University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

ENHANCING SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN GHANA: A CASE STUDY OF THE PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCACY & SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT (PPASA I) IN SUHUM MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY

BY

GLORIA AMOO

(10334734)

A LONG ESSAY SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTERS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION DEGREE

MAY, 2018

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this long essay is the result of my own research and has not been presented by anyone for any academic award in this or any other university. All references used in the work have duly been acknowledged.

I bear responsibility for any shortcomings.

…… ……

GLORIA AMOO DATE

(10334734)

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this long essay was supervised in accordance with the procedures laid down by the University of Ghana.

…… ……

PROF. JUSTICE BAWOLE DATE

(SUPERVISOR)

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God Almighty without whom this work would not have been complete. To my mother Mdm. Rennie Caplen and my sisters, Ruth, Andrea (A.K.A My Research Assistant) and Christine Amoo for their invaluable support.

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to acknowledge God Almighty for the guidance and strength to successfully complete this essay. I appreciate my family for encouraging me, supporting me, following up on work progress, listening to my frustrations, yet making sure I meet deadlines and giving me precious advice. They are a blessing to me.

I would like to thank my supervisor, Prof. Justice Bawole, for his guidance and advice during this research. I would also like to acknowledge the contributions of the lecturers of the Department of Public Administration & Health Services Management, especially Dr. Daniel Appiah and Dr. Abdulai Abdul-Gafaru, who made meaningful suggestions.

I acknowledge P. N. K. Aborampah Mensah of CDD-Ghana for introducing me to PPASA I and the entire staff of Center for Local Government Advocacy for welcoming this research.

I acknowledge the former and current staff of Suhum Municipal Assembly as well as the people of Suhum for welcoming me with open arms.

Last but not least, to H.E. Laudemar Aguiar and H.E. Mdm. Maria Elisa de Luna of the Embassy of Brazil, I say “Thank you” for encouraging me in this journey.

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION ii
CERTIFICATION iii
DEDICATION iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT v
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS viii
ABSTRACT ix
GENERAL INTRODUCTION 1
1.0 Introduction 1
1.1 Background 1
1.2 Problem Statement 4
1.3 Research objectives 5
1.4 Research questions 6
1.5 Significance of study 6
1.6 Organization of study 6
CHAPTER TWO 8
LITERATURE REVIEW 8
2.0 Introduction 8
2.1 Citizen participation in political and social accountability processes 9
2.2 Public goods and public service delivery in Ghana 10
2.3 The need for interventions 13
2.4 Why must citizens demand accountability? 14
2.5 Importance and benefits of Social Accountability 16
2.6 Nature and pillars of Social Accountability 18
2.7 Approaches of Social Accountability 20
2.8 Social Accountability Tools 22
2.9 Challenges of the use of Community Score Cards and Social Accountability in general 25
2.10 Chapter Conclusion 26
CHAPTER THREE 27
METHODOLOGY 27

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

3.0 Introduction 27
3.1 Study approach 27
3.2 Area of Study 29
3.3. Fieldwork Methodology 29
3.3 Sampling technique and procedure 30
3.4 Interview of individual stakeholders 31
3.5 Focus group discussions 32
3.6 Challenges and limitations 32
3.7 Chapter conclusion 32
CHAPTER FOUR 34
PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS 34
4.0 Introduction 34
4.1 Introduction to Public Policy Advocacy and Social Accountability (PPASA I) project 34
4.2 Social Accountability approach and mechanism used in the Public Policy Advocacy and Social Accountability (PPASA I) project in Suhum 35
4.3 Benefits of PPASA I as a social accountability initiative in Suhum 39
4.3.1 Improved governance 39
4.3.2 Enhanced development 41
4.3.3 Citizen empowerment 44
4.4 Challenges experienced by the main stakeholders during and after the implementation of PPASA I 46
4.4.1 Challenges encountered by CLGA as implementing CSO of PPASA I 46
4.4.2 Challenges encountered by the Municipal Assembly and some Service Providers 48
4.4.3 Challenges experienced by citizens 51
4.5 Chapter conclusion 55
CHAPTER FIVE 56
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 56
5.0 Introduction 56
5.1 Summary of key findings 57
5.2 Conclusions 59
5.3 Recommendations 59
REFERENCES 61
APPENDIX 65

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

PPASA I	Public Policy Advocacy and Social Accountability project phase I
CLGA	Center for Local Government Advocacy
CDD	Center for Democratic Development
DACF	District Assembly Common Funds
MMDAs	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assembly
NACAP	National Anti-Corruption Action Plan
CSC	Citizen Score Card
NCCE	National Commission for Civic Education
IEA	Institute of Economic Affairs
CSO	Civil Society Organization
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
WSP	Water and Sanitation Program
DCE	District Chief Executive
DA	District Assembly
IGF	Internally Generated Funds

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

ABSTRACT

As a country that began practicing constitutional democracy since 1992, Ghana has managed to gain a reputation of a peaceful country were democracy reigns. The country's local government reforms have also paved the way for governance and development to be brought closer to Ghanaian citizens. However, a phenomenon of citizen apathy has been in existence such that people are becoming less and less concerned about participating in governance, much less demanding accountability from their local authorities. As accountability stands among the pillars of good governance and democracy, it has become important to study how concerned actors put their effort in enhancing citizens' interest in governance issues and empower them to demand accountability from governments and service providers. This study approached the context with a case study of a social accountability initiative in the Suhum Municipal Assembly called the Public Policy and Social Accountability (PPASA I). Applying a qualitative method to this study, the objectives were met through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with stakeholders of the project. This long essay explores the dynamics in the use of the service delivery approach of social accountability and the community score card in Suhum. It underlined the positive impact on governance and citizen empowerment in the Suhum Municipal Assembly while recognizing the challenges encountered by the Assembly and citizens with regards to social accountability.

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter introduces the study by presenting the background of study, a statement of research problem, research objectives and research questions. The chapter also contains the research purpose, the significance of the study, the limitations of the study and the chapter outline.

1.1 Background

Accountability is a principle of modern democratic rule. (Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung 2011:5). The current democratic rule in Ghana began with the adoption of the 1992 Constitution, marking the beginning of the Fourth Republic, under the leadership of His Excellency Jerry John Rawlings. This period in the history of Ghana came with many promises and reforms ranging from the admission of multiparty democracy, to the promotion of citizen participation and inclusion in the affairs and governance of the State. Not only did this constitution usher Ghana into a certain maturity in governance but it progressively led the country into being popularly known as the "Beacon of African Democracy". The Ghanaian citizen was given the power through this constitution to elect its leadership and representation. Article 42 of the 1992 Constitution evokes that "Every citizen of Ghana of eighteen years of age or above, who is of sound mind, has the right to vote and is entitled to be registered as a voter for the purposes of public elections and referenda." Furthermore, Article 240 of the constitution prescribes that

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

government of the country should be decentralized. "(1) Ghana shall have a system of local government and administration which shall, as far as practicable, be decentralized." and the decentralized units which are the District Assemblies shall be in charge of the overall development of the communities underneath them. This is explicitly stated in article 245 of the constitution. "Parliament shall, by law, prescribe the functions of District Assemblies which shall include: (a) the formulation and execution of plans, programs and strategies for the effective mobilization of the resources necessary for the overall development of the district." Consequently, "functions, powers, responsibilities and resources are at all times transferred from the Central Government to local government units in a coordinated manner" (Article 240, (2)(a) of the 1992 Constitution). Despite the efforts to bring good governance and development to the doorsteps of the people, developing countries like Ghana are faced with countless challenges among which we can count low living standards in many areas which are deprived of basic needs such as clean water, adequate shelter, good community infrastructure such as roads, hospitals, clean markets, good drainage systems, unavailability of electricity amongst several other challenges. Many political leaders after gaining power, make little effort to raise the living standards of their community members. Problems of high infant mortality rates, limited access to clean water, and low literacy levels are aggravated by political leaders that act in their private interests rather than in the public interest." (World Bank Development report; 2004 in Zhang; 2012:2). Armah-Attoh (2015) noted that most Ghanaians say the central government is performing "badly" or "very badly" when it comes to providing reliable electricity (75% of respondents), maintaining roads and bridges (68%), delivering water and sanitation services (66%), addressing educational needs (63%) and improving basic health services (61%). In the

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

same way, most Ghanaians say their local government is performing "badly" or "very badly" in maintaining local roads (70%) and marketplaces (69%).

On the other hand, the constitution recognizes the importance and benefits of citizen participation in improving government policies and performance in general. Article 240, (2)(e) states that to ensure the accountability of local government authorities, people in particular local government areas shall, as far as practicable, be afforded the opportunity to participate effectively in their governance. It has come to notice that Ghanaian citizens are apathetic to issues of local governance. Electorate turnout for local government elections and other accountability processes have been on the decline. Recently conducted researches have given statistical evidence concerning the low participation of citizens in accountability in a general sense. There are several statistical evidences proving the relatively low interest of citizens in demanding accountability. In fact, turnout for the presidential election in 2012 stood at 79.4%, and 68.6% in 2016, while that of the recent MMDA elections in 2015 stood at 39% and 37.26% in 2010 (Abdul-Gafaru; 2017). Again, the Afrobarometer survey round 5 briefing paper informed that "In the past year, the majority of Ghanaians never contacted an official at a government agency (89 percent), their Member of Parliament (86 percent), a political party official (85 percent) and their local government counsellor (68 percent) about important problems or to give them their views" (Armah-Attoh, Ampratwum and Paller; 2014: 3). This survey also reported that only 38% of Ghanaians reported to have joined other Ghanaians to raise an issue once or twice, several times in the past. 62 percent responded that they did not join anyone to raise any issue (Armah-Attoh et al; 2014: 3).

It is in this regard that international bodies, civil society agencies, governmental and non-governmental agencies have for the few past decades, sought to intervene in supporting citizens

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

to be active participators in local government issues. The effort exercised by entities to enhance citizen participation and demand for accountability beyond elections is an approach known as Social accountability. Social accountability refers to "the wide range of citizen and civil society organization (CSO) actions to hold the state to account, as well as actions on the part of the government, media, and other societal actors that promote or facilitate these efforts" (McNeil & Malena; 2010:1).

Important to this essay, is how independent, non-government, non-partisan and non-profit advocacy and research institutions, with the international community, is contributing to promoting citizen participation and engagement in the development of their communities through holding local government and public institutions accountable for the improvement of public services and community development. To achieve this, the researcher carries out a systematic study of the Public Policy Advocacy & Social Accountability project undertaken by the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development in partnership with CDD-Ghana, with funding from the French Embassy, in the Suhum Municipal Assembly.

1.2 Problem Statement

Many researchers have underlined the advantages that citizen participation in demanding accountability presents (Mechkova et Al; 2017, Shaka; 2008, Gailmard; 2012, Smulovitz & Peruzzotti; 2000). Around the world, there have been several success stories of the positive outcome of citizens' pressures and actions of closely watching over political actions. Acemoglu and Robinson (2013) recalled how the pressure that British citizens exerted on the political leadership in 1688, landed them into gaining more economic expansion. Many Social

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

Accountability studies in Asia and Latin America have been carried out and published but there isn't much to say about its practices in Africa. McNeil and Malena (2010) observed that several social accountability practices like independent budgetary analysis, participatory budgeting, citizen evaluation of public services and participatory monitoring of government expenditure, have been widely studied and evaluated in countries like India, South Africa, Brazil and the Philippines. However, the same cannot be said about Sub-Sahara African countries including Ghana. This study is therefore an attempt to bridge the research gap by a case study on the social accountability project undertaken by CLGA in the Suhum Municipal Assembly.

This essay intends to first of all explore the mechanisms used in the implementation of the PPASA I project by CLGA, to appreciate the benefits that the implementation of the project has brought to the Assembly, and throw more light on the challenges that the stakeholders experienced during the initiation of the project.

1.3 Research objectives

- To explore the mechanism and approach of social accountability used in the implementation of the PPASA I project in the Suhum Municipal Assembly.
- To outline the benefits that the implementation of the project has brought to the Assembly.
- To bring out the challenges that the various stakeholders experienced with the Social Accountability initiative.

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

1.4 Research questions

1. How was the PPASA I initiative implemented in the Suhum Municipal Assembly?
2. What benefits did this social accountability initiative bring to the communities of Suhum Municipal Assembly?
3. What were the challenges experienced by the stakeholders of PPASA I initiative?

1.5 Significance of study

This study explores the conditions of public service delivery at the district level while focusing on the Suhum Municipal Assembly, and carefully highlighting the benefits that the social accountability initiative has generated for the communities without ignoring the challenges those stakeholders encountered. It appreciates the benefits of social accountability initiatives and the efforts exercised by Non-profit organizations and the international community in providing a solution to the apathy of Ghanaian citizens in demanding accountability at the local government level, a situation that has been observed during the round 5 of the Afrobarometer survey and the 2017 findings of the NCCE. The findings of this study present important facts that all stakeholders need to consider in their quest to improve social accountability.

1.6 Organization of study

The study's first chapter presents a background on decentralization and state of public service delivery in the country in terms of resource management. It also outlines the research problem, research questions, objectives and significance of the study, respectively.

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

Chapter two (2) contains the Literature review. It gives the theoretical aspect of social accountability and its strategies and categories. The chapter also elaborates on the conditions of public service delivery in Ghana and the importance of demanding accountability.

Chapter three (3) justifies the methodology followed in this study. It provides information on the Study design, Target respondents, Sampling size and Procedure, Source of data, Instrument for data collection and Data collection technique.

Chapter four (4) presents the results and discussion in the findings of the study.

Finally, Chapter five (5) contains the summary of the study and the conclusion. It also contains important recommendations based on the findings of the study.

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The concept of accountability dated from the 1060s or perhaps earlier. During the reign of William I, it basically denoted bookkeeping, where all property owners had to declare their assets to the king as a sign of allegiance. Today, accountability comes in various shapes and colors (Bovens; 2003:1). The principal-agent models suggests that accountability encompasses actions that can be undertaken by principals (actors or group of actors) who have mandated other agents (to act on their behalf) in order to affect the incentives of the latter to take various possible actions (Gailmard; 2012:3). Accountability is one of the five principles of good governance identified by the UNDP in 1997, among Legitimacy and voice, direction and fairness (Graham, Amos & Plumptre; 2003:3). McNeil and Malena (2010:1) even described it as the cornerstone of good governance. "Accountability is the cornerstone of good governance. Unless public officials can be held to account, critical benefits associated with good governance—such as social justice, poverty reduction, and development—remain elusive."

Accountability is a very important concept in governance such that it measures the objectives of the government and public institutions and evaluates its performance to see if the objectives were

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

followed or if priorities were misplaced. Accountability goes a long way into ensuring that policy decisions are aligned with the public will. "It is the promise of electoral democracy that voters can hold political officials for their policy choices and thereby ensure a close connection between public will and public policy"(Gailmard; 2012:6).

2.1 Citizen participation in political and social accountability processes

There has been a general observation of citizen apathy for their governments globally. A study on focus groups done by the Common Wealth in over forty countries around the world, found a growing disillusionment of citizens with their governments based on concerns on corruption, unresponsiveness to their needs, lack of connection and participation of ordinary citizens (Goetz and Gaventa; 2001:2). They further observed that "there is loss of interest in conventional forms of political participation and a loss of trust in many state institutions" (Goetz and Gaventa; 2001:2). Nevertheless, the influence of social accountability in several countries including India, Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, Argentina etc., have improved citizen participation and demand for accountability and have yielded laudable results in their governance processes (Smulovitz & Peruzzotti; 2000, McNeil and Malena; 2010, Ahmad; 2008).

In Ghana, awareness and interest in local and national government accountability structures are low. The recently conducted survey in 2017 by the NCCE revealed that knowledge of the existing public accountability structures at the local and national levels was very low among the respondents. A little over two-fifth (43.4%) of the respondents responded in the affirmative when asked whether they know of the public accounts committee of parliament, whiles 68.8% of them

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

are not aware of the legal provision of the Local Government Act 2016, Act 936 that mandates District Assemblies to publish their expenditure accounts annually to their constituents. Participation in the accountability process was found to be very low as 96.8% of the respondents have never personally sought for the expenditure accounts of their District Assemblies (NCCE; 2017:15).

The Afrobarometer, a Pan African Network of researchers and analysts conducted the round 5 of its Surveys in Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa and Benin and came out with interesting findings. The Survey in Ghana was done in 2012, with the technical assistance of its core partner the Centre for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) and revealed that "In the past year, the majority of Ghanaians never contacted an official at a government agency (89 percent), their Member of Parliament (86 percent), a political party official (85 percent) and their local government councilor (68 percent) about important problems or to give them their views." (Armah-Attoh et al.; 2014: 3). Furthermore, this survey reported that only 38% of Ghanaians reported to have joined other Ghanaians to raise an issue once or twice or several times in the past. 62 percent responded that they did not join anyone to raise any issue. The results of this survey clearly suggest that citizen participation and demand for accountability in Ghana is not so desirable.

2.2 Public goods and public service delivery in Ghana

Every local government is expected to work in collaboration with service providers to ensure the appropriate provision of public services such as water, electricity, waste management health,

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

education services and more. However, in Ghana just as in many developing countries there have been several challenges in service delivery. Consequently, citizens have expressed their dissatisfaction with regards to government performance in providing public services. Most Ghanaians say the central government is performing "badly" or "very badly" when it comes to providing reliable electricity (75% of respondents), maintaining roads and bridges (68%), delivering water and sanitation services (66%), addressing educational needs (63%), and improving basic health services (61%). Similarly, most Ghanaians say their local government is performing "badly" or "very badly" in maintaining local roads (70%) and local marketplaces (69%) (Armah-Attoh 2015:4).

Access to safe drinking water is critical for the prevention of many diseases and is categorized as a human right. In Ghana, the IEA 2015 survey by locality revealed a significant gap in access to water between rural and urban areas. Whilst 13% of urban households reported that they were without access to safe drinking water always or many times, the proportion of rural households experiencing the same challenge was 22.5% (Ofori-Mensah; 2017: 10).

In the area of sanitation, the conditions are similar. Access to sanitation is one of the SDGs poor performers as it remains a great challenge in many developing countries. Sewage facilities are limited across this part of the world. The average level of access to sewage facilities across 35 countries is 30%, with only seven countries having 50% coverage. Ghana is not immune from this challenge. Good sanitation remains one of the biggest problems confronting a significant number of its households today. The cost of poor sanitation to the Ghanaian economy is reported to be around $290 million annually (WSP; 2012). The proportion of Ghanaian households (both rural and urban) who use water closets is about 14% (Ofori-Mensah; 2017: 12).

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

With challenging water access and poor sanitation, it is predictable that there will be pressure on healthcare. At least half of all Ghanaian households, as per the 2014 and 2015 IEA surveys, reported never going without medicine or medical treatment... It is important to point out that, even where access to medical care exists, barriers to attaining quality care persist. Armah-Attoh (2015:8) provides data that points to the fact that a significant proportion of Ghanaians (32%) encountered difficulties such as lack of medicines or other supplies at their local health facilities (Ofori-Mensah; 2017: 15-16).

In remedy to this situation, recommendations were made among which were the need to add service to government policy priority, to engage private sector partnership, to embark on decentralization reforms and to promote good governance. In view of the latter, financial irregularities and corruption at the local government level is extensive, as repeatedly documented in the Auditor-General's reports. Given that the lack of funds remains a major barrier to enhancing the delivery of basic services, public financial management needs to improve. Ofori-Mensah (2017) explained that there needs to be a renewed focus on strengthening oversight and internal controls within District Assemblies to address the recurrent and prevalent cases of cash embezzlement, overpayments and procurement fraud remain crucial. Further, transparency in Assembly finances must be enhanced. In fact, a majority of Ghanaians (81%) have expressed the view that MMDAs are bad at providing citizens with information about their budgets (IEA; 2016). This view, together with the lack of trust in District Assemblies, calls for measures to improve transparency as one of the measures aimed at rebuilding confidence.

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

2.3 The need for interventions

Between 2012 and 2015, CDD-Ghana initiated a project entitled "Promoting Social Accountability through Citizen Participation in Local Governance" It was at the onset of this project that the center conducted a baseline survey in 17 selected districts in Ghana to ascertain the level of social accountability within the district government system and to identify the areas for intervention and advocacy. The outcome of the survey revealed that citizens' awareness of the actions and decision-making roles of MMDAs is poor. Citizens generally lacked information on specific funds such as the District Assemblies' Common Fund (DACF), which MMDAs depend on to undertake development activities. On the whole, citizens do not think MMDAs are responsive to public demands in the delivery of public services. Community meetings with the MMDAs to provide feedback on specific issues under consideration by local governments were rarely organized. Citizen participation in local governance, beyond voting in District Assembly (DA) elections, is low. Likewise, contact with formal government leaders, such as Members of Parliament (MPs) and District Chief Executives (DCEs). This may be because a majority of survey respondents believed that they could not productively influence or impact the performance of their local governments. Ultimately, MMDAs did not have legitimacy in the eyes of the survey respondents (Mensah, Tetteh, Ampratwum and Kuffour; 2015: v-iv).

After analyzing the situation, these experts recommended that measures be taken so that demand for accountability be increased, structures that ensure free flow of information in the districts be established, and periodic engagement between communities and MMDAs be improved. They also emphasized on the importance of providing sustained public education on MMDA concepts

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

to build public interest as well as initiating consultative processes to increase community participation in decision-making (Mensah et al. 2015).

2.4 Why must citizens demand accountability?

First of all, the Local Governance Act 936 of 2016 underlines the significance of citizen participation in governance by making extensive provisions to cover participatory governance and social accountability at the local level. CDD-Ghana outlined from sections 40-48 of the act key areas such as the participation in district assembly processes, participation in by-laws and fee-fixing resolutions, modalities and platforms for participation, the right of stakeholders to petition, the duty of district assembly to respond to petition of stakeholders and of the District Chief Executive to report on participation, the district assembly communication, the access to information and inclusion and the integration of minorities and marginalized groups (CDD-Ghana; 2017: 26).

Citizens have a role to play in the advancement of the nation. Their contribution to democratic governance promotes uncountable virtues such as justice, a balanced society, peaceful governance and legitimacy. Fung (2015: 514-517) noted that citizen participation in governance enhances legitimacy, effective governance and social justice. These are three important elements that favor the development of a nation. More so, citizens' contributions are important because they provide the basic resources for government expenditure through paying taxes. Citizens through tax paying, amass a great reservoir of resources that the government fetches from in order to operate. It is therefore important that citizens expect accountability from their leaders.

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

Because public budgets are based on financial contributions from citizens and assets that are publicly owned, citizens have the right to budgetary transparency, participation and accountability (Harrison and Sayogo; 2014).

History has proven that citizens have the power to influence leadership and obtain the richness of a whole nation through reasonable demands. The reason that Britain is richer than Egypt is because in 1688, Britain (or England to be exact) had a revolution that transformed the politics and thus the economics of the nation. People fought for and won more political rights, and they used them to expand their economic opportunities. The result was a fundamentally different political and economic trajectory, culminating in the Industrial Revolution (Acemoglu and Robinson; 2013:4). Furthermore, demanding Accountability serves as a check to government actions. It enables citizens to constrain the activities of politicians, public officials and public organizations (Grindle; 2010:2)

As democracy is defined as "le gouvernement du peuple par le peuple, pour le peuple" according to Abraham Lincoln (the government of the people by the people, and for the people), there is a normative belief that more citizen participation in public decision is the realization of important democratic values (Macintosh, 2008 cited by Wijnhoven, Ehrenhard, Kuhn 2015). Even though the people might not be professionals, their ideas and social check can contribute a great deal to achieving the developmental visions of a country. Sometimes the ones in need have better ideas on how to satisfy their needs rather than the elite or the service providers. Ideas from customers are sometimes more innovative than ideas from professionals (Poetz and Shreier; 2012 cited in Wijnhoven et al; 2015).

Some great thinkers believe that in life, you get what you demand or ask for. The economist and philosopher Amartya Sen supported the idea of citizens making demands to their government

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

and insisting that their demands are met. "In democracy people tend to get what they demand, and more crucially, do not typically get what they do not demand"(Amartya Sen; 1999 cited in Zhang; 2012:1).

Furthermore, citizens must be well positioned to participate in the fight against corruption which robs us of the resources that could be used to meet the needs of the communities. Through social accountability, citizens can help curb the corruption that is robbing our society. It is in this same logic that the National Anti-Corruption Action Plan noted the importance of citizens in fighting corruption, a phenomenon which accounts to a large extent for the setback in Ghana. NACAP suggests that citizens must act as watchdogs of society, must say no to corruption, vote buying and report corruption acts. Citizens should serve as anti-corruption watchdogs and be encouraged and supported to report corrupt practices to the appropriate anti-corruption and law enforcement agencies. Citizens must demonstrate integrity and say "no" to corruption. Citizens must be empowered through education and sensitization to put the nation first by saying "no" to vote-buying, bribe-giving, bribe-taking and all forms of corruption (NACAP; 2011:46).

2.5 Importance and benefits of Social Accountability

Social Accountability is very crucial element for progress especially for countries who are taking important steps towards the advancement of decentralization. McNeil and Malena (2010) who recounted a series of case studies on Social Accountability initiatives in Sub-Saharan countries including Ghana, Senegal, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania and Benin noted that "Social Accountability practices make important contributions toward improved governance, enhanced development, and citizen empowerment" (McNeil & Malena; 2010: 12). This is an affirmative of

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

the benefits initially recognized by World Bank (2005). These three elements will be the attention of our fieldwork in assessing the benefits of PPASA I in Suhum Municipal Assembly. They explained that even though some government officials view citizen's demand for accountability as threatening, social accountability approaches often foster positive and productive citizen-state relationship. In Tanzania for instance, citizens became less critical and more understanding of their local government officials as they received more accurate information about the limited resources available to their municipalities and breakdowns on how the resources were used. In Benin, Nigeria and Zimbabwe, CSOs have gained greater respect from government actors for their accountability activities. In Zimbabwe, despite the tension, government actors welcome and rely on CSOs' analyses of policy and budgetary impacts on women and children. Social accountability has demonstrated its strong ability to contribute to enhanced and sustainable development. For instance, the participatory planning and budgeting strategies adopted in Ilala Municipal council in Tanzania for instance has proven to have enhanced municipal level development projects and employment and opportunities. Finally, social accountability enhances citizen empowerment. Social accountability approaches are based upon empowering ordinary citizens especially the less advantaged whose voices are not heard and have no societal influence. They enable them know their rights, to be informed, to be heard, to partake in negotiations for change and hold the leaders accountable.

In countries like Argentina, Colombia, Brazil and Mexico, citizens have been reported to be active participators in governance and have exerted a lot of pressure on their leadership for the right thing to be done. In Argentina, the unresolved murder of a teenager triggered social protests that eventually led to the trial and indictment of her assailants and the resignation of a provincial governor. In Brazil, press reports of governmental corruption and public demands for due

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

process led to the 1992 impeachment of President Fernando Collor de Mello. In Colombia, the introduction of a constitutional mechanism for the protection of fundamental rights resulted in more than 200,000 legal actions, including indictments for malfeasance in office and for violations of due process. NGOs like Alianza Civica in Mexico and Poder Ciudadano in Argentina organized campaigns to monitor elections and the financial assets of elective officials. These cases show ways in which citizens are exercising control over government in many Latin America's democracies (Smulovitz & Peruzzotti; 2000: 147).

UNDP noted in their Guidance Note for social accountability (2010) that social accountability is critical for obtaining responsive government and that it consequently results in more efficient service delivery. It believes that social accountability concepts are not only central to discussions on democratic governance but are fundamental elements for human development (UNDP; 2010).

In Porto Alegre, Brazil, the use of participatory budgeting mechanisms has yielded positive results in service delivery. Access to portable water among local households has significantly improved. Between 1989 and 1996, the statistics of children in public schools doubled and tax revenue increased by 50% (Ahmad; 2008:13). "For many non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and social movements, demanding and securing accountability is a path to people's empowerment, or at least to enhanced effectiveness in responding to the needs and voices of those they claim to serve." (Gaventa and McGee; 2013: 4).

2.6 Nature and pillars of Social Accountability

Social Accountability mechanisms along the years have developed rapidly to adaptive and effective levels. Traditionally, the means by which citizens and civil society used to hold their

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

government accountable were limited to protests, advocacy, lobbying and demonstration. But in the recent years, the means have expanded to the use of participatory data collection and analytical tools, combined with enhanced space and opportunity for citizen and civil society engagement with the state, and have led to a new generation of social accountability practices that emphasize a solid evidence base and direct dialogue and negotiation with government counterparts. These social accountability practices include, for example, participatory public policy making, participatory budgeting, public expenditure tracking, and citizen monitoring and evaluation of public services (McNeil & Malena; 2010: 6-7). Social Accountability has many strategies, approaches and methods that vary according to actors, levels, forms of sanctions and levels of institutionalization. It can be initiated by various actors including CSOs, citizens, government agencies, media, and parliamentarians. Social accountability initiatives can occur at international, national or community levels.

The World Bank identified four conceptual pillars on which social accountability implementation would be effective: transparency, participation, response and monitoring (CDD-Ghana; 2017, Piccard et Al.; 2015). Participation of citizens in governance is a right. Therefore in implementing social accountability initiatives, citizens must be afforded the opportunity to participate in decision making, budget formulation, access complaint systems and participate in strategic planning. To achieve transparency, implementers must follow process that enable citizens to access information on public programs, government operations, budget and expenditure as well as government's new programs and initiatives. In effectives social accountability initiatives, third party monitoring must be ensured and sustained such that citizens are able to confirm if a government is acting toward the delivery of budgeted programs. Finally,

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

response represents the willingness and capacity of governments to address the needs of citizens (Piccard, Yaghi, Fatah, Nada, Maggiulli, Priori and Rabah; 2015).

2.7 Approaches of Social Accountability

Social Accountability adopts various approaches that are elaborated in literature. Yilmaz, Beris and Serrano-Berthet (2008) identified approaches such as the monitoring of provision of information, the monitoring of procurement and implementation of local government contracts, the citizen report card and the creation of institutions that promote citizen oversight over local government services. Monitoring begins with access to information. After the provision of information, citizens and Civil Society organizations can now begin to evaluate and probe further into the decisions made. Some examples of the monitoring approach like social audits by committees in India, were respected personalities of good reputation would scrutinize local decision-making and publicize findings on how public money is allocated and spent. Exposing public funds mismanagement would often force public officials to return misallocated public funds (Mathew and Mathew; 2003 in Yilmaz et al.; 2008:19). Monitoring the procurement and implementation of local government projects as a social accountability approach is complementary to horizontal institutions oversight on government actions. "The contracting and implementation of public works and services suffer from a high risk of corruption and mismanagement. Citizen-based initiatives complement internal government accountability mechanisms that manage these risks—supervising contracting and bidding process, monitoring construction, and auditing budget execution" (Yilmaz et Al. 2008:19). Additionally, they mentioned the citizen report card in India, Bengalore and the creation of institutions that promote citizen oversight over local government services. Ahmad (2008) outlined participatory budget

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

processes as an approach that is well-known among the UN, World Bank, Asian Development Bank. He noted that Participatory budgeting can create more equitable and inclusive allocation of public resources.

McNeil and Malena (2010) presented a more systematic and comprehensive list of approaches. They identified five (5) approaches, namely: the policy and plan approach, the budget, revenues, expenditure and service delivery approaches. The public revenues approach is meant to promote transparency about acquired amount of revenue, the sources of the revenue and how it is managed and accounted for. They noted that in Sub-Saharan Africa, Public revenue transparency is weak and public funds are misused because of corruption. The Public Budgets approach is a well-known approach owing to the series of participatory budgets practices organized annually, like in the case of Senegal, Tanzania and even Ghana. This approach is most common at the local level in sub-Saharan Africa but it can also be found at higher levels like in Ghana's Ministry of Finance's public consultations or the Zimbabwe government's welcoming of oral and written submissions before budget formulations (McNeil & Malena; 2010: 9). With the expenditure approach, citizens assess public expenditure in comparison to the approved budgets. The Public Service delivery approach enables citizens to monitor and evaluate the accessibility and quality of services provided by their local or national authorities. This is done with the participation of CSOs, service providers and local government authorities.

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

2.8 Social Accountability Tools

Along the years, stakeholders have developed various tools for the implementation of social accountability. CDD-Ghana (2017: 41) stipulated that social accountability can be categorized as constituting tools that can be used to monitor the policy priorities underlying the budget, proposals/allocations; budgetary processes and institutions, monitor implementation of policies and programs, and monitor development outcomes. Social accountability tools are but not limited to the Community Score Card (CSC), the Citizen Report Card (CRC), the Social Audits, and Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys (PETS) (CDD-Ghana; 2017). Participatory budgeting and administrative procedures acts may also be mentioned (Work Bank; 2005).

Piccard et al. (2015) listed the Citizen's Chatter, Public Hearing, The Community Score Card, Citizen Report Card, Social Audit, Mystery Visitor, Multi-stakeholder Dialogue, Participatory Budgeting and Youth Participation tools. The citizen's chatter is a document which informs citizens about the public services they are entitled to, the standards to expect, the remedies that are available when the standards are not met and the service charges. The public hearing tool is a platform where local government officials and citizens discuss community affairs. Mystery Visitors are trained individuals who act as potential customers and report their experience for the assessment of service delivery. Multi-stakeholder dialogues consist of maintaining constant communication between stakeholders with the aim of reaching consensus, understanding and foster positive change. Youth participation consists of engaging the youth to express their opinions and participate in decision-making.

Other literature listed demonstrations, investigative journalism and advocacy campaigns as traditional forms of social accountability initiatives and participatory policy making, citizen

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

report card and public expenditure tracking as more recent forms of social accountability initiatives (Ahmad; 2008:12).

For the purpose of this study, we will carefully delve into the characteristics of the Community Score Card (CSC) since it was the main tool used in the social accountability initiative in Suhum Municipal Assembly. CSC is a hybrid technique combining the social audit and the Community Report Card (CRC) tools. The CSC is both a process and a tool through which community members evaluate performance of a particular service and have a say in project management. It provides an opportunity for direct feedback and dialogue between the users and providers of a given service (CDD-Ghana; 2017: p 41-42). There are preliminary stages toward building an effective CSC. First of all the service that is to be evaluated must be identified, be it water, electricity, waste management etc… Secondly, all potential stakeholders must be identified. In the case of waste management, we can identify the community, members of the local council, and public or private service providers of waste management services. Afterwards, there must be planning of time frame for the project which is done for the field assessment step, organizing the community workshop, organizing service providers' workshop, organizing the meeting of the community and the service providers.

The following major step toward building a CSC measure is to build an input tracking matrix. Input tracking is the process of assessing the level of actual inputs (resources) and compare them to the level of inputs (resources) that citizens are entitled to. Inputs are the resources allocated at each stage and layer of the process in order to deliver the service. To achieve that, implementers must first of all, identify the inputs (resources) that the municipality must allocate for service delivery, conduct interviews to get information on the actual level of inputs, study the legal

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

provisions and international standards on the entitlements of citizens concerning those services and finally complete the input tracking matrix (CDD-Ghana; 2017).

Afterwards, the implementers can now carry out the score cards with the citizens. They group the citizens into various groups constituted according to special needs and priorities. The next step constitutes carrying out the score cards with the municipal staff or the service providers. Organization of a scorecard workshop with the service providers (also called self-evaluation workshop) either after the community score card has been completed or at the same time. The process for the providers is essentially the same as for the service users. However, the pace for identifying issues of concern and standards with service providers is often much faster because of the level of knowledge of the providers regarding their service. The standards generated by service providers are usually similar to those of the community because the service providers often identify the same issues but from a different angle (CDD-Ghana; 2017: p 48).

The final step is to carry out interface meetings and developing action plan. At this stage, both sides present their scorecards and deliberate on an action plan for the improvement of services. It is a platform that brings together citizens, local council members and even mayors. According to Piccard et al. (2005) the interface meeting should invite all stakeholders participating in the CSC implementation, as well as other citizens interested in the findings of the process. It is also advised to convene the media, in order to disseminate the results of the process, to present the content of the action plan and to report on the local authorities' commitment to the action plan. The interface meeting should be very carefully prepared, as it is a crucial step in the CSC process.

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

2.9 Challenges of the use of Community Score Cards and Social Accountability in general

In some communities where CSC is used, District Administrators at the initial stages of assessment, are skeptical about it as they see it to be confrontational. Initial assessments are met with resistance and skepticism by district administrators. They often see the tool as confrontational rather than an opportunity to get direct and constructive feedback from service users (Mwanza & Ghambi; 2011:192). Additionally, they noted that initiating this mechanism raises high expectations among citizens which are often hard for the District Administrators and Service providers and even for CSOs to meet. This point was also expressed by CARE Malawi (2013; p 8) "It can raise expectations with the service users if not facilitated well (creating a demand that cannot be fulfilled by the service provider, need to balance between community demands and service providers ability to provide and how the two sides can support each other to improve services)".

Holding service providers into account requires a long time. As recent as the practice is, it requires a lot of time to let citizens tap into the awareness and recognition of that right to demand accountability. CARE Malawi (2013:8) also noted that "holding service providers accountable might be a new concept and therefore a difficult concept to understand and get accepted by communities and service providers".

Generally in Ghana, the element that challenges the effectiveness of Social Accountability initiatives in terms of improving community development and service delivery is the availability of funds. The most significant source of funding that local government entities receive from the central government is the District Assembly Common Fund (DACF). Meanwhile, the extensive process for approval and disbursement of this fund to each MMDAs create multiple delays which

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

affect the execution of development projects in local communities. In some case, the Assemblies end up receiving less the amount initially allocated by the Parliament of Ghana. This is a situation which was also reported in the case study of tracking the Ghana District Assemblies Common Funds by Abbey, Azeem and Kuupiel in McNeil & Malena (2010).

2.10 Chapter Conclusion

Literature has extensively demonstrated the low interest of Ghanaian citizens in participating in governance. Meanwhile, there are various development challenges across the country that can to be addressed with the participation and involvement of all stakeholders including citizens in leadership accountability. Evidently, social accountability presents a wide range of approaches intended to improve vertical and horizontal accountability in governance, having a subtle nature directed at encouraging citizen participation and can be coined and adapted in a way deemed fit and relevant to specific communities.

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology approach and the procedure that was followed in the study of the initiative on enhancing citizens' demand for accountability in the Suhum Municipal Assembly. It also presents the different techniques that were used in collecting and analyzing the data for the study, the design, the sample choice, the data collection procedure, and the analysis of data. It also explains how the objectives of this study were achieved.

3.1 Study approach

In this study, a qualitative research method was employed. This method was chosen for the study in order to fully experience the dynamics and special stakeholders' perception on the impact of the project. As Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen and Namey (2005: 1) put it, "the strength of

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

qualitative research is its ability to provide complex textual descriptions of how people experience a given research issue. It provides information about the "humane" side of an issue – that is, the often contradictory behaviors, beliefs, opinions, emotions, and relationships of individuals."

The objectives of the study were met through fetching from secondary data such as research manuals and available literary works on social accountability, that was very relevant literature to this work and also, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were conducted as they were optimal for gathering information on the experiences of the stakeholders, the benefits and the challenges that were relative to the communities and the entities involved. Field notes were also taken, audios were recorded and transcribed. In-depth interviews provide a two-side advantage and comfort to both interviewer and interviewee. As Mack et al. (2005: 29) stated, in-depth interviews offer people the opportunity to express themselves in a way ordinary life rarely affords them. The in-depth interview is a technique designed to elicit a vivid picture of the participant's perspective on the research topic. During in-depth interviews, the person being interviewed is considered the expert and the interviewer is considered the student. My interviewing techniques were motivated by the desire to learn everything the participant could share about the research topic. Evidently, this approach turned to be the most appropriate to find out the experience of the respective stakeholders with regards to their experience of the PPASA I project in the Suhum Municipal Assembly. The respondents expressed their views passionately. The Municipal officials recalled how they participated in the project and the citizens did not hesitate in recalling their experience as well expectations of PPASA I. In recalling their challenges, some respondents even went as far as making certain remarks that can be regarded as recommendations for successful implementation of social accountability initiatives

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

3.2 Area of Study

The fieldwork was conducted in the Suhum Township of the Suhum Municipal Assembly located in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The town counted an approximate population of 49,398 people as at 2013. Suhum was chosen because of the simplicity of the project. It was reported that donor satisfaction was met such that the Assembly was awarded another project (from the French government) in the name of PPASA II. At the point that the study was conducted, PPASA I had not yet been studied by a third party or someone outside the organizations involved. This was confirmed by CDD-Ghana and CLGA. The key stakeholders such as the Service providers, the Local Government officials, and the active citizens who participated in the implementation of the project were located in Suhum. The Head-office of the CSO who implemented the project, CLGA, is located in Accra.

3.3. Fieldwork Methodology

The first interview was granted by the Program Officer of CDD-Ghana in charge of Social Accountability initiatives. He introduced a couple of recent projects and assisted with the contacts of the CSOs involved in these projects. After choosing the Suhum project, there came the opportunity to visit the Center for Local Government Advocacy, to interview the Deputy Executive Director, who after explaining the project, introduced the staff of the center and gave them permission to make available contacts of focal persons of the project. Thereafter, the

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

Former Deputy Coordinating Director of Suhum Municipal Assembly who was the focal person for the project but had been transferred to a different Assembly was interviewed on telephone. When I was finally able to visit Suhum, I interacted with a Municipal official on duty at the Suhum Municipal Assembly, with concerned service providers in the municipality and some active citizens who participated in the social accountability meetings.

Two qualitative instruments were applied in this study: In-depth interviews and Focus group discussions.

Before the fieldwork in Suhum commenced, official approval was obtained from the Assembly.

3.3 Sampling technique and procedure

The case study targeted a purposive sample which was determined at the saturation point of the information sought from various respondents. The Center for Local Government Advocacy assisted with the contacts of focal persons such as: an active citizen in Suhum and a Municipal Executive whom after being contacted assisted in turn with attaining the contacts of the other concerned respondents who were participants in the social accountability initiative. After contacting and briefing the active citizen who was the focal person for the town inhabitants, a humble request was made for him to contact and organize four other active citizens who participated in the project, to participate in a focus group discussion. This demand was met with satisfaction such that the group even included the traditional Chief of the zone. This citizen also contacted another active citizen from another town zone whom in turn organized 5 members of

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

his zone including the Chief and the Assemblyman. The total number of respondents reached as far as this study is concerned was 16 (sixteen):

- Active Citizens (2 groups of 5 active citizens each)
- Service provider (1)
- Local government officials of the Suhum Municipal Assembly(2)
- Officials of the Center for Local Government Advocacy who implemented the project (2)
- Program Officer from CDD-Ghana (1)

3.4 Interview of individual stakeholders

A set of interview questions were administered to collect the views of stakeholders such as service providers (Municipal Operations Manager of Zoomlion) and Municipal officials (ie: Deputy District Coordinating Director, Deputy Planning Officer) the Program Officer (CDD-Ghana) and CSO representatives (Deputy Director and Project Officer) on the approach and mechanism of social accountability used in the initiation of PPASA I, the benefits that have been evident in the community since the initiation of the project as well as the challenges that existed during the implementation of the project and the currently existing challenges. The interviews were recorded and later transcribed into a comprehensive and well organized material.

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

3.5 Focus group discussions

Two focus group discussions were conducted, involving active citizens belonging to two of the four zones that participated in the project, namely the *New Town North and South zone* and *Narterh Anoma and Oforikrom zone.*

This approach was chosen to obtain as many views as possible, with regards to members' experience of the project. In attendance at each focus group discussion were the Traditional Chiefs of the zones and four (4) other active citizens who are all inhabitants of the corresponding communities.

3.6 Challenges and limitations

This fieldwork was an interesting one involving respondents from various social backgrounds. The challenges were encountered with regards to getting appointments with the Service providers and the Municipal executives since most of the top level Municipal administrators who were involved in the project in 2015-2016, had been transferred to other jurisdictions or had gone on retirement.

3.7 Chapter conclusion

The qualitative research approach to this study was efficient as it established a relationship of knowledge seeking and provision between the interviewer and interviewee. It also created an

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

environment face to face interaction with some stakeholders as well as a platform for mini-community interactions where the respondents provided valuable information and remarks with regards to their participation in the social accountability initiative that took place within the year 2015-2016, the benefits of the initiative and the challenges experienced during and after the implementation of the project. Indeed, one of the Traditional Chiefs stated that the focus group discussion made them revisit and recall the PPASA I social accountability process as it was a commendable effort towards fostering citizen empowerment. The following chapter (Chapter 4) seeks to present the key elements of the project and the analysis of data obtained from the fieldwork undergone.

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents an introduction to the Public Policy Advocacy and Social Accountability Project (PPASA I) which took place in the Suhum township of Suhum Municipal Assembly. It also presents the implications of this social accountability initiative for the citizens of the town and the challenges experienced by all the stakeholders involved in the initiative.

4.1 Introduction to Public Policy Advocacy and Social Accountability (PPASA I) project

The Public Policy Advocacy and Social Accountability (PPASA) project was an initiative under a bigger project called "Strengthening the accountability of Ghana's central and local government", funded by the Government of France after signing an agreement with the Government of Ghana under the program "Solidarity Priority Fund"(2014-2017). The PPASA project had three (3) components among which the Suhum project was the third. Ghana Centre

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) was the operational partner for this component. The center recruited a Civil Society Organization (CSO) to implement the project under the name of Centre for Local Government Advocacy (CLGA). The component funding for this project was worth 200,000.00 euros and was executed in two (2) phases; Phase I and II (PPASA I and PPASA II) The current study is centered on phase I (PPASA I) which was launched in March 2015.

4.2 Social Accountability approach and mechanism used in the Public Policy Advocacy and Social Accountability (PPASA I) project in Suhum

After the launch of the project on the 28th May 2015, the Suhum Municipal Assembly set up a project implementation committee to oversee the running of the project. The implementing CSO (CLGA) in collaboration with the Assembly introduced the stakeholders to the project at large and what it exactly entailed. The social accountability approach of this project was a **Service Delivery** approach, with the use of the **Community Score Card** as social accountability tool.

Primarily, the Center for Local Government Advocacy, in collaboration with the Assembly, introduced the participating citizens to elements in Budget formulation, in order for them to understand the Public Financial Management system in Ghana. This was explained by a Project Officer of CLGA:

> *There was some form of public expenditure tracking. Before they could track (the assembly part), they had to understand what goes into the whole budget process. It*

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

was an eye opener for the citizens to participate in the budgeting process of the Assembly, as in the PFM cycle (Public Financial Management Cycle). Train their minds on issues so that when they go and meet the assembly, they do not go with blank minds.

This was also confirmed by a local government official:

What we did was to train them on the budget preparation process and development an action plan so that they begin to know that they can prepare their action plan for consideration into the action plan of the whole Assembly. We wanted them to know their responsibilities as well because it's a two way thing, so we took them through what they are expected to do within the Municipality. After training them we allowed them to develop their local action plan.

Afterwards, the implementers focused on the Service Delivery Approach of Social Accountability applying the Community Score Card tool to assess service delivery by general Service Providers and the Municipal Assembly. According to the Center for Local Government Advocacy, the Service Providers involved apart from the Municipal Assembly were: the Electricity Company of Ghana, Ghana Water Company, Zoom Lion, the Police and some CBOs (Community Based Organizations).

The Town of Suhum was sectioned into four (4) zones according to the electoral areas in the town. The four zones were: the ***New Town North and South zone***, the ***Narterh Anoma and Oforikrom zone, Ahenbronum South and Osafohene Atiemo zone***, and the ***Ahenbronum and***

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

Ayebronum zone. Each zone had a fair representation of citizens from various social backgrounds. A local government official explained the selection basis as follows:

> *We selected women; we selected people from the gender perspective, people from the traditional authority, Assembly members and unit committee members. Between 25 and 30 people per zone were selected. We wanted all groups to be represented so that they could spearhead the development agenda of the zone.*

The respondents indicated that each zone agreed on specific indicators they wanted to rate service providers on. In general, each community had citizens representatives who gathered to come up with indicators they wanted to rate their Assembly and service providers on. They assessed security, roads, street lights, education, healthcare, drainage. Each zone came up with as much as 12 indicators. When the four zones were gathered, they discussed the indicators and agreed on the most important indicators to evaluate service providers on.

The Narterh Anoma and Oforikrom zone's focus group discussion revealed that they came up with some indicators and area specific challenges such as solid waste disposal, security, roads and drainage, markets (the whole of Suhum has just the Central market), public toilets. The other zones came up with relative indicators to their community. New Town north and south came up with health, sanitation, security etc. According to one of the respondents from CLGA, the number of indicators identified varied for each zone but was consolidated before interface meetings with the service providers. She explained that:

> *Some had 14 areas, some had 10, so they agreed to come to a common stance. They agreed on 8 indicators. So the ones that were mentioned across the 4 zones were the*

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

ones that they selected ... and based on this we used the score cards for them to assess and then they used the score cards after we trained them and they did the scoring.

In so doing, the implementers fulfilled the Input tracking matrix (CDD-Ghana; 2017: p 43) which was mentioned in the literature review, in Chapter 2 of this study. The participants allocated scores they felt were deserved by each area. Some indicators performed relatively well, while some were poor. One of the participants in the *Narterh Anoma and Oforikrom* zone recalled the scores given to the service providers on the various indicators.

Now in our group, we scored them from 1 to 5 and we prioritized the indicators. I think market was 1/5, toilet and then waste: 1/5. In this area we have quite a lot of schools so we scored it 4/5. Abattoir- not available, so we gave it 0. Street lights, 3/5 (not adequate, especially the newly built sights). Roads, 2/5 (because we felt there was the need for improvement). Then security, sanitation were scored 2/5 (No refuse containers and no drains). Security and electricity, not available. Public toilet, we scored it 3- not adequate. Water, 1 - not available, we are talking about portable water… health, we scored 4/5.

After this stage, the implementers proceeded to the interface meetings and the development of an action plan as described in the literature review, in Chapter 2 of this study. All the respondents recalled their experience with respect to the interface stage which involved all the various stakeholders in Suhum. Most of the respondents recalled that there were various service providers present: various departments of the Assembly, Zoom Lion, and duty bearers in public

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

education, health and citizens. At the interface meetings, the stakeholders were presented to the issues on the ground and the scores given to the service providers. Exposés on the work of the Assembly and the service providers and discussions on existing challenges in some cases also took place.

4.3 Benefits of PPASA I as a social accountability initiative in Suhum

According to McNeil and Malena (2010) social accountability brings about several benefits that can be grouped under three main elements, namely: "improved governance, enhanced development, and citizen empowerment". These are the three main elements that will be looked out for in the findings concerning the benefits of PPASA I in Suhum.

4.3.1 Improved governance

McNeil and Malena (2010) explained that social accountability initiatives improve governance by strengthening democracy in a way that citizens are equipped with capacities, opportunities and information that enable them effectively participate in public affairs, engage public actors and voice their needs. PPASA I was no exception to that effect as respondents from the various parties of this study affirmed that the project provided an enabling atmosphere for improved governance. It made the citizens aware of the engagements of the Assembly and consequently reduced the mistrust that citizens once had for the local authorities. A respondent from the Suhum Municipal Assembly revealed the following:

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

> *I have been there for ten good years and to be honest with you the relationship between the Assembly and the people was not the best. We had experienced some of the worst demonstrations in the town. The population was very antagonistic to the Assembly. They used to see the Assembly as a different entity all together until this program came up. Had it not been for this program, it would have been very difficult to engage the citizenry.*

The respondent further stated that this social accountability intervention broke the antagonism that existed between the citizens and the local government authorites. Initially, the citizens thought that the Assembly was against them and did not want to help them with the funds from central government, while the funding from central government had the tendency to delay.

> *They used to see the Assembly as an institution that is out there to punish them and that whatever they needed from the assembly, we were not doing though we had the resources. They forgot that it was the chicken and the egg situation. We needed money to provide the resources that they required but the money was not forthcoming, how would we be able to provide these things?*

Through PPASA I, transparency established in the affairs of the Assembly. The citizens became aware of the current challenges facing the Assembly.

A retrospection on the principles of good governance by UNDP (1997) cited in chapter two of this study reminds of the notions of legitimacy and voice, direction, accountability and fairness. This project improved legitimacy by exposing all stakeholders to their rights and responsibilities as they relate to each other. It broke the mistrust that citizens had for the Assembly. It gave the

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

voice not only for the citizens to be heard but also for the service providers to explain their challenges to the people they met and come to a common agreement as to how to improve service delivery. It provided the Assembly a platform to account for their work and achievements. The project officer from CLGA, recalled that a traditional leader admitted he didn't know much about the Assembly's work until then. He said:

> *It brought a closer collaboration between the Assembly, citizens and the traditional authorities especially. I remember when the Omanhene of Suhum said that he did not know the Assembly was doing that much because at that meeting we asked the Assembly to bring a banner of all their projects. They did a banner and had pictures of all the projects they did across the municipality which turned out to be true. So the chief said he did not know the Assembly was doing all that.*

PPASA I provided an avenue for a new and closer collaboration for accountability to take place among various stakeholders.

4.3.2 Enhanced development

During the interface meetings of the project, the participating citizens of Suhum requested for the improvement of certain key services from the Assembly and corresponding service providers in the town. They requested for improved security in terms of street lights in the areas, improved drainage, improved sanitation with additional communal waste containers and a solution to solid waste disposal practices among inhabitants, a well-equipped abattoir, and toilet facilities among

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

others. In terms of public toilet facilities and communal containers for solid waste, the Assembly resolved to engage in public private partnership to be able to provide for the communities since the Assembly could not undertake it solely. According to a respondent from the Municipal Assembly:

> *What we did was that since the Assembly had no money to put up the toilet facilities for them and we have some in existence, the Assembly identified a private entity to partner with and help build for the people. Therefore, we were able to provide the facility for them. As for the communal containers we partnered with Zoom Lion to be able to provide for them and we went to place them at specific locations.*

A leading service provider in the area of sanitation also explained that some residential areas demanded for communal containers, while communal containers were to be given to middle and low income areas. Therefore this social accountability project created a platform for the Assembly to educate the citizens further on the allocations of communal containers for some areas and the use of subscribed bins for others:

> *So we told them that they should educate the inhabitants about the bin because if you have the bin you wouldn't have an issue with these communal containers. Afterwards, a lot of them contracted us for the dustbins. (Sanitation service provider representative).*

The active citizens from the focus group discussions however did not seem confident about seeing major development outcomes in their communities after the project. An active citizen from the New Town focus group briefly stated that:

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

I think they are on it. We see that they are trying to address some of them (the issues).

Another active citizen of the Narterh Anoma focus group discussion recalled a development outcome that provoked an outburst of laughter from the other participants of the focus group.

As a matter of reminder, in looking at our drainage, there is a main stream that runs through the town and through the support of the Assemblies, it has been desilted. So I have talked generally about Suhum, the two sides have benefited from that… I remember the Assemblyman brought us a letter that didn't work much but the thing has been desilted and it's no more as bad as it used to be. I can also remember we talked about poor lightening systems, I can remember personally that one or two bulbs were planted (Laughter).

The reaction of the other participants showed that they expected more development outcomes and these are not as significant as the interventions they are expecting from the Assembly. To respond to this reminder, the traditional chief of the area, who also participated in the focus group discussion, stated that the developments they had seen since PPASA I were as a results of the citizens own efforts and contributions.

Well the one that they just spoke about is through our effort. What we have told you is the same thing that we were looking forward to get from the Assembly. This is a project that we were made to understand that we would be able to forward our demands so that in return they also fulfil it but I have not seen anything like that yet.

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

I do not know whether the Assemblyman knows about any project that has been done here. But for me, I have not seen any development.

The majority of participants in this focus group made submissions in agreement with the chief's statement. They had not witness significant development outcomes. A similar observation was made by the participants of the New Town zone who complained in these words:

We complained about the abattoir we are using now and demanded a new one yet nothing.

At last, the participants concluded that perhaps the delays were due to financial constraints at the Assembly. The Assemblyman of the area, who participated in the New Town focus group discussion, explained that the Assembly is financially constrained:

In terms of purchasing power, the Assembly is not financially sound; it's always in our long term plan so we are trying our possible best to build a new abattoir.

4.3.3 Citizen empowerment

As citizen empowerment begins with access to information, the project began with training citizens on the Public Financial Management system in Ghana. They were trained on how to track the Budget expenditure and the importance of participation in community meetings so as to be informed and to contribute to the budget formulation of their Assembly. They also participated in interface meetings and action plan agreements so that they could follow the commitment of service providers based on their promises. Indeed all the participants in the focus

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

groups affirmed that the project had empowered them as citizens, equipping them with the knowledge and confidence to be active citizens and to question and assess on-going projects.

> *The project has opened our eyes. Duty bearers now know that they have a responsibility to the community and we also know that it's not a grey area. We must go to them, interact with them and tell them what we need. Not that they should sit in the office and plan for us. (Active citizen)*

> *Initially I found it difficult to contact the contractor on a project, but because of the project, I realized that I can even go to the site and question the contractor on the project being done. (Active citizen- Assemblyman)*

The officials at the Assembly also noted that the project has made them sit up because the citizens now know the right avenues to channel their complaints when things go wrong. They also know who exactly to hold responsible for their community challenges. An Official of Suhum Municipal Assembly expressed this remark in the following lines:

> *Yes, the project has made us to always be on our toes. Because the people now know how to complain about issues, until we get them resolved, they expect us to liaise with the service providers to get their issues fixed.*

The interesting aspect of this finding is that the persons with disabilities were also involved in the project and were empowered as much. A representative of persons with disabilities, who participated in the New Town focus group discussion, stated that:

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

Previously, people with disabilities were left out but right now we are aware that we have to be part of decision making for every project.

4.4 Challenges experienced by the main stakeholders during and after the implementation of PPASA I

CDD-Ghana (2017) noted that the use of community score cards can present certain challenges for the implementers such as conflicts during interface meetings. CARE Malawi (2013) also expressed that confrontational scenes may occur at some point and added that in general social accountability initiatives raise the expectations of citizens and this requires ample time and tactics to be managed. Some of the findings of this study cut across these challenges while some go beyond them, they are of typical nature. In either case, the challenges identified will be categorized according to stakeholders.

4.4.1 Challenges encountered by CLGA as implementing CSO of PPASA I

As stated in the literature review of this research paper, CLGA encountered instances during the interface meetings where the service providers felt they were scored unfairly by the citizens but this is a challenge that the center managed skillfully in order to avoid confrontations. In fact, a respondent from CLGA, noted that they had to be tactical during the interface in order to avoid serious confrontations.

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

> *The Assembly was there, so in the area of drainage; the various departments came in, then the town and Country Manager of Zoom lion was there, public education, health, they were all there, face to face, and citizens were there... we had to manage it tactfully so it doesn't turn unpleasant because some of them were saying that the scores given them were not fair.*

The same respondent additionally mentioned that time was a pressing factor for them and scheduling the meetings was not an easy task because the citizens would sometimes complain that they have more pressing businesses to attend to, while the sitting allowances offered by CLGA were not compensating enough (GHS 50) This was often the arguments of the traders when the meetings were scheduled around market days.

Interestingly, another respondent from CLGA, in a separate interview did not seem to have encountered many challenges with respect to the project implementation, apart from the fact that the respondent wished the center had more funds to reach more communities. The respondent stated:

> *I did not see much of a challenge; I did not see any during the project implementation because stakeholders were all involved… our meetings were always well attended. Basically, we need more funds to reach to other communities. We make sure that before we enter, the community is aware. We inform the Assembly member of the area. So we used the Assembly members to gather the people so that the people can also see that the Assembly members are*

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

working. So we do not just jump into the communities, we use the local structures available to do that.

4.4.2 Challenges encountered by the Municipal Assembly and some Service Providers

The first and major challenge experienced by the Suhum Municipal Assembly in terms of fulfilling the agreements made in the action plan during of PPASA I, has been resource constraints and the customary delay of the District Assemblies Common Funds. This was a phenomenon explain in the findings of the case study on Tracking the District Assembly Common Funds in Ghana which was reported in McNeil and Malena (2010). When asked about the challenges encountered by the Assembly in providing for the demands of the citizens, a respondent from the Assembly explained the following:

You know, to implement most of the requests, we needed money. The inflow of funds when it comes to Local government service, we have the IGF and the transfer from central government. These are the two main funds that come in to support. But over the years, we have this kind of erratic inflow of funds. We are supposed to get four quarters of the DACF in a year. Sometimes, to get a quarter in a year becomes a problem. So funding was a very big challenge because of the erratic remissions of the common funds. Currently the maximum you can get is two remissions in a year.

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

The lack of adequate funds is a situation that has even come to the notice of active citizens such that one of the participants in the focus group discussion made reference to it in the following manner:

> *We were told that every request that we make will be given attention, but we also have to remember that, everything is budgeted for and we do not know when the money is coming for them to be able to grant our requests. Looking at the project that we went through, all that we have been taught about the governors and the governed, the need assessment of the citizenry and after that, what have we seen?*

This implies that receiving doesn't easily depend on demanding as Amartya Sen claimed that in a democracy, citizens get what they ask for. If the entity in charge of providing does not have adequate funds available at the time of the demand, granting the request may delay or may not be granted at all.

Furthermore, a typical challenge to the fulfilment of resolutions in the action plan was the land tenure system in Suhum. Respondents explained that the lands there do not belong to the chiefs but to private individuals. It is therefore challenging for the Assembly to have parcels of land for development projects. This issue was mentioned by most of the respondents interviewed in this study. An Assembly official affirmed:

> *Another issue was the land issue. Some of the projects that we needed to put up, the public toilet facilities and others require land. And sometimes it is very difficult to get the land especially in communities whereby the lands system is not vested in the traditional authority; it was very challenging to get lands to develop*

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

> *projects. There was a case around the New Town area where we had public-private partnership, we wanted to put up a public toilet facility but because we didn't get the land, we had to demolish the old toilet facility to put up the new one.*

In the same logic a participant in the focus group discussion confirmed the existence of this typical issue.

> *The land is privately owned (by families) in Suhum and there is no stool land. The families own the land, so you must buy if you want it or lease, and that is the major constraint when public facilities have to be developed.*

The respondents who were officials of the Assembly observed that initially, citizens did not show high interest in the social accountability exercises but along the line, the citizens came to understand the advantages of the exercise and became more involved. They also stated the issue of time constraint. The focal person being an official of the Assembly was sometimes faced with a short notice to inform all stakeholders about upcoming meetings. Fortunately, that challenge was overcome with the help of other focal persons, active citizens of Suhum, who facilitated the rapid propagation of information. Another official of the Assembly confirmed the existence of this challenge by stating that:

> *One of the areas mostly complained about was short notification to meetings. The focal person was the one liaising between the community and CLGA… and sometimes he had just three days to tell the others.*

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

Additionally, some of the service providers stated that the citizens had very high expectations and while demanding, citizens expected to obtain instant results. A respondent, a service provider noted:

> *At times, when they make the demand they expect it right away. Some of the things they demanded were not feasible at that moment so we tried to tell them to find another alternative… Initially, it didn't go down well but I think as time went on things were normalizing and now things are ok.*

The same respondent further stated that the challenges that they are currently facing are related to citizens' behavior toward waste disposal. There are some citizen behavioral aspects that impede community sanitation development and cause challenges to the day to day activities of the service providers.

> *Our major challenge is the behavior of the inhabitants. They have it in mind that it is the responsibility of Zoom lion to clear their waste, whether they dump it indiscriminately or not. This has been our major challenge.*

4.4.3 Challenges experienced by citizens

On the side of the inhabitants of Suhum and the active citizens who participated in the PPASA I to be specific, the implementation stage of the project did not present significant challenges. Respondents of the two focus groups expressed their gratitude for being part of such an "eye

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

opening" intervention. They however counted a number of challenges they are experiencing as capable active citizens, since the completion of the project in October 2016.

First of all, they mentioned the challenge in obtaining information from the Assembly and from service providers. Despite the social accountability intervention, access to information still remains a challenge. A respondent of the New Town focus group noted that they only manage to get some pieces of information when they chance upon Assembly executives at public gatherings.

> *When you engage them privately, during social gatherings, while we are having social conversations, then they would tell you the problems that they are facing in their outlooks.*

Again, another respondent reiterated that they try to get pieces of information in order to have the clear picture on Assembly's performance because generally, relevant information is not available to the citizens.

> *Sometimes you volunteer and get pieces of information. For instance, why won't the government provide the things that we need? When they transfer the District Assembly Common Fund, it should be in the papers so that the public gets to know. This will make us avoid us going to the Assembly for them to tell us that the funds have not been released. If government itself comes out with information, it will help us assess them and rate them. For instance on "One District, One Factory"-a current government initiative-, what is being built in Suhum? Let's put things on paper and disseminate it to the citizens.*

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

Up till now, the citizens are sometimes not consulted or informed about incumbent projects. A focus group discussion participant recalled that the Assembly wanted to construct a public toilet facility but was faced with the disapproval of some residents of the locality concerning where they intended to set up.

> *Some time ago, they agreed to provide a toilet facility but when they were ready to start building, they did not inform us nor consults us as to where they intended to set it up. But they went ahead and the people revolted against them so they couldn't build.*

Additionally, administrative staff turnover at the Municipal Assembly has been a sensitive matter after the implementation of PPASA I. With the change of government after the 2016 general elections in Ghana, some of the key actors in this project who worked for the Assembly have either been asked to go on retirement or have been transferred to other assemblies. The Deputy Coordinating Director of Suhum Municipal Assembly, who was a key player in the project at the time, has been transferred to another municipality. The Coordinating Director, another key player in PPASA I, has gone on retirement. This does not only contribute to a loss of institutional memory, but also affects the established relationship between the Assembly and the citizenry. This worrisome situation was expressed by a respondent during one of the focus group discussions in these words:

> *The transfer of administrative staff at the Assembly is also a major issue. The staffs that assessed the project have been transferred and anytime we visit the*

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

Assembly, we need to introduce ourselves. Institutional memory is not there and all these things are institutional constraints for our development.

Most of the participants in the focus groups raised the issue of citizen apathy. The respondents noted that many inhabitants seem not to be interested in participating in governance or community development. According to them, this could be due to political factors or simply lack of interest.

An individual from his own pocket organized a meeting on sanitation. Sister, those of us who went there regretted. An individual put together his own resources! … So if you have a friend let him look at apathy among Ghanaians and document it... Authority has also been taken away from chiefs, it is not because Nana is sitting here, but in those days, chiefs had authority they used effectively even though some abused it… (Respondent 1, Narteh Anorma focus group).

The town is paralyzed with politics; if it is not my government, then I will not help. Why should I help another government succeed? Let us put politics aside because with the issue of sanitation for example, the mosquito is everybody's business. It does not know any party member. I the apathy is gradually reducing but the rate at which it should is the issue (Respondent 2, New Town focus group).

The people also form part of the difficulties. When you need information and call them, they don't come. After having meetings with the Assembly, we have to brief the people of the community but when we call them, they don't come but they are

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

expecting us to inform them when a project is about to be executed. (Traditional Chief, New Town focus group).

These statements clearly reveal that citizens expect a lot from their leaders but are often not ready to participate in the required process. Could it really be that some refuse to participate because the political party they belong to, is in opposition and so they don't want to support their local authorities for the government in power to take the credit? This is a phenomenon that can raise the curiosity for further research as far as social accountability initiatives and development of our communities are concerned. It can also be examined in considerations for research in causalities of citizen participation or understanding motivations for citizen participation in governance.

4.5 Chapter conclusion

In conclusion, the participants of both focus groups and the individual respondents of this study provided a myriad of information pertaining to this initiative. It exposed both the common realities and typical challenges of social accountability interventions in Sub-Saharan Africa and Ghana to be specific. The Centre for Local Government Advocacy, in implementing PPASA I had a service delivery approach and used the Community Score Card tool of social accountability. The project improved local governance, empowered the citizens and presented a potential for development in the town even though the citizens expressed their disappointments about the delays. The Municipal Assembly noted the erratic flow of funds as a main challenge to the implementation of projects and the availability of lands for project setups in Suhum. The

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

Centre for Local Government Advocacy noted that they had to overcome time constraints and be tactical in mediations in order to avoid serious confrontations. The citizens on the other hand, complained about general citizen apathy, difficulty in accessing information from the Assembly and administrative staff turnover as existing challenges.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the findings of this case study on the Public Policy Advocacy and Social Accountability project, phase 1 in Suhum. It also contains a conclusion to the entire study and brings forth a set of recommendations for improving the sustainability of the benefits of Social Accountability initiatives in Ghana. Research done by the Afrobarometer round 5 and NCCE (2017) has proven that there is a relatively low interest in demand for accountability at the local government level among Ghanaian citizens. However, many Ghanaian

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

communities face challenges in adequate infrastructure (good roads, potable water, sanitation, health…). While in recent decades, democracy advocates have underlined the importance of social accountability in enhancing development; I took interest, as a researcher in studying the practice in Suhum, a town in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The underlying objectives were to explore the social accountability approach and mechanism used in Suhum, to identity the benefits it generated and to list the challenges experienced by the stakeholders of the project. These objectives were met by conducting in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The following subsection presents the summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations.

5.1 Summary of key findings

This study presented a typical case of social accountability initiative in Ghana. It provided an exploratory platform to how the Center for Local Government Advocacy used the Community Score Card tool of Social Accountability to enhance citizens' demand for accountability and improve service delivery in Suhum. PPASA I as a social accountability initiative was able to raise awareness of citizens in Suhum on their rights and responsibilities as active citizens who have a role to play in the development of their communities by actively participating in governance. Most of the respondents of the interviews and focus group participants admitted that the project was an "eye opener". Again, the citizens believed that this project had empowered them by equipping them with knowledge and making them understand the importance of their demand for accountability in governance. This has to a large extent, improved governance in the Suhum Municipal Assembly, while strengthening democracy and equipping citizens with information that enable them understand the situations surrounding their challenges. Consequently, they could mobilize forces and apply alternatives within their means. Initially, the

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

citizens had a lot of mistrust for the local government authorities. They thought that the Assembly was against them and did not want to help them with funds from central government; while in real sense, the funding from central government had the tendency to delay. When it comes to the benefit of enhanced development in Suhum, the citizens of Suhum, through citizen empowerment and the improved governance, were able to mobilize some funds to try and solve some of their issues. During the project, the citizens requested for improved security in terms of street lightning in the areas, improved drainage, improved sanitation with additional communal waste containers and a solution to solid waste disposal practices among inhabitants, a well-equipped abattoir, and public toilet facilities among others. Some sort of improvement was witnessed in the area of sanitation and security. However the citizens complained that the improvements are not satisfactory as several of their demands had not yet been met by the Assembly. Enhancing social accountability in Ghana comes with its fair share of challenges relative to each stakeholder. Thus in the Suhum Municipal Assembly, the erratic flow of funds from central government, has created difficulties in implementing certain significant development projects. At the same time, the citizens had high expectations for development outcomes. On the other hand, the active citizens who participated in the focus group discussions expressed that, the phenomenon of administrative turnover, influenced by the change of government in the Assembly, is disturbing the stability and strength of the Citizen- Assembly relation. They noted that there are existing challenges in obtaining information from the Assembly, while there still are many citizens who remain apathetic about local government issues and community development.

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

5.2 Conclusions

From the findings of this key study, it can be concluded that PPASA I contributed immensely in enhancing citizen demand for accountability in Suhum. The exercise raised a lot of awareness among the stakeholders that were involved especially the citizens in the town. The initiative improved governance by strengthening the relationship between the Assembly and the citizenry. It also empowered the citizens as they became better informed about their rights and responsibilities in the development of their community. These achievements were nevertheless met with challenges pertaining to the time of implementation of the project as well as currently existing challenges, such as financial challenges, administrative staff turnover at the Assembly, citizen behavior and apathy and persisting communication gaps between the citizens and the Assembly.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, it is worth draw readers' attention to the following recommendations, which have potential for improving the success of social accountability initiatives in Ghana. Social accountability projects need to be implemented on long term bases. This would go a long way into establishing more sustainable results in improved governance, citizen empowerment and community development. Furthermore, a longer term initiative would ensure that the Assemblies meet the demands of the citizens by the time they receive the resources that were unavailable at the time of demand.

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

The Government of Ghana needs to further reform its public financial management system in order to obtain a more integrated system that enables timely transfers of local government funds, in a more transparent and accurate manner, so that local Assemblies can serve their communities adequately. The Right to Information (RIT) bill which has been before parliament since 2013 should be actually passed. This will enable citizens to easily access information from their Assemblies and public service providers and eventually consider their financial disposition before making demands.

It is important for CSOs and funding partners to consider the need to target larger samples of participants in communities where they implement social accountability initiatives. This would eventually create greater awareness and achieve nationwide eradication of citizen apathy. The NCCE (National Commission for Civic Education) should deeply involve itself in creating citizen awareness to social accountability and promote community members' participation, anytime social accountability projects are being carried out in a locality. The media should also be involved in publishing social accountability interface meetings on national television channels, to boost citizen interest in participating in local governance and community development. Finally, social accountability is not only the responsibility of Civil Society Organizations but also, that of governments, the media, citizens, public and private entities and researchers. It is therefore important that all stakeholders get involved in playing their part to enhance social accountability and achieve sustainable development.

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

REFERENCES

Abdul-Gafaru, A. (2017). The Political Economy of Decentralization and the Challenge of Improved Service Delivery in Urban Ghana. *GJDS, 14* (2), 83-104.

Acemoglu, D. & Robinson, J. (2013). *Why Nations Fail. The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty.* London: Profile Books LTD

Ahmad, R. (2008). Governance, Social Accountability and the Civil Society. *JOAAG, 3*(1), 1-21.

Armah-Attoh, D. (2015). The Quality of Public Services: An Intrinsic Factor in Ghanaian Evaluations of Government Performance. *Afrobarometer Policy Paper No 21*, 1-13. Retrieved from: http://afrobarometer.org/sites/default/files/publications/Policy%20papers/ab_r6_policypaperno21.pdf

Armah-Attoh, D., Ampratwum, E. & Paller, J. (2014). Political Accountability in Ghana: Evidence from Afrobarometer Round 5 Survey. *Afrobarometer Briefing Paper No 136*, 1-9.

CARE Malawi (2013). *The Community Score Card (CSC): A Generic Guide for Implementing CARE's CSC Process to Improve Quality Services*. Retrieved from: http://governance.care2share.wikispaces.net/Community+Score+Card+CoP

CDD-Ghana (2017). *Strengthening Social Accountability in the Decentralized Planning and Budgeting Systems in Ghana: Manual for Citizens, Community based organizations and Local government Practitioners.* Accra, Ghana: CDD-Ghana.

Gailmard, S. (2012). Accountability and Principal Agent Models. Prepared for *Oxford Handbook for Public Accountability*. Oxford University Press.

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

Gaventa, J. & McGee, R. (2013). The Impact of Transparency and Accountability. *Development Policy Review, 31*(1), 3-23.

Goetz, A. & Gaventa, J. (2001). *Bringing Citizen Voice and Client Focus into Service Delivery. IDS Working Paper No 138,* 1-66. Brighton, United Kingdom: Institute of Development Studies.

Graham, J., Amos, B. & Plumptre, T. (2003). Principles of Good Governance in the 21st Century. *Policy Brief No 15*, 1-6. Ontario, Canada: Institute on Governance.

Grindle, M. (2010). Sanctions, Benefits and Rights: Three Faces of Accountability. *Faculty Research Working Paper Series*. Retrieved from: http://ssrn.com/abstract=1724737

Harrison, T. & Sayogo, D. (2014). Transparency, Participation and Accountability Practices in Open Government: A Comparative Study. *Government Information Quarterly*, *31*(4), 513-525.

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (2011). *Concepts and Principles of Democratic Governance and Accountability. A Guide for Peer Educators*. Kampala, Uganda: Conrad-Adenauer-Stiftung.

Mack, N., Woodsong, C., MacQueen, K. M., Guest, G., Namey, E. (2005*). Qualitative Research Methods: a Data Collector's Guide*. USA: Family Health International.

McNeil, M. and Malena, C. (Eds.). (2010). *Demanding Good Governance: Lessons from Social Accountability Initiatives in Africa*. Washington DC: World Bank. Retrieved from: https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/2478

Mensah, P. A., Tetteh, R. O., Ampratwum, E. F., & Kuffour, P. O. (2015). A Survey on Citizen Participation in Local Governance. *CDD-Ghana Research Paper No 25*, 1-77.

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

Mwanza, J. & Ghambi, M. (2011). The community scorecard process: Methodology, Use, Successes, Challenges and Opportunities. *Participatory Learning and Action, 1* (64), 187-194.

National Anti-Corruption Action Plan, NACAP (2011)

National Commission for Civic Education (2017). *Survey on public perception on the state of Corruption, Public Accountability and Environmental Governance in Ghana*.

Ofori-Mensah, M. (2017). Access to Basic Public Services: Challenges Ghana Must Overcome. *IEA Monograph No 46*, 1-24.

Piccard, S., Yaghi, M., Fatah, D., Nada, M. A., Maggiulli, V., Priori, A., & Rabah, M. (2015). *Manual on social accountability for civil society organizations and municipalities in Palestine.* (1st Ed.)

Smulovitz, C. & Peruzzotti, E. (2000). Societal Accountability in Latin America. *Journal of Democracy*, *11*(4), 147-157.

The Constitution of the Republic of Ghana (1992)

UNDP (2010). *Fostering Social Accountability: From principles to practice*. Guidance note. Oslo, Norway: UNDP.

Wijnhoven, F., Ehrenhard, M. & Kuhn, J. (2015). Open government objectives and participation motivations. *Government Information Quarterly*, *32*(1), 30-42.

World Bank (2005). *Social Accountability in the Public Sector: a Conceptual discussion and Learning module.* Washington D.C., United States of America: World Bank.

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

Yilmaz, S., Beris, Y. & Serrano-Berthet, R. (2008) Local Government Discretion and Accountability: A Diagnostic Framework for Local Governance. *Local Governance and Accountability Series No 113*, 1-33.

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

APPENDIX

INTERVIEW GUIDE

The interview guide is was research instrument to facilitate a structured interview in carrying out study on the topic "***Enhancing social accountability in Ghana: a case study of the Public Policy Advocacy and Social Accountability Project (PPASA I) in Suhum Municipal Assembly"***. The questions were adapted to the various types of stakeholders involved (citizens, CSO official, Municipal officials and service provider)

SECTION A: SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY APPROACH AND MECHANISM APPLIED

1. What approach and mechanism of social accountability did you use in the Suhum Municipality?
2. What process did this initiative follow?
3. How did you experience the PPASA project in your community?

SECTION B: BENEFITS OF PPASA I IN SUHUM MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY

1. How has PPASA I improved the relationship between the Assembly and the citizens?
2. What kind of development have you witnessed in your community as a result of the issues raised during the implementation of the project?
3. To what extent do you feel empowered as a citizen since you participated in PPASA I?

SECTION C: CHALLENGES OF STAKEHOLDERS DURING & AFTER PPASA I

1. What are the challenges that you experienced during the implementation of project?

University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh

2. What are the challenges you experienced after the implementation of the project?

3. What are the challenges you face as an active citizen in your quest for good service delivery and accountability in your community?