



LOCAL GOVERNANCE PRACTITIONERS' FORUM (LGPF)
REPORT ON THE SECOND FORUM

**THEME: Setting the Agenda for Decentralization and Local Governance Transformation
in Ghana**

Date: 30th March, 2021

Host: Institute of Local Government Studies, Tamale Campus

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Acronyms

CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAs	District Assemblies
ILGS	Institute of Local Government Studies
IMCCoD	Inter-Ministerial Coordinating Committee on Decentralization
LG	Local Government
LGPF	Local Governance Practitioners Forum
MLGDERD	Ministry of Local Government, Decentralization and Rural Development
MMDAs	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies
OHLGS	Office of Head of Local Government Service
RCC	Regional Coordinating Council

1.0 Introduction

The Second “Local Governance Practitioners’ Forum” (LGPF) took place on 30th March, 2021 at the Institute of Local Government Studies (ILGS) Tamale Campus, in the Northern Region of Ghana. The forum brought together a total of seventy-five (75) experienced local governance practitioners in Northern Ghana to discuss the country’s decentralization and local governance practices and collate ideas that would feed into national policy discussions. The event had a mix of both 34 physical and 41 virtual participants including members of the LGPF, mayors and city managers, practitioners, traditional authorities and other key stakeholders. The theme for the event was “Setting the agenda for decentralization and local governance transformation in Ghana”.

An interactive and participatory approaches were deployed which saw rich and insightful contributions from both physical and virtual participants. A key thread of the discussions was that progress in decentralization has reached a plateau for the past decade. Achieving further progress will require some injection of new ideas and radical transformation plan. The key speaker presented ideas that focused on a four-prong approach to transforming Ghana decentralisation and local governance: (1) Conceptual shift of purpose of decentralisation; (2) A top-down political commitment (3) A bubble up advocacy and (4) capacity building

During the open forum, discussions focused around four cluster of issues:

1. Administrative Decentralisation Resources:
 - Recruitment and posting of staff to MMDAs
 - Career progression and training
 - Improving the relationship between political heads and LG staff at the MMDA
2. Political decentralization and downward accountability
 - Election of MMDCEs
 - Remuneration of Assembly Members
 - Creating space for active involvement of Traditional Authorities and other marginalized groups
 - Need to review Act 936,
 - Enhancing vertical and horizontal accountability
 - Effective operationalization of the district assembly sub structures.
3. Fiscal decentralization
 - Increasing the DACF and revising the sharing formula
 - Improving IGF through development of database and application of ICT
 - Enforcement of bye-laws
 - Education and sensitization of the citizenry on their tax obligations to the LGs
4. Local economic development
 - Sensitization of the citizens and stakeholders on local economic development,
 - Mapping of natural and institutional resources at the LG level
 - Localizing the 1D1F secretariat and incorporating 1D1F into MMDA

At the end of the forum, participants built a consensus on some recommendations which were put into a resolution/communiqué for submission to the Minister for Local Government, Decentralization and Rural Development (MLGDRD) and the Inter-Ministerial Coordinating Committee on Decentralization (IMCC) for policy consideration. See resolution/ communiqué in appendix.

1.1 Context

The Local Governance Practitioners Forum (LGPF) provides an inclusive space for diverse policy actors (researchers, central and local policy makers, local governments, private enterprises, bureaucrats, civil society organizations (CSOs), development partners, politicians and political parties, and the media) to share research and practice evidence on democratic and developmental local governance. In the context of decentralization and local governance, the 1992 Constitution of Ghana envisages local governments that provide opportunities to enhance local democracy, promote citizens' participation, improve the delivery of local public services and general local development.

Article 240 (1) of the Constitution further states, "Ghana shall have a system of local government and administration which shall, as far as practicable, be decentralized". The decentralization process thus, encourages more accountable and responsive governance, improved public service delivery, and promotes more equitable distribution of services and resources across the country. It brings government closer to the governed so as to improve public administration. Hence the implementation of decentralization and local governance in Ghana is anchored on Administrative Decentralization and Service Delivery, Political Decentralization and Downward Accountability, Fiscal Decentralization and Local Economic Development (LED).

1.2 Rationale

The overall purpose of the second forum was to elicit views and recommendations through discussions and experience sharing, for policy and practice reforms leading to efficient, effective and sustainable local level governance and development. The specific objectives of the second LGPF were to:

- Update participants' knowledge on the current status of Ghana's decentralization and local governance;
- Provide an opportunity or a platform for stakeholders in Northern Ghana to express their views on the state of decentralization and local governance practices in the country;
- Collate ideas and recommendations that can be shared in national forum for policy uptake on decentralization and local governance reforms in Ghana

1.3 Participation

The second forum brought together members of the LGPF and partners including researchers, central and local policy makers, LG officials at the regional and district level, traditional authorities, private enterprises and civil society organizations (CSOs). The event had a mix of both physical and virtual participants. A total of Seventy five (75) participants took part in the forum comprising thirty-four (34) participants attending physically, of which there were four (4) females and thirty (30) males and forty one (41) participants joined via Zoom (See attendance list and Screenshot of Zoom participants in appendix)

1.4 Approaches and Methodology

An interactive and participatory approach was adopted for the forum. Presentations and breakout sessions (including group presentations) were facilitated by experienced resource persons. The delivery process was in two sessions, namely, a presentation on the theme for the second forum and breakout sessions on the following sub-themes:

- Political decentralization and local democratic governance
- Administrative decentralization and service provision
- Fiscal decentralization
- Local economic development

2.0. Opening Session

The forum commenced with an opening prayer by Mr. Abdul-Moomen Salia at exactly 10:20am, after the moderator, Mr. David Osei-Wusu (Registrar of ILGS) called participants to order. Mr. David Osei–Wusu thereafter gave a brief overview of the Local Governance Practitioners Forum (LGPF) in terms of its structure and operation as well as the composition and working of the Steering Committee among others.



Mr. David Osei-Wusu, Registrar, ILGS and Moderator for the second forum

The moderator took the opportunity to introduce the chairman of the forum who is also the Executive Secretary of the Inter- Ministerial Coordinating Committee on Decentralization (IMCCoD) in the person of Ing. Salifu Mahama.



Ing. Salifu Mahama, Executive Secretary IMCC and Chairman of the Second Forum

In his opening remarks, Ing. Salifu Mahama acknowledged and thanked all present. He expressed his appreciation and thanks to the Institute of Local Government Studies (ILGS) as organizers of the forum and the sponsors: the Dutch Platform on Inclusive Development (INCLUDE), Star Ghana Foundation, and all stakeholders that had helped the LGPF to stay and operate.

Ing. Salifu observed that the theme for the forum ‘Setting the agenda for decentralization and local governance transformation in Ghana’ resonates well with the National Decentralization Strategy of Ghana for 2020-2024, and therefore sets the pace for stakeholder engagements. He disclosed that this is the first time in Ghana a forum like this is established and it was therefore no wonder that there is a mix of participants from various stakeholder groupings.

He further observed that the pace of decentralization in Ghana is generally slow and therefore a forum like this was necessary to take varied views for accelerating the agenda of decentralization in the country. He hoped for specific proposals to be made for the achievement of the forum and to help in the achievement of the overall objectives of the decentralization policy in Ghana. He implored all to give out their best and hoped for an interesting deliberations.

In his welcome statement, Mr. Richard D. Kambootah, the Deputy Director of ILGS, Tamale Campus welcomed all and sundry to the second LGPF in Tamale. He opined that local governance provides an opportunity for the improvement of the wellbeing of the people and that the sphere of local governance is about service delivery with regards to availability and access. He added that over the last three decades, there have been some success stories in the decentralisation journey and there are equally some challenges along the way and since decentralization is a process, there was the need for stakeholders to come together to share ideas and experiences and to chart a common path for accelerating the decentralization process. He took the opportunity to once again welcome all participants including those joining via zoom, and hope for an interesting and successful forum.



Mr. Richard D. Kambootah, Deputy Director, ILGS, Tamale Campus

The Northern Regional Minister, Hon Shani Alhassan Shaibu in his opening address acknowledged all present and praised ILGS and all partners for such a forum. He thanked the organizers on behalf of the chiefs and people of the Northern Region for selecting Tamale to host the second forum of the LGPF, an important forum at a critical stage of Ghana's decentralization journey. He observed that local governance and decentralization promotes democracy for effective service delivery and added that the benefits of decentralization are abound for all to see. Hon Shani said that decentralization in Ghana has come a long way and can only be enhanced by inputs from practitioners, academics and research and training institutions. He further reiterated that political decentralization, administrative decentralization, fiscal decentralization and local economic development are the pillars on which effective decentralization revolves.



Northern Regional Minister Hon. Alhaji Shani A. Shaibu delivering his Opening Address

The Minister added that there have been limitations to the effective practice of decentralization making the LGPF more than relevant and appropriate. He further stated that Government will do anything and everything possible to ensure that development responds to the felt needs of the citizenry which can only be done when there is active citizen participation in decision making, leadership and governance processes. He emphasized that the change of name of the Ministry to Local Governance, Decentralization and Rural Development brings to light the seriousness the current government attaches to issues of decentralization. He once again on behalf of the chiefs and people of the Northern Region thanked everyone for coming and hope that insightful proposals would be made to fasten the wheels of Ghana's decentralization agenda.

2.1 Presentation by Keynote Speaker

The Guest Speaker for the occasion, Dr Nicholas Awortwi who is also the Director of the Institute of Local Government Studies gave a presentation on ‘Decentralization and Local Governance Transformation: Setting the Agenda for Reform in Ghana ‘.



Dr Nicholas Awortwi, Director of ILGS and Key Note Speaker during the Second LGPF

The presentation focused on five key areas:

I The Position of LGs in inter-Governmental Relations

The presentation shows that from cradle to grave, local governments (LGs) are supposed to be the government that citizens interact with in their day to day activities until they die. This is because LGs provide the basic needs and services of the people. He argues that the principles of subsidiarity guide the division of work between the central and local governments, ensuring that local problems are addressed by local institutions unless there are convincing arguments that a higher-level institutional solution is needed. This could be economies of scale, externality and spill-over effects, etc. Once services and other responsibilities are transferred to LGs, then finance and authority need to follow to ensure that LG mandates are funded. This principle has guided the design of decentralization and central-local government relations in both developed and developing countries.

II Conceptual understanding of Decentralization and Local Governance

As a development strategy and policy, decentralisation was introduced as a result of the failures of centralization. Using the literature from advanced, transitioned and developing countries, Dr. Awortwi provided evidence that decentralization works better in promoting citizens welfare than centralization. It can also be used to achieve several national objectives, the most common and well-known objective being “bringing government and services” closer to the people. Other objectives include: promoting peace, inclusiveness and sensitivity to local needs and conditions; promoting political stability and national unity; and enhancing sustainability of democracy. However, these lofty objectives are not automatic and indeed there are potential pitfalls.

The presentation highlighted the pitfalls and some factors that make decentralization implementation successful: the type of decentralisation that is chosen; political commitment and readiness of the central government to transfer some of its power, resources and responsibilities to LGs; central government capacity to regulate and coordinate LG; LG capacity to implement local projects and the needs of the people; degree of empowerment of grassroots organisations; system of accountability; legal and institutional framework, etc.

Conceptually, a country can implement three types of decentralization: deconcentration, delegation or devolution (or combination). He argues that devolution is the ultimate or ideal form of decentralization that increases citizens’ welfare but which many governments are unwilling to implement. Devolution transfers substantial leadership, authority for decision making, finance and accountability to LGs in a well demarcated local jurisdiction. The question of whether to practice deconcentration, delegation or devolution; and how much of administrative, fiscal and political decentralization will be added on to LGs is determined in many cases by central government politicians and bureaucrats, and also by a country’s historical antecedents. Given that decentralization is a zero-sum game because power or resources that are transferred from the centre to local means a lost by central politicians and bureaucrats, there is always strategic choices. Central government bureaucrats and politicians always want to be in control of local development.

III Ghana decentralization policies, practices and progress to date

The presentation then moved to examine Ghana’s 30 years of implementing decentralisation reforms. It argues that while the 1992 Constitution in (chapters 35(6), 36(2) and 20) envisages devolution, translation of these constitutional provisions into decentralization policies and strategies since 1992 has been couched in Deconcentration than devolution. He recounted some of the benefits of decentralisation policies and practices in Ghana and argues further that progress in decentralization has reached a plateau for the past decade. Achieving further progress will require some injection of new ideas and radical transformation plan.

The weaknesses of the current Decentralization Policies and Practices.

Dr. Awortwi argued that a starting point for transformation is going back to the basics to analyze the weaknesses associated with four of the key pillars of Ghana decentralization policies and practices.

1. *Administrative Decentralisation and Local Public Services provision*

- There is over centralisation in the provision of local public services in terms of planning, budgeting, staffing, delivering, monitoring and evaluation, and accountability.
- Analysis of 25 municipal services shows that the central government controls 53% of the functions in their provision while local governments only 36.4%
- In fact, in many LG jurisdictions citizens welfare or service provision are unlikely to be seriously affected if a LG is not there because the centre is responsible for most of the local services provision.
- Consequently, there is accountability failure. Administrative decentralisation and service provision are clear candidates for reforms and transformation in Ghana

2. *Fiscal Decentralisation*

- Low Internally Generated Revenue. The 260 MMDAs mobilise less than 1% of the national revenue generation.
- MMDAs do not collect substantial part of their revenue sources and prefer to depend on District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF).
- The DACF and donor support through the District Development Facility (DDF) have become the major sources of revenues for district assemblies (LGs). Without it, only few LGs (Kumasi, Accra and Tema) can survive.
- Much of the revenue assigned to LGs are not collected because there is little pressure on the staff to deliver hard performance indicators.

3. *Economic Decentralization*

- Promotion of local economic development is one function of the district assemblies that is explicitly stated in the LG Act 936 (section 12) but it is also the least performed by the DAs. This is so because there is limited understanding, operational knowhow and financial support by the assemblies.
- On average DAs spend about 5% of their budget on LED.
- In many DAs there isn't any dedicated staff to promote LED. Ghana's LGs are far behind in the transition from traditionally service delivery orientation to LED
- Attempts to promote local industrialization in the form of 1D1F has been centrally driven.

4. *Political Decentralization and Local Democratic Governance*

- LG are structurally, systematically and legally weakened by design when deconcentration is chosen instead of the constitutional preference for devolution
- Continuous appointment of MMDCEs weakens the principles of democratic local governance
- Citizens interest and participation in local governance have been poor compared to their participation at national level issues
- Currently there is little pressure on MMDCEs to perform. Downward accountability for resource mobilization, administrative function, service delivery and local economic development by LG staff and MMDCEs are the weakest links in Ghana's decentralization and local development.

IV. Proposals for Transformation

According to Dr. Awortwi, fixing the weaknesses of the current decentralization and local governance will require a four-prong approach:

1. Conceptual shift of purpose of decentralisation
2. A top-down political commitment,
3. A bubble up advocacy
4. Capacity building

Conceptual shift of purpose of decentralisation

- Conceptually, Ghana should think about decentralization beyond the cliché of “effective and efficient service delivery” and shift towards democratic developmental local governance. This proposition shifts emphasis on decentralization and local governance towards the promotion of local economic development under democratic local governments system. The proposition will find expression in Article 240 of the 1992 Constitution. He argues:
 - Democratic developmental local governments are anchored on devolution of power and prioritises local economic transformation, product development, job creation and income growth.
 - It gives local authorities discretion over their own resources, in parallel with a responsibility to local needs and preferences.
 - It is based on the performance of elected Mayors, whose grip on power is dependent on the social economic investment they enable in localities.

Top-down political commitment on four pillars

On top-down political commitment towards transformation, he made a number of suggestions under the four pillars:

Political Transformation and Downward Accountability

- Downward Accountability through Executive performance management system without democratic elections. In this setup, the MMDCs will continue to be appointed by the President but will:
 - (i) sign performance contract with hard measurable indicators such as; the amount of revenue generation; local industrial products to develop; number of jobs to create; tons of waste to collect from the streets; etc. with the President;
 - (ii) sign performance contract with local residents through their representatives in the form of Citizens Charter;
 - (iii) Every year citizens’ report card will be conducted to assess the performance of MMDCs.
- The second remedy to fixing accountability problem will require major legal/constitutional reforms. It should lead to direct election of MMDCs by local residents. The ideal form for the election of MMDCs will be on political party system but the odd against it is high in the

current political environment. So perhaps a non-partisan basis is the one that is likely to get an overwhelming political support from Parliament and the citizens. It will be less expensive, requiring just Parliamentary action without any referendum. This option will also eliminate the influence of party delegates in the selection process. To avoid unmanageable number of applicants, a sieving process can be adopted with legal backing to prune down applicants for the electable MMDCE position. A roadmap towards achieving this needs to be developed by 2021 to rekindle citizens interest in LGs.

- Representation of traditional authorities (Chiefs) and marginalised groups (women, youth and PWD) in LG through affirmative action.

Fiscal Transformation

- The big cities (metros and municipalities) must be compelled to collect substantial revenues from their property rates to qualify for District Development Facility.
- Decentralisation of land valuation board to enable substantial mobilization of property rates.
- Increase the DACF fund from 5% to about 10%.
- The formula for sharing DACF needs a review to make it possible to devote substantial revenue to districts and less to metros and municipalities. The DACF should consider 3 allocation formulas one for Metropolitan; another for municipalities and districts. This will enable special dispensation for lagged districts and push the well-endowed urban LGs to mobilise much of their IGF
- Participation of LGs in financial market. It is time the Ministries of Finance and Local Governments collaborate to seriously design municipal finance bill for Parliamentary consideration. The Metropolitan and Municipal Assemblies can use their share of the DACF as collateral security to raise municipal bonds.
- Activate the payment of basic rates. If basic rate is fixed at GHC2, every LG can make about GHC 100,000 a year.

Promoting LED

- Need for a serious work on building the capacity and attitude of municipal staff in LED
- MMDAs must be supported to undertake comprehensive mapping of endogenous resources and institutions that can collaborate to develop local area products to promote local economy, wage employment and income growth
- Localisation of the 1D1F secretariat into the district assemblies and within the policy of LED.
- Need for Coordination of 1D1F and LED policies. That means that the Trade and Industry Department at the MMA needs to be established through a legislative instrument.

Bubble up (bottom-up) Approach

- While national level political commitment would be needed for any attempt to pursue transformation, a bubble-up approach is urgently needed to complement top-down political support. A bubble-up approach is civic actions by a coalition of local institutions and actors

that advocate for reforms in line with areas that promote local governance, local transformation and local development.

- The bubble-up involves negotiating with the central government on varied fronts (fiscal, political, economic, administrative, leadership and accountability). This will be needed because while national politicians and bureaucrats find it expedient to appear to support decentralization, they do not wish to see powerful LGs to emerge to challenge their privileges to resources, power and influence in society.
- Had grassroots institutions and actors stood up in support of the proposed reforms, there was no way the political parties would have pivoted the 2019 referendum towards their interest. A bubble-up approach involving grassroots organisations, institutions and actors would partly own the reforms.
- One of the factors that enabled Latin American countries to successfully initiate democratic local governance system and a switch from appointment of Mayors to direct election was the demand by local politicians and grassroots organisations. Assembly members, traditional authorities, local government functionaries, CBOs and CSOs, etc need to demand new forms of decentralization that favour LGs.

Capacity Building.

- Need for training and reorientation of LG officers and functionaries (LG staff, Assembly members, MMDCEs, etc) in the new business of LG.
- LGs need to be managed as a business and not as a bureaucracy. There must be a relationship between LG staff and improved performance at the Assembly. LG staff must be seen as making a difference in communities. We cannot assume that Accra will be the cleanest city in Africa when LG staff or the performance of the Mayor of Accra cannot be measured on how much waste is collected from the city.
- ILGS and OHLGS needs to collaborate to deliver structured training while the performance assessment tool of DPAT must change to incorporate hard data.



Alhaji Alhassan Issahaku, Chief Director, NRCC



Dr. Nicholas Awortwi and Ing. Salifu Mahama

2.2 Discussions that emerged from the keynote presentation

- A participant reiterated the importance of accountability in any governance process but observed that whilst efforts are made to enhance vertical accountability, horizontal accountability is left unattended to, a situation the participant believes is affecting the entire accountability process.

- Polarization of MMDAs is effecting cohesion and smooth decision making especially at the General Assembly level. It was said that this situation calls for an urgent debate on the way forward for the conduction of local level elections.
- A participant wanted to know the role of technocrats at the MMDA level in our decentralization journey so far. It was clarified that the vehicles for the practicalisation of decentralization have always been the technocrats at the MMDA level even though in some instances logistical constraints, human resource capacity and political interference have challenged these technocrats in the discharge of their non-partial roles.
- A participant lamented and asked rhetorically whether there is any hope for decentralization in Ghana. He observed that after three decades of its practice in the country, the number of MMDAs has increased from 110 in 1988 to 260, it appears we are marking time since creating more districts means transferring some of the challenges to another geographical area. Participants were however reminded that decentralization is a process and not an event but of course we need to get the fundamentals right in order to realize the full benefits of it.
- Related to the above, a participant said that we continue to create more MMDAs and so what? What is the justification to continue to create more MMDAs if the envisaged development has not come and these local governments continue to underperform?
- A participant was categorical that if we do not reduce partisanship at the local level, we would not make any headway. He buttressed his point with minors operating tricycles within the Tamale Metropolis. He observed that bye laws just do not work and every step taken by leaders are overly politicized.
- A participant reiterated the need to empower Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) at the local since that is the base of the local economy, and the source of internally generated revenue to the MMDAs. If SMEs are non- performing, revenue mobilization will be ineffective and nonexistent in some instances.
- There is general lack of motivation for DA Members, Unit Committee Members, and the staff of the sub structures. As a result, their role in effective resources mobilization is affected, coupled with lack of accountability, supervision and transparency.
- A participant lamented that if party foot soldiers can ask for the removal and transfer of a public officer, what type of system are we running?
- It was pointed that all MMDAs are poor because they do not know what they have and they are not making efforts to know. It was discussed that for them to explore their areas of jurisdiction, there is the urgent need for resource and institutional mapping so that they know what they have, their location and what needs to be done for an aggressive local economic development take off.
- On how to make public office holders more effective and responsive, there was the need for performance based contracts to be used, where they come into office with their vision and plan of action. These officers are therefore assessed based on the key performance areas and their respective key performance indicators.

- The district assembly substructures ineffectiveness and non-operational nature should be looked at. They should be resourced with the needed logistics and human resources since that is the basic point in our development journey.
- The rationale for government appointment into the various MMDAs should be revisited. Only people with requisite skills should be appointed.
- The decentralization and local government system in Ghana should be seen as a dynamic concept. Every system falls sick and therefore needs some diagnosis and that is where we have found ourselves. The lamentations about the system should be seen as a generational challenge.
- Urgent need for public education on decentralisation in Ghana.

Cross Section of Participants











3.0 Breakout Sessions

The second segment of the forum was the breakout sessions. Participants were grouped into four main themes of (a) Administrative decentralization and service delivery, (b) political decentralization and downward accountability, (c) fiscal decentralization and (d) local economic development. Below are the issues discussed in the various clusters and the recommendations made.

3.1 Administrative Decentralization and Service Delivery

The group on administrative decentralization and service delivery summarized the issues discussed and their recommendations as captured in table 3.1 below;

Issues Discussed and Recommendations on Administrative Decentralization

No.	Areas for Consideration	Suggestions and Recommendations
1.	Recruitment and posting of staff by the OHLGS is not in conformity with staffing norms – over-staffing and understaffing in some MMDAs	Human Resource Assessment should be conducted prior to recruitment and posting to the MMDAs. Staff should be posted through the RCCs to ensure co-ordination
2.	Over-centralization of recruitment process even without recourse to the Regional Co-coordinating Councils (RCCs)	Recruitment of Auxiliary Staff such as Drivers, etc. should be decentralized to the MMDAs
3.	Inadequate Office space	Provision of adequate infrastructure to cater for office space especially for newly created MMDAs and Regions

4.	The merger of some departments is creating conflict among staff. E,g the Community Development and Social Welfare Departments	Need for effective orientation and training for merged departments to fully understand their roles and functions to avoid conflict
5.	Lack of Capacity Building and effective orientation of newly recruited staff	Career progression training should be instituted to build the capacity of staff to perform effectively and efficiently
6.	Lack of effective co-operation between bureaucrats and political heads mostly due to inadequate resources, late/erratic release of funds and budget cuts	Foster relationship between Political Heads and MMDAs Bureaucracy. Improve Internal Revenue generation. E.g, increase basic rate from the current 10 pesewas to GH¢5.00 preceded by public sensitization and education
7.	Inadequate operational logistics such as computers, etc	Provision of adequate logistics to make staff more efficient and effective
8.	Poor maintenance culture of infrastructure and other services provided	There should be mandatory maintenance plans development accompanied with resources commitment
9.	Some caliber of staff such as Spatial/Physical Planning Officers are lacking in some MMDAs	OHLGS should take urgent steps to fill vacancies of Spatial/Physical Planning Officers, ICT and other critical staff lacking in some of the MMDAs
10.	There are some inconsistencies in the Local Governance Act, (Act 936). E.g The DCD as the Chair of the DPCU is also the Convener and the DPO the Secretary but the DPO is in one breath referred to as the Convener	Review the Local Governance Act, (Act 936) to reflect operations of the MMDAs especially the area of the DPCU.

Group Members

No.	Name	Organization/Designation
1.	Gilbert Nuriteg	MCD, Tamale Metropolitan Assembly
2.	Ivan Z. Gam	MCD, Savelugu Municipal Assembly
3.	Dennis Osei	MCD, West-Gonja Municipal Assembly
4.	Musah Issaka	DCD, Mion District Assembly
5.	Alhaji A.Y.M.B Ibrahima	Former Mayor, Tamale Metro
6.	Richard D. Kambootah (Moderator)	Deputy Director, ILGS, Tamale



Naaba Moses Abaare Appiah IV, Chief of Binaba and Chairman of the ILGS Council

3.2 Political Decentralization and Downward Accountability

The discussions on political decentralization and downward accountability are captured in table 3.2 below:

Areas Discussed and Suggestions made on Political Decentralization

Areas for Consideration	Suggestions and Recommendations
Downward accountability through executive performance management system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct election of MMDCEs through universal adult suffrage • Empowering of Assembly Members to hold MMDCEs accountable. • Holding Assembly Members accountable to their electorates. • Downward Accountability through Executive Performance Management System
Election of MMDCEs on partisan or non-partisan basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct election of MMDCEs through universal adult suffrage • Election of MMDCEs on partisan basis is most preferred

Representation of traditional authorities (Chiefs) and marginalized groups (women, youth and PWD) in LG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avenues must be created for getting more representation for Traditional Authorities, Women and PWDs.
Bring back Town Development Committee to replace Unit committees in rural area and Chiefs could be made chairpersons of the TDCs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the establishment and motivation of the Unit Committees to perform their functions
Payment of monthly Allowances to Assembly members.	Central Government should pay allowances of Assembly Members from the Consolidated Fund.

3.3 Fiscal Decentralization

Discussion on fiscal decentralization and related issues are captured in table 3.3 below

Areas for Consideration and Suggested Strategies on Fiscal Decentralization

Areas for Consideration	Suggestions and Recommendations
DAs are not widening the tax net enough to cover more of its residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Education and sensitization of citizens on the need to pay their fees and charges ▪ Enforcement of the laws relating to default in payments of fees and fines ▪ Accountability in the collection, usage of resources in the DAs ▪ Reliable database of properties in the DAs ▪ Strengthening the sub-structures
Increase in the DACF from 5% to 10% or even more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the bubble up approach through advocacy to galvanize the citizenry to make the demand enforceable
Sharing formulae of the DACF does not address equity issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sharing formulae need to be relooked based on updated data ▪ DAs should receive more due to their disadvantage in revenue sources
Sub-structures not functioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Allocate resources to the sub-structures ▪ Involve the local people during implementation ▪ Get the needed resources at the right time for projects
Inability of the DAs to collect some rates and fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use available technological avenues such as MoMo to make collection easier and less expensive

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ LG should strengthen and develop innovative ways of collecting its rates and fees.
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3.4 Local Economic Development

Areas discussed and what needs to be done by way of suggestions are captured in table 3.4 below.

Areas Considered and Recommendations made on Local Economic Development

Areas for Consideration	Suggestions and Recommendations
Capacity building and attitude of MMDA staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitization on LED not just to MMDA staff but to the general public on what LED is, its role and importance, rationale, objectives and stakeholders
Comprehensive mapping of endogenous resources and institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen and operationalize the district assembly sub structures. • Mapped out resources should be categorized into natural and human • Comparative advantages and value chain analysis of these resources should be determined.
Localizing 1D1F Secretariat into MMDA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the institutional arrangement for LED at the MMDA level with a dedicated staff • Bottom-up approach in all LED programs including all flagship programs • Implementation should be driven by experts and technocrats at the local level and not by top political class
Coordination 1D1F and LED policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The national LED policy should be finalized and published • Coordination of all institutions that have direct and indirect role to play in LED • Implementation should be left in the hands of local level institutions so that the center focuses on policy making.
Group Members	
Name	Institution
Dr J. A Asitik	Senior Lecturer, SDD-UBIDS
Yussif Yakubu	MPO, Wa Municipal Assembly

Mohammed Shani Iddrisu	CSO (Executive Director, NAID)
Alhaji Inusah Abukari	REPO, NRCC
Seidu Saaka Baari	GEPA, Northern Region
Abdul-Moomen Salia	ILGS, Facilitator

3.5 Going Forward

On the way forward, the Speaker and Director of the Institute of Local Government Studies, Dr Nicholas Awortwi said that the proposals from the discussions on the thematic areas will be put together into a resolution for policy advocacy and policy direction

4.0 Closing Remarks


In his closing remarks, the Executive Secretary of the IMCCoD Ing. Salifu Mahama thanked everyone from the northern sector for the wonderful engagements and the very important and captivating discussions in the various themes. He reiterated the fact that the four thematic areas form part of the six themes of the National Decentralization Strategy for 2020-2024, which sets the agenda for decentralization reforms. He hoped that the resolution will set the stage for national discussions geared towards reforms in local governance and decentralization in Ghana. He wished everyone well. A closing prayer was said by Abdul-Moomen Salia to bring closure to the one day forum at exactly 5: 15 pm.

4.1 Conclusion

The second Local Governance Practitioners Forum which was hosted by the Institute of Local Government Studies, Tamale Campus and took place at the Global Dream Hotel, Fuo-Tamale with all intends and purposes was a success. The decision for the Northern sector to host the second forum was a step in the right direction as it afforded stakeholders there an opportunity to deliberate on critical local governance issues. The general organization of the forum was excellent as participants were carefully selected from different shades of stakeholder groupings. The venue was conducive for such an important programme and also spacious enough to accommodate the breakout sessions. All the anticipated physical participants were present coupled with an overwhelming Zoom participants who stayed connected till the end of the programme. The insightful, refreshing and experiential discussions that ensued gave credence to the significance of the forum, The passionate manner in which the breakout sessions went gave birth to a resolution/Communiqué which will serve as a foundation for policy advocacy and direction.

Appendix

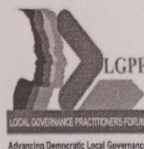
List of Participants



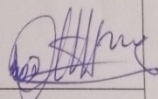

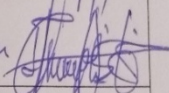
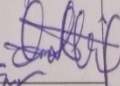
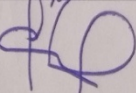

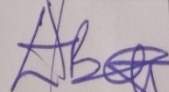
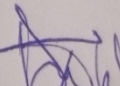
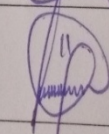
2ND LOCAL GOVERNANCE PRACTITIONERS FORUM

Theme: 'Setting the Agenda for Decentralisation and Local Governance Transformation in Ghana'

Tuesday 30th March, 2021 @AUDITORIUM, ILGS TAMALE CAMPUS



PARTICIPANTS REGISTRATION LIST

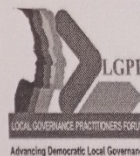
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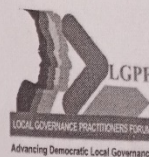
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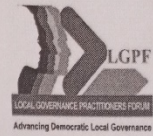
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2ND LOCAL GOVERNANCE PRACTITIONERS FORUM

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LOCAL GOVERNANCE PRACTITIONERS' FORUM

SECOND FORUM

TUESDAY 30TH MARCH, 2021

@ AUDITORIUM, ILGS TAMALE CAMPUS

Theme: *Setting the Agenda for Decentralisation and Local Governance Transformation in Ghana*

Time	Item/Activity	
8:30am – 9 :30am	Arrival, registration and settling-in of participants	ILGS, Tamale
9.30am – 9:35am	Opening Prayer	Moderator
	Introduction of Guests and Chairman	
	Chairman's Remarks	Ing. Salifu Mahama, Executive Secretary, IMCCoD
9:35am – 9.45am	Welcome Statement by Host	Mr. Richard Kambootah, Deputy Director, Tamale Campus, ILGS
9.45am – 10:00am	Opening Address	Alhaji Shani A. Saibu, Northern Regional Minister
10:00am – 10:15am	Video on Ghana's Local Governance	IT Manager, ILGS
10:15 am -11:00 am	Presentation on 'Setting the Agenda for Decentralisation and Local Governance Transformation in Ghana'	Dr. Nicholas Awortwi, Director, ILGS
11: 00an - 11:30am	Snacks/Cocoa Break	ILGS, Tamale Campus
11.30am – 1.30pm	<u>Open Discussions on 4 Thematic Areas</u> 1. Political Decentralisation and Local Democratic Governance 2. Administrative Decentralisation for Service Delivery 3. Fiscal Decentralisation 4. Local Economic Development	Facilitators: ➤ Frederick Agyarko Oduro ➤ Richard Kambootah ➤ David Osei-Wusu ➤ Salia Abdul Moomen
1:30pm – 2:30pm	Lunch Break	All Participants
2:30pm – 3:00pm	Breakout Sessions: Priority Areas for Reforms	All Participants
3:00pm – 3:45pm	Presentation on the Resolution	All Participants
3:45 – 4:00 pm	Closing Remarks and Departure	Director, ILGS and All Participants

SCREESHOT OF ZOOM PARTICIPANTS

