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COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

(CENTRE FOR SOCIAL POLICY STUDIES)

DECENTRALISATION AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE HO WEST DISTRICT OF GHANA

BY

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THIS DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE MASTER OF RESEARCH AND PUBLIC POLICY DEGREE.

APRIL 2022

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is an original academic work produced by me at the Center for Social Policy Studies of the University of Ghana, for the award of the Master of Research and Public Policy Degree. All materials and documents used in this study have been duly cited and acknowledged.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my lovely daughter, Regina Venunye; my mother, Veronica Quashie; not forgetting Jessica Ahiekpor, Jessica Aforve, Jaspa Aforve, Cletus Ayivie, and Blessing Ahiekpor.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AEAs	Agricultural Extension Agents
DA	District Assemblies
DACF	District Assemblies Common Fund
DCE	District Chief Executive
DoA	Department of Agriculture
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IDI	In-Depth Interview
IGF	Internally Generated Fund
LI	Legislative Instrument
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MMDAs	Metropolitan, Municipal & District Assemblies
MMDCEs	Metropolitan, Municipal & District Chief Executives
MoFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission
NPP	New Patriotic Party
PNDC	Provisional National Defence Council
RCC	Regional Coordinating Councils
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank

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Abstract

Most governments across the globe resorted to decentralisation of public services to the local government authorities as a solution to central government failures, and as a means to ensure popular participation in the development planning of their localities. The government of Ghana operationalized the decentralisation of the agriculture department as part of the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies in 2012 as a way of ensuring participation of the local stakeholders including farmers in its development. Against this backdrop, this study was pursued to analyse the extent, and the dynamics of the agricultural sector decentralisation and its contributions to food security in the Ho West District of Ghana. This research was conducted using a mixed research method with an exploratory design. A sample size of 377 consisting of food crop farmers, some core staff of the Ho West District Assembly and some technical staff of the Department of Agriculture in the Ho West District. The study revealed a poor implementation of decentralisation of the agriculture department which resulted in the lack of financial autonomy, delays in the allocation of statutory funding, and failure of the transfer of the needed resources to accompany the policy. In addition, the study showed that, even though decentralisation of the agriculture department in Ho West has contributed to the participation of local stakeholders in the decision-making, it has not translated into ensuring food security in the District. Additionally, the study found an incomplete fiscal decentralisation of the department resulting in lack of the fiscal autonomy necessary for effective operations of the department. The study recommends a complete fiscal decentralisation, adequate and timely allocation of financial resources to the department, and the need for the deployment of qualified and adequate number of agricultural extension agents to the District.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

During the 1980s, developing countries across the globe had a paradigm shift in their governance systems resulting in the decentralisation of central government functions to local government authorities (Ayee, 2013; Rosenbaum, 2013; Ahwoi, 2010). The reasons for the decentralization of governance and public services vary from continent to continent, and from country to country. In Eastern Europe and Asia, decentralisation was a political transformation from the centralised government where only very few participated in decision-making to a more decentralised system where many were involved in the decision-making process for their local development (Crawford, 2008). In Sri Lanka and South Africa, decentralisation was a response to both ethnic and regional conflicts (Muriisa, 2008).

Ghana resorted to decentralisation in the late 1980s as part of its Structural Adjustment Programme and a response to the economic hardships and irresponsiveness of the central government to the local populace (Ayee, 2013). To make decentralisation effective in Ghana, colonial local government systems were revitalized to serve as administrative authorities at the local level (World Bank, 2013). Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) were created in Ghana to ensure the transfer of power to the grassroots. Between the periods of 1988-89, there was a sharp increase in the creation of MMDAs from 65-110. Additionally, twenty-eight (28) new districts were created in 2004, 32 in 2008, 46 in 2012, 38 in 2018, 6 in 2019 and one (1) in 2020. Currently, Ghana has two hundred and sixty-one (261) MMDAs spread over the length and breadth of the country (Chachu, 2021; Oxford Policy Management, 2019). According to Ayee (2012 & 2013), the creation of MMDAs in Ghana was to

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accelerate the socioeconomic development through local participation in the governance of local government territories (Ayee, 2012; Ayee, 2013).

To ensure the development and sustainability of some relevant sectors at the local level, the government of Ghana operationalized the devolution of some departments including the Department of Agriculture as part of MMDAs in 2009. As expected, under the L.I 1961 of the Local Government Instrument of 2009, the Department of Agriculture was mandated, among others, to ensure the delivery of better extension services to ensure food security and income generation towards the alleviation of poverty among the rural folks. The department was also mandated to ensure the formulation of workable policies at the local level to ensure the development of the agriculture sector. In addition, the department was to liaise with the various MMDAs in all matters of agriculture development at the local level (Government of Ghana, 2009).

The agriculture sector is a major contributor to communities' socioeconomic development, including poverty reduction and ensuring food security (Ghana Statistical Service, 2020; World Bank, 2019; Ibrahim, 2014). Four agricultural subsectors contribute to every locality's socioeconomic development. These subsectors are the crops subsector, the livestock subsector, the cocoa subsector, the fisheries subsector, and agro-forestry **(**Ghana Statistical Service, 2020; Government of Ghana, 2020). The crop subsector, which is the focus of this study, is categorised into four groups: industrial crops, root and tubers, cereals and legumes, and fruits and vegetables (Dzanku *et al*. 2013). The crops subsector, which is the largest subsector amongst the livestock, fisheries, and forestry subsectors of the large agricultural sector of Ghana, provides both food and nutrition security and the grounds for agro-industrial activities and export (Essegbey & Maccarthy, 2020).

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The devolution of administration, it has been argued, spurs the provision of public services especially at the local level (Muhumed & Minja, 2019). The advocates of devolution of the agriculture sector argue that it leads to more familiarity with local problems affecting and hindering the progress of the sector by the local government officials (Faguet 2014). This has been evident in the study conducted by Gundersen, Kuhn, Offutt & Morehart, (2014) in the United States of America on the impact of the devolution of the agriculture sector. It was revealed that the devolution of the agriculture sector ensures improved service delivery to the farmers at the local level.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Decentralisation is expected to enhance democracy, empower the local populace, and contribute towards poverty reduction at the local level (Maschietto, 2016). Obeng (2020) affirmed this assertion by stating that decentralisation of governance promotes democratic systems that allow the local populace to discern needs and preferences, hold duty bearers at the local government level accountable, and actively participate in the development planning at the local level (Obeng, 2020).

Considering the above expectations of decentralization, the Government of Ghana through the local government instrument (LI 1961), passed by the Parliament of Ghana in 2009, institutionalised in 2012, operationalised sixteen (16) decentralised departments under the Metropolitan, thirteen (13) under Municipal and eleven (11) under District as part of the MMDA's. This saw the devolution of the agriculture sector as a department under the MMDAs. This implies that the district Department of Agriculture must rely on the assemblies for funding for projects and programmes rather than on the previous financial allocation from the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (Government of Ghana 2009). As a comprehensive form of decentralisation, the devolution of the agricultural sector entails the optimum transfer of authority, autonomy

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and accountability to the local government authorities in the management of agricultural sector related initiatives. As part of the devolution exercise, section 38 (2) of the Local Government Act, Act 936 of 2016, calls for the introduction and implementation of a composite budget system for all decentralised departments, converting the status of all staff working in the decentralised departments under the local government service by placing them under the assembles (Government of Ghana, 2016).

Across the globe, and in some African countries practising the decentralisation of the agriculture department, studies have been conducted on the topic with much focus on the impact of decentralisation on extension service delivery to farmers. These studies found a positive relationship between decentralisation and the delivery of extension services to farmers. For example, Oladele (2011) conducted a study in Nigeria on the topic and found out that decentralisation of agriculture services to local government authorities improved the delivery of advanced technological and extension services to farmers. Similar studies were conducted by Nambiro, Omiti and Mugenieri (2005), in Nigeria, and by Masango *et al*., (2017) and Badu (2010), in Kenya, and all found a positive relationship between decentralisation and improved extension service delivery.

In the Ghanaian context, studies by Tsekpo (2014), Mahama (2017) and Resnick (2018) were conducted on the decentralisation of the agriculture department in some parts of the country. In the case of Resnick (2018), the study, which was conducted extensively in sixty (60) districts across the nation on the seriousness of Ghana in the implementation of its decentralisation of the agriculture policy, revealed a poor or underperformance of the department. The study found that the poor/underperformance of the department was due to financial and human resource constraints that confronted the department after its decentralisation. The study further revealed that staff (AEAs)

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of the department were compelled to finance most of the agriculture-related projects and extension services in the districts from their personal pockets. Meanwhile, Ghana's agriculture sector is a major contributor to both national and local economies, represents a significant proportion of the rural population, engages about 83% of the rural population, and is expected to ensure food security. This implies that there is the need for the investment of the needed resources at the local level towards developing the rural agricultural sector **(**GLSS, 2014; World Bank, 2018**).**

While these studies have been conducted on decentralisation of agriculture department in general, research on the extent and dynamics of the decentralisation of the agriculture department has not received considerable attention. This has created a gap in the literature, which needs to be filled through rigorous academic research. Therefore, this study sought to investigate the extent and dynamics of decentralisation of the agriculture sector and its contributions to ensuring food security in the Ho West District, a district where agriculture constitutes the mainstay of the economy, employing about 95% of the district's active work force (GSS, 2019).

1.3 Research Objective

The general objective of this study was to analyse the extent and the dynamics of agricultural sector decentralisation and its contributions to food security in the Ho West District of the Volta Region.

1.3.1 Specific Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives were to:

I. describe the extent of decentralisation of the agricultural sector and its influence on food security in the Ho West District,

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II. analyse the funding mechanisms and dynamics of the Department of Agriculture in the Ho West District, and

III. examine the challenges faced by the Department of Agriculture in the Ho West District, and its effect on service delivery to farmers.

1.4 Research Questions

The underlisted questions gave focus to the study.

I. What is the level of the agricultural sector's political, administrative, and fiscal decentralisation and its contribution to ensuring food security in the Ho West district?

II. What are the components and the intricacies of funding for the agriculture department in the Ho West district?

III. How does the challenges faced by the agriculture department affect service delivery to farmers in the Ho West district?

1.5 Scope of the study

The general scope of this study was to analyse the extent and dynamics of decentralisation in the agriculture sector in Ghana focusing particular attention on the Ho West District of the Volta Region. This study specifically focused on the crop subsector and its contributions to ensuring food security in the Ho West Municipality of the Volta Region. Specifically, the study investigated the contributions made due to the decentralisation of the agriculture sector as part of the District Assembly system in Ghana in 2010, and to establish the effects on food security in the Ho West Municipality. The study targeted the food crop subsector of the local agricultural sector in the District. The study further investigated how the policy to decentralise the agriculture sector at the district level as part of the District Assembly ensured food

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security. The study included staff of the district Agriculture Department, some key staff of the District Assembly, farmers and farmer-based organisations/associations in its population.

1.6 Significance of the study

This study seeks to serve as a blueprint for policymakers in decentralisation and rural development, development experts, the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies in Ghana, advocacy and interest groups, international development partners and specifically, and the Ho West District Assembly. In addition, the findings of this study would immensely contribute to knowledge, the existing literature and the current debate on decentralisation and the rural agricultural sector development in Ghana. The study also seeks to expose the challenges hindering the effectiveness of decentralisation as a development initiative and its associated challenges with rural agricultural sector development in Ghana. When implemented by the government, the recommendations of this study would boost the performance of the local agricultural sector in the various MMDA's in Ghana. Moreover, this study would serve as a reference document for other scholars and writers on development.

1.7 The Organisation of the Study

This study is organised into five chapters. Chapter One presents the introduction of the study, and captures the background, the problem statement, research objectives, scope and significance of the study, and organisation of the work. Chapter Two presents the study's literature review, mapping out the various arguments, and identifying the gaps in the literature. It also presents some theoretical and conceptual frameworks on the concepts. Chapter Three introduces the methodology of the study. This includes the

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research design employed in the study, the population of the study, the sample frame and size, sampling techniques, data sources and strategies employed in collecting the data. Chapter Four submits the data analysis and interpretation of the study. This includes the demographic characteristics of the respondents, responses to the research questions and discussions, their analysis and interpretations. Lastly, Chapter Five presents the conclusion, summary of the findings and recommendations as solutions to the problems identified as part of the study.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter draws on the earlier works of development scholars and presents a review of the available literature on decentralisation, the theoretical and the regulatory frameworks on decentralisation, the relationships between decentralisation and development and the agricultural sector, and the agricultural sector and food security.

2.1 Overview of Ghana's Decentralisation

Globally, decentralisation of governance and public services responded to the populace's demand for equity, accountability, and efficient service delivery. It was also in opposition to the central government system, which was seen as irresponsive to providing basic services to the local populace (Muriisa, 2008). In Africa and Ghana, in particular, decentralization dates back to the days of the indirect rule system during the British colonial regime where power and authority were decentralised from the Queen to the chiefs (Ayee, 1994, cited in Yankson, 2008). Ghana, Tanzania, Cote d'Ivoire, and Kenya were the pioneering countries in Africa to subscribe to decentralisation as part of their public sector reform strategies (Cabral, 2011).

According to Ahwoi (2010), PNDC Law 207 established a four-tier local government structure consisting of regional, district and town/unit committees. The PNDC's expectations for the decentralisation were to ensure citizens' popular participation in local development and local governance systems. This ensures effectiveness, accountability and responsiveness, stability, and economic and social development at the local level (Haynes, 1991; Amanor *et al*. 1999; Ayee *et al*. 2010).

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The PNDC government had two policy positions for the implementation of decentralisation in Ghana: firstly, the need for participatory democracy to ensure effective local rural development, to make governments responsive and accountable to the governed; secondly, the empowerment of the citizenry through the establishment of local government systems to initiate, coordinate, manage and execute policies in all matters within the various localities (Ahwoi, 2010). Smoke (2003) and Ayee (2013) added that the implementation of decentralization in Ghana lay on three key objectives: promote democratisation and popular participation of the citizenry; to slim down the ineffective central government through the shedding of functions, and the transfer of costs to users; and to democratise local government units to improve good governance. Amanor *et al* (1999) contend that, even though decentralization was part of the World Bank's liberalization initiative in developing countries, its implementation preceded the Structural Adjustment Programme. He asserted that the development and implementation of decentralisation came due to the radical critique of the failing elitist administration and corruption. The conceptualization of decentralization was a radical populist agenda towards achieving democratic dispensation.

Ghana's decentralisation saw the establishment of Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies with vested political, administrative, and fiscal authorities. The assemblies are also deemed corporate entities, who can sue, be sued, and engage in contractual agreements with other entities to provide certain goods and services not exceeding a reasonable financial threshold (Ahwoi, 2010).

The local government system ensures responsiveness to the local needs through popular participation of the poor majority in developing their local communities (Crawford, 2008). Decentralisation expects to ensure an effective and responsive district assembly system to reduce poverty among the local populace through local socio-economic development and the empowerment of disadvantaged groups and the vulnerable at the local level (Yeboah-Asiamah, 2016).

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Decentralization of government across Africa created the ground conducive for governments and the World Bank group to initiate neoliberal reform policies, including good governance practices before initiating parliamentary processes. Muriisa (2008), supports the position of Amanor (1999) in asserting that, even though decentralization has been a long-time development practice in Africa, the 1980s and 90s saw its pronouncement due to its feature by the World Bank as a structural criterion. Decentralisation has been the World Bank's recommendation for developing countries to devolve both political and administrative powers to the local authorities to ensure effective and efficient service delivery to the populace (Muriisa, 2008).

According to Böckenförde (2011), decentralisation has two facets including the elements of 'self-rule' and 'shared-rule'. The element of 'self-rule' gives power to local authorities to regulate and steer certain affairs and functions on their own. The element of 'shared-rule' allows local government authorities to participate in national decision-making **(**Böckenförde, 2011**).** In addition, Muriisa (2007), argues that the concept of decentralisation presents two significant benefits to the local populace, which are "freedom to access" and "freedom to decide". Freedom to access implies that people could voice their needs and get the needed resources necessary for local development. Freedom to decide implies that people could take autonomous decisions devoid of the central government's influence within a decentralized framework (Muriisa, 2007).

Furthermore, decentralisation manifests in both political and development terms **(**Crawford, 2008**).** According to the World Bank (2013), decentralisation in community-driven development is aimed at economic efficiency, public accountability, and empowerment at the local level **(**World Bank, 2013**).** Earlier scholars in the field of development acknowledged and put the general purpose for adopting and implementing decentralization into two perspectives: administrative and political. The administrative

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perspective of decentralization seeks to decongest the central government and distribute the workload to subnational agencies in easy-to-manage proportions. The workload distribution seeks to promote greater efficiency, effectiveness and effective coordination in public service delivery. Politically, decentralisation was adopted to promote good governance through pluralism, accountability, popular participation and engagement, and transparency **(**Hussein, 2004; Crook, 1994**).**

2.2 The Structure of Ghana's Decentralisation System

Ghana's decentralisation has a four-tier structure comprising regional coordinating council, metropolitan, municipal and districts assemblies. The Regional Coordinating Councils (RCC) are both administrative and coordinating bodies located in the county's regional capitals of the sixteen (16) administrative regions. The RCCs are expected to play an oversight role over all MMDAs within the respective regions. The RCCs are composed of a regional minister as the chairperson of the council, regional deputy minister(s), presiding members and MMDCEs of the various assemblies, two representatives from the regional house of chiefs and the regional heads of departments without voting rights (Ahwoi, 2010; Arkorful, Lugu, Hammond & Basiru, 2021).

The metropolitan, municipal and districts are areas composing towns with a population size of 25000, 95000 and 75000 inhabitants. The metropolitan, municipal and district assemblies are composed of Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executives, a presiding member elected from the assembly members, 30% appointed and 70% elected assembly members (Ahwoi, 2010). The sub-districts consists of sub-metropolitan, urban, zonal and town councils, made to deepen and promote citizen participation in decision-making, planning, execution, monitoring in the delivery of public services (Arkorful *et al*., 2021; Ahwoi, 2010).

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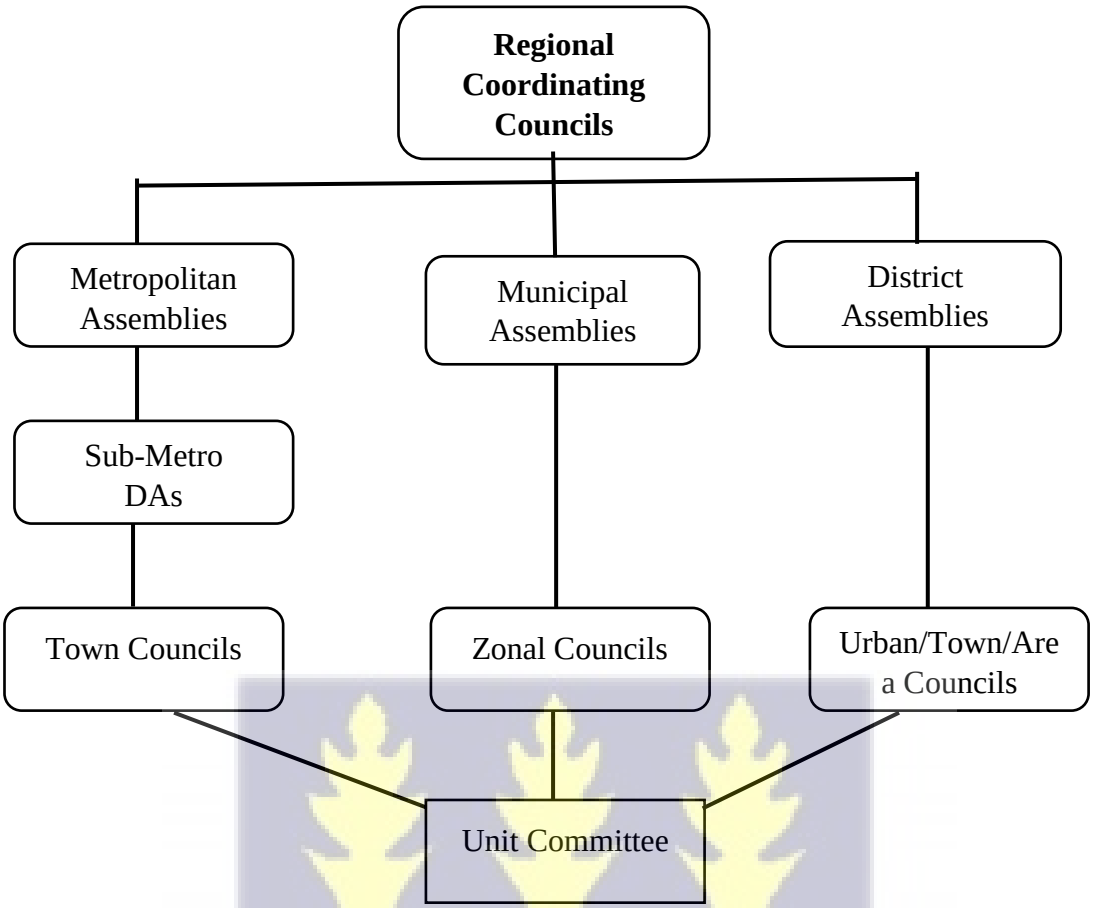

Figure 2. 1: The Structure of Ghana's Local Government System

Source: Ahwoi (2010).

2.3 Local Government Funding in Ghana

Ghana's Fourth Republican Constitution of 1992 provides a strong and comprehensive stance for the budgetary and financial base of local government authorities in Ghana. It states that local government authorities must have a sound financial base with adequate and reliable sources of revenue. The MMDAs in Ghana have three major revenue sources: the District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF), the locally/internally generated fund (IGF), and the ceded revenue **(**Ayee, 2012; Ahwoi, 2010**).**

The DACF as a major funding for MMDAs is an intergovernmental financial transfer, depicting the manifestation and achievement of fiscal decentralisation in Ghana (Ayee,

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2007). Ghana's 1992 Constitution made an explicit provision for a statutory quarterly transfer of funds by the central government to the local government authorities. The DACF Act, Act 455 of 1993 gave legal backing to these transfers. It is expected that 5% of the national revenue be allocated to the local government authorities using a formula decided by the Parliament of Ghana. This was subsequently changed to 7.5% under the John Kuffour-led NPP government (Yeboah-Assiamah, 2016).

The second source of funding for the local government authorities, internally generated funds, are the own-sourced revenue of the local government authorities in Ghana. The Local Government Act 462 of 1993 authorises and empowers MMDAs to mobilise revenue in rates, fees, fines and licenses from persons and entities liable for local development (Puopiel *et al*., 2015).

The ceded revenues are those lesser taxes collected by the Ghana Revenue Authority for the central government and later transferred to the local government authorities for utilisation (Osei-Akoto *et al*., 2007).

2.4 Forms of Decentralisation

2.4.1 Political decentralization

Political decentralisation refers to how central governments delegate political roles such as representation to sub-governmental units and the powers to elect local representatives. Political decentralisation presents two elements: transfer of power to elect local officials and representatives, i.e., electoral decentralisation; and transfer of authority to structure a sub-national level government (Böckenförde, 2011). Political decentralisation has been associated with pluralist democracy supporting democratisation, and citizens' representatives participating in the decision-making processes at the sub-national level (Rondinelli, 1999; Ozmen, 2014).

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In the views of Hoffman & Metzroth (2010), the purpose of political decentralisation, which sought to give the entirety of political powers to the local government authorities in forming their own government through election of their representatives is defeated by the presidents' appointment and the imposition of MMDCEs and 30% assembly members on the various assemblies (Hoffman & Metzroth, 2010).

2.4.2 Administrative decentralisation

This refers to the administrative autonomy offered to local government authorities to steer the day-to-day affairs of the local authority. Administrative decentralisation seeks to give the local government authorities the responsibility to plan, finance and manage public functionaries at the local government level. Administrative decentralisation has three main forms: deconcentration, delegation, and devolution (Rondinelli, 1999; Ozmen, 2014).

Deconcentration: This form of decentralisation refers to the shift of the central government's responsibility to its subsidiary offices to implement certain policies. The overall authority and power remain in the central government's hands even though it alters the geographic distribution of authority. Deconcentration redistributes the balance of power and authority between the central government and the subsidiary entities. Central government transfers responsibilities to the subnational government to fast track the delivery of public services. They were getting the services closer to the local populace and deconcentrating the attention on the centralised delivery system. The central government still controls the affairs at the various levels or peripheral entities (Hart & Welham, 2016; Khambule, 2021). In the case of Ghana, the passport application centre, which was initially in the national capital, was subsequently decentralised through deconcentration to regional levels of government. Under their

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auspices passports are issued, but the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration controls the operations of these peripheral entities.

Delegation: this seeks to transfer power and authority to semi-autonomous local government authorities without central government control but accountable to it. Central government transfers responsibility for decision-making and administration of public functions to semi-autonomous entities. These entities are partly controlled by the central government. In Ghana, public enterprises, including the Electricity Company of Ghana, Ghana Water Company, and the state Transport Cooperation are typical government-delegated powers. These entities are expected to exercise discretionary powers in their decision-making. They hire their own personnel instead of relying on the traditional civil service. They also charge users for the services provided.

Devolution*:* refers to the transfer of authority for decision-making to quasi-autonomous local government units with corporate status. This provides the greatest form of autonomy to the local government authorities as compared to the previous two forms of administrative decentralisation **(**Schneider, 2003**)**. This involves the transfer of governance responsibility to a subnational government that is largely outside the direct control of the central government. As part of Ghana's devolution exercise is the creation of local government institutions to steer local related affairs. Currently, Ghana is divided into sixteen administrative regions. These regions are also subdivided into metropolitan, municipal, and districts depending on the area's population density. These entities are expected to exercise administrative powers in providing basic public services to the populace living within these localities.

2.4.3 Fiscal decentralization

Fiscal decentralization refers to the transfer of financial powers to local government authorities in mobilizing revenues for local development. It is both the revenue-making

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powers and the transfer of financial resources from the central government to the local government authorities. For sub-national governments to effectively discharge their responsibilities to the local populace, there is a provision for the timely allocation of financial resources from the central government to the local government authorities (Khambule, 2021). Fiscal decentralisation has three fundamental components: responsibility for expenditure, responsibility to mobilise local revenues; and financial transfers from the central government transfers (Böckenförde, 2011). Fiscal decentralisation is considered to affect public service delivery positively, and to reduce poverty due to the easy access to funds raised at the local level. Both the central government financial transfers and the internally generated funds are necessary in determining the ability and efficiency in delivering developmental outcomes (Hart & Welham, 2016; Khambule, 2021).

The District Assemblies Common Fund was introduced to deepen fiscal decentralisation in Ghana. This fund comprises a quarterly allocation of funds to the MMDAs to promote development at the local level. In addition, schedules 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the Local Government Act (Act 936 of 2016) gives powers and authorities to the MMDAs to collect rates, fees, fines and licenses. The most important sources of IGF for MMDAs in Ghana are property rates, licenses, fees and fines. In 2011, the Government of Ghana introduced a new financial allocation to the MMDAs called District Development Fund; this is to achieve a balance between the functions of the MMDAs and the financial resources available to them (Otoo & Danquah, 2021).

Fiscal decentralisation, which seeks to delegate financial authority to sub-national governments in raising local revenue to support development at the local level is challenged in many ways. Most district assembles in Ghana are faced with a series of challenges to their efforts at generating internal revenue (IGF). Key amongst them is the

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limited revenue bases in the various districts and municipalities (Gadenne & Singhal, 2014). In addition, a study conducted by Sanogo (2019) on Cote D'Ivore's local government revenue generation indicates that there is a higher likelihood of adequate revenue generation in developed countries than there is in developing ones; this is attributed to capacity issues related to local government authorities in raising local revenues (Khambule, 2021).

2.5 Empirical Literature Review

Series of studies were conducted across the globe on the impact and contributions made by decentralisation to development.

Owusu *et al*, (2005), conducted a study and established that the demarcation of administrative boundaries in Ghana is due to administrative decentralisation, which sought to give deliberative powers to the local populace in the determination and implementation of their development policies at the local level. The representative participation of the local populace in local policymaking ensures rapid development at the grass root.

Egbenya (2009) conducted a study on the devolution of central government departments at the local level and asserted that the representation of central government departments: health, education, agriculture and social welfare at the local level ensures better service delivery to the local level due to closeness with the populace. He further asserted that, even though some of these departments, which existed at the local level, are not under the direct supervision of the MMDAs, they performed extremely well.

Canare (2020), conducted a study on the impact of decentralisation on development at the local level and found that good governance, economic growth and delivery of efficient and effective public services are benefits of decentralisation. The rapid growth of small towns and villages through the development of infrastructure, educational

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facilities, health and local governance architecture immensely contribute to the development of localities.

In another study by Faguet & Poschl (2015), it is suggested that decentralisation of governance to the local level provides the opportunity for better information concerning citizens' needs and wants, ensures greater participation of citizens in the selection of their development needs, and creates greater accountability and transparency of in the local government systems for citizens.

These findings are in line with the findings of Hussein, who, in his (2004) study, stated that both political and administrative decentralisation seek to promote citizen participation in governance and development. Citizens' participation in development planning and implementation enables the formulation of workable plans to solve local problems (Hussein, 2004). There is wide acceptance among development scholars of the relationship between decentralisation and poverty reduction. It is asserted that decentralisation plays a very crucial role through citizens' participation in the formulation and implementation of policies geared towards reducing poverty. It is believed that the local populace has the necessary information and incentives to participate in policies that effectively tackle local needs and preferences (Ahwoi, 2010; Aryee, 2010). Steiner (2005) alluded to Hussein in his 2004 position on the impact of decentralisation on the local populace. He mentioned that there is an informational advantage for the local government compared to the central. This, he said, is due to its closeness with the local populace and better targeting of the poor.

Asibuo (2000), Ayee (1997), and Owusu (2005) conducted a study on the essence of decentralisation on rural development and revealed that the development of small towns and rural areas through decentralisation reduces the migration rate of the youth to urban and large cities to search of jobs. Resources allocated by the central to the local

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government authorities are expected to ensure local development by providing basic services and facilities. In Ghana, decentralisation is expected to enhance the development of the various district capitals to serve as a hub for potential rural-urban migrants.

Crook and Manor (2000) analyzed the process of political decentralisation in India (Karnataka state), Bangladesh, Côte d'Ivoire, and Ghana and discovered that decentralisation of governance resulted in increased transparency and decreased corruption. They argued that while decentralisation reduced grand theft, it increased petty corruption in the short run, both may eventually decrease. Fiszbein (1997) concluded from a review of political decentralisation in Colombia that competition for political office created opportunities for responsible and innovative leadership, which became the impetus for capacity building, improved service delivery, and reduced corruption at the local level.

Habibi *et al*. (2001) examined the influence of fiscal decentralisation on social sector outcomes in Argentina from 1970 to 1994 and concluded that it improved education and health service delivery while it reduced intra-regional inequities. Eskeland and Filmer (2002) also discovered that decentralisation of education resulted in an increase in school accomplishment scores using cross-section data from Argentine schools.

Faguet (2001) also discovered that decentralisation aided in the alignment of governmental services with local preferences, as well as the quality and accessibility of social services in Bolivia. Foster and Rosenzweig (2001) concluded that democratic decentralisation of governance improved local service distribution in India. Santos (1998) demonstrated the same impact through participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil. Isham and Kahkonen (1999) documented significant improvements in water services in Central Java, Indonesia, because of local community control. In Nicaragua,

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King and Ozler (1998) noticed that decentralised school management resulted in an increase in achievement scores. Estache and Sinha (1995) discovered that decentralisation resulted in greater spending on public infrastructure in a cross-section of industrialized and developing countries. Huther and Shah (1996) and Enikolopov and Zhuravskaya (2003) found that decentralisation enhanced the delivery of public goods in a significant number of nations, using cross-section and time series data.

Ayee (2013) studied the effects of decentralisation on development and asserted that, even though decentralisation is still an ongoing process, it aims to address the needs of the people at the grassroots level. Due to this, the successes and failures are not easy to measure. Decentralisation is measured against its efficiency, economy, effectiveness and accountability. Efficiency refers to the use of scarce resources for maximum gain. He classified efficiency into allocative and productive efficiency. The former ensures accuracy in the provision of public services for local needs. Productive efficiency ensures value for money in public services and aims to improve accountability at the local level. Economy refers to the use of the cheapest resources for production. In terms of the award of contracts for the provision of goods, services or works, the lowest bidder with the requisite skills should be selected. Effectiveness refers to achieving the original aims of a project without compromising quality.

Muriisa (2008) conducted a study and found that decentralisation of governance has brought accountability of resources utilised by the local government authorities. Accountability, in his findings, refers to the timely provision of accounts on all resources allocated and spent to the citizenry by the officeholders. He distinguished between two categories of accountability: political accountability and administrative accountability. Political accountability refers to the situation where elected officials are

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accountable for their electorate and administrative accountability is the timely accomplishment of tasks within budget.

2.6 Challenges to Ghana's Decentralisation

Decentralisation is a complex and multifaceted concept plagued with structural and institutional implementation challenges and outcomes **(**Crawford *et al*. 2008). Furthermore, the disconnection between power and capacity, clientelism, patrimonialism and informal institutions shaping choices and behaviors are some other challenges faced in its implementation (Olowu & Wunsch, 2004). The effectiveness of Ghana's decentralization policy has been undermined by the lack of the central government's political will and the frequent interferences in the operations of the local government authorities despite the lofty goals of the policy **(**Nyendu, 2012**).**

Little fiscal autonomy by MMDAs creates a weak financial base to support development initiatives at the local level. Regrettably, about 85% of the funding for MMDAs are central government transfers, mostly from the DACF, or from donors (Hoffman & Metzroth, 2010; Amanor *et al*. 1999). The DACF, which is the major source of revenue for the MMDAs, is fraught with several challenges, including irregularities in its disbursement, lack of transparency, and lack of discretionary powers to the MMDAs in its allocation. Lastly, there is the delay in its disbursement. (Ayee *et al*. 2010). In addition, due to the central government's absolute authority in raising all the lucrative revenues in the form of income taxes, local government authorities are faced with challenges in raising large revenues within their areas to support development at the local level (Hoffman & Metzroth, 2010).

The composite budgeting system introduced at the local level, is ineffectively implemented due the unwillingness of the Ghana's Ministry of Finance (Yeboah-

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Assiamah, 2016). Decentralization remains a theoretical ramification with less practice (Yeboah-Asiamah, 2016).

In the context of political decentralisation, MMDAs in Ghana fall short of constituting their own government. This is due to the continuous appointment of heads of the various local government authorities (MMDCEs) and the 30% assembly members by the President. According to Aryee (2010), this defeats the non-partisan nature of the MMDAs (Ayee, 2010). Even though stipulated in Ghana's Fourth Republican Constitution of 1992, this act renders the relationship between the central and the local government authorities a "principal-agent typology". After three decades of implementing decentralisation in Ghana, it is further argued that very little of it is achieved. Its expectations of leading to effective, responsive and accountable district assemblies and ensuring poverty reduction and the empowerment of the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups at the local level have remained unfulfilled (Yeboah-Assiamah, 2016; Hoffman & Metzroth, 2010).

Stone (1997), and Antwi-Boasiako (2010) argued that, even though decentralisation is a development strategy aimed at transferring power and responsibility to sub-national levels of government (regional and district levels), most countries across the African continent especially in the sub-Saharan Africa have failed in transferring such power and responsibility through delegation and devolution, but adopted the strategy only in theory. They contend that little impact of decentralization has been felt after several decades of its implementation especially in the case of Ghana (Yeboah-Asiamah, 2016; Stone, 1997; Antwi-Boasiako, 2010).

2.7 Decentralisation and Agricultural Development

There has been a series of studies to investigate the contributions of decentralisation to the development of the agriculture sector. For example, Nambiro, Omiti & Mugunieri

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(2005) conducted a study and asserted that there is a positive effect of decentralisation on agricultural development especially in the areas of extension service provision to farmers. Similarly, Hanyani-Mlambo (2000) & Oladele (2011) stated that the delivery of extension services under decentralisation is guided by two approaches: supply-driven and demand driven services. Decentralisation of agricultural policies improves good financing mechanisms at the local level. Decentralisation ensures pluralism, demand-driven and decentralised coordination and user participation in extension financing to ensure effective agriculture extension service to farmers. Pluralism under decentralisation implementation in the agriculture sector affords farmers the access to influencing quality of extension services. The institutionalization of District Agriculture Extension Service systems ensures effective operationalization of demand-driven services and decentralisation coordination (Masangano *et al*., 2017; Babu, 2010). The World Bank (2007) supported the earlier assertions that, decentralisation of administrative responsibilities in the delivery of technical agricultural services improves agriculture production.

Conyers (1986) argues that the decentralisation of control in the determination of agricultural pricing policy to the local government authorities offer motivating incentives to local farmers, and this translates into the improvement in the living standards of the local farmers and the local populace due to the consensus and engagement of the local farmers in the price determination (Conyers, 1986). The FAO (2001) has asserted that the decentralisation of the agriculture sector through devolution uplifts the economic status of farmers due to the transfer of national resources to the local level. Due to the active participation of farmers in the determination of agricultural development policies at the local level, there is a boost to the economic at the local level. This is due to the ability of the local populace in identifying the remedying solutions at the local level than in the case of central government (FAO, 2001). Decentralization gives hope for rural programs in terms of eliminating the urban bias

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that emerges from rural people's geographic dispersion, their inability to organize to advocate their interests, and the discrimination against agriculture inherent in many countries' policy frameworks. Decentralization of agricultural extension and research strives to improve user participation in technology initiatives and make programs more accountable to users (World Bank, 2009).

In agricultural development, decentralization initiatives boost user ownership and financial support for services, improve program accountability, and build constituencies for agricultural extension services. The ability of food crop producers to communicate their demands for technical innovation may be the most significant benefit of decentralizing agricultural extension operations.

The demand side of extension systems is strengthened by agricultural sector changes, but simply decentralizing extension to local governments does not guarantee that beneficiaries will have more authority over decision-making (World Bank, 2000). Decentralized agricultural extension administration supports collaborations between various participants in the technological system, facilitating the participation of other actors in the agricultural value chain in particular. The privatization of some extension functions and the introduction of private services can improve cost efficiency. Fee-for-service and cost-sharing arrangements can be introduced more easily with decentralized agricultural extension. In decentralized systems, involving users in the evaluation of agricultural extension agents and programs, as well as connecting extension agent remuneration to performance, can be effective ways to enforce accountability (FAO, 2001).

A study by Lai & Custilli (2005) on the impact of decentralisation on agriculture sector development revealed that decentralisation contributed towards an integrated package of services, including the development and extension of new technologies, the

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distribution of inputs, equipment, and credit, and the creation of production and transportation infrastructure. Because of the lack of developed local enterprise and the underdeveloped nature of many marketplaces, state intervention was viewed as the only way to quickly provide appropriate services to small farmers for most agricultural services. Farmers were frequently offered financial incentives in the form of subsidized credit, farm inputs, and equipment, as well as government funding of the costs of technological research and transfer, as well as input delivery networks.

2.8 Agricultural Sector in Ghana

Agriculture remains the largest employer in the Ghanaian economy, contributing about 19.7% in 2018, 18.5% in 2019 and 18.24% in 2020 to the country's GDP and accounts for approximately 30% of the country's export earnings (World Bank, 2021). This sector recorded a 2.9% growth in 2016, 6.1% in 2017, but a 4.8% decline in 2018. The sector recorded a 6.9% growth in 2019 and 7.1% growth in 2020, respectively (Israeli Embassy of Ghana, 2020). Currently, most of the country's population lives in rural areas where agriculture is a major source of the economy. The sector employs about 93% of the population of the rural savannah zone, 81.3% of the rural forest zone and 64.7% of the coastal zone (Ghana Statistical Service, 2020). In Ghana, the agricultural sector consists of several interrelated activities: agriculture research, agriculture extension, production and marketing of cash crops, fisheries, animal and food crops, forestry, and logging (Ali *et al*, 2021; GLSS, 2017). Over the years, especially in the post-independence era, governments formulated several policies geared towards the modernization of the sector with particular attention on upgrading the skills of subsistent farmers **(**Center for Democratic Development, 2011**).**

In Ghana, the agricultural land area covers an approximation of 136,000 km^2 accounting for about 57% of the country's land area. With this, about 58000km^2

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representing 24% of the total land area is under cultivation, 11000 hectares of this is under irrigation (Ali, Agyekum & Addai, 2021).

About 80% of Ghana's agricultural sector consists of smallholder farmers with an average farm size of less than 1.2 ha, traditional and reliant on rain **(**World Bank, 2017; Israeli Embassy of Ghana, 2020**).**

Ghana's agriculture growth trend has been attributed to three drivers: government policies, rapid urbanization, population pressure, and land expansion. In Ghana, successive governments enacted some polices aimed at developing the agricultural sector. Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy (I &II), Medium Term Agriculture Sector Implementation, Fertilizer Subsidy Policy, Youth in Agriculture Programme, and Agriculture Extension Services.

In 2019, Ghana's Ministry of Agriculture was allocated a total sum of GH₵967.845 million, but this was later reviewed after the presentation of the midyear budget to GH₵1,186.521million. This review was to accommodate payments for the subsidized fertilizer and seeds committed to under the planting for food and jobs initiatives by the Government of Ghana. In addition, the Ministry in the year 2020 was allocated a total amount of GH₵965,131,569. Out of this amount, Government of Ghana contributed GH₵580,491,120, representing about 60% of the total budget and the remaining 40% amounting to GH₵384,640,448 representing contributions from donors (Government of Ghana, 2020).

Even though Ghana's agricultural sector has been assessed to perform reasonably well in the past decades, by African standards, in terms of the significance of its role in reducing rural poverty, increasing labour productivity and income for farmers, it has failed in exploiting its potential to reduce the high dependence on imported food (Diao *et al*. 2019). Ghana's agricultural sector is plagued with series of

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challenges, including low cash and staple crop yields, the harrowing effect of climate variability, low soil fertility, outbreaks of pests and diseases, inadequate financial supports to farmers through extension services, low deployment of agricultural technologies, and the rapid population growth (World Bank, 2016; Mogomotsi *et al.* 2020; Dube *et al*. 2016). These challenges resulted in Ghana becoming a net importer of basic food commodities such as rice and poultry. A total amount of USD 2 billion, equivalent to the estimated annual earnings from the exportation of cocoa, is spent annually on importing these basic food commodities (World Bank, 2017).

A vibrant agricultural system is a major contributor towards the overall development and growth of the economics of nations (Janvry & Sadoulet, 2010). The agriculture sector plays diverse significant roles in the socio-economic development of society today. More importantly, the agriculture sector plays a significant role in improving food availability and ensuring food security generally for the populace (Smutka, 2009).

2.9 Agriculture and Food Security

The concept of food security emerged some decades ago during the global food crisis in the 1970s. As defined by the FAO (2002), food security refers to the ability of people to have access at all times to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and preferences socially, economically and socially (FAO, 2002). The concept of food security as defined globally during the 1970 global food crisis focused on ensuring the availability and affordability of basic food due to the extreme volatility of agricultural commodity prices at the time (Berry *et al*., 2015; Peng *et al*., 2019). Ghana's Ministry of Food and Agriculture in its Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy II, defines food security as having good quality nutritious food, which is hygienically packaged and attractively presented and available in sufficient quantities at all times of the year at locations appropriate and affordable to consumers (Government of

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Ghana, 2007). The concept of food security has four dimensions: availability of food either locally produced or imported; accessibility to the consumer through both transport and economic means; utilization, which involves the ability of consumers to get the right quantity and quality for a healthy life; and lastly, stability of the consumers to withstand food shocks caused either by the natural or manmade phenomenon. Today, Africa's food security is threatened by the climate change situation, which has far-reaching effects on cereal production, especially in sub-Saharan Africa (Peng *et al*., 2019; FAO, 2008).

Ghana's broad strategy towards attaining food security focusses on the national and agro-ecological levels. It seeks to develop five main crops: maize, rice, yam, cassava, and cowpea. To ensure food security at the district level, the ministry seeks to focus on two crops for development. The choice of crops to develop at the district level to ensure food security will be based on the comparative advantage of the district, the availability of the market, and the importance of the crop to the people living in the locality. The government, through MoFA seeks to support the growth of such crops through the provision of irrigation and sustainable management of land, supply of improved planting material, and finally, the provision of appropriate mechanisation. In addition, Ghana's strategy for food security targets the poor, and aspires to enhance their capacity to cope with food insecurity (MoFA, 2007). The government of Ghana, over the years, started the implementation of certain policies geared towards tooling and supporting local farmers in the country. The government of Ghana in its 2019 programme based projects estimates, is seen to be committed to ensuring food security. This programme aimed to reduce food and nutrition insecurity through modernized agriculture, maintain national strategic stocks for emergencies, and establish an effective early warning system. The government of Ghana designed five (5) key sub-

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programmes to achieve the aims of the programme. These include productivity improvement through the provision of the needed technological packages to farmers, provision of mechanisation, irrigation and effective water management systems for the agriculture sector, provision of adequate food storage systems, distribution of improved nutritional commodities, diversification of livelihood options, and creation of early warning systems and emergency preparedness (Government of Ghana, 2019).

Food insecurity, a chronic challenge on the continent, is attributed to the low yields recorded by the agriculture sector. The continent faces challenges of feeding its growing population; a continent known as a net exporter of agricultural commodities is now a net importer of the same commodities (Khan *et al*., 2014; Pawlak *et al*. 2020**).** On the contrary, the agricultural sector is expected to ensure food availability. Moreover, to ensure food security, attention must be given to investment in agriculture infrastructure and extension services (Pawlak *et al*. 2020). Sustainable Development Goals, which succeeded the MDGs in 2015 focused on agriculture and food. For example, SDG 1, which aimed at reducing poverty by 2030, tasked the agriculture and the food sector to play a major role in providing quality and the right quantity of food. Goal 2 focuses on ending hunger, achieving food security and improving nutrition by promoting sustainable agriculture. Agriculture is the major economic activity in the rural areas where most of the world's poor live. This calls for the needed investments in the agricultural sector, which will translate into the growth of the sector's productivity, ensure an increase in food availability, decrease in the price of food on the domestic market, and make food available and accessible (Brooks, 2016).

2.10 Theoretical Framework

This study is supported by the theory of participatory development, which was based on the works of Hickey (2006), Mohan (2007), Stokke & Cleaver (2004), and Chambers

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(1994). The theory of participatory development depicts an evolutionary trend away from the global, aspatial, top-down techniques that dominated early development attempts and toward more locally sensitive methodologies. The term "participatory" originally appeared in development terms during the 1950s, and gained popularity in the 1970s when the United Nations and the World Bank recognised participation as a critical way of raising economic and social standards, particularly in rural regions (Cummings, 1997). According to Lowe, Ray, Ward, Wood, and Woodward (1998), the notion of participation was created due to the failure of the conventional economic model to improve the lives of the majority of impoverished people in developing nations. As used in the analysis of this study, participatory development refers to the active involvement of the citizenry in the policymaking and development planning of a locality. In its broader terms, participatory development is considered as citizens' empowerment tool, both an end and a means (Mohan, 2007; Dinbabo, 2003).

The theory of participatory development assumes that participation is the exercise of power by the citizens in decision-making and the control of their efforts in a collaborative framework. Dialogue and information sharing among citizens and government officials lead to rapid development (Rahman, 1993; Oakley, 1991). In addition, the egalitarian redistribution of power and resources, democratising national and local political processes encourage and promote the involvement of the citizenry in the development of their communities (Forero-Pineda, 2001). The theory of participatory development emphasized that, to achieve rapid development, there is the need to encourage the participation/involvement of citizens in the development planning, since the local populace is considered experts of their needs. Ghana's decentralisation aimed at shifting from the initial hierarchical top-down approach in development planning and implementation to a bottom-up approach where citizens

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actively participate in development planning (Ayee, 2012). Cummings (1997) asserted that citizens' participation helps in overcoming the shortcomings of the top-down approach in development. This emphasizes the fact that the decentralisation of the agriculture sector in Ghana encourages a bottom-up policymaking and implementation pathway, which ensures the involvement of the local farmers in inputs and commodity price determination (Conyers, 1986).

The crux of Ghana's decentralisation policy has been to promote popular grassroots participation in the planning, implementation, monitoring and delivery of those services deemed necessary for improving the livelihood of the local populace. In this study, the decentralisation of the agriculture sector, which encourages and promotes the participation of stakeholders in the development planning, budgeting of the sector is considered an essential element for the sustainable development of the sector. The agriculture sector is charged with ensuring food security all year round with government support through the provision of timely and adequate resources. The theory of participatory development is presented with two major perspectives: the Social Movement Perspective and the Institutional Perspective. The former views participation as an attempt to eradicate unfair inequalities of knowledge, power, and economic distribution. This perspective sees participation as a way of overcoming obstacles and shaping the lives of the citizenry (Mefalopulos *et al*., 2009). However, the social movement perspective refers to citizens as primary stakeholders, who are *primus inter pares*: those with a considerable influence in development decisions (Mefalopulos *et al*., 2009). The Institutional Perspective sees participation as reaching and involving relevant groups in the design and implementation of a development project. The Institutional Perspective utilizes the information and opinions of relevant groups or stakeholders in a society to achieve a pre-determined goal (Mefalopulos *et*

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al., 2009). In the case of the agriculture sector at the local level, participation of the local farmers and stakeholders through information dissemination ensures that workable ideas are shared among both local officials and the local farmers. This will also ensure the equitable distribution and judicious use of resources.

The theory of participatory development takes the pathways of traditional economic model, ensuring a top-down strategy to addressing poverty-related issues, focusing on exogenous development such as physical infrastructure and material resources, investments, finance, and other factors to enhance critical sector productivity. The presumption is that members of the community lack the competence and knowledge necessary to handle technical and production issues (Cummings, 1997). The exogenous economic strategy, on the other hand, according to Abbott (1995) and Lowe *et al*. (1998), has resulted in a more efficient kind of new development to assist raise community living standards. The government recognizes that human, environmental, and cultural elements are underutilized resources that result in exogenous development failure in rural communities.

Changes were made in the 1980s with an emphasis on endogenous development by maximizing the utilization of community-based human resources, the environment, culture, and assets for rural community development. The economic development paradigm creates an atmosphere in which an effective strategy for addressing poverty among community members is required (Lowe *et al*., 1998; Marsden & Oakley, 1991). Due to the failure of the top-down approach to development and poverty eradication in rural regions, participation has become increasingly important in rural development planning (Cummings, 1997; Kelly & Vlaenderen, 1996).

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The theory of participatory development is relevant for analysing this study due to its ability to provide explanations for the extent of stakeholder participation on the development of the agriculture sector. Farmers, citizens, chiefs, local government officials, and other players on the agriculture value-chain are the main stakeholders, whose participation in the development planning and implementation are essential for the development of the sector. This is coupled with the timely and adequate deployment of resources to farmers by the central government. Ferero-Pineda (2001) asserted that participation of farmers and other stakeholders in development planning addresses issues of inequality in the distribution of resources at the local level. Marquetti *et al*. (2012), identified participatory budgeting as a public decision-making tool that allows stakeholders direct involvement and participation in determining fiscal policies. As a form of decentralisation, fiscal decentralisation seeks to ensure the timely transfer of the needed financial resources to the local level for development. It also seeks to give the power and authority for revenue generating at the local level (Ahwoi 2010). As is the case under the new decentralisation system, all departments under the various assemblies are expected to participate in the preparation of the composite of the district (Government of Ghana, 2012).

The researcher adopted Arnstein's (1969) typology of participation and Peng's (2020) hierarchy of participation for this study. According to Peng (2020), the participation of farmers and other stakeholders in agriculture sector development at the local level is in four categories: information, consultation, collaboration, and empowerment. Information, which is the first level of stakeholder participation, seeks to ensure there is adequate provision of the information necessary for their consumption on all development policies at the local level. Peng's first level of participation is in line with Arstein's two bottom rungs of participation: manipulation and therapy. Arstein refers

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to this two bottom rungs as non-participation. He explained that powerholders only provide education to participants in the form of information but do not provide the opportunity for direct involvement of the stakeholders. Consultation, the second level of participation, ensures that policy makers sought public opinions and ideas on policies and programmes on agriculture development from farmers and other stakeholders on the agriculture value-chain. Arstein referred to the rungs 3 & 4 as tokenism: *informing* and *consultation.* He explained that these allow have-nots to hear and have a voice. These levels provide citizens with opportunities to be heard but fail to empower them in ensuring compliance by the power holders. The third level of participation, collaboration, is a dialogue-based level of participation. It ensures collaborative decision-making and responsibility sharing among stakeholders. This is in line with Arstein's fifth level of participation, placation. He referred to it as a high degree of tokenism because the ground rules allow the have-nots to only advice but left the entirety of the power to the powerholders to decide. The fourth level, empowerment, is a dialogue-based level of the hierarchy of participation. It seeks to transfer a complete power of decision-making powers to the public or stakeholders in a development project. The 6th, 7th and 8th levels on Artein's participation ladder, partnership, delegated power and citizens control fall in line with Peng's empowerment level of participation. Arstein referred to them as increasing decision-making influence by citizens. These levels enable citizens to negotiate and engage in trade-offs with powerholders (Arstein, 1986; Peng, 2020).

The theory of participatory development is utilised in examining the effects of participation of farmers and other stakeholders in the decentralisation of the agriculture sector, and its extent in ensuring food security in the Ho West District of Ghana.

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CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents both the profile of the study area and the description of the research methodology and techniques employed in the conduct of the study. First to be presented is the profile of the study area. The second part of the chapter describes the research design, data collection procedures and techniques, the population of the study, the sampling technique and procedures, the sample size determination of the study, and the ethical principles guiding the researcher throughout the study.

3.1 Study Area Profile

3.1.1 Location, Size and Population of the Study Area

The Ho West District is one of the eighteen (18) administrative districts of the Volta Region. The Legislative Instrument (LI), 2083 of 2012 established the Ho West District; it was carved out of the Ho Municipality in 2012. The District is bordered on the South by Adaklu District, on the North by Afadjato South District, on the East by Ho Municipality and the Republic of Togo and on the West by the South Dayi District. The District is located between latitudes 6.33º 32"N and 6.93º 63"N and longitudes 0.17º45" E and 0.53º39" E, and has a total land area of 1,002.79 km^2. According to the 2020 Population and Housing Census, the District has a total population of 94,600; out of this, 45,361 are males representing 48%, and 49,239 are females representing 52% of the total population. 89.1% of the population live in rural areas, against 10.9% living in urban areas (Ghana Statistical Service, 2020).

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3.1.2 Agriculture

Agriculture represents the mainstay of the District's economy employing about 95% of the District's labour force. According to the Ghana Statistical Service (2021), 2020 PHC report, there are 23,875 households in the Ho West District; out of this, 17,559 households, representing 73.5% are involved in agriculture, 16,723 households, representing 95.2% are into crop farming, 124 households representing 0.7% are into tree planting, 6,827 households, representing 38.9% are into livestock rearing and 10 households, representing 0.06% are into fish farming. This implies that the majority of the households involved in agriculture are crop farmers, which is of interest to this study. The farming activities carried out in the District are on a small-scale basis. The major crops cultivated by the farmers in the district are maize, rice, cassava and beans. Cultivation of cash crops such as cocoa and palm fruits were gaining ground at the time of the census.

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MAP OF HO WEST DISTRICT

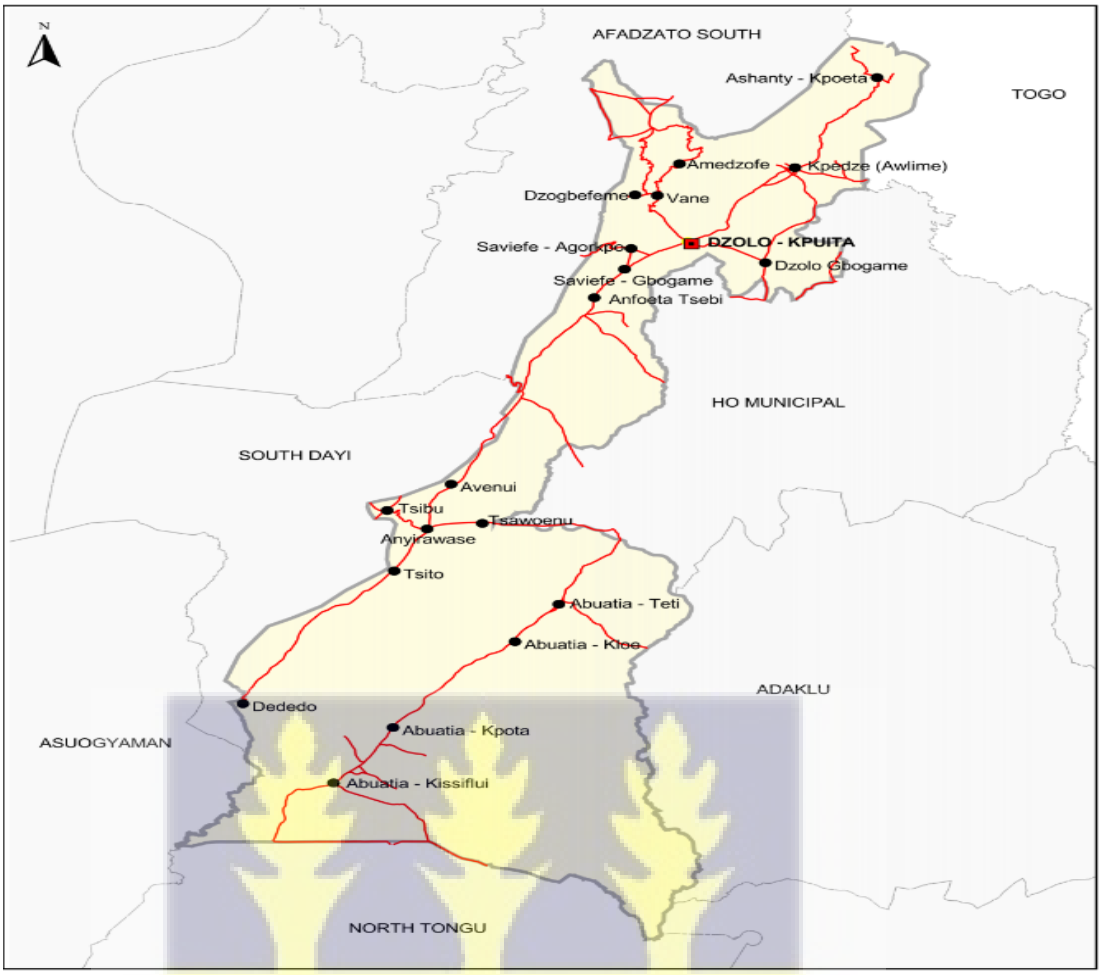

Figure 3. 1: Map of the Ho West District

Source: Ghana Statistical Service (2010).

3.2 Research Paradigm

The research is grounded in the philosophical assumptions of pragmatism. According to Hall (2013) and Morgan (2014), pragmatism as an intellectual paradigm presents a radical shift from the old philosophical beliefs concerning the nature of reality and the possibility of truth. Dewey (2008) refocuses on inquiry as a central form of human experience. He states that the attempts at producing knowledge happens within a social context. Pragmatism is based on the assumption that research might avoid philosophical discussions about the nature of truth and reality in favor of 'practical understandings' of

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tangible, real-world problems (Patton, 2005). While this approach is compatible with qualitatively prevailing interpretivist understandings of socially constructed reality, the focus is on questioning the value and meaning of research data through evaluation of its practical implications.

The use of pragmatism is suitable for this research because it allows the researcher to move beyond the objectivist conceptualizations that have dominated research and instead explore and understand the linkages between knowledge and behavior in context. Furthermore, pragmatic inquiry understands that people (including organizations) in diverse social circumstances can have different experiences with action and change, which encourages them to be flexible in their investigation strategies (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). Furthermore, rather than disputing the validity and intrinsic value of certain methods and methodologies, pragmatism encourages researchers to choose methods and methodologies based on their relevance "in terms of transporting us from the realm of practice to the world of theory and vice versa" (Kelemen & Rumens, 2012).

3.3 Research Approach

The study employed a mixed-method research approach in the collection and the analysis of its data. As the name indicates, the mixed-method research is a purposeful integration and combination of both the quantitative and the qualitative research techniques in conducting research. It states that researchers gather both the quantitative and the qualitative data from the sample population using appropriate instruments (Creswell & Plano, 2011). The relevance of this approach to the study is its ability to create both the statistical and in-depth views on the phenomenon under study. Specifically, the study sought to analyse the extent and the dynamics of agricultural sector decentralisation and its contribution to food security in the Ho West District of

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the Volta Region. Thus, qualitative data were collected with an interview guide from the core staff of the Ho West District Assembly, some selected farmers, and the technical staff of the Department of Agriculture in the Ho West District. In addition, quantitative data were gathered through a semi-structured questionnaire that was administered on farmers in the District.

3.4 Population, Sampling Technique and Sample Size of the Study

Creswell (2012) defines population of a study as a group of individuals with similar characteristics, which is of interest to the researcher. The population of interest for the researcher in this study is all food-crop farmers in the Ho West District, the core staff of the Ho West Municipal Assembly, and all technical/extension services staff of the Department of Agriculture in the Ho West District.

The farmers were targeted for this study because they constitute direct beneficiaries in decisions made by the District Assembly and the central government on agriculture-related policies. For the purposes of this study, farmers were limited to all those involved in the production of food crops in the Ho West District both on large- and small-scale. In addition, the Ho West District Assembly was selected as part of the population due to their role in the preparation of the composite budget and the disbursement of central government financial allocations to the various departments under the Assembly including the agriculture department, and the oversight roles played in the operations of all decentralised departments in the District. They include the Municipal Chief Executive, the District Coordinating Director(s), the District Planning Officer(s), the District Budget Officer(s), and the District Finance Officer(s)/Director(s). The Ho West District Department of Agriculture was selected due to the general agricultural and extension services it rendered to the farmers and

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other players in the agriculture value chain in the District. They comprise all agriculture extension agents in the Ho West District, and include the District Director of Agriculture.

3.4.1 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques for the Study

Sample refers to a subset of a study population, or a segment of the study population selected by the researcher for the purposes of investigation (Bryman, 2012). With a study population size of 18000 registered farmers in the District, the researcher employed a sample-size determination table, developed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) to arrive at a sample size of 377 with a confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval of 5%. This is to ensure a 95% accuracy and allow a +/-5% margin of error.

To ensure a fair and equal representation of farmers from the various communities, the researcher sampled twenty-nine (29) respondents each from thirteen (13) farming communities in the Ho West District. These thirteen communities were grouped into three general zones: southern, central and northern zones. The southern zone communities comprised Amedzope, Anyirawase, Dededo, and Avenui. The central zone communities were Abutia Kissiful, Abutia Kloe, Abutia Kpota, and Abutia Teti. In addition, the northern zone consisted of Anfoeta Tsebi, Anfoeta Agorkpo, Ashanti Kpoeta, Dzogbefeme, and Avenui.

The researcher used a purposive sampling technique of the non-probability sampling method in selecting 15 participants consisting of 5 core staff of the Ho West District Assembly, 4 technical staff from the Department of Agriculture, and 5 farmers for the interview. Purposive sampling refers to the judgmental selection of elements of the sample by the researcher. The selection of research participants using purposive sampling technique aims at ensuring the inclusion and the accurate selection of those

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with the requisite knowledge on the subject matter of the research (Palinkas *et al*., 2015; Kelly, 2010).

Additionally, a simple random sampling technique of the probability sampling method was used to select the 377 farmers from the thirteen farming communities in the District for the survey (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Simple random sampling refers to the haphazard selection of a subset of a population, which ensures equal and fair chances of subjects' selection.

Table 3. 1: Sampled Farming Communities in the Ho West District

Zones Sampled	Communities	Number
Southern zones:	Amedzope, Anyirawase, Dededo, & Avenui.	116
Central zones:	Abutia Kissiful, Abutia Kloe, Abutia Kpota & Abutia Teti	116
Northern zones:	Anfoeta Tsebi, Anfoeta Agorkpo, Ashanti Kpoeta, Dzogbefeme & Avenui.	145
Total		377

Source: Field Report, (2021).

Sampled Agencies for the Study

Population Groups	Population	Number Sampled
Ho West District Assembly (Core Staff)	12	5
Ho West district DoA (Technical Staff)	8	4
Total		9

Source: Field Work (2021).

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3.5 Methods of Data Collection

The researcher utilised both the primary and the secondary data for the study. The methods of data collection for the study were through surveys and interviews.

3.5.1 Survey

In this study, the researcher conducted a survey using a self-administered semi-structured questionnaire on 377 food crop farmers in the Ho West District. The farmers were reached in their various farming communities based on prior notification. This targets the gathering of the quantitative data for the study. Survey refers to numerically rated questions in the collection of information from a sample population (Ponto 2015). According to Creswell (2012) and Ponto (2015), the use of a survey in research enables the researcher to collect numerical data that helps to generalise research findings and statistical quantifications. Surveys help describe and explore into variables and the construction of interest (Ponto, 2015; Creswell, 2012).

3.5.2 Interviews

Interviews are the widely employed data collection method in qualitative research (Bryman, 2012). According to Nunkoosing (2005), interviews as a data collection method, offer the research participants the opportunity to express their views on issues of interest to the researcher. On the other hand, interview affords the chance to researchers to delve into or probe matters of interest to the research. The researcher conducted fifteen (15) in-depth interviews with the core staff of the Ho West District Assembly, technical staff of the Ho West District Department of Agriculture, and some selected farmers from the District. The interview discussions focused on the funding dynamics and mechanisms of the agriculture department, the challenges associated with

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the Department of Agriculture and its effects on service delivery, and general involvement of farmers in the decision-making of the Department.

The interviews were guided by the use of an interview guide. Creswell and Creswell (2017) refer to an interview guide as a series of open-ended questions in either printed or electronic forms, which guides a researcher in the conduct of interviews (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The use of an interview guide is to ensure consistency in the conduct of interviews especially in the administration of questions (Bryman, 2012).

3.6 Data Analysis Methods

The quantitative data for this study was collected through the conduct of a survey on 377 respondents who were food crop farmers in the Ho West District. The data was uploaded onto Microsoft Excel (Version 2016), and later coded based on the themes in the research objectives to provide answers to the research questions. Data coding refers to conceptualising and classifying data into meaningful and relevant groups for the purposes of analysis and interpretation (Singh, 2007). The researcher used frequency tables, bar and pie charts to present the data for its analysis and interpretation. With the aid of Microsoft Excel, both the bar and the pie charts were constructed depicting the responses from the respondents. To provide meaning and understanding for the data presented, the researcher provided a detailed interpretation/narration of the numerical figures presented.

The qualitative data collected through interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed into text by the researcher. The transcribed data were put into global, emerging and basic themes, based on the research questions using a qualitative data analysis software called NVivo. The transcribed data were uploaded onto the software, color-shaded into three themes identified based on the research objectives. As a result, the software

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produced a systematic and well organized presentation of responses from the participants of the study in line with the research questions asked. The data were presented in both analysed forms and in direct quotes. In addition, quotations were used to emphasise certain assertions and comments made by some participants.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

The researcher adhered to ethical principles such as confidentiality and anonymity throughout the research process. The researcher adequately sought permission through an introductory letter to the Ho West District Assembly, the Department of Agriculture in the Ho West District, and the farmers prior to the proceeding into the study area for the data collection exercise. This was followed by phone calls to the various authorities and persons to confirm their readiness and availability. Respondents were made to understand the purpose of the research, informed about the voluntary nature of their participation in the study, and informed to freely withdraw in case of any inconvenience. Names of respondents were excluded from the researcher's records to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. Also, respondents were introduced to the research topic and the reasons for conducting the study, respondents and the participants voluntarily consented to participate in the study by completing a consent form designed by the researcher. In addition, the researcher kept completed questionnaires, and the audio recordings of the interviews in a theft free backpack to avoid access by third parties and to ensure confidentiality and anonymity. Moreover, the researcher verbally assured respondents of the utmost confidentiality and anonymity.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter presented the methodology employed in the conduct of the study. The mixed method approach was employed with a concurrent exploratory design in the

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conduct of the study. This was to ensure the inclusion of both quantitative and qualitative research techniques to be able to carry out descriptions and inferences. The population, the sample size, sampling methods and techniques were duly discussed. The researcher strictly complied with fundamental ethical research principles.

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CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings and the analysis of the data collected on the extent and the dynamics of decentralisation of the agricultural sector in the Ho West District of Ghana. This study was guided by three objectives: to describe the extent of decentralisation of the Agricultural sector and its influence on food security in the Ho West district; analyse the funding mechanisms and dynamics of the Department of Agriculture in the Ho West District; and, examine the challenges faced by the Department of Agriculture in the Ho West District and its effect on service delivery to farmers.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics

This section is in two parts. The first part presents the demographic data on farmers and the second on the core staff of the Ho West District Assembly and the technical staff of the Department of Agriculture in the District.

4.1.1 Sex of Respondents

Of the 377 respondents surveyed, 278 (74%) were male and the remaining 99 (26%) were females. The low representation of women in farming implies that farming is a male-dominated venture in the Ho West District. The low representation of women in farming in the District created a gender imbalance among the farmers. This finding confirms several other findings including that of Egyir *et al*., (2014), Obuobie and Hope (2014) and Emmanuel *et al*., (2016), who found out that the low representation of women is attributed to traditions banning women from acquiring land for farming.

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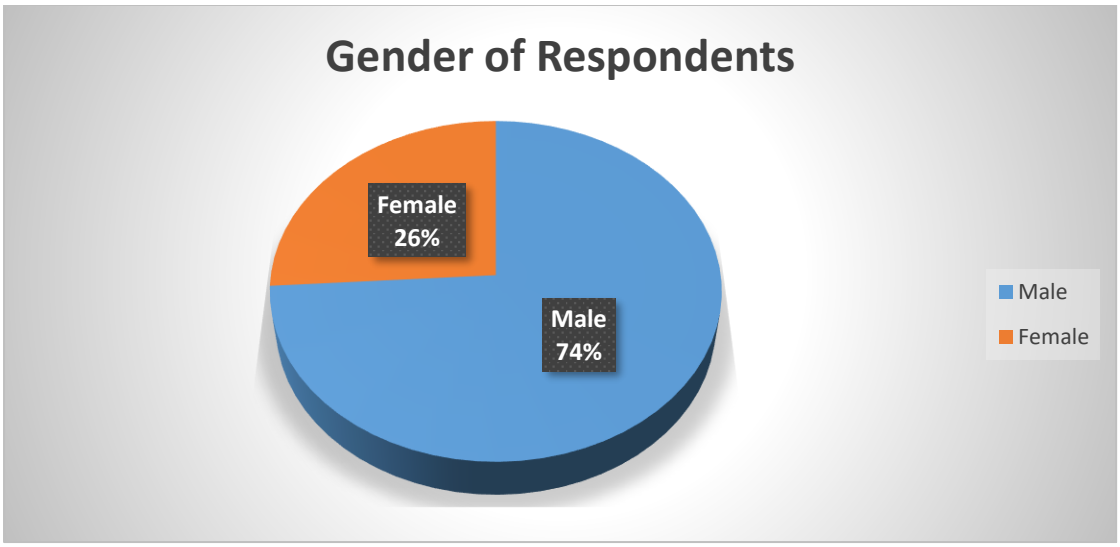

Figure 4. 1: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Source: Field Report (2021)

4.1.2 Age of Respondents

The survey indicated that the majority of the farmers in the Ho West District were between the ages of 46-50 years and above. 189 (50%) of the respondents were between the ages of 46-50 and above. In addition, 83 (22%) of the respondents fall between the ages of 41-45 years. 55 (15%) of the respondents were between the ages of 36-40 years. Lastly, 50 (13%) of the respondents were between the ages of 35 years or below at the time of this research. This created a worrying scenario for policy intervention in the Ho West District as it appears that, a low percentage of the population of the youth participate in agriculture, especially in food crop production. This could be attributed to the low interest of the youth in venturing into agriculture or the desire to migrate to urban cities for white-collar jobs, or to seek greener pastures. This threatens food security in the Ho West District as those within the economically active population show no interest in farming.

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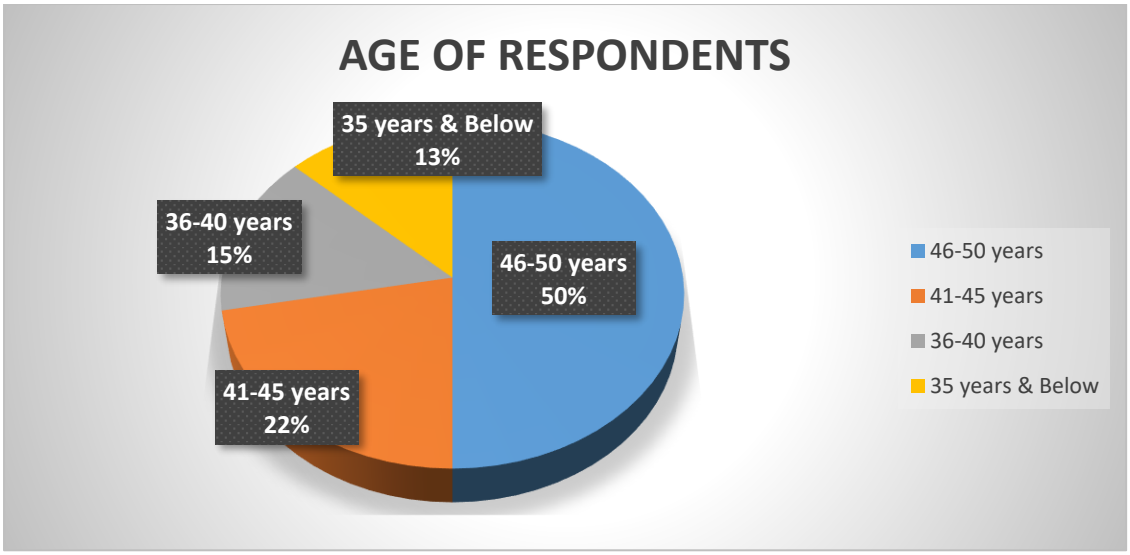

Figure 4. 2: Age Distribution of Respondents

Source: Field Report (2021)

4.1.3 Educational level of Farmers

Of the 377 respondents, 111 (29%) had no formal education. 99 (26%) of the respondents had education up to Middle School Leaving Certificate / Basic Education Certificate Examination levels. In addition, 97 (26%) of the respondents had up to Senior Secondary School Certificate / West African Senior Secondary School Certificate levels. 37 (10%) of the respondents had diplomas. 33 (9%) of the respondents had obtained technical/vocational educational qualifications. This implies that the majority of the farmers in the Ho West District had no formal education.

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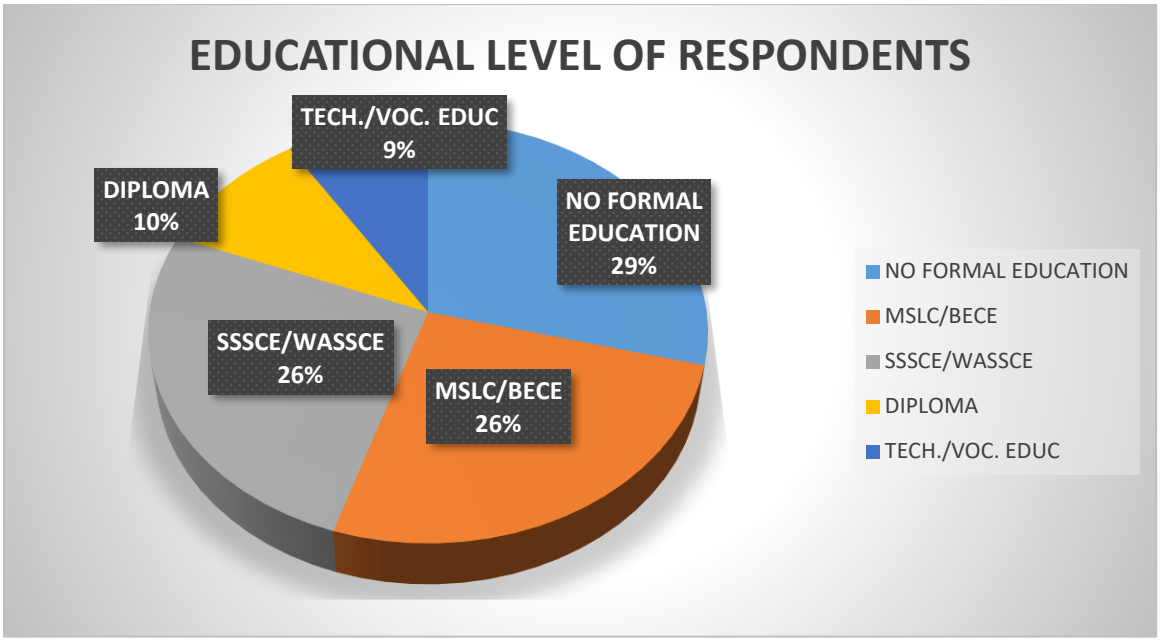

Figure 4. 3: Educational Distribution of Respondents

Source: Field Report (2021)

4.1.4 Profile of Research Participants from the Ho West District Assembly and the Department of Agriculture.

Table 4. 1: Profile of Respondents for the Interview

IDI ID	Sex	Age Range	Educational Level	Type of Participants	Location
IDI 1	Male	41-45	Master's Degree	Assembly Core Staff	Rural
IDI 2	Male	41-45	Degree	Agriculture Staff	Rural
IDI 3	Male	46-50	Degree	Agriculture Staff	Rural
IDI 4	Male	31-35	Master's Degree	Agriculture Staff	Rural
IDI 5	Female	35-40	Master's Degree	Assembly Core Staff	Rural
IDI 6	Male	41-45	Master's Degree	Assembly Core Staff	Rural
IDI 7	Female	35-40	Degree	Agriculture Staff	Rural
IDI 8	Female	46-50	Degree	Assembly Core Staff	Rural
IDI 9	Male	41-45	Degree	Assembly Core Staff	Rural

Source: Field Work (2021)

These participants were sampled purposively from both the Ho West Department of Agriculture, and the Ho West District Assembly. At the time of this research, four (4)

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participants had master's degrees, and five (5) had first degrees in various disciplines. Four participants were between the age range of 41-45; two (2) were between the age range of 46-50; two (2) between the age range of 35-40; and, one (1) between the range of 31-35. All the participants were in a rural community.

4.2 Extent of Agricultural sector decentralisation and its influence on food security.

4.2.1 Extent of Political Decentralisation of the Agricultural Sector

Political decentralisation of the agriculture sector demands that farmers and the stakeholders in the agriculture value-chain are empowered to participate actively in the decision making of the department.

Table 4. 2: Farmers Assessment on the extents of political decentralisation in the Ho West district.

Questions	(N)	Frequency		Percentage	
Does decentralisation improve:		Yes	No	Yes	No
Transparency & accountability of the DoA?	377	369	8	98%	2%
Farmer participation in the decision-making of the DoA?	377	373	4	99%	1%

(N=Sample size=377).

Source: Field Work (2021)

The pre-devolution era of the Department of Agriculture predating the year 2012 saw a centralised decision-making system, where the district department relied on the Ministry of Food and Agriculture for all decisions at the local level. The farmers'

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assessment of the current political decentralisation commencing from the year 2012 revealed that the department became transparent, accountable and able to encourage farmers to participate in the department's decision-making processes. As indicated in Table 4.2, 369 (98%) of the responses alluded to the fact that the district agriculture department became transparent and accountable after the decentralisation. 8 (2%) of the responses disagreed with the fact that decentralisation improved the transparency and accountability of the department or undecided.

4.2.1.1 Participation in Decision-making Process

On improved farmer participation in the decision-making of the department, 373 (99%) of the responses alluded to the fact that decentralisation of the Department of Agriculture encouraged and improved the participation of farmers and other stakeholders in the decision-making in the District. Only 4 (1%) of the responses disagreed.

A staff at the Ho West department of Agriculture said:

> The decentralisation of the department demands that, we engage all stakeholders in the agriculture sector to participate in the decision-making of everything we do. Therefore, we asked farmers to voice everything bothering them in the district. We go down to the various communities to gather information (Field Report 2021).

A farmer in the Ho West district confirmed this by stating:

> Now, we the farmers in the district have a say in the decision-making of the department. The officers from the department hold meetings with us, or our representatives to discuss the plans of the department before taking any actions. This gives us the opportunity to contribute our views and suggestions on what we think is good for the development of agriculture sector in the district. The problem is that, even though we contribute our views to the department, we don't normally see it translating into action (**Field Report 2021**).

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This presents a significant shift from the pre-decentralisation regime of centrality in the decision-making and accountability, when central government held all the power, and there was no involvement of the local populace. The first implication of this finding is that, due to decentralisation of the agriculture department, farmers in the District are allowed to be represented and actively participate in decision-making and development planning of the department. Secondly, the finding implies that the department rendered timely accounts to the farmers and those stakeholders involved. This finding reaffirms the positions of Hussein (2004) and Crook (1994) that political decentralisation ensures good governance through popular participation and pluralism to promote accountability and transparency at the local level. When farmers are informed and consulted, decision-making and implementation of development plans becomes effective and demand driven.

As expected, under its political decentralisation, the Ho West District Department of Agriculture encouraged and promoted the participation of farmers and other stakeholders in the department's decision-making. Arstein (1986), and Peng (2020) describe this type of participation as tokenism: consulting and informing, the second and the third levels on Arstein's participation ladder. Under these levels, citizens/stakeholders are expected to have a voice and be heard. This means that power holders listen to the demands of the local populace in the determination of any development planning. Arstein criticized these participation levels due to its failure in empowering citizens to ensure compliance by the powerholders. This defeats the purpose of the essence of participation. The implication of this to the agriculture sector and farmers in the Ho West District is that, even though farmers might have a say in the decision-making of the agriculture department in the District, powerholders did not

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heed the demands made by the farmers. In effect, input supply was supply-driven instead of demand-driven.

The accountability and transparency of the agriculture department will ensure the judicious use of resources at the local level. The participation of farmers in the judicious use of available resources at the local level ensured that the available resources were directed to the needed areas, and workable ideas suggested for the development of the agriculture sector. The development of the agriculture sector entails its core purpose of ensuring food security being achieved.

4.2.1.2 Strategies for Ensuring Active Participation of Stakeholders in the District

The study revealed that the department through its Research Extension Leakage Committee conducted a three-level engagement (community, zonal and district levels) for farmers and other stakeholders in the agricultural value-chain.

This was the observation of a participant:

> We are now involved by the department in taking decisions. The officers from the department visit us in our various communities to let us know what the department is planning to do. All programs and projects by the department are accounted for during the meetings with us (Field Report 2021).

This engagement creates a bottom-up approach in solving local problems, and a platform for registration of grievances, suggestions and recommendations to the department on the needed inputs in carrying out their farming activities. This initiative ensures that farmers in the District feel that they are involved in the development planning of the district agricultural sector. This finding is in line with the theory of participatory development, which asserted that local participation ensures responsive local government system, and, in addition, reverses the "top-downism" of central

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government bureaucracies, and encourages "bottom-upism" in addressing local problems (Mohan, 2007; Crawford, 2008). Secondly, in line with the theory of participatory development, decentralisation of the agriculture sector seeks to cure the shortcomings of the top-down approach in development to a more participatory bottom-up approach where farmers and local stakeholders actively participate in product and commodity price determination, inputs demand at the local level (Cummings, 1997).

Due to decentralisation and the strategy adopted by the Ho West District in ensuring participation of farmers and stakeholders, there is a universal determination of product pricing, appropriate inputs demand. The engagement of farmers, which resulted in the determination of a universal pricing regime for farm produce in the district, promoted unity among the farmers, improving their income level. This finding confirms Conyers's (1986) argument that the decentralisation of control in the determination of agricultural pricing policy at the local level offers motivating incentives to locals and improves the living standards of farmers. As stipulated by the theory of participatory development, the institutional perspective of the decentralisation of the agriculture department views the contributions of farmers' ideas and suggestions through participation at the local level as necessary in achieving the pre-determined organizational goals (Mefalopulos *et al*., 2009).

The participation of farmers in the department's decision-making ensures transparency and accountability. The department ensures that services and projects implemented in the District are based on farmers' demands. This is achieved through the involvement of farmers in the preparation of the medium-term district development and the annual action plans of the department. This finding reaffirms those of Crook (1994) and Hussein (2004), who stated that the essence of political decentralisation is to promote good governance through accountability and transparency.

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4.2.2 Extent of Administrative Decentralisation of the Agricultural Department

Administrative decentralisation of the agricultural sector aims at empowering stakeholders in the agricultural value-chain with the necessary authority and responsibility.

Table 4. 3: Farmers Assessment on the extents of administrative decentralisation in the Ho West District.

Responses	(N)	Frequency		Percentage	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
Does decentralisation improve extension service delivery?	377	39	338	10.3%	89.6%
Does decentralisation improve farmer consultations?	377	363	14	96.2%	3.71%
Does decentralisation improved information dissemination?	377	361	16	96%	4%

(N=Sample Size=377).

Source: Field Work (2021)

As indicated in Table 4.3, above, 39 (10.3%) of the responses indicate that decentralisation of agriculture improved the provision of extension services delivery to farmers in the District. An overwhelming majority, 338 (89%) of the respondents disagreed with the suggestion that decentralisation of agriculture department improved the delivery of extension services. Conclusively, farmers' assessment on administrative decentralisation indicates that the decentralisation of the agriculture department did not help in improving extension service delivery to farmers in the Ho West District. This could be attributed to the low number of agriculture extension agents in the District, and the lack of resources to deliver extension services to farmers. This reaffirms what was revealed during the interview with the technical staff at the department who

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claimed that the department had both financial and human resource challenges in carrying out extension services to farmers.

A technical staff of the department of agriculture confirms this thus:

> In the Ho West district, farmers are forced to use self-determined/self-decided chemicals to treat their crops due to the absence of extension service agents on the farms for education and consultation. Some of these chemicals affect the crops if not well applied. That is also harmful for human consumption (Field Report, 2021).

A farmer in an interview confirmed this assertion by stating:

> Seriously, extension services are very poor in the district. Me I am a farmer for a long time, about 20 years. Personally, I don't remember the last time I saw an extension officer visiting my farm (Field Report 2021).

This finding contradicts those of Oladele (2011), Nambiro, Omiti & Mugenieri (2005), Masango *et al.*, 2017 and Badu (2010), who researched into the impact of decentralisation on agricultural development, and found out that the decentralisation of the agriculture sector ensured the effective provision of extension services to farmers which helped in improving yield.

On farmer consultation, 363 (96.2%) of the responses indicated that there was improvement in the consultation of farmers and other stakeholders in the agriculture value-chain in the decision-making of the department in the District. Only 14 (4%) did not recognise improvement in the consultation of farmers due to decentralisation. The improvement in the farmer consultation was concomitant with the decentralisation regime of the agriculture department, which sought to ensure a demand-driven service delivery to farmers at the district level. This presented a significant shift from the previous pre-decentralisation regime (1992-2012), where service delivery was entirely supply-driven. As explained by Arstein (1986), consultation offers the opportunity for the have-nots to be heard. In relation to decentralisation and the development of the

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agriculture sector, this implies that the local officials listened to issues affecting the well-being of farmers and matters affecting the development of the agriculture sector. Again, when farmers were consulted in the development planning of the agriculture sector, and relevant information on needs were provided which guided the implementation of decisions.

On information dissemination, 361 (96%) of the responses agreed that there was an improvement in the dissemination of information among farmers in the District under the current decentralisation regime. Only 16 (4%) of the responses did not recognise decentralisation of the agriculture department as a contributor to improvement in information dissemination among the farmers in the District. This implies that farmers were well educated on the necessary development plans of the agriculture sector. Peng (2020) placed information dissemination at the first level of participation, and described it as the way of providing education to the farmers.

The delivery of extension services through the dissemination of the needed information in consultation with farmers implies that proper guidance and education on the best farming practices were provided. The provision of extension services in consultation with farmers could automatically translate into increased yields when the needed resources were available for use. When there is increase in the yield of farmers, the food availability, accessibility and utilisation, which are requirements of food security mentioned by FAO (2008) would be assured.

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4.2.3 Extent of Fiscal Decentralisation of the Agriculture Department

Table 4. 4: Farmers Assessment on the extents of fiscal decentralisation in the Ho West district.

Responses	(N)	Frequency		Percentage	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
Improved Financial Support for Farmers	377	21	356	6%	94%
Improved Financial Mgt. Systems	377	19	358	5%	95%
Improved Local Financial Dev.	377	33	344	9%	91%

(N=Sample size=377).

Source: Field Work (2021)

Fiscal decentralisation aims at providing the needed financial resources and financial autonomy to local government authorities for effective implementation of programmes and policies. The measurement of fiscal decentralisation, which captures improvement in the financial support to farmers, improved financial management systems of the department, and the improvement in the local financial development of the department, indicates that fiscal decentralisation in the Ho West District was, based on the responses from the farmers, unsatisfactory.

As indicated in Table 4.4, above, only 21 (6%) of the farmers agreed with the suggestion that fiscal decentralisation of the agriculture sector improved financial support for farmers in the District. The majority of the responses, 356 (94%) disagreed with the

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suggestion that fiscal decentralisation of the agriculture department improved financial supports for farmers.

On the improvement of financial management systems, only 19 (5%) of the responses agreed that the fiscal decentralisation of the agriculture department helped in improving its financial management system. The majority of the respondents, 358 (95%) disagreed with the submission that fiscal decentralisation improved the financial management systems of the department.

Regarding financial autonomy, 33 (9%) of the responses asserted that fiscal decentralisation offered a financial autonomy to the department. On the other hand, 344 (91%) of the respondents disagreed with the submission that fiscal decentralisation granted financial autonomy to the department.

These findings could be attributed to the department's financial constraints resulting from incomplete fiscal decentralisation of the department, and delays by central government in the transfer of the needed financial resources to the local government authorities. Incomplete fiscal decentralisation implies that the department lacked the financial autonomy in the management of its own finances, even after its decentralisation. It is expected under the fiscal decentralisation of the agriculture department that there is an established financial base and control by the department. This was entirely not the case in the Ho West District Department of Agriculture, based on the findings of this study and those of Resnick (2018).

As revealed during the interview with the technical staff of the department, there was a lack of financial autonomy, and delayed/low budgetary allocation to the department. These, the technical staff maintain, were the major challenges affecting the department in the delivery of satisfactory services to the farmers. The incomplete fiscal

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decentralisation, which resulted in poor agriculture service provision by the department, revealed by this study in the Ho West District confirmed those of Resnick (2018). In Resnick's (2018) study conducted in about sixty (60) administrative municipalities and districts on Ghana's seriousness with the decentralisation of the agriculture department found that, poor implementation of fiscal decentralisation, is a major contributor to the poor performance of the agriculture sector. The unavailability of funds for projects and implementation of programmes in the various districts compelled AEAs to delay in the provision of extension services to farmers.

The study again revealed that, since its decentralisation, the Ho West District agriculture department relied on the Ho West District Assembly for the disbursement of all its funding from the central government. At the time of this study, the department suffered from inadequate/insufficient financial allocation, delays in statutory financial allocations, overreliance on central government funding, less/no power in generating local revenues and bureaucratic bottlenecks in accessing funding for agricultural-related projects in the District. These findings reaffirm Aryee's (2012) and Resnick's (2018) assertions that Ghana's practice of decentralisation is incomplete due to the lack of financial autonomy and numerous challenges associated with the disbursement of the DACF for the local government authorities.

Again, the responsibility to expend, mobilise and to receive financial transfers from the central government, which are components of fiscal decentralisation mentioned by Böckenförde (2011), are defeated by the current implementation of fiscal decentralisation in the Ho West District.

A senior staff at the Ho West department of agriculture intimated:

> I can say that the agriculture department is only decentralised on paper, we don't do anything on our own. Even though we now have a composite budget, central

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> government chooses how much we should receive. All our funding come from the central government. We still don't have any power to generate our own revenue. To me, fiscal decentralisation means that, we have a financial autonomy as a department. However, this is not the case (Field Report 2021).

A farmer confirmed the above assertion stating:

> I don't see anything good with the agriculture office. The officers always complain to us that, there's no money. They also tell us that, the government is not giving them enough money for the management of the office and for helping farmers. We don't know how much the department receives from the government. We are not involved in the budget making for the department (Field Report 2021).

As indicated above, the purpose of introducing the composite budget is defeated by the frequent significant reduction in budget allocation to the department resulting in the non-implementation of numerous planned agricultural related projects and programmes; this, in turn, affects the quality of service to farmers in the District. If farmers are considered as the main stakeholders in the development of the agriculture department/sector, it would be a prudent measure when they are involved in the preparation of budget for the department. This finding corroborates those of Yeboah-Assiamah's (2016) study which lamented the poor/ineffective implementation of the composite budget at the district level, and associating it with poor governance structures at the local level. The department's delay/non-implementation of agriculture-related projects in the district affects the sector in several ways, including poor or no extension services and delays in the supply of farm inputs. These, in turn, affect crop yield, and translated into the unavailability of the right quantity of food crops to meet the consumption demand of the populace at the local level. When there is less quantity of food crops, which are in high demand, the likelihood of price-hikes is high, making food difficult to afford. These affects the FAO (2008) availability, and affordability tenets of food security in the Ho West District. Based on the above revelations, this research concludes that the fiscal decentralisation of Ghana's agricultural department is

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meaningless and incomplete due to the lack of financial autonomy of the department, causing its overreliance on the central government for all financial allocations.

4.2.4 The Link between the Department of Agriculture and the District Assembly

As a political unit in each metropolis, municipality and district, the assemblies are expected to collaborate with all the decentralised departments to deliver public services to the general populace (Crawford, 2008). This study revealed that due to decentralisation, the district assembly collaborates with the department of agriculture in three main ways: preparation of the district medium-term development plan, district annual action plan, and the preparation of the composite budget.

The Ho West District Assembly collaborated with other decentralised departments, including the agriculture department, to prepare its medium-term plan. The medium-term development plan of a district is a four-year development plan for the various MMDAs, which is prepared based on the country's national development plan. As part of this collaboration in the preparation of the medium-term development plan, the department incorporates all agriculture development programmes in the plan for execution.

Secondly, the annual action plan is a yearly action plan prepared by the Ho West District Assembly in collaboration with other decentralised departments including the Agriculture Department. This action plan broke down the medium-term development plan for yearly-based implementation. The Ho West District Department of Agriculture again incorporated those programmes to be implemented within its farming year into this annual plan.

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Lastly, the composite budget is the district financial and expenditure plan prepared by the Ho West District Assembly in collaboration with the agriculture department. It is based on a forecasted financial/expenditure plan of activities in the annual action plan to perform. The composite budget consisted of inputs from all decentralised departments in the District.

The district coordinating director asserted:

> As the law expect, we as an assembly must collaborate with all those departments under us to prepare the budget and the medium-term plan. We don't have any problem collaborating with them in the preparation of the medium-term and the budget. The only problem we have as a district is the implementation of those plans due to a lack of funds (Core Staff, Ho West District Assembly).

Popular participation, a major aim of decentralisation (Arkorful *et al*, 2021; Saito 2001), seems to materialise through the interdepartmental collaboration between the Assembly and the Department of Agriculture. This is due to the participation of farmers in the decision making of the District Department of Agriculture. Farmers are consulted through community fora organised by the Department of Agriculture. The feedback of the consultations informed and determined what went into the preparation of the district medium-term development and annual action plans of the department. This is in line with the social movement perspective of the participatory development theory, which stated that the participation of the local populace in development planning eradicates the unfair inequalities of knowledge and economic distributions (Mefalopulos *et al*. 2009).

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4.2.5 Influence of Department of Agriculture Devolution in ensuring Food Security

To understand the impact of decentralisation of the agricultural department in ensuring food security in the Ho West District, the researcher analysed the food-crop production figures during three years of pre-decentralisation (2008, 2009 & 2010) and three years of decentralisation (2018, 2019 & 2020). The periods selected provide the opportunity for presenting a clearer picture of the dynamics of the pre-decentralisation and the decentralisation periods of the agriculture sector.

Table 4. 5: Food Crop Production figures, Demand and Deficits in Metric Tons in the Ho West District.

Major Food Crops	Pre-Decentralisation Period (2008, 2009, and 2010)				Decentralistion Period (2018, 2019, and 2020)				
	Average Yearly Production figures (Metric Tonnes)	Average Yearly Demand (Metric Tonnes)	Surplus (Metric Tonnes)	Deficit (Metric Tonnes)	Average Yearly Production figures (Metric Tonnes)	Average Yearly Demand (Metric Tonnes)	Surplus (Metric Tonnes)	Deficit (Metric Tonnes)	Percentage Deficit
ROOT AND TUBERS									
Cassava	38630.3	40749	0	2118.7	205,793.28	219,152.20	0	13,358.92	10%
Yam	5612.2	5641.3	0	291	7232.3	7745.3	0	513	7%
Plantain	2913.6	3441.3	0	527.7	5488.6	6115	0	626.4	10%
CEREALS AND GRAINS									
Rice	1080.3	1207	0	126.7	10816	13431.2	0	2615.2	20%
Beans	1012	1200	0	188	1321	1415	0	94	7%
Maize	2477.33	3481	0	1003.67	16443.46	17863.5	0	1420.04	8%
VEGETABLES									
Tomatoes	1142	1163	0	21	1306.4	1467	0	160.6	11%
Pepper	1352	1211	0	141	1352	2152	0	800	37%
Okro	1179	1221	0	42	3390.2	3897.8	0	507.6	14%

Source: Food-Crop Production/Consumption Figures; Ho West DoA (2008, 2009, 2010; 2018, 2019, 2020).

As depicted in the table above, both periods (i.e., pre-decentralisation and decentralisation) present a similar situation of insufficient food production to meet the consumption demand of the populace in the District. This implies that the food security

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situation in the Ho West District is threatened by the insufficient food crop production capacity of the farmers in the District. Even though both pre-decentralisation and decentralisation regimes are presented in the above table, the focus of this section is on the decentralisation of the agriculture department regime where the researcher looks at its contributions in ensuring high yields, which translates into ensuring food security in the District.

The record of insufficient food crop production recorded in the Ho West District contradicts the assertion of Oakley (1991), that decentralisation of agriculture, which sought to promote the participation of local stakeholders, coupling with the availability of resources at the local level ensures development of the sector resulting in sufficient food crop production. This research revealed that, due to decentralisation of the agriculture department, farmers in the Ho West District were able to actively participate in the decision-making of the department in ensuring that services were demand-driven rather than supply-driven as experienced under the pre-decentralisation regime. However, participation without the availability of resources obviously could not translate into the sufficient food crop production in meeting the consumption demand of the populace.

A member of staff at the DoA observed:

> Due to decentralisation of the department, we encourage the farmers and other stakeholders to participate in the decision-making of the department, but if through participation and agreements are reached on certain policies and projects with the farmers, and the resources are not available for its implementation, is that not useless?. It is useless and meaningless (Field Report 2021).

A farmer remarked:

> These days, the officers from the agriculture office come to ask us questions on what we want in the district. They told us our ideas, suggestions will be used to

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> prepare the medium-term development and the annual action plans of the district. The only problem we have with that is that, we don't see the implementation of what we tell the officers for in the district" (**Field Report 2021**).

The finding of insufficient food crop production confirms those of Lambongang *et al*. (2019), that most African countries including Ghana are unable to meet their nutrition and food security needs due to the poor performance of the agriculture sector. The food insecurity situation on the African continent is due to the low yields recorded by the agriculture sector (Khan *et al*., 2014; Pawlak *et al*., 2020). The purpose for decentralisation of the agriculture sector, which is to ensure its rapid development at the local level, has been defeated by the failure of the central government in the transfer of resources to accompany the policy.

Additionally, the insufficient food crop production situation revealed by this study and others contradicts the government of Ghana's assertion that Ghana is a net exporter of food commodities due to the implementation of the Planting for Food and Job Policy under the New Patriotic Party (Government of Ghana, 2021). The insufficient food-crop production capacity recorded in the Ho West District could be attributed to many factors including poor implementation of the Planting for Food and Job Policy, unavailability of inputs for farmers, climate-change related challenges, and lack of irrigation facilities. The short-term solution to the insufficiency in food crop production in the District is the need for the transfer of food to augment demand in the Ho West District. In the long term, government must invest adequate resources into the development of agriculture, and this should include adequate and timely supply of inputs to farmers, provision of irrigation facilities and the adhering to climate change adaption and mitigation measures.

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4.3 Funding Mechanisms and Dynamics for the Agriculture Sector in the Ho West District.

According to the participants from both the Department of Agriculture and the core staff of the Ho West District Assembly, the Ho West District Department of Agriculture has three main funding sources: the District Assemblies Common Fund, Modernization of Agriculture in Ghana-Donor Fund (MAG, Canada), and the Government of Ghana funding (Goods and Services).

4.3.1 The District Assemblies Common Fund.

According to the participants from both the Assembly and the Department of Agriculture in the Ho West District, the Department of Agriculture has its major funding from the District Assemblies Common Fund. Its devolution as a department under the MMDAs had necessitated the transfer of its funding source from the central government through the Ministry of Food and Agriculture to the DACF through the Assembly. This initiative was to ensure there was fiscal decentralisation of the department where power was given for expenditure at the local level (Böckenförde, 2011). This is in line with Ayee's (2012) assertion that the DACF is the major source of funding for the operations of local government authorities in Ghana (Ayee, 2012).

At the time of this study, the Ho West Department of Agriculture had received between 5-10% of a quarterly DACF allocation to the Assembly. As explained by the participants from the Assembly, the allocations to the Department were based on its budget estimates of programmes and projects to be implemented in the District.

A participant had this to say:

> You know the District Assemblies' Common Fund is the major source of funding for the operations of all assemblies in the country. As the agriculture

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> department and others were devolved to be part of the assembly in 2012, it is necessary they benefit from the share of the common fund. Because they are now part of the assembly. I know you are only interested in the agriculture sector but just to let you know, some other departments were part of the devolution exercise carried out some years ago as part of the assembly as well. Even though the fund has its own issues, it is the only major source of central government's financial support to the assemblies, and it is backed by the constitution and the common fund act (A core staff at the Ho West District Assembly, 2021).

The Ho West District Department of Agriculture was, at the time of this study, implementing series of projects funded by the DACF. These included plantation establishment, tree crop nursery, and cockerel distribution projects.

4.3.2 Modernisation of Agriculture in Ghana Fund

According to the participants of the study, a significant source of funding for the agriculture sector in the Ho West District was the Government of Canada supported programme: Modernisation of Agriculture in Ghana (MAG). The Ho West District Department of Agriculture received this funding annually through the Assembly. According to Government of Ghana (2017), the MAG was a fund meant for conditional budget support and technical assistance to all departments of agriculture under the various MMDAs. Its aim was to enable the country respond to the objectives of the Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy (FASDEP), the Medium-Term Agriculture Sector Investment Program (METASIP), and the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA). Another purpose of the fund was to respond to the decentralisation of Ghana's agriculture sector implementation responsibilities of MMDAs. The fund sought to ensure and promote a demand driven agricultural research and alternative methods of agricultural extension delivery services so as to increase productivity. This is in line with the assertions of Hoffman and Metzroth, (2010) and

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Amanor *et al*. (1999), that central government and donors fund about 85% of Ghana's local government expenses.

A participant from the Department of Agriculture asserted:

> I think I should make one important point here, before the MAG program came to Ghana; we were having very few extension service agents and in some cases none. Meanwhile, it is the responsibility of the agents to conduct timely and frequent visits to the farms and interact with the famers. In some cases, it is expected that, these agents stayed in the various farming communities acting as the first point of call to the farmers. Now in the Ho West district for example, we have quite enough of those agents living in some of the farming communities due to the MAG program, which saw the recruitment of additional agent. I think it is helping the famers to improve on their farming practices (**Field Report, 2021**).

Another participant of the study commented:

> My brother, let me tell you, this Canadian funding that we call MAG provides direct funding through the Ghana government so that the agriculture sector can improve on the country's food security situation, improve on the performance of the agriculture sector by modernising it, making it equitable and sustainable. This program benefits about 7000 farm households in the Ho West district. Therefore, my brother, the fund is supposed to be used for five main activities. However, I will give you two of them. The first is to deliver agricultural extension services and market-oriented training to farm households, and the second one is to provide support to both the district and regional agricultural departments with extension materials, equipment and some logistical supports. I think this is where your focus is. So districts across the country have been benefiting from this fund **(Field Report, 2021).**

4.3.3 Government of Ghana (Goods and Services)

According to the participants from the Assembly, the agriculture department received another private funding from the central government of Ghana named Goods and Services: it was a fund meant for agriculture sector development at the district level. This fund catered for both the operations at the Department of Agriculture in the District and other agriculture-related programmes in the District. The Ho West District Department of Agriculture, like any other agriculture department, received this funding

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annually into the Department's operational account, which is managed by the Assembly.

4.3.4 Other Funding for Specific Projects

Another funding source for the Ho West District Department of Agriculture was what was termed by the participants as funds for specific projects. This, they claimed, were funds meant for the implementation of specific projects in the District. At the time of this research, the Ho West District Department of Agriculture was implementing a project from the Ghana Agriculture Subsector Investment Program, which aimed at training women and youth farmer-based organisations on agriculture and agribusiness related activities in the District. As a result, over 2000 farmers were undergoing various skills training in agribusiness and business development in the District at the time of this research. The Ghana Agriculture Subsector Investment Program was a three-(3) year project, which began in 2019, and was expected to end in 2021.

4.3.5 Budgeting System for the Ho West Department of Agriculture.

Unlike during the pre-decentralisation period during which the Department of Agriculture relied on the Ministry of Food and Agriculture for funding, the Ho West District Assembly through a composite budget system introduced under the new decentralisation regime controlled financial allocations at the district level. As expected, the Ho West District agriculture department prepared its budget based on the annual action plan of the department, and submitted it to the Assembly for integration and submission to the Ministry of Finance.

A member of staff of the Ho West District had this to say:

> The composite budget system, which was introduced for MMDAs in Ghana, was to integrate the budget of all departments under the various assemblies. This

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> in effect, will improve planning, budgeting, financial reporting and auditing and to ensure local development. In addition, the composite budget system is to ensure that the local populace have their voice in the preparation of the budget based on their needs (**Field Report, 2021**).

This confirms the provisions in Ghana's Decentralisation Policy Framework (2010), for the composite budget system that aims to ensure a responsive local government system capable of delivering efficient public services through a financial arrangement to the local populace.

A member of staff of the Ho West District Department of Agriculture debunked the assertion by stating:

> It is true that, we now participate as a department in the preparation of the composite budget for the district based on the annual action plan of the department. However, the fact is that we receive less or none of what we budgeted for. Currently, we are unable provide the needed services to the farmers in the district due to the delays in financial allocations and the inadequate funds received from government (**Field Report, 2021)**.

This again reaffirms Asiamah-Yeboah's (2016) assertion that the composite budget of the district assemblies in Ghana are ineffectively implemented due to the unwillingness of Ghana's Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning to provide adequate financial resources to the districts. The Ho West Department of Agriculture obviously cannot function properly by providing the needed resources to the farmers in the absence of funds. Since the Department prepared its budget based on the annual action plan of the District, a downward adjustment of the budget affected the implementation of its intended action plans therefore affecting service delivery to farmers and in effect their yield. Thus, farmers' productivity, which results in food security, is threatened if the needed resources are not provided adequately and timely.

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4.3.6 Challenges of Agriculture Sector Funding in the Ho West District

4.3.6.1 Inadequate Budgetary Allocations

According to the participants from the agriculture department, due to the incomplete fiscal decentralisation of the agriculture sector resulting in the lack of financial autonomy, the department is forced to slash programmes and projects that focus on the development of the agriculture sector in the Ho West District. This is one result of the insufficient financial allocations to the Department. Even though the decentralisation of the sector empowered the Department by enabling it to prepare its own budget based on programmes and projects to be implemented, the department had not received any financial allocation based on its submitted budget. This finding corroborates those of the World Bank (2016), Mogomotsi *et al*. (2020), Dube *et al*. (2016), that the agriculture sector is plagued with series of challenges including inadequate financial supports, among others.

The inadequacies with financial allocations to the Department means that farmers will not get the needed and the sufficient services in the forms of timely and adequate allocation of inputs necessary for their farming, and adequate extension services, among other services in the District. The result of this is the low yields recorded, which threatens food security in the District.

4.3.6.2 Delays in Financial Allocations

The second challenge with the agriculture sector funding is the delays in the allocation of financial resources to the Department. The Ho West District Department of Agriculture suffered several delays in receiving its funding for projects and programmes for the district. In the case of the DACF, a fund, which was to be allocated every quarter for the development at the local level, and which is the major source of

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funding for the department, funding had been in arears for over three quarters. . Other funds such the MAG, and the Government of Ghana Goods and Services were also delayed. When funding and resources are delayed in reaching the department, the service delivery to the farmers in the forms of inputs allocation and extension services are affected. When inputs are not sent to the farmers on time and extension services are poor, the yields of farmers are affected. This again reaffirms the findings of Resnick (2018), that the agriculture sector is underperforming due to the delays in the allocation of funding and resources to the department.

4.4 Challenges affecting the Department of Agriculture and its effects on service delivery to Farmers.

The crux of this objective was to examine the challenges faced by the Ho West District Department of Agriculture and its effects on service delivery to farmers in the District. In achieving this research objective, the technical staff and the District Director of Agriculture were extensively engaged in in-depth interview sessions on the topic. The researcher grouped these challenges into institutional, bureaucratic, and resource challenges.

4.4.1 Institutional Challenges

4.4.1.1 Political Interference

According to the participants from the Department of Agriculture, the Ho West District Department of Agriculture after its decentralisation faced political interferences and influences in its decision-making and operational management activities from the political heads such as the DCE, and political party executives at both the district and regional levels. These interferences and influences resulted in the diversion, inequity

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and bias in the distribution and the allocation of the available resources to the farming communities and the farmers in the District. This defeats the political decentralisation of the agriculture department, which seeks to empower farmers and other stakeholders in the agriculture value-chain in the management and the decision-making of the department. The exclusion of farmers in the operations and the decision-making of the department affected their contribution in the development planning of the sector. This finding confirms those of Nyendu (2012) on the premise that the effectiveness of Ghana's decentralisation policy is undermined by the frequent political interferences at the local government level. This research, which was conducted during the period when the country was preparing to award its deserving farmers, witnessed unprofessional and unethical interference and influence in the operations of the department. A typical example of its manifestation is the alterations made by the DCE to the list of farmers proposed by the Department for rewards during the celebration of Farmer's Day.

A participant from the agriculture department lamented:

> You know we are preparing to reward our hard-working farmers in the District during the farmers day celebration, but the list we prepared based on the performance of the farmers in the district over the year is been altered by the DCE with names of farmers affiliated to his party. This is a serious problem. You cannot complain because the assembly control our finances (**Field Report, 2021**).

As lamented by the participant in the quote above, the frequent influence of the decisions of the Department impeded the smooth progress of work and demoralized the hardworking farmers in the District; there was a lack of motivation for the deserving farmers. This defeats Herzberg's 1968 theory, which establishes the relationship between high performance and recognition through rewards. The decentralisation of the agriculture department, which seeks to ensure the sector's development in ensuring

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food security, is undermined when the decisions of the department is politically influenced.

4.4.1.2 Poor Implementation Approach of the PFJ in the district

The responses from the participants indicate that the approach adopted by the central government in the implementation of the Planting for Food and Jobs programme in the District accounted for portions of the challenges confronting the department. The implementation of the PFJ took a top-down approach, defeating the purpose of decentralisation of the agriculture department. This means that the central government continues to take full control in the implementation of the policy meant for agricultural development and job creation at the local level. The Ho West District Department of Agriculture is literally excluded in the implementation of the PFJ. This is because, the Department of Agriculture, which is expected to oversee the formulation and the implementation of all agricultural related policies in the District is excluded during the selection of input suppliers in the District, and they were excluded during the transfer of the inputs to the District. The transfer of the farm inputs, which were to be sold to the farmers at a 50% subsidized rate, into the District are entirely based on a direct arrangement between the central government (Ministry of Food and Agriculture) and the input merchants in the Ho West District.

A participant observed:

> We are not involved in the implementation of the planting for food and jobs as a department. The arrangement for the transfer of the inputs are between the Ministry of Food and Agriculture and the various individuals dealing in the farm inputs supply in the district (**Field Report, 2021**).

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This notwithstanding, the department is expected to only monitor the sale of the produce harvested from the PFJ, to avoid its overpricing to the citizenry, and to monitor the movement of produce to avoid smuggling.

4.4.1.3 Smuggling of Government Subsidised Inputs

Another major challenge confronting the Ho West District Department of Agriculture is the illegal exportation of the government-subsidized fertilizer under the PFJ programme to Togo. This illegal exportation was easy due to the proximity and the high demand of the fertilizer in Togo (Ghana Statistical Service, 2019). According to the participants from the agriculture department, this phenomenon was rampant in the District due to the central government's direct engagement with the input merchants, and the restricted role played by the Ho West District Assembly in the implementation of the PFJ. Another reason mentioned by the participants was government's delay in the disbursement of funds to the input merchants after supply to the farmers. When inputs meant for the development of the agriculture sector are exported illegally to other jurisdictions, farmers for which they are meant would be handicapped and would be forced to rely on local and traditional means for their production. As seen in many cases, the absence of inputs for farmers results in low yield, and a threat to food insecurity.

4.4.1.4 Lack of Political Will

According to the participants from the Department of Agriculture, there is no political will on the part of both the central and the local government in the implementation of the decentralisation agenda of the agriculture department in the Ho West District. This is manifested in the delays in the allocation of resources to the Department at the local level, and the involvement of central government in the implementation of agricultural development related policies at the local government level. Secondly, the bureaucratic

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bottlenecks encountered by the Department in accessing resources at the assembly level, partially, accounts for the lack of political will at the local government level. This finding is line with the findings and assertions of Nyendu (2012), and Asiamah-Yeboah (2016), that there is inadequate political will by the political actors in the transfer of power and authority to the local government authority. They further explained that the implementation of decentralization in Ghana remains theoretical, devoid of practice. The Department of Agriculture in the Ho West District was incapacitated in the delivery of services to farmers due to the absence of resources. The absence of the needed resources to farmers in the District affected their ability to produce the needed quantity of food to meet the consumption requirements of the populace in the District. This affects the general motive of decentralisation, which seeks to transfer power and resources to the local government level for effective local development.

4.4.2 Resource Challenges

4.4.2.1 Human Resource Challenges

According to the participants from the Department of Agriculture, decentralisation of agriculture in the Ho West District did not improve extension service delivery. It was revealed that the Department had only six (6) agriculture extension agents expected to oversee over eighteen thousand (18000) farmers in the District. This number is woefully inadequate based on the Food and Agriculture Organization benchmark of one (1) AEA=500 farmers. In the Ho West District, at the time of this research, and based on the calculation of 18000 farmers against six (6) AEAs, each AEA currently oversees about 3000 farmers. Due to this shortage of AEAs in the District, the majority of the farmers in the District did not have access to agriculture extension services, resulting in self-decided agro-chemical usage and farm practices. The lack of education of

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farmers on best farming practices, adequate and appropriate dosage of chemical use on the crops negatively affects yields. Both over/under dosage of agro-chemicals on crops has consequences in the forms of high toxicity yields and low yield due to the damage caused to the crops. This assertion supports those of the World Bank (2016) and Mogomotsi *et al*. (2020), that the inadequate extension services including lack of modern agricultural technologies are the major contributors to low performance. Agricultural extension agents are crucial in the education of farmers on crop-related matters thereby providing the opportunity for better performance and in effect improving yields. It was revealed that the available AEAs in the District were challenged by the lack of funds for their operations. This again supports the finding of Resnick (2018), which lamented how AEAs in about sixty districts relied on their salaries for official duties.

A participant mentioned:

> Considering the level of education of most of the farmers in the district demands that, agriculture extension agents guide them on their farms in the use of chemicals and in the general farming practices. They are very few compared to the number of farmers we have in the district. This is a major challenge for the department. I can tell you, the unavailability of AEAs in the district is affects the yields of farmers including damage to crops due to over dosage of fertilizers (Field Report, 2021).

Another dimension of the human resource challenge revealed by the participants during the interview was the recruitment and the deployment of AEAs who were of non-crop bias. The Ho West District, which is mainly a food crop-producing district, suffers this situation. Over the years, the District received several AEAs who had expertise in other areas other than food crop. Consequently, their contribution to the development of the food crop subsector of the large agriculture sector was minimal. As a suggestion, the District Director

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mentioned consultation with the Department concerning the deployment of such personnel into the District.

A participant lamented:

> Look, the public services commission sit in Accra and recruit personnel with different expertise for us here. Mostly, we do not need these people in the district because they are people with other expertise than food crop. The most important personnel we need in the district are those into food crop production. They should stop the blanket recruitment and deployment (Field Report, 2021).

4.4.2.2 Financial Resource Challenges

I. Inadequate Funding

The first financial challenge mentioned by the participants from the Department of Agriculture in the Ho West District was the inadequate and insufficient financial allocation made to the department after its decentralisation as part of the district assemblies. It was expected that financial allocations to the Department were made based on the budget of the Department, which was incorporated into the composite budget of the District. According to the participants, the Department suffered several budget cuts since the decentralisation. The implementation of the district annual action plan became difficult due to the insufficient and the inadequate funds resulting from budget cuts. Specifically, the inadequacy and the insufficiency of the DACF and other funds meant for the Department impeded its ability to render the needed services and inputs provision to the farmers. When inputs are not supplied to farmers, the ability for timely planting is affected and this leads to low yields, due to the harsh weather experiences for the crops.

II. Delays in Financial Allocations

Apart from the inadequate funding for the department, the participants from the Ho West District agriculture department mentioned that the Department experienced delays

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in receiving the resources needed for its operation. The District Assemblies' Common Fund is a major source of funding, and is expected to be disbursed quarterly to the various MMDAs on a formula approved by the Parliament of Ghana (Ayee 2012). As of the time of this research in December of 2021, the Ho West District had received only the first and the second tranches of the DACF. This implies that two tranches of the fund for 2021 were in arrears. Thus, the implementation of agricultural related policies and programmes, which is to contribute towards the development of the agricultural sector's ability to ensure food security in the District is impeded. This again is in line with Resnick's (2018) study, which found the delays in the allocation of funds to the department a contributor to the poor performance of the department and in effects affect the food security in the districts of her study. The Ho West District Department of Agriculture was forced to either cancel or review projects and programmes to suit the scanty funds available. This has been a major contributor to ineffective service delivery by the Department of Agriculture in the Ho West District.

III. Lack of Financial Autonomy

The participants mentioned that, even though the department was decentralised, it was denied the authority to raise revenue locally, and the authority to budget its control without central government interference. This defeats the purpose of fiscal decentralisation, which seeks to give financial autonomy to the local government authorities in the management of their own finances (Gadenne & Singhal, 2014). In addition, Hoffman & Metzroth, (2010), Amanor *et al*. (1999), explained that the underdevelopment at the local level is due to the little fiscal autonomy of the MMDAs.

Overwhelmingly, the participants explained that, due to the absence of the authority to raise revenue locally, the Department was constrained in carrying out some basic initiatives and programmes, which could be funded with revenue raised locally by the

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Department. The Ho West District Department of Agriculture, like any other agriculture department, heavily relied on the central government for all funds. In the absence of revenue generating authority by the Department, service delivery to farmers in the form of regular and frequent visits by the AEAs to the various farming communities and farms, and timely input supply to farmers was affected. The absence of extension services and the unavailable input supply are the main contributors of the poor agriculture performance resulting in the unavailable and inadequate food supply (Pawlak *et al*. 2020).

4.4.2.3 Logistical Challenges

I. Vehicles

According to the participants from the Department of Agriculture, one major challenge encountered by the Department, especially the AEAs in the District, was unavailability of vehicles for the conduct of farm visits. The Department, as of the time of this research, had only three (3) motorbikes, shared among the eight (8) AEAs in the District for their official duties including farm visits. Due to this, the AEAs resorted to the use of commercial motorbikes, termed in our local parlance as *okada/zemiger* for their official duties including farm visits. The cost of using the commercial motorbikes was borne by the AEAs with the expectations of refund after disbursement of central government funds to the Department. This confirmed the finding of Resnick's (2018) study on Ghana's seriousness with the decentralisation of the agriculture sector, which found that the staff of the Department of Agriculture in the districts studied were personally funding their official duty travels and farm visits. This situation of unavailable vehicles for the department is the result of the poor extension service

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delivery resulting in the low yield of farmers recorded in the district. Lack of farmer education on farming best practices affects yield resulting in food insecurity.

II. Office Accommodation

From both the researchers' observation and the accounts of participants, the Department with its entire staff are compelled to use a single room as office space. The department lacked a conducive office space for the conduct of its daily administrative duties. After the decentralisation of the department as part of the assembly, there was no special provision for a conducive office to enable a conducive working environment for the staff of the department. A total of nine (9) personnel including the district director of agriculture, the administrator, the accountant and the finance staff with the AEAs shared this single room as office space. The unavailability of a conducive office space to house the department hindered the smooth progress of work thereby affecting efficient service delivery. Service delivery to farmers, which entirely depended on the Department of Agriculture in the District, is affected in the absence of an environment conducive for the delivery of efficient service.

4.4.2.4 Effects of Agriculture Sector Challenges on Service Delivery

I. Poor Agriculture Extension Service Delivery

Two main resources (i.e., trained AEAs and vehicles) are needed to render better agriculture extension services to famers in the Ho West District. The absence of these resources were the cause of poor extension service. The unavailability of trained agriculture extension agents coupled with the unavailability of vehicles were the main causes of the poor extension services to the farmers. Farmer education and sensitization, which are the basic components of agriculture extension services, are the prerequisite for the effective and the efficient performance of the agriculture sector especially the

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food crop sector. The results of the poor services to the farmers are the low yields resulting in food insecurity in the Ho West District. Today, the Ho West district is unable to produce the needed quantity of food to meet the consumption demand of the populace within the District.

II. Delays in inputs allocation to Farmers

The farmers in the Ho West District relied on resources from the central government through the agriculture department for their farming. Several challenges: lack of fund, and delays in the allocation and the disbursement of central government funds to the department hindered the timely allocation of the needed resources to the farmers in the District. As revealed by this research during the interview, the Ho West District experienced several delays in the allocation of the needed resources from the central government to perform its operations. The participants attributed the delay to the era of the department's decentralisation, where financial allocations were passed through the MMDAs for disbursement. Farmers were unable to produce the needed and the adequate quantity of food to meet the consumption demand of the District when inputs in the form of fertilizer, seeds and other farming relevant resources were delayed, the farmers were unable to produce the adequate quantity of food to meet the consumption demand of the District.

III. Low Farm Yields

Another effect of the agriculture sector challenges in the Ho West District is the low yield recorded over the years. Extension services to farmers are the ways of giving guidance and education to farmers on best practices for modern farming. For the better performance of the agriculture sector in meeting the consumption demand of the populace, extension services are expected to be accompanied with the farm inputs. The

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absence of agriculture extension services to farmers coupled with unavailable inputs to farmers compelled farmers in the Ho West District to resort to primitive farming practices. This resulted in low and inadequate production of food crops to meet the food security demands of the populace in the Ho West District.

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter presented the analysis of both the quantitative and qualitative data collected through survey and interview. The researcher presented the quantitative data using frequency tables, graphs, numbers and percentages. On the other hand, the qualitative data was presented with descriptions and direct quotes of the participants of the study.

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary based on the findings of the research, the conclusions and the researcher's recommendations for policy intervention.

5.1 Summary of Findings

This study sought to understand the extent and dynamics of the decentralisation of the agriculture department and its contribution to ensuring food security in the Ho West District of Ghana. The study was guided by three objectives: describe the extent of decentralisation of the agricultural sector and its influence on food security; analyse the funding mechanisms and dynamics of the department of agriculture in the Ho West District; and examine the challenges faced by the Department of Agriculture in the Ho West District and its effect on service delivery to farmers. A mixed research method was employed with a sample size of 377 respondents consisting of farmers, the technical staff of the Department of Agriculture and some selected core staff of the Ho West District Assembly. The qualitative data was collected from the technical staff of the Department of Agriculture, the core staff of the Ho West District Assembly, and some selected farmers in the district and the quantitative data collected from the farmers in the Ho West District.

To measure the effect of decentralisation in the development of the agriculture sector and its contribution to ensuring food security in the Ho West District, the annual average production figures of the major food crops produced in the district (maize, rice, beans, plantain, cassava, yam, pepper, tomatoes and onion) were presented against their average annual average consumption figures. Three years of pre-decentralisation were

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matched against three years of decentralisation period. This study found out that, the decentralisation of the Department without the deployment of the needed resources to the local level contributed to the low and insufficient food crop production in the district.

It was realized that decentralization of the agriculture department led to close interdepartmental collaboration in the policymaking and development planning of the district. Because of this, both the Department of Agriculture and the Assembly had, over the years, collaborated in the preparation of the composite budget for the District, the preparation of the medium-term development plan and the annual action plan of the district. All these geared towards the development of the Ho West District.

In addition, the DoA faces institutional, bureaucratic, human resource, financial and logistical challenges in the delivery of its services to the farmers in the District. These challenges as faced by the Department hindered the effective service delivery to the farmers in the District.

5.2 Conclusion

After a decade of decentralisation, it is important to assess the extent and the dynamics of the agriculture department under the local government authorities and the contributions to ensuring food security at the district level. The study generally created an enlightenment on decentralisation resulting in the structural and organisational arrangements of the agricultural department. The discussions of the study centered on the available literature on the topic and the theory of participatory development. Relevant stakeholders in the agriculture value-chain especially those at the grassroot level were involved in the study.

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This study concludes that the decentralisation of the agricultural department, which happened almost a decade ago, expected under its political decentralisation to ensure the participation of the local stakeholders in the decision-making and implementation has improved the participation of farmers. Stakeholders in the agricultural value-chain including farmers in the Ho West District were able to actively participate in the decision making of the Department due to the decentralisation of the Department. As compared to the previous regime, there was a collaboration between the Assembly and the Department in three major ways, namely: the preparation of the medium-term development plan, the annual action plan, and the composite budget. The collaboration of the agriculture department with the Assembly promoted development through easy and quick identification of developmental and sectorial challenges and the proposal amicable ways of solution. According to Ayee *et al.*, (2010), the importance of citizens' participation at the local level is in line with the PNDC's expectation for decentralisation of ensuring rapid development at the local level. The effectiveness and the efficiency in the management in the local development affairs were ensured through the involvement and participation of the local populace. The platform created for farmers to share ideas with the local government officials ensures easy identification of problems and easy proffering of solutions.

The study further concludes that the decentralisation of the agriculture department did not contribute to ensuring food security in the District. This is depicted in the consumption deficit recorded in the District in the production of its major food crops. The incomplete fiscal decentralisation, which resulted in the lack of financial autonomy for the department after its devolution, hindered the effective and efficient provision of basic and relevant services to farmers at the local level. The insufficient food crop production revealed by this study threatens the food security situation of the Ho West

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District, as it calls for an immediate policy actions to curtail its deterioration. Several reasons may have accounted for the insufficient food crop production; these include lack of adequate and timely resource deployment to farmers coupling with the poor/lack of extension service delivery are associated with the poor performance of the agriculture department. Khan *et al*. (2014); Pawlak *et al*., (2020) and Lambongang *et al*. (2019), attributed the food insecurity situation in Africa including Ghana with the poor performance of the agriculture sector, which is due to the low yields records of farmers. The decentralisation of the agriculture department without deploying the requisite resources cannot translates into the production of sufficient food crop in meeting the consumption demand of the populace.

The study finally concludes that the performance of the agriculture sector is likely to deteriorate if adequate investments are not made through financing of farmers, provision of the needed farm inputs including irrigation facilities to augment the irregular rainfall pattern.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends the following to help in the proper decentralisation policy implementation and the development of the agriculture department and the sector at large.

- There is the need for effective and complete fiscal decentralisation of the agriculture department. There is the need for government to grant a complete fiscal decentralisation and financial autonomy to the agriculture department at the local level.
- Since decentralisation sought to transfer power and authority to the local government authorities and the citizens to take charge of their development

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needs, there is the need for the effective and the efficient deployment of adequate needed resources in accompanying the power and authority transferred. This is to ensure the translation of decisions into actions at the local level

- Depoliticisation of agricultural development in the Ho West District and in Ghana at large is required. For the agriculture sector to see the needed development it deserves, political actors should rest their decisions on the advice of experts within the sector. As revealed by the study in the case of the award of the best famers in the District, which was subsequently swapped due to the political affiliation of the individual involved.
- There is the need for timely and adequate transfer of the needed resources for local government operations and development, especially the DACF.
- There is the need for the recruitment and deployment of adequate number of Agriculture Extension Agents to the Ho West District. This is to help in the provision of the needed extension and technical assistance/services to the farmers in the district. As revealed by the study, the current AEA to farmer ratio is woefully beyond the FAO standard of one AEA to five hundred farmers (1 AEA-500 farmers). This necessitates the urgent deployment of the needed AEAs to the Ho West District based on the consultation with the district agriculture department.
- There is the need for government's investment in the provision of irrigation infrastructure and facilities for farmers in the District. This is due of the current irregular rainfall patterns and the unfavorable high/harsh temperature recorded across the nation including the Ho West District, which is attributed to the actions of climate change, distorting the farming seasons in the district. The

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study revealed that farmers in the District incurred losses, over the years, due to the damage cause to seeds planted in the anticipation of rain and the unfavorable weather condition experienced in the district. To avoid the reoccurrence of these losses recorded; there is the need for investment into irrigation infrastructure in the district to enable farmers irrigate their crops all-year-round in the absence of the rain.

- There is the need for government to promote and encourage the participation of the youth into agriculture through rolling out of youth-motivated agricultural related policies and programs at the local level. As revealed in the study, a very minute number of the youth engage in agriculture activities especially, food crop farming in the district.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

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The researcher is a graduate student at the University of Ghana, pursuing a Master of Research and Public Policy and conducting this academic exercise on the topic: **DECENTRALISATION AND RURAL AGRICULTURAL SECTOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE HO WEST DISTRICT OF GHANA.** The researcher seeks to solicit views of farmers on their relationship with the departments of agriculture and other technical or financial supports rendered or otherwise by the district department of agriculture**.** All responses provided in this study will be used purely for academic purposes. Confidentiality and anonymity are assured for all participants and the responses provided.

INSTRUCTION: Please answer by ticking the boxes provided.

SECTION A: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

1. Gender a. [ ] Male b. [ ] Female
2. Educational level

a. [ ] BECE

b. [ ] MSLC/SSSCE

c. [ ] TVET

d. [ ] Diploma

e. [ ] Degree

3. Age

a. 30 years and below [ ]

b. 31-35 [ ]

c. 36-40 [ ]

d. 41-45 [ ]

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e. 46 and above [ ]

4. Apart from farming, do you have any source of economic means?

a. [ ] Yes b. [ ] No

SECTION B: Political, Fiscal and Administrative Decentralisations of the Agriculture Department

N.B: Please answer by ticking in box of the question.

	Questions	Yes	No
	Political Decentralisation		
Q1	Does the DoA became transparent & accountable after its decentralisation?		
Q2	Does decentralisation improved farmer participation in the decision-making?		
	Administrative Decentralisation		
Q3	Does decentralisation improved extension service delivery?		
Q4	Does decentralisation improved farmer consultations?		
Q5	Does decentralisation improved information dissemination?		
	Fiscal Decentralisation		
Q6	Does decentralisation improved Financial Support for Farmers in the district?		
Q7	Does decentralisation improved Financial Mgt. Systems in the district?		
Q8	Does decentralisation improved Local Financial Development in the district?		

5. What are the major food crops cultivated in the district?

I. ……

II. ……

III. ……

IV. ……

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Section C: Challenges Confronting the Farmers in the Ho West District

6. What are the major challenges confronting you as a farmer in the district?

S/N	**Questions**	**Yes**	**No**
1	Do you think the actions of climate change affect your farm in the district?		
2	Have you been confronted with financial challenges as a farmer in the district?		
3	Do you have the needed inputs in carrying out your farming activities?		
4	Do you receive the needed extension services as a farmer in the district?		
5	Do you have the storage and marketing facilities for your produce in the district?		

SECTION C: FARMERS RELATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

7. Do you know where is the department of agriculture is located? a. [ ] Yes b. [ ] No
8. Have you ever reported any challenge related to your farm to the department of agriculture? a. [ ] Yes b. [ ] No
9. If your answer to this question is yes, how did you report to the department?

   a. [ ] Personal Visit to the Office b. [ ] Called Via Telephone

10. Do you know any extension officer at the department of agriculture in your district?

    a. [ ] Yes b. [ ] No

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11. Does any of these extension officers visited your farm for a periodic monitoring, and to render any support? a. [ ] Yes b. [ ] No
12. Have you ever received any support for your farm from the department of agriculture in your district? a. [ ] Yes b. [ ] No
13. Did the department of agriculture in anyway contribute to the increase in your farm yield? a. [ ] Yes b. [ ] No
14. Have you ever been involved in any decision making of the department of agriculture? a. [ ] Yes b. [ ] No
15. Do you think the staff of the department of agriculture relate well with you on your farm issues? a. [ ] Yes b. [ ] No
16. Do you think the department of agriculture is capable of providing the needed support for your farm? a. [ ] Yes b. [ ] No

29. What other challenges confront farmers in the Ho West district?

I. ……

II. ……

III. ……

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Appendix 2: INTERVIEW GUIDE

TARGET GROUP: DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE STAFF

My name is theophilius Kodzo Dzakaklo, a master of research and public policy student at the center for social policy studies, university of Ghana. This study is purely academic exercise on the topic: Decentralisation and agricultural development in the Ho West district of Ghana. However, this discussion is centered on the Agriculture Extension Services, and Food Production in the Ho West District.

1. Sex of participant
2. Educational level of participant
3. Age range of participant
4. How many farmers are registered on the records of the department of agriculture in your district?
5. What are the major food crops produced by these farmers?
6. What is the average farm size in acreage of the farmers in your district?
7. How many extension service officers are in your district?
8. What is the standard ratio of extension officer to farmers?
9. What is the current situation of the extension officer-farmers ratio in your district?
10. Does farmers participate in decision-making concerning farming related policies in the district?
11. How is the DoA funded?
12. Is the assembly collaborative enough in the preparation of the composite budget for the agriculture sector?
13. What are the challenges with the composite budget system as compared to the precious budgeting system?

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14. What are the agriculture program rollouts in the district to ensure high productivity for farmers?
15. What are the major challenges facing the Agricultural sector in the Ho West district?
16. How does these challenges affect farm yield/output?
17. What are the quantities in metric tons of the various food crops produce by farmers in the district?
18. What are the demand in metric tons of the various food crops in the district?
19. What are the major diseases attacking farms and crops in the district?
20. Has there been any intervention by your office in providing solutions to these diseases?
21. What are the main interventions provided by your office in solving disease attacks on the farm crops?
22. How is Planting for Food and Jobs implemented in your district? Probe for more information on its implementation.
23. What are the major challenges confronting the agriculture sector in the district?

Thank you for your participation

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Appendix 3: INTERVIEW GUIDE

TARGET PARTICIPANTS: HO WEST DISTRICT ASSEMBLY CORE STAFF

My name is theophilius Kodzo Dzakaklo, a master of research and public policy student at the center for social policy studies, university of Ghana. This study is purely academic exercise on the topic: Decentralisation and agricultural development in the Ho West district of Ghana. However, this discussion is centered on the Budgeting and Funding Mechanisms for the Agriculture Sector in the Ho West District.

1. Sex of participant
2. Educational level of participant
3. Age range of participant
4. How is the agriculture sector decentralised in the Ho West District?
5. What is your assessment on the performance of the agriculture sector in your district?
6. What is the extent of collaboration between the assembly and the DoA in the preparation of Medium Term Development Plan?
7. What is the extent of collaboration between the assembly and the department of agriculture in the preparation of the composite budget?
8. Are there challenges with the current composite budget system? (Probe further if there is).
9. What are the sources of funding for the agriculture sector in the Ho West district?
10. What is the funding percentage for the DoA in the District assembly Common Fund?
11. Do you think the above percentage is adequate for the operations of the department?

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12. What are the current challenges with the DACF in your district?
13. Are there alternative sources of funding for the DoA in the district? Probe for more information.
14. Are there any challenges faced by the DoA in your view after its devolution?
15. What are some recommendations to address the aforementioned challenges?
16. Apart from the financial support, are there other forms of support for the agriculture sector in the Ho West district?
17. How is the Planting for Food and Jobs policy implemented in the Ho West district?

Thank you for your participation.