

**AN APPRAISAL OF THE CAPACITY OF THE ASANTE AKIM SOUTH
DISTRICT ASSEMBLY IN MANAGING
PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

By

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"It is hard enough to design public policies and programmes that look good on paper. It is harder still to formulate them in words and slogans that resonate pleasingly in the ears of political leaders and the constituencies to which they are responsive. And it is excruciatingly hard to implement them in a way that pleases anyone at all, including the supposed beneficiaries or clients" (Eugene Bardach, cited in Goel 2003).

The above quotation illustrates and succinctly portrays the intricacies involved in the formulation and implementation of policies and by extension development plans. As Goel (2003) has remarked, it is usually at the implementation level that difficulties creep in resulting into lower output. Ghana's experience with development plans dates back to the Guggisberg's rule in the colonial era when the Ten Year Development Plan was prepared as a blueprint for accelerated national development. Subsequently, development plans have virtually become synonymous with every regime. However, the level of socio-economic transformation attained so far seems incongruous in a nation which has had many development plans. The problem has always been the inability to fully implement the plans at the national level in a centralised administrative structure.

The dawn of decentralisation and local government system was thus expected to enhance the implementation of developments plans because of the relatively smaller nature of the administrative units (districts) and their propinquity to the grassroots. As has emerged, however, plan implementation at the district level is also saddled with a number of challenges as plans are rarely implemented in full. Key among these challenges is the capacity of the District Assemblies (DAs). The foregoing thus spurred this study to appraise the capacity of the Asante Akim South District Assembly (AASDA) in managing the implementation of its Medium Term Development Plans (MTDPs). On the whole, the goal of the study was to identify hindrances to plan implementation pervasive in the AASDA and propose suitable recommendations.

The study used the case study approach to appraise the capacity of the AASDA in six main areas, namely: human, logistics and equipment, financial resources, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) capacity, collaboration with decentralised departments and leadership. Summarised overleaf are some of the major findings from the study:

- Inadequate Staff Strength, Competencies and Qualifications
- Inadequate Logistics and Equipment, and Poor Maintenance Culture

- Inadequacy, Over-dependence on DACF and Instability in Revenue
- Poorly Resourced and Non-Functional District Sub-Structures

In response to the findings from the study, recommendations were made. Some of the recommendations are, human resource development, re-tooling logistics and equipment capacity of AASDA, improving resources mobilisation capacity, operationalise District Sub-Structures (Town/Area Councils), strengthening DPCU and monitoring and evaluation activities, and enhancing coordination between DA and decentralised departments. It is the hope and expectation that the holistic implementation of the recommendations made would improve the existing capacity of the AASDA to effectively manage the implementation of its MTDPs.

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List of Abbreviations

AANDA	Asante Akim North District Assembly
AASDA	Asante Akim South District Assembly
ACCA	Association of Chartered Certified Accountants
APC	Annual Programming Chart
APE	Annual Programming Exercise
APF	Annual Phasing Form
CBOs	Community Based Organisations
CPA	Certificate in Public Administration
CUM	Certificate in Urban Management
CV	Coefficient of Variation
CWSA	Community Water and Sanitation Agency
DACF	District Assemblies Common Fund
DAs	District Assemblies
DBA	District Budget Analyst
DCD	District Coordinating Director
DCE	District Chief Executive
DFO	District Finance Officer
DPA	Diploma in Public Administration
DPCU	District Planning Coordinating Unit
DPO	District Planning Officer
GETFUND	Ghana Education Trust Fund
GIMPA	Ghana Institute Management and Public Administration
GIS	Geographic Information System
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
HND	Higher National Diploma
IGF	Internally Generated Funds
IMS	Implementation Management System
LI	Legislative Instrument
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MBA	Masters in Business Administration

MDAs	Ministries Departments and Agencies
MIS	Management Information System
MLGE&RD	Ministry of Local Government Environment and Rural Development
MLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
MMM	Monthly Management Meetings
MMR	Monthly Management Report
MTDP	Medium Term Development Plan
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
OCAT	Organisational Capacity Assessment Tool
ORS	Operation Room System
PGD	Post Graduate Diploma
PIM	Programming and Implementation Management
RCC	Regional Coordinating Council
T&CP	Town and Country Planning
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VIP	Village Infrastructure Project
MSLC	Middle School Leaving Certificate
SSCE	Senior Secondary Certificate Examination

1. MANAGING PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL: CAPACITY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

1.0 Background to the Research

It is a common knowledge that many of the development plans prepared as blueprints for accelerated development in most developing countries such as Ghana have not been entirely successful in achieving the expected and desired impacts on society. The incidence of poverty, diseases, squalour and many other development challenges which the plans were supposed to address are still widespread. Also quite prevalent are spatial inequalities in the level of development, inadequate and limited access to social amenities such as potable water, education, health care to mention but a few challenges. The North-South divide in Ghana thus represents the main dimension of spatial inequality (Songsore, as cited in Vanderpuye-Orgle, 2002). There is also a rural-urban divide which has been attributed to the strategy of locating social services in the administrative centres for the benefit of the elite (Dickson, as cited in Vanderpuye-Orgle, 2002). Thus in spite of the efforts and resources that went into the preparation of development plans, spatial inequalities still persist.

The reality is that many of the plans ended up on the shelves. It is for the purpose of facilitating the implementation of plans, particularly at the local level, that the government by PNDC Law 207 of 1988 embraced decentralisation and the District Assembly's (DAs) concept as a means of ensuring decentralised planning at the grassroots. However, as the implementation agency, the DAs can effectively perform this onerous responsibility only if they possess the requisite capacity to implement their own plans. It is in the light of this that this study seeks to take a critical inquiry into the capacity of the Asante Akim South District Assembly (AASDA) in managing the implementation of its development plans.

Development plans in general are paper representations of clear, precise and purposeful goals and objectives of what individuals, organisations, local administrative authorities and countries as a whole want to achieve at stipulated future dates. Plans are therefore structured written documents of development proposals and policies for an area or entity over a time with the overall aim of bringing about

change. As tools for development, plans give focus, directions, sense of imagination and vision to an entity. The universal acceptance of the capabilities of development plans as instruments for socio-economic development is not in dispute. As Waterson wrote, plans have become so popular that today the national plans appear to have joined the national anthem and the national flag as a symbol of sovereignty and modernity (Waterson cited by Conyers and Hills, 1984). Plans have thus become crucial and unavoidable constituents in human endeavours, particularly in development planning and management at the local level.

It is against this background that almost all successive Ghana governments irrespective of their ideological inclinations (socialist or capitalist) have found development plans valuable tools at least at certain times during their reign. The utility of development plans also find expression in their usefulness as documents for monitoring and also offering measures for objective and independent assessment of success, or the lack of it, at any point in the course of, and, or at the end of implementation. Indeed development plans have become so crucial nowadays that the release of funds from the central government to the DAs is contingent upon the preparation of plans. The lack of plans may lead to untimely changes in directions, duplication of efforts, and inconsistencies. Hence without plans, actions become merely random activity, producing nothing but chaos (Goetz cited by Goel, 2003).

Reminiscent of many developing countries, Ghana as well as Ministries, Departments, Agencies (MDAs) within it, have a long history of planning. However, there is a mismatch between the status of development and depth of planning experience. The obvious question then is what has become of these numerous development plans? As Conyers and Hills (1984) have remarked, if a plan or project does not result in the changes necessary to achieve the desired goals and objectives then it is, in effect, meaningless. Denhardt and Grubbs (2003) are also of the view that without implementation, plans remain sterile, and thus they advocate a close connection between planning and execution.

Needless to state, the implementation of development plans is quite an arduous task. It is against this background that Waterson informs us that the failure to implement policies and the required actions in plans, programmes or projects is widely recognised to be one, if not the major, weakness of contemporary planning in Third

World Countries (Waterson, as cited in Conyers and Hills 1984). Conyers and Hills (1984) also remarks that, in spite of the significant changes and improvements in planning techniques used for policy formulation and appraisal of plans and projects, implementation still remains a major problem.

A number of factors affect plan implementation of which the existing capacities of the implementing agencies is paramount. However, serious under funding of programmes has been identified as a barrier to successful implementation (Rosenbloom, 1998). Nonetheless, demonstrable, managerial and organisational efficiency have been identified as great impetus to the successful implementation of plans. In the words of Waterson (cited in Conyers and Hills, 1984), the successful implementation of a plan is largely a matter of proper organisation and administration. This viewpoint is also supported by Kinsey (1987), who informs us that even a poorly designed plan has a good chance of success in the hands of skilful managers. But above all capacity is indispensable, and as King and Saemann (1996) have mentioned, capacity is very crucial to successful project implementation. They contend that, well-planned and designed projects failed during implementation not as result of lack of funding, but due to lack of institutional capacity.

It is against this background that this study aims at appraising the existing capacity of the Asante Akyem South District Assembly (AASDA) in managing the implementation of its development plans. This is to be followed by propositions on the ways to improve upon the capacity of the Assembly to manage the implementation of its development plans.

1.1 Problem Statement

Historically, Ghana has had a good number of Development Plans in her quest to transform the country economically and socially into a better living place for its citizens. This dates back to the period of the colonial administration when modern development planning emerged. Indeed, Ghana is considered to be one of the pace-setters in development planning in the 1920s. Notable among the earlier Development Plans is the Ten Year Development Plan under the rule of Governor Sir Frederick Gordon Guggisberg from 1920-1930. Subsequently, a number of development plans have been produced with every regime change.

However, Ghana has an unimpressive record regarding the successful and full implementation of its development plans. Only a few of such development plans travelled through their planned periods. Majority of them had their life span truncated, mostly through regime changes, sometimes of a violence nature. Example is the Seven-Year Development Plan (1963-1970) whose implementation was abandoned after the coup of 1966. Again, countless numbers of programmes and projects have also remained unattended to as in the case of the Bui Hydro-electric Dam. On the sod-cutting for the construction of the Bui Dam Project, Benjamin (2007) remarked, 'this newly packaged project is a revival of an Nkrumah idea that got scrapped during his 1966 overthrow'. As a consequence, "the phrase this project or programme is in the pipeline or on the drawing board" has become a cliché among politicians lending credence to the problem of plan implementation in the country.

Another issue of grave concern and a bane of plan implementation in Ghana is programmes or projects which get started but are abandoned before completion. There are countless numbers of such uncompleted projects scattered across the length and breadth of the nation. Educational infrastructure, health facilities, agriculture and other economic infrastructure into which considerable sums of money, in most cases borrowed money have been sunk, remain standstill and at the mercy of the weather. The state of dilapidation and the degree of disrepair of some of these uncompleted infrastructure is inconceivable and attest to the problem of plan implementation management. This also highlights the lack of progression between plans and actions. Goals and objectives are rarely achieved and targets are mostly missed.

In spite of the good intentions Ghana's carefully-wrought development dossiers sought to bring to the living standards of the people, these documents have become "tiger papers" gathering dust on the shelves, while needless efforts are always spent on re-inventing the wheel at great cost. The issue of plan implementation is thus national in outlook. With the introduction of a decentralised planning system and the district Assembly concept, the issues associated with the implementation of development plans that hitherto pertained at the national and sector ministries also recur at the district level and the AASDA is no exception.

Plan implementation in the AASDA is no different from the situation that prevailed at the national level. Starting and completion dates for the implementation of programmes and projects in MTDPs usually do not proceed according to planned timescales. Contractors are unable to complete contracts on time. Either they do not have a work plan for the execution of projects, or if they do, they simply do not feel compelled to adhere to their own work schedules. As a result of these delays associated with the implementation of projects and programmes, the actual and final cost of projects and programmes always become much higher than the budgeted cost due to cost overruns.

These unexpected costs therefore mean that additional funding will have to be sourced for in order to be able to complete the same projects or programmes in the plan, thus making less funds available to other equally pressing issues. Apart from the delays, there are also persistent public complaints about the quality of civil works undertaken by some contractors, a phenomenon that has come to be known as 'shoddy works'. Ultimately, the total budget for the entire plan is only able to finance fewer projects and programmes than initially planned.

Another common phenomena associated with the implementation of development plans at the DA is the implementation of projects and programmes that are outside the plan for political expediency. This is done at the expense of the provisions in the plan. As a result of this, significant numbers of projects and programmes in the MTDP never get implemented within the planned period or at all and continue to remain in the plans. Yet significant but unbudgeted resources are expended on 'political projects'.

The last but not the least among the encumbrances to the implementation of development plans at the DAs is high staff turnover. The DAs easily lose its young and enterprising staff with the required competence, expertise and exuberance to other organisations who offer relatively better and attractive incentive packages. Hence staff strength, quality and experience, which are very critical to the DA's operations, are affected. The net effect of the above is that the capacity of the DAs to implement plans is undermined. It is against this background that finding practical answers to the following questions has become imperative:

- Why has the implementation of development plans at the DAs not been in accordance with what was planned?
- What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the AASDA in plan implementation?
- Is the existing capacity of the AASDA for managing plan implementation adequate?
- How can the capacity of the AASDA in plan implementation management be improved?

1.2 General and Operational Objectives of the Research

The general objective of the study is to employ appropriate scientific research methods and techniques to appraise the existing capacity of the AASDA, and to make recommendations to improve the capacity of the DA, that will ensure the speedy, efficient and timely implementation of development plans. In pursuance of the stated general objective, the study seeks to achieve the following specific objectives:

- To review the past-MTDP (2002-2005) of the ASSDA by analysing and assessing the extent to which projects and programmes therein were implemented;
- To assess the existing capacity of the AASDA for managing plan implementation;
- To examine factors which promote or impede the capacity of the AASDA to implement development plans,
- To suggest strategies for improving capacity for managing plan implementation in the AASDA.

1.3 Justification for the Research

District Assemblies are by law the highest planning authority at the local level with deliberative, legislative and executive functions. However, as Crawford (2004) has observed the existing local government structures do not have the requisite capacity to undertake new and expanded responsibilities. Indeed, it has been noted that public confidence in the DAs is waning. This is empirically supported in a survey by Afro Barometer- an NGO in 1999. In the study, only fifty-six percent of the respondents

were satisfied with the performance of local government officials compared with sixty-five percent who had confidence in the traditional chiefs (Bratton et al. as cited in Crawford, 2004). In a case study involving three districts, (Aryce, as cited in Crawford, 2004) described DA's capacity for financial management as "seriously inadequate". Commenting on the capacity of DAs, Korkor and Kroes (2000) wrote that "the quality of mix as well as levels of staff in the professional and technical grades available to the DAs is generally inadequate". They further state that while there are shortages in some districts others do not have the requisite professional staff such as development planners, and budget and accounting officers at post.

The inadequacy of requisite capacity has long been cited as one of the main reasons for the reluctance of the central government to fully transfer power, financial and other responsibilities to the DAs. However, there is another school of thought which debunks this stance taken by the government and argues that the question of local government capacity can be related to a "chicken and egg" situation (Conyers cited by Crawford, 2004), implying that either the capacities of DAs is first improved or vice versa. Viewed from any angle, the authority of DAs as an implementing agency is most likely to suffer public recognition; respect and cooperation unless attention is given to enhance DAs capacity to deliver.

In effect, the discharge of their statutory mandate largely depends on the capacity to implement policies, programmes and deliver public services. Evidence from the foregoing has clearly demonstrated that DAs nationwide have capacity problems. It is for this reason that there is the need to undertake this research using the AASDA as a case study. The study is therefore justified on the grounds that:

- ❖ There have been growing concerns about the capacity of DAs as already noted. Hence this study will offer an excellent opportunity to validate this assertion using the AASDA as a case, and propose a set of interventions that will improve upon the capacity situation of DA.
- ❖ Recommendations from the findings of the study could assist management to streamline the administrative structures at the local level to enhance swift and successful management of plan implementation.

- ❖ Similarly, the outcome of the study and the recommendations thereof are expected to serve as useful signals for Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Not-For-Profit-Organisations, and other Development Agencies whose primary focus and interests are in the area of capacity development. The findings from the study will thus enable potential development agencies to identify key area (s) within the AASDA where technical, logistics and any diverse form of assistance are mostly needed. Based on the outcome from the study, assistance may be extended to the Assembly. Stated differently, findings from the study can be used to develop a winning proposal on capacity development for the AASDA which can be used to solicit help from development agencies.
- ❖ Last but not the least, it is envisioned that findings from the study and the ensuing recommendations will constitute a knowledge base, reference point or framework that can guide and facilitate sustained operational capabilities and competence in the management of plan implementation of a political or local administrative area.

1.4 Scope of the Research

The geographical delineation of the study area was defined to cover the entire stretch of the land area constituting the political and or administrative region of the AASDA as stipulated by the law governing the establishment of DAs. This is provided in section one (1) of the Local Government Act of 1993 (Act 462).

With regard to content, the latitude of the study included a thorough examination of the immediate past MTDP (2002-2005) of the Assembly, and a scan of the existing structures and procedure(s) followed in managing the implementation of the district's development plans. The central line of analysis covered capacity audit of the district's financial, human and physical resources, monitoring and evaluation, extent of collaboration between the DA and decentralised departments, leadership capabilities, as well as capacity of the sub-structures in the district. In each case, focus was laid on the existing, required, backlogs, and the condition of available logistics. That is, whether they were functional or otherwise. The time frame for the appraisal was four years spanning 2002 to 2005. This period was considered

appropriate as four years is enough to conduct an assessment of the extent at which the 2002-2005 Medium Term Plan (MTDP) of the DA was implemented.

1.5 Organisation of the Research Report

The study is organised into five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction and gives a panoramic view of the study. It comprises a concise background to the study, problem statement, objectives, and the justification for the study. Review of available literature is the subject of chapter two. The research approach and methodology adopted in conducting the research is the subject of chapter three. The chapter ends with the identification of variables, respondents, and the design of questionnaires for the field work. Chapter four deals with data analysis, presentation and a discussion of the results. The study finally ends with findings, recommendations and conclusions in chapter five.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

The main limitation of the study is inherent in the weaknesses of the approach adopted in carrying out the study. The case study as an approach to scientific research treats each case as unique and on its own merit. Therefore due to peculiarity and the changing circumstances surrounding each case, it is less appropriate to use conclusions of one case for another. Similarly the indicators used in the appraisal of the capacity of the AASDA did not constitute an exhaustive list of all the variables that influence the capacity of an organisation. They indeed represented only a perspective of the multiplicity of factors influencing capacity. In view of these, the outcome of the study does not lend itself to generalisations as such attempts may amount to reductionism. Nonetheless the approach and processes followed enabled a detailed study to be carried out, and this can be adapted and adopted in different districts.

1.7 Conclusion

As already noted, the expected role of the DAs is central to the realisation of the objectives of the new decentralised planning system. However, the extent and the effectiveness with which these roles are carried out are contingent upon the capacity of the DAs. From the foregoing literature (section 1.3), the topic of capacity of DAs in the country is gaining currency and as a natural sequel, calls for rigorous

investigations to establish and validate the cause (s). This is precisely what the study seeks to achieve hence the appraisal of the capacity of the AASDA. It must however be noted that managing plan implementation and for that matter facilitating overall development of a district, requires the collaborative efforts of the DA and others such as development partners and Community Based Organisations (CBOs). However, the study focussed on the DA since it is the institution that is statutory empowered to oversee the development of the local area.

Having considered the background to the study, objectives and justification for the study, the next chapter will take a critical review of available literature on the subject under consideration. The purpose will be to seek the opinions of other authors on the subject. Among the issues discussed in the next chapter include explanation of key concepts in the study, identify and review of various typologies of capacity assessment methods, history of decentralisation in Ghana and capacity-development planning nexus. The chapter ends with a conceptual framework of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

2. DECENTRALISED PLANNING, LOCAL CAPACITY AND GRASSROOTS DEVELOPMENT: THEORIES AND PRACTICES

2.0 Introduction

It is generally expected that the main concern of every government is to protect and improve the quality of life of the people by providing infrastructure. Making facilities and services available and accessible to the people is therefore regarded as an intrinsic of citizens' right enshrined in the constitutions of most countries. Article 35(3) of the 1992 constitution of the Republic of Ghana buttresses this assertion and unequivocally states, among others that, "the state shall promote just and reasonable access by all citizens to facilities and services in accordance with the law". It can be said to imply that, this constitutional provision seeks to achieve spatial equity, geographic spread and the egalitarian distribution of the benefits of development.

Well-structured administrative systems are often put in place in order to meet the diverse expectations of the people. These structures and systems naturally reinforce the political ideologies and inclinations of the particular regime, serving as a platform for the running of the government machinery. The deployment of sufficient and effective administrative structure that is inclusive and participatory, is thus seen as a necessary condition for the smooth translation of government's policies and programmes into reality enroute to the much cherished improved quality of life.

According to UNDP (1991), giving proper meaning to development means that "development should be development of the people, by the people and for the people". This suggests the creation of appropriate administrative structures that encourage full participation and wilful co-operation of beneficiary communities in decision-making, planning, implementation and management.

The focus of this chapter is therefore to examine the theories and concepts that underpin the topic under discussion. Among some of the issues to be discussed are the meaning and typologies of decentralisation, history of decentralisation in Ghana, methods of capacity assessment and plan implementation management.

2.1 Centralised Administration

The trajectory of development aggressively pursued by many of the past governments before and after the attainment of political independence was characterised by high and over concentration of power and administrative machinery at the national capital. However, the centralised system of governance was unreceptive to the views of the people and also precluded consultations and participation of the ultimate beneficiaries in decision making. This is because the system of administration that existed in the country provided little or no opportunity for local communities to participate in local planning, schemes, decisions and initiative of actions conducive to development at the local level (Owusu Ansah, as cited in Botchie, 1996).

Moreover, most planning activities were lopsided and single-handed by officials who sat in the comfort of their offices making professional guesses about their own perception of community problems, and also their subjective considered opinions of what was right for the communities. According to the NDPC (2000), most of the 1996-2000 district development plans were not implemented due to the theoretical nature of the plans. Also the 1996-2000-plans were mostly based on the desires of the planners, and not what the departments could implement or what the central government, the private sector, and the NGOs were able and prepared to fund (World Bank, 2003). For inexplicable reasons, officials and technocrats appeared to be oblivious to the simple fact that, community needs have both time and spatial dimensions. In other words, different communities have different needs at the same time, and that even the same community has different needs at different times.

The over concentration of political and administrative power at the top and the regional centres created a wide gulf between the urban and the rural areas. Presumably, such a development strategy of conscious concentration of infrastructural development in the urban centres at the expense of the rural majority was couched in slavish and dogmatic attachments to unproven and experimental, but popular theories at the time. A theory in contention here is the Growth Pole Theory with the expectant trickle-down effect. As Corbridge and Jones (n.d) have remarked, the option for governments was always to develop regional growth poles at lagging regions. This explains why Brazil moved its capital from Re de Janeiro to Brasilia. Walter Christaller's Central Place Theory, which argues that certain goods and services could be provided on sustainable basis only by

settlements of a given size or rank order, could also account for the concentration of development at the regional centres.

To some extent, this situation is also partly blamed on the relics of the colonial administrative structures and systems of deliberate exclusion bequeathed to us. As Songsore has argued "dependency and capitalist penetration, which under colonialism shaped the internal structure to fit the needs of the colonial metropolis, continue under neo-colonialism to distort the internal patterns of production, and the spatial organisation of economic and social activity" (Songsore, as cited in Vanderpuyé-Orlé, 2002). The asymmetrical and skewed distribution in infrastructure provision between the urban centres and the rural areas has brought about the present rural-urban dichotomy - a situation often described as the urban bias.

This polarised development has not only resulted in the mass drift of the rural youth to the urban centres in search for non-existing jobs, but also, social vices such as prostitution, armed robbery, congestion, homelessness, teenage pregnancy and exertion of undue pressure on the few amenities have become symptomatic of urbanisation. As Hoselitz (as cited in Corbridge and Jones, n.d) puts it, the urban problems and pathologies (structural unemployment, crime and disease), is a result of neglect of the countryside. Urban bias has thus led to "substantially worse rural than urban outcomes" in most developing countries (Lipton, as cited in Corbridge and Jones, n.d). Lipton argues further that the continuation of urban bias has been ensured by pro-urban and industrial bias of mainstream development theory.

Conversely, the human resources and the economic base of the rural areas have been atrophied due to the exodus of the able bodied young men. Article 36(2) sub-section (d) of the 1992 constitution seeks to correct this imbalance. The relevant section reads as follows:

"The object of the government is undertaking even and balanced development of all regions and every part of each region of Ghana, and, in particular improving the conditions of life in the rural areas, and generally, redressing any imbalance in development between the rural areas and the urban areas."

Clearly the centralised administrative system that existed failed to promote grassroots participation. Instead it brought apathy, dwindled communal spirit, lost of sense of belongingness and above all poor maintenance culture. The problems associated with

undue centralisation, brought about a spontaneous response to a new paradigm of development strategy and administrative structure – decentralisation.

2.2 Genesis of Interest in Decentralisation

The increasing preference for decentralisation is generally believed to be the outcome of the failure of the central administration (Wunsch and Olowu 1995, in Ribot, 2002), pressure and conditionalities as part of the structural adjustment and other programmes imposed from outside (World Bank, 2000) or an emulation of reforms in other developing countries. It also emanates from the attributes of the concept of being open to discussion, participation and bringing governance much closer to the people. In this vein, article 35(d) of the 1992 constitution sought to make democracy a reality by decentralising the administrative and financial machinery of government to regions and districts. This is intended inevitably to afford the people in the local areas the opportunity to also participate in decision-making that affects their communities.

The government decision to decentralise was therefore inspired by the philosophy of 'power to the people' (Asante and Ayee, n.d). Several terminologies have evolved in the domain of development studies apparently reinforcing and giving practical meaning to the constitutional provision of decentralisation. Amongst the rhetoric that has gained currency are; 'bottom-up' planning, involvement at the grassroots and planning from below (Stohr 1981, as cited in Kunzmann, 1996).

The bottom-up approach to development or development from below is now seen as the panacea to sustainable community development. Decentralisation programmes and the DAs concept have been seen as a sure way of achieving grassroots participation and balanced development. The preference for smaller administrative units (decentralisation) to larger areas lies in the axiom that it is much easier to administer a smaller area than a bigger area. This viewpoint was echoed by Diaw (1997), who states that the increase in the administrative units from sixty-five to 110 was based on the hypothesis that the smaller and more manageable the units, the closer to decision making and power to promote local development. Botchie (1996) also shared this view and argues that 'development oriented decentralisation is the bedrock of local level development planning in Ghana'. He further states that decentralisation is a tool that is

expected to improve the capacity of local communities to take initiative in planning and development at the district level.

However, the extent to which DAs can promote the development of their respective constituencies largely depends on their existing capacity to implement plans, hence this study. The first step in appraising the capacity of the AASDA in plan implementation management would be to apprise ourselves of what decentralisation generally entails, and a brief description of the nature of decentralised development planning in Ghana.

2.3 Understanding Decentralisation

To help situate the discourse on decentralisation in its proper perspective, it is imperative that divergent opinions on decentralisation are considered to create the necessary ambience for further discussions. The concept of decentralisation has been described in many ways and it is instructive to preface the discussion by taking a cursory look at how some writers have endeavoured to define it. No single, precise and universally acceptable definition of the concept of decentralisation may exist. It is thus seen as a word that is surrounded by terminological confusion (Conyers, as cited in Akuoko-Frimpong, 1996). As Gershberg has noted, the concept of decentralisation is slippery (Gershberg, as cited in *Bray and Mukundan*, 2003). It is a complex multifaceted concept (World Bank, n.d), and thus defies a clear-cut definition (Asante and Ayee, n.d). In view of this, the term usually has the prefix political, administrative and democratic.

Decentralisation is generally defined as the dispersal of decision-making powers to individuals at 'lower' levels in the spatial hierarchy (Conyers and Hills, 1984). Or "any deliberate change in the organisation of government involving the transfer of powers, resources and functions from the centre to units of government and administration at sub-national level" (Akuoko-Frimpong, 1996). Such decision-making powers must encompass any action that is focused on the development of the local area and ranges from policy issues, planning strategies, finance and personnel issues.

In the case of DAs, such policies borne out from the transfer of decision-making powers must dovetail with the policies of the national government. Other writers have

also defined decentralisation as "any act in which a central government formally cedes powers to actors and institutions at lower levels in a political-administrative and territorial hierarchy" (Smith, Mawhood, as cited in Ribot, 2002). According to Chambers 21st Century Dictionary, decentralisation means 'from one main central place to several smaller less central places'. This implies moving away from compact structures where power is concentrated at the top in favour of more loosely fragmented structures (UNESCO, 2000). Concluding, Uphoff (n.d) holds the view that decentralisation implies moving away from centralisation, a pre-existing condition which has been the most dominant form of governance for many centuries in most parts of the world. Perhaps, a more elaborate definition encapsulating all aspects of decentralisation is given by Rondinelli and Nellis, as cited in Rondinelli et al. (1989). They wrote:

'It is the transfer of the responsibility for planning, management and the raising and allocation of resources from the central government and its agencies to field units of government agencies, subordinate units or levels of government, semi-autonomous public authorities or corporations, area wide, regional or functional authorities, or non-governmental private or voluntary organizations'.

From the different perspectives on decentralisation, it may be inferred that it is a strategy that aims at giving a designated political or administrative area the right to determine the focus and direction of their development. This must, however, be consistent with national aspirations and policy guidelines and with support from the central government.

Decentralisation thus entails the political and administrative arrangements in which power and resources to plan, implement and manage are ceded from the central government to local government who take absolute charge for the sustainable development of their political/administrative areas. Although decentralised organisations tend to have an appreciable degree of autonomy to make policies and prepare their own development plans, Conyers and Hills (1984 p. 215) have observed that, they lack much control over the financial and manpower resources needed to implement them.

While attempting a contextual definition of decentralisation, one must also not lose sight of the concept of 'level' of the system of governance which is also extremely important in the discussion of decentralisation. The level or local area being referred to

in this study is the DA. DA here refers to the lowest administrative unit representing a geographical area of considerable size, with a number of settlements: towns, villages and hamlets.

2.4 Typologies of Decentralisation

Decentralisation can take many forms. However, what differentiates the various forms of decentralisation according to Sowa (1996) is the quantum of powers, functions and/or resources transferred and how they are transferred and to whom. Nonetheless, in spite of the nature and complexities of the various forms of decentralisation, certain conditions must prevail if decentralisation should be meaningful for sustainable development at the local level. Scott-Herridge (2002) categorises these as follows:

- The local authorities must have sufficient power and freedom to formulate policies and raise revenue to deliver services;
- The local authorities must first and foremost be answerable to the local electorate for their actions;
- Decentralisation does not necessarily mean that the individual authorities will physically provide all services.

Substantial knowledge on the types of decentralisation, the type envisaged in Ghana's decentralisation programme and the type actually being implemented is crucial to the understanding of the expected roles of DAs. This will aid the assessment of their capacity in doing same. Deconcentration, delegation, devolution and privatisation are the four main forms of decentralisation discussed in this study.

2.4.1 Deconcentration

Deconcentration, also referred to as administrative decentralisation is where officials appointed by the centre are posted to the field to act as central government representatives. However, the extent to which these officials freely exercise discretion in performing their duties is limited (Wallis 1998, as cited in Magomelo, n.d). According to Kokor and Kroes (2000), "deconcentration is where governmental functions are assigned to regional and district branch offices of headquarters, sector ministries and departments". In other words, it is a form of decentralisation where the central government relocates branches of the central state to local areas and undertakes some of its responsibilities through the regional or local offices. In effect,

deconcentration consists of a mere shift of responsibilities from central government officials in the capital to those working in the regions/districts/provinces.

In these arrangements, decision making is brought closer to the people who are affected by those decisions. However, there is no transfer of power or authority to any other organisation. Full control over the functions of the local offices is still retained at the central level with locally based officials remaining accountable to the central government, ministries and agencies. Deconcentration or administrative decentralisation is considered to be the weakest form of decentralisation. This is because the 'downward accountability relations from which many benefits are expected are not as well established as in democratic or political forms of decentralisation' (Ribot, 2002). Deconcentration thus represents an extension of central control over the periphery rather than the granting of autonomy to institutions and administrators.

2.4.2 Delegation

The second form of decentralisation is delegation. To delegate means to (part of one's work, power) to someone else or to send or name someone as representative, as the one to do a job (Chambers 21st Century Dictionary). Delegation therefore refers to the transfer of public functions to lower levels of government, public corporations, or any other authority outside of the regular political-administrative structure, to implement programs on behalf of a government agency (Alex et al. 2000, cited in Ribot, 2002).

In delegation, the responsibilities of taking decisions, administration, and providing services are transferred by the central government to semi autonomous organisations. These may include local government, parastatals, the private sector, public enterprises or corporations, transportation authorities and NGOs. An example is public social services such as production, distribution and management of water and electricity. Although these institutions have discretion in decision-making, they remain answerable to the central government over the responsibilities delegated to them. Subsequently the central government exercises supreme control over policies and all resources. Delegation has the advantage of relieving the central government of the burden of service delivery which are given to specialised bodies.

2.4.3 Devolution

Decentralisation may also take the form of devolution which involves the total transfer of political power and authority to semi autonomous local government bodies. The autonomy covers all facets of human lives and particularly covers areas such as decision making (initiate, formulate, legislate and execute), mobilisation and allocation of resources, administration, and service delivery. In devolution, local governments have clear, legally demarcated and recognised spatial boundaries where their authorities are exercised. Municipalities therefore have the power to elect their own mayor. Devolution therefore refers to a form of decentralisation where a local government has an established local assembly with elected members.

In the view of Uphoff (n.d), devolution represents a two dimensional form of decentralisation. This is because, apart from the decision makers becoming physically accessible to the local public, the public also has the legitimacy in influencing decisions on local needs and interests. In devolution, the local officials are elected by the public and so can be removed by same through laid down and approved procedures. Therefore in principle, the local authorities are not accountable to the central government, but rather to the local electorate under devolution. Although the central government has no control over them, devolved institutions are bound to operate within the statute and laws which established them.

2.4.4 Privatisation

According to Kokor and Kroes (2000), privatisation as a form of decentralisation is an aspect of public sector services or function. Such functions include providing management for facilities and services such as markets, lorry parks, public toilets and refuse collection and disposal. Privatisation ranges in scope. This includes leaving the market forces entirely to determine the provision of goods and services, or public-private partnerships, where the government and the private sector cooperate to provide goods and services.

The various forms of privatisation include: allowing private entities to operate and provide services which previously remained the monopoly of the state. Privatisation can also take the form of contracting the management of public services or facilities to the private sector. Other forms which privatisation can take include, financing of

public sector projects through the capital market (Stock Exchange) so that private people can become shareholders of such projects, and lastly, divestiture of state-owned enterprises to private enterprises. In effect privatisation represents the permanent transfer of power to any non-state entity, including individuals, corporations and NGOs.

The essential and distinguishing characteristics of the four forms of decentralisation discussed lie in the degree of autonomy granted to the local authorities in managing the affairs of their localities. Devolution therefore represents a complete form of decentralisation where political, administrative power and power to mobilise and allocate resources are entirely vested in the local authorities. This is the pinnacle of decentralisation which Ghana aspires to attain.

According to Kokor and Kroes (2000), available documentation such as the Local government Act, 1993 (Act 462), the Civil Service Law, 1993 (PNDC 327) and, Ghana-Vision 2020 (The First Step 1996-2000) give an indication of decentralisation by devolution. They further concluded that the system currently in operation is akin to the principal agency model. Hence any discretion by the DAs as principal agents will be subject to control and direction by the centre. Uphoff (n.d) is, however, of the view that, effective decentralisation in practice involves some colourful combinations of the various forms discussed.

2.5 Decentralisation and Grassroots Development

Decentralisation has gained prominence in contemporary discussions on grassroots development. This growing interest gathered momentum among developing countries as far back as the 1980s. A lot of international development agencies and non-governmental organisations also appear to favour grassroots development via decentralisation. This wave of decentralisation is empirically supported by a survey conducted in 1995 which indicated that about eighty-five percent out of seventy-five developing countries examined had started implementing decentralisation (Scott-Herridge 2002, citing Dillinger).

According to Oyugi (2000), 'there is not a single country in Africa which some form of local government is not in operation'. Countries such as Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and Uganda have constitutions that are

explicitly pro-decentralisation and formally recognise the existence of local government (UNCDF 2000; as cited in Ribot, 2002). "Indeed in West Africa it is difficult to find a country that does not have a decentralisation programme" (Crawford, 2004). Cook and Sverrisson (2001) thus conclude that, since the mid 1980s, decentralisation has become so popular that it has been introduced by virtually all states, whether under the regime of military dictatorship, authoritarian presidencies and monarchs, through single party or dominant party regimes to multi-party competitive democracies.

To some development practitioners and analysts, decentralisation is widely perceived as a political and administrative tool that holds the wheel to accelerated and sustainable grassroots development. The following section will therefore examine some of the arguments adduced in favour of the potentialities and perceived roles decentralisation play in grassroots development. It must however be noted that, different countries pursue different forms of decentralisation for several reasons and with different expectations. Few of such expectations for implementing decentralisation reforms are discussed as follows:

2.5.1 Political and Managerial Reasons

Both political and managerial benefits are some of the arguments advanced in favour of decentralisation. Politically, it is argued that decentralisation promotes participatory democracy, engenders fair distribution of political power and national unity. In the area of management, decentralisation is believed, guarantees access to local needs, produce implementable plans, elicit the contribution and cooperation of the beneficiaries, effectively coordinate all agencies involved in planning and implementation, and reduces poverty (Asante and Ayee, n.d). It is also much easier and swifter to introduce changes in plans or projects at the local than at the national level.

The primary justification is that a decentralised environment provides the optimal conditions for citizen participation (Hart, 1994). Decentralisation significantly promotes good governance and democracy at the local level because it encourages representation at the local level. It empowers the local people through their elected representatives to take active part in deliberations that affect them directly or otherwise. The opportunity for civil societies, analogous institutions and the ordinary people to

engage in constructive dialogue with the local government also serves as checks and balances on the activities of the local government officials.

Participation is currently a key aspect of most discussions of decentralisation and is often uttered in the same sentence (Balogun as cited in Ribot, 2002). As Conyers (1990) writes, participation is believed to make plans more relevant, give people more self-esteem, and to help legitimise the planning process and the state as a whole.

Participation also enhances scrutiny and can ensure transparency and accountability which are tenets of good governance and democracy. As Scott-Herridge (2002), has remarked "where services are delivered by the central government through a network of remote offices, there is a danger of lack of accountability and corruption". Decentralisation thus limits intermediaries between the centre and the local areas and avoids possible duplication of activities. Participation can however be costly and sluggish.

2.5.2 Improved Service Delivery

Another role decentralisation plays in local level development is expressed in its capacity to improve service delivery. This is because services and infrastructural development delivery take into consideration local circumstances and needs. This is opposed to centrally run governmental system where officials at the national level have little or no detailed knowledge about the prevailing conditions at the local level, yet decisions are taken that affect these local areas. With decentralisation, politicians and the civil servants are much closer to the people, aware of the developmental challenges and for that matter are better placed to address the concerns of the localities. Together with the people, their development needs can be prioritised. Decentralisation can therefore greatly enhance the state's capacity to accelerate local development and reduce poverty (World Bank 2000/2001).

Decentralisation does not only result in the improvements in service delivery but also ensures sustainable development. This is because when people are involved in decision making process in the selection of a project, they tend to have a greater sense of ownership and are therefore prepared to maintain such projects. Similarly, their involvement makes them proactive in making proposals that affect their future development rather than waiting for external help. Thus "decentralisation is not an end

in itself, and nor is good governance, they are necessary to achieve the ultimate objective, that is sustainable development (Elroy, as cited in Scott-Herridge, 2002.).

2.5.3 Efficient Central Government

Decentralisation contributes to the efficiency of central governments. This is because it relieves the central government from the bureaucratic pathologies and red tapeism associated with central government's attempt to provide services directly to all communities. With decentralisation, such functions can effectively be performed by the local government authorities. Against this background, the World Bank (1999/2000) argues that, "successful decentralisation improves the efficiency and responsiveness of the public sector while accommodating potentially explosive political forces". As the local authorities take charge of service delivery functions, the central government can therefore concentrate on strategic policy issues both at the national and the international levels. Increased administrative efficiency is the overriding impetus for governments to decentralise (Conyers 2000, as cited in Ribot, 2002).

The above although was not intended to provide an exhaustive list of how decentralisation is expected to facilitate local development. It nevertheless provides an insight to the connection between decentralisation and development at the local level. The most important question now is the extent to which these expected roles have been achieved. Scott-Herridge (2002) seems to provide the answer as he states, "whilst available evidence suggests that decentralisation has not yet achieved all that was expected of it significant progress has been made".

The link between decentralisation and grassroots development can be summed up in following remarks by Griffin (cited in Ribot 2002): The most recent wave of decentralisation "seems to be based more on the assumption that decentralised planning and participation can achieve effectiveness and efficiency by resolving the implementation problems of rural development planning". Implementation is also seen to be improved through better co-ordination by decentralised bodies (De Valk, cited in Ribot, 2002). Lastly, decentralisation is seen to increase the relevance and sustainability of development, as well as self-help contributions to development.

Decentralisation will, however, flourish when certain conditions prevail. Among these conditions are that, the central government must first demonstrate commitment and the

political will towards decentralisation by relinquishing control from the centre and making available adequate resources to the local government. This must be followed by a legislative framework spelling in unambiguous terms the roles, powers and the relationship between the central and the local government. As argued by Nsibambi (cited in Magomelo, n.d), in guaranteeing the participation of citizens, the form of decentralisation must seek to improve the capacity of local authorities to plan, finance and manage the delivery of services to their constituents. A good decentralisation system must therefore be founded on the principle of good governance in order to promote community participation in development and decision making (Ikhide 1999, cited in Mogomelo, n.d).

Adequate financial and human resources are also important for decentralisation to thrive. As Scott-Herridge (2002) has stated, "having sufficient professional and well-trained staff is essential for local government to realise its potential for serving its communities". The government of Ghana has demonstrated the political will and provided the legislative framework for decentralisation. However, inadequate resources still remain a challenge.

2.6 Decentralisation in Ghana

2.6.1 Historical perspective

Ghana, like most African states, had their unique traditional systems of governance before colonisation by the Europeans. Governance was dispensed through the traditional chieftaincy system and the chiefs were seen both as the embodiment of spiritual leadership as well as agents of development. They were the custodians of the communities' resources and for that matter remained accountable to the citizens for their stewardship. However, most of these functions hitherto performed by the traditional rulers were usurped during colonisation and imperialism by the west. As a result of this, the authority of the chiefs did not only suffer a decline, but also started losing its significance. "The democratic ideals underlying chieftaincy in Ghana, which made chiefs accountable to their peoples, began to suffer as the recognition by the central government was more crucial to the chief than the support of his people" (Crawford, 2004).

Decentralisation in Ghana has undergone an evolutionary process. Historically, decentralisation in Ghana dates back to 1878 during the colonial era when the British

introduced indirect rule in the then Gold Coast which lasted until 1951 (Ayee, as cited in Crawford, 2004). Decentralisation is therefore not new Africa (Ribot, 2002), and for that matter Ghana. Systems of 'association' by the French and 'indirect rule' by the British were the means set up to penetrate and manage the rural world (Mamdani 1996, as cited in Ribot, 2002).

Under this system the colonial administration ruled the people through the chiefs with their council of elders (native authorities) who were handpicked. The traditional rulers thus only carried out directives of the colonial authorities and became instruments that perpetuated the authority of the colonial government. The chiefs had the power to "establish treasuries, appoint staff and perform local government functions" (Nkrumah, as cited in Crawford, 2004). The indirect rule, however, failed to recognize the participation of the people and also rendered the chiefs no longer accountable to the people but rather to the colonial authorities.

The resolution for decentralised administration was conceived some decades ago with the setting up of series of commissions to advise governments. Each Commission built on the work of the previous ones. Notable among them were the Mills Odoi Commission (1967), Siriboe Commission (1963), the Constitutional Commission (1967-1968), The Akuffo-Addo Commission (1966), The Constituent Assembly (1979), Sir Frederick Bourne (1955) and so forth. Although consensus had long been arrived on the need and type of decentralised administration best suited for Ghana, interpretations put on it differed and always slanted to suit the political purposes of each of the passing regimes. However, formal attempts at decentralisation came with the passage of the Local Government Act, 1961 (Act 54) and Local Administration Act, 1971 (Act 359).

Until the 1980s successive governments experimented with some form of local governance. But local governance was largely used as a strategy to only ensure the administration of the local areas rather involving the local people in the governance process. A common feature that permeated all the attempts at decentralisation was that it was characterised by administrative decentralisation or deconcentration. According to Crawford (2004), the motive for this was to entrench central government control at the local level rather than devolution.

2.6.2 Legislative Framework for Decentralised Planning

The Local Government Law (PNDC Law 207) underpins the current decentralisation programme which seeks among other things to promote popular participation and ownership of the machinery of government by devolving power, competence and resources to the district level. Key among legislation giving credence and legitimacy to the decentralisation programme are: The National Planning Systems Act (Act 480), The Local Government Act of 1993 (Act 426), The District Assemblies Common Fund Act 1994, (Act 455) and Local Government Service Act.

The Local Government Act (Act 426) designates DAs as responsible entities for the overall development of the district performing legislative, administrative and executive functions. The pursuit of decentralisation was also given constitutional endorsement as the entire chapter twenty of the 1992 constitution titled "Decentralisation and Local Government" was devoted to decentralisation. This was reinforced by Articles 240 (1) and (2) which state that Local government and administration shall be decentralised and that functions, powers, responsibilities and resources be transferred from the central government to the local government units.

The structure of Ghana's decentralised system is made up of Regional Coordinating Councils (RCCs) for each of the ten regions of Ghana and a four-tier Metropolitan and three-tier Municipal/District Assemblies. The duties of the RCCs among others are to coordinate, monitor and evaluate the performance of DAs in the region. The Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) report to, and seek approval from, the RCCs. At the base are the sub-district structures made up of sub-metro, zonal, urban, town and area councils and unit committees. Appendix E shows the structure of the new local government system.

Significant features of Ghana's current decentralised system are that seventy percent of the assembly members are in elected positions while thirty percent are appointed by the president in consultation with traditional authorities and interest groups. Elections are on non-partisan basis. The metropolitan, municipal and district chief executives are nominated by the president and approved by two-thirds of the assembly members present and voting. Each of the DAs has a District Planning Coordinating Unit (DPCU) which coordinates all the development programmes of the DAs. Furthermore,

all the DAs have a District Tender Board (DTB) to ensure that the award of contracts is done in an open, competitive and transparent manner.

2.6.3 Components of Ghana's Decentralisation Policy

Ghana's decentralisation programme has five main components. These are political, administrative and fiscal decentralisation, public-private partnership management, as well as decentralised development planning. The public-private partnership management concerns collaboration between the DAs and the private sector in the provision, and management in service delivery to the people. This may be in the areas of sanitation and waste management and facility management.

Political decentralisation mainly consists of re-demarcation of local government boundaries and giving legitimacy to the DAs concept through a series of legislation. Political decentralisation thus entails the establishment of DAs and their sub-structures such as the sub-metropolitan, Urban, Zonal, Town/Area councils, and Unit Committees (Ahwoi, 1996). Subsequently 110 DAs were created, later increased to 138 and further to 170. The overall aim of political decentralisation is to give the citizenry the right to elect their representatives to participate in policy formulation and implementation. By this, the people at the grassroots can take active part in the democratic governance of the localities to ensure transparency and accountability in the use of resources.

Highlights of administrative decentralisation component include the setting up of Local Government Service to create departments of the DAs, and enacting Local Government Bill to facilitate staff transfer to the local government. The objective is to create a loyal, motivated technocrats and administrators to provide the manpower capacity to the local governments. Integration of sectoral programmes and the restructuring of the ministries to enable the transfer of functions, power and resources to the DAs also form part of the administrative decentralisation. In view of this, eleven government departments have been decentralised which are expected to operate as an integral part of the district administration and to perform functions hitherto performed by twenty-two central government departments and agencies.

Fiscal decentralisation on the other hand required the transfer of financial resources in addition to revenue-generating authority to the DAs, preparation of budgets and the ability of the DAs to make financial decisions. In line with this, the DACF has been

established where funds are transferred to the DAs from the central government. The DAs also have the power to generate revenue from local sources through fee fixing resolutions by the assemblies in accordance with the section 34 of Act 462. Other sources include ceded revenue which is collected by the central government on behalf of the DAs. The DAs are also expected to prepare composite budget (section 92 of Act 462).

Lastly the decentralised development planning component of the decentralisation policy is the aspect which gives focus and direction to the activities of the DAs. It establishes the DAs as the highest planning authority; defines and vests in them all the functions performed by the DAs which are facilitated and coordinated by the DPCU. In line with this the DPCU advises and provide a secretariat for the DA in its planning, programming and M&E functions. It also coordinates the planning activities of the other decentralised departments and agencies in the district. Above all, the DPCU formulates and update district development plans and ensure their implementation and also provide information required for planning at the national level among others. However the extent to which these functions are performed would depend on the functional capacity of the DA in question. This underscores the need to appraise the capacity of the AASDA.

2.7 Constraints to Decentralisation in Ghana

In spite of the legal framework, constitutional provisions and administrative structures that have been put in place, the implementation of the local government system is faced with a number of constraints. Asante and Ayee (n.d) enumerate some of the constraints to decentralisation as follows: The shortage of adequately trained human resources; inability to make the sub-district structures function because of their size and lack of funds to pay core staff; lack of participatory bottom-up planning; lack of fiscal decentralization as a result of the centralization of the management of public finance due to existing legislation (Financial Administration Decree, 1979 and Financial Administration Regulations, 1979). Crawford (2004) categorises these constraints as: local government autonomy, fiscal independence, district-level capacity and matters of inclusion and participation.

2.7.1 Incomplete Local Government Autonomy

The autonomy of the local government is somewhat compromised. This is because the central government continues to wield excessive control and influence over the administration of the DAs. This is achieved remotely through the following; presidential appointment of the District Chief Executive (DCE), the appointment of thirty percent of the assembly members, and a number of administrative and fiscal controls. For example presently government directs and decides how about fifty-one percent of the DA's Common Fund should be spent. The result of these is that the DCE becomes accountable to the central government rather than the electorate.

2.7.2 Fiscal Dependence

There is also the constraint of fiscal dependence. The main and predictable source of revenue to the DAs is the DA's Common Fund which is a guaranteed minimum of not less than five percent (now 7.5 percent) from the consolidated fund. Others include ceded revenue and Internally Generated Fund (IGF). Although the DAs have power to raise revenue, not much is generated from these sources (Diaw, 1996). This is because the "lucrative tax field (for example, income tax, sales tax, import and export duties) all belong to the centre, while local government has access to only "low yielding taxes such as basic rates and market tolls" (Crawford, 2004 citing Nkrumah). There is therefore a shortfall between inflows and expenditure. In view of this, the DAs become extremely dependant on the central government.

2.7.3 Incapacity of District Assemblies

Perhaps the biggest constraint to the decentralisation programme is the capacity of DAs to deliver. As expected, decentralisation was to bring about accelerated growth and expansion in the provision of social and economic facilities at the local areas. This expectation is yet to fully materialise. This is partly because the existing local government structures do not have the necessary capacities to undertake new and expanded responsibilities (Crawford, 2004). The capacity of DAs takes various forms such as the availability and adequacy of the human and financial resources, logistics, strength in monitoring and evaluation of projects and programmes among others. Capacity can also take the form of leadership qualities, internal administrative structures and the legal environment as well. Inadequate capacity of the DAs therefore

has the likelihood of reducing the pace of rapid socio-economic transformation of the local areas.

2.7.4 Constraint of Non-Inclusion

Added to the constraints are the concerns of non-inclusion of the potential beneficiaries in decision-making process as most assembly members do not consult their communities when taking decisions on their behalf. Similarly, deliberations of the assembly are also rarely communicated to the public. Ingrained in this litany of constraints is the capacity of DAs to implement their plans. In view of this, efforts must be directed in assessing the capacity of DAs so that remedial actions are taken to enable the DAs diligently perform their statutory roles of improving the quality of life of people at the local areas. The next section thus takes a look at the relationships between DAs capacity and development planning.

2.8 Situating Capacity-Development Planning Nexus

It is worth mentioning that the delineation of a district, provision of office accommodation, creation of administrative structures and legislative framework alone do not necessary translate into momentous and rapid development of a local level. DAs must have the requisite capacity to deliver.

As a prelude to the discussions on the connection between capacity and development planning, an attempt is made at a conceptual definition of capacity. Diverse opinions have been expressed on what constitutes capacity, but for the purposes of this study, capacity shall be construed as "capacity for something". In the generic and ordinary usage of the term, capacity connotes the ability or power to achieve something. According to (UNDP, 2006), capacity is "the ability of individuals, institutions and societies to perform functions, solve problems, and set and achieve objectives in a sustainable manner" It is also seen as the ability to perform appropriate tasks effectively, efficiently and sustainably (Hopkins, 1994). According to Yu-Lee (2002), "capacity of an organisation represents its ability to perform work". The OECD/DAC (as cited in UNDP, 2006) also sees capacity as the ability of people, organisations and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully.

Two issues clearly emerge from these viewpoints expressed on capacity. The first issue is the possession of the ability by the individual or institution in question. The possession of the ability to undertake specific functions is very important, because this makes the organization, individual or even a nation to be self-reliant in the discharge of its duties. The second issue of utmost concern is sustainability. This implies that, the ability to perform certain functions should not be ephemeral but must grow and even become better with the passage of time. There can therefore be no meaningful capacity if the two elements of ability and sustainability are missing.

Whereas there appears to be broad agreement on what constitutes capacity, the debate in respect of development is still fiercely contested; literature is replete with countless definitions of development (Adarkwa, 2003). In this study however, the perspective of Gwilliam (as cited in Adarkwa, 2003) is considered. His interpretation of development was weaved around three elements. The first involves a continuing capability to support improved quality of life which corresponds to the concept of economic sustainability. The second element involves an improvement in the general quality of life, that is, environmental sustainability. Finally, development must be shared by all categories of population, corresponding to social sustainability. Planning on the other hand implies conscious interventions to achieve a desired state. It is the means of subjecting the operations of economic laws and economic development of the society to the directions of the human will (Oscar Lange cited by Goel, 2003).

From the above, development planning can be seen as a conscious intervention to bring qualitative change in the life of the people. This is largely determined by the capacity of the institutions charged with the responsibilities of implementation. The possession of the appropriate capacities by the DAs is in no doubt central in influencing the level of development planning at the local level. Inadequate staff, logistics, funding, inability to monitor progress of work, lack of visionary leadership, improper administrative structures and lack of internal control among others are most likely to stall the clock of development at the local level. The next section presents an overview of assessing capacity that is needed to promote development.

2.9 Defining Capacity Assessment

According to Hopkins (1994) the traditional approach to capacity building efforts adopted in the past witnessed several shortcomings over the years. For example assessment of the present condition of an organisation was ascertained through what could be described as a "quick walking" tour by key governmental officials. Apparently, this approach lacked any serious analysis in an effort to know the true state, condition and the readiness of institutions to perform. As Hopkins (1994) has remarked, "what continues to be a "missing link" is the "capacity assessment" methodology that provides realistic "baseline" data of what is the current state of affairs and what it will take to move from point (a) to (b) to (c)".

Capacity assessment is therefore seen as "an analysis of current capacities, against desired future capacities" (UNDP, 2006). Similarly, "a capacity assessment is defined as an exercise undertaken to appraise the existing capacity of an individual or collective entity to perform key functions and deliver expected results" (UNDP, 2005). From these viewpoints, capacity assessment obeys the simple planning principle that enjoins one to know what is available (existing situation) before he/she can determine the normative at a future date. Capacity assessment is therefore expected to disclose among other things the existing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and gaps. It is therefore used to determine the additional capacity or improvements required to upgrade organisations to perform the functions for which they were established.

2.9.1 Methods of Assessing Capacity

Various typologies of capacity assessment methods exist. The UNDP 'Default' Capacity Assessment Framework (UNDP, 2006) is a common example. This Assessment Framework is made up of three dimensions. These are the entry points, the core issues and the cross-cutting functional capacities. The entry point considers different capacity levels (starting points). These are either at the enabling environment, organisational or individual levels. In this study, the assessment is restricted to the organisational and individual levels. This is because, the enabling environment which essentially deals with policy and legal issues have already been discussed (see section 2.6.2). As the core issues are many, the ones analysed were determined by the scope of the exercise.

Another capacity assessment method is the Programme Approach modelled along the Harvard Framework (Hopkins, 1996). This consists of five dimensions namely: Action Environment, Public Sector Institutional, Task Network Context, Organisations and Human Resources. Last but not the least method discussed in this study is the Mckinsey Capacity Assessment GRID (Mckinsey, n.d). This is a matrix that explains seven elements of organizational capacity and their components. The grid enables the assessor to score the organisation on each element/variable of organisational capacity by selecting the text that best describes the organisation's current status in a continuum of 1-4 scale.

Its main weakness is that, "it is very difficult to quantify the dimensions of capacity, and the descriptive text under each score in the grid is not meant to be exact. The scores are meant to provide a general indication – a "temperature" taking, if you will of an organisation's capacity level, in order to identify potential areas for improvement".

Regardless of the method, capacity assessment in general must be systematic and logical. The first stage involves identification and delineation of the organisation to be assessed as well as a clear statement of purpose. This is followed by the conduct of a fairly rigorous capacity assessment by first determining and using the appropriate data collection instruments and collecting the relevant data. The final stage is data analysis. This will produce salient issues, themes and identify capacity gaps or deficits which will require some improvements (Hopkins, 1996).

Generally, capacity assessment is qualitative in nature and does not provide quantitative benchmarks for intervention (UNDP, 2006). It usually takes the form of a matrix. Besides the nominal definitions of capacity, the concept is operationally defined as follows: The availability and ability of the AASDA to utilise human, financial and physical resources and the administrative structures in managing the implementation of its plans. Finance, staff, logistics, monitoring and evaluation, collaborations and leadership shall constitute the indicators for measurement. Figure 2.0 shows the conceptual framework for the study.

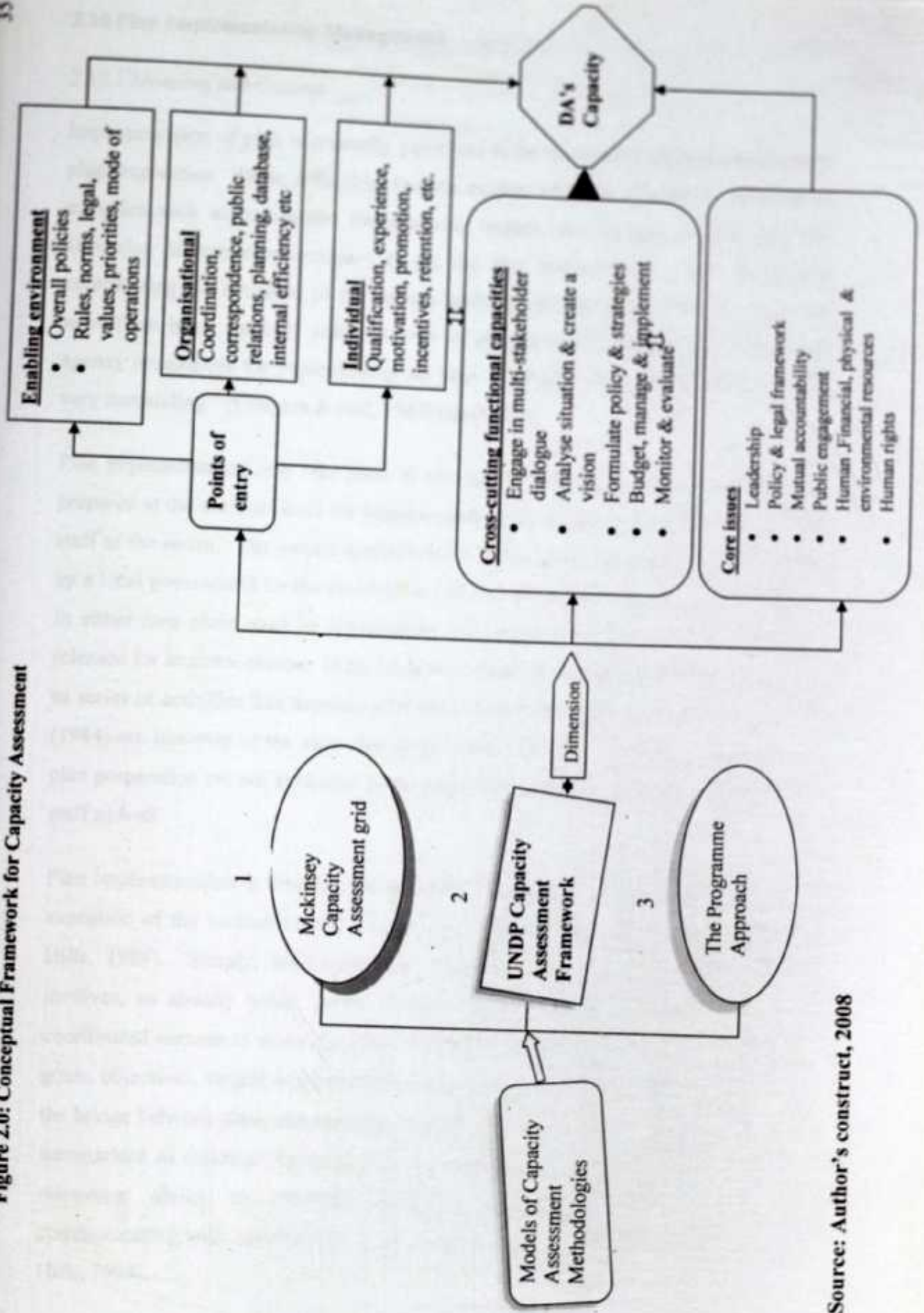
The conceptual framework shows typologies of capacity assessment methodologies, the various dimensions and more importantly common variables used in assessing capacity

of an organisation. The framework shows the three models of capacity assessment methodology already discussed.

The study adopted the UNDP Capacity Assessment Framework which consists of three dimensions (collection of a number of related variables). The dimensions are the Entry points for conducting capacity assessment. From the framework, the three main entry points/levels for conducting capacity are the Enabling Environment, Organisational and at the Individual levels. Below each Entry point are the variables to be measured. The other dimensions for assessing capacity are the Cross-cutting functional capacities and the Core issues with their associated variables. These are the general and commonly used variables in institutional capacity assessment. The assessment of these variables is therefore expected to give a true reflection of the capacity situation of the AASDA in managing plan implementation.

Since at any rate the success of any development efforts depend on the extent to which development plans are implemented, the next section examines some examples of plan implementation management practices.

Figure 2.0: Conceptual Framework for Capacity Assessment



Source: Author's construct, 2008

2.10 Plan Implementation Management

2.10.1 Meaning and Content

Implementation of plan is generally perceived to be much difficult task compared to plan preparation. These difficulties become evident when identifying the sequence of activities such as time-scales for achieving targets, role casting, mobilisation and allocation of resources necessary to get the plan implemented. Also difficult is coordinating the activities of the various collaborating agencies some of whom are apart from being spatially scattered, owe no allegiance administratively to the main agency responsible for implementing the plan. "Clearly effective implementation is very demanding" (Conyers & Hill, 1984) concluded.

Plan implementation may take place at two spatial levels. The first is sectoral plans prepared at the national level for implementation at the local level (districts) by local staff of the sector. The second spatial level is where plans are prepared and executed by a local government for the development of a local administrative and political area. In either case plans must be approved by the central government before funding is released for implementation. In the lexicon of planning, implementation is considered as series of activities that happens after plans have been prepared. Conyers and Hills (1984) are however of the view that these chain of events or actions occurring after plan preparation are not exclusive to the planner but also the functional and technical staff as well.

Plan implementation is therefore the process of carrying out these actions, the actual execution of the various courses of action to bring about development (Conyers & Hills, 1984). Simply, implementation connotes getting the work done, and this involves, as already noted, series of activities and actions carried out in a well coordinated manner to move the plan into reality. Here reality means achieving the goals, objectives, targets and timeframes set in the plan. Implementation is therefore the bridge between plans and realities. The prerequisites of implementation have been summarised as follows: knowing what you want to do, availability of the required resources, ability to assemble, control and manage these resources and communicating with collaborating agencies (Barret and Fudge cited by Conyers and Hills, 1984).

2.10.2 Issues in Plan Implementation Management

Four significant factors affect plan implementation (Waterson cited by Conyers & Hills, 1984). They are the nature of the planning process, organisation of planning and implementation, the content of the plan and last but not the least, the management of the implementation process. Other factors are also potentially disruptive to plan implementation but are beyond the control of the implementing agencies. Examples include natural disasters, political upheavals, civil wars and shortfalls in projected cash inflows especially foreign exchange. In this study however, it is presumed that the plan is already prepared hence the focus will be on the management of the implementation process. However in this study, the emphasis was on managing the plan implementation.

Plan implementation management is involving and entails appreciable dexterity in mobilising, organising and managing the resources at the disposal of the implementing agency. These resources according to Conyers and Hills (1984) are finance, manpower and equipment. They further attribute the inability to implement even realistic plans to the fact that the resources are unavailable in the right quantities and qualities, at the right place and at the right time. The decision to assess the capacity of AASDA in these areas is therefore appropriate.

Equally important to note is that resources at any point in time is insufficient to meet all development needs of an administrative unit. In view of this, it is imperative that answers are found to the following questions: Are the available resources released on time? Are the plans prepared within budget? How predictable is the inflow of resources that will be available during the planning period? How easy or otherwise are these resources made available on request? What efforts are made to access both available and potential sources of funding? How accurate are the estimation of the resources needed to implement the plan? What is the achievement rate? Is there any significant and identifiable trend/pattern in the flow of the resources and expenditure?

Additionally, coordination of the entire process has also been the bane of plan implementation management. As Conyers and Hills (1984) have mentioned, 'one main obstacle to implementation in many countries is lack of coordination between plans and annual budgeting process. Most development plans therefore die their

natural death at the implementation phase owing to lack of effective coordination among the main actors in the development planning process (Botchie, 1996).

According to Smith (1989), problems of coordination may arise from differences in priorities among collaborating agencies, inter-departmental and personal rivalries. Poor administrative practices such as failure to access resources promptly, meeting deadlines, untimely or non-submission of all necessary documentation required to access funding also affect implementation. Other administrative malady affecting implementation is non-adherence to scheduling schemes as well as indifference on the part of collaborating entities. In essence what implementation management seeks to achieve is to coordinate the various stages in the process and get all the stakeholders to play their expected roles.

2.10.3 Approaches to Plan Implementation Management

Several approaches to plan implementation management exist. One of such approaches elaborated here is Implementation Management Systems (IMS). As an approach to plan implementation, the IMS incorporates a lot of measures and techniques. Among them are the techniques of plan implementation (e.g. Project Breakdown Structure, Milestone chart, Gantt chart, and network techniques). Others include array of reporting and monitoring procedures and finally strategies for coordination.

The IMS is further divided into two, these are Programming and Implementation Management (PIM) and the "Operation Room System" implemented in Kenya and Malaysia in the 1970s and 1950s respectively. The PIM consists of three components. These are Annual Programming Exercise (APE), Monthly Management Meeting (MMM) and Monthly Management Report (MMR). The APE was a meeting between staff from the various collaborating ministries to decide on annual projects and programmes. The meeting was also used to prepare Annual Programming Charts (Gantt charts) as well as Annual Phasing Form (APF) which showed officials who have been assigned responsibilities and the quantum of resources required for each for the activities.

The Monthly Management Meeting (MMM) on the other hand was a meeting of officials exercising oversight responsibilities in the implementation of the plan or projects. The meeting was used to discuss the progress of the implementation, identify problems encountered as well as the remedial actions to be taken. Again the MMM was used to update the APC. The outcome of the MMM was Monthly Management Report (MMR) which was usually compiled and disseminated immediately by the area coordinator or any senior officer. The MMR therefore served as a control device that ensured that plan implementation progressed as scheduled.

The inherent weakness of the PIM was difficulty in rallying the support and commitment of staff from the various ministries to the plan implementation process as experienced in Kenya. Nonetheless, the PIM served as point of convergence of staff from the respective ministries and agencies involved. At this point responsibilities were assigned; information exchanged, and also served as forum where the activities of each of the agencies were coordinated and the progress of the entire process timely monitored. Even though the system had cost implications in terms of allowances, transport cost and time among others. But on the whole, it presented an effective strategy that gave detailed and updated information on the status of implementation of a plan at any point in time. In this respect review of the plan is not expected to present any difficulty.

In the case of the Operation Room System (ORS), a room was designated for holding regular meetings of all the stakeholders connected with the implementation of the plan. Displayed in this room were the most recent records of progress made in implementing the plan, often in the form of maps and charts. The ORS had the advantage of offering a quick and good visual impression of the status of implementation of projects and plans at any point in time. According to Conyers & Hills, (1984) the ORS was able to bring individuals and collaborating agencies together to interact and deliberate on the progress of implementation and also take on-the-spot decision. Like the PIM, the drawback of the ORS is the time, effort and organisation that must be committed to operate and maintain the system in an efficient manner.

In spite of the weaknesses identified in the two examples of managing plan implementation (PIM and ORS), the review has revealed that the two examples have

great potentials in overcoming the problem of coordination considered as a bane of plan implementation management. A fusion of the two systems will therefore not only give an update of the status of plan implementation, but also offer an avenue for stakeholders to regularly discuss and take decisions on issues emerging from plan implementation.

2.11 Summary and Conclusion

The issues arising from the discussion on decentralisation, capacity of DAs and grassroots development are summarised as follows: There was a semblance of decentralisation in colonial Gold Coast. This took the form of indirect rule where the colonial authorities ruled through the chiefs (native authority). After independence several commissions recommended decentralisation as a system for local governance. The quest for decentralisation was therefore a direct result of the dissatisfaction with the centralised planning and management strategies of government in the 1950s which was non-participatory. As a result of this, decentralisation has become almost a mantra among policy makers and the international development agencies as well. The purposes of decentralisation included to enhance administrative efficiency, improve resource allocation, utilisation and management at the local area to come out with programmes that are suitable to local conditions and circumstances for the development of the local areas.

In the light of this, DAs became the pivot of development activities at the local level, responsible for policy formulation, strategies, resource mobilisation and utilisation, as well as the preparation and implementation of development plans. However effective plan implementation is clearly a very demanding task as it entails mobilisation, organisation and management of resources to undertake the projects and programmes in plans. On the contrary most of DAs in the Ghana do not have sufficient professional and well trained personnel, financial and logistics (capacity) which are essential to successful plan implementation and decentralisation in general.

With a deeper knowledge and fairer understanding on the issue of capacity, grassroots development, and decentralised planning in Ghana, the ensuing chapter will consider in detail the method used in carrying out this study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

“Unless you can convince your audience(s) that the procedures you used did ensure that your methods were reliable and that your conclusions were valid, there is little point in aiming to conclude a research study” (Silverman, 2001).

This chapter seeks to outline in details, the structured procedures, processes, techniques, tools and the research approach adopted in carrying out the study. The study had as its primary focus the deployment of a method of enquiry that did not only facilitate the research but also sought to guarantee the credibility of the research findings. Accordingly, the study was underpinned by the scientific research method. This is because the scientific research method is uniquely identified by its reliance on observation and measurement, and characterised by empirical reasoning (Rosnow and Rosenthal, 1996). The adoption of the scientific research method thus ensured conceptualisation (conceptual framework and operational definitions); logical recordings and measurements of the variables studied, facilitated organisation and categorisation of the collected data, and lastly made the analysis of the relationships between the variables studied possible.

The credibility of the study was grounded in the two complementary concepts of reliability and validity. In making sure that the outcome of the study was reliable, the procedures adopted maintained considerable degree of consistency and dependability in the data generated. In the same vein the validity or accuracy of the data gathered was also safeguarded. This was done by triangulating the data sources. That is, gathering data from multiple sources as well as using different methods. For example, apart from obtaining data from the core staff of the DA (central administration) with some common questions to all, different sets of data were gleaned from the Town and Area Councils and selected decentralised departments.

In addition to the statistical compilation of the absence or otherwise of the indicators for measuring the capacity of the AASDA, a capacity self-assessment sheet using

The purpose of the chapter is to indicate how the study was carried out and the issues to be discussed. Among some of the issues discussed are why the study area was chosen, the survey design, data analysis and presentation.

3.1 Choice of the Study Area

A mix of factors determined the choice of AASDA for this study. Prominent among them was the fact that the AASDA was carved out from the former Asante Akim District Council with the other part being the Asante Akim North District Assembly (AANDA), now upgraded to a municipal status (see section 4.1.1). However, compared to the AASDA, the AANDA appears to have concentration of bigger settlements and as a result of this the people have better access to social amenities.

For example the north has teacher and nurses' training colleges, more and well established secondary schools, two hospitals and flourishing commercial centres. The north therefore appears to be more developed in terms of infrastructural provision compared to the south. Additionally, the capital of the former District Council-Konongo is again situated in the north. The north thus has the advantage of having the old capital where most of the state bureaucracies are already established and functional.

In sum, the south appears to be bedevilled with more developmental challenges. In view of this, the south is less likely to be attractive to skilled civil servants compared to the north. It is against this background that it became ideal to choose the AASDA, to appraise its capacity in managing plan implementation and to propose interventions to cope with the developmental challenges. These were the overriding considerations in choosing AASDA for the study. Other less weighty nonetheless influential factors also played a decisive role in selecting AASDA as a study area. These were the linguistic and geographic familiarity of the district. Finally proximity to the campus of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, though remote, might have also influenced the choice of the study area.

3.2 Survey Design

3.2.1 Case Study Approach

The research used the case study approach. The *raison d'être* for adopting the case study for the research are as follows. The case study approach offers a "systematic way of in-depth collection of information or investigating the circumstances of a person, a group, a community, an institution, or an incident" (Kumepkor, 2002). As an approach to scientific research, case study lays emphasis on detailed investigations into a single example on its own merit and not a sample out of the many. In other words, case study focuses exclusively on a particular case and at a greater depth, the very tenets the investigator sought to achieve in this study. A case study also permits the deployment of techniques and methods such as interviews, participant observation and field studies (Hamel et al. 1993). These were the very techniques which the study extensively made use of in gathering data. Furthermore a case study endorses the use of multiple sources of evidence (Yin cited by Rubin and Babbie, 1997), and in this study, multiple sources of data were needed and indeed used to ensure the credibility of the outcome. Hence the case study approach became the preferred choice.

In a nutshell, when one considered the nature of the study, the variables investigated (see Table 3.0), details involved and the tools and techniques used, then the case study was the approach that would satisfactorily permit any meaningful research and produce verifiable findings. In view of these, the case study approach became the obvious, preferred and appropriate alternative for the study. Last but not the least, the choice of the case study approach was also informed by the fact that given the constraints of time, logistics and funding sources available to the investigator, it would not have been possible to conduct multiple case studies within or across regions in the country, thus the choice of AASDA.

3.2.2 Sampling Design and Sample Size Determination

The study adopted non-probability sampling strategies in the selection of respondents. Mainly, purposive sampling technique was used. Purposive sampling was used because the technique ensured that the selection of potential respondents were restricted to key officials or informants whose contributions and cooperation were considered fundamental to the realisation of the objectives of the study. In other words, the use of

purposive sampling made it possible for the investigator to focus on and handpick officials (see section 3.2.4) who have information that is rich, typical and directly or indirectly related to plan implementation management. The use of purposive sampling therefore, enabled the researcher to identify and involve the core personnel who were not only very knowledgeable in the operations of the DA, but also had the requisite skills and expertise in the specific areas of investigations. Besides, purposive sampling also helped in selecting officials who were not only in a position to provide useful data but also were administratively qualified to volunteer the required data.

In addition to purposive sampling, stratified sampling was also used in the selection of sub-district structures such as Town and Area Councils for inclusion in the study. The criterion for stratification was principally based on the location of the prospective Town or Area Council to be included. That is, whether they were located in relatively urbanised or were found in rural areas. This was predicated on the assumption that all officials at the sub-district structures were fairly kept abreast of the Assembly's operations irrespective of their locations, and that, all selected respondents would be willing to fully participate in the study.

It was also assumed that the views of officials in Town or Area Councils in a rural setting would not be the same as those in the urban areas. This informed the use of urban and rural areas as the criterion for putting sub-structures in the District into two strata. Afterwards, five out of the nine Area councils were selected for inclusion in the study by simple random sampling using the lottery method. Five Area Councils were selected because the number was considered representative of the total. Both Town Councils were included in the study.

3.2.3 Data Sources and Instruments for Data Collection

As much literature as possible on capacity, plan implementation management and decentralisation was reviewed. The purpose was to pick up different ideas and perspectives relevant to appraisal of capacity. The study thus made adequate and good use of both primary and secondary data. Secondary data were mainly obtained through desk study. Among the documentary sources reviewed included textbooks, Local Government publications and materials from the internet. In addition to these, records at the DA also served as useful sources of data in carrying out the study. Among them

were district budgets, trial balances, development plans, monitoring and evaluation reports, profile of the district, and reviewed reports on the past medium term development plan (2002-2005).

Various instruments were used in collecting primary data from the field. Among them was the use of questionnaires in obtaining data from the DA. Other instruments used included face-to-face interviews using structured questionnaires and involving chairpersons of the selected Town and Area Councils. Questionnaires comprised of both closed, open-ended and matrix questions. Other instruments used included observation and field visits. The use of multiple data collection instruments was based on the philosophy that the combination of several data collection methods would yield better results than the use of just one method.

Open-ended questions were used predominantly to give respondents the opportunity to thoroughly express their thoughts and impressions about the subject of investigations and come out with possible suggestions. Some of the open-ended questions also adopted the critical incident technique where respondents were asked to give an elaborate description of an observable action. For example the District Engineer was asked to describe what in his professional view generally constituted shoddy works. Closed ended questions on the other hand limited respondents to fixed response options such as 'Yes' or 'No'. Matrix questionnaires were also used to elicit data for assessing leadership and capacity self assessment using the Organisational Capacity Assessment Tool (see section 3.3).

3.2.4. Units of Analysis and Variables

Two main units of analysis were considered in the study. These were at the group/organisation and individual levels. At the organisational level, the AASDA, that is, the central administration as a whole was considered as a single entity for the purposes of the capacity appraisal. This excluded the decentralised departments even though theoretically the DA is composed of eleven decentralised departments. Seven selected decentralised departments/agencies were, however, assessed regarding the extent to which they collaborated with the DA in the implementation of district development plans. At the individual level, the study incorporated the views of key personnel such as the District Coordinating Director (DCD), District Planning Officer

(DPO), District Budget Analyst (DBA)/District Finance Officer (DFO) and the District Engineer. The District Planning Coordinating Unit (DPCU) of the DA also formed one of the units of analysis because of its peculiar roles in district development planning and implementation activities. The DPO who is the secretary to the DPCU was interviewed. Among the main variables investigated were human and financial resources, logistics/equipment, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) capacity, collaboration and leadership. Each of these variables had a number of attributes (see Table 3.0).

3.2.5 Data Analysis and Presentation

The analysis and presentation of data involved three main stages. The first phase involved assembling all raw data collected from the field in their richness, breadth and depth. These included data gathered from the DA, the sub-structures (Area/Town Councils) and selected heads of decentralised departments. These included the following: health, education, agriculture, community development and social welfare, community water and sanitation, town and country planning and works departments. The data collected were then edited to identify any data gaps. Afterwards, the data were organised, and this took the form of summaries, categorisation and classification into related themes. These themes included human resources, financial resources; logistics/equipment, Monitoring and Evaluation capacity, coordination/collaboration and leadership.

The variables were first measured by simply recording their presence or absence, frequency if present, types and status, that is, whether they were functional or otherwise. Furthermore, the attributes of a variable was measured using the nominal scale. This involved calculating the quantity of attributes of a variable that fell into the various categories. For example, nominal measurement was used in analysing the educational attainment and gender representation of Assembly Members. Extensive use was also made of ordinal measurement which ranked from low to high the capacity of the AASDA on selected indicators from the point of view of the officials of the DA. This was done through the use of capacity self-assessment sheet with a rating scale that ranged from 1 to 5.

Simple statistical techniques such as percentages (achievement rate), coefficient of variation (CV), time series analysis and other techniques for budgetary analysis such as computing the real values or purchasing power of revenues were also used. Forced choice rating method was also used in the measurement of variables. In this case, respondents were presented with equally favourable alternatives from which they made a choice. For example respondents were asked to rate the attractiveness of the AASDA to core staff.

The outcome of the analysis was presented in the form of tables and pictographs to give good visual appreciation. Mainly, the analysis took the form of descriptive, explanatory or interpretive analysis and relied mostly on qualitative data supported by quantitative data where necessary. This is because qualitative research methods and qualitative analysis constitute the appropriate methodology for an institutional assessment. Also by viewing quantitative and qualitative information together, a deeper understanding of AASDA's capacity was achieved. While description was used in presenting events, trends and patterns, explanatory analysis examined why certain events happened and their implications which took the form of discussion.

The research approach and methodology employed finally ended with a presentation of the report from the analysis. This took the form of thematic narrative. In other words, the themes that emerged from organising the data were used as the frame of reference in presenting the outcome of the analysis. Finally, the findings from each of the themes assessed were thoroughly and dispassionately discussed to bring out the planning implications and the bearing such findings have on the overall performance of the DA in managing plan implementation.

Table: 3.0 Thematic Areas and Associated Variables.

Thematic areas	Variables/issues considered
Human resources	Staff strength, training, human development policy, training budgets, transfers, resignation, incentives, performance assessment etc.
Financial resources	Revenue and expenditure pattern, flow of common fund, donor funding, database on rateable items, techniques for revenue projections, revenue collectors, accountability and transparency in the revenue collection system etc.
Logistics/equipment physical resources/	Equipment requirements (type, number existing, number required, status), maintenance plan, maintenance budget, inventory system, availability of an estate manager etc.
Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)	M&E framework, budget for M&E, indicators for M&E, reporting format, M&E plan, M&E team, designated office for plan implementation, DPCU's meeting, incentives for monitoring, existence of database, documentation centre etc.
Coordination/collaboration	Involvement in plan preparation, plan implementation, ways of involvement, suggestions for enhanced coordination, problems of coordination etc.
Leadership	Type of leadership, leadership management style, etc.

Source: Author's construct, April 2008

3.3 Application of Organisational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT)

The Organisational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT) is a tool designed to identify the strengths and weaknesses of an organisation in the areas of predetermined variables and indicators. OCAT thus provides empirical basis for deciding on the kind of capacity interventions required. Generally, OCAT uses an assessment team; however, the tool was customised in this study to suit the prevailing circumstances. Subsequently, the assessment was done by individuals (core staff) and their respective views collated. The customised OCAT consisted of a series of capacity related statements/elements under six main themes/components (see Table 3.0). Scores were assigned to each statement/element in a rating scale of 1 to 5 (see appendix F). The assessment was done by adding the rating scores of all statements/elements under each theme/components by all respondents and divided by the number of statement/elements that have actually been rated. For example all the rating score under M&E were added,

and the result divided by the number of statements/elements (six) that fall under M&E. The themes/components with the highest average score were simply seen as areas where the AASDA had relatively higher capacity and vice versa. The tool was adopted from a document titled *Guidelines on Capacity Building in the Regions* (Rohdewohld and Poppe, 2005). In sum the entire process was designed to identify capacity gaps and areas of strength of the AASDA in managing plan implementation.

3.4 Summary and Conclusion

This chapter has given a detailed and the step-by-step account of the procedures that were followed in carrying out the study. It has also amply justified why the case study was chosen as an approach to the study over the other methods of research. The stringent application of the scientific methods in the investigation is therefore sufficient guarantee of the reliability of the outcome of the study.

After elaborately describing the research method used in the study, the next chapter shall consist of a holistic portrayal of the analysis of the data collected from the field and an objective discussion of the outcome from the analysis.

4. CAPACITY SITUATION AND THE MANAGEMENT OF PLAN IMPLEMENTATION IN THE AASDA

4.0 Introduction

Chapter four of the study presents the outcome of data collected and analysed from the field studies which form the empirical basis in appraising the capacity of AASDA in plan implementation management. The chapter is divided into three broad sections. The first section discusses the current development profile and state of governance of the study area. The second part examines the extent to which the 2002-2005 MTDP of the ASSDA was implemented. In line with this, attempts were made to gauge how some stated objectives and significant milestones set in the 2002-2005 MTDP were achieved. It also assesses how programmes and projects in the named plan were implemented. The underlying reason(s) for successes or failures of implementation are also outlined. Lastly, lessons learnt from the assessment are also documented to serve as a source of reference and a guide to future plan implementation activities.

The third section deals mainly with the appraisal of the capacity of the AASDA in managing plan implementation which is the thrust of the research. The presentation is done along the broad themes forming the basis of inquiry discussed earlier (section 3.2.5). To recap, these themes are human and financial resources, logistics and equipment, monitoring and evaluation capacity, collaboration and leadership. The outcome of the analysis is comprehensively discussed. The chapter ends with a presentation on the outcome of Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT), a framework developed by GTZ and adapted in this study.

4.1 District Profile and Governance Situation

4.1.1 The Study Area: Location and Size

Historically the Asante Akim South District (AASD) was part of and carved out from the erstwhile Asante Akim District Council. This explains its proximate location to the Asante Akim North District (now elevated to a municipal status) which is the other part of the former administrative region. The AASDA was established by Legislative

Instrument (LI 1409) in 1988 as part of the decentralisation policy of the government. Juaso is the District capital and it is situated about 195 kilometres from Accra the national capital and also some 77 kilometres away from Kumasi the second largest city in Ghana. Information about the profile of the District obtained from the MTDP (2006-2009) and the website (www.ghanadistricts) are presented as follows:

The AASDA is one of the twenty-seven Districts in the Asante region. The District has an estimated total surface area of about 1217 kilometre square (472.4 square miles) representing approximately 5 percent and 0.5 percent of the land sizes of Ashanti region and Ghana respectively. The AASDA is located at the eastern part of the Asante region with the eastern frontier forming the geographical and administrative boundary separating the Asante from the Eastern region. The District shares common borders with the Asante Akim North District to the north and the Kwahu South District to the west. Other adjoining Districts are the Amansie East District to the south-west, while the south-eastern limit is bordered by the Birim North District in the Eastern region. Also traversing the District capital is a thoroughfare and soon to be operational rail line linking Accra to Kumasi. This makes the District capital highly accessible to the rest of the country. This ease of accessibility to the District capital therefore has the potential of attracting and retaining staff as staff can travel with relative ease. Appendix A shows the study area in regional and national contexts.

4.1.2 Settlements

The AASDA has a total of 103 settlements of varying sizes, shapes and importance with Juaso, Obogu, Bompata, Dampong, Kurofa, Adomfe and Ofoase being the major ones. Out of these settlements, only two namely Juaso and Obogu have attained urban status giving a rural-urban split of 83.5 percent and 16.5 percent respectively. In line with the pattern of population distribution, provision of social amenities and services are skewed in favour of the relatively larger settlements of Juaso, Obogu, Ofoase, Bompata and others leaving many of the settlements with no or limited access to basic social facilities. Overwhelming number of the people living in the rural areas (settlements with less than 5000 inhabitants) are thus deprived of access to basic social amenities since the rural areas are the least developed.

4.1.3 Demography, Ethnicity and Religion

The projected total population of the District as at 2005 is put at 108674 people with average inter-censal growth rate of about 2.5 percent per annum. The current population growth rate is about 2.3 percent which compares favourably with the regional and national growth rates of 3.4 percent and 2.7 percent respectively. Available figures from National Population and Housing Census (2000) puts the District's population density at eighty persons per square kilometres as against the regional population density of 148.1 persons per square kilometre, thus making the AASDA one of the least populous Districts in the Asante region. Males outnumber females in the District. Males constitute about 50.4 percent of the total population compared to 49.6 percent who are females. This gives a sex ratio of 100.7 males to 100 females signifying a conspicuous departure from the national trend where female population mostly exceeds that of their male counterparts. The population in the District is generally youthful with a potential labour force of about 52 percent.

The AASDA is ethnically diverse with the native Asantes forming about sixty-five percent of the District's population. Other ethnic groupings comprising of the Akyems, Kwahus and Akwapims constitute 10, 4.7 and 5.5 percent respectively. Akans (Asantes, Akyems, and Akwapims) form 85.2 percent of the population in the District. The remaining 14.8 percent of the District's population is accounted for by ethnic groups from the Northern regions, Ewes, Gas and Krobos. The dominant religion is Christianity. The religious composition in the District is as follows: Christians (68.8 percent), Islam (16.5 percent) and 8.3 percent being followers of traditional religion. The rest is made up of minor religions.

4.1.4 The Local Economy

The local economy is sustained by agriculture and farming naturally becomes the predominant occupation. Farming is generally on subsistence basis with farmers cultivating an indeterminate mix of food and cash crops. Animal husbandry is very minimal and undertaken as part time business or complementary to crop farming. The agricultural sector employs about seventy-two percent of the population. The industrial sector is the least developed in the District. Few industrial activities take place in the District and these are mainly wood based industries, block factories and agro-based industries. Apart from akpeteshie distilleries, cassava processing, oil palm extraction,

carpentry and blacksmithing which are small scale enterprises with sole ownership, no manufacturing factories of industrial status and significance exist in the District. The service sector is dominated by hairdressing and tailoring with the recent addition being mobile phone operators ('space-to-space'). The industrial and service sectors employ 6 percent and 21.6 percent of the labour force respectively.

4.1.5 Governance of Development Administration

The AASDA is the highest planning, administrative and political authority in charge of development administration of the District. Like any other DA the AASDA is responsible for the overall development of the District by preparing and executing development plans and many other functions in accordance with section 10(3) of the local government Act (Act 462). Records made available indicate that the General Assembly, that is, the legislative wing of the DA is made up of sixty Assembly Members, forty-two of whom are elected members while eighteen were appointed. Fourteen of the Assembly Members (23 percent) are women. Records at the DA further indicate that out of the fourteen female Assembly Members, nine (64 percent) were appointed while five (36 percent) were elected.

Forty (67 percent) of the current members are in the assembly for their first term, nineteen (32 percent) for their second term with only one member being in the assembly for the forth term. Educational background of members is as follow: Five members (8 percent) have first degree and above, twelve members (20 percent) are Certificate 'A' holders, while sixteen members with Middle School Leaving Certificate (MSLC) account for 27 percent. Two members (4 percent) hold HND certificates, with the rest being products from agriculture and cocoa colleges, commercial and vocational schools, forestry, nursing and so forth. Thirty percent (18) of the assembly members are farmers, twenty-three percent (14) teachers, one legal officer and a medical officer.

The educational and occupational composition of the Assembly shows that Assembly Members with the least educational attainment (MSLC) dominate the Assembly. This may affect the deliberative functions of the Assembly as people with higher levels of education generally tend to be conscientious.

The AASDA has two Town Councils at Juaso and Obogu. There are also nine Area Councils at Asankare, Banka, Bansa, Bompata, Dwendwenase, Komeso, Morso,

Nnadieso and Ofoase, ninety-five Unit Committees and forty-two electoral areas. Appendix B shows the spatial distributions of the Town and Area Councils. The assembly also has one Member of Parliament who is an ex-officio member. In consonance with section 21(b) of the Act 462, the AASDA has in place an Executive Committee which superintends over the administrative and executive functions of the assembly. The Executive Committee is made up of twenty-one members. Also in place are the five mandatory sub-committees complementing the efforts of the Executive Committee. These are: Development Planning, Social Services on education and health, Works, Justice and Security, and Finance and Administration sub-committees.

In addition to the above mentioned sub-committees, the District also has other committees which advise the DA on certain sectors or issues of significance to the AASDA. These committees are the Agricultural, Investment & Trade, and Audit Implementation committees. The DA has a Public Relations and Complaint sub-committee with the Presiding Member (PM) as its chairperson. This committee receives complaints on the conduct of the assembly staff, institute an inquiry and reports to the office of the DA. There is also an encouraging presence of decentralised departments and public agencies that form the new decentralised system. Among some of the agencies or units of the decentralised departments that are not present and operational in the District are the Ghana Library Board, Rural Housing and many others. In all, eight units or agencies are yet to be established. Details of departments and agencies present in the District and the organisational structure of the AASDA are shown in appendices C and D respectively.

The AASDA is encumbered with a number of development challenges. Key among these challenges is inadequate staff for the proper functioning of the Town and Area councils. Moreover, the few available and qualified staff are unwilling to accept postings to such communities. Undervaluation of properties also poses significant challenge to the operations of the AASDA, the result of which is inaccurate data and consequently low income to the AASDA. Related to this is untimely release and inadequacy of DA's Common Fund. The AASDA is also faced with the problem of inadequate skills and logistics for revenue collectors leading to low revenue that are accrued to the Assembly.

The effect of the problem of low local revenue mobilisation is that the AASDA is rendered incapable of recruiting its own revenue staff. On the other hand, public interest in working with the Town and Area Councils is also low due to non-payment of allowances. Other challenges include inadequate office accommodation and equipment for Town and Area Councils for smooth operation of the councils.

4.2 Extent of Implementation: Review of 2002-2005 MTDP

The overall goal of the 2002-2005 MTDP was to ensure growth and total development of the District through capacity building, job creation and access to social and economic facilities. In view of this, a number of projects and programmes were earmarked for implementation within the planned period in a bid to realise this goal. These projects and programmes cut across all segments of the society so as to ensure balanced development. In all a total of seventy-five projects and programmes were to be implemented by the end of year 2005 with the AASDA as the lead implementing agency.

However, a review of the 2002-2005 MTDP indicates that at the end of the planned period, ten projects and programmes constituting about 13.3 percent were never implemented. A total of forty-six projects and programmes (61.3 percent) had been completed, while nineteen (25.4 percent) of the projects and programmes which got started were not completed within the planned period (on-going). Out of the forty-six completed projects and programmes, twelve (26 percent) exceeded their targets by a low of about 105.9 percent to as high as 400 percent. That is, the number to be provided exceeded the targets set. For example the target was to provide eleven school blocks, but fifteen were provided due to support from GETFUND and HIPC.

Mostly, all the areas where set targets were exceeded received additional support in the form of inflows of revenue or equipment. The additional funding came from sources such as the GETFUND, HIPC, VIP and Hunger Project. For example more refuse disposal equipment was supplied by the MLGE&RD, whereas provision of toilet facilities received additional funding from HIPC. Of the on-going projects and programmes, the study noted that the actual work done ranged between twenty and forty percent. Between physical and non-physical projects, the review disclosed that implementation rate was higher in non-physical projects than in physical projects.

Lack of funding and inadequate funds were the major reasons adduced for the non-implementation of ten projects, while nineteen projects and programmes had not been completed (on-going) even at the end of the planned period. For instance, in the review of the 2002-2005 MTDP of the AASDA, lack of funding and inadequate funds were cited in as many as twenty-one times as the reason why certain projects and programmes were not implemented at all. The same reason also explains why projects at various stages of implementation were not completed at the end of the planned period.

The review of the 2002-2005 MTDP also brought to the fore the fact that external inflows which presumably were least anticipated, unbudgeted for and unreliable rather became very instrumental in meeting certain targets and in some cases exceeding the set targets. So what would have been the situation without the inflows? However, in spite of all the inflows, some projects were not implemented at all while others which got started were not completed as noted already. Normally the additional revenue should have translated into the DA embarking on new projects and programmes. The implication of the above is that even the feat achieved in the implementation of certain projects and programmes would not have been possible without the external support. Besides the issue of funding, one of the following could be inferred from the foregoing: either the plan was not realistic, unattainable or that overly ambitious targets were set, or the plan was not based on a careful examination of the capacity of the DA to implement it.

The review also showed that projects that were not implemented mostly included those requiring huge capital outlay. Examples include projects such as the completion of bungalow for District Director of education, construction of 150 bed hostel for 3rd and 2nd cycle schools, mortuary at the Juaso District Hospital, acquisition of X-ray equipment, provision of police station at Juaso and many more. It can be inferred from the foregoing that the plan was not based on a sound analysis of the DA's ability to generate the needed resources to implement all the projects and programmes. It can thus be concluded that there was a mismatch between the MTDP and the available resources. In other words, there was little or lack of coordination between the MTDP and commensurate resources to implement it. The outcome of the review supports the view of Denhardt and Grubbs (2003) that without implementation plans remain sterile, and advocate a connection between planning and execution. It also reinforces the assertion

by Conyers and Hills (1984) that if a plan or project does not result in the changes necessary to achieve the desired goals and objectives then it is, in effect, meaningless.

Lessons learnt from the plan review are that the preparation of district's MTDP must take into account resources that would be available to achieve full implementation. In line with this, the district must not undertake the construction of too many projects at the same time, or implement projects as and when funds are available. That is the DA should synchronise the commencement of projects with the release of funds meant to implement them.

4.3 Appraisal of the Capacity of AASDA.

4.3.1 Human Resources

(i). Staffing Strength

Since the quantity and quality of human resource of the AASDA is indispensable in managing the implementation of its MTDPs, the study extensively analysed the staffing situation of the DA (central administration) with emphasis on the core staff. Issues critically examined were the strength of key personnel and their level of qualification, staff development policies, incentives, working experiences with DAs, and many others. In effect this section assessed the technical capacity of the AASDA and mainly emphasised on particular areas of professional expertise and knowledge. The core staffing position of the District is presented Table 4.0 overleaf:

Table 4.0: Core Staffing Position of AASDA

	REQUIRED		EXISTING		Working Experience with DAs	No. of years with AASDA
	No. required	Qualification required	No. present	Existing qualifications		
DCD	1	1 st degree	1	BA,DPA,CPA, CUM	21years	2 years
Deputy DCD	2	1 st degree	1	BA, MBA	2 years	2years
DPO	2	1 st degree	1	Bsc, PGD	15 years	2years
Asst. DPO	1	1 st degree	-	-	-	-
DBA	1	1 st degree	1	BA	13 years	4 years
Budget officer	1	1 st degree	-	-	-	-
DFO	1	1 st degree, ACCA (final)	1	ACCA II		2 years
Asst. DFO	1	ACCA I	1	ACCA II		1 year
Dist engineer	2	Bsc. Civil	2	HND	7 years	4,2 years
Internal Auditors	5	Bsc. ACCA I,II	1	ACCA II	1 year	1 year
Revenue Superintendent	1	SSCE	1	MSLC	31 years	19 years
Town and Country Plg. Officer.	1	1 st degree	-	-	-	-

Source: Author's field survey, April 2008

As can be seen from the table in Table 4.0 above, key positions such as Deputy DCD, Assistant Development Planning Officer, Budget Officer, and Internal Auditors are vacant. Additionally, the study revealed that the Assembly has no substantive Town and Country Planning Officer. For this reason the physical planner stationed at the AANDA also takes charge of the AASDA. Although an office is maintained at the AASDA to provide the physical planning needs of the Assembly, only two staff are kept. The study also showed that the DA does not have enough revenue collectors.

Apart from the inadequacy in terms of numbers in certain categories of core staff, the study again revealed that the DA lacked the requisite skills in certain positions. This is because the occupants of those positions do not possess the preferable and recommended qualifications. Among some of the higher qualifications required by the DA are civil engineers, quantity surveyors and chartered accountants. In sum, the core staff audit indicated that the existing staffing situation of the AASDA does not match up with the actual workload in plan implementation. Although the District lacked some essential staff, it was observed that the competencies of some of the key staff available were appropriate for managing plan implementation. For instance the DCD, Deputy DCD and the DPO had qualifications over and above the required minimum of first degree (see Table 4.0).

(ii). Job Market and Skills Availability

Interactions with the DCD on skills availability and the staffing situation of the DA showed that skills required are readily available in the job market. However data gathered further suggested that individuals with the skills and expertise required by the DAs are generally unwilling to be absorbed into the civil service which employs DA's staff. The unwillingness in joining the DA thus makes such skills become scarce on the job market. This state of affairs the study gathered ultimately results in difficulty in the recruitment of highly skilled labour to the DA. Another drawback is that the recruitment processes take an unduly long time. The investigations also revealed that although records of the DA's staff were properly kept, these records were not stored in electronic format. This makes compilation of staff records slow and also difficult to retrieve.

(iii). Training, Incentives and Transfers

The study noted that the AASDA had a policy of training its staff and this is evidenced by the existence of a course plan which determined the training needs of each category of staff. The selection of staff due for training is determined by management, and this decision is arrived at after appraisal of the training needs of individual staff. However, officials admitted that budgetary allocation for staff training was inadequate. The explanation offered was that, resource allocation for each financial year is based primarily on the number of projects and programmes to be implemented during the year. Hence training budgets depended very much on budget surplus. Budgetary allocation spanning a period of three years is provided in the Table 4.1 below:

Table 4.1: Budgetary Allocations for Staff Training

Years	Estimates (GH¢)	Actual (GH¢)	Gap	Percentage (shortfall)
2005	6000	5666.44	333.56	5.9
2006	6000	5613.65	386.35	6.4
2007	7000	4314.4	2685.6	38.4

Source: Author's field survey, April 2008

From Table 4.1 above, it can be observed that although budget for staff training increased over the period, the actual amount spent declined with the gap between the estimates and the actual amount spent on training increasing from 5.9 to 38.4 percent between 2005 and 2007. On the average there was a shortfall of about GH¢1,135.17 over the three years. It can therefore be inferred from the gradual decline in the actual funds made available for training that, less importance is laid on staff training. Although much clearer picture would have been portrayed if the provided data had included that of 2002-2004, nevertheless, no significant difference would have emerged based on the existing trend.

(iv). Frequency of Training Programmes

Training courses are mostly organised for newly recruited staff. Courses often pursued include, Certificate in Public Administration (CPA) and Diploma in Public Administration (DPA). These are offered at the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) lasting for three to four months. The only record of staff training in 2002-2005 made available was a course in Revenue Mobilisation Strategy attended by the Revenue Superintendent at the Local Government Training

Institute in the year 2002. This lasted for two months. However it was found out that a number of training courses have been outlined for the 2008 financial year. These included DPA for the deputy DCD and Strategic Planning Training for staff of the planning unit all at GIMPA. Others include Computer Training for core staff and defensive driving for drivers. It was however noted that the DA has no formal links or memorandum of understanding with any training institution that provides the training needs of the DA's staff.

The study also revealed that management occasionally assess the performance of staff, and the probable penalty for non-performance is withholding promotion of the affected staff. Staff turnover rate in the DA was identified to be high, although there were no records of transfers and resignation within the years 2002-2005. The staff turnover rate is confirmed by the data in Table 4.0 above, as many of the core staff presently at post have been in the District for an average of two years. The study also gathered that the main reason for staff transfer is to fill another vacancy in same employment in another District. Meanwhile the DA has no control over staff transfers as this is done at the Regional Coordinating Council (RCC). Lastly respondents were of the view that no incentive package existed for staff.

The analysis of the DA's staffing situation clearly validates the earlier observation by Kokor and Kroes (2000) who state that "the quality of mix as well as levels of staff in the professional and technical grades available to the DAs is generally inadequate". The writers further concluded that while there are shortages in some Districts, others do not have the requisite professional staff such as Development Planners, Budget and Accounting officers at post. But in the case of AASDA, the positions of a Deputy DCD and a Physical Planner are also vacant in addition to an Assistant Development Planner and a Budget Officer. Botchie (2000) also writes that in spite of the pivotal role of the DAs in the new decentralised development planning system, there are still inadequate human resources with requisite skills and competence to perform the various tasks of the assembly. Lastly Diaw (1997), also reports that the inability of most DAs to perform their statutory functions is due mainly to lack of adequate and technical personnel in the Districts, which have failed to attract skilled manpower. He attributed this to lack of appropriate incentives and distortions in the salary structure of the public system. The finding from the study is therefore in line with what available literature suggests.

The scanty records on staff training provided, however, seem to suggest the DA places less premium on staff training and development. This statement is supported by the annual budgetary allocations for staff training. Apart from the fact that budget allocations for staff training were inadequate, the actual amount spent on training also recorded a downward trend between 2005 and 2007 (see Table 4.1). The commitment of the DA's management to staff training and development thus found expression in the budgetary allocations for training and the actual amount spent over period of time. The assertion that management places less emphasis on staff training and development was confirmed by the fact that only 58.8 percent of all training programmes for staff in the 2002-2005 MTDP were implemented.

As observed earlier, staff turnover at the DA was adjudged to be high. Furthermore transfers are controlled from the RCC level. Logical inferences can therefore be made that the less investment in the training and development of staff could be attributed to the fact that staff who receive additional training may be transferred after huge sums of funds have been expended on them. However as already noted, investments in training holds a good promise for career prospects, promotion, increased earnings by way of higher wages and a great source of staff motivation. However training is just one alternative of increasing labour productivity, a lot of other factors come into play. But, training still remains the means of upgrading the skills and the knowledge of staff by exposing them to the newest trends of doing things.

4.3.2 Logistics, Equipment and Physical Resource Situation

This segment examined the presence or otherwise of logistics and equipment considered essential in carrying out effective plan implementation. It involved stocktaking of logistics and equipment that the Assembly had compared to what it required. The condition or status of the available logistics and equipment also constituted a key area of interest in the analysis. Table 4.2 gives a summary of the logistics and equipment standing of the ASSDA.

Table 4.2: Logistics and Equipment Status of the AASDA

TYPES OF EQUIPMENT	NO. REQUIRED	NO. EXISTING	GAP	CONDITION OF EXISTING LOGISTICS AND EQUIPMENT
Vehicles	10	8	2	good
Motor bikes	6	2	4	no comments provided
Computers	18	9	9	fairly good
Photocopiers	4	2	2	one is functional
Fax machines	2	1	1	not functional
Telephones (fixed)	5	1	4	not functional
MIS	-	-		not available
Flip charts	2	2		good
Others:				
LCD (projector)	1	1		good

Source: Author's field survey, April 2008

From Table 4.2, it is observed that a shortfall was recorded in almost all the logistics and equipment considered in the analysis when the logistics and equipment available is compared to what is required. The exception to this trend was noticed with Flip Charts and LCD Projector where the number existing paralleled what was required. In some instances, and as is it in the case of computers, only half of what is required by the DA was actually available translating into a backlog of about fifty percent.

In addition to the shortfalls recorded in almost all the logistics and equipment examined, some of them were also noticed to be unserviceable. For example of the two photocopiers that the DA had, only one was in good working condition. The same applies to the fax machines. The study also revealed that the DA had neither a maintenance plan nor any existing contractual arrangements with any company that carries out routine maintenance of its equipment. However a budget is provided annually for the maintenance of equipment. The DA as an institution has no Estate Manager who takes charge of its assets including logistics and equipment even though such a position has been created in the DA's organisational structure (see appendix B). Also the DA has no Management Information System (MIS) infrastructure. Lastly, officials interviewed held the view that amongst the logistics and equipment considered; vehicles, computers and photocopiers were the most vital for managing plan implementation. In addition to this, the view of the researcher is that good communication network that will facilitate information flow among stakeholders is also vital.

Outcome from the investigations gives sufficient grounds for the need to re-tool or reinvigorate the logistics and equipment capacity of the assembly to enable it perform its assigned roles particularly in plan implementation management. The inadequate numbers coupled with the fact that others such as telephones, fax machines are unserviceable have implications on the operations of the DA. Undoubtedly, the lack of telephones (fixed) which is a relatively cheaper alternative, may affect the ability of the DA to communicate and exchange information, particularly on the progress of plan implementation among stakeholders and the outside world.

Similarly the ability of management to make timely and decisive decisions would be affected if communication is hampered. This is against the backdrop of the fact that modern day management thrives on unrestricted access to, and dissemination of, information. So even if the DA has no functional telephone lines, then asking for MIS may be ambitious. Indeed one of the surest ways to facilitate collaboration among the decentralised departments in plan implementation management could be improved, regular and effective means of information flow particularly among members of the DPCU. Again the inadequacy implies the few equipment available would be overused which can affect their life.

Another important disclosure from the analysis is that the DA had no maintenance plan to routinely service and maintain all the existing equipment and logistics. The main consequences of not having a maintenance plan that is rigidly adhered to is that, most of the logistics and equipment will have truncated life span. This probably explains why one of the photocopiers and the only fax machine were not in good working condition. Similarly information gathered indicated that most of the computers were infested with virus. The effect of this is corrupted files and subsequent lost of important documents as a soft copy of the 2002-2005 MTDP could not be retrieved. The lack of proper maintenance culture also has the effect of the DA incurring huge future cost often associated with major breakdown of equipment which may sometimes call for total replacement of damaged parts. The lack of maintenance plan may again explain why none of the logistics and facilities was described as being in excellent condition.

The absence of an Estate Manager also implies that proper inventory of all logistics and equipment such as: their ages, life span, due dates for maintenance and disposal are not kept. In his study of the Asunafo North District, Habtamu (2005) came out with similar

findings regarding inadequate logistics and equipment of that DA. This also falls in line with the observation by Conyers and Hills (1984) that, the inability to implement even realistic plans is due to the fact that resources (*including logistics*), are unavailable in the right quantities at the right place and at the right time.

4.3.3 Financial Resources and Budgeting

The analysis of the financial resources situation of the AASDA centred mainly on the various sources of revenue available to the DA, the most predictable source (s), the stability and timeliness of the various sources particularly the DACF, as well as the trend and pattern of growth in revenue and expenditure among others. Various techniques and indices of budget analysis were employed. In effect, the financial capacity analysis sought to determine the fiscal performance of the DA over the period under consideration. The outcome of the analysis is presented as follows:

(i). Sources, Achievement Rates and Stability in Revenue Generation

Like any other DA in the country, the various sources of revenue to the AASDA consist largely of Internally Generated Revenue (IGF) and government grants in the form of DACF. Other sources of revenue include donor funding like the European Union Micro Projects and allocations from the GETFUND and the HIPC relief.

The internal sources of revenue to DA are made up of rates, fees and fines, licenses, rent to mention but a few. The various sources of revenue and items of expenditure to the AASDA, the absolute figures both budgeted and actual for the period 2002-2007 are shown in Tables 4.3 and 4.4 respectively. All figures have been converted to the new Ghana cedis (GH¢).

Table 4.3 Revenue Stream of AASDA for 2002-2007

Revenue	2002Est	2002Act	2003Est	2003Act	2004Est	2004Act
Rates	7593.3824	7586.96244	11041.872	8641.872	13099.2795	10146.9893
Lands	4045	10256.4	7530	10262	13595	23546.5
Fees & fines	8529.2	10867.65	12115.2	10252.91	13180.2	15459
License	4205.9	4013.22	7850.9	6987.85	7984.4	9293.5
Rent	1521.6	951.7	2557.872	1709.2	3518.4	2386.1687
Grants	445734.4657	405095.9969	902078.572	1078349.971	1341723.337	1041225.518
Investments	0	0	434.63	0	2200	1215
Misc.	1000	1208.1794	1600	434.63	1550	3991.7556
Total	472539.5481	439980.1087	945209.046	1116638.433	1396850.617	1107264.432
Revenue	2005Est	2005Act	2006Est	2006Act	2007Est	2007Act
Rates	15897.3991	11505.8	22383.4108	45384.832	50586.31	43232.14
Lands	28560	23981.5	29190	97365.5	59590	26165.5
Fees & fines	24397.2	220343.8	25062	23304.56	26255	20213.2
License	16153	9575.2	21156.5	11652.71	20396	25759.9
Rent	4156	2580.9	4108	3080.6	3906.8	3000.3
Grants	1027282.581	567082.7877	924458.834	998129.0325	1469843.36	663606.7
Investments	1000	328.3	1500	1094.9	2500	554
Misc.	2005	1076.7148	2035	1084.991062	2135	6637.9
Total	1119451.18	856475.0025	1029893.745	1181097.126	1635212.47	789169.64

Source: Author's field survey, April 2008.

NB: All figures in Ghana Cedis (GHC)
Est. (Estimates). Act. (Actual).

Table 4.4: Expenditure of AASDA for 2002-2007

Expenditure Items	2002Est	2002Act	2003Est	2003Act	2004Est	2004Act
Personal Emolument	32790	41935.8217	42098.1853	59838.4241	56328.5592	64578.1743
Transport & Travelling	9013	14378.2458	14324	17131.9235	19005	19396.6452
General Expenses	3785	6809.267	7777	6622.8092	8686.7	9901.8862
Maint. Rep & Renewals	220	648.575	2200	28.273	2200	508.0375
Other Current Expenditure	6835	12756.317	13753.8	13491.112	20581	14906.0941
Capital Expenditure	418863	336248.8057	864800	894990.5367	1290000	975164.6827
Total Expenditure	471506	412777.0322	944952.9853	992103.0785	1396801.259	1084455.52
Expenditure Items	2005Est	2005Act	2006Est	2006Act	2007Est	2007Act
Personal Emolument	65909.2747	68362.9863	78575.14	98587.5164	148363.36	137949.6
Transport & Travelling	35077.1	22221.7213	42418.2	41295.9981	52883.68	37975.97
General Expenses	13826.2	11584.73	14626.9	27535.4467	24135.6	17343.61
Maint. Rep & Renewals	3500	2742.7	3500	10523.5885	9000	896
Other Current Expenditure	28041	24138.9101	33685	55966.7954	48685	34658.16
Capital Expenditure	973000	617035.4567	857000	1023422.461	1352000	512955.36
Total Expenditure	1119353.575	746086.5044	1029805.24	1257331.806	1635067.64	741778.7

Source: Author's field survey, April 2008.

NB: All figures in Ghana Cedis (GH¢)
Est. (Estimates). Act. (Actual).

The achievement rates or the Revenue Collection Index (RIC) of each of the revenue items/sources were also estimated. The purpose was to assess the quality of the forecasting and how the flow of the various sources of revenue over the time. The rate measures the actual amount (revenue) realised out of the total estimated, and it is calculated by dividing the estimated revenue by the actual and multiplying the result by hundred (actual ÷ estimate × 100).

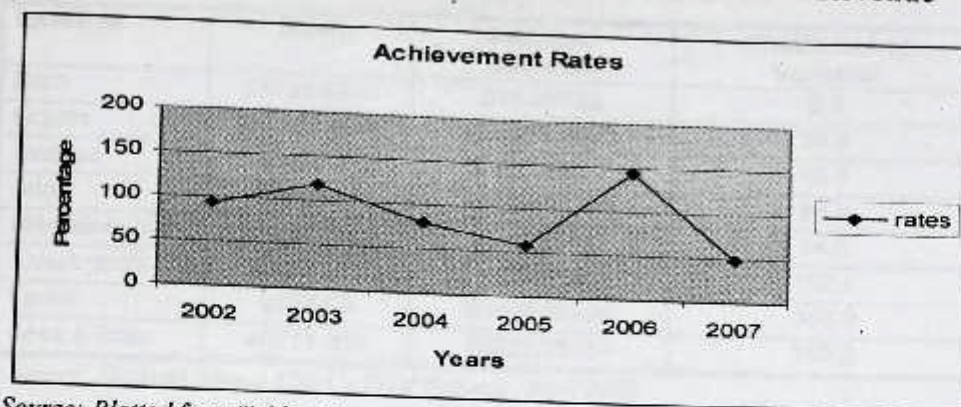
The AASDA achieved 93.1 percent of all revenue estimates in 2002 (the aggregate of all revenue sources in a year). This increased to 118.1 percent in 2003 exceeding its targets by 18.9 percent. It however, took a nosedive recording a rate of 58.8 percent in 2005. The oscillatory trend continued with the rate plummeting to a low of 48.26 percent in 2007 financial year. A table and corresponding graph showing the trends in the overall achievement rates over the years is provided in Table 4.5 and figure 4.0. Besides, the total performance of individual revenue source for the period under consideration was also examined. This looked at the cumulative achievement rate for each revenue source by simply adding all the rates achieved over the successive years (column eight). From the rank order in Table 4.5, the achievement rate was highest in Land revenue source and lowest in Investments.

Table 4.5: Achievement Rates for each Revenue Source

YEAR/ DESCRIPTIO N	2002 %	2003 %	2004 %	2005 %	2006 %	2007 %	TOTAL FOR 6YRS	RANK
Lands	253.36	136.3	173.2	84.0	333.6	43.9	1024.36	1 st
Miscella- neous	120.81	26.3	257.5	53.7	53.3	310.9	822.51	2 nd
Rates	101.1	77.9	77.5	72.4	202.8	85.5	617.2	3 rd
Fees & fines	127.42	84.6	117.3	90.3	92.9	76.9	589.42	4 th
Licences	95.4	89.0	116.4	59.3	55.1	126.3	541.5	5 th
Grants	90.9	119.5	77.6	57.1	107.9	45.2	498.2	6 th
Rent	62.5	66.8	67.8	62.1	74.9	76.8	410.9	7 th
Investment	0.0	0.0	55.2	32.8	72.9	22.2	183.1	8 th
Total	93.1	118.1	79.3	58.8	144.7	48.3		

Source: Derived from AASDA's Trial Balance, April 2008

Figure 4.0: Graph Showing the Achievement Rates in Total Revenue



Source: Plotted from Table 4.5

Closely linked to the achievement rate (aggregate of all revenue sources) is the growth pattern of the actual total revenue the DA mobilised over the period. Like the performance rate, the actual total revenue also experienced upward and downward spiral. The study indicated that the actual revenue mobilised (both IGF and Grants) increased between 2002 and 2003, dropped in 2004 and 2005, increased again in 2006 and experienced a decline in 2007. A connection between the achievement rates and the total revenue realised was observed as the two moved in the same direction.

The stability of the various revenue sources was also assessed. This was to ascertain whether the forecasting technique used provided data or figures that were close to reality. In other words, the purpose was to identify revenue sources that are more predictable or otherwise. This was done by calculating the coefficient of variation (CV) of each of the revenue sources and comparing the results. That is simply dividing the standard deviation of each revenue source by the average amount realised and multiplying the results by hundred ($CV = \text{standard deviation} / \text{average} \times 100$).

The underlying logic is that the higher the CV, the more variable or unpredictable the revenue source. From the analysis, Rent and Grants are the more predictable sources of revenue to the DA, while revenue from Investments, Lands, Fines and fees are the most fluctuating and the least reliable. The reason why rent is more stable could be that it is made up of items which can easily be located. Examples include market stores, lorry parks, and Assembly's staff quarters. The outcome is shown in Table 4.6 overleaf.

Table 4.6: Stability of Sources of Revenue to AASDA

Revenue	Mean	Standard Deviation	Coefficient of Variation	Rank
Rent	24731.4259	816.28195	3.3	1st
Grants	877161.4894	304973.6895	34.8	2nd
License	10389.71	6591.83869	63.4	3rd
rates	18829.9684	15826.58925	84.0	4th
Miscellaneous	2198.02141	2080.28393	94.6	5th
Investments	728.35375	743.98902	102.1	6th
Lands	26587.8	29498.09298	110.9	7th
Fees & fines	40717.065	72725.25157	178.6	8th

Source: Derived from AASDA's Trial Balance, April 2008

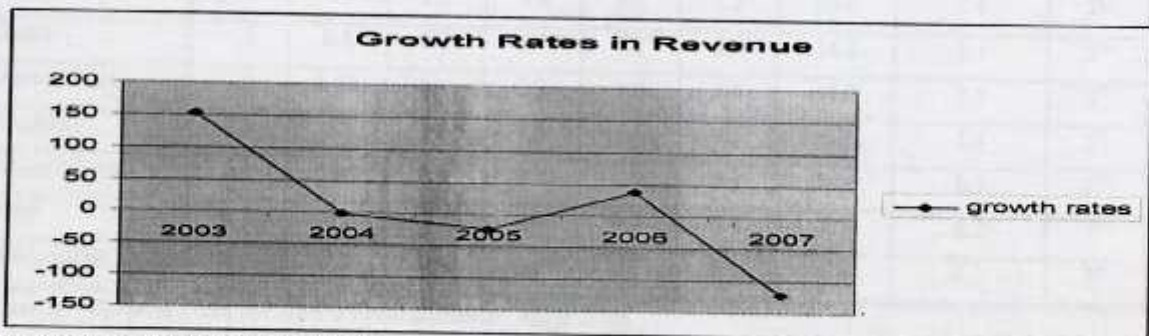
(ii). Growth Rates, Nominal and Real Revenue

The rate of growth in the total revenue to the DA was calculated in order to arrive at an estimated rate of increase or decrease in revenue generation over the years. On the average the revenue of the DA grew at 9.5 percent annually between 2002 and 2007. The highest rate of increase of 153.8 percent occurred between 2002 and 2003. Afterwards, the DA achieved negative rates of growth between 2003 and 2005 with the highest drop of negative 120.7 occurring in 2006 and 2007. The reason in the drop could be due to a drop in the district's share of the DACF as a result of deductions at source. Table 4.7 and the corresponding Figure 4.1 shows the movements in the rate of growth in revenue of the AASDA over the period.

Table 4.7: Growth Rate in Revenue

YEAR	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
Growth rate	153.8%	-0.8	-22.6	37.9	-120.7

Source: Derived from AASDA's Trial Balance, April 2008

Figure 4.1: Graph Showing Growth Rates in Revenue

Source: Plotted from Table 4.7 above

The analysis also considered the real value of the revenue accrued to the DA over the period. The purpose was to ascertain the purchasing power of the revenue the DA

generated by adjusting for inflation to enable a meaningful comparison over the years. The analysis shows that the average inflation rate for the period under consideration was 14.8 percent. This implies that the purchasing power reduced by 14.8 percent. In other words, the DA could buy 14.8 percent less of the nominal value of the revenue collected. The highest fall in the nominal value occurred in year 2003 where inflation was 23.3 percent. But this is relatively better than the year 2000 where inflation was about 40 percent. Table 4.8 below shows the real and the nominal values of revenue the DA generated after deflating the nominal values.

Table 4.8: Nominal versus Real Revenue

Years	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Nominal Value	439980.1087	1116638.433	1107264.432	856475.0025	1181097.126	789169.64
Deflator	0.848	0.764	0.882	0.852	0.895	0.8725
Real Value	373103.1322	853111.7632	976607.2288	729716.7021	1057081.927	688550.511

Source: Derived from AASDA's Trail Balance, April 2008

(iii). Percentage Contribution of Each Revenue Source

The percentage contribution of each of the revenue source to the overall revenue mobilisation of the DA was also analysed. The purpose was to identify which of the sources is significant to the revenue base of the DA and where attention is needed most. The outcome is presented in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Percentage Contribution of Each Revenue Source

YEARS/ REVENUE	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	TOTAL FOR 6YRS.	AVERAGE %	RANK
Grants	92.1	96.6	94.0	89.3	84.4	84.1	540.5	90.1	1 st
Lands	2.3	0.9	2.2	3.6	8.3	3.3	20.6	3.4	2 nd
Rates	1.7	0.8	0.9	1.7	3.8	5.4	14.3	2.4	3 rd
Fees & fines	2.5	0.86	1.4	3.3	1.9	2.6	12.6	2.1	4 th
Licences	0.9	0.6	0.8	1.5	1.1	3.3	8.2	1.4	5 th
Miscellaneous	0.3	0.04	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.8	1.84	0.3	6 th
Rent	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.4	1.7	0.2	7 th
Investments	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.1	8 th

Source: Derived from AASDA's Trail Balance, April 2008

From Table 4.9, Grants contributed the highest to the DA's revenue over the six year period. This was followed at a distant second by revenue from Lands with

Investments contributing the least (0.1%). Grants here include the DACF and any other funding apart from those generated internally.

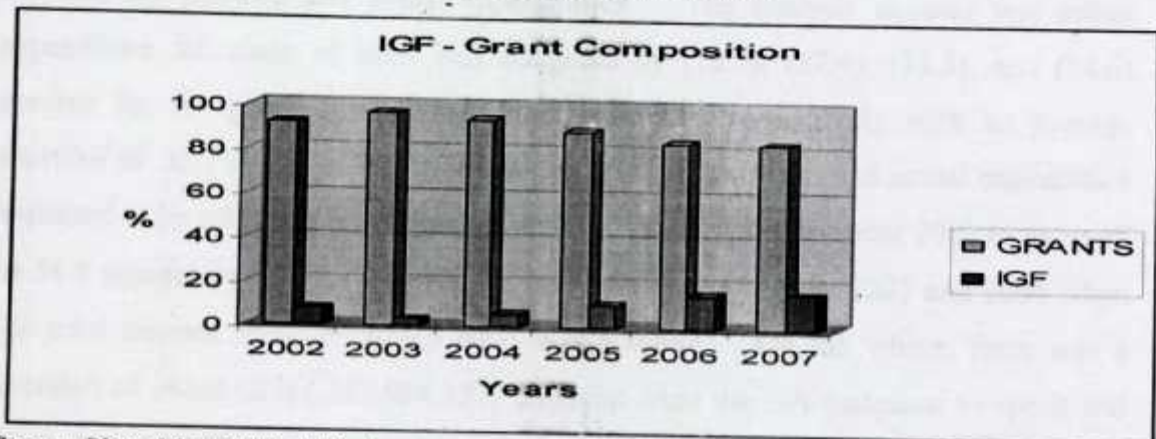
The study also looked at the percentage contribution of the two main classifications of revenue sources namely the IGF and Grants to the overall revenue generation of the DA. The result showed that grants remained the greatest source of revenue to the DA. Averagely, grants contributed about 90.1 percent to the Assembly's revenue over the six year period, with the IGF contributing an average of 9.9 percent. Table 4.10 shows the IGF and Grants composition of the DA's revenue with Figure 4.2 showing the corresponding histogram.

4.10: Percentage Composition of IGF and Grants

YEAR/ REVENUE	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	AVERAGE
Grants	92.1	96.6	94.0	89.3	84.4	84.1	90.1
IGF	7.9	3.4	6.0	10.7	15.6	15.9	9.9

Source: Derived from AASDA Trial Balance, 2002-2007

Figure 4.2: Histogram of IGF and Grants Composition



Source: Plotted from Table 4.10 above.

The results clearly showed that the contributions of grants and IGF to the overall revenue of the DA are inversely related. This is because as grants was at its peak of 96.6 percent in 2003, IGF registered its lowest contribution of 3.4 percent. It can thus be concluded that the contributions of IGF to the overall revenue of the DA is highly insignificant as the highest ever contribution was 15.9 percent in the year 2007. This may be attributed to inability of the DA to mobilise enough revenue locally.

The study also noticed a time-lag between the due and actual dates for the release of the DACF which is the major source of revenue to the DA. For example it was noted that arrears for the third quarter of year 2002 was released in February, 2007 (03-02-2007), while fourth quarter arrears for 2002 was also released in July, 2007 (25-07-2007). Similarly, the second quarter of 2005 was released in September (21-09-2005) instead of June, third quarter in November (14-11-2005) instead of September, and the fourth quarter in March, 2006 (30-03-2006) rather than December, 2005. Hence apart from the third and fourth quarter arrears of 2002 which took about five years to be paid, it was noticed that on the average, there was about two-and-half month delay in the release of the DACF. The above clearly supports the view by many of the respondents that untimely release of funds as one of the problems of plan implementation.

(iv). Estimated versus Actual Expenditures

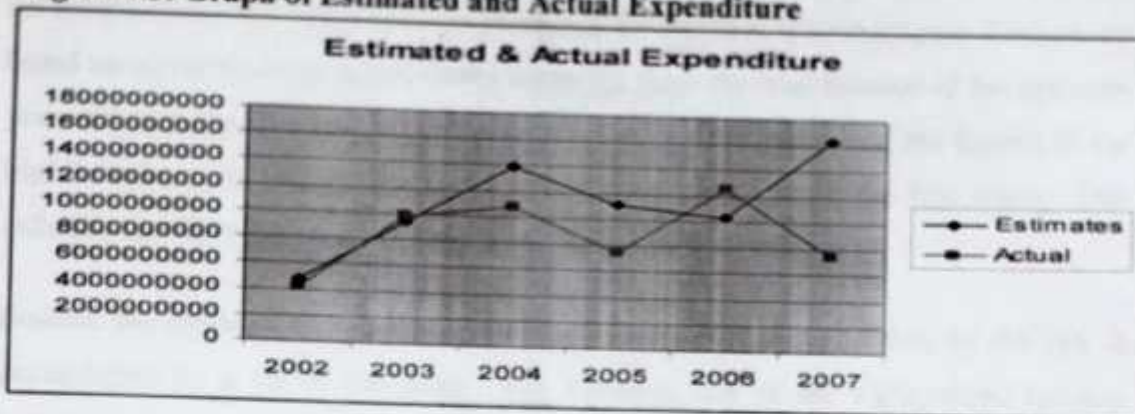
The total amount the DA estimated to spend annually was compared with what it actually spent. The aim was to identify any gaps/deficits or excesses/surpluses between the planned and actual expenditures. The analysis showed that actual expenditure fell short of what was budgeted by (12.5), (22.4), (33.3), and (54.6) percent for the years 2002, 2004, 2005 and 2007 respectively with an average shortfall of 30.7 percent. The shortfall/gap between estimates and actual expenditure appeared to be widening with a low of about 12.5 percent in the year 2002 to as much as 54.6 percent in 2007. However the reverse was the case in 2003 and 2006 when the total amount spent exceeded what was budgeted. On the whole, there was a shortfall of about GH¢1,362,954.1277 between what the DA budgeted to spend and what was actually spent over the years under consideration. A table showing the estimated and actual expenditure and the associated graph are shown in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Estimates and Actual Expenditure

Year/Expenditure	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Estimates (1)	471506.0698	944952.9853	1396801.259	1119353.575	1029805.24	1635067.64
Actual (2)	412777.0332	992103.0785	1084455.52	748086.5044	1257331.806	741778.7
(1) - (2)	58729.03655	-47150.0932	312345.7392	373267.0703	-227526.5661	893288.94
% shortfall/surplus	(12.5%)	5%	(22.4)	(33.3)	22.1	(54.6)

Source: Derived from AASDA Trial Balance, 2002-2007

Figure 4.3: Graph of Estimated and Actual Expenditure



Source: Plotted from Table 4.11

The outcome from the analysis of the financial capacity of the DA presented, has important implications on the ability of AASDA to implement its plans. First and foremost, it would be difficult to satisfactorily rely on the revenue projections for any realistic budgeting due to the fluctuations in revenue sources provided by the stability analysis (CV). This erratic inflow of funds may be attributed to one of the inappropriateness of the projections techniques used in arriving at estimates. Although the DA has a database on rateable items compiled in December 2005, this is yet to be updated.

In reference to a study of the former Asante Akim District Council (see section 4.1.1), Diaw (1996) reported significant differences between estimates of revenue and the actual that accrued to the District at the end of the financial year. In that study, actual monies collected from basic rates in 1977/78 was sixty-one percent of what was expected. Similar shortfalls were also recorded with the other sources of revenue such as Trading services and Land revenue. The finding of this study regarding the shortfall between estimated and actual revenue falls in line with the observation by Diaw. However, while revenue from rates formed the bulk of revenue (forty percent) to the District Council between 1977 and 1981, grants formed the biggest source in the case of the AASDA (90.1 percent). This may be due to the introduction of the DACF. But in general the issue of significant difference between revenue estimates and actual existed at the local level long ago and not a recent phenomenon.

Issues that emerge from the analysis and which require some attention are: how were the revenue estimates arrived at before the compilation of the database on rateable

items, how accurate is the database, and whether the non-updated database influenced the revenue forecast. Also as is the practices, the situation where revenue forecast are based on actual revenue payers items extracted from the trial balance of the previous year may not give the true potentials of the DA to raise revenue if the figures in the trial balance were themselves underestimated or inaccurate in the first place. This calls into question the effectiveness of the forecasting techniques.

Besides the methods of revenue estimation, local revenue collection by the DA is encumbered by a lot of problems. For example, out of the eighty-three revenue collectors the DA requires, it has only forty (commission collectors), leaving a backlog of forty-three. The other problems affecting local revenue mobilisation include: unreliable revenue data, inadequate revenue education, inefficient monitoring and supervision, high unemployment and poverty levels, inefficient management of investments by the DA, many entry and exit points to the District and chieftaincy disputes. These factors among others may affect the achievement rate and for that matter fluctuation in revenues accrued to the DA.

Also the sole reliance on grants (DACF and donor funds) could bring the activities of the DA to a grinding halt when the expected funds are not released on time. This is especially so when over ninety percent of the DA's funds come from grants. It can be inferred from this that apart from the situation undermining the fiscal independence of the DA, the excessive reliance on grants also limits the discretionary powers of the DA as such grants tend to be either sector or project specific and are often accompanied by guidelines for utilisation. For instance, between seventy-five and eighty percent of the DACF is to be used on projects. Perhaps the reliance on grants has affected the local revenue generation capacity of the DA.

This seems to corroborate remarks by Kokor and Kroes (2000) as they write, "there are even speculation that as a result of this relatively massive financial transfers to the DAs their own revenue generation effort is being relaxed". On the other hand, the IGF of about 9.9 percent establishes the statement by Diaw (1996) that although the DAs have power to raise revenue, only little is generated from these sources. And this may be due to the fact that local government has access to only "low yielding taxes such as basic rates and market tolls" (Crawford, 2004 citing Nkrumah).

Nonetheless when the constraints to local revenue mobilisation noted above are adequately addressed, improvements in IGF should be expected. Excessive dependence on the DACF may also delay completion time of projects. For example, in the Keta District in the Volta Region, the construction of classroom blocks for seven Junior High schools and four Senior High schools was suspended by the DA due mainly to financial constraints (Botchie, 2000).

Finally the widening gap between the DA's estimated expenditures and the actual amount spent in a way signifies the DA's determination to embark on the implementation of more projects and programmes, whereas the available funds to finance such projects does not match up with the financial requirements. The shortfall may thus partly explain why many projects and programmes in the 2002-2005 MTDP were either not implemented at all or not completed. On the other hand some projects which got started were never completed. For instance construction works of a Police Station at Juaso had just started at the time of the field work when this was supposed to have been completed in the year 2005. The shortfall in the financing of projects identified in the study reinforces the assertion by Rosenbloom (1998) that serious under funding of programmes has been a barrier to successful implementation.

4.3.4 Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and Plan Implementation

MTDPs of the AASSDA are prepared by the DPCU and implemented through annual action plans by an implementation team that comprises of some of the members of the DPCU. Members of the team include the DCD, DPO, DBA, DFO and the District Engineer. The DPCU has a designated office that is also used for plan implementation activities. The study noted that, coordination of the decentralised departments is mostly through DPCU meetings since some heads of the decentralised departments are members of the DPCU. The DPCU has the full complement of its membership and co-opted members as well. However data on the schedules and frequency of DPCU meetings made available was quite scanty. This notwithstanding, evidence gathered indicated that attendance and participation at meetings is encouraging anytime a meeting is held. The DA has no documentation centre.

Although M&E go together, in this discussion the emphasis is more on monitoring. M&E at the AASSDA is performed by a monitoring team made up of the DPO, DBA

and the District engineer. No separate budget for M&E existed in the past. However, the policy as at the time of the investigation was that a separate M&E plan had been prepared with a budget covering the procurement of a vehicle exclusively for M&E, fuel cost and allowances for M&E activities. The team had no timetable for M&E activities, the frequency of M&E however depended on the duration for completing a project or programme. In most cases M&E is undertaken monthly or fortnightly. The monitoring team has no incentive packages. Finally M&E reports are submitted for the information and actions of the DCE and DCD instead of management.

4.3.5 Problems of Plan Implementation

Data from the field also showed that plan implementation in the AASDA is fraught with a number of problems. Significant among them is inadequate funds and untimely release of the DACF {section 4.3.3 (iii)}. Suffice to state that, the issue is not much of the delay in the release of funds as the tentative delay period has been established to be around two-and-half months. It was also gathered from the investigations with officials that contractors are required to provide evidence of a credit line from financial institutions during the bidding process as assurances that they would readily get access to credit for the continuous execution of projects. Hence the actual problem is the over-dependence on the DACF rather than the delay in the release.

Respondents also stated the other problems affecting plan implementation as follows: apathy on the part of the community members who take no keen interest and involvement in the preparation of the MTDP. This same attitude is also displayed in the course of implementing the plan. Also as a result of lack of understanding of the workings of the MTDP, the DA is always inundated with request from the communities for projects and programmes that are not included in the MTDP. Related to this is the issue of political interference for the selection and implementation of projects and programmes that are not in the MTDP. Finally some NGOs also embark on the implementation of certain projects and programmes without prior notification to the DA. Others include change of administrative heads and problems of logistics for M&E.

The analysis focused on examining the strength or otherwise of the AASDA in carrying out M&E activities. This is because timely collection, collation and analysis of data are useful in tracking the progress of plan implementation. The discovery that no budget was made for M&E activities in the past has serious implications on plan implementation. It could be inferred from this that M&E activities was not intense as no special budget was provided for that. Contractors could therefore take advantage of irregular M&E to produce shoddy works. Although officials admitted having heard of complaints of shoddy works, no such cases had officially been reported to the DA. The apathy on the part of the communities may affect community contributions. Finally since the DPCU is the "engine room" for plan preparation and implementation, the absence of a database capable of tracking and generating timely report could affect implementation.

4.3.6 Leadership and Plan Implementation Management

Since leadership inspires confidence and influence the direction of an organisation, the study again looked at the leadership style and practices associated with the leadership of the DA from the perspective of the core staff. The leaders evaluated included the topmost hierarchy of the DA set up, that is, the DCE and DCD representing political and administrative leadership respectively. Results/responses from the analysis showed that the two officials were overwhelmingly regarded as being democratic leaders and also demonstrated supportive and participative leadership behaviour. Neither the DCE nor the DCD was adjudged to have exhibited directive and or achievement-oriented leadership behaviour which is typical of leaders who set challenging goals, encourages and expects high performance from staff, give specific directions and schedules work among others.

The link between the extent of the implementation of the 2002-2005 MTDP and the leadership behaviour noted cannot easily be established. This is particularly so when the DCD had been at post only for the past two years which is outside the plan implementation period reviewed. However, the effects of leadership qualities on the extent of implementation cannot equally be dismissed. Ranking of scoring on the various practices associated with leadership as per some of the core staff are presented in Tables 4.12 and 4.13 for the DCD and DCE respectively.

Table 4.12: Rank of Leadership Practices of DCD

Practices associated with leadership	Rank Score
Recognising : praise and give recognition for an outstanding performance, significant achievement, and special contributions;	11
Delegating : allowing subordinates to have responsibility and discretion in carrying out work activities, giving staff authority to make important decisions;	10
Developing & Mentoring : providing coaching and career counselling, embarking on actions that facilitate subordinate's skills acquisition and career advancement;	10
Clarifying : ability to assign work, provide directions on how to do the work, communicate clearly of job responsibilities, output or expectation and setting of deadlines;	9
Problem Solving : ability to identify work related problems, analyse the problem and determine the causes, find solutions on time, and resolve the crisis;	9
Informing : disseminate relevant information about decisions taken, plans, and activities to staff and people who need information to do their work;	7
Rewarding : providing tangible rewards such as honorarium, allowances and recommendation for promotion for effective performance demonstrated competence by subordinate;	7
Consulting : Conferring with staff before taking decision or making changes that affect them, encouraging participation in decision making, and allowing others to influence decision;	7

Definitions Adopted from Patrick M. Wright and Raymond A. Noe (1996)

Table 4.13: Rank of Leadership Practices of DCE

Practices associated with leadership	Rank Score
Problem Solving: ability to identify work related problems, analyse the problem and determine the causes, find solutions on time, and resolve the crisis;	9
Delegating: allowing subordinates to have responsibility and discretion in carrying out work activities, giving them staff authority to make important decisions;	9
Clarifying: ability to assign work, provide directions on how to do the work, communicate clearly of job responsibilities, output or expectation and setting of deadlines;	8
Informing: disseminate relevant information about decisions taken, plans, and activities to staff and people who need information to do their work;	8
Recognising : praise and give recognition for an outstanding performance, significant achievement, and special contributions;	8
Consulting : Conferring with staff before taking decision or making changes that affect them, encouraging participation in decision making, and allowing others to influence decision;	8
Rewarding: providing tangible rewards such as honorarium, allowances and recommendation for promotion for effective performance demonstrated competence by subordinate;	7
Developing & Mentoring : providing coaching and career counselling, embarking on actions that facilitate subordinate's skills acquisition and career advancement;	5

Definitions Adopted from Patrick M. Wright and Raymond A. Noe (1996)

From Table 4.12 the DCD was ranked highest in praising and giving recognition to outstanding performance and delegation of responsibilities. However, the DCD was lowly ranked when it comes to consulting with staff in taking decisions that affect them as well as rewarding staff for hard work and sterling performance. That is, providing honorarium, allowance and recommending staff for promotion. From Table 4.13 the DCE on the other hand, was highly rated for his problem solving abilities and also delegation of functions allowing subordinates to take responsibilities and discretion in carrying out their functions. The DCE also attracted low ranking when it comes to rewarding, developing and mentoring. The position of rewarding in both cases (DCD and DCE) seems to confirm the observation that no incentive packages

exist for staff {section 4.3.1(iv)}. The limitation of the assessment could be the 'halo' effect and leniency bias.

4.3.7 Capacity of Town and Area Councils and MTDP Implementation

This section sought to examine the operational efficiency of selected Town and Area Councils as part of the overall appraisal of the capacity of the AASDA in managing plan implementation. Specifically, the purpose was to assess the readiness and the extent to which the sub-District structures were involved and fully complemented the efforts of the AASDA in managing the implementation of the DA's plans. Among the critical issues examined were the problems the Councils encounter in the discharge of delegated functions if any, the reasons for their non-involvement in plan implementation assuming they were not involved, and how the council members would like the DA to involve them in the implementation of future projects that take place in their respective areas of jurisdiction. In other words, part of the mission was to ascertain how the AASDA solicited the cooperation of the Councils in the implementation of the MTDP. Respondents were mainly the Chairperson of the Council or the Secretary.

The entire District is zoned into a total of eleven Councils made up of nine Area and two Town Councils. Seven Councils were visited as part of the study. These included five Area Councils and two Town Councils. All the Councils visited with the exception of Kumeatifi were named after the settlements where the council's office is located.

(i). Office Accommodation for Town and Area Councils

Paragraph (34), sub-paragraph (1) of the instrument establishing the Town and Area Councils (LI 1614) unequivocally directs that offices be provided for the councils for their meetings and administrative functions. Of the five Area Councils visited, three namely Kumeatifi, Morso/Krofa and Dadieso have been provided with new office accommodation. That of Asankare was under construction and nearing completion. In the meantime the chief's palace was being improvised as office for holding the council's meetings at the time of the study. The premises housing the Juaso and Obogu Town Councils are old but rehabilitated offices. The situation at Komeso was however different as the Area Council had a rented store as its office. However the

facility has since reverted to the owner as a result of persistent failure of the Area Council to pay the overdue rental charges. Hence with exception of the Komeso Area Council which has no permanent office of its own, all the three Area Councils and the two Town Councils visited had reasonably decent accommodation while that of the Asankare Area council is under construction (see Appendix I for photographs).

(ii). Logistics and Equipment for Town and Area Councils

In line with the focus of the study, scrupulous efforts were made to assess the adequacy or otherwise of logistics and equipment situation in each of the Town and Area Council visited. It was however observed that none of the Councils visited had been provided with even simple and basic office logistics and equipment to enable them function properly. There were no typewriters/computers, telephones, flip charts and so forth at the offices. The only assets found were few furniture made of writing desks, office chairs and cupboards. Ironically, some of the newly completed office accommodations such as that of Dadieso is furnished with seemingly very old furniture. The Morso/Krofa and the Dadieso Area Council offices are yet to be connected to electricity while the sign post/directional sign was yet to be erected.

(iii). Staffing of the Town and Area Councils

Although the legislative instrument establishing the District sub-structures stipulates that the Town and Area Councils are provided with permanent secretaries by the DAs, none of the Councils visited had been provided with permanent secretaries. Instead secretaries were appointed from among the members on temporal basis. Similarly, although the law permits the respective Councils to engage their own staff where appropriate under terms and conditions as they may determine, this provision is yet to be utilised by any of the Councils visited. All the seven Town and Area Councils included in the study therefore do not have permanent staff. There are no secretaries, treasurers, typists and security officers as well. This is against the backdrop of the fact that provision was made in the 2002-2005 MTDP to recruit staff for the eleven Town and Area Councils. But this was never implemented.

(iv). Revenue Generation by Town/ Area Council

All the seven Town and Area Councils visited had no records of revenue that are generated within their respective areas of authority. This is because revenue

collectors stationed and operating within the areas under the influence of the Councils report directly to the DA. Consequently, all revenues collected are lodged into the DA's accounts leaving nothing in the coffers of the Councils. The current situation therefore makes it difficult for the Councils to have a good picture about the revenue generation potentials of their respective areas since they are not privy to such records.

The study tour of the five Area and the two Town Councils uncovered a number of deep seated challenges affecting the proper functioning of the sub-District structures. These challenges in no small measure also affected the cooperation of the Councils in plan implementation management. Their continued existence would in no doubt undermine the very purpose and significance of establishing such structures. Although all the seven Councils visited have been duly inaugurated for the second time with majority of the old members retained, they are practically non-functional.

Critical among the challenges confronting the Councils are lack of logistics. The availability of logistics and equipment in the rightful quantities is deemed necessary in enhancing the operations of the Councils. Because the availability of proper logistics will facilitate secretarial works, proper record keeping, effective communication between the Councils and the DA, and also ease of mobility within the area of influence of the Councils. Even more prominent among these challenges is lack of funding. Information gleaned from the Councils indicated that they had no source of revenue to cover for even simple administrative expenses.

This is largely due to the fact that, the Councils had no bank accounts into which fifty percent of revenues collected from the area together with other funding sources such as special development funds are deposited. The failure to open a bank accounts thus contravenes paragraph (42) and (43) of the establishment instrument (LI 1614) of 1995 which also meant no revenue inflows to the Councils. Interactions with Council members clearly indicated full awareness of this particular provision. Moreover resolution has been passed by the DA which increased basic rates out of which fifty percent were to be retained by the Councils. However, opening bank accounts and depositing these monies on behalf of the Councils are yet to materialise.

It was also observed that the Town and Area Councils were seldom involved in the implementation of projects in their areas. No functions are delegated and indeed the

cooperation of the Councils is never solicited particularly in project implementation. The Councils are not officially notified of the award of contracts to contractors who undertake construction works within their areas. In view of this, Council members are many a time oblivious of the type and nature of the construction works, the terms and conditions of the contracts, the completion date and the expected role of the communities in such projects.

Despite the limitations of information gathering and analytical capacities of the Council members compared to professionals, they can in no doubt be useful agents in generating data on the performance of contractors. In the present situation, the likelihood that contractors may want to profit by using community contributions (labour, materials) is great. Additionally, Council members do not have any authority over such contractors even though the construction activities do take place in their respective areas.

Persistent complaints of delays and sometimes non-payment of sitting allowance (three Ghana cedis), travelling & transport (T&T) expenses and cost of refreshments for attending meetings also re-echoed in all the areas visited. The results of these are irregular meetings. Contrary to the recommended minimum of about six meetings in a year, most of the Councils interviewed rarely meet due the aforementioned reasons. Again none of the Councils interviewed had prepared an action plan of their own. The argument advanced was that action plans could only be prepared in anticipation of revenue inflows to the Councils.

Apart from Juaso Town Council where an existing chieftaincy dispute in the Juaso Township has the tendency of undermining the front and the authority of the Councils, there were no visible signals of chieftaincy disputes that could possibly cause disruptions to the operations of the other Councils. In conclusion the Town and Area Councils in the District do not play any active and meaningful roles in the implementation of the MTDP of the DA. This situation defeats the tenets of the new decentralisation programme which requires that participatory planning, implementation and management of development programme at the local level are carried out with inclusion and participation of the Area Councils (CBRDP, 2005).

4.3.8 Collaboration with Decentralised Departments

Seven decentralised departments/agencies were selected and the extent to which they collaborated with the DA in plan implementation examined. The department of health is the only one among the seven selected for the study whose premises is located away from the District administration block. The offices of the departments of education and agriculture are located a bit farther from the main Assembly block, whereas the offices of Works, Community Development, Community Water and Sanitation and Town and Country Planning (T&CP) departments are all housed in the premises of the DA.

Of the seven decentralised departments interviewed, five never had copies of the 2002 – 2005 MTDP. These included Community Development, Education, Works and T&CP departments. Almost all the seven departments interviewed were involved in the preparation of the 2002 -2005 MTDP in some sort except the T&CP department. This may be due to the fact that the DA does not have a substantive Physical Planner at post. All the departments interacted with acknowledged collaborating with the DA in plan preparation and implementation. Again, out of the seven departments interrogated, four had their own sectoral plans as against three who had no sectoral plans of their own. Three departments indicated that the roles they are expected to perform in plan implementation are determined in advance, two however responded in the negative, while two offered no response. The mode in which the departments were involved in the preparation and implementation of the 2002-2005 MTDP, the ways they would like to be involved in the future, and suggestions for enhancing future collaboration are tabulated in appendix G.

Plan implementation is a teamwork which requires the active participation and the synergic collaboration of all stakeholders. The need for full cooperation of all stakeholders (decentralised departments) in the implementation of the DA's MTDP cannot therefore be underestimated. It is indeed important to determine in advance the specific role each stakeholder is expected to play (role casting). This makes it imperative to assess the extent to which the decentralised department collaborate with the DA (central administration) in managing the implementation of development plans in the District. The closeness of the various decentralised departments/agencies in terms of geographical location is a suitable condition for effective collaboration.

However, this does not guarantee effective collaboration if there are no regular meetings, role specifications and exchange of information concerning the status of plan implementation. This makes the finding that some of the decentralised departments had no advance knowledge about the role they are expected to play quite critical.

Also the discovery that some departments had no copies of the 2002-2005 MTDP constitutes a serious blight to effective collaboration. This implies that firstly such departments will have no idea of the role they are required to play assuming these were specified in the plan. Secondly, a department without a copy of the MTDP will certainly be oblivious of the programmes and projects to be implemented in its sector, the targets and time frame among others. Last but not the least such departments cannot guarantee whether inputs submitted for the preparation were incorporated in the final plan.

The possession of sector plans by some departments also signifies lingering allegiance of decentralised departments to their mother ministries. Similarly responses such as "*the mechanisms and structures for institutionalising all inclusive and participatory decision for plan preparation and implementation is weak in the DA*" and others such as "*the ... directorate should be seen as part of the Assembly*" gives an indication of perceived alienation and exclusion in the entire processes. The above agrees with the findings of Botchie (2000) that, DAs exhibit weaknesses in co-ordination and integration of institutional resources at the District level.

4.3.9 Outcome of the Organisational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT)

Collaboration emerged the highest with an average score of 9.2 from the OCAT. This was followed by M&E (9.1), Human resources (7.9), Financial/Budgeting (7.6) with Logistics and equipment attracting the least score of 7.5 in that order. Results from the OCAT analysis show that AASDA has a relative strength in terms of capacity in the area of collaboration and M&E over the other indicators of capacity studied. Ironically the last three indicators of human, financial and logistics where the DA's capacity was identified to be relatively weak in the OCAT analysis are critical areas to plan implementation. This implies that attention must be focused on these areas.

The outcome of the OCAT analysis reinforces the findings obtained using the other modes of data collection. For instance the issues of inadequate staff {section 4.3.1(i)}, funding {4.3.3 (iv)}, and logistics and equipment (section 4.3.2) came up during the analysis. Beyond the rankings and the indications of which theme(s) requires attention, it is also possible in the OCAT analysis to identify the weakest elements under the theme by locating the element with the least score. For example under Financial/Budgeting, statements/elements numbers two and five attracted the least scores. This requires that special attentions be given to those elements. The ability to pin down the weakest element(s) for the needed remedial action is the main advantage of the tool called the 'Rolling up' mechanism.

The limitation of the tool and particularly the use of matrix questionnaires is the phenomenon of 'central tendency bias'. That is a situation where respondents avoid the extreme ratings and instead cluster their responses around the centre choice (Rosnow and Rosenthal 1996). Nevertheless, the tool offered a fair reflection of the capacity situation of the AASDA. Details of the OCAT analysis are provided in Appendix F.

4.4 Summary and Conclusion

The analysis of the capacity situation of the AASDA has revealed significant weaknesses and deficits in both human and material resources which for which corrective measures or actions are required. For example the study revealed a lot of vacant positions, high labour turnover, poor maintenance culture, weak local revenue mobilisation among others. In conclusion, the outcome from the analysis has proved correct available literature on the capacity of DAs in the country. From the situational analysis, the AASDA needs to be resourced: both human, material and fiscal in order to perform its onerous task of developing the district.

The next and the concluding chapter of the study is made up of summary of key findings from the study, recommendations for improving the capacity situation of the AASDA and areas for further research.

5. SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

Being the last and the concluding part of the study, chapter five constitutes the 'melting pot' of the entire study. This is because it represents the outcome of the synthesis of divergent views on the topic, the various concepts discussed, logical reasoning and validation by empirical evidence via scientific research approach and methodology. It is made up of three main parts. The first part presents a summary of important findings from the study which forms the basis for policy formulation. The second part considers responses to the findings in the form of recommendations. These take the form of policies, policy objectives and strategies, while the final part is made up of the concluding remarks of the whole study. The presentation is done alongside the six main themes of the study as follows:

5.1 Key Findings and Implications

5.1.1 Staffing Strength, Competencies and Qualifications

Competencies of the existing core staff was identified to be appropriate for plan implementation, although some core staff such as the District Engineer and the Accountant do not have the preferable higher qualifications. This was as a result of the difficulty in recruiting highly skilled personnel to the DA due to the general unwillingness of such calibre of personnel to join the civil service. It was also found that the selection/recruitment processes are unduly delayed. The net effect of the above is the shortage of some key staff. Vacancies thus exist for the following positions: a Deputy DCD, Assistant Development Planning Officer, Budget Officer, Physical Planning Officer and about forty-three Revenue Collectors. In conclusion, the AASDA does not have the full complement of its core staff, while the available staff are rarely trained/re-trained. The implication of the above is that the existing staff will be over-stretched and may not be able to cope with the volume of work in managing plan implementation. Subsequently there may be delays.

5.1.2 Inadequate Logistics and Equipment, and Poor Maintenance Culture

The study found significant backlog in the logistics and equipment needed to enhance the operational efficiency of the DA in the areas of computers, vehicles, fax machines and many others (see Table 4.2). In addition to this, it was found that the few logistics and equipment available were not properly maintained. This had resulted in the frequent breakdown of some of the logistics and equipment. Similarly, most computers in the DA were observed to have been infected with viruses which have resulted in the corruption of files and subsequent loss of vital information. In conclusion the study noted a considerable deficit or lacunae between the logistics and equipment required by the DA and what was available, whereas the existing ones were not regularly maintained. This has the implication of slowing down the pace of administrative duties, communication with the outside world and mobility of staff.

5.1.3 Inadequacy, Over-dependence on DACF and Instability in Revenue

The study found out that, apart from the DACF, most of the identifiable sources of revenue to the DA were highly unstable, resulting in a huge imbalance between estimates and actual figures in both revenues and expenditures. Moreover, revenue generation was observed to be growing at a negative rate. There is over-dependence on grants as the major source of revenue to the DA although the IGF component of the district budget was observed to increasing (see Table 4.10). At the same time, proceeds from Investments were identified to be insignificant as yields are highly variable and the achievement rate also low. In a nutshell, financial resource available to the AASDA for plan implementation is inadequate as a wide gap existed between budgeted and actual expenditures. The implications of the inadequacy, instability in revenue and the extreme dependence of the DA on the DACF is that plan implementation would be adversely affected if the releases of funds are delayed.

5.1.4 Poorly Resourced and Non-Functional District Sub-Structures

The research disclosed that the Town and Area Councils lacked basic office equipment and permanent staff. It was also noticed during the field visits that the Town/Area Councils have no funds to cover even administrative expenses as all revenue collected are sent to the DA. Furthermore they had no bank accounts. In sum, Town/Area Councils in the District are dormant and non functional as members rarely meet largely

because the payment of sitting allowances, transport and travelling expenses are unduly delayed or not paid at all. In effect the Councils play no roles in project implementation and monitoring as no such functions are delegated to them by the DA.

5.1.5 Weak Monitoring and Poorly Equipped DPCU

The study noted that the designated office for DPCU lacks the necessary equipment and software for managing plan implementation; moreover the office is manned by a secretary who has no skills in managing plan implementation. Also information gathered indicated that the DPCU rarely meets especially after the preparation of MTDPs is completed. No budget was provided for M&E activities in the past. No specific vehicle was assigned for monitoring activities and at the same time no incentives were provided for officials undertaking monitoring as no monitoring plan existed. It also came to the fore that the coordinating role of the DPCU invariably rest with the staff at the DA. This is because as the study gathered, the other members do not take active part in the operations of the DPCU except attending meetings. The implication of a poorly resourced and seemingly inactive DPCU is that coordination of the management of plan implementation may be affected. This is because the unit oversees the preparation and implementation of MTDPs by coordinating and synchronising the efforts of all stakeholders.

5.1.6 Stakeholder Collaboration in Plan Implementation

Representation at Sub-Committee meetings, submission of inputs, collection and collation of data, community animation, and membership of DPCU were identified as some of the ways through which decentralised departments are involved in plan preparation and implementation. However, the investigations further revealed that many of the decentralised departments never had copies of the 2002-2005. Meanwhile other departments such as Education, Agriculture and Health had their own sectoral plans.

Bureaucracy at the DA, short sightedness of some DCEs, delays in the release of funding for projects, inability of the DA in exercising direct control over the departments and lack of resources (human and material) among others were identified as some of the common factors that make collaboration with the DA difficult.

5.1.7 Unassuming Leadership

The two topmost leaders representing political and administrative leadership of the DA were mainly regarded as being participative and supportive, and none was assessed to be achievement-oriented. By implication they were not the type who set more challenging goals and required staff to work hard to achieve set goals. This has the propensity of negatively affecting the overall performance of the DA.

5.2 Recommendations

5.2.1 Human Resource Development

Data from the field firmly established that the AASDA was less attractive to highly skilled labour. This is viewed against the backdrop of the unwillingness of the highly skilled labour force to join the civil service. Confronted with this situation, the feasible alternative of maintaining competent staff at all the time is to offer continuous training and developing the capacities of the existing employees, instead of looking to the labour market for skills need which may not be readily available.

The focus is to improve human resource capacity of the DA through staff development, motivation and retention. The objectives of the policy among others is to enable the DA's staff be in tune with the changing dynamics and trends in their respective professions, enhance the output of core staff in plan implementation management, and finally to introduce the core staff to new techniques and computer programmes for managing plan implementation, for example MS Project.

The following strategies for achieving the outlined policy objectives are therefore suggested: the DA should conduct on regular basis Training Needs Assessment (TNA) to identify the training needs of each category of staff. Sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with a training institute who will organise training programmes for the core and supporting staff as well as new recruits at regular intervals. The DA must also consider instituting 'career development loan scheme' that will make funds available to prospective staff who want to pursue further studies in relevant programmes at no or lower interest rates, and be bonded to serve at the District for stipulated period of time. This measure will help retain staff that benefit from training and help stem the rate at which staff leave the District. In response to this, budgetary allocation for staff

training and development must be increased over the current allocation and this must be linked to requirement per period.

Besides, the DA should take advantage and make adequate use of the two percent deductions from the DACF meant for capacity development. The DA must also keep proper records of all training programmes organised. This should contain sufficient information on who attended what training course and when, together with other vital data on staff. Electronic database is preferred since it will enable easy tracking of all training programmes and retrieval of staff records. In line with this, it is further suggested that the DA switches to human resources management software and offer the personnel officer adequate training in this direction to improve his skills. Management should also explore the possibility of setting up a Provident Fund as a measure of retaining staff. Finally, it is recommended for an improved reward system in the form of payment of honorarium, allowance and per diem to be put in place to reward hard working and deserving staff.

5.2.2 Re-tooling Logistics and Equipment Capacity of AASDA

The goal for redressing the logistical challenges of the DA is to improve the logistics and equipment situation of the DA through the procurement of additional ones and the institution of an effective maintenance plan for all equipment. The policy objective is to make up for the deficits and to forestall frequent breakdown of equipment. In line with this, the following strategies should be pursued by the DA: It is recommended that an Estate Manager be employed or an existing staff be trained to take on the additional responsibilities of estate management and prepare annual maintenance plans for the routine maintenance of all logistics and equipment. This will naturally call for an increased budgetary allocation for maintenance.

The other policy strategies will be to acquire additional computers, fix the dysfunctional equipment, fix and increase the number of telephone lines, procure additional vehicles and all other equipment needs on incremental basis. The DA must also consider engaging the services of a service company through competitive bidding processes to offer professional maintenance services to the DA. Alternatively a dedicated and competent maintenance firm should be identified where all equipment such as vehicles would be sent for routine maintenance. Last but not the least, staff should be surcharged

for any destructions or damage caused to equipment due to negligence or carelessness. This will ensure that logistics and equipment are properly handled by staff.

5.2.3 Improving Resources Mobilisation Capacity

The policy on finance/budget is to increase the capacity of the AASDA in generating sufficient funding for plan implementation purposes. The policy objective is to improve upon local revenue mobilisation of the DA, ensure reliable and regular sources of revenue to the District and to reduce the extreme dependence of the DA on central grants and other unpredictable sources of revenue such as donor funding. The policy strategies will be to embark on an intensive educational campaign on the need to pay tax. Below are some of the suggested policy strategies for carrying out the educational campaign.

Airing of attractive and easy to remember jingles on the need to pay taxes on local FM radio stations, as well as holding talk shows on the need to pay taxes is one of the strategies the DA can embark on in local revenue mobilisation drive. Related to this is dawn broadcasting using vehicles fitted with loud speakers. Similarly, the chief's 'gong-gong' can be beating in all the 103 settlements to impress upon the people on the need to pay taxes and the benefits to be derived in honouring ones tax obligations. Other educational campaign strategy is the distribution of leaflets with cartoons and messages on the need to pay tax. Some of the appropriate venues for intensifying the educational campaign are using occasions such as chief's durbars, festivals, churches and the mosques. But above all, it must be recognised that the public will only be convinced to pay taxes if the benefits and positive outputs are visible, comprehensible and obvious.

Another strategy is by establishing a credible databasc and regularly updating the existing one which has not been updated since the year 2005. This can be done through the following: making an inventory of all rateable facilities/properties in the District to update the existing information, this can be done at a moderate cost by using the Assembly Members to compile data relating to their respective electoral areas using a specially designed data capture form. It is also recommended that the DA engages the Land Valuation Board to value assets in the two urban areas of Juaso and Obogu in the short term and later extended to the other communities. Alternatively at a special

request by the DA, national service persons from Land Economy Department (KNUST) can be attached to the Land Valuation Board to further reduce cost. However in the long-run, it is recommended the DA looks at the application of GIS in local revenue mobilisation. The use of Geographic Information System (GIS) will enable revenue collectors to spatially locate taxable properties on a computer. This will make revenue collection much easier especially when appropriate numbering system is assigned to each property.

The DA can also embark on privatisation of selected facilities such as lorry terminals, markets, public toilets and urinals and water facilities. Other measures of increasing revenue mobilisation is effective tax administration system by printing of receipts with enhanced security features to ensure proper accountability and transparency on the part of the revenue collectors. In addition to this electronic devices can also be introduced all in an attempt of ensuring transparency. It is also suggested that the DA intensifies its investment drive although returns from existing investments in transport and plantation is low as shown by the achievement rates and the revenue stability analysis (see Tables 4.5 and 4.6). This is because poverty levels are high in the District. Secondly commercial and economic activities are not buoyant; hence less revenue is expected from the other local sources of revenue.

Last but not the least, the DA should embark on massive prosecution of tax evaders to serve as deterrent to others who want to do same. Other strategies is for the DA to recruit and train revenue collectors, engage the services of private companies to collect revenues on behalf of the DA, and lastly the erection of barriers/checkpoints at strategic points or routes so that people conveying rateable items especially traders are made to honour their tax obligations.

5.2.4 Operationalise District Sub-Structures (Town/Area Councils)

The policy is to make Town and Area Councils under the DA functional by enabling them participate fully in plan implementation management. The policy objective is encouraging grassroots participation in plan implementation in fulfilment of the requirements of the decentralisation processes. To achieve these, the following policy strategies are to be pursued. The first is providing adequate staff for the councils to take charge of the day to day administration. It is proposed as an interim measure for the DA

to engage National Service persons, preferably those with planning background as an alternative to solving the staffing problems of the councils while arrangements are made to find permanent staff. Office equipment such as computers/typewriters, telephone facilities, fax machines and good furniture must also be provided to enhance administrative functions. In the councils where settlements are scattered such as Kumeso Area Council, it is suggested that particular Council be provided with motorbike for ease of movement.

Bank accounts should be opened by the DA in the name and on behalf of the Town and Area Councils in which the mandatory fifty percent of revenue generated within Town/Area Councils should be deposited. The DA must provide the councils with some seed monies (development fund) for which they can use to initiate some projects or programmes for the benefit of the people. Similarly, database of population and rateable properties of the respective councils should be provided by the DA to the councils. This database when provided will enable the councils to have a fair idea of estimates of revenue that can be generated in their respective areas.

Finally, it is recommended that aspects of monitoring functions of the DA should be delegated to the councils. Council members must therefore be formally notified of award of contracts in the respective areas and be required to submit reports on completed works in their area to the DA before final payments are made to the contractor. Sitting allowances and transport and travelling allowances of council members must also be paid and on time so as to motivate them to attend meetings to deliberate on issues affecting their areas of authority.

Other suggested means of financing the activities of the Town and Area Councils is to intensify public sensitisation on payments of tax so that their share of the mandatory fifty percent will be appreciably higher. It is also recommended that the Town and Area councils take over the management of certain facilities in their jurisdictions. The councils can also lobby the DA to increase taxes in their fee fixing resolutions so that the marginal increase will go into the coffers of the Councils. Alternatively they could obtain development grant from the DA, use it to build a public facility like toilet and oversee its management and operations. Lastly, the councils may resort to the collection of special development levy from members of the community to undertake specific development projects and programmes.

5.2.5 Strengthening DPCU and Monitoring and Evaluation Activities

The M&E policy is to strengthen the M&E capacity of the DA and make M&E an integral part of plan implementation management. The policy objective is to ensure that there is adequate, well motivated and resourced team to undertake M&E activities. The following are some of the policy strategies: the DA should prepare M&E plan annually with a budget covering allowances for the M&E team and procurement of a vehicle solely for M&E activities. Management must also organise training courses for the M&E team to upgrade their skills in the following areas, development planning, database management and other computer programmes such as MS Project and ARCview- Geographic Information System (GIS).

In accordance with the NDPC guidelines for M&E, the RCC must be invited to DPCU meetings. M&E report must be coordinated by DPCU and submitted to management, project actors, Town/Area Councils and the decentralised departments involved in a project or programme under consideration. The M&E report should highlight the following: progress of work, observations, gaps identified, and explanations and suggestions for remedial actions. Finally, it is suggested that a clear distinction is made between M&E and supervision, supervision seems to be more technical and quality control mechanism in construction projects, usually undertaking by engineers. It is therefore proposed that a supervisory unit be formed within the M&E team made up of the District engineers, who will report to the M&E team. Logistics must therefore be provided for the supervisory unit.

5.2.6 Enhancing Coordination between DA and Decentralised Departments

The policy is to strengthen the existing collaborative links between the DA (central administration) and decentralised departments. The objective of the policy is creating a platform for the expression of divergent views, soliciting the support, inputs, and the cooperation of all stakeholders particularly in the implementation of plans. This is to create the opportunity and ambience for shared responsibilities in managing plan implementation so as to avoid duplication of efforts.

Among some of the policy strategies is equipping and staffing the DPCU office to serve as central point where all activities related to plan implementation management will be coordinated from. In line with this, a fusion of the 'Programming and Implementation

Management" (PIM) and the "Operation Room System" implemented in Kenya and Malaysia in the 1970s and 1950s respectively is recommended (see section 2.10.2). This should be headed by an Assistant Planning Officer who will report to management. This is expected to free the DCD who is the head of the unit under the existing arrangement. It is recommended that MIS infrastructure be provided to improve information sharing among all the stakeholders involved in plan implementation.

Other ways of strengthening coordination is for the DA to provide copies (both hard and soft) of MTDPs to all departments. The expected role all departments and stakeholders are supposed to play in the plan implementation process must also be determined and circulated to them well in advance. Other strategies for collaboration are increased stakeholder participation in the development of project proposal and work plan, involvement in site visits arranged by the DPCU, sharing of information on project implementation, joint review of monitoring reports on project or programme implementation, providing suggestions on the implementation and direction of the work to ensure that the project goals, as set out in the work plan are met. Similarly joint seminars, workshops and meetings on plan implementation should be organised regularly by the DPCU among all stakeholders (decentralised departments, community, contractors). The last but not the least suggested means of collaboration is joint evaluations of progress reports using independent methods.

5.2.7 Boosting Leadership in Plan Implementation Management

It is recommended that the topmost leaders in the DA are sent on training to deepen their knowledge and understanding in plan implantation management and leadership skills. Programmes such as leadership and governance for the DCE and DCD may be considered.

5.3 Areas for further Research

Capacity as a concept is a mosaic of seemingly countless variables that cannot easily be covered by single study like this. Constrained by time and other factors, the AASDA study considered only six variables. From the conceptual framework (see Figure 2.0), other areas can be studied to complement the findings of this study. Possible areas for further research include assessing the capacity of the AASDA in policy formulation and strategies resulting in the preparation of MDTPs. Another area worth investigating is

the capacity of the DA in public engagements or relations. In other words assessing the processes and the extent at which the public are involved and informed about the work of the DA particularly in plan preparation and implementation. Mutual accountability and internal control mechanisms for ensuring transparency at the AASDA is also another possible area worth examining. Last but not the least, the capacity of the DA in database management is another area that can be studied.

5.4 Conclusion

The study set as its objectives to assess the extent to which the 2002-2005 MTDP of the AASDA was implemented, identify constraints to plan implementation management, and come out with recommendations to improve plan implementation management. The appraisal of the capacity of the AASDA brought to the fore a number of challenging issues affecting plan implementation. Notable among them are inadequate funding, logistics, equipment and staff.

A significant observation from the review of the 2002-2005 MTDP of the AASDA is that the plan looked overly ambitious as it contained projects with huge capital requirements which the DA could hardly raise. Equally important finding from the study was the non-availability of copies of the MTDP to many of the stakeholders (decentralised departments), and the general lack of or little knowledge about the content of these plans. There was also a high staff turnover rate which all things being equal will not promote consistency in policies.

Useful lessons learnt from the study to avoid plan implementation failures in the AASDA and other districts are the following: DAs need to plan for projects and programmes which the expected revenue inflows over the planned period will ensure that there will be sufficient funding for implementation of such projects. Above all staff motivation and monitoring are *sin qua non* to the implementation of DMTP and must given the needed attention.

It is the anticipation of the investigator that the propositions made when implemented will in no small measure boost the capacity of the AASDA to manage the implementation of its current and future MTDPs in an effective manner.

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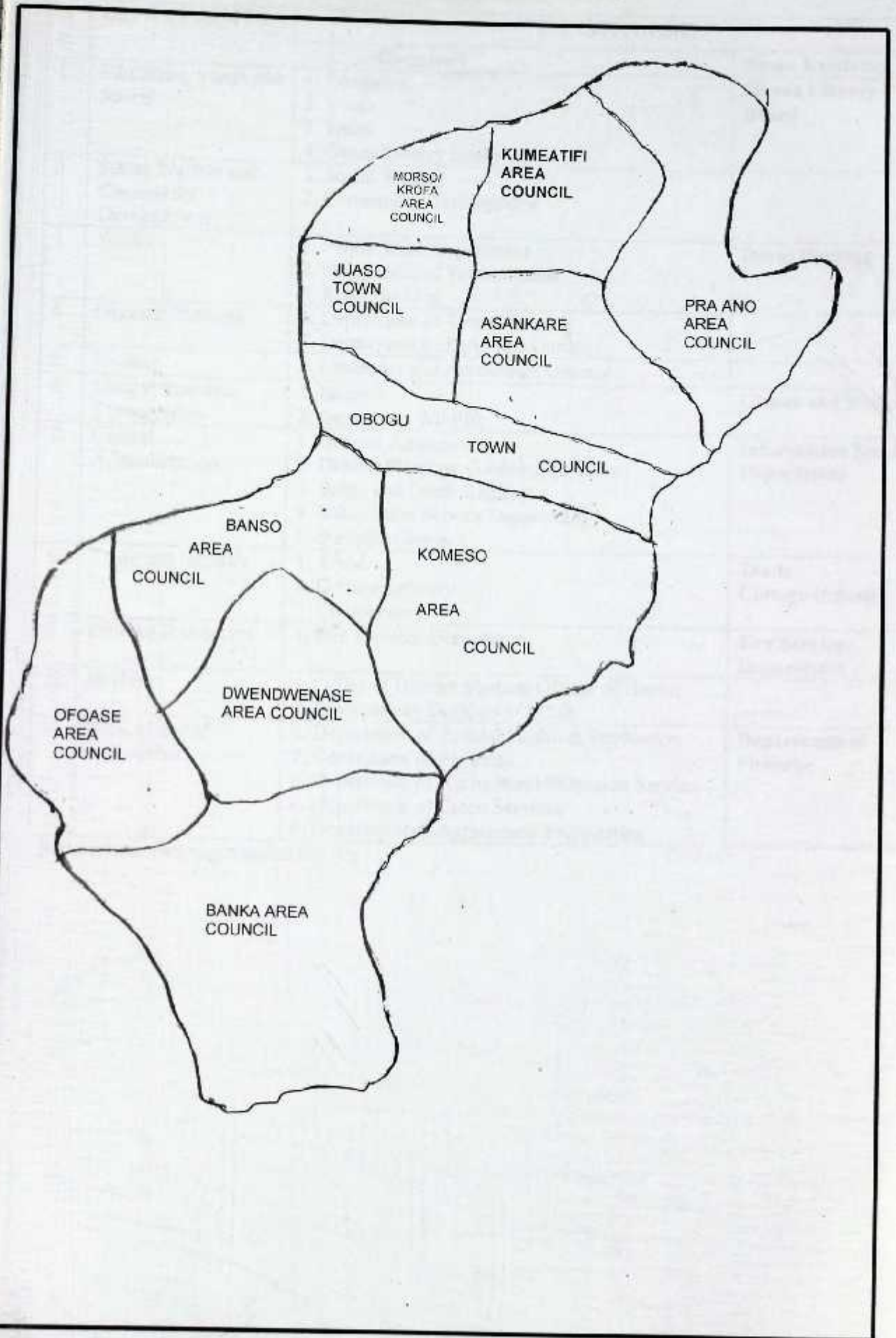
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Appendix B: Spatial Distribution of Town/Area Councils

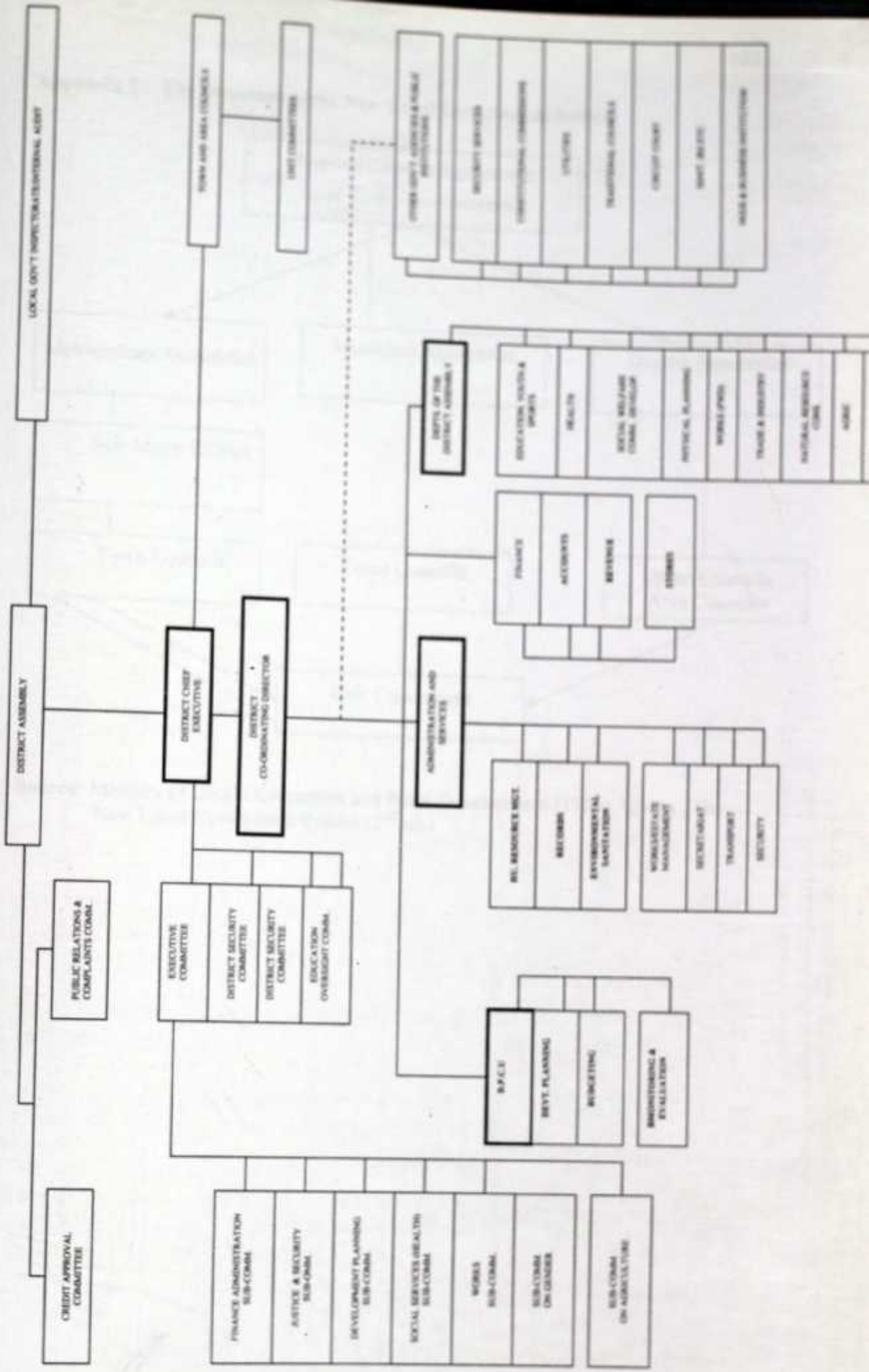


Appendix C: Departments of the AASDA and Their Constituents

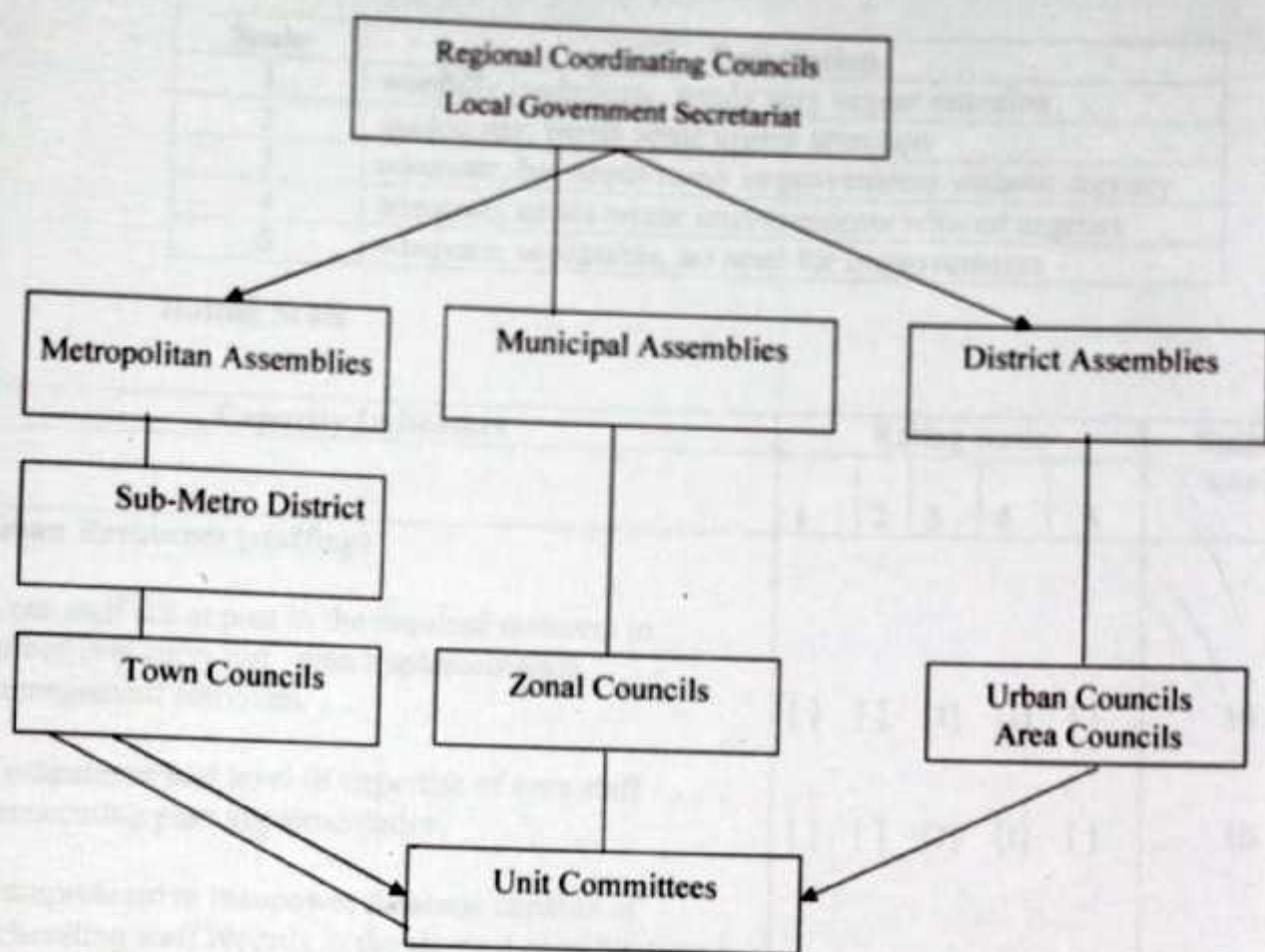
N o.	DEPARTMENTS	CONSTITUENT	
		Required	Non - Existence
1	Education, Youth and Sports	1. Education 2. Youth 3. Sports 4. Ghana Library Board	Ghana Library Board
2	Social Welfare and Community Development	1. Social Welfare 2. Community Development	
3	Works	1. Public Work Department 2. Department of Feeder Roads 3. Rural Housing	Rural Housing
4	Physical Planning	1. Department of Town Planning 2. Department of Parks and Gardens	
5	Finance	1. Controller and Accountant General	
6	Natural Resource Conservation	1. Forestry 2. Games and Wildlife	Games and Wildlife
7	Central Administration	1. General Administration 2. District Planning Coordinating Unit 3. Births and Death Registry 4. Information Service Department 5. Statistical Service	Information Service Department
8	Trade and Industry	1. Trade 2. Cottage Industry 3. Co-operatives	Trade Cottage Industry
9	Disaster Prevention	1. Fire Services Department	Fire Services Department
10	Health	1. Office of District Medical Officer of Health 2. Environment Division of MLG	
11	Department of Agriculture	1. Department of Animal Health & Production 2. Department of Fisheries 3. Department of Agricultural Extension Service 4. Department of Crops Services 5. Department of Agricultural Engineering	Department of Fisheries

Source: <http://www.ghanadistricts.org>

ORGANOGRAM OF THE ASANTE AKIM SOUTH DISTRICT ASSEMBLY



Appendix E: The Structure of the New Local Government System



Source: Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (1996). Ghana : The New Local Government System (2nd ed.)

Appendix F: Capacity Assessment Using OCAT

Scale	Description
1	woefully inadequate, needs very urgent attention
2	inadequate, needs some urgent attention
3	adequate, but needs many improvements without urgency
4	adequate, needs minor improvements without urgency
5	adequate, acceptable, no need for improvements

Rating Scale

Capacity Indicators	Rating Scale					Rating score
	1	2	3	4	5	
Human Resources (staffing)						
1. Core staff are at post in the required numbers to effectively carry out plan implementation management activities.	[]	[]	[2]	[1]	[]	10
2. Competence and level of expertise of core staff prosecuting plan implementation;	[]	[]	[2]	[1]	[]	10
3. Comprehensive manpower database capable of generating staff records in the shortest possible time is available;	[]	[1]	[]	[2]	[]	10
4. Systems and mechanisms for forecasting future staff needs over a period of time is in place and functioning properly;	[]	[2]	[]	[1]	[]	8
5. Clear and transparent mechanism exist for the selection of staff for training on regular intervals as part of human development policy of the AASDA;	[1]	[2]	[]	[]	[]	5
6. Appropriate incentive packages are in place to enhance staff performance;	[1]	[1]	[]	[1]	[]	7
7. Records of budgetary allocation for staff training is constant and such information are made available to all staff;	[]	[]	[]	[3]	[]	12
8. Performance assessment is a yearly affair and constitute an integral part of management operations where all core staff are duly assessed;	[1]	[]	[1]	[1]	[]	8

- | | | |
|---|---------------------|---|
| 9. Staff training is not compromised and that human development plan exist which is thoroughly implemented; | [1] [1] [1] [] [] | 6 |
| 10. Arrangement have been put in place linking AASDA to a training institution that provides the training needs of staff; | [3] [] [] [] [] | 3 |

Average Score

$79 \div 10 = 7.9$

Logistics/Equipment

- | | | |
|--|---------------------|---|
| 1. All logistics/equipment required for effective plan implementation are available in sufficient quantities and are in good conditions; | [] [3] [] [] [] | 6 |
| 2. Adequate maintenance plan is in place for the routine maintenance of all equipment. This is rigidly followed and budget for maintenance is always provided; | [] [1] [2] [] [] | 8 |
| 3. Inventory of all logistics/equipment for managing plan implementation is kept and under the care of qualified Estate manager | [] [1] [2] [] [] | 8 |
| 4. Arrangements are in place for a service company who carries out routine maintenance of all equipment used for plan implementation management; | [] [1] [2] [] [] | 8 |

Average score

$30 \div 4 = 7.5$

Financial /Budgeting

- | | | |
|---|---------------------|----|
| 1. A comprehensive and regularly updated database on rateable items covering the whole district exist, providing a basis for realistic revenue projections; | [] [] [1] [2] [] | 11 |
| 2. Adequate, hardworking and well motivated revenue collectors are available for revenue collections; | [1] [2] [] [] [] | 5 |
| 3. Available revenue collection system and structures is capable of blocking any revenue leakages and ensuring transparency and accountability in revenue collection; | [] [1] [2] [] [] | 8 |
| 4. Techniques and methods of revenue estimations is capable of generating fairly precise figures on revenue; | [] [] [2] [1] [] | 10 |

5. Regular and reliable sources of funding exist to implement all projects and programmes in the plan;

[2] [1] [] [] []

4

Average score

$$38 \div 5 = 7.6$$

Collaboration/Coordination

1. All decentralised departments are actively involved in the preparation of DMTP and all departments are provided with copies of the DMTP;

[] [] [] [1] [2]

11

2. Good mechanisms exist for coordination and cooperation between all the implementing agencies - decentralised departments;

[] [] [2] [1] []

10

3. Mandates and responsibilities of all implementing agencies are clearly stated and distributed among them well in advance;

[] [] [1] [1] [1]

12

4. decentralised departments and agencies are able to obtain all information regarding plan implementation including progress reports

[] [1] [] [2] []

10

5. MIS is operational and adequately used for managing plan implementation;

[1] [] [2] [] []

7

6. Extent to which aspects of plan implementation are delegated to sub-structures (Area/Town Council);

[] [2] [1] [] []

7

7. A designated office exist, fully equipped and used solely for managing plan implementation, all information on implementation is obtained;

[1] [1] [1] [] []

6

8. Plan implementation team with clearly defined roles is in place who are in charge of managing plan implementation;

[] [1] [1] [1] []

9

9. Well constituted, adequately resourced and highly motivated DPCU exist, meet regularly to coordinate and deliberate the progress of plan implementation;

[] [] [1] [2] []

11

Average score

$$83 \div 9 = 9.2$$

Monitoring and Evaluation .						
1. Framework for monitoring and evaluation is in place as well as monitoring plan and these are consistently followed in monitoring;	[]	[1]	[2]	[]	[]	8
2. Budgetary allocations for monitoring is a constant item in all annual budgets;	[]	[1]	[1]	[]	[1]	10
3. Format and systems for quick and timely generation and circulation of monitoring reports among all the implementing and funding agencies is in place;	[]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[]	9
4. Extent to which remedial actions on monitoring reports are implemented;	[]	[2]	[]	[1]	[]	8
5. M&E indicators and benchmarks are developed in advance and are used to monitor and evaluate performance;	[]	[]	[1]	[2]	[]	11
6. Projects and programmes implementation are independently reviewed and evaluated;	[]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[]	9
<u>Average score</u>	55 ÷ 6 = 9.1					

Source: Author's field survey, April 2008.

	Mode of involvement in plan preparation	Suggested ways of involvement in future plan preparation	Mode of involvement in plan implementation	Suggested ways of involvement in future plan implementation	Difficulties in collaborating with the DA in plan implementation
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequate notice of dates for MTDPs; As a key stakeholder, as health is wealth; Involved in all stages of plan preparation; The department has been fully involved in the preparation of the MTDP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction of health facilities through submission of proposals; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pure decentralisation: - health projects given to health directorate to implement and monitored and evaluated; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delays in the release of DACF; Bureaucracy even at the assembly Short sightedness of some DCEs.
Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tasked to draw plans and programmes for input into the district plan under production and gainful employment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The district director of agric is a member of the DPCU which meet regularly to deliberate on programmes on implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The district director of agric is a member of the DPCU which meet regularly to deliberate on programmes on implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial support by the DA to enable the department to execute most of her programmes under the plan to achieve the set goal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate funding by the DA; Because the department is not directly under the DA, her programmes are not directly monitored by the DA.
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represented the district education office in the planning of the MTDP; Preparation and submission of work plan to the committee's meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information for the next preparation should be scheduled in time for the directorate to compile all its problems geared towards the goals of the DA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The directorate is informed when any project is going to be implemented through the educational sub-committee meetings; The director of education is a member of the monitoring team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copies of the plan should be given to the directorate to see whether targets set were followed and accomplished within the time frame. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finances for the implementation of plans are at times delayed which draws the time frame backward; Monies meant for delayed projects devalued which makes the implementation difficult.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member of the DPCU; • Involved in the collection of inputs from both government and private institutions for the project; • Involved in the collection of inputs for the MTDP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection and implementation of projects; • Monitoring; • Animation of communities on proposed projects; • Evaluation and project report writing. 	
Community Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typing of all the scripts (MTDP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help in collecting data on water and sanitation issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting was held among all departments to discuss how to implement the plan; • Public forums involving assembly members and a briefing about the plan. 	
CWSA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offered data on existing infrastructure and also the cost of putting up fresh buildings and rehabilitations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are currently involved in the current MTDP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At management level, advice is sought from the department when it comes to implementation of development projects 	
Works			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The department is already well involved 	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funds, resources (that is, human resources and material), logistics 	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resourcing of the department to facilitate our movement. 	

Appendix H: Sample of Questionnaires

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DISTRICT COORDINATING DIRECTOR (DCD)

SECTION A: DATA ON STAFFING

1. Please complete the table below on the core staffing position of the AASDA (central administration).

Position/job title	required		existing		Working experience with DAs	No. of years with AASDA
	No. required	Qualification required	No. present	Existing qualifications		
DCD						
Deputy DCD						
DPO						
Asst. DPO						
DBA						
Budget officer						
DFO						
Asst. DFO						
Dist engineer						
Local Govt. Inspector						
Revenue Superintendent						
Town and Country Plg. Officer.						

2 (i) Does the current staffing situation meets the actual workload required for effective plan implementation? Yes No

(ii) What are the major gaps/critical shortage areas in human resource skills?

- a. b.
- c. d.
- e. f.

(iii) From (ii) above, please indicate the skills urgently required

Vacancies

skills/qualifications

- a. a)
- b. b)
- c. c)

(iv) Are the vacancies/skills required to be filled readily available in the job market? Yes No

- (v) Please indicate the scarcity, ease of recruitment or otherwise of the core staff required in the table provided below:

Vacancies/skills require	Scarce skills (please tick)	skills that are readily available (please tick)	Comment on Recruitment (easy/ difficult)

2. (i) Is the level of competencies of existing staff appropriate for managing plan implementation? Yes No

- (ii) If yes in 2(i) above, how would you rate the staffing situation of the AASDA?
a) Excellent b) very good c) good d) bad e) worse f) worst

- 3 (i). Do you have in place a basic manpower database/information system?
Yes No

- (ii) Are the likely future manpower needs and supplies known at any point in time?
Yes No

- (iii) If yes in (ii) above, please give the projections of labour needs for the under listed staff for the respective years:

Skills/positions	2010	2012	2016	2020
DCD				
Deputy DCD				
DPO				
Asst. DPO				
DBA				
Budget officer				
DFO				
Asst. DFO				
Dist engineer				
Local Govt. Inspector				
Revenue Superintendent				
Town and Country Plg. Officer.				

- 4 (i). Do you have in place any policy regarding the training of staff? Yes No

- (ii). If No in 4(i) above, why?
-
-

- (iii). If yes in 4(i) above, how are the training needs of the core staff determined?
-
-

(iv). Who determines the training needs of the core staff?
.....

(v). How do staff get selected to participate in training courses?
.....

(vi). Are adequate resources made available for the training of staff? Yes No

(vii) If No in (vi) above please give reasons:
.....
.....

(viii) If yes in (vi) above please provide the training budget in the table below:

Is the linked to any training institution to provide your training needs? Yes No

Please state the name of the institution if yes in (xi) above:

(xi) What are the proposed training programmes for 2008?

5 (i). What are the existing opportunities for staff professional development?

(ii) What are the incentive packages available to the core staff?

(iii) Are the core staff responsible for plan implementation satisfied with the prevailing incentives packages? a). very satisfied b) satisfied c) somewhat satisfied d) not satisfied

(iv) Does the prevailing incentive packages motivate staff to perform well?

(v) Is performance assessment mechanism in place? If yes what is the penalty for non-performance:

6(i). How would you describe core staff turnover rate (attrition) in the district?

(ii) Kindly provide records of resignations and transfers of core staff between 2002 and 2005 in the table below:

Core staff	No. resigned	Transfers	
		No. of Transfers out	No. of Transfers into ASSDA

(iii) What are the common reasons often cited for the following?

(a) Resignations:

.....

(b) Transfers:

.....

(iv) How would you rate the general attractiveness of AASDA to core staff?

a) highly attractive b) attractive c) less attractive d) unattractive

7. (i) What are the major problems that affect implementation of development plans in the district?

.....

(ii). What are your suggested solutions to these problems?

.....

SECTION B: DATA ON LOGISTICS/PHYSICAL RESOURCES

7 (i). Please provide an inventory of logistics/physical resources required for managing the implementation of plans

Types of equipment	No. required	No. existing	Condition of existing logistics/equipment
vehicles			
Motor bikes			
computers			
photocopiers			
Fax machines			
telephones			
MIS			
Flip charts			
Others:			

(ii). Which of these items do you consider critical in managing plan implementation?

.....

(iii) What efforts have you made in meeting the shortfalls in logistics required for managing plan implementation (if any?)

.....

- (iv) Do you have in place adequate maintenance system/plan? Yes No
- (v) Do you have an existing contract with a company who carries out routine maintenance of your equipment? Yes No
- (vi) Is there yearly budgetary allocations for the maintenance of equipment/logistics?
Yes No
- (vii) Do you have at post and Estate Manager in charge of the equipment/logistics? Yes No

(ii) Is there a comprehensive database on rateable items covering the entire district?
 Yes No

(iii) If yes in (ii) above when was it compiled?

(iv) When was the last time the database was updated?.....

(v) If No in (ii) above, how do you make projections on revenue generation in the district?.....

(vi) How many revenue collectors do you have?..... How many do you require?

(vii) How do you ensure accountability /transparency in the revenue collection systems?

(viii) How do you estimate the Assembly's share of the common fund for the ensuing year?.....

(ix) In the table provided below, please indicate releases of the Assembly's share of the Common Fund:

Year/ quarter	1 st quarter		2 nd quarter		3 rd quarter	
	Expected date/month	Actual month of release	Expected date/month	Actual month of release	Expected date/month	Actual month of release
2002						
2003						
2004						
2006						
2005						
2007						

(x) Apart from the sources of revenue indicated 8(i), what are the other sources of revenue to the Assembly:

(xi) Are these sources listed in (x) above reliable sources of revenue to the DA?
 Yes No

Please list the most unreliable sources of revenue to the DA;

(xii) Please enumerate the problems the Assembly encounter in generating revenue locally.

(xiii) Kindly suggest possible solutions to these problems

(xiv) What steps have the DA taken to improve upon local revenue generation?

(xv) What are the major problems that affect implementation of development plans in the district?

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DISTRICT PLANNING OFFICER (DPO)

SECTION D: DATA ON PLAN IMPLEMENTATION (2002-2005)

1. Who prepared the 2002-2005 Medium Term Development Plan (MTDP) for the DA?

2. (i) How do you manage the implementation of projects and programmes in the plan?

- (ii) Is there a team/group/officials that is directly responsible for managing the implementation process? Yes No
- (iii) If yes in (ii) above, who are the members of the team/group/official?

- (iv) If No in (ii) above, who is responsible for managing the implementation of the district's plan?

- (v) If yes in (ii) above, does the team has a designated office for managing plan implementation? Yes No
3. (i) Were there any projects or programmes implemented with funding from the DA but which were not in the 2002-2005 plan? Yes No
- (viii) If yes in 3(i) above please explain why?

4. Is the selection of annual projects and programmes to be implemented politically influenced?
 Yes No
- If yes in 4(i) above, please explain how

5. (i) Please list the major problems encountered in the course of implementing the 2002-2005 Medium Term Development Plans?

(ii) What kind of improvements will you suggest to facilitate managing plan implementation in the district?

6. How would you describe/gauge the overall level of satisfaction in the implementation of the 2002 – 2005 Medium Term Development Plan?
 (a).very satisfied (b). satisfied (c). somewhat satisfied (d). not satisfied

7(i) Please complete the table overleaf relating to 2002-2005 plan implementation

8. (i) Complete the table below on the membership of the DPCU (expanded).

Members	Qualification

(ii). Kindly complete the table below on the meeting schedules of the DPCU.

Years	Number of meetings in a year	Attendance at meetings						
		1 st meeting	2 nd meeting	3 rd meeting	4 th meeting	5 th meeting	6 th meeting	7 th meeting
2002								
2003								
2004								
2005								
2006								

(iii). How does the DPCU coordinate the activities of other collaborating agencies (decentralised departments) in the implementation of plans?

(iv) Is the DPCU equipped with database System? Yes No

(v) If yes in (iv) above, is the system capable of generating reports on the status of implementation of projects and programmes? Yes No

(vi) If no in (iv) above, how are records of plan implementation kept?

(vii) Is the database (if exists) capable of tracking the implementation of projects and programmes?

(viii) Are members adequately trained to operate and maintain the system? Yes No

(ix) What are the problems facing the DPCU?

(x) Does the Assembly have a documentation centre? Yes No

(xi) Who man the documentation centre if it exists?

(xii) If yes in (x), list the equipment/logistics requirements of the centre in the table below:

List of equipment/logistics	Existing/available	required

9. (i) Who is responsible for monitoring and evaluation of projects and programmes during implementation?

(ii) Is there an existing framework for monitoring and evaluation (M&E)? Yes No

(iii) Are resources allocated for monitoring and evaluation? Yes No

(iv) If Yes in (iii) above, please provide the monitoring and evaluation budget for the planning period 2002-2005;

Year	2002	2003	2004	2005
M&E budgets				

(v) Has some aspects of monitoring and evaluation functions being delegated to the sub-structures?
 Yes No

(vi) Is there a timetable or plan for carrying out monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects?
 Yes No

(vii) What is the frequency of monitoring and evaluation of projects and programme during implementation?

(viii) At what intervals do you review the progress in the implementation of the plan?

(ix) Who are the monitoring reports submitted to and who takes any corrective actions required?

(x) How is data required for effective M&E of plan implementation generated? Please tick appropriate sources from the list:

(a) project record (b) periodic interviews with project staff

(c) project beneficiaries (d) questionnaire survey (e) direct observation of project activities

(x) What incentive packages and rewards are available for officials undertaking monitoring and evaluation?

.....

(xi) What are the problems facing monitoring and evaluation of projects and programmes?

.....

(xii) What are your suggestions for improving upon monitoring and evaluation capacity of the Assembly?

.....

.....

Questionnaire for Decentralised departments

The purpose of this questionnaire is to assemble data for Msc. thesis on the topic "*An appraisal of the capacity of the Asante Akim South District Assembly (AASDA) in plan implementation management*". As a decentralised department, the study seeks to know how you collaborate with the AASDA in implementing projects and programmes in the district. Your candid opinions and inputs are thus considered necessary to the realisation of the objectives of the study. Thanking you in advance.

Name of decentralised department:

Date.....

Title/position of responding official.....

1(i). Did your department have a copy of the Medium Term Development Plan (MTDP) of the District Assembly (DA) for 2002-2005? Y N

(ii) Were you involved in the preparation of the plan? Yes No

(iii) If Yes in (ii) above, please describe how you were involved in its preparation?

.....

(iii). If No in (ii) above, please explain why you were not involved;

.....

2. In what ways would your outfit like to be involved in the preparations future MTDPs?

.....

3(i). Does the department collaborate with the ASSDA in the implementation of the district's

MTDP? Yes No

(ii). If Yes in 3(i) above, please describe how your department has been involved in implementing development plans (MTDP) of the district assembly:

.....

(iii) Please suggest possible ways the department can best be involved in implementing the district's MTDP?

.....

(iv) Are the expected roles (if any) to be performed by the department in plan implementation determined in advance? Yes No

(v) What are the problems that make collaboration with the DA in plan implementation difficult?

.....
.....
(vi) What strategies would you propose to enhance collaboration between your department and the AASDA in plan implementation management?

4(i). Do you have your own sectoral plan? Yes No

(ii). If yes in (i) above, how is your own plan integrated into the MTDP of the DA?

.....
.....

Questionnaire - Town and Area Councils

The purpose of this questionnaire is to assemble data for Msc. thesis on the topic "*An appraisal of the capacity of the Asante Akim South District Assembly (AASDA) in managing plan implementation*". As sub-structures of the AASDA, your opinions and inputs are considered necessary to the realisation of the objectives of the study. I am counting on your maximum cooperation to the success of this academic exercise. Thanking you in advance.

1) Name of Town/Area Council..... Date of interview

2) (i) Settlement in which the Town/Area Council is located.

(ii) What is the number of settlement(s) making up the Area/Town Council?

3) Date of inauguration..... Responding Official.....

4) Which of the staff listed below are presently at post? Please indicate by ticking.

Chairperson Clerk Treasurer Typist

5) Are these officers permanent employees of the Council? Yes No

6 (i) Are training courses organised for the staff of the Council? Yes No

(ii) If no in (i) above, give reasons:

(iii) If yes in (i) above, please indicate the number of training courses attended in the table below:

staff	2002			2005		
	Nature of training course	Training institution/consultants	Duration	Nature of training course	Training institution/consultants	Duration
chairman						
clerk						
treasurer						
typist						

7. Please provide an inventory of existing and logistics/physical resources required by the council in the table below:

Types of equipment	No. required	No. existing	Condition of existing logistics/equipment
Motor bikes			
Computers			
typewriters			
photocopiers			
Fax machines			
telephones			
Flip charts			
Others:			

9. (i) Kindly provide in the table below records of local revenue generated over the indicated years

Revenue heads/description	2002		2003		2004		2005	
	estimate	actual	estimate	actual	estimate	actual	estimate	actual

(ii) What percentage of the revenue collected is kept by the Council?.....

10. (i) Has the AADA formally (in writing) delegated any of its functions to the council?
 Yes No

(ii) If yes in 10(i) above, state these delegated functions:

11. Has the council ever implemented any project or programme of its own? Yes No

12 (i). Has the council being involved in implementing programme and projects by the AASDA in your area? Yes No

(ii) If yes in 12(i) above, kindly indicate the various ways in which the DA allowed the council to been involved.

(iii). What are the problems the council encountered in performing these tasks?

(iv) How would the council like to be involved in implementing projects and programmes initiated by the AASDA in its area?

13. Describe any incentive packages that are available to the council members:

14. What are the major problems facing the operations of the council

15. Please suggest possible solutions to the problems identified

CAPACITY SELF-ASSESSMENT SHEET

The purpose of this Capacity Self-Assessment Sheet is to seek independent and objective views of respondents regarding the capacity situation of the AASDA in managing plan implementation. Various indicators (statements) of capacity have been outlined. You are kindly requested to thoroughly read through and choose by marking (x) on the scoring scale of 1-5, the one in which in your best judgment, accurately describes and reflects existing capacity situation of the Assembly. Below is the scale for the assessment:

Scale	Description
1	woefully inadequate, needs very urgent attention
2	inadequate, needs some urgent attention
3	adequate, but needs many improvements without urgency
4	adequate, needs minor improvements without urgency
5	adequate, acceptable, no need for improvements

Capacity Indicators	Rating Scale				
	1	2	3	4	5
Human Resources (staffing)					
1. Core staff are at post in the required numbers to effectively carry out plan implementation management activities.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
2. Competence and level of expertise of core staff prosecuting plan implementation;	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
3. Comprehensive manpower database capable of generating staff records in the shortest possible time is available;	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
4. Systems and mechanisms for forecasting future staff needs over a period of time is in place and functioning properly;	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
5. Clear and transparent mechanism exist for the selection of staff for training on regular intervals as part of human development policy of the AASDA;	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
6. Appropriate incentive packages are in place to enhance staff performance;	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
7. Records of budgetary allocation for staff training is constant and such information are made available to all staff;	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
8. Performance assessment is a yearly affair and constitute an integral part of management operations where all core staff are duly assessed;	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

9. Staff training is not compromised and that human development plan exist which is thoroughly implemented;

10. Arrangement have been put in place linking AASDA to a training institution that provides the training needs of staff;

Logistics/Equipment

1. All logistics/equipment required for effective plan implementation are available in sufficient quantities and are in good conditions;

2. Adequate maintenance plan is in place for the routine maintenance of all equipment. This is rigidly followed and budget for maintenance is always provided;

3. Inventory of all logistics/equipment for managing plan implementation is kept and under the care of qualified Estate manager

4. Arrangements are in place for a service company who carries out routine maintenance of all equipment used for plan implementation management;

Financial /Budgeting

1. A comprehensive and regularly updated database on rateable items covering the whole district exist, providing a basis for realistic revenue projections;

2. Adequate, hardworking and well motivated revenue collectors are available for revenue collections;

3. Available revenue collection system and structures is capable of blocking any revenue leakages and ensuring transparency and accountability in revenue collection;

4. Techniques and methods of revenue estimations is capable of generating fairly precise figures on revenue;

5. Regular and reliable sources of funding exist to implement all projects and programmes in the plan;

Collaboration/Coordination

1. All decentralised departments are actively involved in the preparation of DMTP and all departments are provided with copies of the DMTP;

2. Good mechanisms exist for coordination and cooperation between all the implementing agencies -decentralised departments;	[] [] [] [] []
3. Mandates and responsibilities of all implementing agencies are clearly stated and distributed among them well in advance;	[] [] [] [] []
4. decentralised departments and agencies are able to obtain all information regarding plan implementation including progress reports	[] [] [] [] []
5. MIS is operational and adequately used for managing plan implementation;	[] [] [] [] []
6. Extent to which aspects of plan implementation are delegated to sub-structures (Area/Town Council);	[] [] [] [] []
7. A designated office exist, fully equipped and used solely for managing plan implementation, all information on implementation is obtained;	[] [] [] [] []
8. Plan implementation team with clearly defined roles is in place who are in charge of managing plan implementation;	[] [] [] [] []
9. Well constituted, adequately resourced and highly motivated DPCU exist, meet regularly to coordinate and deliberate the progress of plan implementation;	[] [] [] [] []
Monitoring and Evaluation	
1. Framework for monitoring and evaluation is in place as well as monitoring plan and these are consistently followed in monitoring;	[] [] [] [] []
2. Budgetary allocations for monitoring is a constant item in all annual budgets;	[] [] [] [] []
3. Format and systems for quick and timely generation and circulation of monitoring reports among all the implementing and funding agencies is in place;	[] [] [] [] []
4. Extent to which remedial actions on monitoring reports are implemented;	[] [] [] [] []
5. M&E indicators and benchmarks are developed in advance and are used to monitor and evaluate performance;	[] [] [] [] []
6. Projects and programmes implementation are independently reviewed and evaluated;	[] [] [] [] []

LEADERSHIP CAPACITY ASSESSMENT

This exercise aims at evaluating the performance of the immediate past leadership (DCE) of the ASSDA from the perceptions (attributions) of the staff. Ten statements (items) about practices associated with leadership are given. You are kindly requested to indicate your assessment on each of the statements by checking the appropriate boxes. That is whether his performance was

(1) Poor (2) Fairly good (3) Good (4) Very good (5) Excellent

*Please remember to 'check one best answer for one statement' in a row. Be assured that responses from this survey will be treated strictly as **confidential**, and data from the study will be reported only in the **aggregate**. I am trusting on your usual good and objective judgments. **Please do not disclose your identity.** Thanks*

Sections A

Practices associated with leadership	Rating Scale				
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Problem Solving: ability to identify work related problems, analyse the problem and determine the causes, find solutions on time, and resolve the crisis;	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
2. Clarifying: ability to assign work, provide directions on how to do the work, communicate clearly of job responsibilities, output or expectation and setting of deadlines	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
3. Informing: disseminate relevant information about decisions taken, plans, and activities to staff and people who need information to do their work;	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
4. Recognising : praise and give recognition for an outstanding performance, significant achievement, and special contributions;	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
5. Delegating: allowing subordinates to have responsibility and discretion in carrying out work activities, giving them staff authority to make important decisions;	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
6. Developing & Mentoring : providing coaching and career counselling, embarking on actions that facilitate subordinate's skills acquisition and career advancement;	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
7. Rewarding: providing tangible rewards such as honorarium, allowances and recommendation for promotion for effective performance demonstrated competence by subordinate;	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

8. **Consulting** : Conferring with staff before taking decision or making changes that affect them, encouraging participation in decision making, and allowing others to influence decision;

Section B:

1. From the list provided below, tick the one(s) which best describe the type of leadership behaviour of the DCE. You may tick more than one answer.

- a. Directive Leadership
- b. Supportive Leadership
- c. Participative Leadership
- d. Achievement-oriented Leadership

The explanations are as follows:

Directive Leadership:

Letting followers know what is expected of them, giving specific directions and scheduling work.

Supportive Leadership:

Being friendly and approachable, and showing concern for followers' well being.

Participative Leadership:

Consulting followers and asking for suggestions, with the officers ultimately making decisions.

Achievement-Oriented Leadership:

Setting challenging goals, expecting and encouraging followers to perform at high levels, and showing confidence in their abilities

2. Is/was the DCE an **Autocratic leader** or **Democratic leader** ? Please tick one answer only.

Explanation:

a. **Autocratic Leader:**

A leader who tends to centralise authority and rely on legitimate and coercive power to manage subordinates.

b. **Democratic Leader:**

A leader who delegates authority to others, encourages participation, and relies on expert and referent power to manage subordinates.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DISTRICT ENGINEER/WORKS FOREMAN

1. Please describe briefly what you generally consider as shoddy works;
.....
.....
2. How do you detect/determine whether completed facility was shoddily executed or otherwise?
.....
.....
- 3 (i). Have you ever heard of complaints of shoddy works by contractors in the district?
Yes No
- (ii) Have complaints of shoddy works ever come to your notice (office)? Yes No
- (iii) If yes in (ii) above please name few cases of shoddy works reported;
.....
.....
- (iv) Whom did you received these complaints from?
.....
.....
4. What actions are taken to remedy reported or detected cases of shoddy works?
.....
.....
5. How do you ensure that contractors produce quality works?
.....
.....
- 6 (i). Are the services of consultants engaged to supervise construction works? Yes
No
- (ii) If yes in 6(i) above, who is held responsible for shoddy works where there any?
.....
7. What are the penalties for contractors who carry out shoddy works?
.....
.....
8. Please give few examples of contractors who have suffered such penalties before (if any);
.....
.....
9. What are the possible causes of delays in completing projects?
.....
.....
10. What are the factors that affect plan implementation in the district?
11. Please suggest possible ways through which plan implementation management in the district can be improved.

Appendix I: Photographs of Town and Area Councils Visited



Above: Komeso Area Council (Rented Store)



Above: Asankare Area Council (Under Construction)



Dadieso Area Council (No signage)



Kwahu-Praaso Revenue Office (Dadieso Area Council)



Above: Morso/Krofa Area Council



Above: Komeatifi Area Council



Juaso Town Council



Obogu Town Council