



Research Article

© 2023 Okrah et al.

This is an open access article licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>)

Received: 11 December 2022 / Accepted: 21 February 2023 / Published: 6 March 2023

The Impact of District Assembly Common Fund on Socio-Economic Activities in the New Juaben Municipality

Bismark Okrah^{1*}

Ronald Osei Mensah²

Charles Quansah³

¹Institute of Distance Learning,
Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology,
Private Mailbag, Kumasi, Kumasi, Ghana,

²Centre for Languages and Liberal Studies,
Social Development Section, Takoradi Technical University,
P.O. Box 256, Takoradi, Western Region, Ghana

³Department of Geography,
Simon Diedong Dombo University of Business and Integrated,
Development Studies, P.O. Box 64 WA, Upper West, Ghana

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36941/mjss-2023-0010>

Abstract

This paper's value is in determining how the district assembly common money affects socioeconomic activity in NJM. The study, which focused on five thematic areas—instruction, health, poverty eradication, social facilities, and infrastructural development—obtained quantitative and qualitative data using questionnaires, interview guides, and observation. The sample size was thirty-two (32) and included every member of the NJM Assembly. According to the report, society has benefited from a number of advancements in the areas of health care delivery, poverty reduction, social amenities, and infrastructure development. Researchers suggest, based on their findings, that a program be funded by DACF with the goal of cooperating with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture to create a rural environment that is conducive to agricultural development. Last but not least, the management of the fund should be governed by tight rules. The impoverished should be the objective, not the wealthy.

Keywords: Beneficiaries, District Assembly Common Fund, Decentralization, Decision-making, F-CUBE, Rural development, Socio-economic

1. Introduction

Ghana's present local state arrangement can be said to have its backgrounds in the colonial era, when outmoded ruling classes and local councils were instituted as advisory entities with the sole aim of gathering property taxes on immobile domestic possessions. Because of the local governments' inherent structures, functions, and tasks that were inborn at independence and have stayed complete for a very long time, Ahwoi (1992) claims that states did not appear to have placed any major

emphasis on them as agencies for development in the past.

District Assemblies (DAs) were able to be established in 1993 because to the Local state Act, Act 462, which supported the regionalization trend (The Constitution of the Fourth Republic, 1992). According to Section 10(3) of this Act, the DAs' responsibilities include overseeing the district's overall growth, developing and carrying out plans, programs, and policies for the active mobilization of resources needed for the district's overall expansion, encouraging and supporting the district's productive actions and social progress, and removing any challenges to initiative and progress; preserve security and public safety in the district in cooperation with the relevant local and national security authorities; ensure that the district's courts are freely accessible for the progress of justice; offer municipal works and services in the district; Perform any additional responsibilities that may be specified by any other legislation, as well as any necessary research to complete any of the tasks made possible by the Act or any other legislation.

There is no question that substantial financial support is required for the aforesaid functions to be carried out effectively and efficiently. Up to now, the municipal governments' conventional funding sources have been as follows: Identified Rates, Licenses, and Taxes Subject to the Minister of Local Government and Minister of Finance's approval, twenty million cedis (20,000,000) in loans and overdraft facilities, interest on funds, shared revenues, profits from projects and business dealings. The majority of the districts did not have adequate fiscal situations since it was problematic to gather this income, despite the customary sources of funding for progress in the various districts being described above. The Local state Act of 1993 created the concept of "Ceded revenue" as a result of the inadequacy of these outdated funding sources" (Constitution of the Fourth Republic, 1992).

According to that scheme, a portion of the money gathered by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), a central state agency, is shared to the DAs in compliance with a formula by the Ministry of Local State and Rural Development. One of the most innovative and democratic innovations to the country's local state structure was the founding of the DACF. This DACF concept aims to safeguard central resource pooling so that districts with and without financial advantages receive fair funding to finish building the necessary organization and logistics to increase rural residents' standard of living (Ahwoi, 1992).

2. Statement Of the Problem

Since Ghana's regionalization of administration has been so anti-rural, rural towns no longer have the resources to meet their necessities. Since the state has engrossed more on conference the needs of urban inhabitants, relying on it to expand local zones has not been effective. The issue is made worse by the lack of a clear definition of "rural progress" and the incapacity to begin and put into place policies that are steady with achieving those aims.

The DACF notion has emerged as a significant source of subsidy for rural expansion in Ghana and has strengthened the financial base of local state, giving it new life. Rural low-income settlements make up more than 30 of the 54 voting districts that make up the New Juaben Municipality (NJM). Most of these rural communities are devoid of good road systems, piped water, power, second-cycle schools, and health care facilities. As a result, the majority of these rural settlements suffer from severe economic hardship. Therefore, the goal of this enquiry is to determine how socioeconomic activities in NJM have been influence by the District Assembly Common Fund (DACF).

2.1 Objective of the Study

The primary goal of the work is to determine how the District Assembly Common Fund has impacted the socioeconomic actions of the residents of the NJM in terms of erudition, health care delivery, poverty alleviation, social services, and the development of infrastructure.

2.2 Significance of the study

It is crucial to offer a strong basis for this reading in order to examine and appraise the aids of DACF to the general socio-economic progress of the districts.

It aims to provide a framework for the state, district assemblies, and common fund overseer to comprehend how important a role the DACF plays in rural economic development and why it deserves the proper support. The study effort would also reveal to policymakers the fund's sufficiency as well as any instances of misuse, enabling them to take the right action to achieve the purpose of establishing the fund. It will also demonstrate how to advance socioeconomic growth, scale down poverty, and alleviate material deficiency as a means of responsibility to the public. In conclusion, the reading will provide as a guide for upcoming researchers in the area.

2.3 Scope and Limitations

The New Juaben Municipality is the sole subject of the reading. However, due to financial, logistical, and time constraints, the study is limited to a few chosen areas because of the area's relatively large number of thirty (30) municipalities. Last but not least, while the phrase "socio-economic activities" encompasses a wide range of actions, the reading will focus exclusively on erudition, health care delivery, poverty reduction, social services, and infrastructure progress.

3. Literature Review

3.1 Decentralization as a Tool for Rural Development

The Ministry of Rural Development and Social Welfare's main objective, conferring to Greenstreet (1979), was to create equipment for rural zones that would be used for particular changing activities and programs. His submission requested that the Ministry was keen to ensure that the trend of young person's transiting to metropolitan areas in search of white-collar jobs was overturned by building substructure facilities in the local zones.

Osuji (1986) asserts that linking local expansion plans to national and state expansion goals is the best way to achieve cooperation in local governance. He claims that this is vital because the self-help actions of the increasing rural towns must be integrated and coordinated with state and national expansion programs in order to provide the maximum potential contribution to a state's efforts to achieve rapid socioeconomic progress. He comes to the conclusion that the lack of these connections may contribute to the discrepancy amid what the national state considers necessary for socioeconomic growth and the spontaneous expansion actions that local boards engage in.

In her study on decentralization, Conyers (1983) points out that, notably in Anglophone Africa, the 1950s and 1960s regionalization projects were closely related to the transition from colonial to democratic independence. She said that the local state was viewed as an integral part of the framework of an independent democratic state and, more precisely, as a means of relieving the central state of some of the responsibilities related to offering home-grown services. She ends by pointing out that efforts to boost funding for rural development programs have manifested in both initiatives to increase funding for such programs and in growing satisfaction with the modest results of such lineups.

According to Ahwoi (1992), the DA concept was presented against the backdrop of a prejudiced socioeconomic scheme that comprising the scourge of underdevelopment and deprivation, especially in local areas, poverty, joblessness, and underemployment. In order to combat and resolution these difficulties through effective local level planning and expansion execution, the DACF was established. In his influence to rural expansion, Opoku-Afriyie (1974) made it clear that rural decadence is one of the main challenges currently affecting rising countries. The challenge is made worse by rural-urban migration, which has a number of core causes, including a lack of social, economic, and physical

infrastructure in local zones. He argues that kindness must be dedicated to rural expansion in order to attain actual national expansion because local zones add up 70% to 80% of the population in the majority of rising nations. As a result, developing the rural economy is rural expansion' primary objective to improve rural populations' living standards beyond the minimal.

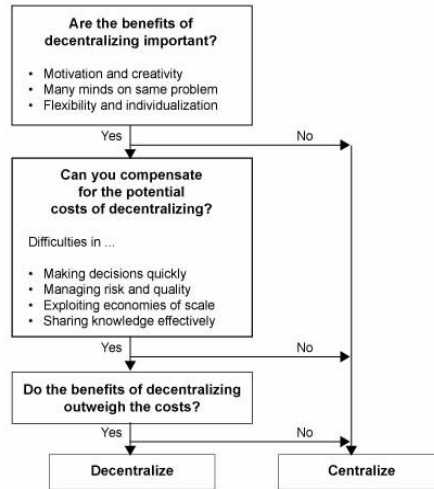
The argument put forth by Wood (1986) contends that the lack of successful examples of democratic states necessitates the need for local governance. So regardless of size, the architecture of any modern state must have some form of local autonomy. He made the case that local governments should continue to exist because they are required to manage issues that are best handled in small units, such as education, basic healthcare, sanitation, and other human functions. He thinks that local inhabitants cannot rely on Ministries, Public Corporations, or other entities situated in Accra to deliver an effective administration that would promote rural expansion because decentralization has not yielded the intended outcomes. He asserted that the framework of local administration is itself the answer to the problem of directing local affairs toward growth.

3.2 *Impact of Decentralization*

Devolved management in outsourcing can have both financial and nonfinancial benefits. Economic gains can be attained because services or tasks are not regulated by a centralized control ordered but somewhat by market forces that control price and service levels. The flexibility of outsourcing can also reduce opportunity costs and increase calculated value. Businesses with short creation life cycles might purchase crucial mechanisms, resources, or talents more quickly than they could generate them themselves. A corporation can react quickly by employing areas of know-how that are not right away obtainable within the company and that would else be costly and time-demanding to progress or acquire. The Toyota automotive company is a particularly good example of this (Watts, 2003). In order to provide all the resources and technical know-how required to construct its cars and trucks in a wonderfully efficient manner, Toyota is made up of nearly 200 different businesses that collaborate. Companies working on short-term projects are limited to using specific skill sets and individuals for the duration of the project (Malone, 2004). Additionally, because of this flexibility, businesses can access more knowledge and talent than they might otherwise be able to afford on a full-time basis, enabling them to compete on a higher level.

Staffs can gain from regionalization as well. A devolved system is one in which "power, ownership, and initiative [are] diffused throughout a complete market," according to Malone (2004). A more enjoyable work condition is made by the independence and autonomy of devolved labor, where persons have more sway over their own operations. Additional advantages are frequently produced as a result of the enhanced control and ownership. The greater ownership of responsibility inspires people more. Employees also experience a greater sense of direct competition from other service providers, which boosts innovation and levels of knowledge. These advantages are then immediately transferred to the business using this outsourced service. Strategic paybacks come from geographical dispersion as well. For instance, outsourcing to nations with different time zones makes it possible to work a 24-hour shift without incurring overtime costs. Furthermore, even a smaller spread can mitigate the effects of locally unique problems like a natural tragedy or a localized scheme failure. Despite all the positive potential, a decentralized structure is not always preferable. A hierarchical structure may be more appropriate for some businesses that need to be able to coordinate massive schemes with limited communication. Military organizations are a prime example of this, as it is crucial to have a clear chain of command and prompt reply times (Malone, 2004). Decentralization may not be a good fit for businesses with prolonged product life cycles, long lifespans, or those working on interesting or multifaceted issues.

Factors to Consider in Choosing Whether to Decentralize a Given Decision



Source: Authors' Construct (2020)

4. Methodology

4.1 Research Design

The research design used in the study was descriptive. In order to effectively elicit realities about the influence of DACF on socio-economic progress in NJM in terms of erudition, amenities expansion, health delivery, social facilities, and poverty eradication, the work was primarily based on primary data taken from several selected towns in the NJM. In addition to the primary data, the Ministry of Local State and Rural expansion personnel, the District Assemblies Common Fund Administrator, the NJM Co-ordinating Director, the Project Officer etc.

4.2 Sample Size

The study's sample size was calculated using the five research subjects. As an outcome, the readings sample size was 24 and it only included the headmasters of 24 schools. Compared to the health category, which had 59 participants, the other categories had 80 participants.

4.3 Population and Sampling Techniques

The entire population of NJM served as the study's sample. However, based on the five primary study questions, it was separated into five main responder groups. This led to the development of numerous sampling strategies. 20 schools and four senior secondary schools in the municipality were chosen for the study on education using a simple random sample approach, and the headmasters of the schools were used.

The Project Officer provided the researcher with the names of beneficiary organizations and individual beneficiaries for the poverty alleviation fund. Twenty people involved in trading and poultry farming were also taken into consideration. Seven recipient groups involved in production, marketing, and processing were also chosen. To obtain the average that reflects each group, a graded sampling strategy was used to pick ten recipients from each group, while a modest random sampling

technique was employed to pick ten persons from the persons.

Six villages were selected for the study using the judgment sampling method in the areas of the supply of social amenities and the development of infrastructure. We did so because we believed the individuals had certain characteristics we wanted to investigate. However, ten individuals from each of the six chosen communities were chosen using simple random sampling.

5. Data Collection, Processing and Analysis

5.1 Interview

The investigator spoke with the District Coordinating Director and the District Planning Officer of NJMA to learn more about the many schemes the Assembly has carried out with the Common Fund. The investigator gave an explanation of the criteria used to choose the beneficiary communities and the various initiatives that were implemented in the recipient villages. The investigator also questioned the scheme officer regarding the process utilized to pick and distribute the recipients of the funds for reducing poverty.

5.2 Methods of data analysis

The acquired information was examined to see how the DACF affected socio-economic activity in NJM. The gathered information was cleaned up and the responses were checked for consistency. Following data editing, the researcher organized the data into five major research areas. The data was presented in a meaningful fashion for simple understanding using tables, graphs, and charts. Version 20.0 of SPSS was used to analyze the data.

6. Results and Discussion

The findings from the field survey's interview data are presented in this section. The study focuses on how socioeconomic actions in the New Juaben Municipality are affected by the district assembly common fund. Improvements in academic performance, the health care delivery system, poverty alleviation, and social amenities were among the findings.

7. Improvement in Academic Performance

All of the interview subjects from the chosen schools took part and voluntarily answered the researcher's research questions in the appropriate manner. It's interesting that while a few respondents indicated support for the district assembly common fund, the majority of respondents voiced worries about its benefits. Two SHS headmasters noted from the research what:

Due to the extra support provided to the scientific department, the aid from DACF has enhanced their schools' performance at WASSCE. The other two (2), however, claimed they had not noticed any alterations in the routine.

With respects to basic schools, five (5) Headmasters observed:

Their Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) has improved as a result of the help. Even if there have been advances, the other two headmasters insisted that they were the consequence of the instructors' labor of love and not the blocks' rehabilitation.

Other three interviewees observed:

The quality of one's academic work has not changed. Due to the fact that the remaining 10 schools are new, no applicants for external examination have been provided.

Conclusion: As a result of the DACF's support, schools have seen an average 27 percent increase in enrollment. It is not inappropriate to use DACF to advance educational progress. Therefore, this determination by NJMA toward the FCUBE program is admirable and other districts in Ghana should

follow this trend when comparing the goal of the FCUBE program to the figure of school-age children in the communities who are not in school.

7.1 Health Delivery System

Forty-seven (47) of the fifty (50) respondents were questioned to describe how NJMA is assisting in improving the health delivery scheme in their towns, (47) responded that the health post in the towns treats minor sicknesses as well as aids as a first aid location for cutlass wounds and other farming injuries. 94% of responders are represented by this. They said it was impossible to overstate the importance of the community's health position. They claimed that up until this point, they had been transporting all cases, even minor wounds, to the state hospital in Koforidua, located some 15 kilometers from the hamlet. The folks no longer have to worry about traveling such a distance for such simple procedures thanks to the construction of the health post. The medical assistant also revealed that, on average, thirty (30) persons visit the clinic every day. The clinic supports communities outside of the village where it is located, according to study. Poverty Alleviation

The Poverty Alleviation Fund's executor, NJMA, provided the information. The split of the total sum made available by the Assembly for distribution to beneficiaries is provided in the table below.

Table 1: Amount released by New Juaben Municipal Assembly (NJMA) for distribution

Year	Amount (GH¢)	Commission charge by the bank (10%)	Net Loadable Fund
	GH ¢	GH ¢	GH ¢
2018	50,000	5,000	45,000
2019	60,000	6,000	54,000
2020	40,250	4,250	36,225
Total	¢ 150,250	¢15,025	¢135,225

Source: NJMA (2020)

Table 2: Disbursement to recipient groups

Year	Production	Marketing	Processing	Individuals	Total
	¢	¢	¢	¢	¢
2018	84.85	2,710	8,550	19,500	6,3635
2019	150.00	1,6575	7,825	12,950	5,2350
2020	100.00	1,0125	2,000	10,800	3,2925
TOTAL	334.85	5,380	18,375	43,250	¢ 148, 910

Source: NJMA (2020)

A ploughback of beneficiary payments is represented by the difference between the total amount released by NJMA and the total amount distributed to the recipients.

The above payout was denoted in a pie chart below

Production	=	33,485 x 360°	=	81°
Marketing	=	148,910 53,800 x 360°	=	130°
Processing	=	148,910 18,375 x 360°	=	44°
Individuals	=	148,910 43,250 x 360°=	=	105°
		148.910		

Table 3: Amount gathered by the recipients

Amount gathered	No. of participants
GHC	
100	18
150	20
200	12
225	15
300	8
400	5
1,000	2
Total	80

Source: NJMA (2020)

Table 4: The average amount gathered by the recipients can be considered as follows:

X	F	FX
GHC		GHC
100	18	1,800
150	20	3,000
200	12	2,400
225	15	3,375
300	8	2,400
400	5	2,000
1,000	2	2,000
	F=80	FX = 16,975

Source: NJMA (2020)

Arithmetic mean was GH¢212.19

Each of the beneficiaries received an average of GH 212.19 to invest in business projects that would lower their level of poverty. Access to loans for business initiatives is a significant issue for Ghana's rural residents. Therefore, this sum of GH 212.19 to the residents of NJM would significantly boost their businesses and raise their living conditions. Based on the foregoing, the study looked at how much the recipients are being helped by the money they have received. The focus was on the types of commercial initiatives the loan was used for and the advantage the recipients received.

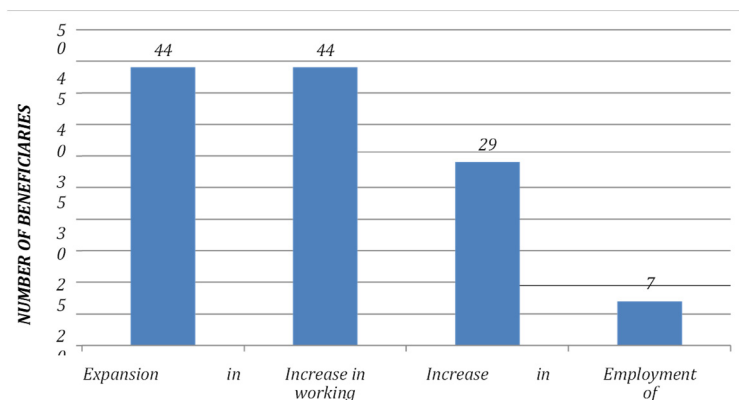


Figure 1: Benefits from the poverty alleviation fun

Source: NJMA (2020)

All 44 recipients stated that they were able to grow their companies and add to their working capital. Only 29 people stated that the endowment has led to an upsurge in their profits when it comes to the profit increase. Seven of the beneficiaries said they were able to provide jobs for more individuals. According to the report, the recipients in the aforementioned categories received between 225 and 1,000 Ghana cedis. The analysis additionally revealed that around 75% of these claimants received payments for a full year. The following connections were made among the 29 recipients of the DACF who gained from an increase in earnings over prior years, among other things.

Table 5: Percentage increase in profit

Percentage Increase in Profit (%)	Number of participants
1-10	3
11-20	2
21-30	4
31-40	3
41-50	3
51-60	7
61-70	2
71-80	4
81-90	1
Total	29

Source: Field Data (2020)

The researcher determined the average percentage increase in profit by the recipients as a result of the Poverty Alleviation Fund's help based on the aforementioned distribution.

Table 6: Average recipients from pervert eradication fund

Age	Mid-Pt (x)	Frequency (f)	Deviation (d)	Fd
1-10	5.5	3	-50	-150
11-20	15.5	2	-40	-80
21-30	25.5	4	-30	-120
31-40	35.5	3	-20	-60
41-50	45.5	3	-10	-30
51-60	55.5	7	0	0
61-70	65.5	2	10	20
71-80	75.5	4	20	80
	85.5	1	30	30
		F=29	D=40	Fd=310

Source: Field Data (2020)

Calculations show that, on average, the beneficiaries of the poverty alleviation fund saw improvements in their business profits of roughly 63%. It was discovered that, on average, the recipients employed three people in the neighborhoods where their enterprises are located. Ghana's unemployment issue is a major one, particularly in the rural areas where around two-thirds of the population resides. Full employment has developed into a significant public policy objective in contemporary Ghanaian culture, while being impractical in developing countries like Ghana. Therefore, it is pure that the recipients' ability to generate employment through the Poverty eradication Fund is a significant step toward economic development, particularly in rural areas. This is especially true when taking into account how unemployment affects economic growth.

7.2 Social Amenities

In total, sixty participants were wrote to through form to learn more about the kinds of social facilities NJMA has built and how the community is using them. The sixty responders to this study provided no affirmative responses. The single social amenity identified by each of them in their different areas was a football field. None, though, claimed NJMA furnished them. Out of the 60 respondents, 21 claimed that the young people in their local communities take care of the fields. The remaining 39 individuals claimed that local schools are responsible for maintaining the fields.

It is evident from the foregoing that NJMA does not use its portion of the Common Fund to fund social facilities for residents of local zones. Due to a lack of social facilities, amid other things, youngsters in rural areas are drawn to metropolitan life. In order to stop the issue of rural-urban migration, the central government wants to provide facilities in rural areas. Even though DAs are in charge of expansion in their respective districts, it is really odd to find that NJMA is not assisting the central state in this endeavor.

7.3 Infrastructural Development

The reading exhibited that the following kinds of structure were built by NJMA with the District Assembly Common Fund (DACF).

- Septic Tank Latrine
- Hand Dug Wells/Boreholes
- Feeder Roads
- Rural Electrification

The number of towns and the type of infrastructure expansion in each is shown in the table below.

Table 7: Types of infrastructure

Infrastructure	Number of towns
Septic Tank Latrine	5
Hand Dug Wells/Boreholes	6
Feeder Roads	6
Rural Electrification	5

Source: NJMA (2020)

7.4 Septic Tank Latrine

The chart shows that five of the six villages considered for the research had this kind of infrastructure. Rural areas are well recognized for their well-liked neighborhood KVIPs, which are constructed by locals using collective labor. These neighborhood KVIPs are poorly maintained, and some of them are even without roofs. Houseflies then fly from these restrooms to homes, spreading illnesses like cholera and others. According to 38 responders, the construction of septic tank latrines by DACF has significantly reduced cholera, a disease that used to be widespread in their communities. Others claimed that they could no longer find the random human excrement in their neighborhoods.

7.5 Hand Dug Wells/Boreholes

This form of structure was present in each of the six villages in the study region. In Ghana's rural areas, giardia worm and other water-borne diseases are widespread. Communities in NJM don't stand

out. This is owing to the fact that they all consume stream water. Infected regions for guinea worms were discovered in 4 of the 6 communities, according to the study. According to 25 responders, the placement of the boreholes was a big relief for the locals in their areas. The boreholes have declined the prevalence of guinea-worm maladies and surged student promptness because previously, kids were arriving at school late because of the distance they had to travel to gather water.

7.6 Feeder Roads

The investigation found that NJMA had renovated the feeder roads in each of the six communities. It was discovered that four new feeder roads connecting several of the local villages were built by NJMA using funding from the DACF. On some of the feeder roads in the study area, significant maintenance projects such as bridge construction and re-graveling were also carried out. Farmers were able to transport food and other farm goods conveniently to metropolitan areas because to the building and renovation of the feeder roads. Due to the poor condition of the roadways, metropolitan regions had a tough time obtaining transportation up until this point, but this load has been lifted thanks to the development of these feeder roads. Nowadays, it is simple for people to relocate from rural to metropolitan areas for medical care and other economic activity.

7.7 Rural Electrification

The goal of the rural electrification initiative is to decrease the issue of young migration from rural to urban regions by attracting cottage industries to rural areas. In order to complement the central government's efforts in that direction, NJMA's utilization of the DACF for rural electrification is the proper course to take. The survey revealed that 5 of the 6 villages had rural electrification projects that NJMA has taken on. This led to the establishment of a palm-oil processing factory in one of the communities, which provides farmers with a quick outlet for their palm nuts and has improved the farmers' productivity and standard of life. The youth exodus to metropolitan areas has decreased as a result of the availability of electricity in the communities. This is due to the establishment of cottage industries and the majority of young people's training in employable skills, which has led to their employment.

The aforementioned information could lead one to the conclusion that NJMA deserves praise for using its portion of the Common Fund towards rural electrification. The general growth of each district is the responsibility of the MMDA. Additionally, they must remove any barriers to initiative and development and encourage and support constructive behaviors. Financial backing is required for things to be implemented effectively. The DACF was established to assist the districts in their development project because many districts lacked this financial help. Therefore, District Coordinating Councils are expected to apply their portion of the Common Fund to the goals for which it was created. The New Juaben Municipal Assembly hasn't strayed from the reason the Fund was founded, according to the discussion above. The supply of social facilities, which appear to be deficient in the municipality, should be the focus of concern. Decentralization has been promoted as a substitute strategy for encouraging a plan for the quick development of rural areas plagued by poverty. Rural communities could not experience greater standards of life or increased economic development as a result of central planning (Rojos and Rosebaum, 1992).

Since money is the lifeblood of every society, having money on hand is essential for the effective development of rural communities. However, because they are unable to optimize revenue collection from the sources that are accessible to them, the DAs, which are the offspring of the devolution scheme, have not been able to carry out sufficient expansion projects with their own properties. The majority of income targets are not met, which leads to inadequate revenue generation, which in turn limits the capability of the DAs to fund expansion initiatives (Boakye-Danquah, 1990)

8. Summary of Findings

8.1 Educational Development

The analysis revealed that NJMA spends its portion of the DACF on municipal educational expansion. Some of the schools in the communities have benefited from this help in terms of an increase in student enrollment and an development in the schools' performance in external assessments. The study found that among the 24 schools included for the study, enrollment had increased by about 27% on average.

It has been observed that little progress has been made in terms of academic performance. Only two senior secondary school headmasters and five basic school heads said that performance in external exams had improved in their respective institutions. However, the ten new schools that have not yet subjected students to exterior assessments are anticipated to make significant improvements.

8.2 Health Delivery System

The analysis demonstrated that NJMA uses its portion of the shared revenue to enhance the municipality's health service scheme. It was discovered that a town clinic had been established in a certain area and was providing services to neighboring villages.

8.3 Poverty Alleviation

The analysis revealed that certain people and recognized organizations had benefited from the fund, and the recipients had invested their winnings in things like production, marketing, and dispensation. Some of the recipients were able to grow their businesses; others saw a rise in their profits and working capital; still others were able to usefully hire more personnel. However, some said that because the sum handed to them was so small and insufficient for any economic activities, they had not benefited from the fund.

8.4 Social Amenities

According to the analysis, NJMA has not spent any of its DACF allocation on social amenities. The DACF has not provided any social amenities to any of the six chosen villages, according to none of the sixty responders from those communities, and no such facilities have been spotted in any of the groups.

8.5 Infrastructural Development

The following infrastructure improvements were discovered to have been beneficial to the six communities that make up the research areas: septic tank latrines, hand-dug wells and boreholes, feeder roads, and local electrification. In addition to septic tank latrines and rural electrification, hand dug wells and feeder roads have been constructed in each of the six towns. Regarding the advantages of these structures for the local towns, it was noted that the construction of septic tank latrines has decreased the number of cases of cholera while hand-dug wells have decreased the prevalence of water-borne illnesses like guinea worm. Feeder roads in the rural areas have made it easier for residents to transport their products to urban areas for commercialization. Additionally, they have made the locations accessible so that residents might have access to transportation in order to travel to urban areas for business or other urgent situations.

According to research on rural electrification, the availability of this facility has contributed to the development of an agricultural economy that employs people from the countryside. The establishment of several small business units, particularly hair salons, in the villages goes hand in

hand with this electrification. The DACF was created by the 1992 constitution to give the DAs extra sources of funding for expansion in an effort to halt this predicament. Quarterly payments of 5% of Ghana's budgeted revenue are made to the DACF each year, to be distributed to the DAs and utilized strictly for rural expansion initiatives. The DACF is intended to give the DAs the resources they need to start and finish a variety of initiatives, mostly in the fields of infrastructure, rural electrification, social amenities, health, and education.

9. Conclusion

After careful examination, the researcher concluded that NJMA had utilized its portion of the DACF to advance education in the municipality. Communities have helped from this due to an increase in school enrollment and an improvement in student performance on external exams. The utilization of the DACF to construct a town health clinic in one of the towns, which other towns can readily visit, has improved the health delivery system. The clinic treats illnesses like malaria and malnutrition, among others, saving people from having to travel a great way to Koforidua Hospital for care.

The Poverty Alleviation Fund has assisted the residents of the NJM. They have been able to grow their enterprises and their profit margin as a result of this. It was discovered that no social facility has ever been advantageous to any of the six towns used as the study area. The NJMA provides infrastructure facilities using its portion of the DACF. The DACF has supplied infrastructure such as septic tank latrines, hand-dug wells, feeder roads, and power.

10. Recommendations

The following suggestions have been made in light of recent research results on the subject of the influence of the district assembly common fund on socioeconomic actions in the New Juaben municipality.

- A program aiming at fostering the rural environment necessary for agricultural development should be funded by DACF and coordinated with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture.
- It was discovered that the district's agriculture might use some improvement. Because there is an abundance of prolific agricultural land in the NJM, large-scale farming will benefit enormously from a program that gives farmers entree to specific services like loan services, inputs, and others that are straight relevant to agricultural productivity. In reality, the Poverty eradication Fund is a productivity and income-generating fund. It was established as a part of the state's initiatives to support the development of small and medium-sized businesses amid low-income persons with the goal of raising family incomes and supplying hire opportunities. As a result, the management of the fund should be governed by tight rules. The impoverished should be the objective, not the wealthy.
- Timely release of the DACF is required. Since contractors are required to follow a specific work plan, funds should be made readily and predictably available to DAs. Due to the delayed distribution of the cash, contractors will not be compensated for the job they have already completed. Thus, poverty rates rise, especially for individuals whose families rely on contract work, in particular.
- Additionally, it is advised that a portion of the endowment be used to award scholarships to deserving and talented students enrolled in academic establishments.
- To reduce the likelihood of fund misappropriation, prudent and solid fiscal management methods should be implemented and promoted. To maintain good and transparent financial administration and responsibility of the fund, strong control methods and accounting practices are required.
- Internal and external auditors should conduct periodic audits to help address the ongoing issue of fund embezzlement.

- Lastly, it is advised that potential Poverty eradication Fund grantees must provide an initial sum of money that is at least equal to 25% of the overall cost of their business initiative. This will lessen the issue of the beneficiaries misusing the loan.

References

- Ahwoi, Kwamena (1992), Resolving issues crucial to the socio-economic political situation of Local Government: Sectional Meeting of the Adansi West District Assembly, Obuasi.
- Ahwoi, Kwamena (1992), The 4th Republican Constitution and the Local Government System: 6th Annual Workshop on Decentralisation, University of Ghana, Legon, Accra.
- Boachie-Danquah Y, (1990), District Assemblies Small Scale Industrial Animation: A way out of Rural Under-Development in Ghana
- Conyers, Diana (1983): Decentralisation: The Latest Fashion in Development Administration; Public Administration and Development Journal, Vol. 3 January – March.
- Gantman, E. R. (2005). Book Review: Thomas W. Malone, *The Future of Work: How the New Order of Business Will Shape Your Organization, Your Management Style, and Your Life, Top Down: Why Hierarchies Are Here to Stay and How to Manage Them More Effectively*. *Organization Studies*, 26(8), 1258–1263. <https://doi.org/10.1177/017084060502600809>
- Malone, T.W. (2004). *The Future of Work: How the New Order of Business Will Shape Your Organization, Your Management Style, and Your Life*. Harvard Business School Press. Boston: Massachusetts.
- Opoku-Afriyie (1974), The Nature of Infrastructure for Rural Development, *Greenhill Journal of Administration*, Vol.1 No.2 July-September.
- Osuji, E. E. (1986), The Co-ordination of Developmental activities at the local level, *Public Administration and Development Journal*, Vol. 6 No. 1 Pp. 87-101, January/February.
- Rojos, M.V. & Rosebaum (1992), Decentralization, Local Government and Centre Periphery Conflict in Sierra Leone, *Public Administration Journal* Vol. 7
- ROPD. (n.d.). Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government of Trinidad and Tobago | Regional Observatory on Planning for Development. Regional Observatory on Planning for Development. <https://observatorioplanificacion.cepal.org/en/institutions/ministry-rural-development-and-local-government-trinidad-and-tobago>
- The 1992 Constitution of Ghana.
- Watts, R.L. (2003) Conservatism in Accounting Part I: Explanations and Implications. *Accounting Horizons*, 17, 207- 221. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2308/acch.2003.17.3.207>
- Wood, S. N. (1986): *Why Local Government*, Paper delivered at a Seminar on Democracy, Accra.