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Title: FACTORS INFLUENCING STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION IN THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS: A CASE OF GA WEST MUNICIPALITY, GHANA

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Summary

Participation has become a very important tool for the facilitation of development efforts. Various development agencies, governments and Non-governmental organisations have employed participation in its planning and implementation of development interventions. This has been because of the perceived benefits of participation which includes but not limited to improvement of participants' capacities, skills and knowledge due to continues interactions and involvement in various development activities. Participation helps build strategic alliances and networks to support programme and projects implementation. Besides, participation helps improve decisions, development of better policies, plans and programmes that are practicable to local people. It is believed to promote ownership for sustainable development because decisions are taken based on broad consensus.

It is most of the time assumed that stakeholders would participate automatically because they understand the benefit of development and the participatory process. But theory posits that other factors also influence participation, given especially the voluntary nature of participation. This study viewed participation as a means or a tool for organising, promoting and mobilising people as creative problem solvers. The focus was therefore on participatory planning process for the formulation of District Medium Term Development Plans (MTDP) or Strategic Spatial Plans (SSP) in the Ga West Municipality of Ghana.

The main objective of the study was to understand and map out factors that influence the quality of participation in the strategic planning process. The research therefore delves into the factors that influence participation in the planning process and also investigated stakeholder mobilisation strategies, actions to facilitate self-organised initiatives and how it influence participation.

The findings indicated that, indeed a lot of factors influence stakeholder participation in the strategic planning process. The provision of adequate financial resources and its timely release was perceived as the most influential because, respondents perceived funding as having a rippling effect on other factors including the number of stakeholders that are invited. It was stated that 35-40 stakeholders are invited to Zonal council planning meetings which in the view of respondents is not representative in a multi-stakeholder environment. The inadequate funding was tied to the delays in the payment of incentives, especially financial incentives like travelling and transport as well as sitting allowances. The study revealed that the Local government pay different incentives depending on the location of a meeting and this very much influence participation. The commitment of top management was also perceived as a very influential factor. The leadership is not very involved in the process and therefore funding, implementation of agreed strategies and the involvement of representative stakeholders is lacking. The inability to implement projects was a major factor that is believed to be discouraging effective participation. This situation is further increasing the distrust citizens have for the local government. The limited stakeholder involvement, inability to implement agreed strategies and its attendant distrust is becoming a vicious cycle which if not checked would jeopardise the already fragile participatory process.

The research also revealed that Local government does not adequately mobilise stakeholders to participate. There is no comprehensive stakeholder list that is representative of all stakeholder groups that need to be involved. Documents and information on the process are not made available to stakeholders. Sensitisation is done during the planning meetings especially at the Zonal Council level planning activities. This was perceived as constraining participation as well as its quality. Cultural believes and values were however perceived as not at all influential because in the urban setting there were no dominant cultural practices

and believes. The occupation or employment of stakeholders were perceived as slightly influential on participation.

It was also found that, some communities are self-organising and initiating projects which are called self-help projects. The main supports given by the local government are financial and technical advice. This not withstanding however, the local authority is unable to adequately facilitate and support such initiatives. Requests for supports are delayed some for over two years; this was the experience of a traditional leader who I interviewed.

On effective participation it was found that stakeholders are participating effectively at the 5th and 6th typology of Pretty (1995) which are functional participation and interactive participation. These notwithstanding stakeholders are not at all influential when it comes to the allocation of financial resources for programmes and projects implementation. On perceived ownership of the strategic spatial plan, respondents accepted ownership but could not assert fully that the document contained a lot of local knowledge.

Key words: Development planning, Self-help projects, Zonal Councils, Assembly members, participatory planning, Unit committees, financial incentives.

Acknowledgements

Abbreviation

ANT	-	**Actor Network Theory**
CBOs	-	**Civic Society Organisations**
DACF	-	**District Assembly Common Fund**
DFID	-	**Department for International Development**
DPCU	-	**District Planning Coordinating Unit**
FBOs	-	**Faith Based Organisations**
GPRTU	-	**Ghana Private Roads Transport Unit**
ICT	-	**Information Communication Technology**
IHS	-	**Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies**
JHS	-	**Junior High School**
MCE	-	**Municipal Chief Executive**
MCD	-	**Municipal Coordinating Director**
MPCU	-	**Municipal Planning Coordinating Unit**
MTDP	-	**Medium Term Development Plan**
NDPC	-	**National Development Planning Commission**
NEPAD	-	**New Partnership for Africa's Development**
NGOs	-	**Non Governmental Organisation**
RCC	-	**Regional Coordinating Council**
SPSS	-	**Statistical Package for Social Sciences**
SSP	-	**Strategic Spatial Planning**
T&T	-	**Travelling and Transport**
UN	-	**United Nations**

Factors Influencing Stakeholder Participation in the Strategic Planning Process: The Case of Ga West Municipality

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction

1.0 Background

Stakeholder participation in public affairs such as the planning process has long been recognised and promoted worldwide by Governments, Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs), United Nations (UN) and the World Bank. To be specific, the UN declaration of Human Rights (1948) emphasized participation by all segments of people in the decision making process as a right. Participation has therefore been a major theme in development discourse for the past 50 years. Even though stakeholder participation has had some criticism (Cleaver, 1999), arguments for enhanced Participatory initiatives often rest on the benefits of the process and its outcome and the assertion that, policies formulated would be practicable and locally accepted hence sustainability would be achieved, (Irvin and Stansburg, 2004; Bishop and Davis, 2002; Landry, 2007).

This means that, people who have legitimate concern about the development of a place should be involved in the processes that produce the plan for the development of that place. In addition, urban areas are essentially dynamic with complex spatial challenges that require collaborative efforts. This complexity, Healey, (2007, p.viii) explains that ''it is a mixture of nodes and networks, places and flows, in which multiple relations, activities and values co-exist, interact, combine, conflict, oppress and generate creative synergy''. This synergy, she argues ''centers around collective action, both in formal government arenas and informal mobilisation efforts''. This collective action, whether government initiated or self organised at the community level should enhance effective stakeholder involvement for the promotion or maintenance of places on a sustainable basis. The increasing complexity of urban development and shift in power of actors involved in spatial planning has also brought to the fore the recognition of self-organised civic groups and the critical role they play in urban governance.

The conception of urban areas as complex in nature requires flexible strategic planning approaches. The strategic spatial plan formulation process, it is believed should be based on broad knowledge and harness local experiences and consensus building to develop strategic objectives and targets that are relevant and practicable to stakeholders, (Cooke and Kothari, 2001). D'hondt, (2011p. 21) state it more specifically that 'every community has unique qualities that should help to define and shape the community's vision. Pre-formatted plans and planning processes cannot harness this unique variety'. This implies that top-down approaches to plan formulation cannot solve urban problems and government policy makers and planners would have to adopt bottom-up approaches to urban spatial development. It is through this mechanism that policy makers can network creative individuals; formulate plans based on broad knowledge and consensus building and as a result ownership and commitment from both government and stakeholders can be achieved.

Ghana, before 1988 operated a centralized system of planning where development plans were formulated without the participation or involvement of stakeholders (Gyampo, 2012). The programmes and projects in the plans became outdated before implementation was completed (Botchie, 2000). These centrally formulated strategic plans did not help to adapt development decisions to local conditions. In recognition of this development challenge, a comprehensive local government and decentralization reforms were initiated as an alternative development strategy (Government of Ghana, 2010).

It is therefore, the recognition of the benefits of stakeholder participation in development, that the Government of Ghana through its local government structures is promoting stakeholder

participation in its strategic spatial planning process. Ghana is currently implementing a decentralised system of planning where local government authorities have the mandate to facilitate the formulation of 4-year strategic development plans called Medium Term Development Plans (MTDP). The plan formulation processes must be participatory as enshrined in the Local Government Act 1993, Act 462 which also establishes Metropolitan/Municipal/District Assemblies as planning authorities in the areas of their jurisdiction.

The National Development Planning (system) Act, 1994 Act 480 also defines and regulates planning procedures and emphasis the participatory approach to the formulation of MTDP. The National development Planning Commission (NDPC) in line with the Act 480 prescribes the procedures, format and content of development plans for local authorities by issuing development planning guidelines.

The planning guidelines have as its major tenet stakeholder participation in the strategic planning processes. The stages in the planning processes where stakeholder participation are expected are well elaborated in the planning guidelines. This participatory approach to planning, the Commission believes should be encouraged to ensure collective ownership and sustainable implementation of projects and programmes.

Ownership and sustainability are very critical at a time when Ghana is dealing with massive urban periphery settlements due to rapid urbanisation, especially in the capital city of Accra. The city of Accra and its functional urban areas including the Ga West Municipality are facing complex urban problems such as pollution, traffic congestion, poor environmental and waste management, inadequate housing resulting in informal settlements and unemployment issues to mention but a few. It is therefore imperative for government to facilitate the active involvement of stakeholders to achieve the desired future on sustainable basis.

As stated earlier on, the study area, Ga West Municipality is a functional urban area of the city of Accra but is administratively not under the mayor of Accra. The municipality is fast urbanising with its associated demand for urban services and infrastructure. The municipality's local government under the decentralised planning process have developed several four-year medium term development plans since 1994 The core influencing factor was the lack of commitment of top management which is linked to the other factors to address present and future demands for local services and infrastructure. It adopts participatory processes or approaches in line with the planning guidelines with the objective of soliciting active stakeholder participation in goal formulation, selection of key strategic interventions and implementation.

1.1   Problem Statement

The benefits of stakeholder participation has been researched extensively and acknowledged in the academic literature. Van Djik, (2006, p 71) states that 'participation not only makes programs and policies more acceptable they make them cost-effective and enhances the feeling of ownership'.

The concept of a decentralised integrated planning system in Ghana prescribed for local government authorities emphasize a participatory approach. The planning laws and regulations make it mandatory for stakeholders to actively participate in the processes to ensure ownership of the plans. Local government authorities are therefore vehicles for local mobilisation and agents

for local development in partnership with stakeholders. The structure of the local government system also facilitates the involvement of stakeholders at the lowest level which is the unit committee to the sub-local government level of the urban and Zonal Councils.

Unfortunately however, it is reported that most local government authorities have not been able to involve stakeholders actively in their planning processes as envisaged. The National Development Planning Commission puts it this way '' the 1996-2000 Guidelines focused primarily on the regulatory framework and institutional functions within the planning system. In the event, some weaknesses and challenges emerged in their use. These include how to improve prioritization and stakeholder participation in the planning as well as strengthening procedures and mechanisms for the preparation and implementation of plans and programmes'' NDPC (2001, p 5). Besides, Ofei-Aboagye, (2011, p.139) note that, 'there is not enough involvement of locals in spite of the legal requirements for public hearing and 'bottom-up' planning". The author further states that "communities suggest that very selective processes have been adopted; few civil society groups have been involved and those who have contributed to the process could not represent the poor". This situation bring to the fore Cleaver (1999, p.605) statement that ''it is assumed that people will automatically participate due to the potential benefit or social responsibility, that is the interest of the community as a whole''.

Thus the assumption of getting the legal and policy framework right and adopting bottom-up approach to planning does not necessarily result in effective participation. There may be other factors that influence participation that needs to be explored and explained. The Ga West Municipal Assembly is one of the local government authorities in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana and has a long experience of employing participatory approach to planning. The municipality has some challenges with regards to participation of stakeholders in its planning process. The engagement of stakeholders has been weak and participation at the various consultative meetings and public hearings are not encouraging. The implication of the continuation of this trend on urban development is the decline in faith in local governance and the straining of efforts of the Municipal Assembly to address present and future infrastructure and service demand. This municipality is the case for this study.

1.2 Research Objectives

GENERAL

The general objective of the research is to understand and map out the factors that influence the quality of stakeholder participation in the strategic planning process. What actually motivates or constraints peoples involvement in the planning process and how does it affect the process and its output?

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE
1. To understand the nature of the participatory planning process
2. To identify the factors that influence stakeholder participation in the planning process
3. To understand how the local authority prepares stakeholders to generate their interest and be involved.
4. To explore how self-organized initiatives are supported/integrated into the Assembly planning process for urban development.
5. To assess the nature, level of participation and the extent of stakeholder influence on decisions

1.3   Research Questions

MAIN QUESTION

The main question that the research seeks to answer is: what factors influence effective participation of stakeholders in the planning process in the study area?

Sub-questions

- How does the participatory process operate in the municipality?
- What factors influence stakeholder participation in the strategic planning process?
- How does the local authority mobilize stakeholder to participate effectively?
- What actions does the local government take to facilitate and integrate self-organized initiatives for urban spatial development and does it influence participation?
- How effective is stakeholder participation in the planning process and how do they influence decisions?

1.4   Significance of the study

The significance of the study cannot be over emphasised, especially in the era when stakeholder participation in development is strongly associated with the achievement of sustainable development. The Government of Ghana has adopted a decentralised planning system with the aim of getting governance to the 'door-steps' of its citizens. The planning process is one of the critical policy areas to promote stakeholder participation in decision-making and the policy choices that affect them directly or indirectly.

This study is very important because it contributes to the existing knowledge of what motivates stakeholders' to participate in the planning process. The knowledge can contribute to make participation process more attractive and successful especially in the study area. It is important to state that not much research focuses on factors that influence participation and their importance. The findings of this research would be an input into policy discussions in Ghana, especially when the National Development Planning Commission is very concerned about how to ensure maximum or effective participation of stakeholders' in the planning process. The Commission would understand what is preventing theory from being translated into practice rather than focusing on getting the guidelines and policies right.

Besides, the study provide direct answers or empirical findings of the factors influencing stakeholder participation in the municipality for the Local Government Authority of the study area to learn from its best practices and also improve upon the restraining factors to participatory initiatives.

Finally, my choice to study local governance and participation in the planning process has been motivated by my experiences as a local government staff and the need to contribute to the development of local governance in my country. I believe that not everybody can be part of government, but everybody can be part of governance and active participation in the planning process is a key governance function that all stakeholders must be given the opportunity to be part of.

1.5   Scope and Limitation

The coverage of the research is on factors that influence stakeholders to get involved in participatory initiatives, how they are involved in the planning processes and how stakeholder involvement support the quality of the process. The Ga West Municipality is the case study of this research.

The research cover one planning period, that is the 2010-2013 planning period and the guidelines for the preparation of the Medium Term Development Plans is extensively deployed. This is because it provides the framework for the formulation of the MTDP or Strategic Spatial Plan (SSP), and prescribes to some level how stakeholders should be involved. It is important to state that MTDP and SSP are used interchangeably in this study. The various planning activities and the factors that enable stakeholders to participation are extensively investigated.   The research does not cover participation at the plan implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages of the planning cycle. In order to produce good research work in the limited time available, the study concentrated on key stakeholders as defined by the NDPC at the following levels of local governance:

- Municipal Assembly (The central administration and its decentralised departments)
- Sub-local government level (Urban or Zonal Councils members)
- Community level (Unit committees and traditional leaders)

The research is limited in scope because it focused only on the plan formulation phase without delving into implementation of interventions and monitoring and evaluation. As such data collection and analysis was largely based on the participatory initiatives adopted until the plan is finally approved by the general Assembly. In this vein the findings of the research is limited to the phases of the 2010 to 2013 planning period.

Also collecting primary data from the local government institution as well as the community representatives was not an easy task. This was further constrained by the limited time for data collection. Also at the time of data collection some department heads who had participated in the process have been transferred. Also, the elections of new Assembly and unit committee members in 2011 has brought in new Assembly members who had not participated in the process. The above mentioned limitations culminated in my not being able to administer all the survey questionnaires, because most of the key stakeholders who have participated in the planning process were no more in the municipality. Also, the local government authority does not involve NGOs and CBOs in the process, so none could be interviewed. This however did not significantly affect the research because the main respondents for the interviews were available to talk to, that is the in-depth discussions with 22 respondents.

1.6   Decentralization and Local Governance – Ghana

There has been increasing focus on local governance in recent years due to globalisation and the re-definition of the role of the state (Alam, 2011). As such decentralization reforms have taken place and are still taking place all over the world albeit with some variations. Ghana embarked on decentralization in 1988 for a more participatory approach to development. The decentralization programme is to enhance and provide an effective response to the challenge of local development as a result of the top down planning process (Botchie, 2000) and there by facilitate the effective involvement of local people in the decision making process.

The decentralization programme has the support of Ghana's 1992 Constitution and is comprehensively spelt out in the Local Government Act, 1993 (Act 462). Local government is the lowest level of government and is the closet to citizens with a critical role of facilitating

development. The Act creates a four tier Metropolitan Assemblies and three tier Municipal and District Assemblies. The Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies have overall responsibility for the development of the areas under their jurisdiction. Section 10, subsection a (1) of the Local Government Act, 1993, makes the local government responsible for the overall development of the district and to ensure the preparation and submission to the NDPC development plans of the district.

It is important to note that Metropolitan and Municipal Assemblies are in charge of urban areas whiles the District Assemblies governs rural communities. The details of the local government structures are given in figure 1. For effective governance at the local level, sub-local government structures are created and reach as far as the community level. These structures form the rallying point for citizens' participation and involvement in all public decision-making processes. Owusu and Afutu-Kotey, (2010, p.24) puts it that ''decentralization brings government to the governed both spatially and institutionally''. Ahwoi, (2011, p.40) however warns that decentralization ''could weaken support for nationally and centrally defined priorities and central government could lose power and control over the country''. These notwithstanding decentralisation positions local governments to understand urban complexities and dynamics through constant interaction with stakeholders. This positions local governments to be potentially more responsive to the needs of urban people.

Figure 1: Local Government Structures
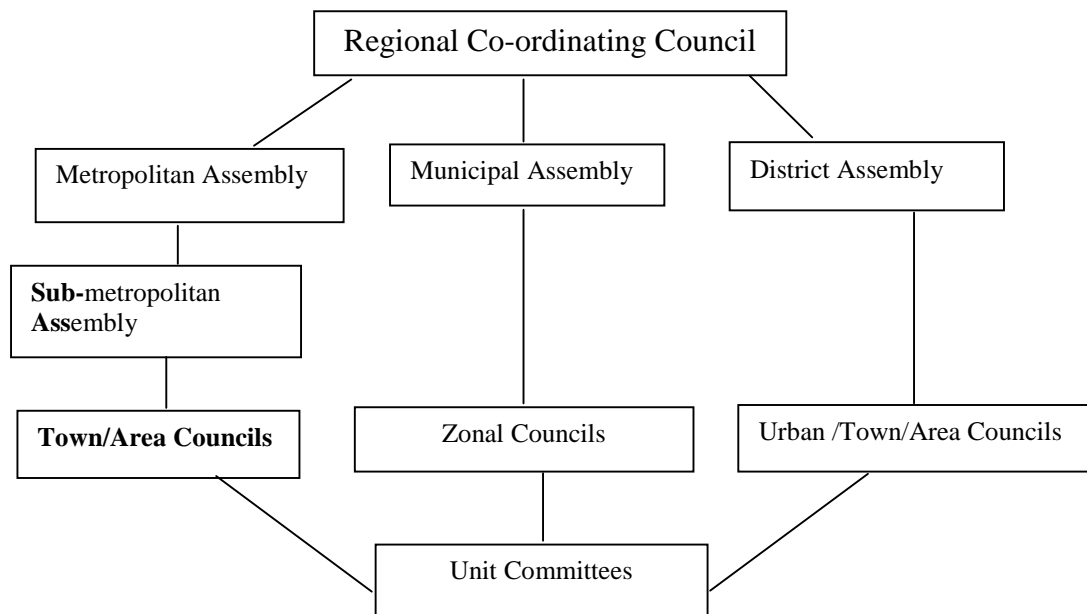
Source: (Boachie-Danquah, 2011))

1.7   Study Area

The study area is locally governed by the Ga West Municipal Assembly which is responsible for the overall development of the Municipality through the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development plans, programmes and projects. The Ga West Municipal Assembly was carved out of the erstwhile Ga District which was created in 1988

in pursuance of the government decentralization and local government reform policy with a head quarters located at Amasaman (see figure 2 and appendix 1 for location map).

Figure 2: Ga West Municipality Location Map

Source:www.mapsofworld.com/ghana/google

It is one of the sixteen (16) Assemblies in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. It lies within latitude 5^048' North 5^039' North. The population of the municipality according to the 2010 National Population and Housing Census is 262,742 with growth a rate of 3.4% (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012). The municipality is rapidly urbanising as a result of its closeness to the capital city Accra where there is a lot of inflow of migrant workers. The location of this municipality is one of the major potentials for private sector investment in the areas of commerce, service and industry. The municipality is about 25km west of Accra, the National Capital of Ghana, and have access to all its facilities and services. The municipality occupies a land area of approximately 305.4 sq km with about 181 urban and peri-urban communities but the area is predominantly urban (Ga West Municipal Assembly, 2010).

Over the past several years the local economy has seen a significant growth particularly in the service sector followed by manufacturing and agriculture. A number of economic and financial services and other infrastructure facilities exist whilst others are being developed to serve as catalyst for the rapid development of the Municipality.   These include telecommunication and banking services. The Local Government (Ga West Municipal Assembly) Establishment Instrument, 2004 LI 1587 makes provision for the establishment of Zonal Councils and Town councils. Currently six Zonal Councils have been established in the Municipality and these are: Ofankor, Pokuase, Mayera, Amasaman, Ayikai Doblo and Kotoku Area Councils. The councils serve as rallying points for community mobilisation for participation in various strategic decisions for spatial development management. The councils have delegated power through the Municipal Assembly. Some of the urban challenges facing the municipality include: poor waste disposal management, urban sprawl, poor education infrastructure, rapid population growth and migration, unemployment especially for the

youth, poorly maintained urban infrastructure and inadequate housing ((Ga West Municipal Assembly, 2010)

1.8 Decentralized Planning System

Ghana's decentralized planning system is within the framework of the (National Development Planning (Systems) Act, 480, 1994). The Act provides the context within which stakeholders can participate in the policy formulation and strategic planning processes at the Metropolitan/Municipal and District Assembly levels. The decentralized planning system provides spaces for the active participation of sub-district structures, civic society organisations (CSOs), Non-governmental organisations (NGOs), chiefs, community members and other interest groups (Government of Ghana, 2010).

The Planning Systems Act confers planning roles at the national level, local government level, regional coordinating councils, ministries and departments. At the national level the National Development Planning Commission is in charge of the formulation of policies and preparation of planning guidelines for local government structures and ministries. This policies and guidelines are channelled to the Local governments through the technical bodies of the Regional Coordinating councils (Regional Planning Coordinating Units – RPCU) to the District or Municipal Assemblies. These documents could also be sent directly to the Assemblies. The strategic spatial plans are channelled to the NDPC through the RPCU. The decentralized participatory process as described in Owusu (2004) is illustrated in the appendix 2 which provides the details of the structure of the decentralised planning system and channels of communications. The metropolitan, municipal and district assemblies are the planning authorities (Local Government Act, 462, 1993) at the local government level and possess deliberative, executive and legislative powers. The Planning Systems Act, section 2 sub-section 1 designates their planning functions to include: Initiate and prepare district development plans and settlement plans, Carry out studies on resources mobilisation and also economic, social, spatial, environmental issues and policies in the district and Initiate and coordinate the process of planning, programming, budgeting and implementation of district development plans programmes and projects.

It is important to note that Local governments prepare both statutory Land use plans and MTDPs but the focus of this study is on the later. Discussions with Forbes Davidson of the Institute of Housing and Urban Development Studies (IHS) however indicate that efforts are underway by the NDPC of Ghana to issue guidelines to facilitate the preparation of the two plans at the same time. The integration of the MTDP and land use planning would present new challenges for stakeholder participation. Leadership of local governments and the DPCUs would again be challenged to facilitate the preparation of these plans in a participative manner.

The Planning Systems Act section 7 defines the functions of the DPCU among other things to facilitate strategic plan formulation and decisions on strategic interventions for place making and maintenance. The plan preparation is based on guidelines issued by the NDPC. Various activities are specified to be undertaken, and the local government is obliged to involved stakeholders. The activities include performance review of the previous plan, compilation of profile and current development situation, harmonisation of district development issues with national issues and the development of strategies, goals, objectives and programmes. Appendix 3 summarises activities in the development planning process as given in the planning guideline (National Development Planning Commission, 2011).

CHAPTER 2: Literature Review

2.0   Introduction

This chapter delves into definitions and discussions of theories and concepts in the phenomena under study which is the factors that influence stakeholder participation in the strategic planning processes. The chapter considers theoretical concepts and how they relate to the research by various authors that are of importance to the topic under consideration. To put it more succinctly, Rowe and Frewer, (2005, p. 254) state that ''definitions are both the object of empirical research activity and a requirement for such activity to be effective''.

The review touches on the theories of participation and some definitions and explanations of relevant concepts which are the building blocks of theories are reviewed and discussed with references to the relevant literature. Specifically, the following concepts are discussed: definition of participation, stakeholder, participation typologies, participation as a means or an end, factors that influence participation, self-organisation, and strategic planning. The linkages in these theories and concepts are put together in a conceptual framework to help understand the phenomenon under study. At the end some conclusions are arrived at to guide the field work.

2.1   Theory of Participation

The theory of participation underpins this research. In explaining Karol Wojtyla's theory of participation, Mejos, (2007, p. 79) states that, ''Wojtyla introduced the word participation to indicate the way in which, in common acting , the person protects the personalistic value of his own acting and participates together in the realisation of common action and its outcome''. That is participation indicates a person's capacity to interact and act together with others without losing one's personal identity and self actualization. Thus people participate or interact not only to seek their individual good but also the common good. He argues further that, participation does not just happen but emanates from a person's purposeful effort for fulfilment and the realisation that it is impossible to do it alone.

Mejos (2007, p. 80) posit that ''as antithesis to alienation, participation allows the person to maximize his array of experience which will eventually lead him to an even deeper understanding of himself and others''. He explains that in participation a person is made to go into various interpersonal relations and thereby play different roles while pursuing common goals. This deferent roles and relationships bring about dynamism and add to the growth and development of the group as well as the individual.

According to (Majos, 2007) Wojtyla's theory of participation provides two kinds of participation which are differentiated as authentic and inauthentic attitudes. Authentic attitudes of participation were given as solidarity and opposition, whiles inauthentic is non-involvement and conformism. Solidarity was explained as the express unity of the group to work together to achieve the common good that is the individuals commitment to work together as group. The opposition attitude is not in connection with the solidarity but a different mode (Mejos, 2007). The opposition is to contest issues or actions that are contrary to or would not help in the common good. Conformity attitudes indicate the attitude of going with the crowd by accepting and not being critical with issues. The characteristics of the non-involvement attitude according to Mejos, (2007, p. 82) is ''man's absence from the community''. It leads to segregated community as people become unconcerned. Figure 4 provides a summary of the theory.

Figure 3: Karol Wojtyla's theory of participation
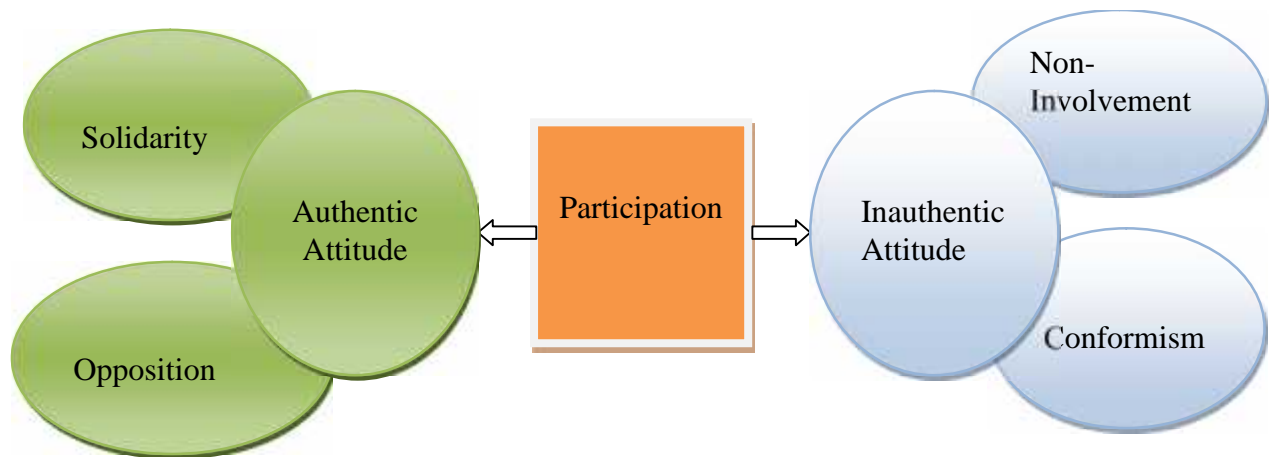
Source: Developed by author based on Mejos (2007)

2.1.1 Conceptual Definition - Participation

Besides this theory various conceptual definitions of participation are found in the development literature. It is important to note that, after about five decades of the practice of participation in development, there is still no commonly agreed understanding of what it means and lend itself to various definitions. Bishop and Davis, (2002 p. 14) posit that ''defining the concept and its boundaries proves a contentious undertaking''. This contentious definition makes it also difficult to state what constitutes real participation.

Apart from the challenge of definition, various authors' use the term participation and modify it with adjectives to reflect the context or the perspective from which participation was being described or defined, like citizen's participation (Arnstein 1969; Bishop and Davis, 2002; and Irvin and Stansburg, 2004), stakeholder participation (Rider and Pahl-Wostl, 2005) and community participation among others. Most times these terminologies are used interchangeably.

The definitions given by various theorists are discussed subsequently. Arnstein (1969, p. 216) defines citizens' participation as '' the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future''. She explains further that, participation is a strategy for sharing power and conceptualises it in a ''continuum'' according to Bishop and Davies (2002, p. 16), from non-participation to ''tokenism'' and ''citizens control''. This definition brings out several unique features of participation and provides significant understanding of the demand from the have-nots to share power with the powerful in decision-making regarding resource allocation, programmes and contracts.

Arnstein's definition advocates a critical difference between what is described as ''empty ritual of participation'' Arnstein (1969, p. 216) and the actual power needed to influence outcomes of decisions. For her, any participation that does not challenge power relations is not participation, that is, ''participation without redistribution of power is an empty frustrating process for the powerless'' Arnstein (1969, p. 216). Bishop and Davis (2002) posit

that Arnstein writes from the perspective of citizen activist and is therefore doubtful about establishing participatory approaches in existing political structures and any participation which does not transfer power is token. Bishop and Davis (2002) argue further that this perception of participation has serious analytical problems when seeking to comprehend the role of participation in the policy process. They also disagree on the grounds that, Arnstein's unspecified but powerful attachment to direct democracy, made her reject as simple tokenism what can pass for participation in policy making. They however acknowledge that conceiving citizens participation in a continuum, make participation not a single act but an array of possibilities.

In their definition, Bishop and Davis, (2002, p. 14) state that ''participation is the expectation that citizens have a voice in policy choices''. This definition brings to the fore a sharing of power between the governed and the government, a contrast from Arnstein call for transfer of power. On the other hand, Rider and Pahl-Wostl, (2005, p. 188) define participation in the context of project implementation as '' all activities that are planned and carried out by or in co-operation with local government''. In this context as well, sharing of power is the focus and local government is seen as the facilitator of the process.

In addition to these definitions, Rowe and Frewer, (2005, p. 253) state that participation is ''the practice of involving members of the public in the agenda setting, decision making, and policy formulation activities of organisation/Institution responsible for policy development''. This definition they claim only few people would argue about but the issue is how to make a clear distinction between involving the public at large and specific stakeholder groups. This argument stem from the fact that many discussions on public participation leaves out the element of cost (Irvin and Stansburg, 2004), that is, an extensive public participation process may take resources from the organisation and reduce actual project achievement on the ground. This review has shed some light on the varying definitions of the concept participation. Most of the definitions touched on the fact that it is the sharing of power between government and stakeholders, and the issue of participation in the context of policy formulation process.

In this study I adopt the definition of Rowe and Frewer (2005) and applied the concept the way Ansell and Gash (2007, p. 546) apply Stakeholder involvement which is "both the participation of citizens as individuals and to the participation of organised groups''. It also refers to public agencies even though they play a dual role of initiators and facilitators of the participatory process (ibid).

2.2   Stakeholder Defined

Literature on the concept stakeholder has emerged from three critical areas, which are organisational management, public policy and International development projects. From the policy perspective, stakeholder engagement is to design policies that are sensitive to the needs of local people and also to promote active participation and transparency in decision making process. On the other hand, the organisational management literature looks at who is important from the firm or business perspective (Freeman, 2004). In the context of International development project, the focus is on identifying those who are affected by the project or intervention and ensure their involvement.

Bryson (2004, p. 22) defines stakeholder from the public policy and international development perspective as ''persons, groups or organisations that must somehow be taken into account by leaders, managers and front-line staff''. He argues further, after a review of

some other definitions that stakeholders should not be only those with power to affect policies, but a '' broader array of people, groups or organisations including normally the powerless'' (ibid). The argument is that stakeholder support is needed to ensure long-term prospect of organisations as well as policies, plans and programmes (Bryson, 2004).

Besides this, the literature on international development projects focuses on those affected by development interventions. Thus, the World Bank (1996, p. 125) defines stakeholders as ''those who are affected by the outcome-positively or negatively- or those who can affect the outcome of proposed interventions''. That is, the initiators of participatory processes have the task of identifying the relevant stakeholders for the development issue at stake. This implies that getting the expected results depends much on the ability to identify who would be affected and those who can affect project outcomes (World Bank, 1996). The Department for International Development (DFID, 2003) gives another dimension by categorising three types of stakeholders as follows:

1. Key stakeholders – referred to as those who can significantly influence the success or otherwise of an intervention
2. Primary stakeholders – are individuals or groups who are ultimately affected positively or adversely
3. Secondary stakeholders – all other individuals or institutions with an interest or a stake in an activity

DFID however argues that, in reality the categorisation may overlap. From the organisational management perspective, Freeman (2004) views stakeholders as those groups who are critical to the continued existence and success of the organisation. This recent definition has however been criticised for focusing on the organisation, in this vein those in academia and practitioners prefer, Freeman, (1984, p. 25) which posit that stakeholders are ''any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the firm's objectives''. From the foregoing, it can be said that stakeholder are individuals, groups or institutions who can affect or can be affected by the outcomes of policy decisions.

❖ **Stakeholder Mobilisation**

Stakeholder mobilisation is seen as critical to encouraging citizens to participate. It is a process of getting stakeholders ready, aware and interested in participation and more importantly being involved. The process includes stakeholder analysis which is the decision as to who should be involved when and how (Bryson 2004). This process it is believed should result in a list of classified stakeholders including key, primary and secondary depending on the influence and resources. Other issues in the mobilisation process include informing stakeholders, establishing roles and mobilising interest and involvement.

2.3   Typologies of Participation

We have been able to review some definitions of participation and have summarised some elements that seem common in the definitions. The typologies developed by two authors are reviewed to help illustrate the point that there are important gradations in stakeholder participation. The typologies also show effectiveness or the extent of stakeholder influence over policy decisions.

2.3.1 Arnstien (1969) - Ladders of Participation

The work of Arnstein (1969) on different levels of participation has had a great influence on understanding participation. The concept of ladder of participation provides a continuum of eight levels of participation from no participation to tokenism and then to citizen's control. For Arnstein, the first five (5) levels of the rung does not represent participation and therefore citizens engaged at that level are not participating. It is only from the sixth rung upwards that some meaningful or effective participation begins to emerge. The ladder is presented in figure 4 below.

Figure 4: Ladder of participation
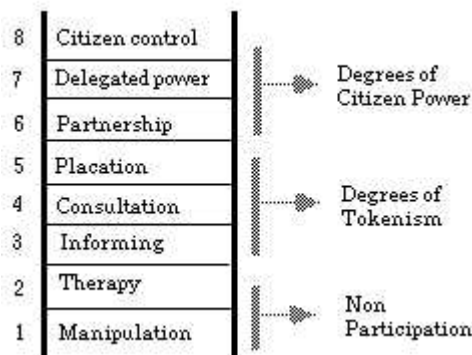
Source: Arnstein (1969)

❖ **Criticism of Arnstien Ladder**

Much as the Ladder of participation has been influential in the development literature it has attracted some level of criticism. The typology has been described as outdated and defective (Fung, 2005) in the sense that public empowerment may not be desirable in all cases. There are cases where consultation is more appropriate for the general public than citizens' control. The ladders has also been criticised for not addressing participation processes and methods and therefore cannot solve contemporary challenges of stakeholder participation (Tritter and McCallum, 2006). They argue from the health services point of view that, user engagement and empowerment are complex phenomenon and therefore a hierarchical typology would make the evaluation of the nature of stakeholder involvement difficult. A multiple ladder is therefore proposed to capture other people who self-organise without going through hierarchical processes (Tritter and McCallum, 2006).

2.3.2 Pretty (1995) - Typology

Another typology of stakeholder participation was developed by Pretty, (1995) for planning and implementation in an agricultural context. Pretty (1995, p. 1253) states that'' the many ways that development organisations interpret and use the term participation can be resolved into seven (7) clear types''. The types range from manipulative participation which is the lowest level to self-organisation which is the highest level.

The manipulative types provide the level where stakeholders are put on official boards as representatives but have no power to influence; most times they are non-elected members. At

the passive level, people participate by being told what government has already decided. Pretty (1995, p. 1253) posits '' some suggest that the manipulation that is central to types one to four mean they should be seen as types of non-participation''. It is therefore from the fifth type that some level of effective participation begins to emerge. The highest level is self-mobilisation where stakeholders take initiatives without external influence to change systems. This level can be said to be at what Arnstein's ladder describe as citizens control. Pretty's typology however does not critically challenge power relations. Table 1 gives details of the typology and the description of the elements in each level.

Table 1: Pretty (1995) Typology of participation

Type	Characteristic of each type
Manipulative Participation	*Participation is simply a pretence, with 'peoples' representatives on official boards, but who are un-elected and have no power.*
Passive Participation	*People participate by being told what has been decided or has already happened. It involves unilateral announcement by an administration or project management without any listening to people's responses. The information being shared belongs only to external professionals.*
Participation by consultation	*People participate by being consulted or by answering questions. External agents define problems and information-gathering processes, and so control analysis. Such a consultative process does not concede any share in decision making, and professionals are under no obligation to take on board people's views.*
Participation for material incentives	*People participate by contributing resources; for example, labour, in return for food, cash or other material incentives. Farmers may provide the fields and labour, but are involved in neither experimentation nor the process of learning. It is very common to see this 'called' participation, yet people have no stake in prolonging technologies or practices when the incentives end.*
Functional Participation	*Participation seen by external agencies as means to achieve project goals, especially reduced cost. People may participate by forming groups to meet predetermined objectives related to the project. Such involvement may be interactive and involve shared decision-making, but tends to arise only after major decisions have already been made by external agents. At worst, local people may still only be co-opted to serve external goals.*
Interactive Participation	*People participate in joint analysis, development of action plans and formation or strengthening of local institutions. Participation is seen as a right, not just the means to achieve project goals. The process involves interdisciplinary methodologies that seek multiple perspectives and make use of systemic and structural learning processes. As groups take control over local decisions and determine how available resources are used, so they have a stake in maintaining structures of practice.*
Self-mobilisation	*People participate by taking initiatives independently of external institutions to change systems. They develop contacts with external institutions for resources and technical advice*

	they need, but retain control over how resources are used. Self-mobilization can spread if government and NGOs provide an enabling framework of support. Such self-initiated mobilisation may or may not challenge existing distribution of wealth and power.

Source: Adapted from (Pretty, 1995)

❖ **Criticism of Pretty's Typology and similarities with Arnstien**

It is acknowledged that Pretty's typology seems to cover important types of participation but still have some limitations. That is, she blames lower levels of participation on external agents, which is not entirely true. Factors including structural constraints may contribute to passive participation, which is the knowledge and skills of participants.

Besides this, the typology does not identify a level where there is no participation at all; this is however addressed by Arnstien's model. (Cornwall, 2008) also makes the following comparative observations about the two typologies as follows:

➢ While Arnstien looks at participation from the view point of those on the receiving end, Pretty focuses on the users of participatory approaches whether project managers or government
➢ The two typologies are normative in that they both conceive participation from bad to good
➢ With regards to effective participation, Arnstien's level is citizens' ultimate power and control whiles Pretty looks at self-mobilisation which may or may not challenge existing power structures
➢ Also both typologies considers to some extent, a shift of control by authorities to people or citizens

In measuring effective participation however, the study adapts Pretty's typology to assess the extent of stakeholder participation in the strategic planning process. Effective participation can therefore be described as the levels that allow and provides sufficient opportunities for stakeholders to influence decisions or take initiatives.

2.4   Participation as a Means or an End

Participation is an important component of development and can influence to a greater extent the quality of an urban areas development pattern. It can be viewed as a means that is, an instrument to facilitate development or as an end or a goal on its own. Various organisations including local governments, donor organisations and Non-governmental Organisations employ participation as a means or an end or a combination of the two objectives.

Participation as a means serves as a tool for organising, promoting actions and mobilising people as creative problem solvers in a complex urban environment. That is to facilitate better planning of urban areas or cities (Hassan et al, 2011). Participation functions as a means through which stakeholders and local self-organised groups get access to higher and macro arenas of decision-making of local governance. Government can also use participation as a strategy to enter into alliances with grass root organisations already familiar with practices of participation and participatory processes.

Participation becomes a goal when it aims at building the capacity or empowerment of stakeholders (Hassan et al, 2011) for self-sustaining development planning processes. In this

vein, participation enables people to do things for themselves by self organising and intervening in the spatial development of their neighbourhood or communities.

Alsop et al (2006, p. 10) however defines empowerment as '' a groups or individuals capacity to make effective choices, that is to make choices and then to transform those choices into desired actions and outcome''. They argue that capacity is very much influenced by opportunity structures which are the institutional context in which stakeholders operate. This, Alsop et al. (2006) further argue that it affect agency, which is the stakeholders ability to make purposeful choices. Bebbington et al.(2007 p. 617) corroborate this assertion that '' to take empowerment seriously is to go against entrenched values, interest and power. In this research, participation is viewed as a means to an end.

2.5   Factors that Influence Participation

It is often assumed that stakeholders would voluntarily or automatically participate in policy decision-making process because they understand the benefits (Cleaver 1968). The stand therefore is that all that is needed is to mobilise them and their capacities would be released to support development. But there are various factors that may enhance or constrain a person's ability to participate. Some of these factors have been documented in various literatures.

According to Hassan et al (2011), trust may facilitate an open discussion and produce collaboration among actors and also influence public support for policy decisions. This assertion is corroborated by Ridder and Pahl-Wostl (2005) that for participation to be successful trust must be developed. Hassan et al (2011, p. 206) argue that trust can grow from low to high as interactions continue and defines trust as "a belief, or expectancy regarding the attitudes, the future behaviour and the performance of an object of trust''. They give the attributes of trust as openness, reliability and transparency (ibid). Other factors are given as the technical capacity/capability of participants where capacity is defined as the competence, skills, knowledge and ability (Aref et al, 2010). Also the cultural settings or local conditions, adequate and timely feedback are considered important factor for participation (Peelle et al. 1996). Culture is defined here as the shared norms, practices and traditions of a group of people.

From the organisational point of view, Hassan et al, (2011) talks of regulatory constraints, adequate resources in terms of time and funds. They argue that in most times even though participation is embedded requirements in the policy formulation processes, the processes are inconsistent with the institutional structures. Also, they posit that many of the failures experienced in participatory processes have their roots in the organisational cultures of the institution initiating the process. Besides, (Ansell and Gash, 2007) argue that facilitative leadership is an important factor in bringing people to the decision-making table. They explain that leadership is critical for establishing clear agenda and rules, facilitating dialogue and developing trust. They also indicate that, incentives are critical to participation.

In addition, there are a number of techniques or instruments for enabling participation which Rowe and Frewer, (2005, p. 252) jointly term '' mechanism''. There are a number of mechanisms for participation in the literature which are employed depending on the participation type, the requirements and aims. The effectiveness of the mechanism adopted is assessed either by the process or its outcome (Rowe and Frewer, 2005) and can be a factor to influence participation. Some of the participation mechanisms listed in the literature include but not limited to the following; public hearings, community forums, focus groups, citizen's

advisory committees, facilitated workshops, surveys and review panels. Also included in the list is public opinion, consensus conference and citizen's jury (Rowe and Frewer 2005).

These factors has been put under five categories by Peelle et al (1996) which are: Process factors, Organisational context factors, Agency strategic considerations, Social-economic-historical-political context and unique factors. Three of these categorisations are adapted by the researcher and modified based on the various literatures to operationalise concepts and variable for the field work. The adapted categories are organisational context factor, process factors and socio-economic factors.

2.6   Self-Organization - Concept

This concept has been based on the argument that, participatory planning proposals have remained under the control of government and are not responsive to initiatives that emerge from the dynamics of civil society itself, (Boonstra and Boelens, 20110) The concept has been based on the idea that, there are various diversity and dynamics in the urban area that one governmental standpoint cannot provide sustainable solutions. The theory that underpins the self-organisation concept are complexity theory (Bonstra and Boelin (2011).

Complexity theory according to (klijn, 2008) is the idea that society is made up of large elements or parts which interacts in sophisticated ways. This interaction is non-linear; they co-evolve and self-organize to produce new structures. Non-linearity is explained as the dynamic process and the unpredictable changes they produce, whiles co-evolution is how systems and its sub-systems influence each other in the complex system. Bonstra and Boelens (2011) while acknowledging complexity theory as underlying self-organization, argues that Actor Network Theory (ANT) present a detailed and precise way to examine the relationships that determine a system. The ANT according to Bonstra and Boelens (2011, p. 113) describes ''the emergence of society as the outcome of heterogeneous relations between actors and artefacts''.

The concept self-organisation has been defined by various authors with some common elements and themes. In their definition, Boonstra and Boelens (2011, p. 100) state that it is ''initiatives for spatial intervention that originate in civil society itself, via autonomous community-based networks of citizens, outside government control''. The concept is conceived in a network society where urban spaces and places are connected to others beyond boundaries. They argue that national government position has been reduced for various reasons which include reduced public funds and globalisation. This has made it imperative that government can no more act on their own. There is therefore the need to recognise or develop shades of participation that can adapt better with current civil society organisations which are extremely empowered, elusive and individually segregated, Boonstra and Boelens (2011). To further their argument, Boonstra and Boelens (2011, p. 109) defines participation as ''goals set by governments bodies on which citizens can exert influence through procedures resulting in processes of thematic, procedural, geographical – and so on – inclusion''. They therefore bring out the issue that participation is government initiative whiles self-organisation is civil society initiated, the two initiatives however influence the urban fabric either to transform or maintain a place. They also assert that, self-organisation stand for the real motives, communities, networks and objectives of stakeholders, at least initially outside of government policies and separated from participatory planning processes. It is important to note from the assertion that, initially self-organisation emerging from civic society may be independent of government influence but with time may depend on it.

Besides this definition is that of Meerkert et al. (2012) which state that self-organisation is ''the emergence and maintenance of structures out of local interaction, an emergence that is not imposed or determined by one singular actor, but is rather the result of a multitude of complex and non-linear interactions between various elements''. In this definition recognition is given to established actors and institutions and the need for flexibility to collaborate with this self-organized emerging structures for urban area regeneration. Bakker et al (2012) brings another dimension of self-organisation and focuses on the collective actions which are citizen's initiatives. They argue that citizen's initiatives needs supports and interest of governments. These supports could be in the form of encouraging, informing and transfer of resources. From the foregoing, it can be said that self-organization is understood as any civil society led initiatives (Bonstra and Boelens 2011) with or without government collaboration (Meerkerk et al 2012).

2.7   Theoretical definitions - Strategic Planning

The role of urban areas as the engine of growth and pivot for economic development of nations has long been recognized. Most advanced and transitional economies have been able to strategically formulate and implemented policies and strategies that focuses on the development and management of cities to function as engine of growth and make them liveable for their inhabitants. Pennink et al., (2001, p. 7) state that ''many countries are exploring ways in which to maximize the opportunities of urban areas while tracking the specific challenges they present''.

Pennink et al (2001, p. 7) further argue that, the planning of towns and cities are of critical importance for five reasons:

- Urban growth is a reality
- Cities and towns are engines of national economic development
- Urban development can impact on more people faster
- Good urban development is good for rural development
- Urban areas are centres of social progress and cultural development

This supports the idea that urban areas or cities must be planned to achieve city development objectives and greater sustainability. Many planning theories have evolved over the years and strategic spatial planning (SSP) has been adopted by many public sector institutions to facilitate development of cities and urban areas. The definition of planning theory has been described by (Campbell and Fainstein, 2003) as a frustrating and disappointing endeavour. This notwithstanding, there has been various definitions of strategic planning which need to be reviewed.

Strategic planning has been defined by Van den Broeck, (1995) cited in Van den Broeck, (2004, p. 173) as a ''social process aimed at designing and realising an intended spatial development of a given area. Within this process, four sub-process can be distinguished: one leading to the design of dynamic and sustainable long term perspective, second dealing with daily policy, trouble shooting and process-supporting actions, a third dealing with a decision-making process involving all possible actors and last but not the least, the process to empower people to better their living conditions to participate in society''. He argues that many definitions of strategic spatial planning focuses on the achievement of long term visions or goals but de-emphasises measures and actions to realise that goal. It is therefore important to note the emphasis on the processes and sub-processes in the definition, however,

strategic planning has been criticised for focusing too much on processes and very little on implementation.

The key issues in this definition includes planning as a social process, which recognises the complex nature of the urban environment with a number of players (Todes, 2011) determining the urban development. The definition also focuses on visioning as a major activity in the planning process. Visioning is the process by which a community mentally creates the future it wants (D'hondt, 2011) and arranges a set of activities to achieve it. The involvement of stakeholders is also captured which is argued (Campbell and Fianstein, 2003) indicates a shift from technocratic rational planning models to a more dynamic, multi-actor and interactive process, based on complex system and uncertainties in the urban environment.

Besides this, Albrechts, (2004 p. 747) also defines strategic planning as a "public sector-led socio-spatial process through which a vision, action, and means for implementation are produced that shape and frame what place is and may become''. Much as Van den Broeck, (2004) remains silent on who leads the strategic planning process, Albrechts's definition is clear on the issue. The two definitions however recognises the social aspect of planning that it is not a neutral technical activity ((Todes, 2011) but it is shaped by values and interest of the diverse actors. Albrechts also subscribe to the four track approach as given by Van dan Broeck.

In addition, Healey, (2004, p. 47) defines strategic planning as ''a self-conscious collective (societal) effort to imagine a town, city, region or territory and to translate the result into priorities for area investment, conservation measures, new upgrading areas of settlement, strategic infrastructure investment and principles of land use regulations''. This definition posits that strategic planning is a purposeful intervention in the development process of an urban area and also recognises vision, process and development of strategic intervention as critical elements in the place making process.

(Albrechts, 2004) argues that strategic planning indicates the willingness of stakeholders to accept policies and decisions made through network of actors including organisations, even when the decisions are not in line with generic policies. He also explains that active stakeholder involvement, consensus building, collaboration, open dialogue and accountability are some of the key terms in strategic planning theory. This assertion is corroborated by Campbell and Fainstein (2003, p. 4) that planners do not ''have exclusive influence over territories; developers, business persons and politicians and other actors also shape urban and regional development''. This is why it is important to collaborate with all actors in urban areas. It is imperative at this point to also note some of the important characteristics of strategic spatial planning.

2.7.1 Characteristics of Strategic Planning

The ''what'' of the concept, strategic planning has been reviewed and the ''how'' is also important. Albrechts (2004, p. 747) enumerates some characteristics of strategic planning which has also been cited in Van Dan Broeck (2004).

- Focus on limited strategic key issues: this characteristics emphases the principle of specificity and selectivity as against comprehensiveness. That is, the prioritising and concentrating on workable interventions. The fact is that resources are limited.
- Take a critical view of the environment in terms of determining strengths and weaknesses in the context of opportunities and threats
- It studies the external trends, forces and resources

- It identifies and gathers major stakeholders (public and private)
- It allows for a broad and diverse involvement during the planning process
- It develops a long-term vision or perspective and strategies at different levels
- Take into account power structures, uncertainties and competing values
- It designs plan making structures and develops content images and decisions framework for influencing and managing spatial change
- It is about building new ideas and processes that can carry them forward, thus generating ways of understanding, ways of building agreements, and ways of organising and mobilising for the purpose of exerting influence in different arenas
- It is focused on decisions, actions and implementation
- It incorporates monitoring , feedback and revision

2.7.2 Strategic Planning Process – The Four-track approach

It is recognized that various processes of strategic planning has been proposed in the planning literature. But this study reviews the four-track approach which seems to synthesize the various steps in the strategic planning process into four-tracks. Albrechts (2004, p. 752) describe it as ''the working tracks''. The four-track process was adapted for the LA21 programme. It is said to be non-linear (Albrechts, 2004 and Van Dan Broeck, 2004) and also not a normative process but descriptive. Thus the LA21 programme cities adapted it depending on their context. On the division of the tracks, Van Dan Broeck (2004, p. 177) states that it ''lies in the different objectives and the character of the planning activities as well as the different and complementary skills to be used''. This makes it easy for stakeholders to participate based on their skills and competence which enables participation.

Albrechts (2004, p. 752) explains that, the four-tracks are based on four complementing types of rationality: ''value rationality (the design of alternative future), communicative rationality (involving a growing number of actors- private and public- in the process, instrumental rationality (looking for the best way to solve the problems and achieve the desired future and strategic rationality (a clear and explicit strategy for dealing with power relationships).

The four track strategic planning process as given by Van Dan Broeck (2004) and Albrechts (2004) are summarised as follows:

Track 1:   This track focuses on formulating a long-term vision and programmes and a short term action plan.

Track 2:   Here the emphasis is on building trust and solving problems to ensure the achievement of the stated vision. Also lessons are learnt from the implementation of projects.

Track 3:   Involving different actors in co-producing and participate in the decision-making processes

Track 4:   Creation of a more lasting and empowerment process. Activities in the track are of different nature focusing on local issues on places and spaces. Self-organised groups are involved in major decisions.

This process which is described as iterative ensures the involve stakeholders in the various tracks for legitimacy and acceptance of strategic visions and projects.

2.8   Conceptual Framework – Stakeholder Participation

Conceptually it can be said that stakeholder participation, self organisation, and strategic planning are inter-related. The complexity of the urban environment, the network of actors with different interests and needs requires effective participatory inputs in urban planning and management. A hierarchical and highly technocratic planning process is certainly incompatible with the complexity of urban areas. Healey, (2007 p. viii) explains it this way ''the argument for expert and technical considerations to rule policy processes is highly being challenged by contemporary intellectual, political and urban dynamics''.

The conceptual framework, given in figure 5 looks at the translation of selected concepts in the theories of participation, factors that influence participation and strategic planning in an iterative context and how it can be operationalized in practice. The policy and legal environment of the study area is also considered in the framework.

Conceptually, stakeholder's ability to participate in the policy or planning process is highly associated with various factors including the allocation of adequate funds, regulatory framework or policy documents and trust (Hassan et al 2011). Also important for participation is the cultural context, skills and knowledge of individuals and feedback mechanism. The facilitative leadership and mechanisms adopted for the participatory initiatives can also influence stakeholder's willingness to interact at the policy arena (Rowe and Frewer, 2005). It can be inferred that, theoretically, this same factors can integrate self organised groups and their initiative into the policy arena. The conceptual framework takes into account the fact that self organised groups are autonomous and may or may not be involved in the collaborative efforts. They however may monitor the policy arena as a matter of interest.

The factors that influence participation are linked conceptually to stakeholders (government/departments and community level stakeholders) in the planning process which lead to effective participation. Also conceptually, the mobilisation of stakeholders and facilitation and integration of self-organised initiatives can also lead to effective participation. The outcome of the effective participation is stakeholder perceived ownership of the strategic plan, perceptions of influencing the prioritisation and selection of key strategies and location of projects.

Figure 5: Conceptual Framework - Factors Influencing Stakeholder Participation

Source: By Author based on Van dan Broeck (2004)
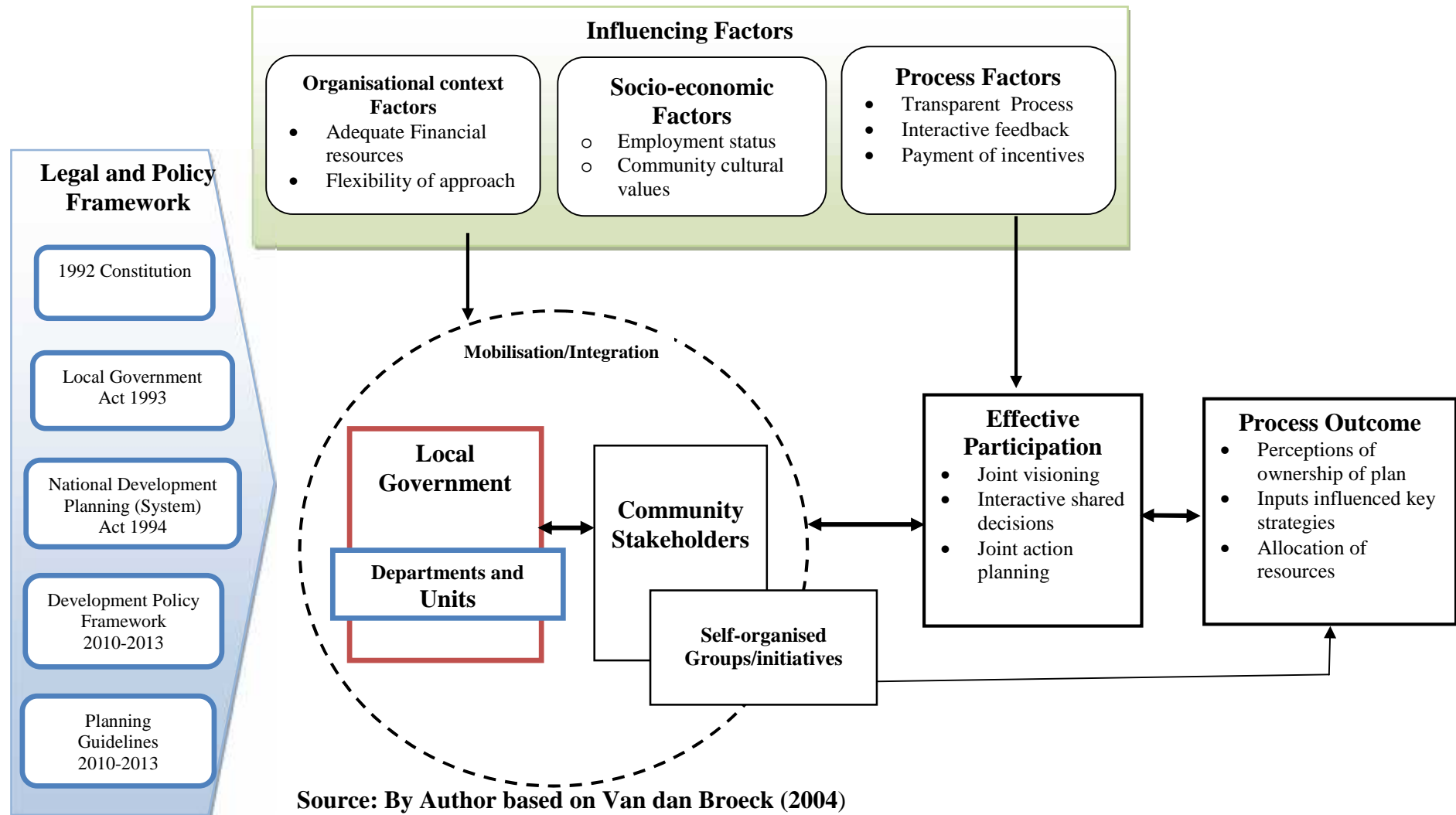
2.9   Conclusion

In concluding this chapter, it is imperative to summarise the theoretical ideas gathered from the review. Theories reviewed included theory of participation and complexity theory. Major concepts discussed included stakeholder participation, Self-organization and strategic planning. For the key issues on participation:

- The researcher state that Pretty (1995) typology of participation is adapted to assess the ex9tent or effectiveness of stakeholder participation because the indicators are available and also is empirically grounded and therefore relevant to the study.
- The definition of stakeholder participation for the purpose of this study is the one given by Rowe and Fewer, (2005) which is ''the practice of involving members of the public in the agenda setting, decision making, and policy formulation activities of organisation/Institution responsible for policy development''. This definition fit very much the local government situation which is the context of the study.
- The study also looks at participation as a means to preparing the MTDP and therefore empowerments is not measured. Besides, the term stakeholder is used synonymously with the term community and citizen participation but is considered a sub-set of the general public.
- Also stakeholder participation, involvement and engagement are used interchangeable.
- Factors that influence participation like capacities and skills of stakeholders, openness of the process or trust, availability of funds, payment of incentives and flexibility to approach the process may enhance or constraint effectiveness or quality of participation.
- Effective participation is for the purpose of this research is described as the levels that allow and provides sufficient opportunities for stakeholders to influence decisions or take initiatives.

Key issues on self-organisation:

- It is solely civil society initiated process
- It may or may not have government facilitation and this study adapts
- Self-organisation leads to the initiation of projects and programmes that local governments can facilitate and support for spatial improvement.

Key issues on Strategic Spatial Planning:

- There is no single agreed definition in academia as the review shows
- The study adapts Albrechts, (2004) definition of strategic planning as a "public sector-led socio-spatial process through which a vision, action, and means for implementation are produced that shape and frame what place is and may become''
- Strategic planning yield very much to participation and therefore a good context to investigate factors that influence participation.

The conceptual framework is very much influence by Van Dan Broeck (2004) definition of strategic planning and the four track process as well the theoretical perspectives of the various participation literatures reviewed.

CHAPTER THREE – Research Methodology

3.0   Introduction

This chapter focuses on the research methodology, which is how the research was undertaken. It outlines and explains the design (type, approach and strategy) and operationalization of variables. The chapter also delves into study population, sample size and selection, validity and reliability of the study, data collection methods and data sources, unit of analysis and data processing methods.

Much as the research is a case study and adopts a qualitative approach, there is a quantitative component to complement the advantages and disadvantages of the difference between qualitative and quantitative methods. That is, there is a survey within the case study. Figure 6 provides the framework for the research design and linkages with the various chapters of the research, while appendix 4 gives the research design with time schedules.

Figure 6: Research Design and Methodology
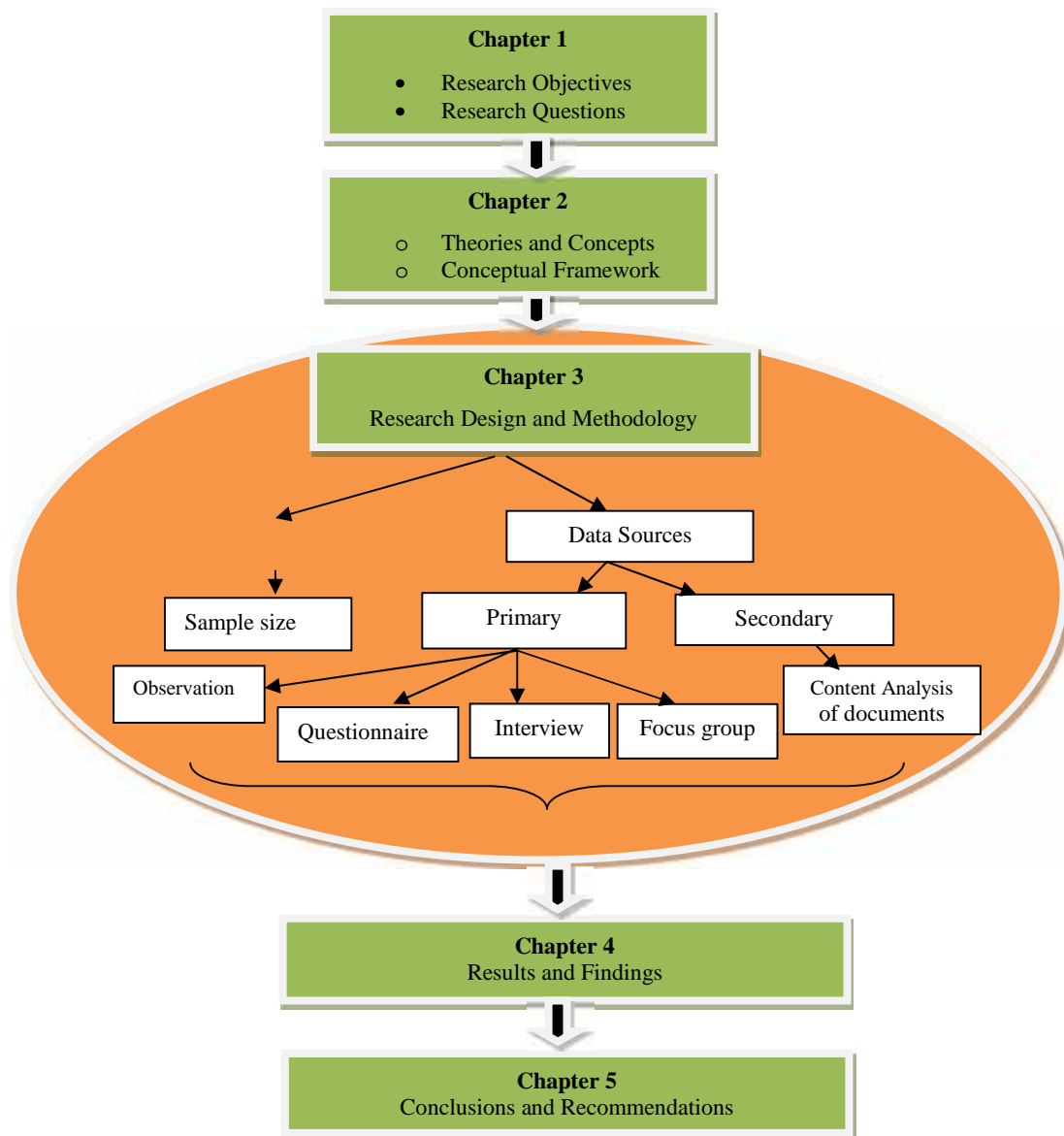
Source: Author's own construct

3.1   Revised Research Questions

MAIN QUESTION

To be able to achieve the objective of the study, the following questions have been designed as a guide. The main question that the research seeks to answer is what factors influence effective stakeholder participation in the strategic planning process?

Sub-questions

- How does the participatory process operate in practice?
- What factors influence stakeholder participation in the strategic planning process?
- How does the local authority mobilize stakeholders to participation and how does it influence participation?
- What actions does the local government take to facilitate and integrate self-organized initiatives for urban spatial development?
- How effectively do stakeholders participate in the planning process and to what extent do they influence decisions?

3.2   Research Type, Approach and Strategy

The research adopts a qualitative approach but have a quantitative component. It adopts a case study as a strategy to explore and explain the factors influencing stakeholder participation in the strategic planning process in the study area. The research focuses on a single holistic case study. Various definitions and indicators as to when to use case study are found in the case study literature. Eisenhardt, (1999p. 534) defines case study as ''a research strategy which focuses on understanding the dynamics present within single setting''. Much as this definition sheds some light on what a case study research is, a more comprehensive definition is needed. This is provided by Robert Yin. A case study according to (Yin, 2009), p. 18) can be defined from two technical perspectives. That is from the scope and data collection and analysis perspective. He defines a case study based on the scope that it is ''an empirical enquiry that investigate a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly defined''. From the data collection perspective he states that it:

- Copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as a result
- Relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing coverage in a triangulating fashion. And as another result
- Benefit from the prior development of theoretical proposition to guide data collection and analysis

The researcher therefore adopted a case study approach for the following reasons drawn from the definitions:

a. It afforded the opportunity for an in-depth study of stakeholder participation
b. Case study enabled the researcher to adopt various sources of evidence which allowed validation and therefore improved the quality of data and findings.
c. It also enabled the researcher to learn empirically the translation of theoretical participatory approaches into practice

    d. Finally, since the researcher has no control over the phenomenon being investigated, a case study was the most appropriate method.

It must however be stated that a survey strategy was also used to collect data to strengthen some of the weaknesses of a case study strategy.

3.3   Selection of Study Area

The Ga West Municipality was purposively selected as the focus of the study. This was however based on some characteristics of the municipality. The municipality is an urban area and is one of the oldest districts created in Ghana since the decentralization reforms in 1988, and therefore has well established sub-structures to facilitate the study.

The Municipal Assembly under the decentralised planning system has prepared four strategic plans from the year 1994 to 2013 using participatory approaches as provided in the planning guidelines. The municipality however has had some challenges of involving stakeholders in its planning process. Also the researcher has worked as a local government staff of the Ga West Municipal Assembly until 2005 and is therefore very familiar with the area. Also as a local government staff, my experience helped me ask probing questions and also was able to cross check issues for triangulation. Access to secondary data was also enhanced due to the fact that I am a local government staff.

3.4   Sample size and Selection

The guiding principle for the sampling procedure was respondents' representativeness of the research population. The population of the study was determined based on the definition of key stakeholders who have experience or participated in the planning process. It was out of this population of 241 that samples were drawn for both the survey questionnaire and the semi-structured interviews. This population is made up of local government staff (heads of departments) and community representatives (Assembly members, Unit committee members and traditional authorities). For the survey, 60 respondents were randomly selected out of the population. On the field however, 41 questionnaires were administered due to the challenges enumerated in chapter one but this does not in any way significantly affect the findings.

For the semi-structured interviews, the sample frame was once again used but non-probability sampling procedures or techniques were employed to select 22 respondents. The reason for the purposive sampling was the knowledge of those respondents of the phenomenon under study. Two (2) focus group discussions was also organised with the Municipal Planning Coordinating Unit (MPCU) and Unit committee members in the Zonal Councils. One direct observation of a plan review meeting was also undertaken. Appendix 5 provides further breakdown.

3.5   Validity and Reliability

A.   Validity

The reliability and validity of any research work is very critical. Validity has been assured by operationalising the concepts being measured. In this vein, the researcher has constructed a table that links the research questions with the data collection questions and the variables to be measured. Besides this, the design and layout of the questionnaire as well as the interview

guide were carefully done and strengthened by pilot testing of the questionnaire to solicit input to refine it. Also the results of the various data collection techniques were continuously compared. That is the interviews, focus groups, observation and questionnaires.

B.   Reliability

(Yin, 2009), p. 45) states that the ''goal of reliability is to minimize the errors and biases in a study''. Such that if another investigator follows the same procedures described by an earlier researcher and undertake the same case study again, the same findings and conclusions would be arrived at. With this in mind therefore, the researcher ensured careful documentation of all research activities. The research design was also carefully followed.

Besides these, the knowledge of the study area and the researcher's ability to speak the local language supported the use of the right terminologies. The research also adopts multiple methods of data collection for triangulation of data to allow cross-checking of information as shown in figure 7. That is a combination of questionnaires, interviews, observation and focus group discussions and secondary data to complement the data collected. The objective is to validate answers and conclusions.

Figure 7: Data Triangulation

Source: Authors own construct
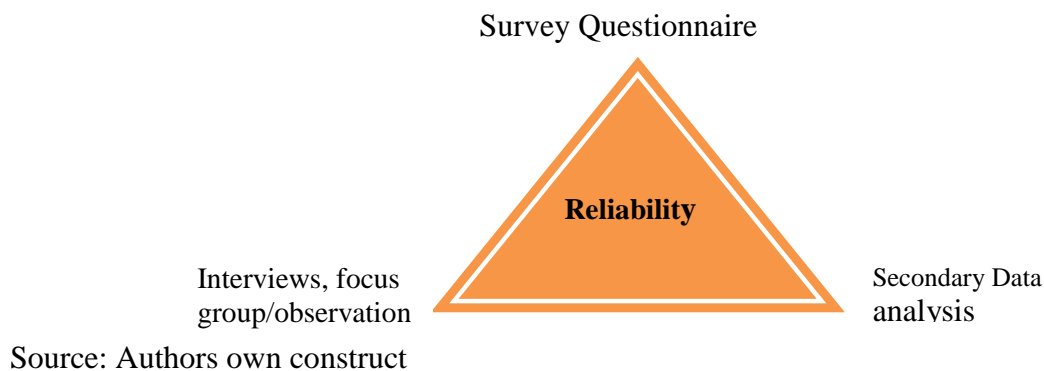
3.6   Operationalization of Variables and Indicators

The concepts as reviewed in the chapter 2 of the document formed the basis for the operationalisation of the variables and indicators for the data collection. The operationalisation allows the researcher to measure what is to be measured thereby improving construct validity of the study.

The questionnaires and interview instruments were subsequently prepared based on the outcome of the operationalisation as indicated in Table 4.

Table 2: Operationalisation of Variables and Indicators

Research Questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Source of Information
Variable -1. Participatory Planning Process			
How does the participatory planning process operate in the practice? *(Independent variables)*	1.1 Levels of meetings (Municipality, Zonal council and community) 1.2 Stakeholders invited (individuals, groups) 1.3 Number of days used for planning meetings	Secondary data Semi-structured Expert interviews	Planning guidelines Planning System Act 480 Minutes of meetings Planning Coordinating Unit
Variable – 2. Organizational context factors			
What factors influence stakeholder participation in the strategic planning process? *(Independent variable)*	2.1 Adequate resource allocated : Budget for the process and actual release 2.2 Timely release of planning guidelines and policy documents 2.3.3Evidence of top management commitment to the process/presence at meetings/ provide resources 2.4 Evidence of freedom/flexibility to approach participatory activities (varied forms of engagement)	Secondary data Semi-structured interviews Questionnaire Focus group discussion Expert interviews	Minutes of meetings Financial Reports Annual Budget Policy documents Assembly members Heads of departments
Variable – 3. Social-economic factors			
	3.1 Stakeholder have regular source of income/employment 3.2 Evidence of prior stakeholder experience in participation 3.3 Perceptions of community Cultural and social influence on participation 3.4 stakeholder perceptions of having adequate skills/ knowledge and competence	Semi-structured interviews Questionnaire Focus group discussions	Assembly members Heads of departments Council members Unit committee members NGOs and CBOs
Variable -4. Process Factors			
	4.1 Trust : perceptions of open, transparent and reliable process 4.2Existence of interactive feedback 4.3 Evidence of Assembly's acceptance and consideration of citizens inputs 4.4 Evidence of incentive to participate (T&T allowances, time/frequency of meetings)	Secondary data Semi-structured interviews Questionnaire	Public hearing reports Assembly members Heads of departments Council members/Unit committee members NGOs and CBOs

Source: Developed by author based on literature review

Table 2. Continued (Operationalisation)

Research Questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Source of Information
Variable – 5. Stakeholder mobilization			
How does the local authority mobilize stakeholders to participate? *(Independent variable)*	5.1 Existence of stakeholder list – clear representation 5.2 Evidence of effective stakeholder mobilization - Adequate information about the planning process and activities (sensitization, dissemination of information - Local government working through established groups and local mobilization channels - Clear role of stakeholders established and communicated	Secondary data Semi-structured interviews Questionnaire	Policy documents Public hearing reports Assembly members Heads of departments/Units Council members
Variable – 6. Facilitation and integration of Self-organized initiatives			
What actions does the local government take to facilitate and integrate self organized initiatives for urban spatial development? *(independent variable)*	6.1 Number of self-organised initiatives (projects/sector) 6.2 Evidence of technical support to groups (advice, location of facilities, staff support) 6.3 Evidence of Self-organized initiatives incorporated into strategic plan 6.4 Evidence of financial support/% of budget for self organized activities	Secondary data Interviews (semi-structured) Questionnaire	Annual Budgets MTDP 2010-2013 Local Government Budget Central Administration department Assembly members (Statutory sub-committee members) NGOs/CBOs
Variable 7. Effective Stakeholder participation			
How effective is stakeholder participation in the planning process and how do they influence decisions? *(dependent variable)*	7.1 Number of stakeholders regularly participating in meetings 7.2 Evidence of how stakeholders are involved in specific planning activities -member of planning team and extent of influence - Information giving on what is planned - Consultative problem definition and information gathering and sharing - Existence of stakeholder in-kind contribution (labour, land, cash, skills/expertise) -	Secondary data Semi-structured interviews Questionnaire Focus group discussions	Minutes of meetings Assembly members Heads of departments Council members Unit committee members NGOs/CBOs

Source: Developed by author based on literature review

Table 2: Continued (Operationalisation)

Research Question	Indicators	Data Collection Method	Sources of Information
	Perceptions of interactive shared decision making process - Joint analysis, joint development of action plans participation seen as a right		
	Variable 8. Influence on decisions		
	8.1 Perceptions that inputs influenced key strategies 8.2 Perceptions that inputs influenced allocation of financial resources 8.3 Stakeholder believe that inputs influenced location of projects 8.4 Perceptions of owning the plan/having copies or includes a lot of local knowledge	Interviews (semi-structured) Focus group discussion	Heads of departments Area Council members Assembly members NGOs/CBOs

Source: Developed by author based on literature review

3.7   Data Sources

The study employed two main sources of data. That is primary and secondary data were collected, collated and analysed for the required information for the research.

3.7.1   Primary Data Sources

The primary data sources were generated from the questionnaire and interviews with the key stakeholders. The interviews lasted on the average 45 minutes but the in-depth discussions with the key planning team members lasted for an hour. A focus group discussion was also used to gather some primary data from stakeholders who were purposively selected due to their role in the planning process. That is the DPCU and Unit committee members. An observation was also employed to further ensure reliability. A sample of the questionnaire, semi-structured interview and the interview guide are attached as appendices 7, 8 and 9 respectively. Some pictures of the interviews and focus group discussions are also attached as appendix 10.

3.7.2   Secondary Data Sources

The secondary data sources included documents from the municipal authority and its departments, review of literature on stakeholder participation, strategic spatial planning, and decentralised planning system. Also, secondary data were used to support arguments, counteract it or explain concepts. In addition, secondary data were used to compare findings and conclusions. For example, the annual budgets, minutes of meetings and projects files were consulted and the contents analysed. Besides, legal documents, policy documents and planning guidelines were drawn upon to clarify issues on the phenomenon under study.

3.8   Data Collection Methods and Instruments

The data collection methods employed was qualitative but had a quantitative component. The data collection was divided into three phases to ensure that all issues were captured, but this does not imply a linear programme because some of the activities were undertaken concurrently. The questionnaires were pre-testing to ensure that the concepts and questions were clear to respondents. The content analysis of the participatory process started before going to the field with a review of the planning guidelines and the planning systems Act, 480. Responses from the interviews were used to assess the process as it operates in practice.

Phase 1 of the data collection was the administration of the questionnaire. Questionnaire was chosen as an effective instrument because it is able to collect data from a large number of respondents within a relatively short period. To be able to measure the factors and the extent to which they influence participation as well as the other issues, a Likert type scale response was adopted to measure the degree of agreement and influence for each question item. The measurement was on a five-point scale which is for example, 1- not at all influential to 5- extremely influential. The questionnaires were administered by three research assistants after a short training. The researcher was with one assistant or the other for the first two days to ensure things were going on well.

The phase 2 of the data collection was the interview section which the researcher met face-to-face with respondents and captured the information. No research assistant was employed for this aspect of the data collection. The semi-structured interview instrument was used for respondents who were purposively sampled to get in-depth information. The semi-structured instrument was adopted because it ensured that the same question was posed to all respondents. This is part of the process to ensure validity and reliability.

The third phase of the research was the organisation of focus group discussions with two groups, which also used purposively sampled respondents to verify the information gathered (DPCU members at the head office of the local government and the unit committee members at the Pokuase Zonal council office). An interview guide was used to facilitate the discussions. This notwithstanding, digressions were allowed in situations where more information was being given from respondents. With the observation of a heads of departments plan implementation review meeting, I concentrated on the time the meeting started, issues discussed (formal and informal), openness of the process, documents given out, participants' reactions to issues and the presence of the MCE and DCD. Appendix 5 gives a schema for the data collection phases linked to key informants.

3.9 Data Processing and Analysis Methods

The qualitative interviews generated a lot of information like field notes, interview scripts and audio recording as well as information from secondary data (documents). In this research, the analysis of qualitative data commenced on the field and included: organising the data, searching for significant patterns and synthesizing. Also coding was undertaken and finally, Atlas-ti software was used for the final analysis which involved grouping of quotations under various codes and subsequent intepratations.

With the survey questionnaires, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyse the data. Descriptive statistics were used to describe demographic characteristics. Specifically, chi-square text was used to establish associations between various groups and perceived influence of factors influencing participations. Conclusions are drawn and some recommendations are then made.

CHAPTER FOUR – Research Analysis and Findings

4.0   Introduction

This chapter delves into the analysis and findings of the one month data collection on the research questions. The chapter commences with a description of the planning process as given in the National Development planning Systems, Act, (Act 480) and the planning guidelines and how it is operating in the research area, Ga West Municipality. A brief description of the sample used and the demographic profile of respondents are also provided to give meaning to the analysis and findings.

The analysis and findings under the five research questions are then presented in line with the theoretical framework which underpins this study. The research questions are as follows:

- ➢ How does the participatory process operate in practice?
- ➢ What factors influence stakeholder participation in the strategic planning process?
- ➢ How does the Local Authority mobilise stakeholders to participate?
- ➢ What actions does the Local Authority take to facilitate and integrate self-organised initiatives and does it influence participation?
- ➢ How effective is stakeholder participation in the planning process how do they influence decisions?

The findings of the research indicate that funding is a major factor that influences participation. The inadequate funding is perceived as affecting most activities in the planning process. The participatory process involves limited number of stakeholders who are considered not representative; about 35 to 40 people are invited per zonal council meeting. The planning meetings took just three days and is organised by a core team of a Planning officer and a budget officer. Top management are not involved in the zonal council meetings. Of all the factors measured for the extent of influence, stakeholder's occupation or employment was considered slightly influential and cultural values were considered not at all influential by the majority of respondents.

4.1   The Planning process and how it operates in the Study Area

The National Development Planning Systems Act 1994, (Act 480) provides a decentralised planning structure for all local governments or District Assemblies as detailed in chapter 1. The focus of this study was however on the District Assembly and its decentralised structures as given in the figure 8. The structures are interactive from the District Assembly, Zonal councils and the Unit Committees which is the lowest tier of the system. The system gives spaces within the structures for the active participation of stakeholders within the decentralised planning framework, which is bottom-up approach.

Within the local government structures, there are elected or appointed community representatives who are called Assembly members for specific electoral areas. The electoral areas have smaller units and elected or appointed community members of these units are called Unit Committee members. The Assembly members together with the Unit committee members constitute the Zonal Councils. The Study area has six (6) Zonal councils, 31 Assembly members and 31 unit committees of five people per unit at the time of the research.

Figure 8: Focus of the study – Decentralised Planning system
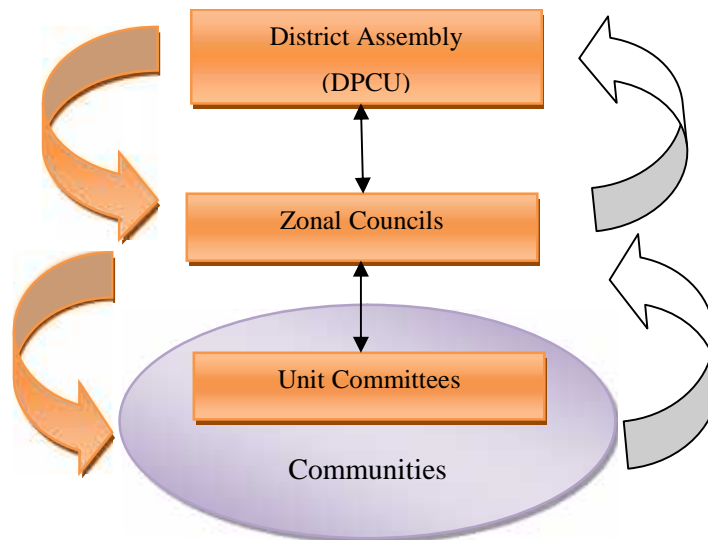
 Source: By Author based on Boachie-Danquah (2011)

Key: ▭Local government structures/levels of participation   ▭Community inputs

The District Planning guidelines provides, in line with the Act 480 detailed framework for the participatory planning process which is to be lead or facilitated by the District Planning Coordinating Units (DPCUs) of the Local Government Authority. The DPCU serves as the Technical planning secretariat of the Local Government and have to network and collaborate with all stakeholders from problem identification to the approval and adoption of the Strategic Spatial Plan or Medium Term Development Plan (NDPC, Planning Guidelines 2010-2013). The DPCU have the option of forming a smaller planning team to facilitate the day to day planning activities.

The study area, like any other urban area provides the opportunities in terms of human resources and institutions that local governments can harness in its development planning efforts. In addition, urban areas in general are essentially dynamic with complex spatial challenges that require collaborative efforts. The planning guidelines therefore stress effective participation of people who have a stake in the development of the urban area. A number of key stakeholders are listed in the guidelines (NDPC, Planning guidelines 2010-2013: p 3) and the local governments are entreated to network and collaborate with to produce and develop strategic objectives and targets that are relevant, acceptable and practicable to stakeholders.

Some of the key actors mentioned in the guidelines who are supposed to participate in the planning process include Departments and agencies, Traditional authority, Private sector institutions, civil society groups and Assembly members. The others are Sub-district council members, Youth organisations, Academia and Research institutions.

The participatory process and its consultation and collaboration activities in a multi-stakeholder environment are provided in a network framework shown in figure 9. The thick lines represent direct networks of consultations and collaborations.

Figure 9: Participatory process – Stakeholder consultation and collaboration networks

Source: Developed by Researcher Based on Planning Guidelines 2010-2013
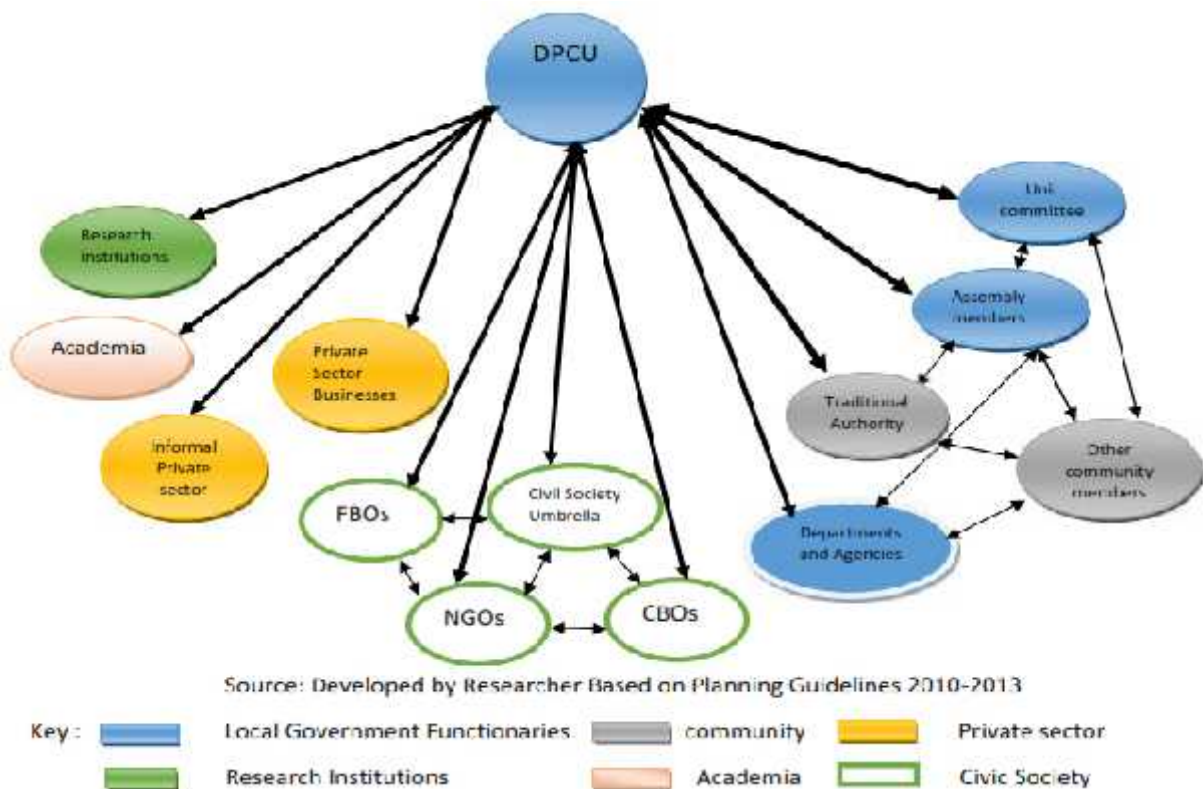
During the research however, it was found out that the participatory planning process networks deviates from what the guidelines describe. Much as there are some consultations and collaborations, it is highly skewed towards heads of departments, Assembly members, representatives of traditional authority and some unit committees. Figure 13 gives the picture. The broken lines indicate limited networks or collaboration and where there are no lines indicates no network or participation. The research revealed that the DPCU is not able to organise community level planning dialogue meetings not even for selected communities. The process activities are limited to the Zonal councils and attendance is by invitation of 35 to 40 stakeholders per Zonal council. Assembly members stated that they are requested to bring only two or three people from their electoral areas; this in their view is not representative. Also heads of departments are not involved in the Zonal council planning meetings. This situation, majority of respondents believe affect the quality of the participatory planning process. Some responses to the current planning practice in the study area are as follows.

A respondent, who is an expert in development planning, referring to NGOs and CBOs participation vividly states '' ***actually we do not invite them. Financial constraint is the main reason but we would consider it. In the urban areas participation is highly related to funding. Using the persons time without giving anything is a challenge ''.***

This view was corroborated by a respondent who is a community representative, he states '' ***NGOs, CBOs and others are not invited to our planning meetings even though they play a role in our development. We have to do something about it, it is not the best''.***

On community members' participation, the research findings indicate that it is left to the Assembly members to organise and collate inputs and proposals without the required logistic support. The responses show that they are not able to organise such meetings. Respondent

Seth who is a community representative at the Assembly describes it this way'' ***They do not give enough time for the process. I cannot go to the grounds and get information, even though we have to meet with our community members to get information''.***

In the view of another respondent from a department ''*we have the flexibility to involve people and we use the Assembly members and unit committees to get information. But whether they go down is questionable. We have checked and people say they do not know anything about the process, which shows may be they do not go or because they deal with a few section of the people''.* Figure 10 Provides how the network operates practically.

Figure 10: Actual Participatory process - Stakeholder consultation and collaboration networks

Source: Developed by Researcher Based on Planning Guidelines 2010-2013
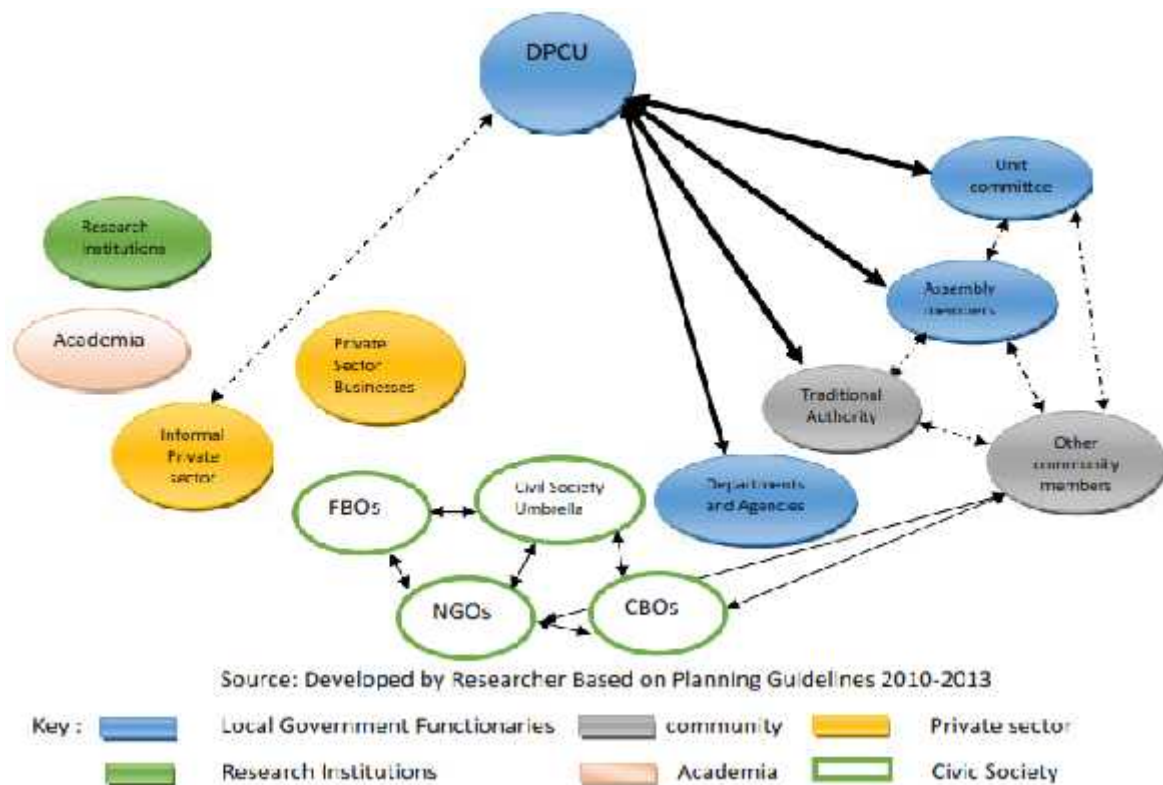
Conclusion on the participatory process

In this section a critical overview of the planning process and the involvement of key stakeholders as given in the planning guidelines and as being practiced in the study area have been discussed. Based on the analysis of responses from the interviews and the documents reviewed, it can be concluded that the planning process as described and as being practically implemented are different. The involvement of stakeholders is limited in terms of numbers and category. Also stakeholders are not involved in various meetings especially heads of departments who are the technical staff for the implementers of programmes and projects.

4.2   Description of Sample

In line with the research strategy of a qualitative approach with a survey, two samples were used. For the semi-structured interviews, 19 respondents were purposively selected out of which 12 (63%) were heads of departments and included 4 experts of the planning team. For the survey 41 respondents were randomly sampled. Out of the 41 respondents 22 (56.7%)

were heads of departments while 19(46.3%) were Assembly members or Unit committee members. The respondents are people working with the Municipal Assembly's department or are a community representative of the local government. This group of respondents are considered key stakeholders of the planning process and therefore valid responses could be obtained. Besides these, two focus group discussions were held. The first focus group discussion was with the DPCU. The second one was with Unit committee members. An observation of a plan review meeting was also undertaken to strengthen reliability. The details of the sample are given in table 5 below.

Table 3: Sample Description

No.	Parameter	Sample size	Percentage
1	**Survey Category**		
	Heads of Departments	22	56.7
	Assembly and Unit Committee members	19	46.3
	Total	41	
2	**Semi-structured Category**		
	Heads of Departments	12	54.54
	Assembly members/chairmen of sub-committees	8	36.36
	Traditional Authority	2	9.09
	Total	22	
3	**Focus Group**		
	Unit Committees	8(1 group)	-
	DPCU	13(1group)	-
4	**Observation**		
	MPCU Plan review meeting	19 officers	-

Source: Author's Field Work 2013

4.3   Demographic Profile of Respondents

4.3.1 Semi-structured Interviews

The demographic characteristics of the 22 respondents for the semi-structured interviews are given in table 5. The demographic characteristics indicates that 15 (68.18%) of the respondents were between the ages of 35 and 54 years while 7(31.82%) were above 55years. With gender 18 (81.82%) were males. Actually, this was expected since only two women are Assembly members and also most of the heads of departments are men. But this has no implication on the research since analysis is not on gender. Also with educational background, 15 (68.18%) of respondents had tertiary level education. Table 5 gives details.

Table 4: Demographic characteristics - Interview Respondents

NO.	PARAMETER	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	**Age in years**		
	25-34	0	0
	35-54	15	68.18
	55 and above	7	31.82
2	**Gender**		
	Male	18	81.82
	Female	4	18.18
3	**Educational Levels**		
	Tertiary	15	68.18
	Senior Secondary/Vocational	7	31.82
4	Junior Secondary	0	0
	Middle School Leaving Certificate	0	0

Source: Author's Field work 2013

4.3.2 Survey

The demographic characteristics of the respondents for the survey focused on age, gender, educational background and the number of years the respondent has worked with the Municipal Assembly as a civil servant or Assembly member/Unit Committee Member (elected or appointed). The age profile indicated that 27 respondents for the survey were between the ages of 35 to 54 years. This represented 70.7%. On the gender of the survey respondents, 28 of the respondents which is 68% were male whiles the remaining 13, representing 31.7% were female. The profile of educational attainment of respondents indicates that 22 of respondents have tertiary level education, which is 53.7% while 13 of them representing 31.7 % have either secondary or vocational level education. Respondent's number of years working with the Municipal Assembly indicates that 23(56.1%) of them have been with the Assembly between 5 to 8 years. The remaining respondents have been with the local government less than 5 years or more than 8years. Table 6 provides the details.

Table 5: Demographic Characteristics - Survey Respondents

No.	Parameter	number of respondents	Percentage
1	**Age in years**		
	25-34	3	7.3
	35-54	29	70.7

	55 and above	9	22.0
2	**Gender**		
	Male	28	68.3
	Female	13	31.7
3	**Educational Levels**		
	Tertiary	22	53.7
	Senior Secondary/Vocational	13	31.7
	Junior Secondary	1	2.4
	Middle School Leaving Certificate	5	12.2
4	**Number of years worked with Local government**		
	1-4	9	22.0
	5-8	23	56.1
	9 and above	9	22.0

Source: Author's fieldwork, 3013

4.3.3 Demographic Profile - Implication for the Study

The demographic description gives an idea of the people who gave responses for the study. It can be said that responses came from very experienced and qualified people, majority of whom have worked with the local government between five and eight years or more. Majority also have higher level of education and therefore understand the issues being investigated. All the key staff as well as chairmen of sub-committee who had to be interviewed we duly contacted. Besides all the respondents have participated in the planning process and therefore add to the validity of the findings of this research.

4.4   Factors Influencing Stakeholder Participation

The factors that influence participation were categorised into three groups in the conceptual framework. These are therefore grouped in that order for ease of discussion. The analysis and findings combine the interviews, survey responses, focus group discussions, observation and content analysis (secondary data).

4.4.1 Organisational Context Factors

The indicators measured under the organisational context variable was the allocation of adequate financial resources for planning, timely release of funds, timely release of policy and planning guidelines, top managements' involvement and presence at meetings and the freedom and flexibility to approach participatory activities.

1. Adequate and timely release of financial resources for planning activities

The analysis of the survey responses indicates that all the indicators are very influential on participation. But of most influence is the allocation of adequate funding for the planning process activities that is 75.6% of respondents. The flexibility to adopt various approaches is second influential, at 70.7%. Besides, 68.3% of respondents perceived the release of the guidelines as very influential on participation. Top management commitment to the process was perceived as very influential by 56.1% of respondents whiles 29.3% perceived it as extremely influential. Timely release of funds for the participatory process was perceived very influential by 53.7% of respondents probably because most respondent did not have information on the time the funds are requested and released. The expert interviews and the secondary data analysis actually shed more light on the release. The release delayed and affects the process. Details are given in subsequent pages. The figure 11 gives details of the responses analysed.

Figure 11: Influence of organisational factors on participation
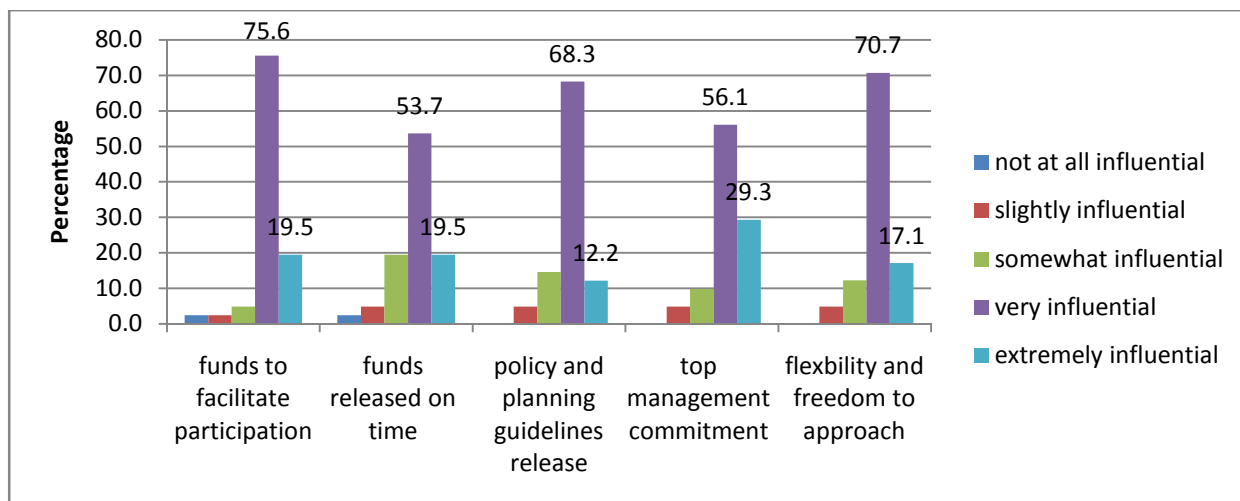
Source: Author's Fieldwork 2013

Responses from the interviews on the adequacy of financial resources and how it influence participation supports the survey findings. Majority of respondents, 16 said financial resources were not adequate and also not released on time and that it influence participation very much. In the view of department heads interviewed, the inadequate funds affect all aspect of the planning process. That is meetings cannot be organised or the number to be organised has to be reduced. Financial Incentives cannot be paid; the planning team is not able to organise community level planning dialogues all because it takes funds to undertake all most of these activities. The remaining 6 respondents believed that financing very much influence participation but that the Local government has adequate funds which need to be mobilise to support projects and programmes implementation. This perception was held by some community representatives. On the release of funds, the budget unit indicated that, they use allocation from the District Assembly Common Fund (DACF). So when the release of that funds delays, it also delays the release of funds for planning activities. This notwithstanding, it was stated that the local government authority has other commitments, and sometimes planning activities is not seen as a priority.

The focus group discussion with the DPCU, confirmed strongly that inadequate funding is a major influence on the participatory process and contributes, from their view about 70% of all the challenges. The focus group discussions with the unit committee members also confirmed the perception but stated that the local government is capable of generating its own local revenue instead of depending on central government. To illustrate these views:

A community representative stated, *''the Assembly does not have enough funds looking at their commitment and the funds they generate, it is inadequate. This seriously influences effective participation because they cannot invite all the people who can contribute very well. They have the potential to generate funds though''.*

An expert with the planning team expressed his view this way, '' *Funding is a major issue. We prepare activity based budget and they say reduce it. We can pay only that much. I mean it is difficult. We issue letters to the Zonal Councils to invite identifiable groups in their areas but because of financial constraints we restrict the invitation to between 35 to 40 participants. We need to engage more people, we even need to start community by community and have their plans before we move to the Zonal councils. Participatory Planning is costly but it is difficult for them to sink money into it''.*

The table 7 gives details of the budgetary allocation and releases for the 2010 participatory planning process with its United States (US) Dollar equivalent. The exchange rate was obtained from the Central Bank of Ghana web site *www.bog.gov.gh* on the 31st of July; 2013. It can be seen that, it took eight months after the first amount was released to pay the final tranche, that is 3rd August 2010 to 7th April, 2011. It is important to note that, the funds were released in the first and second years of the plan period, the period in which the process should have been completed and the document submitted to the NDPC. This confirms respondents assertion that the release of funds delays and influence participation.

Table 6: Budget for the Participatory Planning Process - 2010

Budget Allocation 2010 (Gh ₵)	Amount Approved Gh ₵ / US$ equivalent	Date Approved	Actual Released GH₵/US Dollar equivalent	Date Released
			1st Release	
9,000.00.00	GH₵ 9,000.00 (US$ 6,140.82)	16th July, 2010	GH ₵ 4,000.00 (US$ 2,729.26)	3rd Aug. 2010
			2nd Release	
			GH₵ 5,000.00 (US$ 3,411.57)	7th April, 2011

Source: authors Field work 2013 based on 2010 DACF Budget

NOTE: Exchange rate as at 31st December, 2010 – US$1= GH₵ 1.4656
        Exchange rate as at 30th December, 2011 – US$1= GH₵ 1.6024

2. Release of policy and planning guidelines

The planning guidelines and policy documents are released to local government authorities to facilitate the plan preparation process and also ensure that local government priorities are in line with that of the national government. From this perspective, planning authorities depend very much on it for their planning activities. Experts interviewed on the release of the planning guidelines and policy documents indicate that they are not released on time and this shortens the period for the planning activities. It was stated that, the 2010 to 2013 guidelines was released late and they had less than three months to prepare and submit the development plan. From respondents' perception, they are unable to study the documents adequately when they receive them late.

An expert with the planning team stated: '' *for the 2010 planning period we were able to meet the deadline, but I should say the timing is not adequate. We need to start early, for instance within six months we should receive the guidelines and policy documents but no. It came late. Also from time to time they change certain portions or add to it and we have to consult again. The people ask '' what kind of plan is this?'' in fact the guidelines were issued in less than three months and we had to work within. This really affects the process, because we have to rush or shorten the process and we are not able to involve a lot of people.''*

3. Influence of top managements' commitment

Majority of respondents, which is 18 believe that top management attend planning meetings only at the Municipal Assembly level, they are not involved at the Zonal councils or community levels. But all the 22 respondents believe their presence and commitment are very influential factor for stakeholder participation. Of most influence in the perception of respondents is the presence of the Coordinating Director and Chief Executive and their commitment to making resources available timely. Actually, the planning guidelines states that the MCD should lead the process but this is not done. During the two focus group discussions, it came out strongly as a confirmation that top management do not attend Zonal council planning meetings. They expressed the view that if heads of departments as well as Coordinating Director and Municipal Chief Executive (MCE) should attend those meetings, it would very much influence participation. This is because people want to see them, engage with them and have that sense of belonging and being partners in development. During my observation of the plan review meeting, I noticed that a senior official came to the meeting but very late and stayed for a few moments and left. The other observation was that, her presence made people emphasize their challenges especially with regards to funding of their projects and programmes. When she left even though the meeting continued in terms of the presentations the emphasis was reduced.

From a community representative: '' *for top management, they are involved. At the Zonal councils they do not attend at all. If they attend people would really appreciate and attend. May be they do not have the time. They most of the time say, I have a meeting in Accra, this and that. Sometimes it is true but they need to make time for the people and planning. They should attend because it would help a lot. They also have to make other resources available''*

An expert with the planning team said:

 ''*at the community level the MCE and MCD are not involved it is only the Planning officer and the budget officer. But if the MCE should appear, actually it would influence*

participation greatly. We have not taken it into account because they always say it is the planners work. I think they should be more involved in various ways''.

4. Influence of flexibility in participatory approach

The planning guidelines describes some strategies for the planning processes but it is accepted by 15 respondents that the Assembly has the flexibility to approach the participatory planning process and these would rope in more stakeholder inputs. The other 7 respondents' believes that even though the flexibility is there, the strategies being used are too limited, it does not influence participation. The interviews revealed the strategies or approaches as meetings with sub-committees, meetings with heads of departments, public hearing, town hall meetings (Zonal Councils) and questionnaires (for list of projects). This notwithstanding, it was stated that financial constraint does not allow them to explore more strategies and even the aforementioned strategies are limited in terms of those who can participate. The questionnaires are also not for comprehensive needs assessment but to capture infrastructure needs. The flexibility to approach the process, even though perceived as influential, have serious constraints. Some of the responses are as follows:

From a department: *''we have only meetings to present our inputs; whiles we can have real workshops for thematic groups to do real analysis of situations to improve the plan. The engagement strategies are too limited, it does not allow a lot of people to participate''.*

An interview with two experts brought out the following: *'' We have the flexibility to adopt other strategies to involve people, but if the time is short what can you do? But we use strategies like meetings with the various sub-committees, public hearing, questionnaires are given to Assembly members for inputs from their communities and town hall meetings. I think these strategies are effective and influence participation as well as the quality to some extent''.*

''We only go through the sub-committees to collect information since they have their allowances already budgeted for. In fact, as to whether they actually consult in their communities we cannot guarantee'' (SIC).

Conclusions on influence of organisational factors

It can be concluded that all the organisational factors are perceived by respondents as influencing participation very much. But of most influence is the inadequacy of funding to facilitate the process and top management commitment. In the view of respondents this factor affects other activities in the participatory process including limiting the number of stakeholders who are involved. Much as there is flexibility to approach the process, once again respondents perceive the inadequate funding as inhibiting the exploration of more options.

4.4.2 Socio-economic Factors

Socio-economic factors are also seen in theory as influencing participation. The indicators measured as to how they influence participation in the study area were: perceived influence of regular source of income/employment, prior experience in participation, influence of cultural values as well as skills and knowledge.

The results of the survey corroborate the views expressed during the interviews. The figure 12 shows that respondents' perceive previous experience in participation as very influential on their participation which is 70.7% of responses. Also 53.7% of respondents' perceived skills as being very influential on participation whiles about 20% considered it as extremely influential. Only 9.8% and 14.6 perceived cultural values and employment as very influential.

Figure 12: Influence of Socio-economic factors on participation
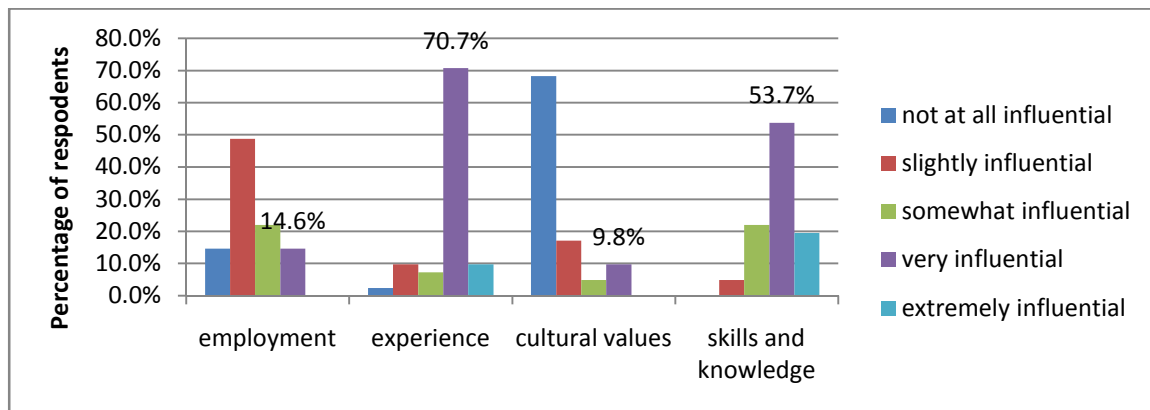
Source: Author's Fieldwork 2013

a. Influence of income/employment and previous experience in participation process

The majority, which is 16 out of the 22 respondents, did not perceive their employment or regular source of income as influencing their participation. This is expected because for the heads of departments, attending meetings is part of their work schedule as local government staff. Some community representatives however consider it as influential since they have to ask permission among others to be part of the process. But they concede that all they need is adequate time or notice for meetings.

Previous experience in participation is also perceived by the majority (18) as very influential for effective participation. They explain that previous experience builds their capacity in terms of knowledge, ability to relate to other stakeholders, talk in public and also ability to accept other views. The other four respondents said it is somewhat influential. The following views were expressed:

From a department: *''I am a member of the MPCU, so I have to be involved. But I think I have gained experience over the years and it is a great asset''.*

From a community representative: *''also the traditional authority looks at the experience of the representative before asking the person to represent the Association. I think it helps a lot. My job is not that influential on my participation, I can always obtain permission''.*

b. Influence of Cultural beliefs and values

Cultural beliefs and values on the other hand are not perceived by the majority of the respondents as influencing participation. Most respondents (19) believe that, the municipality is fast urbanising and cultural values and beliefs are somehow not critical issues. It was however expressed that there are still some few communities that have days of not going to the farms and these days are used for meetings. An instance is a community called Mayera where on Fridays farmers do not go to the farm. The cultural issue were expressed in various ways as follows:

From a department's perspective: *''cultural issues are not hindrance to participation in this municipality. Everybody is free to participate, but I think may be the skills are not there to enable them participate''.*

From two community representatives: *''in this municipality we do not have cultural issues that prevent participation. If women do not talk at meetings then it is because of inadequate expertise in the area of discussion or no training and others.''*

From the expert's view point: *''Oh, I do not think culture is any great influence. We normally find out from the opinion leaders, especially areas that are not highly urbanised the days that are convenient and it works. But we do not have much of such communities''.*

c. Influence of skills and knowledge

On the other hand, skills and knowledge was expressed as being very influential on stakeholder participation. 18 of the respondents perceived their skills and knowledge as influencing their participation. They explained that skills enable them express their views and also understand the various planning issues. Some responses were given as follows:

From a department: *''I think I have the competence, skills and knowledge and that helps me to participate in the planning process. Not only in my area of specialisation. No, my job does not influence me ''.*

From an expert: *''skills and knowledge are very important. It would interest you to know that with the radio stations, people are aware of development and know their rights so it influence them to participate''.*

My observation at the plan review meeting actually confirmed, that skills and knowledge are very influential on participation. Most people who presented really indicated they have the skills and knowledge to present, explain issues and also communicate exactly what they wanted to communicate.

Conclusion on influence of socio-economic factors

The analysis and findings from the interviews, observation and survey of the indicators point to the fact that stakeholders perceive previous experience in participation as well as skills and knowledge to be very influential on participation. In their view they are able to express themselves, accept other people's views and contribute well because of the skills and experience they have. On cultural values and employment however, it was perceived as not influential at all. In respondents view, the urban area does not have any predominant cultural believes and values due to the diversity of people. Employment or the occupation of stakeholders was also perceived as slightly influential by the majority.

4.4.3 Process Factors

The measurement of the concept process factors was based on perceptions of trust (openness and transparency) of the planning process, feedback mechanism, acceptance of stakeholder inputs and views and influence of incentives.

Analysis of the survey responses indicated that all the indicators were very influential, but of most influence is the payment of incentives which 60.9% of respondents' said it was very influential while 36.8% said it was extremely influential. Openness and transparency followed at 58.5% very influential and 34.1% said it was extremely influential. Also 53.7% of respondents said feedback mechanism was very influential. Figure 13 provides the remaining information. Some reasons from the interviews such as the need to reward

intellectual contribution and the fading out of voluntarism, could explain perceptions of payment of incentives as very influential or extremely influential.

Figure 13: Influence of process factors on participation
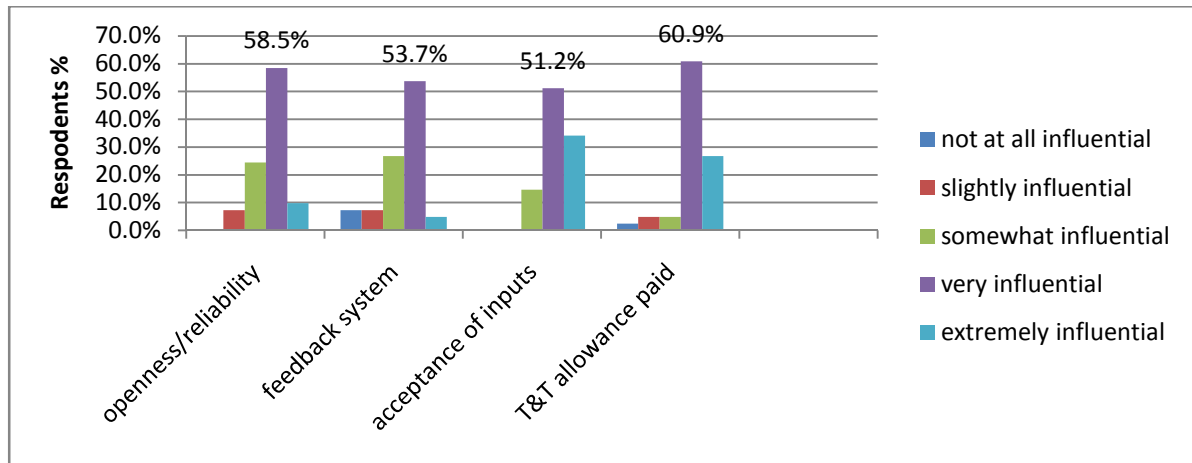
Source: Author's Fieldwork 2013

a. Chi-squire test – perceived influence of incentives

A test of significance between departments and the community representatives on perceived influence of incentives on participation indicated that there is no significant difference at 0.073 P-value.

Table 7: Test of significance

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.367[a]	8	.073
Likelihood Ratio	18.500	8	.018
N of Valid Cases	41		

a. 12 cells (80.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .20.

b. Openness and Transparency of the planning process

There were varied views on the openness of the planning process but generally, respondents believed that it influence participation very much. Most respondents 18 perceived the planning process to be generally open and transparent. They explain that every participant is given the opportunity to express his or her views. They also state that the officers' in charge of the meetings facilitate and ensure that people have fair opportunities to make inputs and suggestions. The DPCU meetings, it was said offer the opportunities to the heads of departments to present their inputs which are discussed together and agreed upon. But respondents' express the view that after the meetings, the process is not very open, especially with implementation. At the Zonal Council meetings however, a respondent stated that the

meetings are not well structured, not focused and development issues are discussed in a rush. As a result it does not give the required input or feedback. Some of the responses include:

From a department: *''the planning process is very open. No one is intimidated you have the platform to express yourself. So it encourages us to keep going''.*

From a community representative: *''Yes, trust, people talk on issues that help them live better life but lack of implementation is the issue. Stakeholders trust each other but the Assembly is not totally trusted. Because they promise a market and the market is not implemented. Trust is about 40%. It is affecting the quality of participation somehow but not totally''.*

''Oh, for trust, you know this unit committee, Assembly members and the technocrats there is always friction even though we sit and discuss issues. Because the Assembly does not implement what they say they would. So people no longer trust them. But it does not affect the people attending the meetings too much''.

During one of the focus group discussions, respondents had a similar view of the process. They express the view that everything is done within a few days (3days). Even though they perceive the meetings as offering the opportunity to make inputs the entire process is not open because after the meetings, they are not involved again. Their programmes are hardly implemented. This statement was made during the focus group discussion with the unit committees: *''we interact and make inputs. After the planning meeting, we know nothing. The departments do their own plans and we do not know why. We do not think the Assembly is open, it is 50% open''(SIC).*

c. Interactive Feedback System

All department heads interviewed indicated that they receive some feedback after meetings but it delays a lot. Most times minutes of previous meetings are given out during the meetings instead of days before. It was emphasized that this influences participation and its quality. Because in their view it is difficult to read minutes of meetings and contribute to discussions at the same time. However, stakeholders who participate at the Zonal council level indicated that they do not receive any feedback and this really influences their participation since they do not have information on issues discussed. Even the final list of projects and programmes for the 4-year plan period, they do not know. The perspectives from the departments were expressed as follows:

''We do not get feedback of decisions regularly. And even they do not give it officially. Sometimes they give only sections of documents when the programme is ongoing not in advance''.

''As for feedback we are given but not on time. Most of the time it is given during the meetings and we have to read while the meeting is ongoing. It affects the quality of participation since we read and discuss at the same time''.

The Zonal Council perspective stated: *''No feedback is given by the Municipal Assembly after planning meetings. They did not even give as anything, no document to help us how much more feedback? I do not know why they do those things. But I think if they give feedback it would influence us a lot because you remember exactly what was discussed and then we can continue from there, but no!''.*

My observation of a plan review meeting confirmed the view that, feedback is given during meetings, I observed that the minutes of the meeting held in February 2013 were distributed

at the meeting organised on the 11th of June, 2013. Most officers started complaining and protesting that it was not the best for minutes of previous meetings to be given on the day it is to be discussed. I also observed that, when it came to the discussion of the minutes, people started reading it.

d. Acceptance and consideration of citizens' inputs

On the acceptance of inputs and views and how it influences participation, all the 22 respondents said their inputs are accepted and this influences their participation. However, the inability of the Municipal Assembly to respond by implementing their inputs is what discourages participation. All respondents from the departments stated that projects and programmes are rolled over and over. Some stated that projects and programmes are moved from one plan period to the other. In their view this does not allow critical thinking and the development of strategic interventions. From the departments perspective inputs are accepted totally with few changes, but at the Zonal council respondents' gave varied views of what is accepted. It was stated that not all inputs are accepted whiles a few believed all inputs are accepted. During interviews with the experts however, it was explained that it is the prioritisation and review of the projects and programmes that determine the final list of interventions for the 4-year strategic plan. They stated that initial prioritisation is done at the Zonal councils but the final one is done at the Municipal Assembly level.

Some of the departments' and Zonal council views and the expert explanations are illustrated as follows: Response from a department: *''yes, our views and inputs are considered but not implemented and this discourages people from participating. It actually influences me''*

Response from zonal council: *''The Assembly does not accept and consider inputs and views totally, they accept about 40%. But when it comes to implementation, in Ghana most of the Assemblies rely on the District Assembly Common Fund (DACF). Accepting inputs influence and encourage people to participate but lack of implementation also influences, we belief frequent engagement will change cause''.*

Response from expert interview: *''In fact we capture everything and then we prioritise them first with them and later at the Assembly. At the public hearing there are fights because some projects have been dropped. We explain to them that funds are limited and also there are thresh holds to observe for projects, example not all communities should have a Junior High School (JHS). But especially the Assembly members would not understand for obvious reasons they want all sorts of projects. They sometimes even accuse officials of embezzling their monies because the project is budgeted for and not implemented. Our inability to implement is actually affecting participation. People say, you came here last time and what have you done for us?''.*

My observations at the plan review meeting also pointed to the fact that the inability of the local government to implement development interventions is really influencing participation. Some departments did not present reports others presented and stated; the report is the same as the previous one, because funds have not been given for the projects to be implemented. At the MPCU focus group discussions also, the issue came out that departments have budget ceilings beyond which the Assembly cannot support them. But most departments present but most were unaware of these all this while.

e. Evidence of payment of incentives

The responses from interviewees indicated that the Municipal Assembly give different incentives which are determined by the duration of the meeting as well as location. For meetings that are organised at the Local authority's offices, they give a combination of incentives like Snacks, Lunch and financial incentives like sitting allowances or travelling and transport allowances (T&T). The amount paid during the 2010 participatory process was GH₵25.00 which US$17.06 per meeting. At the Zonal council however incentives are limited to only Snacks and Lunch.

Respondents' views on how incentives influence their participation produced two main responses. The majority, which is 16 out of the 22 respondents, believed the payment of incentives influence their participation because it motivates them. The other 6 respondents made up of both Assembly members and departments believed that it does not influence their participation because it is their job and they are motivated to participate in development. This notwithstanding, some respondents indicated that most officers show their resentment by attending meetings late, submitting report late or not submitting at all as well as not attending meetings regularly or sending representatives. This was also observed at the plan review meeting. The meeting started very late, that is, instead of 10:00am the meeting started at 11:37am about one and half hour late and some officers did not present reports. They also requested for their previous sitting allowance and the finance officer's representative was asked to ensure it was paid before the next meeting. During the meeting, snacks and lunch were provided.

A respondent from a department who said incentive is influential put it this way:

''for the incentives like sitting allowances, the less we talk about it the better. The allowances are small and come after a very long time. It actually de-motivates me. Most people talk and threaten not to attend meetings and that they have other things doing''.

A respondent at the Zonal council level also stated: *''on the issue of sitting allowance and other incentives, at the municipal Assembly they give incentives like T&T, sitting allowances and food. But the adequacy of the amount given is what needs to be talked bout. At the community level, no incentives are given. The Unit committees should be helped. I believe T&T allowances would influence the quality and help a lot because now voluntarism is dwindling and if they motivate people it will enable people to participate more. Even though a few people attend, they go back disappointed and it affects future programmes''.*

From the expert's perspective: *''on the issue of incentives, normally when we go to the Zonal councils we give only snacks or lunch when it's for a long period. It is only when they come to the Assembly that we give T&T. When it is public hearing, we do not pay because the people are many. For the heads of departments also, it is a real factor, for instance the DPCU, we pay them sitting allowance but when the money delays or the last one is not paid and we invite them they are reluctant to attend. For other internal planning meetings we give snacks or lunch depending on the duration of the meeting. I would say it influence the quality and effectiveness of participation''.*

Conclusion on influence of process factors

From the analysis and findings, it can be said that all the process factors are perceived as influential but of most influence are the acceptance of inputs and views as well as payment of incentives, especially T&T allowances. These two indicators had some respondents stating

that they are extremely influential. On the inputs, respondents said the inability of the local government to respond to their needs by implementation is a worrying issue. There is however no difference between heads of departments and Assembly members perceptions on the payment of incentives as given by the chi-square results.

4.5   Stakeholder Mobilisation

Stakeholder mobilisation is also seen in theory as a factor that influence stakeholder participation. In this research, the indicators used to measure this concept were, Existence of stakeholder list with clear representation, adequate information about the planning process given, local authority working through established groups and local mobilisation channels and clear role of stakeholders established and communicated.

The analysis of the survey responses indicates that 70.7% of respondents perceive adequate information, provision of documents and sensitizations as very influential on participation whiles 68.3 % perceive clear roles as very influential. Also stakeholder list with clear representation is perceived as very influential by 65.9% of respondents. Meanwhile, it was stated that such a list does not exist and this influence the quality of participation negatively. They also stated that even if it existed; financial constraints would not allow the list to be used. The figure 14 explains the analysis.

Figure 14: Influence of stakeholder mobilisation on participation
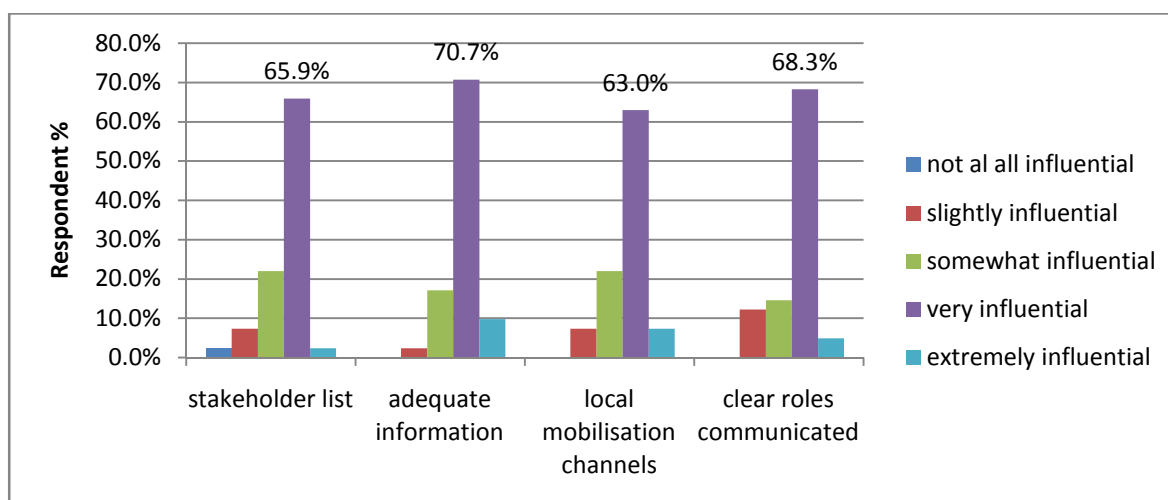
Source: Author's fieldwork 2013

a. Existence of stakeholder list with clear representation

It is believed that stakeholder analysis can help planning authorities to identify and categorise stakeholders for effective engagement. This is based on their influence and ability to affect the policy decisions. Respondents had varied views as to whether there existed a stakeholder list with clear representation. There was a consensus on the list for Assembly members, heads of departments and unit committees but the other stakeholders most respondents were not aware of such a list. Twelve (12) respondents indicated that there may be a stakeholder list even though they have not seen it whiles the remaining 10 respondents believes there is no such comprehensive list. All respondents believe however that such a comprehensive list

would influence stakeholder participation very much. They perceive their current situation, which is the practice of giving quota of stakeholders who could participate in the planning process a great set back. Especially when there has not been able to undertake a stakeholder analysis for stakeholder groups to be well represented.

Interview with the experts confirmed the responses that there has not been any stakeholder analysis with comprehensive list that is representative of all stakeholders. Invitation is done by contacting departments that have some list. These situations they believe influence participation very much since representation is compromised, especially in the situation where invitation of stakeholders is entrusted to the Zonal councils to facilitate at that level. The following responses explain the issues:

Response from a department: *'' we are not mobilised, I should say. Even though there may be stakeholder list to pick people from, they cannot provide the incentives so they limit it. Heads of departments do not participate in the Zonal council level planning meetings, why?''.*

A Zonal council Response: *''We have stakeholders' list example hoteliers, GPRTU and residents associations. But they are not well represented. They ask you to bring two or three from your area. How well representative is these people. This strategy and the responses from those who come are not enough. We need to work more for them to come more, why 2 or 3 stakeholders. It is the funding, that is why they do these, but it affects the quality of inputs''.*

From the perspective of an expert with the planning unit: *''we do not have stakeholder list for all. We sometimes contact the departments for instance, cooperatives or Youth departments. But we do not have a comprehensive one. I believe a composite one would help the quality of participation''.*

b. Adequate information about the planning process given,

The analysis of responses on adequate information about the planning process indicates that most respondents, (19) believe they are not given adequate information about the planning process. They explain, that they are either given portions of documents, that is some heads of departments whiles others do not receive anything at all including Zonal council stakeholders. Respondents perceive this as influencing their participation because; they are unable to contribute effectively during planning meetings. At one of the focus group discussions, a respondent stated that, they are not mobilised in any way at the Zonal councils and they are very much worried. They stated that they are just informed to attend meetings without being prepared in anyway. This in their view affects their participation because they have no information on the national policies and are unable to feed into it. Some responses from various perspectives are given to illustrate.

Response from a department: *''I did not receive any comprehensive document to facilitate my participation, no clear roles, no schedule of meetings to let us prepare our minds. We are heads of departments and we have other things doing''.*

Community representative's perspective: *''They give documents on the meeting day and brief people on the meeting day, how? we are not computers. They need to give all the needed information about the process, and then we can effectively participate. Our attitudes are also an issue. People do not read even when documents are given''*

''The Assembly's way of mobilising people to participate is far below average. The Assembly know those to invite but prior notice is not given to let you know what is going to

be discussed, no. If we do not have information in advance we only go and listen and contribute if we can, especially the few who have the knowledge of the area being discussed. This actually affects the quality of the inputs, because only few people would talk and the rest accept it just like that.

c. Local authority working through established groups and local mobilisation channels

Responses to this indicator point to the view that the local authority work through local mobilisation channels. That is, 12 respondents held this view. They perceive the role of Assembly members and the Zonal councils as being the main local channels that the Assembly use to reach and involve stakeholders. Ten respondents said the Assembly does not use local mobilisation channels effectively because the Assembly members are not the only channels. Some of the views from two perspectives are given as follows: A view from a department:

''I think they use local channels especially the Assembly members and the Zonal councils. I think it influences participation if we do it well.''

The view of a community leader: *In fact, for the planning in my area they have not approached me to mobilise my people for them to make inputs into the plan. I do not know if they use other people as channels in my area of jurisdiction. If they should do this it would influence participation but they do not''.*

From the focus group discussions with the unit committee, it was gathered that most of the Unit committees at the community level are not functioning and therefore cannot be used effectively as local mobilisation channels. They stated that information channelled through unit committee members would not get to the majority of the people. It was stated *''we cannot work without being motivated, but for us in this area we do it because we want our community to develop''.* This indicates that the local mobilisation channels are not working effectively, contrary to the perceptions of some of the staff of the local government authority.

d. Clear role of stakeholders established and communicated.

The responses indicated varied views. All heads of departments and Assembly members believed they knew their roles and it influenced their participation. At the community focus group discussions however, it was brought to the fore that they are not informed specifically what role they have to play. They argued that all they are told is to attend a meeting, in their view this does not promote effective participation. This implies they go there unprepared and provide whatever they have as their inputs. This certainly does not represent community needs and aspirations. This was expressed in various ways as given below:

A response from a department: *''we as heads of departments know our roles so no problem, but the other stakeholders. I think stakeholders cut across which includes heads of departments, Assembly members and community people. Knowing our roles as stakeholder groups would influence our participation very much''*,

A response from an expert: *''stakeholders at the community level do not know their roles until they attend meetings at the zonal councils. The first day of our planning meetings are used to sensitise them and the next days they are able to contribute. We use three days*

which actually affects the quality of participation. We need about a week but funds available would not permit. Clear roles would influence participation to an extent.

Conclusions on stakeholder mobilisation

It can be concluded that, the provision of adequate information through sensitization and provision of the needed documents is perceived as the most influential of all the indicators. Clear roles are also seen as influential. The local govern, it was established does not have a comprehensive stakeholder list and this influence the calibre of stakeholders engaged in the planning process.

4.6 Facilitation and Integration of Self organised Initiatives

The indicators adopted to measure this concept are number of self-organised initiatives/projects and kind of support given to such initiatives by the local government.

5. Number of self-organised initiatives by sector and actions taken to support

The sources of data for the measurement of this indicator were interviews and secondary data. The table 9 gives a list of projects from secondary data and all the five (5) projects were in the water and sanitation sector. This list in my view is not exhaustive because I could not get access to the closed file on the projects. This notwithstanding, it give some idea about the nature of request from groups and individuals in the communities.

Table 8: List of self-organised initiatives (2010-2011)

No.	Initiator	Sector	Year Request for support	Kind of support
1	Pokuase Amanfrom Development Association	Water and Sanitation	2010	Polytank (Water Storage Tank)
2	Council of Elders Pokuase Abensu	Water and Sanitation	2-10	10-seater KVIP
3	Kpobiman Women Association	Water and sanitation	2011	Polytank
4	Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Otsirikomfo	Water and Sanitation	2011	Polytank (₵900.00)
5	Reginald Quashie	Water and Sanitation	2011	Borehole

Source: Author's Field work 2013 - Self Help Projects File

The responses from the interviews however revealed that there were other initiatives from other sectors such as electrification, education, agro-processing (agriculture), Information, Communication Technology (ICT) and health. All respondents were of the same view that

supporting self-organised initiatives influence participation but it takes the Municipal Assembly a very long time to support. This, in the view of respondents discourages such initiatives. On the actions taken by the municipal Assembly to integrate the initiatives, financial support was seen as the main action. Other actions include material support that is, supply of electricity poles and building materials and technical advice.

A respondent puts his experience with self-organised initiatives this way: *'' the one I have in my community was initiated by me. Others are initiated by may be Assembly member or local youth groups. In my community I started a Library project with the community members to a certain stage with the support of Action Aid Ghana. We now need the support of the Assembly for computers for internet. I believe they may come; the request was made about two years ago. Also a community health post, the Assembly provided technical support. I think it influence participation based on the leadership ability to support. The initiative was not put in the plan, may be the Assembly member did not do so''.*

The findings from the survey corroborate that of the interviews. From table 10, 58.5% of the survey respondents said Assembly give financial support while 31.7% said assembly also provides technical and expert advice. The others represented the building material given at times as support to such initiatives. The table 10 provides the summary.

Table 9: Actions to integrate self-organised Initiatives

	Action	Frequency	Percent
Valid	Technical/ expert advise	13	31.7
	Financial support/budget line for the initiatives	24	58.5
	Others	4	9.8
	Total	41	100.0

Source: Author's Fieldwork 2013.

The analysis of budgeted amounts for self-organised initiatives over the four-year plan period revealed that only 13% of budgeted amount for the fiscal year 2010 was actually released. For the fiscal year 2011, only 15% of budgeted amount was released. Subsequently, there have been no budgetary allocations. Interview with the expert in this area indicated that such request could be catered for under the contingency budget. But the local government's financial situation makes it difficult to support such initiatives frequently and on time. In his view, this delay does not promote self-help projects and programmes. He stated further that the local government uses most often part of its share of the DACF to support such projects. The analysis of the total DACF budget for 2010 and 2011 revealed that in 2010, only 1.5% and in 2011 only 0.7% of the amount received was allocated for self-help projects. The total amount of DACF received in 2010 was GH₵1,950,000.00 (US$ 1,330,513.1) and in 2011 it was GH₵ 2,870,544.68 (US$ 1,791,403.32) out of which budgetary allocations were made.

The amount is given both in Ghana cedis as well as its dollar equivalent to allow all readers to appreciate the kind of support given. Table 11 and the figure 15 provide the details.

Table 10: Financial support for self-help projects 2010-2013

Fiscal Year	Budgeted Amount (GH ₵)	Budgeted Amount $ equivalent	Amount Released (GH ₵)	Amount Released $ equivalent	% of Budgeted amount released (GH ₵)
2010	30,000.00	20,469.43	4,000.00	2,729.26	13
2011	20,000.00	12,481.28	3,000.00	1,872.19	15
2012	-	-	-	-	-
2013	-	-	-	-	-
Total	50,000.00	32,950.71	7,000.00	4,601.45	14

Source: Author's Field work 2013

Figure 15: Budgetary allocation and actual releases - Self-help Projects 2010-2013
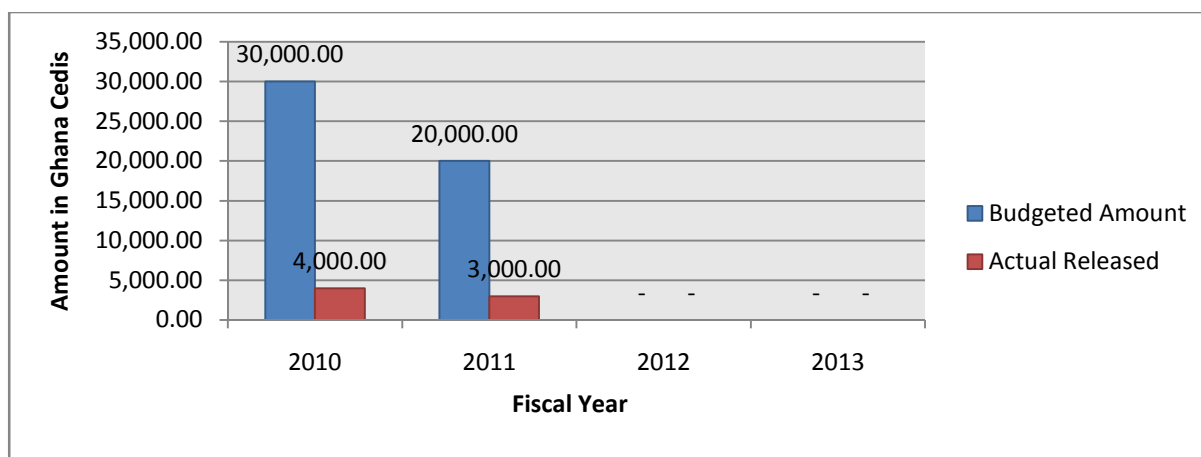
Source: By Author based Ga West Municipal Assembly, MTEF Budgets

The analysis of the survey responses on whether the support of the Assembly influence effective participation revealed that, it was somewhat influential. That is 23 (56.1%) of the respondents. While 26.8 respondents said it was very influential. This is expected because the local government support, according the interview respondents delays and sometimes no support at all. Figure 16 provides the detail analysis.

Figure 16: Influence of actions to integrate Self-help projects
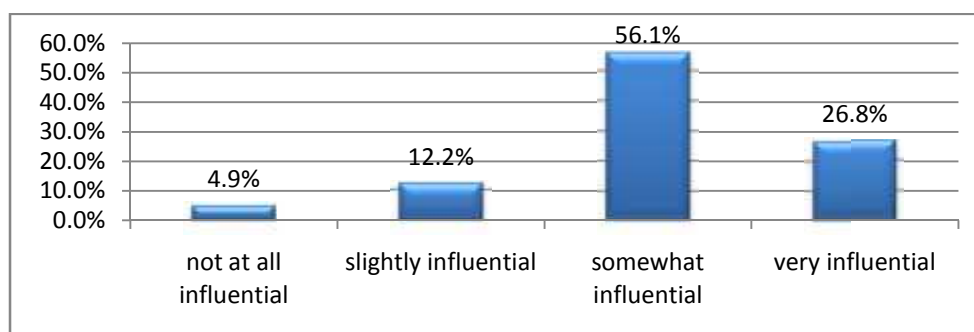
Source: Author's Fieldwork 2013

Conclusion on influence of support for self-help projects

Findings indicate that community level self-organised initiatives are in various sectors including health, water and sanitation, education and ICT. Support to self-help projects is mainly financial but expert advice and other in-kind support like the provision of construction materials and electrification poles are given. These notwithstanding, the influence of these support is perceived by respondents as somewhat influential because of the delays and most times the inability of the Local government to honour requests.

4.7   Effective Stakeholder Participation

The study adopts Pretty (1995) typology of participation to assess effectiveness of participation in the study area. Pretty's typology provides seven levels of participation and it is only from the 5th level upwards that some amount of effective participation emerges. The study also focused on the number of stakeholders regularly participating in planning meetings.

    a.   Number of stakeholders participating regularly

From the survey responses, 21 (51.2%) respondents said they participate sometimes, 10 (24.4%) said they participate often whiles 9 (21.9%) said they participate always. This situation could be explained from the responses during the interviews. Participation is by invitation and therefore one cannot attend all meetings. Also the perceived delays or non-payment of sitting and T&T allowances could be an explanatory factor. Most respondents interviewed indicated that they participate only when they are invited. This situation implies that even when a stakeholder has knowledge in an issue being discussed, without invitation one cannot participate. Figure 17 gives the details of the analysis.

Figure 17: Stakeholders participating regularly in planning meetings
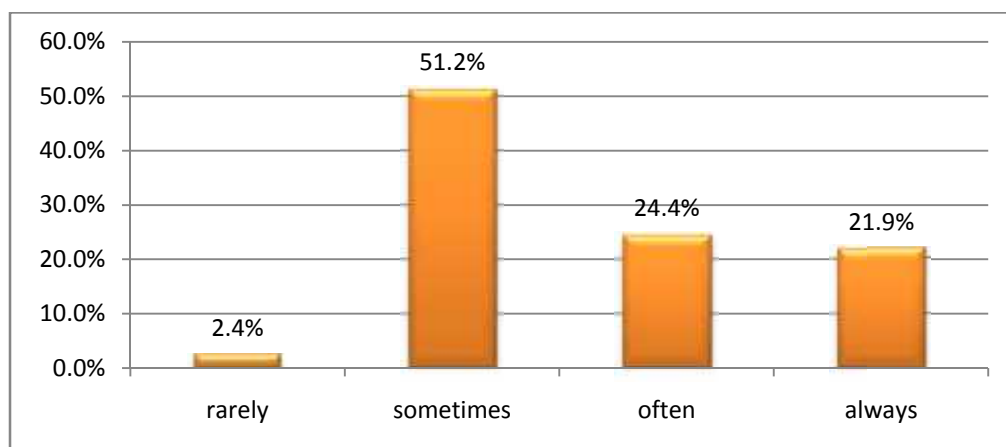
Source: Author's Fieldwork 2013

The interview responses also corroborate the survey outcome since regularity varied from respondent to respondent. Some respondents stated as follows:

From a department: *''I am not regular, there are a whole lots of other things to be done''*

''I would always participate unless I have other things doing. Even that, sometimes I go there late even though it affects my opportunity to contribute''.

From the expert's perspective: *'' In fact, I have not observed but the Assembly members are regular and the heads of departments even though they complain and attend meetings late. But I must say the regularity depends on the invitation. When invited they attend, when not they do not. We use the Assembly members and the Zonal councils to invite groups but the limited number we allow is the problem''.*

b.   Specific involvement of stakeholders – Levels of participation

The specific ways in which respondents have been involved in planning activities were described in various ways. All the 22 respondents interviewed say they are not informed of what the Municipal Assembly has decided on already. That is projects are not imposed on them. Also all the respondents' state they were not members of any smaller planning committees for specific issues. These indicators represent the first and second levels of Pretty's typology of participation.

On the indicator of stakeholders being consulted on problem definition and information gathering, responses varied from the departments and participants at the Zonal council level. Majority of respondents from the departments indicated they are consulted on problem definition but those at the zonal councils say they are not. It was however agreed by all respondents that communities participate by providing land but no more labour because projects implementation are awarded on contract. These indicators represents the third and forth levels of Pretty' participation typology.

On the perception of interactive shared decision making in the areas of strategies and project selection, all the 22 respondents said they are involved at that level. On joint analysis and joint development of action plans, 17 out of the 22 respondents' said they are involved in action planning. The indicators shared decision making and joint analysis and action planning represents the fifth and sixth levels of Pretty's typology. Some respondents expressed the effectiveness or levels of their participation as follows:

From the departments: *''I was involved in the discussions and presentation of projects and strategies. We sit and decide together. I am also involved in action planning''.*

From a Community representative: *''I am not consulted on problem definition and data gathering but I do not know why. For traditional leaders we normally give land for the projects and submit some development programmes for consideration. Gone are the days when we participate by contributing labour, now it is no more. They give it out on contract. We are not involved in any action planning meeting''.*

Expert's response: *''they provide projects and programmes which we jointly prioritise even at the Zonal council level. They have influence on the process, we do not decide for them''.*

They survey responses also shows a similar pattern. It can be seen from the table 24 that, only 12.2% of respondents agreed that they were given information on what is already decided on by the local government authority whiles 53% agreed that they were consulted on problem definition. On the indicator of being on a committee, only 9.8% agreed. Also, participation in the area of skills, labour, land and knowledge 56.1% agreed. The analysis also indicates that

68.3% agree that they are involved in joint decisions in the strategic planning process. On action planning 61.1% agreed that they are involved and this is mainly true for the heads of departments. The Assembly members state however that they are involved indirectly by approving the budget. The process is left for the technical officers.

It is important to note that the charts moves from lower level of participation and rise towards effective levels of participation according to Pretty's typology. Figure 18 provides the detail analysis of effective participation.

Figure 18: Specific involvement of stakeholders in the participatory process
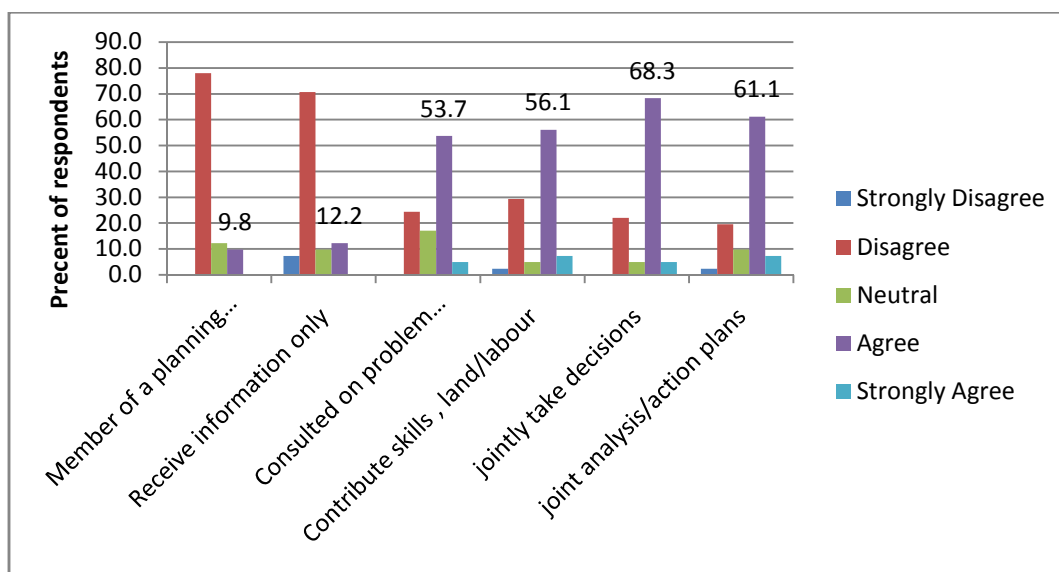
Source: Author's Field work 2013

A chi-squire test on the significant association of joint analysis and action planning with being a head of department or Assembly member showed a significant difference at P<0.020. This corroborates the interviews that technical officers are mainly participants in the action planning process directly. Table 12 gives the result.

Table 11: Test of significance - Payment of Incentives

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	18.107[a]	8	.020
Likelihood Ratio	22.397	8	.004
N of Valid Cases	41		

a. 12 cells (80.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .20.

4.7.1 Stakeholder Influence on Decisions

The concept stakeholder influence on decisions was measured using four indicators. That is perceptions that inputs influence the selection of key strategies, fair allocation of financial resources and the location of projects. Also the perceptions of ownership the plan or the plan containing a lot of local knowledge were measured.

The analysis indicates that all the 22 respondents interviewed say that their inputs influenced the selection of key strategies and the location of projects. This is because what they submit is accepted and captured in the plan. On their influence on the allocation of financial resources however, 18 of the respondents said they had no influence at all, whiles the others said they had influence to some extent. Those who believe they have influence to some extent were technical staffs who were involved in preparing budget estimates or infrastructure bills of quantities. The Assembly members on the other hand did not perceive their approving the budget estimates as a way of influencing allocation of funds because they could not make changes. On the issues of owing or supporting the MTDP, most respondent said they perceive the plan as their own even though they are not given copies. The few who had copies said they got it unofficially because of their relationships with those in charge.

The focus group discussions at the Zonal councils indicated that they did not know of such a document (plan). The expert interviews confirmed the situation, that only the NDPC and the Regional Coordinating Councils (RCC) we given copies of the Plan. It was however acknowledged that the situation does not encourage participation since stakeholders; especially at the Zonal Councils have no documents to refer to. Some respondents gave the following account:

From a department: *'' I would say our views are accepted after full discussions at meetings. So for the selection of strategies and projects I would say I have some influence, but when it comes to implementation where financing is involved, no, I am not influential at all. But for the location of projects I have influence. I was not given a copy of the plan, no''.*

Community Representative: *''On my influence on the process, I think so to some extent, but not on funding. The plan has some local inputs to some extent because generally projects come from various areas by the Assembly members. But I have not on any occasion seen any community formulate their own plan and take it through the zones to the Assembly. I have seen the MTDP 2010-2013 but the traditional authority does not have a copy to enable them engage the Assembly. We have not asked for it and it is about time we ask for it''.*

From expert view: *''I would say they have influence on the selection of strategies because we request for it and they provide it at the various planning meetings. When it comes to the financing however it takes a lot of technical considerations but their representatives who are the Assembly members are involved''.*

''we do not give copies to the stakeholders, only the NDPC, RCC and the MCD. A copy is also kept at the registry. The Zonal councils are not given because that is not where the projects are implemented. we would consider and give them copies. I think it would influence and motivate then to participate''.

Further to respondents' perceptions of influence, the survey finding sheds more light on the views. On perceived influence of selection of key strategies and projects 58.5% of the survey respondents said they are very influential 31.7 said they are somewhat influential. On financing, 4.2% said they are very influential and 9.8% said they are somewhat influential.

Also, 53% said they are very influential with the location of projects and 26% said they are somewhat influential. On the perceived influence on allocation of financial resources, Assembly members indicate even though they give approval at general Assembly meetings, they are not directly involved in allocations. The allocation is seen as being in the hands of management. Figure 19 provides some details.

Figure 19: Stakeholder perceived influence
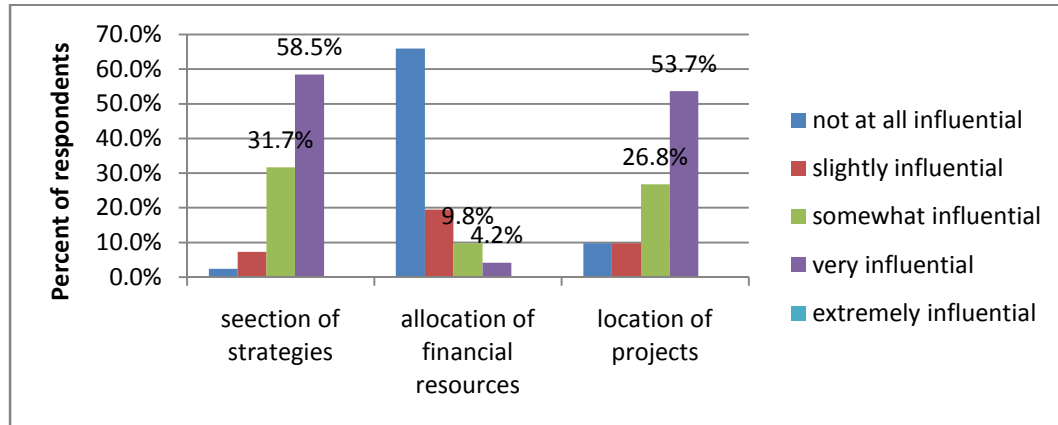
Source: Author's Fieldwork 2013

The survey findings give further insight into the interview responses on the perceived ownership of the plan. Much as respondent expressed the view of owning the plan, they could not assert strongly as to whether the plan contains a lot of local inputs or local government dictated the inputs. This could be explained as the stakeholder representation at the various planning meetings is not to expectation, given the fact that only two or three people are invited from each electoral area. On perceived ownership of the development plan, 73.2% of respondents said they support the output of the planning process, which is the Medium Term Development Plan 2010-2013, but 14.6% remained neutral. Also 46.0% said they agree that the process output contains a lot of local knowledge whiles 36% remained neutral on the indicator. On the indicator whether the Assembly dictated the output which is the projects and programmes, 39% of respondents disagreed and 34.1% remained neutral. Figure 20 gives the details.

Figure 20: Stakeholder perceived ownership of the strategic plan
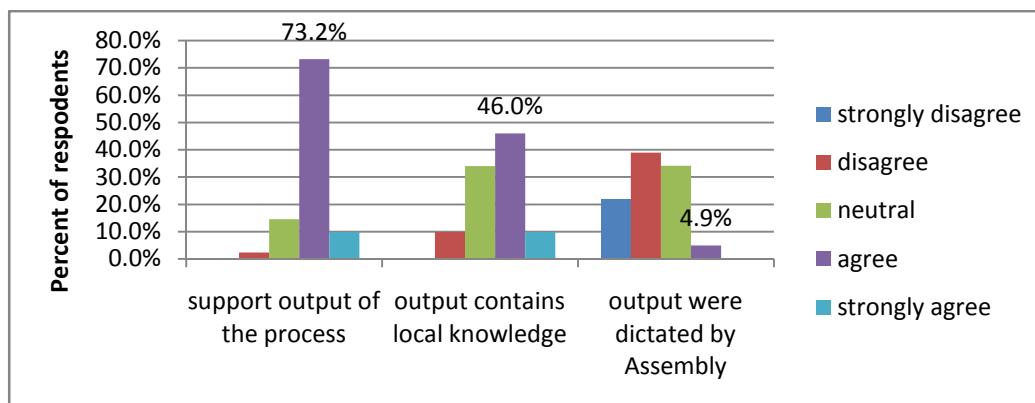
Source: Author's Fieldwork 2013

CHAPTER FIVE – Conclusions and Recommendations

5.0   Introduction

As noted in the chapter one, participation has had a long history of being promoted by development organisations, governments and NGOs because of the perceived benefits. Looking at the benefits of participation in development therefore, I deemed it important to research into what motivates or influences people to participate because this knowledge would contribute to make the participatory process attractive and successful. This research therefore focused on factors that influence participation in the planning process and the Ga West Municipality was chosen as the case study to measure to what extent theory can be replicated in practice.

The objective of the study was to understand and map out the factors that influence the quality of stakeholder participation in the strategic planning process. Various concepts were defined to form the basis for the research and more importantly to draw conclusions. The theory of participation underpinned this research and as such, the overall conclusion is based on this theory. Specific conclusions are also drawn based on the five research questions in line with the analysis and findings in the chapter 4. I wish to state that, the findings and conclusions of this research apply to a very specific participatory process and therefore cannot be generalised to other participatory activities. It is important however to state, based on my experiences and discussions at various workshops in Ghana on local governments and participation, that the situation is not significantly different from other municipalities in Ghana.

5.1   Quality of Participation in the Planning Process – General Conclusion

The analysis and findings of the study has brought to the fore how participation is being practiced in the study area. It can be concluded that participation is not being practiced as the planning guidelines stipulates in terms of the engagement or involvement of stakeholders and the levels of planning meetings. Most stakeholders' are not involved in the planning process and the few that are engaged do not have enough resources in terms of time and funding to effectively consult their electorates at the community level. The inputs that are submitted on behalf of the communities are not very representative of the community members felt needs.

The theory of participation (Majors 2007) gives two kinds of participation which are authentic and inauthentic attitudes of participation. It can be concluded that while the heads of departments and most Assembly members can be said to be engaged to some extent with authentic participation, that is, they are able to work together towards achieving common goals in the development process (solidarity attitudes), they are not able to significantly contest issues that are not agreed upon. It is important, especially where they have little influence when it comes to allocation of financial resources for implementation. On the part of the community level stakeholders, including unit committee members, NGOs, Research Institutions and CBOs, they are mostly left out of the process and has resumed to inauthentic kind of participation attitudes. That is, they either conform by accepting whatever is decided by the few or have become unconcerned, that is non-involvement attitudes. This was described by respondents as apathy on the part of citizens. It can be concluded that this situation of involving few stakeholders, has affected negatively the quality of participation in the planning process. From the survey, respondents could not conclusively assert that the

final process output, which is the MTDP reflected a lot of local knowledge even though they accept ownership this support Ofei-Aboagye (2011) very few people are involved in the participatory planning process.

5.2   Factors that Influence stakeholder Participation

It is documented in theory that various factors influence participation (Hassan et al 2011, Rider and Pahl-Wostl 2005 and Rowe and Frewer 2005). This study therefore set out to understand and map out the factors that influence participation in the study area. It can be concluded that most of the factors that were measured very much influenced participation in various ways, but mostly negatively and therefore affects the quality of participation. It is important however to conclude on critical factors that have causal linkages and breading a vicious cycle of distrust for the local government and its participatory planning process. The main influencing factor in the view of respondents is inadequate funding of which they stated represent about 70% of the challenges. But the commitment of top management or leadership also came out strongly and it is a critical influencing factor. This support Ansell and Gash (2007) argument that facilitative leadership is important factor in bringing people to the decision-making table and develop trust. Top management or leadership of the local government do not ''own the process''. They do not attend meetings at the various levels of the process and do not consider as a priority the allocation of adequate resources to support the process. This leadership issue can be linked to the national level looking at the delays in the release of policy and planning guidelines.

In mapping the influencing factors and their linkages, top management commitment is seen as a core issue and linked to inadequate funding and its release that is perceived to affect all other activities. Funding has been a major constraint to the participatory planning process. The amount released is inadequate to allow the various activities and stakeholders groups and individuals to be involved. Financial incentives which is another very influential factor for stakeholder participation is dependent on the availability of funds. Payment of incentives is delayed and attendance to meetings is affected. Invitation to stakeholders has to be limited to 35 to 40 people per Zonal council planning meeting, which in the view of respondents' compromises the need for all groups of stakeholders to be represented. The inability or lack of commitment of leadership to implement agreed strategies and programmes over the years is increasing citizens' distrust for the local government and its ability to facilitate development. This findings support Ridder and Palh-Wostl (2005) argument that trust must be developed for participation to be successful.

Also linked to the lack of commitment on the part of leadership is the inability to maintain an effective interactive feedback system. Stakeholders do not have adequate information about the planning process and its outcomes and outputs. Copies of the MTDPs are not available to even heads of departments. This situation of inadequate feedback and constant communication is further re-enforcing the existing distrust. Other very influential factor is capacity or skills and knowledge of stakeholders of which the involvement of limited stakeholders does not promote.

The factor that was found to be not at all influential in the participatory planning process was cultural beliefs and values while the income/employment of stakeholders was perceived as slightly influential. Cultural values and beliefs which was conceived as peoples shared norms, practices and traditions was perceived as not being influential as far as participation in development planning is concerned. Much as some cultural beliefs were mentioned, for instance not going to farm on specific days, it was said it does not influence participation. It

is understandable, because the larger part of the municipality in urbanised and the cultural issues mentioned pertains to the few peri-urban communities. Also the employment status of respondents was largely perceived as slightly influential because people are able to obtain permission from the work places. More importantly, for the departmental heads it is part of their work schedule.

5.3   Stakeholder Mobilisation

Stakeholder mobilisation is seen in theory as the activities that help to prepare and generate the interest of stakeholders to participate. The findings on these indicators points to the conclusion that the Ga West Municipal Authority does not adequately mobilise its stakeholders to participate effectively. Much as it was stated that the NDPC organised some initial sensitisation for selected stakeholders, that is the MPCU members, not much was organised for other stakeholders in the planning process. The local government does not have a comprehensive stakeholder list that is representative of the diversity of stakeholders. This is very important in a multi-stakeholder environment of an urban area. The basis for involvement is any identifiable groups without much recourse to stakeholder influence and expertise or power and interest. This, once again can be linked to lack of comment by management.

Adequate information was perceived as very influential but stakeholders are not given much information. It was stated that sections of the policy documents were given to departments without the planning guidelines. At the Zonal council level, no documents are given and roles are not clearly defined and communicated in advance. Sensitisation and information on the planning process is undertaken during the planning meetings which takes three days.

5.4   Actions to integrate and facilitate Self-organised Initiatives

Self-organised initiatives, which in the study area are called Self-help Projects are conceived theoretically to emanate from civic society groups and may or may not have government support (Bonstra and Boelen 2011and Meerkek et al 2012). In this study, the focus was placed on local government support for such initiatives or projects (Bakker et al 2012). From the analysis and findings it can be concluded that the main action taken to facilitate or integrate such projects is by giving direct financial assistance or taking over the project and warding on contract. Other actions or support from the local government are technical or expert advice, which is by providing the architectural drawings or in-kind support of supplying building materials and electrification poles. The local government however does not capture these initiatives in its MTDPs. The reason for not capturing such initiatives was that the request comes as and when the initiatives are taken which may be outside the planning period. But it was accepted that they could be captured during the annual review of the MTDP.

The main action which is financial support has not been effective in promoting such initiatives. The reasons have been that requests for support are delayed to the extent that community members have resorted to seeking support from NGOs. Those who are not able to get support from NGOs just abandon the project in situations where they are unable to continue from their own resources. There was an account from one of the community respondents that they requested for support for ICT equipments and since the year 2011ocal government has not responded. He stated that the classroom block with a computer library

project was undertaken with the support of an NGO but Local government is to help provide computers.

5.5 Effectiveness of Stakeholder Participation

The study looked at effective participation by adopting Pretty (1995) typology of participation where participation is in a continuum and move from bad to good with the highest being self-mobilisation. Effective participation from this perspective was therefore described as the levels that allow and provides sufficient opportunities for stakeholders to influence decisions or take initiatives.

On the stakeholder participation, it can be concluded that most people participate sometimes. This situation does not allow the promotion of long term involvement where very experienced people support new participants to impact and improve the quality of the process and its output. Besides, it can be said that stakeholders are effectively participating in terms of Pretty (1995) typology, which are functional participation and interactive participation. This notwithstanding, the quality of the process and its output are seriously affected by resources available in terms of time, funding and inputs and the under-representation of stakeholders groups.

In Pretty's participation typology, there are lower levels of participation where stakeholders provide labour and are consulted for information that are pre-defined by external agents, in this case the local government. The conclusion from this research is that, the Ga West situation deviates from Pretty's description. In the study area, stakeholders participate by being consultation but the information and process gathering are not predefined. Besides, labour is no more contributed by stakeholders because the projects are given on contract. The contribution is in the form of the community providing land for the projects.

On the perceived influence on decisions, it can be stated that stakeholders have influence on the selection of strategies and their location. But no influence at all when it comes to financial allocation. Much as the Assembly members approved the budget estimates for implementation, they do not consider it as an influence. To them, it is indirect influence and do not have much power to change allocations or distribution of such funds.

5.6 Implications for Planning Policy - Ghana

As discussed earlier in chapter 1, the NDPC is developing a new policy of issuing combined planning guidelines for the preparation of both district development plans and settlement plans using participatory approach (Discussions with Forbes Davidson referred). It is important to reflect on the implications of the findings on such a policy. The current participatory approach has generated a lot of distrust for the local government. This is mainly due to the lack of commitment on the part of leadership linked to inadequate funding for the process and lack of or poor implementation among others.

It is therefore critical for the NDPC not to focus on only the issuing of the guidelines but consider some of the critical factors that influence participation at the local and national levels. This would ensure that the new policy of preparing MTDPs and settlement plans using participatory approach does not become rhetoric but an effective tool for development.

5.7   Recommendations

Based on the research findings and conclusions the following recommendations are being made to support policy change and for the Municipal Assembly to consider. These I believe would help improve the effectiveness and quality of participation in the strategic planning process and its output. The recommended entry point is for leadership to show commitment and provide sufficient support to break the vicious cycle of distrust. The figure illustrates the cycle which needs to be followed among other things to improve the participatory process in the study area.

Figure 21: Recommended interventions to improve quality and effective participation
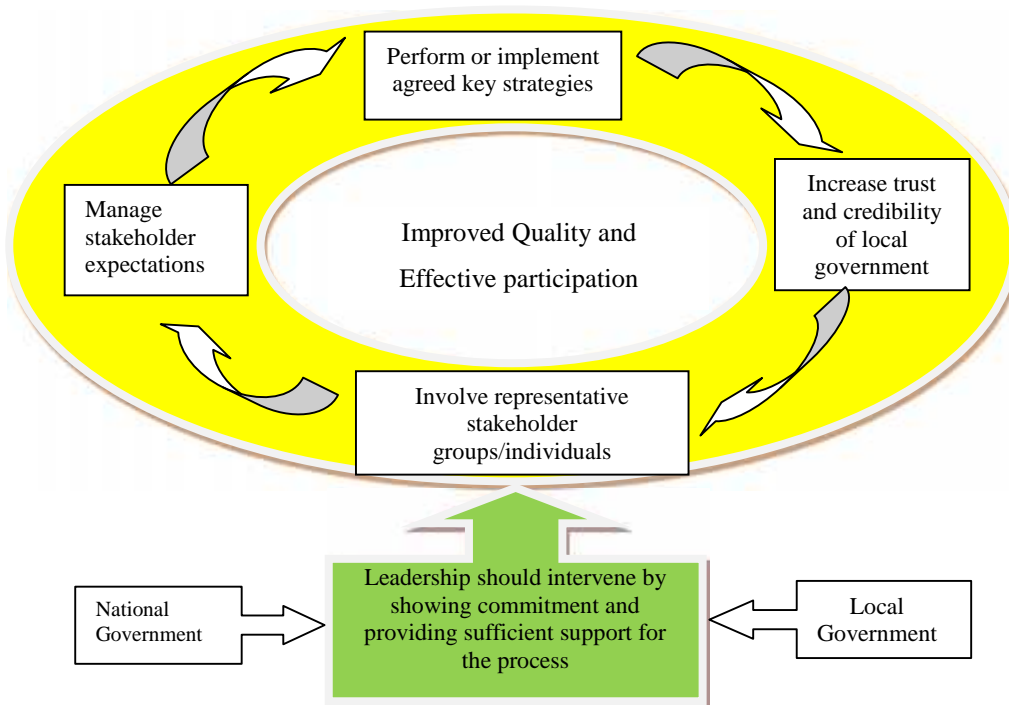
Source: By Author based research conclusions

The critical point of intervention in improving the participatory process is for leadership both national and local government to show commitment and provide the needed support. The needed support has its foundations in effective revenue mobilisation and its judicious use. The support should include adequate funding, capacity building to promote long term involvement and institutional development especially at the unit committee level. This is because experiences and skills were perceived as very influential and the leadership should be committed to invest in it.

The local government leadership should also involve representative stakeholder groups and individuals after a comprehensive stakeholder analysis to rake in the needed expertise and interest. It is also critical to manage expectation by effectively prioritising interventions and communicating agreed strategies to stakeholders. Leadership should ensure that, they implement agreed key strategies which are a major influencing factor to build trust and credibility. This is expected to increase trust and credibility for the local government and then improve stakeholders' willingness to participate effectively to improve the quality of participatory outputs. As leadership continues to manage this process the vicious cycle of distrust would be broken and effective and quality participation would emerge.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Map of the Study Area, Ga West Municipality

Sources: Ga West Municipal Assembly 2010

Appendix 2: Decentralized planning System - Ghana
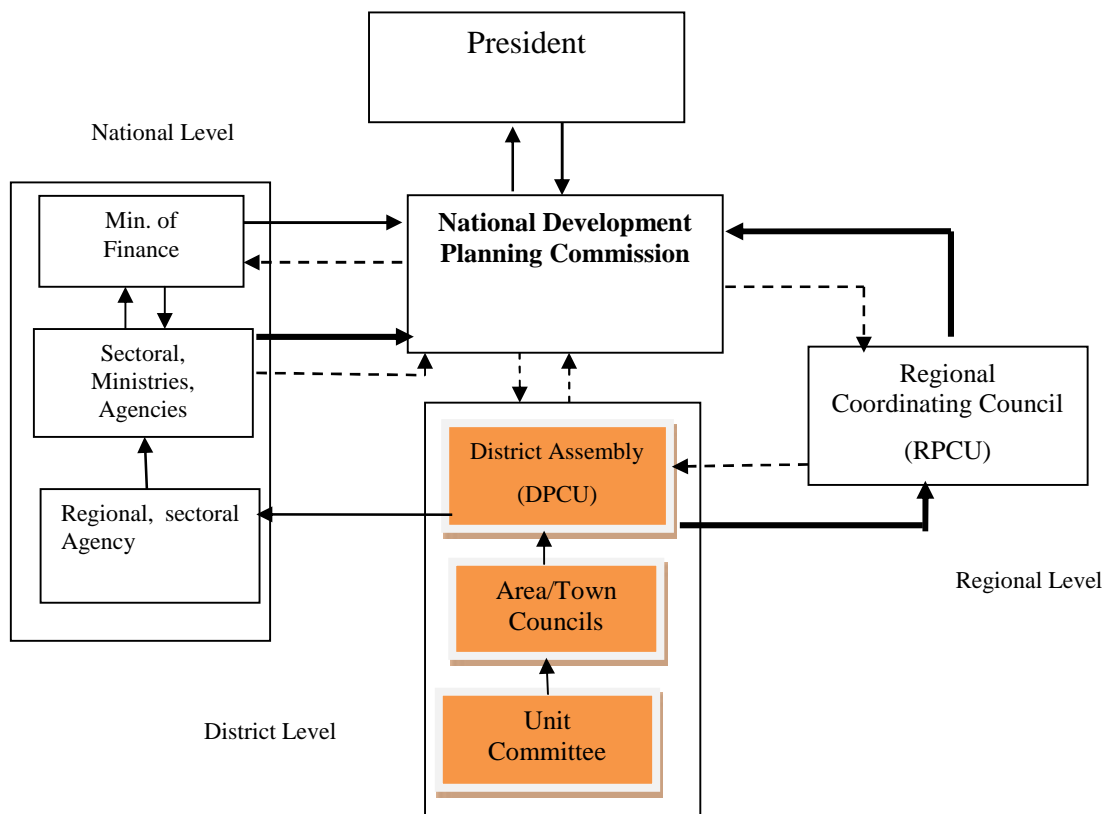
Source: Adapted from: (Owusu, 2004)

Key:

Shaded portion – focus of the study

Development Plans

Plan inputs/projects

- - - - - ▶ Policy framework, data, information

Appendix 3: Plan preparatory process – Summary of activities and stakeholder participation
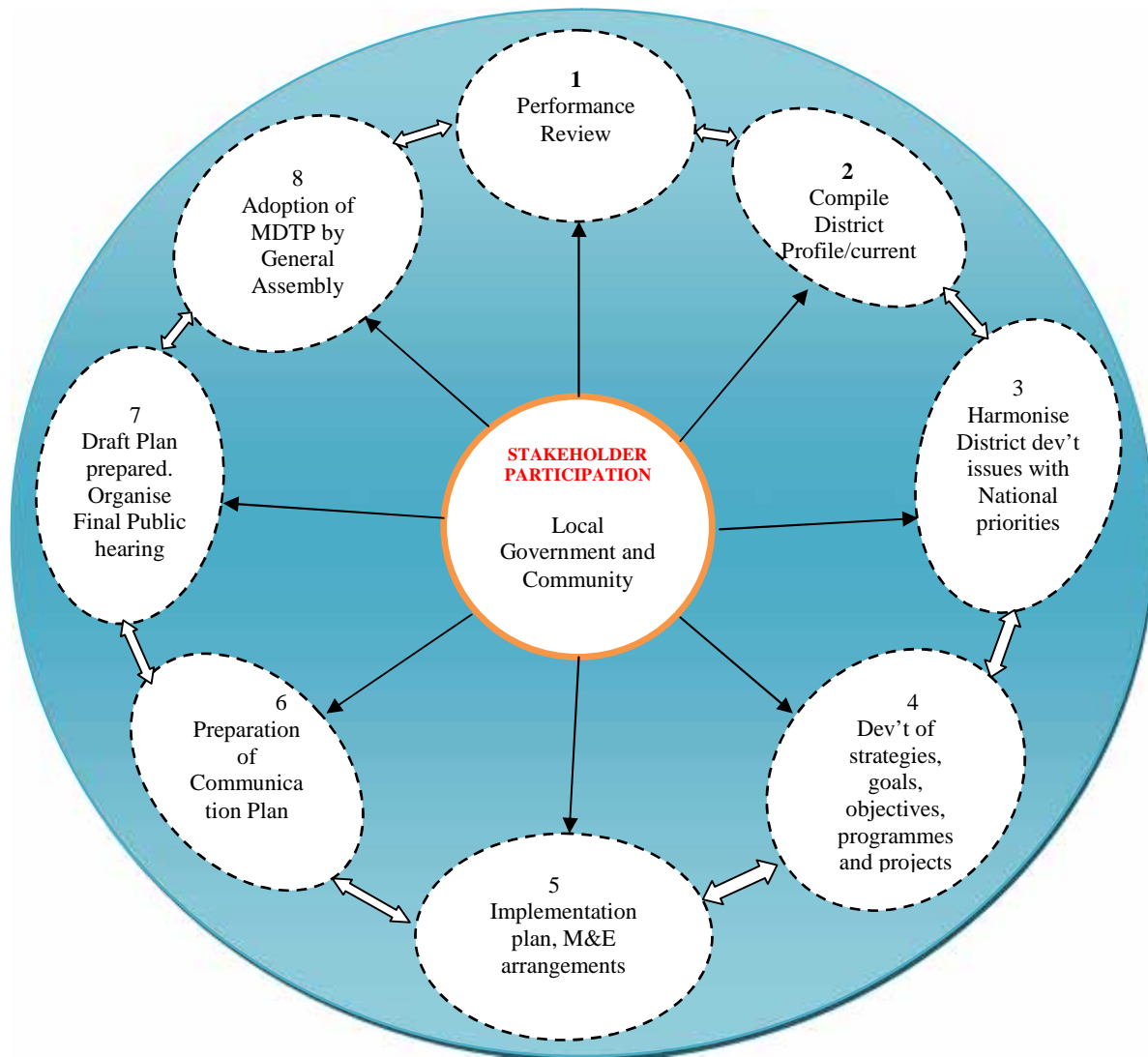
Source: By Author, based on 2010-2013 Planning Guidelines

Apendix 4: Research Design and Methodology with time lines

Table : Research Design and Methodology with time schedule

No.	Task Name	Task Duration (Days)	May		June				July				August			
			1	2	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
	Task Before Field Work															
1	Identify and mobilise resources (stationery, funds, equipments)	4	↔													
2	Design research instruments (survey questionnaires, semi-structure interview and interview guide)	10		←——→												
3	Pre-test instruments with colleagues	2			↔											
4	Development respondents interview schedule	7			←———→											
5	Develop case study Protocol	5			←——→											
	Task During Field Work															
6	Familiarisation and inception visit	2					↔									
7	Review of respondents interview schedule with MPO	2					↔									
8	Meeting with research assistants	1					↔									
9	Pretesting/review of questionnaires	2					↔									
10	Interviewer administration of questionnaires	5						←——→								
11	Conduct face-to-face Semi-structured interviews and content analysis of documents	5							↔							
12	Ongoing preliminary data Analysis	8								←———→						
12	Conduct focus group	4								↔						

No	Task																
	discussions																
13	Evaluation/mop up exercise/filling in gaps	5								⟷							
14	**Task After Field Work** Detailed data analysis quantitative data (SPSS-descriptive/inferential statistics										⟷						
15	Detailed analysis qualitative data (Atlas.ti – descriptive , narratives)												⟷				
16	Compilation of chapter 4													⟷			
17	Compilation of chapter 5													⟷			

Source: Developed by author, field work 2013.

Appendix 5: selection of Respondents - Sample

No	Respondents	Sample Size	Sampling Technique	Data Type and collection method	Data collection Instrument
1	Assembly Members	8	Purposive	Primary In-depth interviews	Semi-structured interview
		11	Random	Primary Survey	Questionnaire
2	Unit Committees	8	Purposive	Primary Focus group discussion	Interview guide
		8	Random	Primary Survey	Questionnaire
	Heads of departments	12	Purposive	Primary In-depth interviews	Semi-structured interview
		22	Random	Primary Survey	Questionnaire
		13	Purposive	Primary Focus group discussion	Interview guide

		19	Purposive	Observation	Checklist
			Purposive	Secondary Content analysis	Document review
	Traditional Authority	2	Purposive	Primary In-depth Interview	Semi-structured interview

Source: Authors Field work

Appendix 6: Phases of Data collection and linkages with respondents
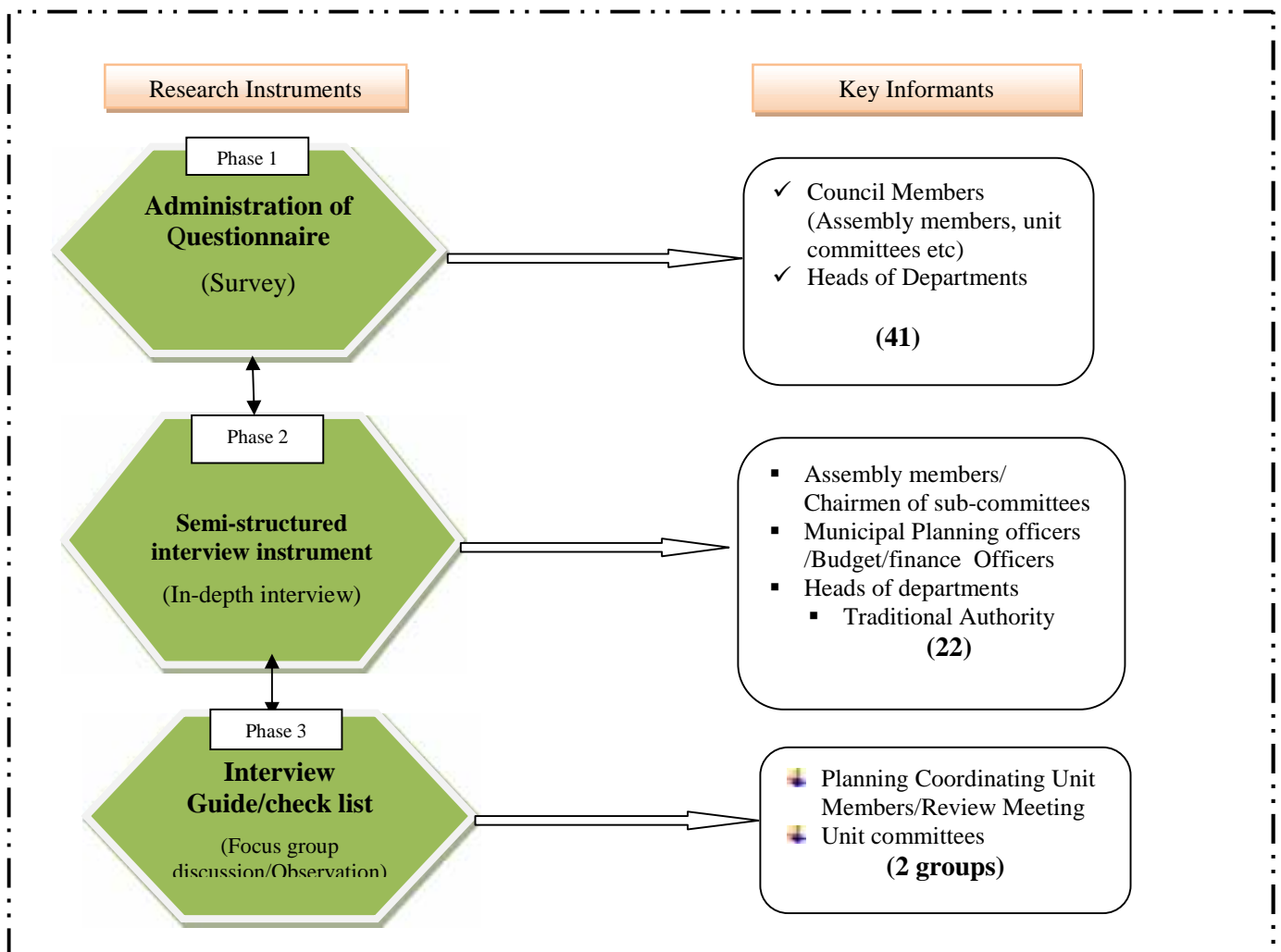
Source: Author's Fieldwork 2013

Appendix 7: Sample of Questionnaires

INSTITUTE FOR HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, ERASMUS
UNIVERSITY ROTTERDAM. THE NETHERLANDS.

*''FACTORS INFLUENCING STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION IN THE STRATEGIC
PLANNING PROCESS: THE CASE OF GA WEST MUNICIPALITY.''*

(This questionnaire is purposely for academic research. As such all information collected
would remain confidential)

Survey Questionnaire

Section A. General Information

1. Name of Electoral Area/Community/Department…………………………………
2. Age of Respondent in Years
   1. 18-24
   2. 25-34
   3. 35-54
   4. 55 and above

3. Gender   1. Female   2. Male
4. Educational Background
   1. No formal Education
   2. Middle School Leaving Certificate
   3. Junior Secondary School
   4. Secondary/Vocational/Technical
   5. Tertiary
   6. Others
5. How long have you worked or represented your community/area in this Municipal
   Assembly? (in years)
   1. 1-4
   2. 5-8
   3. 9 and above

Section B.   Factors that Influence participation

6. Have you participated in the strategic planning process before?   1. Yes 2.
   No
   If No, please go to question 59 and 60.
7. If yes, how were you invited to participate in the planning process?

1	2	3	4	5
Formal letter	Verbal Invitation Through Assembly member	Media (Radio)	Zonal Council Meeting/notice board	Others

8. Did you participate in the GPRS 1 (2001-2005) planning process? 1. Yes 2. No
9. Did you participate in GPRS 2 (2006-2009) planning process? 1. Yes 2. No
10. Did you participate in GSGDA 1 (2010-2013) planning process? 1. Yes 2. No
11. Were you involved in the performance review of the previous plan? 1. Yes 2. No
12. Were you involved in the compilation of profile and situation analysis? 1. Yes 2. No
13. Were you involved in the plan harmonisation process? 1. Yes 2. No
14. Were you involved in the selection of key strategies and projects? 1. Yes 2. No
15. Were you involved in the preparation of implementation plan? 1. Yes 2. No
16. Were you involved in the preparation of communication strategy? 1. Yes 2. No
17. Were you involved in public hearing of the draft plan? 1. Yes 2. No
18. Were you involved in the adoption of the Plan by the general Assembly? 1. Yes 2. No

Organisational Factors

How would you agree with the following statements?

Order	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
19	Assembly has adequate funds to facilitate participation					
20	Assembly has enough time to undertake participatory activities					
21	Assembly releases Funds on time					
22	Assembly receives Policy and planning guidelines on time					
23	Assembly's Top management are present at planning meetings/commitment					
24	Assembly has the flexibility to approach participatory activities					

With reference to your responses to questions 20-25, how in your opinion do these influence your participation?

Order	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
		Not at all influential	Slightly Influential	Somewhat Influential	Very Influential	Extremely Influential
25	Funds to facilitate participation					
26	Period given for participatory activities					
27	Time Funds are released					
28	Policy and planning guidelines released					
29	Top management presence at planning meetings/commitment					

30	Flexibility and freedom to approach participatory activities (means of engagements)					

Socio-economic factors

How would you rate the influence of the following on your ability to participate?

Order	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
		Not at all influential	Slightly Influential	Somewhat Influential	Very Influential	Extremely Influential
31	Regular source of income/ employment					
32	Previous experience in participation					
33	Cultural values and beliefs					
34	Skills, knowledge and competence					

Process Factors

How would you describe your level of satisfaction with the following process issues?

Order	Issue	1	2	3	4	5
		Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Unsure	satisfied	Very satisfied
35	Transparency, openness and reliability of the planning process					
36	Process interaction and feedback system					
37	Assembly's acceptance and consideration of participants views and inputs					
38	Effectiveness of forms of engagements (public hearing, community meetings, workshops)					
39	T&T allowances paid and other incentives					
40	Time and frequency of meetings					
41	Convenience and accessibility of venue of meetings					

With reference to your responses to questions 35-41, how in your opinion do these influence your participation?

Order	Issue	1	2	3	4	5
		Not at all influential	Slightly Influential	Somewhat Influential	Very Influential	Extremely Influential

42	Transparency, openness and reliability of the process					
43	Interaction and feedback system					
44	Assembly's acceptance and consideration of participants views and inputs					
45	Effectiveness of forms of engagements – public hearing, community for a, workshops					
46	T&T allowances paid					
47	Time and frequency of meetings					
48	Convenience and accessibility of venue of meetings					

Section C. Mobilisation of Stakeholders

How would you agree with the following statements?

Order	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
49	Assembly has a stakeholder list with clear representation					
50	Information about the planning process and activities are communicated to stakeholders early					
51	Assembly uses existing groups and local mobilisation channels to reach stakeholders					
52	Clear roles of stakeholders are developed and communicated in advance					
53	Schedule and frequency of meetings are developed and communicated					

With reference to your responses to questions 49-53, how in your opinion do these influence your participation?

Order	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
		Not at all influential	Slightly Influential	Somewhat Influential	Very Influential	Extremely Influential
54	Assembly's invite participants after a detailed stakeholder identification and analysis (clear representation list)					
55	Information about the planning process and activities are communicated to					

	stakeholders early					
56	Assembly uses existing groups and local mobilisation channels to reach stakeholders					
57	Clear roles of stakeholders are developed and communicated in advance					
58	Schedule and frequency of meetings are developed and communicated					

59. Why don't you participate in the planning process? (Please tick the one applicable)

    1.   I am not invited

    2.   My financial position would not allow.

    3.   I do not trust the Assembly

    4.   I do not have enough time

    5.   The meeting place is not convenient and accessible

    6.   I do not have the skills and competence

    7.   I am informed too late

    8.   Others

60. When given the opportunity to participate, would you consider it?

    1. Would not consider   2. Might consider   3. Definitely consider

Facilitation and integration of Self-help projects

61.   What community initiated projects do you know or have in your community?

    1.   Education projects   2.   Health projects   3. Market projects

    4.   Agricultural projects 5.   Electrification projects

    6.   Water and sanitation projects 7.   Others

62. Does the Assembly support such projects?   1.   Yes 2.   No

63. If yes, which of the following actions does the Assembly take to facilitate and integrate these initiatives?

    1. Technical/expert advice   2. Initiatives are incorporated in the Developments plan

    3. Financial support/ budget line for these initiatives   4. Others

64.   How in your view does this action by the Assembly influence effective participation?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all Influential	Slightly Influential	Somewhat Influential	Very Influential	Extremely Influential

Section D. Effective stakeholder Participation

65. How regular do you participate in planning meetings?

      1. Rarely   2. Sometimes   3. Often   4. Always

Indicate your agreement or otherwise of the following statement on your level of participation

Order	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
66	I only receive information on what is already planned					
67	Consulted on problem definition, data gathering and others					
68	I was a member of a planning committee					
69	I contribute in the form of skills and knowledge (technical expertise)					
70	Interact and jointly take decisions on strategies					
71	Involved in joint analysis and development of action plans					

Influence on decisions

How do you perceive your influence on decisions in line with the following statements?

Order	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
		Not at all influential	Slightly Influential	Somewhat Influential	Very Influential	Extremely Influential
72	Selection of key strategies for the MTDP					
73	Allocation of financial resources					
74	Location of projects and programmes					

How do you personally agree on the following statements?

Order	statement	1	2	3	4	5
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
75	I support the final outcome of the planning process					
76	The process outcome contains a lot of local					

	knowledge					
77	The results were dictated by the Assembly					

Appendix 8: Sample of Semi-structured Interview instrument

INSTITUTE FOR HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, ERASMUS UNIVERSITY ROTTERDAM. THE NETHERLANDS.

''FACTORS INFLUENCING STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION IN THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS: THE CASE OF GA WEST MUNICIPALITY.''

Semi-structured Interview – (key Assembly Staff)

1. Age of respondent:………………………….
2. Gender: ☐ Male   ☐ Female
3. Educational Level: ☐ No Formal Education   ☐ MSLC   ☐ JHS
                    ☐ SHS/Vocational/technical ☐ University   ☐ Others

A. Factors Influencing Participation
4. How long have you been participating in the planning process?.......................
5. How are stakeholders' invitations to participate in the planning process? Probes
    What do you/stakeholders consider before deciding to participate? Please explain your response to question
6. How would you describe the assembly's participatory process in terms of the following?
    -Selection of stakeholders
    -top management commitment
    - Sensitization and giving enough information to participants
    -using local mobilisation channels and others
7. What do you consider adequate amount of time for the process?
8. How much time is actually given for the process? To what extent does this affect participation
9. How much was budgeted for the process?
10. How much was actually released? How adequate was this?
11. How early do you expect to receive the guidelines and policy documents before the process?
        ☐ 4 months
        ☐ 6 months
        ☐ 8months
        ☐ Others
12. How many months to the commencement of the process did you receive the documents? To what extent does this affect participation?
13. Do you have the flexibility to approach the participatory process? ☐ Yes ☐ No
14. Among the factors you consider (question 9) before participating, mention five (5) most important that influence you. Explain your choices.

15. Can you list some of the strategies the assembly use to engage stakeholders?
16. How would you describe the effectiveness of these strategies?

B. Facilitation and integration of community level initiatives

17. Are there community initiated projects?   ☐   Yes☐   No
18. If yes, how many projects since 2010?..............................
19. Does the Assembly collaborate or facilitate these initiate☐ Yes   ☐ No
20. If Yes, in what ways does the Local Government support or facilitate these projects?
21. How influential would you say these actions/support by the Assembly on community based organisations effective participation in development? explain
22. How much was budgeted for these initiatives in the under listed years?
        2010……………………………..
        2011……………………………..
        2012……………………………..
        2013……………………………..
23. What percentage of the total budget do these allocations represent?
        2010……………………………..
        2011……………………………..
        2012……………………………..
        2013……………………………..

24. How easy is it to receive support under these budget provisions?
25. How influential would you say these actions/support by the Assembly on community based organisations

Effective Stakeholder participation

26. Do you believe that stakeholders participate regularly in planning meetings? Explain
27. How many planning teams/committees were established during the last planning period?
28. How many community stakeholders were on these planning teams?
29. How would you describe their contribution in terms of inputs and influence?
30. How, in specific terms do you involve stakeholders? What do they really do?
31. Can you explain which stakeholders are involved in the specific way and why?
32. How are the views and inputs of stakeholders taken into account?
33. How would you describe stakeholder influence on selection of key strategies?
34. How do stakeholders influence the allocation of financial resources for these strategies?
35. Would you say stakeholder views and inputs influence the location of projects?
        How?
36. How decisions made available to stakeholders after meetings?
37. How would you rate the overall influence of stakeholders on the strategic decision making process?
38. Explain your key reasons for these rating
39. Any other issues on participation you want me to understand?

Thank You

INSTITUTE FOR HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, ERASMUS UNIVERSITY ROTTERDAM. THE NETHERLANDS.

''FACTORS INFLUENCING STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION IN THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS: THE CASE OF GA WEST MUNICIPALITY.''

Semi-structured Interview – (Other respondents)

1. Age of respondent:…………………………….
2. Employment Status: ☐ Employed ☐ Unemployed ☐ Retired
3. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female
4. Educational Level: ☐ No Formal Education ☐ MSLC ☐ JHS
   ☐ SHS/Vocational/technical ☐ University ☐ Others

C. Factors Influencing Participation

5. How long have you been participating in the planning process?........................
6. How did you receive information to participate in the 2010-2013 planning process?
   -Written invitation
   -From colleagues
   -Others
7. When did you became involved, was the process already on going?
8. Which activities were you involved? Who decides?
9. What do you consider before you decide to participate?
10. Among the factors you consider (question 9) before participating, mention five (5) most important that influence you. Explain your choices.
11. Does the local government have adequate funds and how does it influence participation?
12. How would you describe the assembly's participatory process in terms of its openness and level grounds for participation, Feedback mechanism, top management commitment and others
13. Does the Municipal Assembly pay incentives and how influential is this to participation.
14. What do you consider adequate amount of time for the process?
15. How much time is actually given for the process? To what extent does this influence participation
16. How early do you expect to receive the guidelines and policy documents before the process? State in months.
17. Do you have the flexibility to approach the participatory process? ☐ Yes ☐
        No
    Please explain your response to question 17
18. Can you list some of the strategies/techniques the assembly use to engage stakeholders?
19. How would you describe the effectiveness of these strategies?
20. How would you describe the Assembly's stakeholder mobilisation strategy and its influence on participation (Selection of stakeholders, Sensitization and giving enough information to participants among others)

D. Facilitation and integration of community level initiatives

21. Are there community initiated projects? ☐ Yes☐ No
22. If yes, which sectors?
23. Does the Assembly collaborate/ facilitate/support these initiate☐ Yes☐ No
24. If yes, how is this done? Please explain
25. How would you describe the influence of these actions on effective participation in development? explain

Effective Stakeholder participation

26. Do you participate regularly in planning meetings? ☐ Yes ☐ No
27. If yes, how regular?
28. Did the Assembly establish planning teams for the last planning period? If yes,
29. How many planning teams/committees were established?
30. Were you on any of these teams/or you know of a community stakeholders who was on these planning teams?
31. How would you describe your/their contribution in terms of influence/inputs?
32. How, in specific terms do you participate?
33. How are your views and inputs taken into account?
34. How would you describe your influence on selection of key strategies?
35. How would you describe your influence on the allocation of financial resources for these strategies?
36. Would you say your views/inputs influence the location of projects? And how?
Any other issues on participation that I need to know.

Appendix 9: Interview Guide

INSTITUTE FOR HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, ERASMUS UNIVERSITY ROTTERDAM. THE NETHERLANDS.

FACTORS INFLUENCING STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION IN THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS: THE CASE OF GA WEST MUNICIPALITY.

Focus group Interview Guide –   Unit Committee members

Factors Influencing Participation

1. Which planning periods were you involved?
2. How were you invited to participate?
3. What motivates or enable you to participate in the planning process? (Probe for other details)
4. What cultural beliefs and values are in the various communities? How do they influence effective participation?
5. How would you describe the influence of your occupation/employment/sources of income on participation?
6. How does previous experience influence effective participation? Explain.
7. How would you describe the openness/transparency of the planning process? Explain
8. Do you think you are able to express your views and inputs? I yes what enable it, if no, what prevent it? Explain
9. Would you say your inputs/views are taken into account? How? Who has the final say?

10. How would you describe the methods the Assembly use to engage stakeholders? Community meetings and others. How does it influence your participation?
11. Are you given some incentives after participation? What are these? How would you describe the influence of these incentives on your participation?
12. How would you describe the involvement of top management in the participatory initiatives?
13. What if the feedback system after planning meetings?
14. How would you describe the venues and time for planning meetings? How does it influence your participation?

Stakeholder mobilisation

15. How are stakeholders invited to participate? Is there a list of people? (Probe)
16. Would you say you were given enough information/time to enable you participate? Explain.
17. Would you say you knew what was expected/role of you in the process? Explain.
18. Was these communicated to you earlier on? And how?
19. How does the Assembly schedule planning meetings? How would you describe these schedules of meetings and how does it affect your participation?
20. How would you describe the effectiveness of mobilisation of stakeholders by the Assembly?

Facilitation and integration of self-organised initiatives

21. How would you describe communities' ability to initiate projects and what are the areas of interventions?
22. How involved are you in these initiatives?
23. How do these self-help projects start and how are they implemented?
24. Do you collaborate with the Assembly? How is it done? If not why not?
25. How are these activities supported by the municipal Assembly?
26. Do you think these support to self-help projects enhance effective participation in the Planning processes? If yes explain.
27. If no, how do you think it can be improved?

Effective stakeholder participation

28. How regular are you at planning meetings?
29. How do you specifically participate in the planning process? (probe - Information, consultation, in-kind contribution, joint decisions etc)
30. Are you aware of planning teams being formed? How are they formed? Have you ever served on any of the planning teams? Explain.
31. Would you say you are effectively participating and why?

Perceived influence on Decisions

32. How would you describe your influence on the participatory process? Project selection, allocation of financial resources, and selection of strategies. How?
33. Do you have copies of the plan? How did they get it? If no why?
34. How do you perceive the MTDP 2010-2013? As your own? Or the Assemblies? And why?

THANK YOU ALL.

Appendix 10: Pictures of interviews and focus group discussions

Picture 1: Interview with an Assembly Woman

Picture 2: Interview with Finance & Administration sub-committee chairman

Picture 3: Interview with the head of planning unit

Picture 4: interview with Traditional Leader (Chief)

Picture 5: Focus group discussions with MPCU members.

Interview with the former Development planning Sub-committee chairman