

AWAKENING ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP *Through* SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY



The Shama Model



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Abbreviations

BYC	Beposo Youth Club
CEMAG	Community Environmental Monitoring and Advocacy Group
CHPS	Community-based Health Planning & Services
DA	District Assembly
DACF	District Assembly Common Fund
DCE	District Chief Executive
DDF	District Development Facility
DMTDP	District Medium Term Development Plan
FOAT	Functional Organisational Assessment Tool
FoN	Friends of the Nation
GET	Ghana Educational Trust
GHS	Ghana Cedis
GIPC	Ghana Investment Promotion Centre
GSGDA	Ghana Shared Growth Development Agenda
ICM	Integrated Coastal Management
IGF	Internally Generated Fund
KEEA	Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abirem
LI	Legislative Instrument

MTDP	Medium Term Development Plan
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
RCCs	Regional Coordinating Councils
RPCUs	Regional Planning Coordinating Units
SDA	Shama District Assembly
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEAMA	Shama Ahanta East Metropolitan Assembly
STAR	Strengthening Transparency Accountability & Responsiveness
STMA	Sekondi Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly
TICO	Takoradi International Company
VRA	Volta River Authority
WRCC	Western Regional Coordinating Council

Preface

The laws of Ghana make it imperative for government agencies to show commitment in the prudent management of resources and be accountable in the delivery of services to people at all levels especially those at the grassroots level.

Were we to go by the dictates of the law, we would have a down-up approach to development; a truly decentralized and better system as compared to the present skewed top-down approach with its attendant problems of unrealistic expectations and over-reliance on the Central Government and Members of Parliament. Hopefully, the Oxfam/FoN partnership which has led to Shama District's sterling model of social



accountability should inspire an awareness of the importance and potential of Metropolitan, District and Municipal Assemblies to actually leapfrog our development as a nation. What has started in the Western Region of Ghana should be a tipping point for the transformation of Assemblies across the width and breadth of the country.

Social accountability "affirms direct accountability relationships between citizens and the state and puts them into operation... [it] refers to the broad range of actions and mechanisms...that citizens can use to hold the state to account, as well as the actions on the part of government, civil society, media, and other societal actors that promote or facilitate these efforts"¹.

¹Sirker, K and Cosic, S (2007) *Empowering the marginalized: Case Studies of Social Accountability Initiatives in Asia*. Public Affairs Foundation & World Bank Institute. Washington: World Bank Institute.

The overarching principle in social accountability interventions is equity and inclusiveness. Other features of social accountability such as transparency, partnership, ownership, sustainability and efficiency are all anchored on the principle of equity and inclusiveness. All these components of social accountability are present in the Shama District model.

This book chronicles the inspiring story of how Shama District Assembly (SDA), which is fairly young (barely a decade old) among the 216 Metropolitan, Municipal and Districts and Assemblies, has been able to mobilize its citizens to be actively involved in their own development. It is the story of a paradigm shift from the typical closed and bureaucratic local governance structure to a more open, transparent and inclusive District Assembly. It is expected that this document would enhance a better understanding and appreciation of participatory approach to development and social accountability mechanisms. May the Shama model be the beginning of a revolution in good and accountable governance in Ghana!



Section One

SHAMA DISTRICT PROFILE

(Working and Rising Together)

*"The creation of a District is not for political expediency, but rather it is for development."
-**Timothy Ayensu** (former Assembly member, Shama-Bentsir)*



SHAMA DISTRICT ASSEMBLY: WORKING AND RISING TOGETHER

The Shama District Assembly (SDA) is among the youngest Assemblies in the country, yet it has, within barely a decade of its existence, set precedence in social accountability unparalleled in the history of local governance in Ghana. The Assembly has not only narrowed the space for citizen engagement but has incrementally, sustained community confidence in local governance even within the publicly-perceived failed local governance system in Ghana.

The Assembly was inaugurated in March 2008, having been carved out of the Shama Ahanta East Assembly (SEAMA) in December 2007 by a Legislative Instrument (LI 1882) under the Local Government Act 1993, Act 462. With its capital at Shama, the District shares borders with Sekondi

Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly (STMA) to the West, the Gulf of Guinea to the South, Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abirem Assembly (KEEA) to the East and the Wassa East District (WED) to its North. It has 48 major settlements and 16 minor settlements, all covering a total land size of 198 square kilometers.

In terms of population, the Shama District has a total of 81,966². This represents 3.4 percent of the total population of the Western Region. Out of the 81,966 people, about 43,262, representing 52.8 percent are females while 38,704, representing 47.2 percent of the population are males³.

²Population and Housing Census, 2010.

³*ibid*



Offices of the Shama District Assembly

A significant feature of SDA is that it is very youthful. But its youth are vibrant and poised to making a difference. A classical example is the current DCE, Eric Cobbinah, who is about 30 years old. The acting

Development Planning Officer of the Assembly, Jeffery Scott, is also 28 years old. The majority of Assembly members and Area Council representatives are less than 45 years old.

Governance structure

The Executive Committee is the highest decision making body of the District. The Executive Committee is supported by six⁽⁶⁾ functional Sub-Committees, namely; Development Planning, Works, Finance and Administration, Agriculture, Coastal Management, Social Services as well as Justice and Security. In addition, the District operates further at the grass root level through six (6) Town or Area Councils and 17 electoral areas.

In terms of membership, the District has 17 elected Assembly members (that is elected representatives of electoral areas within the district) and 8 appointed members. At any point in time, the District Chief Executive (DCE) and the Member of Parliament have seats at the Assembly's proceedings and deliberations.

Resources, Challenges and Opportunities

The District has very fertile lands for a variety of crop production. The River Pra, one of the major rivers in the country enters the ocean through Shama District. In addition to that, the District is endowed with several streams.

Shama is home to two major power producers: the Volta River Authority (VRA) operating the Aboadze Thermal Plant and TICO. There are also over ten (10) quarries located in the District.

These and other resources notwithstanding, the District has some challenges to grapple with. For instance, although Agriculture is the backbone of the District's economy, there is woefully inadequate mechanized farming going on. Farming is dominated by an estimated 47,680 small holder farmers as is typically the case in every part of the country. With regards to marine fishing, there are about 1,500 registered canoes in the District. There is a lot of potential for harvesting and processing of fish in fishing communities such as Abuesi and Aboadze.

Some other challenges faced by the District include; inadequate school infrastructure, child labour, malnutrition, high post-harvest losses, inadequate health facilities and poor revenue mobilization.

However, the challenges present further opportunities in the areas of tourism, irrigation farming, investment in education, and royalties from power producers and quarries.

IMPACT ►



*Timothy Ayensu,
former Assembly member*

Timothy Ayensu was an Assembly member for Bentsir in Shama from 2011 to 2015. He served only one term and decided to step down to pursue other interests. But he continues to be actively involved with the District Assembly. He is resourceful to the Assembly and its partners, especially Friends of the Nation, being a leading member of the Community Environmental Monitoring and Advocacy Group (CEMAG), a communal network instituted by FoN (See Appendix B).

According to Timothy, "The creation of a District is not for political expediency but rather it is for development. At the time the Legislative Instrument (LI) was going before parliament, some politicians kicked against it. They thought it was merely for some political gains by the government of the day. But from my experience, I can say the creation of a District or Municipal Assembly is not for political expediency. It is for development. When Shama became an autonomous district, it is then and then only that developments started going to remote areas. It would even interest you to go to a place like Bosomdo, one of the communities along Pra river, to see a modern nursery school facility. That would not have happened if we had not had an autonomous District to focus on development in this area. If all other Districts- especially the

recent ones- were to live up to expectations, it would become obvious that like Shama, every district assembly ought to be the focal point for grassroot development."

Timothy was an integral part of the creation of the District's Medium Term Development Plan. In his own words, "I took an active role in the Assembly's development. I was the chairman of the sub-committee for Works and doubled as a high-ranking member of the Development Planning sub-committee. I assisted with deliberations. At the same time, when the Assembly proposed its Medium-Term Development Plan for 2014 to 2017, I played an active role by going around the communities in the district. We entered into almost 34 communities. We took their needs assessment and based on that we developed the Plan."

"I advocated certain things for Bentsir electoral area. One of the communities, Amenano, did not have a school, so the children had to walk to school at Shama and back with all the associated security risks. Tullow Ghana Limited responded

and through Silver Trust, they built a nursery school for the children. The school has come up now to class three. Having a primary school was a great relief for the parents in that community."

Among other things, Timothy championed for drains to be constructed at the main market at Bentsir as well as obtaining a CHPS Compound for his community before taken an honourable bow out of office.

"I don't have any regrets that I am no more the Assembly member. I also can boast that during my tenure, I got at least a project for my community that people can attest to. Apart from that, I'm considered a senior citizen in the community. I am an opinion leader and the elders seek my opinion and invite me to important meetings affecting the community," he says.

Sources of funding

According to the 1992 Constitution (Article 245, Sub-sections a and b) an Assembly is mandated to formulate and execute plans and programmes; and strategize for effective mobilization of the resources necessary for the overall development of a district. In addition, the District Assembly is tasked to levy and collect taxes, rates, duties and fees.

Like other Assemblies, the Shama District has two main sources of funding, that is; Internally Generated Funds (IGF) and funding from external sources. The SDA obtains its IGF from lands and royalties, fees, fines, licenses, property rates, rent, among others. The external statutory sources of funding are the District Assembly Common Fund (DACF), Government Transfers and Grants, GETFund and others. There is also support from Donors such as USAID, Tullow Ghana Limited, FoN and Oxfam.

In order to adequately manage the resources of the District and in line with the national development plan, i.e. Ghana Shared Growth Development Agenda II (GSGDA II), SDA's MTDP was based on five (5) adopted thematic areas for mobilisation of funds and execution

of projects. These are; Private Sector Competiveness, Agriculture and Natural Resource Management, Infrastructure, Energy and Human Settlement, Human Resource Development and Transparent & Accountable Governance⁴.

These thematic areas give the Assembly a sense of focus on its presently MTDP and beyond. The fifth thematic area of Transparency and Accountable Governance has been recognized as a crucial component of the District's success story thus far.

Essentially, the District's social accountability model has been anchored on the following questions:

- How should the Assembly generate more funding for its operations?
- How does the Assembly account for its income and expenditure?
- What expectations or demands do citizens have of the Assembly and how does the Assembly mobilize funds to supply those demands?
- How best should the Assembly harness its resources to improve the living conditions of its citizens?

⁴ Scott, Jeffery. Mid Term Review of MTDP at the People's Forum, Shama. 25 February 2016.

Friends of the Nation (FoN) has been a key partner in the Assembly's quest to be more open and responsive to the needs of the citizenry.

Meaningful Partnerships

So far, the Shama District Assembly has partnered with corporate entities, individuals, government entities and civil society organizations to carry out its mandate of enhancing the quality of life of people in the District. However, its most instrumental partner has been Friends of the Nation (FoN).

Friends of the Nation was established in 1993 as a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO). It is a prominent NGO based in Adiembra, Sekondi-Takoradi, championing the causes of coastal communities and communities affected by mining operations. Over the past couple of years, FoN has been immensely supported by Oxfam to pilot social accountability schemes especially through the *People's Forum* initiative and Town Hall meetings which form an integral part of the implementation of the District's MTDP.

FRIENDS OF THE NATION



Friends of the Nation (FoN) has played a pivotal role in the realization of an accountable system in Shama. Since its establishment in 1993 as an NGO advocating socio-environment issues, FoN has become a powerhouse of innovative ideas for promoting and actualizing active citizenship and social accountability programmes. It has continuously championed human rights and resource governance, particularly within the coastal areas of the Western Region where it is located.

FoN operates in core function areas such as Resource Management, Population, Health Management, Enterprise Development and Active Citizenship. FoN's mission is to be able to enhance increased action for sustainable natural resource management, healthy environments and proactive citizenship.

Thus, bearing in mind that by incorporating citizens' voice in development planning public sector service delivery and accountability is highly improved, FoN initiated a project to facilitate the preparation and



Donkris Mevuta

Founder and Executive Director of Friends of the Nation

implementation of the statutory Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP) of Shama District Assembly. This initiative is in tandem with Oxfam's aim of focusing on transparency and accountability issues at the local level in Ghana with pilots in Shama and Jomoro Districts which are directly affected by oil and mining productions.

FoN's facilitation is to encourage citizens to exercise their rights to demand information and accountability from their local government.

Apart from Oxfam, FoN has equally benefited from partnership with organisations such as STAR-Ghana and the French Embassy, to make an impact in Shama.



Entrance to the Shama District Assembly

Some of the benefits accruing from the District's partnership with Friends of the Nation include:

- A better understanding of why District Assemblies ought to be transparent and accountable to the citizens. Consequently, the Shama District has incorporated regular Town Hall meetings in its Annual Plans to discuss with the citizenry on the status of implementation.
- Active participation of more than 3,000 people from over thirty-four (34) communities in the preparation and the validation of the District's Medium Term Development Plan (DMTDP). It is the first time in the District's history that such a huge proportion of its citizens have been actively involved in its planning and subsequent implementation of the plans.
- Improved capacity and skills of the District to use participatory processes to prepare their MTDPs and engage the citizenry to address their needs and concerns.
- Increased access to information on the DMTDPs by stakeholders and the citizenry to serve as tool to monitor their implementation and also demand transparency and accountability.
- Strengthened capacity of Community leaders and District Assembly officers to implement Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) to address climate change vulnerabilities and coastal resources management issues. About 15 projects and programmes incorporated into the plan to tackle coastal resources management and climate change issues.
- Increased understanding of citizens to engage the District Assemblies to demand transparency and accountability in the implementation of the DMTDP. Citizens also understand the need to pay taxes such as property rates, ground rent etc. Through this citizens are aware of their rights to seek answers on how District Assemblies utilise their taxes⁵.

Clearly, as presented in the subsequent sections of this document, SDA is living true to its motto of "Working and rising together."

⁵Project Summary: Bridging Gaps in Local Governance. FoN.

Section Two

THE PLAN

*"I have worked in a closed system and I have worked in an open system.
But I can vouch that the open system is the best."*

-Habib Mohammed,

Development Planning Officer, Shama District Assembly (2010-2016)



THE PLAN

Section 10 of the Local Governance Act 1993 (Act 462) states inter alia that;

(1) A District Assembly shall exercise political and administrative authority in the district, provide guidance, give direction to, and supervise the other administrative authorities in the district.

(2) For the purpose of subsection (1), a District Assembly shall perform deliberative, legislative and executive functions.

(3) Without prejudice to subsections (1) and (2), a District Assembly is responsible for the overall development of the district and shall ensure the preparation and submission through the regional co-ordinating council (i) of development plans of the district to the National Development Planning Commission for approval, and (ii) of the budget of the district related to the approved plans to the Minister responsible for Finance for approval; shall formulate and execute plans, programmes and strategies for the effective mobilisation of the resources necessary for the overall development of the district.

In view of the provisions of the Constitution and the Act stated above, the National Development Planning Commission is equally mandated by the National Development Planning Act 1994 (Act 480, Section 1 to 11) to provide guidelines to public service entities like district assemblies in the preparation of development plans⁶.

The rationale for the guidelines is to enable the NDPC monitor and evaluate the various districts on their performance of the MTDP. Similarly, the Regional Planning Coordinating Units (RPCUs) of the Regional Coordinating Councils (RCCs) are to use the guidelines in coordinating, harmonizing, monitoring and evaluating the DMTDP.

Thus, following the policy framework and guidelines from the NDPC, the Shama District Assembly created its Medium-Term Plan for the 2014-2017 period starting from June 2014. Prior to that, the Assembly had implemented a less impactful plan for the 2010-2013 period prepared in accordance with the GSGDA I. Friends of the Nation (FoN), along with its partners, (notably, Oxfam, French Embassy and STAR-Ghana) played a catalytic role by providing technical and financial support in the design and ongoing implementation of

⁶Guidelines for the preparation of DMTDP under the GSGDA II (2014-2017). NDPC, December 2013.

Needs Assessment

Officers of SDA obtaining inputs from women group



the plan. The involvement of FoN in this process has been a game changer.

There were various steps in the process of developing the medium term plan. These were; Needs Assessment, Public Hearings and Validation and Adoption of Plan.

In order to solicit input from the citizenry and to ascertain which development gaps need to be filled, the Planning Team, comprising officers from the Planning Department and Budget Unit of the District Assembly, visited about 34 major communities within the 6 Area Councils of the District. From the beginning to the end of formulating the plan, the team used a participatory approach which stimulates active citizenship over time. For most communities in Shama District, it was the first time they were being engaged to participate in the Assembly's programmes. For most people, it was the first time they were hearing of and actively participating in the District's MTDP. They were appreciative of the fact that the Assembly considers them as key stakeholders in the design and implementation of the plan.

The needs assessments were held in community town halls and centres. The citizenry were truly up and doing. They opened up and voiced out what they need to improve





upon their living standards.

Upon ascertaining the needs of the communities using the guidelines from the NDPC, the Planning Team employed some social techniques to select which projects and programmes were paramount for the respective communities. Using the principle of gender parity, community members who participated in the Needs Assessment were categorized into three groups: men (40 years and above), women (40 years and above) and youth (all below the age of 40). The Planners adopted this categorization as they realised that the traditional method of putting men and women in the same group does not yield the required responses from women who tend to keep quiet as some men dominate discussions. By grouping them, members of each group were able to articulate their needs and concerns and voted accordingly on which projects should be prioritized.

After voting, the participants were regrouped together whereby they themselves ranked their priorities and

arrived at a consensus on which project(s) should be implemented within the duration of the DMTDP.

The example of three adjoining communities, Essumankrom, Anapansu and Abotarye is worth mentioning. Two of these communities happened to have community centres whereby the chiefs normally hold public meetings and host visitors. Anapansu did not have a community centre, so the chief and some leaders of Anapansu, notwithstanding the pressing need of a school building were insistent on getting a community centre so that the chief may also host his guests in that centre thus to be at par with his counterparts.

In the end when the community met, they were categorized into groups and voted on what should be their priority. The school building was voted as priority with votes from the women and youth groups in support.

On the prioritisation of issues the planning team had to bear in mind the following:

- a) That, projects should have an impact on a large proportion of the citizenry especially the poor and the vulnerable;
- b) There should be a significant linkage effect on meeting basic human needs and rights as a result of the projects.
- c) All activities, projects and programmes in the district would ultimately achieve the national goal, which also aims at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals(SDGs).
- d) Finally, the projects should also have significant multiplier effects on the local economy and would also achieve local economic development.

In all, FoN collaborated with the Assembly to undertake a needs assessment involving a direct engagement of about 1500 persons from across the width and breadth of the District. The persons were from different backgrounds with varied interest. They included; traditional leaders, civil society and community based organisations, private sector players, trade associations, Fisherfolk, Farmers, persons with disability, youth groups, women's groups, Artisans and vulnerable groups. The District Assembly was able to incorporate various projects and programmes to address the needs of communities within the framework of coastal resources management.



An elderly woman making a point during one of the public hearings



Drafting and public hearings

Having extensively gathered inputs from all the stakeholders, the planning team drafted the Medium Term Plan incorporating the needs of the citizenry under the context of the GSGDA II (refer to thematic areas in Section One).



Nana Adam Eguafu, Chief Fisherman of Aboadze making a point during one of the public hearings.

After the development of the plan, the team had to go back to the people and organise public hearing sessions. These were held in all the six Area councils targeting over 34 communities (between October-November, 2014) for the communities to make further inputs on the draft MTDP. The team asked if the plan they had drafted was a true reflection of the dialogue they had with the communities. Based on the responses from the community, the team fine-tuned the programmes and projects before developing the final plan. The public hearings created further awareness about the MTDP.

IMPACT



HABIB MOHAMMED: He played a pivotal role in the planning and implementation of the 2014-2017 DMTDP.

Habib Mohammed, former Development Planning Officer of the Shama District Assembly started his career in the assembly system in February 1996. With 20 years in public service, he has not experienced a system as open as Shama District, an open system he contributed to its creation.

“When I joined the assembly system, everything was in a closed atmosphere. In fact, people from outside could not get the opportunity to see what was going on. Even assembly members were not privy to a whole lot of things going on in the assembly, how much more outsiders,” he recalls, adding, “Then, I realised that there is what we call the ‘Trinity’ which is made up of the DCE, the Coordinating Director and the Finance Officer. They formed the trinity. They knew everything happening in the assembly, the rest of us couldn’t know much.”

But Mr. Mohammed nurtured hope that a time will come when the assembly system would open up. According to him, “If you look at literature, what is in the laws is that we ought to bring people into the picture. That we cannot have projects without involving people. The laws talk about a participatory work. The people are supposed to know what is happening, but still people do cover up things. I don’t know whether it’s out of ignorance on the part of the electorate or it is just that the officers don’t want to open up to the public although the laws enjoin us to be open.

On paper, the Assembly concept is wonderful. It is meant to allow people to participate and know what is going on and allowing people to ask questions. And then also it gives officers the opportunity to interact with the outside world. Even before I came to Shama, I remember in Komenda-Edna-Eguafo-Abirem, there was a World Bank funded project on social accountability. We did a pilot by seeking information from the people. We tried to find out whether they knew about the assembly and its functions. The responses that we got were not encouraging. We realized that people had no idea about what the assembly was meant for. They didn't even know that it's their rights to demand projects and programmes from the assembly and also their right to contribute their quota to the assembly. That exercise was an eye opener for me. It started dawning on some of us that this is an era whereby the assembly concept would be opened up for people. But it didn't travel far. The whole momentum died off and nothing was heard of any potential reform in our ways. Then, I was transferred to Shama District.

In Shama we also started on a very low key. I came to meet a chief executive who had worked with development oriented organizations. When I came, I remember we organised the first people's assembly,

where the funding we got from the Central Government were publicized. People were given the opportunity to ask questions. But that was also a nine day wonder. It stopped with her exit.

But luckily for us, FoN entered the fray. The District has had many partners, but the relationship with FoN has been wonderful. We started with FoN on a Spatial Mapping project on land use mappings for ensuring a judicious use of land resources. Our first interaction with FoN went on successfully.

The next project was the Medium Term Development Plan, a four year rolling plan which will assist the assembly in its implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects and programmes. Here again, FoN embraced the idea and partnered with us to create a medium term plan which we are currently implementing. They came in with financial and technical assistance to help us develop the plan."

Benefits of an open system

Mr. Habib is now an ardent advocate of the open system. In discussing the benefits of an open system, he says, "Don't forget that one of the main tasks of the assembly is to collect taxes. Now, if the people are

paying taxes and they don't know what the taxes are used for do you think that they will continue to pay? They may only pay under cohesion. Here, we are letting the people know what we use their taxes for, so willingly they just pay when we go to them. Even some travel to the assembly to pay voluntarily.

The open system has enabled people to for instance know that you need to take a permit before you start developing your land. You don't wait to build and midway through building you are asked to produce permit. Before this opening up, people would apply for permit and it would take between 2 to 5 years before they received the permit. But now, we have given ourselves up to 30 days for you to get your permit. If it should go beyond 30 days it means there is a problem with your application. Even then, we would ask you to come and we will guide you on how to go about it. So the maximum should be between 30 and 60 days. You should have your permit and you can start your development. There are no delays. Initially, people were not informed about the process and cost of the permit, in fact they thought it would delay them. Then they discovered it doesn't cost anything. Now they appreciate the fact that they need permits before they start developing their lands."

Mr. Mohammed further states that, "The open system is the best for any assembly to take than the closed system. Here, instead of the "Trinity", you have the multitude of people doing the work for you. You can talk about the high-level assembly officials, the low level, the assembly members, the area council members, the unit committee members- they are all involved in the activities that we are doing.

Currently, development partners want to see assemblies being open before they fund projects. That is one major benefit and I encourage other assemblies to emulate the Shama example. It brings more investors."

He goes on to give an example: "Recently, there were Chinese investors who wanted to establish a ceramic tile factory. They came straight to the assembly. Luckily on that day the DCE, Planning Officer and Works Engineer were all present. We had a meeting. We listened to them and they said they have identified an area within the district for their project. We then led them to the location. During the negotiation, they also got a hint that there is a similar site in another district. When they went

there people tried to “chop” their money (extort money from them). They got to know that the system at Shama was different from this other district they were now dealing with. Quickly, they came back to Shama and told us what had happened to them. We facilitated a deal between the investor and the owners of the land. As we speak, the investors are ready to commence their project which will likely be a means of employment for youth in the district. The Assembly is also going to get income (through levies) from the project. And the place will also generate other interests or ancillary economic services in the area. That's a huge plus for the assembly. We are fulfilling what the law says. Thus, I have worked in a closed system and I have worked in an open system. But I can vouch that the open system is the best. It's making the work, highly successful. It is indeed very rewarding.”

Mr. Habib Mohammed has since March 2016 been transferred to Birim North as the Coordinating Director of that district. “I look forward to having FoN in Birim North because I am going to promote an open system there,” he declares.

Validation and adoption

On December 18, 2014 after about 4 months of deliberations, needs assessment, public hearings and drafting of the Plan, the Shama District Assembly held a forum at Shama to validate its District Medium Term Development Plan (DMTDP, 2014-2017).

According to Mr. Stephen Blighton, the Regional Economic Planning Officer of the Western Regional Coordinating Council (WRCC), the Shama District had led in the submission of its MTDP and also complied with the guidelines. A Deputy Director of the NDPC, Jonathan Azasoo who was also present at the validation event said, “The processes and outcome of the Shama DMTDP serve as a model for other Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies to emulate.”

Following the validation, the District Assembly presented the finalized document to its General Assembly for adoption and subsequently submitted it to the National Development Planning Commission.



*A young lady voicing her views during the validation of the MTDP.
Other youths in the background*

Section Three

THE PEOPLE'S FORUM

*"It is the responsibility of the assembly to open up to the people and share its vision,
by doing that revenue generation becomes even easier."
-Donkris Mevuta, Executive Director, Friends of the Nation*



THE PEOPLE'S FORUM (Accounting to the People)

The essence of social accountability is cast within the context of rights and responsibilities. Rights must go with responsibilities and such a balance is crucial to any real and meaningful development of human potential and natural resources. As the Assembly may have responsibility of doing things, providing projects for communities, it also have a right to take or demand from the people. Similarly, the citizenry also have rights to demand their needs from the Assembly.

The Executive Director of Friends of the Nation (FoN) speaks of the need for a balanced partnership between the Assembly and citizenry: "The Assembly should be open in providing its mandate to the people. Their mandate should be exercised in such a manner that the people will be able to participate in the delivery of projects. In doing that, people would feel free to contribute to development. It is the responsibility of the assembly to open up to the people and share its vision, by doing that revenue generation becomes even easier," he states.

Consequently, FoN, with funding support from Oxfam has initiated the People's Forum, a platform for the

Shama District Assembly to render account to its citizenry. It is the platform where the people and officers of the Assembly come together to dialogue on what matters most to them regarding schools, water, electricity, roads and other social amenities. This is the crux of the social accountability project in Shama.

Town Hall Meetings

So far, there have been two People's Forums organised since the inception and implementation of the District's Medium Term Development Plan for the 2014-2017 period.

The People's Forum is usually preceded by Town Hall meetings in the six (6) Area Councils, namely;

- Aboadze-Abuesi
- Inchaban
- Shama Junction
- Supom Dunkwa
- Shama
- Assorko-Essaman

In 2015, seven (7) Town Hall meetings were held before the People's Forum. Before the 2016 Forum in February, five (5) Town Hall meetings were held throughout the six (6) Area councils. Members of the Community Environmental Monitoring and Advocacy Groups (CEMAGs) in the district played a leading role during the

town hall meetings and indeed throughout the process of the MTDP.

Posters

A key and innovative component of the 2016 town hall meetings was the introduction of posters detailing project deliverables and status of delivery: completed and ongoing, who the contractor was, cost of the project, location and source of funding. One thousand copies of the A1 size posters were printed and pasted on notice boards and public spaces throughout the district. Hence, before people came to the Town Hall meetings they were adequately abreast on the projects going on in their communities. They attended the Town Hall, actively participated by meetings asking the necessary questions and making the necessary inputs.

Some people either phoned into radio programmes or went to the District office to make more enquiries about projects in their communities. Some would try to challenge what we had put out there, some would try to understand. We had to explain to our stakeholders.

Undoubtedly, the posters have been crucial in the social accountability regime at Shama.





SHAMA DISTRICT ASSEMBLY'S PROJECTS FROM THE YEAR 2014 - 2015

Name of Project	Project site	Location	Contractor	Funding	Contract Sum (GH)	Percentage Complete	Remarks	Name of Project	Project site	Location	Contractor	Funding	Contract Sum (GH)	Percentage Complete	Remarks
Construction of Market Complex		Inshubun	Messrs Natuka Company Ltd	District Assembly Common Fund	138,272.88	37% Complete	Contract terminated. Looking for private investors.	Renovation of 1 No. 6 Unit Classroom Block		Essaman	Messrs Gogicap Ent	District Development Facility Fund	32,438.74	100% Complete	Completed and in use
Construction of Mechanical Borehole		Inshubun	Dr/ Anor Water System Ltd	Internally Sourced Fund	12,201.65	100% Complete	Completed and in use	Construction of Concrete Drain		Komfuku	Messrs Gogicap Enterprise Ltd	District Development Facility Fund	15,034.43	100% Complete	Completed and in use
Construction of 1 No. 3 Unit Classroom Block		Fawomanyi	Messrs Opatech Company Ltd	District Development Facility Fund	124,691.07	100% Complete	Completed and in use	Construction of Concrete Drain		Essaman	Messrs Filopot Company Ltd	District Development Facility Fund	48,454.45	100% Complete	Completed and in use
Construction of 1 No. 1 Unit Classroom Block with ancillary facilities		Bronkrom		District Development Facility Fund		100% Complete	Completed and in use	Construction of Concrete Drain		Nyanrom	Messrs Gogicap Enterprise Ltd	District Development Facility Fund	49,080.72	100% Complete	Completed and in use
Completion of 1 No. 8 Unit Classroom block		Aboso	Messrs Opatech Company Ltd	District Development Facility Fund	85,593.62	100% Complete	Completed and in use	Construction of Concrete Drain		Gertur Market	Messrs Jasima Company Ltd	District Development Facility Fund	25,000.50	100% Complete	Completed and in use
Installation of pipes on Boreholes		Dwoma, Asem Aso 2, Dibiirinkoye na, Bepoo, Bronkrom	NIRA	International Development Agency		100% Complete	Completed and in Use	Construction of Fire Station		Shama	Burtur Enterprise Ltd	District Development Facility Fund	162,932.39	100% Complete	Completed and in use
Construction of 3No 3 seater VIP latrines, 1 no 8 seater and 1 No 4 Seater VIP latrine		Sopomu Dunkwa & Aboador	Messrs Rti Prumpt Company Ltd	International Development Agency	196,295.54	100% Complete	Completed and in Use	Construction of CHPS Compound		Inshubun	Dampco Ltd	District Assembly Common Fund	64,354.37	60% (Roofing)	Contractor on site
Construction of Public Bath House		Upper Inshubun	Robay Company Ltd	Member of Parliament's Common Fund	34,038.38		Drains completed. Bathroom ongoing	Construction of CHPS Compound		Bepoo	Clean & Smooth Ltd	District Assembly Common Fund	65,649.02	60% (Roofing)	Contractor on site
Construction of 1 No. 10-Seater W/C Place of Convenience		Lower Inshubun	Vigil Enterprise	District Development Fund	44,988.05	75% Complete	Contractor yet to resume site	Construction of 16 seater toilet		Besstr	Sunareah Enterprise Ltd	District Assembly Common Fund	88,256.76		Sub structure Contractor not on-site
								Construction of 12 seater Aqua Priy		Ohiamadwen	Filopot Company	District Assembly Common Fund	28,943.50	100%	Completed and in use
								Renovation of 10 Block		Dibiirinkoye	Amptis Company Ltd	Member of Parliament's Common Fund	38,828.82	100% Complete	Completed and in use

PROMOTING SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Publications Supported by



A sample of A1 posters circulated across the District.

The Forums

The first was held in February 2015. Turnout was high (about 120 participants on each occasion) and participation was massive. A major feature of the 2015 PF was that it was aired live on Radio Shama which enabled those who could not be physically present to phone into the programme and ask questions or make contributions.

The second edition of the People's Forum within the implementation of the MTDP was held in February 2016 at Shama. Due to some technical hitches experienced by Radio Shama, this forum could not be carried live on radio. Nonetheless, it was well-attended citizens of different backgrounds: traditional rulers (Chiefs and Queenmothers), traders, artisans, hairdressers, youth groups, fishermen, among others.



A traditional ruler emphasizing a point at the People's Forum

The 2016 forum coincided with the mid-term review of the District's MTDP. The District having spent two years into the implementation of the Medium Term Plan had to go back to the people and inform them of what they had been able to accomplish vis-à-vis challenges they were encountering. This was in fulfillment of we can refer to as a covenant between the assembly and the people. By informing the people of projects and programmes implemented thus far within the 4-year Plan, the Assembly also obtained feedback and inputs on the way forward. Since this forum was also preceded by the Town Hall meetings throughout the different Area councils, coupled

with the posters of deliverables, the participants came to the forum adequately prepared.

For about 2 hours the Shama District Assembly and its citizenry deliberated on status of projects and programmes captured within the MTDP. There were presentations from the Budget and Planning departments of the Assembly followed by questions and general comments from the people therein gathered.

According to the presentation made by the Budget Unit, the District improved with its collection of fees as part of its IGF. In 2014 the District collected GHS357, 630.89 representing 79.81 percent of estimated revenues. This reduced slightly in 2015 when the District received a total of GHS341,503.43, representing 71.73 percent of the targeted revenues.

The District Assembly however did not perform well in the collection of land rates and royalties. In 2014, the Assembly made a total of GHS 62,593.04 representing about 67.30 percent of estimated revenue and in 2015 the Assembly realized a total of GHS 60,487.00 representing 59.01 percent of the target. Some citizens were not satisfied with the reduction in royalties and urged the District to step up efforts to collect royalties from major energy companies such as TICO and VRA as well as the many quarries which operate within the District.



Nana Akosoa Gyamfiaba II (left) and Eric Cobbinah, the new DCE of Shama at the People's Forum, 2016.

With regards to external funds received, it was noted that the Assembly's share of the District Assembly Common Fund (DACF) increased from GHS 616,025.87 (representing 26.24 percent of expected receipts) to GHS 1,975,611.73 (representing 79 percent of projected receipts)⁷.

In learning about the financial situation of SDA, the participants also learnt about the challenges that the District faces in the mobilization of revenue. These include;

1. Low collection of property rate; this being because of inaccessible properties within the District.
2. Delays in the release of statutory funds such as DACF and DDF grants
3. The unwillingness of citizens to pay their rates.

On its part, the Planning unit of the Assembly chronicled projects and programmes executed within the first half of the MTDP. These were categorized within 5 thematic areas, that is;

- Infrastructure, Energy and Human Development
- Human Settlement
- Governance, Transparency and Accountability
- Agriculture and Natural Resources Management
- Social Protection

A list of projects and programmes undertaken within the first two years of the MTDP and captured at the Mid-Term Review (People's Forum) is attached as Appendix A.

Meanwhile, one of the ongoing projects, a small



Nana Yartel, a budget officer of the Shama Assembly addressing community members.

⁷Mid-Term Review of Financial Performance of the Assembly

community water intervention located at Supomu Dunkwa, a community on the Takoradi-Accra Highway, generated extensive discussions and some level of controversy, particularly with reference to the cost involved. Also related to the question of cost was a mechanized borehole situated at Inchaban Junction. In both cases, the community representatives (in the case of Inchaban, a queen mother) did not think such seemingly small projects should cost as high as indicated on the posters and the Mid- Term presentations. The District's Works Engineer was

present to explain the technologies involved in both water projects and why a mechanized borehole could not cost the same as an ordinary borehole which the queen mother alluded to. He also explained the details of the Small Town Water Project at Supomu Dunkwa, including the fact that the contract was awarded to an independent construction firm, Messrs Deccos Investment Limited.

A deterrent

During the 2016 People's Forum it came to light that



A high level tank (left) and a water board office (right) two of the components of the Supomu water project.

IMPACT



Jeffery Scott. He had a grasp of the issues at hand and was adept at presenting and answering questions at the 2016 People's Forum.

Jeffery Scott started work on 1 January 2013 at Shama District Assembly, being his first appointment in the public service. He has played a key role in communicating the agenda of the District in implementing the 2014-2017 Medium Term Plan.

In assessing the District Assembly's performance at the Mid-Term review, Jeffery Scott admits that the District did not perform well in communicating the

costs associated with implemented projects. He says, "Our main challenge with the posters we sent out into the communities was the values allocated to the projects. Although all projects are approved by their own assembly members, people felt we were doing less with more money. Some citizens felt if they were to build their own classroom blocks, it would not cost as high as the District Assembly quotes for the projects. That is an area I do not think we scored high marks."

Thus, Scott states that, "In our next accountability forum, we'll take the pain to explain into detail the cost involved in executing projects. We normally undertake these projects on credit and we give them to private constructors who are also working for profit. That is different from an individual building his own house at the pace that he wants. But the assembly, whether you have money or not, once you have promised the people projects within a plan, then you have to find ways to execute them.

Even though citizens appreciate what we are doing for them, they don't seem convinced about how much we spend on the interventions undertaken. Moving ahead we may have to take the people through the procurement process and what goes into costing the projects, so we can educate citizens well."

"We appreciate the bottom-up approach. It was by interacting with the communities that we really became abreast with what they wanted, not what we thought they wanted," he declares.

Barely 3 years into his work at the Assembly, Scott, has recently been made the Acting Chief Planning Officer of the District. Could this be an enormous responsibility for him, being young and junior in rank and stepping into the shoes of his former boss, Mr. Habib Mohammed?

"I have grown into the role. My boss, [Habib] nurtured me. Just when the Mid-Term Plan was completed there was the need for a validation of all the steps and issues being raised by communities. We invited heads of departments and all stakeholders. It was on 18 November, 2014. I remember that day, because it was the first time, Mr. Habib gave me the opportunity to make a presentation before the entire community and our national and regional bosses to appreciate our work at the Assembly. From there, my big man [Habib] and people knew that in his absence, I could deliver," he says, adding, "The challenge I have is with administration. All other executives are above my rank. Administratively, it is not easy summoning your seniors to a meeting, wondering the importance and

seriousness they would attach to the meeting because you are a junior officer. So far, having justified myself, I hope overcome this challenge in working with my seniors. Already, there are clear indications that my seniors are ready and willing to assist me so we all do our best for the Shama District Assembly."

On collaboration with FoN, Scott reiterates that, "The Town Hall meetings and People's Forum that Oxfam and FoN have helped us undertake have now become key indicators in the mandatory Functional Organisational Assessment Tool (FOAT) which enables Shama District to score high on the assessment and have access to the District Development Facility(DDF)."

the DA had taken ten (10) of its Assembly members to court for not paying fees they are required to pay because of franchise obtained to manage public toilets in their respective communities.

The Assembly men had shown remorse and directed by the court to pay the outstanding amounts within a certain timeline. This action was a clear warning to participants and an indicator that the Assembly was bent on prosecuting all citizens who failed to fulfill their tax obligations.

Section Four

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

(Impact stories, Lessons and Testimonies)

"There are a lot of lessons we have learnt from the work that Friends of the Nation is doing. We have learnt some tips on how to approach the supply side to be more responsive to the demand side."

- Chan Krisna Sawada, Senior Programs Officer, Oxfam in Cambodia



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

(Impact Stories, Lessons and Testimonies)

The social accountability project in the Shama District continues to inspire active citizenship and self-initiatives by some individuals and groups to complement the efforts of the District in line with its MTDP. In this section, initiatives by Nana Akosoa Gyamfiaba II, a queen mother and the Beposo Youth Association are highlighted, followed by a summary of lessons learnt so far in the social accountability model.

Nana Akosoa Gyamfiaba II

Nana Gyamfiaba II is the Queenmother of Nyankrom, a community near Shama Junction. She chaired both People's Forum of 2015 and 2016. She is an active voice and representative of the traditional authorities as she currently holds the position of Acting Queenmother of the Shama Area

Paramourty. Inspired by the participatory processes involved in the preparation of the District Medium Term Plan and the open manner that it is being implemented, she has taken a self-initiative of constructing a community health/counseling center in her community. It is a storey building, self-funded with some support from her network of friends.



Nana Gyamfiaba II, an agent of change.



Community Health/Counseling center under construction at Nyankrom

Beposo Youth Club (BYC)

Beposo Youth Club (BYC) started as a group in November 2013, for the youth in Beposo to support each other. An earlier attempt about 15 years ago had failed. The purpose was to mobilize themselves as youth to help solve problems in the community. They wanted to hold themselves and other community members accountable and be the guardians of Beposo. One of their immediate priorities was to clear heaps of garbage which had been left unattended to by Zoomlion waste collectors for almost 4 weeks. Having cleared the filth, they officially approached the District Assembly in January 2014 and proposed to support the assembly in the collection of revenue at the Beposo Market which is highly patronized twice a week (Tuesdays and Fridays) by traders from as far as the Ashanti and Brong Ahafo regions. They negotiated a partnership with the District Assembly to collect revenue at the Beposo market on the Assembly's behalf for a period of three months. The agency (RevNet) which had been contracted prior to the involvement of the BYC was not performing to the expectations of the Assembly. For the period of 2015, the revenue collection agency had made GHS 15, 000.00 for the whole of the Shama District.

After the agreement with the DA the then 15-member club started collecting toll fees, which was then 20 pesewas a day. By the end of the first quarter of 2014, the Beposo Youth Club had collected a total sum of GHS 7,900.00. With that impressive performance, their contract with the Assembly was renewed.

By the end of 2014, the Beposo Youth Club collected GHS 29,000.00 for the District Assembly. This was unprecedented.

In 2015, the toll was increased from 20pesewas to 50pesewas. By the end the year, the Youth Club had collected a sum of GHS 51,500.00



Members of the Beposo Youth Club

Most of the members of BYC who have been involved in revenue collection express satisfaction of contributing their quota to the development of the assembly. They are also happy about improvement in their own lives, the fact that they have gained interpersonal skills and now confident to express themselves in public meetings.

KEY LESSONS

The following are some important lessons emanating from the social accountability process at Shama District:

1. Power of participatory approach

The making of the District's Plan was not just mere talk shop with the plans shelved. No, it is the realization of dreams and aspirations of communities. It is a bold statement regarding the power of participatory approach to development.

2. Inclusive methodology

It was good grouping the community members during the needs assessment. This brought about divergent views and many issues which the Assembly would have ignored had it not been in touch with the communities to gather data regarding their needs and priorities. The grouping methodology also encouraged participation. In the Muslim communities where most women usually do not

talk in the presence of their men, it was necessary to let the women be on their own. They were then able to open and express what they as women felt were needed in the community.

3. Active citizenship

The people of Shama District have been empowered to actively engage the Assembly to ensure the effective implementation of the Plans. They are aware of the active role they have to play in getting what they want. In Abuesi for instance, where there is a GoG funded sea-defense project going on, the community members who were hitherto apathetic have now, as a result of this social accountability project, resolved to engage the District Assembly to resolve issues of Transparency, Accountability and Responsiveness in connection with the ongoing state funded project. They are also actively involved in the construction of a community centre being funded by the MPs Common Fund.

The Assembly has opened up so much that people are now free, are widely awoken and they go straight to the Assembly to ask questions or lodge complaints. Apart from passing their issues through the chiefs and Assembly representatives, they are now able to walk into the Assembly and talk to officers.

IMPACT

Mark Arthur (affectionately called Uncle Mark) is the Assembly Member for Essaman Electoral Area which covers, Essaman, Apimayim, Essumankrom, Anapansu and Abotarye.

He has been active as an Assembly member for 10 years now. Prior to becoming an Assembly Member, he had worked as a Community Facilitator for Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana (PPAG) and other NGOs.

He shares his feelings about social accountability:

"Governance is now at the door step of the people. Key issues of the communities are being addressed. People are now positive and participate fully in the development of their communities. People in my electoral area now feel the projects are theirs. They used to be very apathetic. Formerly, they wouldn't bother contribute. Now, because they have been brought on board, they participate

fully. People now own the projects. I believe it's because FoN collaborating with the District Assembly has changed so many things within the last few years. Platforms have been created for people to air their views and concerns. When I call for meetings, they come in their numbers. I have never been this happier in my years as an assembly man."



Mark Arthur clarifying issues at the people's forum

4. Capacity development

Through the technical and financial support from Oxfam through Friends of the Nation, officers of SDA continue to benefit from capacity development programmes which should enable the District rally around its citizenry in the preparation of future Development Plans.

5. Commendations

FoN has received high commendation from institutions such as; the NDPC, the RCC and other collaborators. Its key partner, Oxfam continues to inform its collaborators around the world about the successful participatory model employed by FoN at Shama.

TESTIMONIES

On 23 March 2016, the Shama District Assembly received a delegation of Oxfam staff and partners from Cambodia and East Timor to study the social

accountability model of the District. They were hosted by FoN. Generally the group learnt a lot about the accountability process in Shama District. Among other things, they were impressed that the DCEs are not elected as is the case in Cambodia and East Timor.



Solomon Kusi Ampofo (standing) addressing the delegation from Cambodia and East Timor at the Shama District Assembly

Here are some specific comments from leading members of the group of visitors from the East:

"The experience has really been good. At the District Assembly we discussed about a lot of things among them being how they are engaging with the CEMAG and how they are managing funds to implement their projects. Coming from East Timor, the idea of CEMAG is refreshing since we are also embarking on a similar project there. The challenge for us is sustainability of the group that we are building. From this experience, we have gained a lot of ideas on how to sustain our group back in East Timor."

- **Cris Caetano**, Oxfam Australia in East Timor.

"The experience of visiting Ghana with the team has been very helpful. We met a number of partners in Accra to learn what they are doing in the city, as they campaign and lobby at the national level. But we also get to see what has been done on the ground at the grassroots level, particularly what Friends of the Nation has been doing with the supply and demand side of Social Accountability. Although we came from two different countries, and political contexts, there are always things to learn from each other and promote transparency and accountability. There is a lot to take from the experience that you have here, given that your political context is more open. In Cambodia, it's closed. We learn from your

experiences and when we return find opportunities to promote further the work that we are doing in budget transparency and accountability. I think engaging the demand side to be able to demand right and access to information and pushing the supply side to provide and arriving at a point where both sides can build a relationship to move forward is very important and a big experience for us. There are a lot of lessons we have learnt from the work that Friends of the Nation is doing. We have learnt some tips on how to approach the supply side to be more responsive to the demand side."

- **Chan Krisna Sawada**, Senior Programs Officer, Oxfam in Cambodia.



Members of the delegation from Cambodia and East Timor in a pose with Oxfam, FoN and Assembly staff in front of the Shama District Assembly.

Section Five

WHAT NEXT?

(Sustainability strategies)

"The Shama pilot model has taught us that social accountability is the way to go in transforming the country one District Assembly at a time."
-Richard Hato-Kuevor, Oxfam



WHAT NEXT? (Sustainability strategies)

After this successful pilot project at Shama, what should be done next, what should follow? Currently, Friends of the Nation has already commenced a similar social accountability project in Jomoro District and there are requests for them to help other districts in the region with similar interventions. The following strategies are proposed to ensure sustainability and to guide efforts at scaling up the project into other districts.

Continuous involvement of CEMAG

Although the Community, Environmental Monitoring and Advocacy Group, (CEMAG) were set up by Friends of the Nation to promote good governance in the oil and gas sector⁸, their active and continuous involvement in social accountability process in the district (s) is crucial.

Members of CEMAG are informed about issues in their communities. They are in a better position to monitor projects and duly report their findings to the

Assembly.

Incidentally, CEMAG have also become the ground for nurturing leaders, like the current DCE who benefited from FoN training on Social Accountability Tools. This trend should be encouraged. In fact with time, it could be made a mandatory requirement to be a CEMAGs member before you could be appointed as a DCE.

It came to light that some active members of CEMAG are not gainfully employed. Since CEMAG members are not paid, the financial soundness of such unemployed members should be addressed by the District Assembly and its partners, so as to sustain the enthusiasm of such members. Therefore, business development and skills acquisition training programmes should be incorporated into the capacity building workshops which are organised for members of CEMAG from time to time. Also, there should be a careful recruitment process where CEMAG members are selected based on demonstrated commitment and not necessarily because of some token that would keep them working. Otherwise, once funding ceases work will stall.

⁸CEMAG Summary Information, FoN



Susana Ewuakye an active CEMAG member explains some information on the project accountability A1 poster to visitors from Cambodia and East Timor.

Remedies to Improve IGF

Members of the Beposo Youth Club (BYC) who have been instrumental in the mobilization of IG, were very disappointed about the fact that for almost two years, their concerns and promises about building a new market or at least upgrading the current market has not seen the light of day. They were able to increase their revenue collection by informing the traders about the promise received from the Assembly. Since, the traders are not seeing any sign of a new market, some of them are refusing to pay the toll fees especially when it rains and the whole market becomes muddy and unattractive.

It is therefore recommended that the District Assembly fast tracks the Beposo Market project (which is captured in the Medium Term Development Plan) so as to avert dwindling of revenue from the Beposo Market. The Beposo Market project should be a topmost priority among the projects being executed within the second half of the MTDP.

In addition, the current practice where someone has to send the moneys collected to the assembly and render an account before the moneys are taken to the bank is not the best. As soon as

possible, a payment point should be constructed at the Beposo Market and the Assembly should have an agreement with a bank (possibly Lower Pra Rural Bank which supports the Assembly) to directly go to the payment point to collect the moneys and pay in into the Assembly's account, then a receipt issued to that effect. Also, like the CEMAG, the members of the Beposo Youth Club should be offered capacity training in business development and be supported to engage in ventures like corporative mechanized farming, using the Pra River.

Furthermore the District should continue with its plans to:

- a. Complete the Street Addressing and Property Numbering in major Communities within the District
- b. Complete Property Valuation in major Communities within the District
- c. Organise Intensive Education & Sensitization on Rate Payment

Assembly on Radio

The programmes undertaken by the District Assembly are sometimes aired on Shama Radio where there is a programme tailor-made for the District called Time with the Assembly airing every Tuesday morning. The reason for choosing Tuesday is that custom demands

that fisherfolk do not go to the sea on Tuesdays. This has been a taboo from time immemorial. On Tuesdays therefore, most people from fishing communities are glued to their radio set to listen to the programme and get the opportunity to phone in and comment on what is happening on the ground.

In moving forward, the programme should go beyond hosting mainly officers from the Assembly. It should be

more inclusive. Producers should equally bring ordinary citizens into the studio to share their experiences, ideas, challenges and expectations from the District. This should be done on a regular basis. And a segment of five (5) minutes minimum should be dedicated to reporting and addressing issues pertaining to Women, Children and vulnerable groups within the assembly.

Familiarity issues between FoN and SDA:

The cordial relationship existing between FoN and the Shama District Assembly means that FoN is now very familiar with the problems of the Assembly but this should not in any way prevent FoN to voice out its concerns where there is the need to do so. Certainly, FoN's modus operandi has been not to condemn the Assembly, but gently and subtly make an impact. Thus, FoN has been careful not to wash the dirty linen of the Assembly in public. This is good in itself. However, FoN, being an independent and experienced civil society organization, should not shy



Senior citizens of the community could be brought to the studios as part of the Assembly's weekly programme on radio. Their experiences in their communities can inspire the younger generation.

away from naming and shaming any officer of the Assembly who abuses the process of social accountability. The existing cordial relationship should there not be abused but enhanced within the same attitude of openness and accountability guided by integrity and caution.

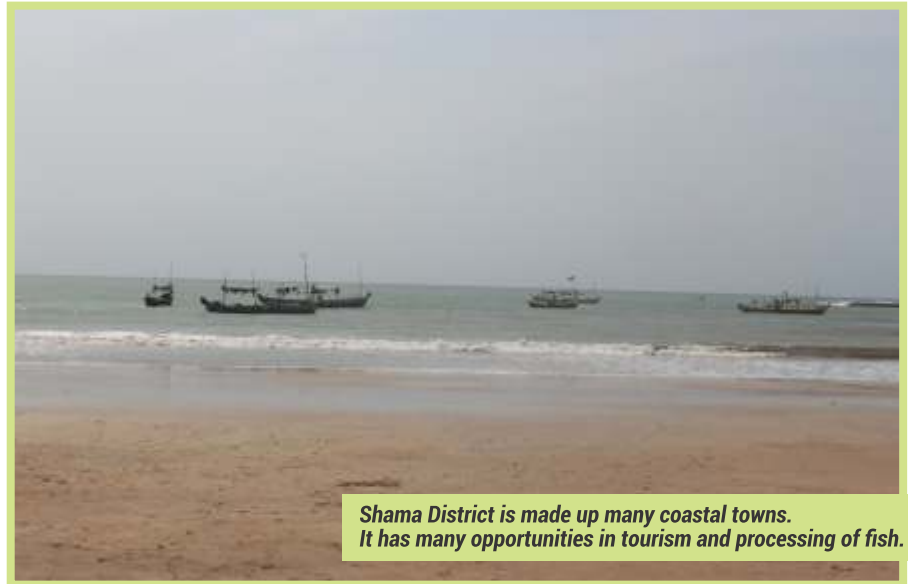
Self-reliance

Should FoN stop its support for the Assembly what would happen? Initiatives in the public service often stagnate when the people involved leave office or supporting agencies stop funding projects. Alternative ways are left unexplored and ideas which could transform many people are left to wither and decay. It is therefore an imperative for the District Assembly to build a stronger institutional framework that will enable the it thrive on positive ideas and rally around the ideal of social accountability.

All stakeholders should bear in mind that good and revolutionary ideas have longer lifespan and that whatever is being done now is meant for

generations of yet unborn. Can the Assembly continue to maintain its momentum in social accountability mechanisms to sustain a long term development?

The next phase of progress in Shama is for the District to sustain the momentum in social accountability by aggressively aiming at being financially self-reliant. The Assembly should be proactive in exploiting investment opportunities that abound in the District. There is for instance, a huge potential for mechanized farming and



Shama District is made up many coastal towns. It has many opportunities in tourism and processing of fish.

tourism. The Assembly should make an investment profile under the guidance of the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC). While doing that, there should be a conscious effort to promote local entrepreneurs, some of whom can partner with investors.

Information dissemination

It is expected that Friends of the Nation would provide the District Assembly with an accountability notice board. This is to enable the District better be in the position to educate the citizenry on the procurement process and to let the public know what the revenues collected are used for.

In exploring other avenues for dissemination of information, the District Assembly should capitalize on using this documentation and the international exposure its social accountability model has gained to its advantage. By so doing, it can improve upon its standards and establish the assembly as an institution that rallies around ideals of transparency and accountability.

It is equally important for the Assembly to frequently update its official website. A website is a 24-hour marketing tool. It is not like a shop that you close for several hours. Even when you go to bed, a website

continues to be available. Also, a website transcends geographic limitations. The information on a website can be accessed anytime and anywhere in the world. To complement the website, the District Assembly should market its potential through social media. By disseminating positive news, the Assembly should obtain positive feedback and attract investors from different parts of the world. Citizens of the District who are abroad can also be invited to make their contributions through social intervention programmes.

Guarding against complacency

It is easy to become complacent especially when you are being praised for a good job done. Stakeholders in the ongoing social accountability model should be on guard against complacency and mediocrity.

The Shama District Assembly has not arrived yet, it has not fully realised its potential. Its success in social accountability practices is only the beginning of a long term process in developing the vast potential in the District. It is not worth being complacent. Stakeholders should not lose sight of the magnitude of responsibility they have. There is more work to do. An excellent performance should be the ultimate goal.

APPENDIX A

A list of some projects captured under the Mid-Term Review, February, 2016

PROJECT /PROGRAMME	LOCATION/BENEFICIARY COMMUNITIES OR INSTITUTIONS
1. Small Town Water System	Supomu Dunkwa, Atwereboanda, Anlo Beach
2. Boreholes	Dwomo, Bronikrom, Beposo, Asem Asa, Obinyimokyena
3. Institutional (School) Latrines	Dwomo Methodist Sch., Aboadze Primary A, Beposo DA, Dunkwa Methodist
4. Toilet Facilities	Ohiamadwen, Twer Nyame, Nkwanta Kesedo, Dwomo, Inchaban
5. Drains	Essaman, Nyankrom, Shama
6. New school buildings	Ohiamadwen KG, Fawomanye JHS, Bronikrom KG, Aboaze Islamic, Ituma
7. Health facilities	Inchaban, Beposo, Aboso
8. Community centres	Abuesi, Supomu
9. Tree planting	Yabiw, Krobo
10. Training of Fishmongers	Several individuals across District
11. Restoration of Mangrove sites	Across the district
12. Irrigation	Badukrom

APPENDIX B

Q & A about CEMAG

Q: What is CEMAG?

A: The discovery of oil and gas in commercial quantities in Ghana in 2007 raised expectations of further progress in the country's economy in view of the enormous opportunities from oil exploitation and production such as; revenues, petrochemical industry development, job creation and poverty reduction and even further estimation of over 5% contribution to GDP. However, the major challenge for Ghana's oil and gas development is to avoid the "resource curse" by managing the environmental degradation associated with the resource exploitation as well as ensuring maximization of benefits of Ghanaians among others.

Against this background, FoN was inspired to support on-going efforts to promote good governance in the oil and gas sector through; transparency, accountability and proper environmental stewardship using citizens' engagement with governments and companies. This culminated in the formation of Community Environmental Monitoring and Advocacy

Groups (CEMAGs) in 2009 with funding support from Oxfam.

Q: How does CEMAG work link to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?

A: CEMAGs work in the coastal districts of the Western Region is linked to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1 and 14.

SDG goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere. The CEMAGs are working towards the protection of community livelihoods (fisheries, farming, etc) to specifically avert poverty and hunger through engagements with stakeholders to ensure that; fishermen are protected and their rights to livelihood is respected by Government and oil investors, also that farmers are protected and the lands acquired for petroleum installations/ facilities have minimum impact on food security in the coastal areas and the due process is followed. (Adequate payment of compensations, provision of proper mitigation measures, etc).

SDG goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources. The CEMAGs, having worked with FoN and partners to conduct

environmental baseline studies in the coastal district are being strengthened to monitor (environmental changes), report and advocate on petroleum pollution including oil spillages, leakages, Ballast water discharges, gas flaring, chemical pollution and others. Some selected CEMAGs are being support by FoN to carry out restoration of mangroves through replanting of mangroves in wetland areas to improve the wetlands environment. Some CEMAGs members are already carrying out sanitation activities (regular cleaning of beaches, engage with District assemblies to enforce bye-laws on sanitation) to ensure environmental sustainability in their districts.

Q: How many CEMAGs have been established?

A: There are six (6) CEMAGs established, one for each of the six coastal districts of the Western Region; notably Shama, STMA, Ahanta West, Nzema East, Ellebelle and Jomoro district CEMAGs.

Q: What is the membership and structure of each District CEMAG?

A: The CEMAGs are made up of representatives from identifiable groups specifically: Religious Leaders (Christians and Moslems leaders), Traditional Leaders, teachers, lecturers, Youth Leaders, Fisher folks, Women

Group Leaders, Media Persons, Student Leaders, CBOs, FBOs, Local TUC Members, Land Owners, Migrant Settlers, etc. Now for each district the membership ranges from 30 to 45 members with a district coordination team of between 5 and 9. The coordination team coordinates the district activity of the CEMAGs. The Regional executives' team is made up of 5 representatives from each of the district to total 30 regional representatives.

Q.How are the CEMAGs networked at the national level?

A: CEMAGs are members of the National Civil Society Oil & Gas platform. The CEMAGS therefore provides an extended presence of the national platform at the grass root level; they provide local level information on oil related activities and engagements with oil companies and implementation of national policies at the community level, they also share community concerns and impacts of the industry at the community level to the national platform. The CEMAGs also act as eyes & ears at the local level to monitor oil and gas activities and report to the national platform and other partners for informed advocacies. The CEMAGs also act as dissemination medium to the communities on emerging issues and policy dialogue on oil & gas and is already working with the National platform to sensitize stakeholders.



The findings, interpretations and conclusions expressed in this document are entirely those of the author(s) and should not be attributed in any manner to Oxfam.

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