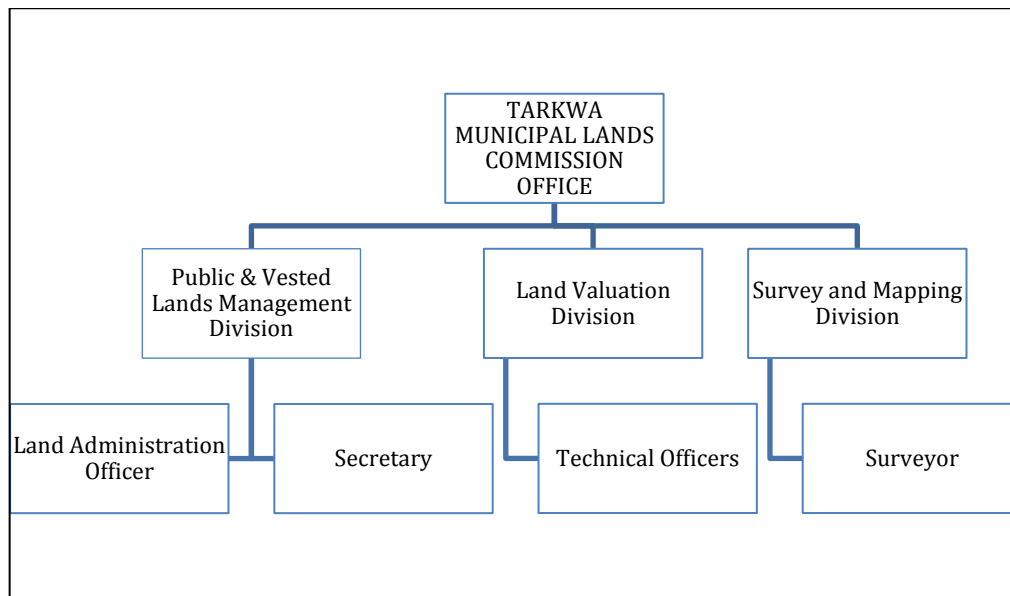
the Western Region has not yet been declared a Title Registration Area and therefore a Land Registration Division has not yet been set up) and dissemination of information regarding every parcel of land in the Western Region. Currently, this division is represented by one (1) Land Administration Officer (who is currently not stationed there) and a secretary who assists him in clerical duties.

## 2. Land Valuation Division (LVD)

This division is represented by four (4) Technical Officers who are responsible mainly for rating valuation works.

## 3. Survey and Mapping Division (SMD)

This division is made up of a Surveyor who is responsible for the preparation of cadastres subject to the approval of the Regional Surveyor.



**Figure 4.1: Structure of the Tarkwa Municipal Lands Commission Office**

#### **4.4 Objective 3: to seek the views of land owners in Tarkwa Municipality on the extent to which they can initiate and complete a service application at the Tarkwa Municipal Lands Commission**

##### **4.4.1 Knowledge of the existence of the Tarkwa Office**

Creating awareness about the existence of the Tarkwa office was very paramount to the smooth running and survival of the office in the locality. From the responses of the staff members, the various means the office used in reaching out to the public included; interaction with the chiefs at durbars, radio advertisements and door to door campaigns. The frequency with which these activities were organized to sensitize the local people according to the staff respondents was low even though the interactions between the chiefs and the office were high. This information was confirmed from the clients who disclosed how they got to know of the presence of the office in the locality. Table 1 summarizes the responses given by the clients, which also indicates that, the respondents

heard it from more than one source. According to Table 1, out of the 40 respondents, 42.5% of them responded they heard about the office from the local chiefs, 22.5% of them heard of the office from the Town and Country Planning Department, 15% from family and friends, 12.5% from radio and the remaining 7.5% respondents from other sources. It can also be deduced from the responses that, the respondents had adequate knowledge about the existence office. However, they did not know particularly what the office does because only the public education (radio advertisement & talk show) was low.

**Table 4.1: Knowledge of the Existence of the Tarkwa Municipal Lands Commission Office**

<b>Source of Knowledge</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Town and Country Planning Department	9	22.5
Local chiefs	17	42.5
Radio	5	12.5
Family and friends	6	15
Other sources	3	7.5
Total	40	100

Source: Field Data, 2018.

#### **4.4.2 View point of land owners/users about the existence of Tarkwa Municipal**

##### **Lands Commission Office**

Data available in Table 2 shows that the entirety of respondents (100%) indicated that there is a representative of Lands Commission in the community. None of the respondents (0%) indicated that their views on land matters have been sorted before. Out of the 40 respondents, 57.5% of them affirmed that they had personally met with a

representative of Lands Commission within the Municipality in the last 12 months, whereas the remaining 42.5% indicated that they have not met with any Lands Commission representative.

**Table 4.2: View point of land owners/users on the existence of Tarkwa Municipal Lands Commission.**

<b>View point land owner/users</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Is there a lands commission representative for this community?	Yes	40	100
	No	0	0
	Total	40	100
Has anyone asked of your views in land matters	Yes	0	0
	No	40	100
	Total	40	100
In the last 12 months, have you met the member of lands commission representative of this community personally	Yes	23	57.5
	No	17	42.5
	Total	40	100

Source: Field Data, 2018.

#### **4.4.3 View point of land owners or users about the extent to which they can initiate and complete a service application at the Tarkwa Municipal Lands Commission.**

Out of the 40 respondents, 23 representing 57.5% (Table 3) indicated that official searches, application for certified true copies and application for P.V.L.M.D plotting and land registration could not be initiated at the Tarkwa Lands Commission since they were directed to submit those applications at the Client Service Access Unit at Sekondi themselves or through their agents. More so, 9 out of the 23 respondent representing 39.1% (Table 3) indicated that they owned state lands but any time they wanted to pay



their ground rent, they had to travel from Tarkwa and its environs to the P.V.L.M.D at Sekondi to do so since they often met the absence of the Officer in charge of P.V.L.M.D at Tarkwa.

These results confirm the fact that land administration has not been fully brought closer to the doorstep of the people of Tarkwa and its environs as those within Tarkwa Municipality seeking the services of the Lands Commission would have to travel to Sekondi Office for the same purpose. It also goes to say that revenues from the collection of ground rent would not be appreciable because only those who can afford to travel the distance to Sekondi to pay their ground rent would do so and as a result, the State would be losing revenue due her.

**Table 4.3: View point of land owners or users about the initiate and complete a service application at the Tarkwa Municipal Lands Commission.**

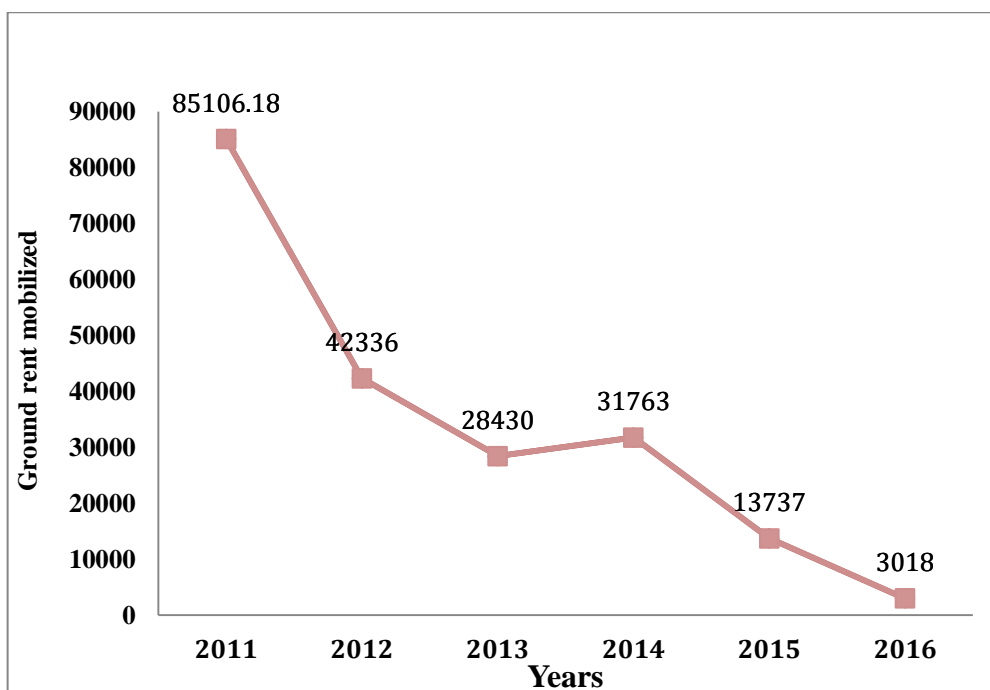
	<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Official searches and Land registration is initiated at Tarkwa lands commission office	Yes	17	42.5
	No	23	57.5
	Total	40	100
Paying of ground rent at regional office	Yes	9	39.1
	No	14	60.9
	Total	23	100

Source: Field Data ,2018.

#### **4.4.4 Revenue mobilization at the Tarkwa (PVLMD) Office**

As earlier indicated, Tarkwa has the second largest concentration of government lands after Sekondi–Takoradi metropolis and one would reasonably expect that revenues accruing from this Municipality would be appreciable. This was not the case as ready data from the Tarkwa rent ledgers suggested decreasing mobilized ground rent from the years 2011 to 2016 as depicted in Figure 2. It can be deduced from this figure that; revenue in terms of ground rent has been falling over the years. Beginning the year 2011, the office mobilized Eighty-Five Thousand, One Hundred and Six Ghana Cedis and Eighteen pesewas (GH¢85,106.18) but fell substantially over the subsequent years to record as low as Three Thousand and Eighteen Ghana Cedis (GH¢3,018.00) in 2016. It is therefore worth mentioning that the revenue generated in 2016 was the ground rent received from only two (2) lessees.

Currently, since there is no residential accommodation for the Land Administration Officer, he now operates from Sekondi Office. This has the potential of denying lessees the convenience to deal with the Municipal Office since he or she would have to travel all the way to Sekondi just to pay ground rent. Secondly, effective revenue mobilization requires frequent door to door delivery of rent demand notes to owners of State lands but due to the unavailability of an official vehicle for the Land Administration Officer to work with, this function is rarely performed. This suggests that the office has the potential of increasing the revenue base of the Lands Commission but for the identified weaknesses, it is not functioning as expected.



**Figure 4.2: Revenue Mobilized by the Office of the PVLMD in Tarkwa from 2011 to 2016**

Source: Lands Commission (Tarkwa) Rent Ledger Books

#### **4.5 Objective 4: to identify the challenges associated with the Decentralization of Land Administration using the case of Tarkwa Municipality.**

##### **4.5.1 Land Administration Officer's view point**

At the end of the study the following challenges to the decentralization of land administration of in the Tarkwa Municipality were outlined by the Land Administration officer;

That there is no Client Service Access Unit and neither is there a records unit (to house records sheets, jackets and folders) at the office with accompanying staff to facilitate service delivery when people walk into the office to patronize a service. This defeats the

objective of bringing land administration closer to the doorstep of those in Tarkwa and its environs.

When it comes to management of government land, the PVLMD is supposed to ward off encroaches of government lands, prepare and distribute rent demand notes to occupant or lessees of government lands so as to generate revenue for the State. This has become a daunting task over the past years, since the officer is currently not in possession of an official vehicle and residential accommodation, owing to inadequate logistics. Currently there is only one official vehicle for the entire PVLMD, which vehicle is used at the regional level and sometimes making allocations for alternative means of transport become impossible due to inadequate budgetary allocations. Revenue therefore emanating from the Tarkwa office over the past years have not been encouraging, considering the chunk of state lands of Tarkwa.

The study also revealed that, availability of funds for the smooth running of the office was a great challenge facing the office. Many a times, the officer-in-charge had to fund repair works and other petty cash out of his personal money.

#### **4.5.2 Land owners or users view point**

At the end of the study the following challenges to the decentralization of land administration of in the Tarkwa Municipality were outlined by land owners/users.

- Absentism of Lands Commission workers. There was nobody at the office most of the time when clients needed to make enquiries.
- Stressful procedure in processing of land documents. Land documents of Clients were not processed at the Tarkwa Municipal office, which made it difficult for follow ups.

- According to the respondents there were cases of missing documents that took a long time before they were found and some up till now have not been found.
- Difficulty in getting information on the status of documents submitted for registration.

**Table 3.4: Challenges associated with the decentralization of land administration**

<b>Land Administration officer's view point</b>			
	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of Client Service Access & Records Unit	Yes	100	100
	No	0	0
	Total	100	100
Inadequate logistics	Yes	100	100
	No	0	0
	Total	100	100
Non availability of funds	Yes	100	100
	No	0	0
	Total	100	100
<b>Land owners/users view point</b>			
	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Absentism of Lands Commission workers	Yes	100	100
	No	0	0
	Total	100	100
Stressful procedure in processing of land documents	Yes	100	100
	No	0	0
	Total	100	100

Source: Field Data, 2018.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECCOMENDATION**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The conclusion and recommendation chapter present a summary of the key findings with respect to the various objectives of the study.

#### **5.2 Conclusion**

The objective of the study was to evaluate the decentralization of land administration in the Tarkwa Municipality, in order to achieve the following specific objectives were set out, to identify the reasons responsible for the establishment of the Tarkwa Municipal Lands Commission Office, to identify the structure and mode of operation of the Tarkwa Municipal land commission office, to seek the view of Land owners and users on decentralization of land administration in the Tarkwa Municipality and to identify the challenges associated with the decentralization of land administration.

The researcher adopted case study research design which is subjective in nature, this which offered the researcher the opportunity to carefully communicate with and captured the experience of the interviewed participants for onward discussion in this research. In reference to the specific objectives the following conclusions were drawn.

1. The reasons the respondents gave for the establishment of the Tarkwa municipal office was in line with the reasons recorded for the establishment of the office which includes the following;

- a. Making available the services of the PVLMD closer to the doorstep of the clients in the Tarkwa Municipality and its environs.

- b. Regularization of encroached state lands.
- c. Redeem the image of the Land Commission (LC) in and around the Tarkwa Municipality
- d. Generation of revenue in that area
- e. Simplify the registration of land and other documents in the area
- f. Reduction of land litigation to the barest minimal in the area
- g. Reduce the stress involved in the registration of land documents in the area

2. The Tarkwa municipal Land Commission consist of three (3) divisions namely Public & Vested Land Management Division, Land Valuation Division and Survey and Mapping Division. PVLMD is made up of a land administrative officer and a secretary. The division functions by facilitating the acquisition and management of government land on behalf of the State. The LVD is made of four (4) technical officers who are responsible mainly for rating valuation works. SMD is made up of a surveyor who is responsible for the preparation of cadastres subject to the approval of the regional surveyor.

3. Most of land owners/users got to know about the existence of the Tarkwa office through local chiefs, Town and Country Planning Department, family, friends and radio. The entirety of respondents indicated that there is a representative of Lands Commission in the community, however none of the respondents indicated that their views on land matters have been sorted before. Respondents indicated that official searches, application for certified true copies and application for P.V.L.M.D plotting and land registration could not be initiated at the Tarkwa Lands Commission since they were directed to submit those applications at the Client Service Access Unit at the Regional Office. It was apparent that revenue generation had decreased from 2011 to 2016.

4. Challenges of decentralization of land administration in the Tarkwa municipality included but not limited to the following;

- There was only one officer who was manning the activities of the office in Tarkwa
- Documents were only collected at the PVLMD office for onward submission at the regional office in Sekondi-Takoradi which does not support the Lands Commission's objective of reducing face to face interaction with back officers with respect to land registration and conducting official searches.
- The office in Tarkwa since its establishment does not have a records section to make references hence difficult to give information on parcels of land within and around the municipality.
- Little or no funds to run the office
- Lack of logistics such as computers, printers, scanners, sheets etc to run the office.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

1. The study focused on the Tarkwa Municipal office, additional research should be carried out to include the Bibiani Lands Commission office.
2. The study focused on investigating the extent to which land administration has been decentralized in Tarkwa Municipality with specific emphasis on the reasons responsible for the establishment of the Tarkwa Municipal Lands Commission Office, identifying the structure and mode of operation of the Tarkwa Municipal land commission office, seeking the view of Land owners and users on decentralization of land administration in the Tarkwa Municipality and the extent to which they can initiate and complete a service



application at Tarkwa Office as well as identifying the challenges associated with decentralizing land administration in Tarkwa. However due to time constraints, the researcher could not capture suggestions from other stakeholders on how to improve the decentralization of land administration. Also, due to the same reason, the researcher considered revenue generated by the Municipal Office for the periods 2011 to 2016 only. Further works should be carried out to include suggestions from other stakeholders apart from land officers and land owners/users on how to improve the decentralization of land administration.

3. Nevertheless, the researcher recommends that the Tarkwa Municipal Office is adequately resourced to achieve the aim for which it was set up so as to further reduce the turn-around time for doing business with the Lands Commission and also increase revenue mobilization. Some of the suggested measures measures that could be considered are:

- a. Recruiting more Land Administration Officers to man the Tarkwa Office.
- b. Advocating for a percentage of the revenue generated by the Western Regional Lands Commission (Sekondi) to be retained at the region to aid in adequately resourcing the Tarkwa Office to perform as it ought.
- c. Making timely and adequate budgetary allocations to the office in the meantime.
- d. Providing adequate logistics to ensure the smooth running of the office.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX A: SEMI-STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LAND OFFICERS**

**KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY,  
KUMASI**

#### **DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING TECHNOLOGY**

Research topic: Decentralization of Land Administration in Western Region: The Case  
of Tarkwa Municipality

#### **Respondent profile**

1. Sex of respondent

a. Male

b. Female

2. Age (in years) .....

3. Marital status

a. Single

b. Married

c. Divorced

d. Widowed

4. level of formal education

a. Never went to school

b. Technical and vocational

c. Tertiary education

d. Other please specify .....

5. Are you a member of this community?

a. Yes

b. No

**What are the reasons responsible for the establishment of the Tarkwa Municipal Lands Commission?**

6. ....  
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**To identify the structure and mode of operation of the Tarkwa District offices.**

7. What position do you occupy?

a. Land Administration Officer

b. Secretary

c. Technical Officer

d. Cadastre Officer

8. What are your basic tasks in matters of land administration?

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9. What are your obligations under the law in matters of land administration?

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10. What statutory powers do you have in land administration?

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11. Are you satisfied with the powers you have in terms of your tasks?

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12. How does your institution arrive at its decisions in matters of land administration?

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13. Do you report to any authority, if so which authority?

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14. What role if any, do local communities play in your decision making processes?

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15. Are you accountable in any way to local communities in the performance of your work?

a. Yes

b. No

if yes how is this done?

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Kindly share your views on the challenges in the decentralization of land administration  
in the Tarkwa Municipality

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**APPENDIX B: SEMI-STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LAND  
OWNERS/USERS**

**KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY,  
KUMASI**

**DEPARTMENT OF CONSTRUCTION TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT**

Research topic: Decentralization of Land Administration in Western Region: The Case  
of Tarkwa Municipality

**SEMI-STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Respondent profile**

1. Sex of respondent

- a. Male
- b. Female

2. Age (in years) .....

3. Marital status

- a. Single
- b. Married
- c. Divorced
- d. Widowed

4. level of formal education

- a. Never went to school
- b. Technical and vocational
- c. Tertiary education
- d. Other please specify .....

5. Are you a member of this community?

a. Yes

b. No

**View point of Land owners and users on decentralization of land administration**

6. Do you have any interest in land

Yes

No

7. If yes, what is the nature of the interest?

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8. How did you acquire the interest in land?

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9. What Use(s) do you put your land?

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10. Is there a lands commission representative for this community?

a. Yes

b. No

11. How did you get to know about lands commission office at Tarkwa.

- a. Local chiefs
- b. Town and Country Planning Department
- c. Family and friends
- d. Radio
- d. Other sources

12. Has anyone asked of your views in land matters

- a. Yes
- b. No

13. If yes, what were the issues on which you were asked?

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14. Do you know whether your views were considered in arriving at decisions?

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15. In the last 12 months, have you met the member of lands commission representative of this community personally

- a. Yes [ ]
- b. No [ ]
- c. Not sure [ ]



**Challenges in the decentralization of land administration in the Tarkwa**

**Municipality.**

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17. Have you registered your land at the Lands Commission?

a. Yes [ ]

b. No [ ]

18. If yes, where did you submit your documents for registration?

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19. Have you ever conducted an official search on your land?

a. Yes [ ]

b. No [ ]

20. If yes, where did you submit the search application?

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21. Have u applied for any other land service at the Tarkwa Lands Commission apart from the one in (19) above?

a. Yes [ ]

b. No [ ]

22. If yes, where did you submit the application in (21) above?

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23. Do you pay your ground rent?

a. Yes [ ]

b. No [ ]

24. If yes, where are such payments made?

a. With respect to State Lands .....

b. With respect to Stool Lands .....

c. With Respect to Family Lands .....

25. If No, why?

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