



THE ROLE OF FAITH-BASED ORGANISATIONS IN FILLING THE RESOURCE GAPS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN GHANA: THE CASE OF KETA MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY



Ronald Adamtey¹⁺

John Victor Mensah²

Faustina Kovor³

^{1,2}Department of Planning, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, Ghana.

¹Email: radamteysekade@gmail.com Tel: +233-546592444

²Department of Environment, Governance & Sustainable Development, School for Development Studies, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana.



(+ Corresponding author)

ABSTRACT

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Given the weak internal revenue mobilisation capacity of Local Governments in many developing countries, this paper explores the role of Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs) in filling resource gaps of the Keta Municipal Assembly (KeMA) in Ghana. We make a case for the establishment of mechanisms for FBOs to increase their investment in the provision of basic services. The study employed both qualitative and quantitative designs using the case study approach focusing on FBOs and KeMA. Interview guides were used for 12 key informants sampled purposively while questionnaires were administered to 60 FBO leaders and five officers at the Assembly. The FBO leaders were randomly selected from the 26 communities across the Municipality. The findings reveal that the FBOs have the capacity and willingness to fill the Assembly's resource gaps. However, KeMA had not collaborated effectively with the FBOs to adequately harness the resources of FBOs. The study recommends that KeMA should work more closely with FBOs in order to leverage their resources to implement development projects.

Contribution/ Originality: This study makes a contribution to the literature on local government finance and ways in which local government authorities can take advantage of unexplored opportunities to fill their financial resource gaps. It does this by making a case for harnessing the resources available with faith-based organisations by local government authorities.

1. INTRODUCTION

A lot of improvement has been achieved in global development outcomes in areas such as health, education, water and sanitation yet there still remains high level of poverty and deprivation in many low-income countries. As governments in developing countries explore new, effective and efficient ways to respond to these problems, there has been increased interest in the promise of locally-based bottom-up development approaches rather than top-down approaches. Consequently, decentralisation initiatives have gained much prominence in many developing countries (Meldon, Walsh, & Kenny, 2014).

Prior to the emergence of decentralisation in the policy arena, many countries in Africa, emerging from colonisation, had embarked upon strong centralisation of development decision-making (Adusei-Asante, 2012). In the early years of independence, central governments assisted by foreign donor agencies were the main development actors providing public services in health, education, water and sanitation. Central governments solely

prepared and implemented policies and programmes financed through local taxes and donor support to improve the livelihoods of citizens (Akudugu & Laube, 2013).

Results achieved fell short of the expectations of many governments in Africa. Most of the state-led top-down interventions failed to effectively address the needs of the people. The policies and programmes could not deliver quality services needed at the grassroots (Alam, 2011a). Additionally, the centralised policy measures failed to effectively impact on sections of the population who are economically and socially disadvantaged. In Ghana, the centralisation resulted in disparities in regional development (Bandie, 2007).

The failure of the centralised top-down approach raised concerns and called for an alternative approach. In response, decentralisation emerged in the 1980s and 1990s and became widely promoted (Alam, 2011b). Governments supported the view that transferring power, resources and functions from central government to local authorities or sub-national units of government would enhance citizen participation; bring service delivery closer to consumers, help government tailor services to the preferences of local people and make government more responsive to local needs as well as enable government to effectively mobilise under-utilized local resources (Bandie, 2007; Mensah, 2005).

In line with this, Ghana has pursued decentralisation reforms. Although several attempts were previously made, some scholars believe that the PNDC Law 207 passed in 1988, set the stage for the new decentralisation and local governance system (Adusei-Asante, 2012; ILGS, 2010). Subsequent legislations such as the Article 240 of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana and the Local Government Act 462 of 1993 and recently the Local Governance Act 936 of 2016 strengthened efforts to implement decentralised local government and administration system (Republic of Ghana, 1992; Republic of Ghana, 1993; Republic of Ghana, 2016).

Consequently, Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) have been established as decentralised and highest administrative and political authorities at sub-national level. Their mandate is to oversee the development of their respective jurisdictions. MMDAs are expected to develop basic infrastructure in areas such as education, health and water as well as initiate programmes to improve the quality of life of the people (Republic of Ghana, 2016).

In spite of the enormous responsibilities of MMDAs, several challenges have crippled their ability to deliver and effectively discharge their duties. Key among these challenges are financial resource gaps resulting from the difficulty in mobilising internally generated funds (IGF) and the delay in inter-governmental transfers to supplement the IGF (Ahwoi, 2010; Ayee et al., 2000; Crawford, 2004; UCLG, 2010). With so much financial burden on the central government, less can be expected. So how can MMDAs look for more resources? We argue that the role of FBOs could be one of the answers.

The role of FBOs in filling the financial and human resource gaps of MMDAs cannot be underestimated. FBOs have played and continue to play vital roles in the development of many societies. Their unique contribution in the provision of social services is touted by scholars and policy makers (Perchoc, 2017; Sanders, 2014; UNDHHS, 2010; Vodo, 2016). Thus, these organisations have helped to alleviate issues of chronic poverty in many deprived areas (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2016; Tadros, 2010; Vodo, 2016). There is ample evidence to support the claim that FBOs can provide some answers to MMDAs' resource issues. FBOs have numerous human and financial resources that can be tapped into by MMDAs to augment government transfers and internally generated funds.

This potential support of FBOs remains one of the least researched in contemporary local government resource literature. This paper examines the role of FBOs in filling local government resource gaps using the Keta Municipality in Ghana as a case. It is organised into nine sections. Following the introduction is the local government structure in Ghana. The third section focuses on financial resource dilemma of Ghana's MMDAs while the fourth section deals with FBOs in the development and service provision. The fifth section is a brief historical account of the role of FBOs in Ghana, the sixth section covers the study context and seventh section presents the

study methods. Section eight deals with the findings and discussion while section nine presents the conclusion and recommendations.

2. LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE IN GHANA

Ghana has undergone waves of governance reforms and is currently practising a system of governance that seeks to afford its citizens the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process. The passage of the Provisional National Defence Council Law (PNDCL) 207 in 1988 set the stage for formal decentralisation and local government practice (Crawford, 2009; ILGS, 2010; Nyendu, 2012). To reinforce this course, the PNDCL 207 was replaced by Ghana's 1992 Constitution. The twentieth chapter of the 1992 Constitution is devoted to decentralisation and local government as per Article 240(1) (ILGS, 2010; Republic of Ghana, 1992). Further consolidation of the constitutional provisions led to the enactment of the Local Government Act 1993, Act 462 which established Ghana's Local Government and administration system (ILGS, 2010). Act 462 has currently been replaced with the Local Governance Act 2016, Act 936.

All these legislations emphasise the "administrative district" as the focal point of development planning, with the belief that it will enhance grassroots participation, local democracy and promote the development of the districts. The decentralised governance system as enshrined in the Local Governance Act, 2016 (Act 936) is a four-tier structure consisting of the Regional Coordinating Councils (RCCs) at the regional level; Metropolitan; Municipal and District Assemblies, at the sub-regional level and Town, Zonal and Area Councils as well as Unit Committees at the sub-district levels (Ayee, 2013; Crawford, 2009; Nyendu, 2012).

MMDAs are empowered to perform political, administrative, deliberative, legislative and planning functions (ILGS, 2010; Republic of Ghana, 1993). They are also responsible for the effective mobilisation of the resources necessary for the overall development of the district; initiate programmes for the development of basic infrastructure and provide municipal works and services in the district. The improvement and management of human settlements and the environment in the district is the responsibility of the MMDAs. The inability of MMDAs to mobilise adequate financial resources has been an issue of concern.

2.1. Financial Resource Dilemma of Ghana's MMDAs

The execution of the mandates of MMDAs requires resources such as land, manpower and equipment, which have financial implications. Thus, adequate financial resource is a prerequisite for successful implementation of decentralisation reforms and local level development. It also enables MMDAs to procure the needed inputs and employ the requisite expertise on time, thereby helping to effectively design and implement development projects as well as deliver services.

The Local Governance Act 2016, Act 936 provides for MMDAs to receive financial support from central government in the form of District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF); grants-in-aid and other conditional revenue transfers. Most importantly, MMDAs are mandated to generate funds internally through licenses, fees and miscellaneous charges, taxes, rates and investment incomes and may also borrow or receive grants from external sources (Republic of Ghana, 2016). The purpose is to strengthen the financial capacities of MMDAs to provide public goods and services effectively. In spite of the various potential revenue sources, financial constraints remain a major challenge to MMDAs. The difficulty in mobilising internally generated funds makes them rely heavily on central government transfers. Other factors such as untimely release of central government transfers and substantial deductions from DACF allocations create huge gaps in the resource demands and receipts of the MMDAs (ILGS, 2010). In effect they are unable to successfully execute and manage projects outlined in their Medium-Term Development Plans (MTDPs) (Crawford, 2010; Mensah, 2005). One of the ways to fill the resource gaps is the role of Faith-Based Organisations as evidenced from historical accounts discussed next.

3. FBOS IN DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICE PROVISION

There has been increased interest regarding the place of FBOs in development (see (Dilger, 2009; Heist, Cnaan, & Wineburg, 2016; Landmark, 2013; Nwawou, 2011; Vidal, 2001)). This could be attributed to the emergence of the “faith-factor” as an essential component in effective service delivery on the part of both service-providers and beneficiaries. However, the nexus between faith-based organisations and service provision has been widely discussed in opposing dimensions in literature (Banji, 2013).

Many scholars claim that religious organisations could be part of the panacea to development (Karam, 2015). The establishment of the Office of Faith-Based Activities by the George Bush administration in the United States of America was an initiative to expand the role of faith-based organisations in development decision making (Noyes, 2009; Vidal, 2001). The formalisation of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Engaging FBOs for Development (IAT-FBO) is in recognition of the importance of FBOs in development and service provision. The establishment of the World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD) in 1998 by the World Bank was also a move in this direction. The increased interest in the discussion of the role of FBOs suggests that FBOs make huge contributions to social service delivery and other aspects of development (Hanlon, 1991; Nwawou, 2011).

FBOs have two entry points in development: as facilitators and direct service providers. Dilger (2009), asserts that FBOs can facilitate the building of social capital and adopting a virtue-ethics approach that blend development activities to communal processes and identity-building as well as the transmission and negotiation of moral values. As direct service providers, Alkire (2009) notes that local, national and international FBOs are directly involved in service provision by being significant actors in education, health, conflict resolution, housing and food security. It is estimated that historically, about half of all services within education and health and basic needs like food, clothing and shelter in Sub-Saharan Africa are provided by FBOs (Landmark, 2013; Vidal, 2001).

On the basis of the findings from a study of FBOs’ programmes in serving homeless and street-living youth in Los Angeles, Nwawou (2011) argues that FBOs have comparative advantage in social service provision because they are well grounded with structures at the grassroots where most of the poor and needy live. Banji (2013) supports this claim and notes that their roots within communities, the depth of their networks, the respect and trust of their constituents, moral and ethical competence to work for positive social change all make them key actors in the development process. Others also argue that when delivering help to people, the ability to forge mutual rapport is an important ingredient and this is why FBOs have the advantage because their workers are able to reach out to people at the grassroots, speak their language and respect their sentiments and culture (see Heist et al. (2016)).

However, many critics have raised some concerns against FBOs. Banji (2013) has pointed to religious violence and terrorist activities that have seemingly obfuscated the logic behind any drive to make room for religious and faith-based considerations in the mainstream development agenda (see also Heist et al. (2016)). Terrorist activities by Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria, for example, are seen by many as the result of people’s adherence and commitment to a faith or tradition.

There is also some evidence to suggest that many of the civil and ethnic conflicts occurring in many parts of the world have some religion or faith inducement (Little, 2006; Macaulay, 2013; Nilsson, 2006). Many however have difficulty supporting the argument that religion could be the motivation behind these activities since that would mean ignoring the fact that such conflicts might be the consequences of complex phenomena whose rationales are deeply rooted in political, economic, territorial, cultural, and psychological considerations.

Another concern of the critics is that FBOs may not be able to reconcile development goals with their religious principles. FBOs in Mozambique gave priority to their members and supported irrigation projects of farmers who were their church members and this could be interpreted as a subtle agenda with the notion of aid as the smokescreen to draw people into their faith (Macaulay, 2013; Nwawou, 2011; UNDP, 2014).

FBOs involvement in perpetrating gender inequality, exclusion and other forms of injustice and the stance of some FBOs against certain critical health issues such as HIV and AIDS has provided some amount of the energy of

the critics who argue against their role in development (Karam, 2015; Nwawou, 2011). The mixed evidence notwithstanding; this paper argues that resources of FBOs can be tapped into by sub-national governments and scholarly understanding of this can contribute to the debate around fiscal decentralisation towards local level development. So, do FBOs really matter in terms of service provision and what does the historical account of their roles in Ghana in areas such as education, health and food security show?

3.1. Brief Historical Account of the Role of FBOs in Ghana towards Education, Health and Food Security

FBOs play a vital role in Ghana's development. Three major areas that their impact is recognised are in education, health and food security or agricultural development. Many educational institutions ranging from basic, secondary and tertiary institutions are owned by FBOs (Kwarteng, 2013; Wesley Methodist Church Edmonton (WMCE), 2020). According to Awevor (2012) the Catholic Church alone, as at 2012, owned 15% of Basic Schools, 10% of Senior High Schools, 21% of Colleges of Education and 39% of Technical and Vocational schools in the country while the Methodist Church of Ghana as at 2015 had 744 Kindergartens, 1,042 Primary Schools, 519 Junior Secondary Schools, 21 Senior High Schools and 3 Teacher Training Colleges. Policy makers have acknowledged that, education in Ghana would not have been what it is today but for the contribution of FBOs (Kaku, 2018).

FBOs are key players in Ghana's healthcare system. Christian organisations alone provide 42% of the nation's healthcare needs and together with Islamic health facilities, these organisations provide up to 50% of healthcare in Ghana operating in faith-oriented Non-governmental Organisation (NGO) health facilities, Church owned hospitals and clinics and Muslim mission owned hospitals and clinics (Grieve & Olivier, 2018; Olivier, Shojjo, & Wodon, 2014). The Christian Health Association of Ghana (CHAG) is the umbrella organisation coordinating the activities of the mission hospitals, clinics and health facilities and is a key partner to the Ministry of Health. Currently, CHAG has 316 member facilities, comprising of 74 hospitals, 210 clinics and health centres, 13 primary health care centres and 19 health training institutions. The facilities are mostly located in vulnerable and deprived areas where government agencies are unable to reach (Christian Health Association of Ghana (CHAG), 2020).

Agriculture and food security is another area that FBOs play a major role in Ghana. Historically, FBOs have been prominent in the provision of food to the needy as a way of their commitment to the core principles of 'caring for one's neighbour'. Most FBOs have supported several agricultural and food security activities especially in Northern Ghana where poverty is predominant. Local churches at Tamale such as the Assemblies of God, the Roman Catholic Church and the Presbyterian Church of Ghana support the livestock industry, which is one of the major means of livelihood in the area. They do this by training farmers in good husbandry practices; assisting farmers with medication; provision of breeding stock; and assisting farmers with feed supplement during the dry season (Ansah, Dzoagbe, Djang-Fordjour, Agbolosu, & Wesseh, 2006). In 2011, the Catholic Church at the Navrongo-Bolgatanga Diocese implemented a sustainable agriculture programme through which the Diocese donated bicycles to farmers, educating them on sustainable farming practices at the Pusu-Namongu Farmers Training Centre, Talensi District.

International FBOs such as World Vision-Ghana, Christian Aid-Ghana and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) also play vital role in enhancing agriculture productivity and food security in Ghana. The World Vision-Ghana, for instance, has worked in 753 communities in Ghana, promoting food security among poor small holder farmers. Through a number of project models, the World Vision International (WVI) has trained and supported 12,047 farmers on improved crop and animal production; over 5000 farmers in vegetable production; 1977 youth in cash crop farming and 5324 farmers in dry season farming. Six hundred women have been trained and supported to produce 400 tons of sheabutter and 800 supported in cassava processing, producing 500 tons of processed cassava (World Vision International, 2020a). Through the Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) model, WVI has restored over 2000 hectares of degraded land resulting in increased crop yields for 800 farmers. Currently, it is

implementing Household Food Security and Resilience Technical Projects in Bawku West, Garu-Tempane, Jirapa, Saboba, Gushiegu and Karaga districts (WVI, 2020b).

The Christian Aid-Ghana has also implemented projects including the Growing Rice Market Opportunities for Women (GROW); Maximising Rice and Key Enterprises in Target Sites (MARKETS); the Northern Ghana Green Market (NGGM) and through the My Price, mobile phones were used to enhance poor small holder farmers' access to market information. These projects have directly affected and improved the livelihoods of about 55,000 people and indirectly affected 750,000 people (Catholic Relief Services (CRS), 2020; Christian Aid, 2020; News Ghana, 2016).

4. STUDY CONTEXT

During a research project by authors of this paper in 2018 to investigate what FBOs do in three regions in Ghana, it emerged from informal interactions with traditional leaders, political actors and community leaders that FBOs in the Keta Municipality appear to be unique in their contribution to reducing the financial burden of the Municipal Assembly. At two of the durbars of chiefs and the people to discuss development issues attended during our field work, high profile officers of the Municipal Assembly and Regional Coordinating Council praised the contribution of FBOs to reducing the financial burden of the Assembly. However, a review of literature reveals that claims of this nature have not been adequately documented for lessons to be shared across MMDAs in Ghana and sub-national governments in Africa.

The Keta Municipality was carved out of the former Anlo District and established by Legislative Instrument (L.I. 1868) of 2007. There are 295 churches and 15 mosques. In the Municipality, the predominant religion is Christianity which constitutes 59.9% of the total population followed by Traditionalists 25.4%. Islam constitutes 1%, other beliefs represent 0.8% and those who do not profess any form of religion represent 12.9% (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014).

As with many MMDAs, KeMA relies heavily on central government transfers as the major source of financial resource for local level development. For example, in 2014, central government transfers alone constituted 91.2% of the total revenue of KeMA with IGF being only 8.8%. In 2015 and 2016, the proportions of central government transfers were 94.6% and 96.4% respectively (KeMA, 2017).

The situation was made worse by the untimely release of these transfers by Government. In 2014, the Assembly expected and budgeted DACF of GH¢3,500,662.46 but received only GH¢1,195,512.61 representing 34% by the end of the year. In 2015 and 2016, KeMA budgeted GH¢4,631,537.33 and GH¢5,438,272.46 respectively as DACF but received GH¢3,889,169.36 (84%) and GH¢3,344,362.35 (61%) respectively (KeMA, 2017).

The revenue performance of the Assembly for all revenue sources for 2014, 2015 and 2016 financial years were estimated to be 63.6%, 74.3% and 70% respectively. This means that the Assembly failed to mobilise an average of 30.7% of the revenue needed to implement projects outlined for the three financial years (KeMA, 2016).

Due to the revenue gaps, KeMA has huge deficits in educational infrastructure including teaching and learning facilities and staff accommodation. There are inadequate health facilities, overstretched waste disposal facilities, poor road network and high level of poverty (KeMA, 2018). These problems are likely to continue for a long time hence the need for FBO support.

5. STUDY METHODS

The study employed a case study approach and data was collected and analysed using mixed methods by combining both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analytical techniques (Creswell, 2014). Data was collected over three-month period. We used open-ended questionnaire for 60 FBO leaders, closed-ended questionnaires for five officers at the Keta Municipal Assembly and interview guides for 12 key informants to collect the data. The snowball method was used to identify all the 295 churches and 15 mosques in the Municipality

and we employed simple random sampling to select 60 FBOs including 50 churches and 10 mosques. The snowball technique was also used to identify five key informants in the KeMA and seven key informants in the FBOs for interviews.

Two key challenges were encountered during the data collection exercise. Firstly, the data collection exercise coincided with the period in which churches in the Municipality were organising a 41- day crusade so the sampled church leaders were busy. Secondly, the officers of KeMA and some of the FBO key informants were busy with other engagements. To overcome these, we had to reschedule many of the appointments leading to the extension of the data collection period from 2 months to 3 months.

The quantitative data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) version 20 and the results interpreted in line with the objectives of the research. The qualitative data were essentially responses in quotes and experiences. They were coded around themes and the contents analysed with inferences made from the quotes. We discuss the findings from the study in the next section.

6. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Three main findings are discussed namely; FBOs provide basic services, FBOs are non-discriminatory in providing services to the people, and FBO resources are not adequately harnessed by KeMA.

6.1. Faith-Based Organisations Provide Basic Services in KeMA

FBOs in the Keta Municipality provide social services and are committed to reducing poverty. About 90% of the sampled FBOs have built schools and health facilities, supported orphanages and extended potable water to deprived areas. This suggests that the FBOs are one of the reliable partners to support the Keta Municipal Assembly in social service provision. This finding supports claims by scholars such as [Alkire \(2009\)](#) and [Karam \(2015\)](#) that FBOs play significant role in social service provision. According to the key informants, the FBOs employed local youth in the construction of these education, health and water facilities, thereby creating jobs for many youth in these communities. One key informant's view corroborated by all the FBO leaders was that jobs created by FBOs partly explains why the youth in the KeMA do not migrate to Accra to look for non-existing jobs.

About 68% of the sampled FBO leaders indicated that FBOs provide education related services. Notable among them is the Catholic Church's St Theresa Vocational Centre located at Abor for the training of persons with disability in vocational skills such as tailoring, carpentry, welding, shoemaking and electronics. According to one key informant, the centre provides graduates with equipment to start up their own small businesses. Corroborating this, a key informant among the beneficiary disabled persons noted that this has helped to reduce disability related poverty in the Municipality. The beneficiary disabled persons have set up businesses and have either directly employed other physically challenged persons or have accepted other physically challenged youth for apprenticeship and training.

Other educational facilities are the Shalom Basic School by the Living Faith Ministry at Abor, Rhema Basic School by the Global Evangelical Church at Keta, and the Zion College by A.M.E Zion Church at Anloga. The Anloga Pentecost Church has a scholarship programme (for youth, especially girls) which has supported over 100 students since 2010. The KeMA officials noted that the support from FBOs in education has relieved the Assembly's education budget burden of up to 40%. A key informant added that:

In addition to the relief this brings to the Assembly, it promotes partnership between the Assembly and the FBOs, a key ingredient for successful decentralisation and governance process (Key Informant, KeMA, March, 2018).

The FBOs own and run health facilities either alone or in partnership with government. The Abor Sacred Heart Hospital established by the Catholic Church is the largest hospital in the Keta Municipality. The Celebrated Gospel Church paid the premium and registered over 1500 people for the National Health Insurance Scheme. It also

brings medical doctors from abroad to treat patients. Both the E.P. Hospital at Hatorgodo and St. Theresa Clinic at Abor contribute to reducing health budget of the Assembly. According to the Assembly officials, about half of the Assembly's health budget is taken by what the FBOs do in health. The important role of FBOs in health services is reported by one Assembly official as follows:

We would not have been able to raise the needed resources to provide health services if these FBOs were not doing this. They have filled our resource gaps, thereby making us look as if we are doing well (High Profile Assembly Official, KeMA, March, 2018).

The study revealed that FBOs have contributed to relieving the Assembly's water and sanitation budget by about 60%. For water, the Catholic Church (Abor), Pentecost Church (Anloga) and E.P. Church (Dzelukope) have provided boreholes free to residents of these communities. Interviews with key informants who had worked in health facilities in these communities in the last 10 years revealed that potable water provided by the FBOs have contributed to reducing water-related health problems among residents.

About 50% of the budget of KeMA to create jobs has been taken by FBOs. For example, the Deeper Life Ministry (Afiadenyigba) and Global Evangelical Church (Dzelukope) have set up vocational training facilities. Over 700 youth have been trained in vocations such as bead making, soap making, batik tie and dye making and production of sandals.

The FBOs had large youthful and active labour force endowed with many skills and talents, who were willing to volunteer and participate in projects executed by the groups. Thus, FBOs were able to mobilise human resources needed to complete development initiatives on time. One officer indicated that:

KeMA is sometimes unable to execute and/ or complete projects on time due to inadequate resources to hire labour. The resources spent by KeMA to hire labour often take so much of the limited funds available for the project. This is where FBOs can be a good resource to us by providing labour (Official of KeMA, March, 2018).

Community development projects such as construction of school buildings, health centers and the cleaning of market places and choked drains would require huge financial resources to hire labour which the KeMA would not be able to mobilise. The youth at the disposal of the FBOs were willing to volunteer their labour to do all these.

6.2. FBOs are Non-Discriminatory in Providing Services to the People

About 90% of the FBOs in the Municipality looked beyond religion and faith as the basis for their support. This finding does not support the views of Hanlon (1991); UNDP (2014) and Macaulay (2013) that FBOs might use services they provide as a way of imposing their faith on beneficiaries. The views of the sampled FBO leaders can be summed up in what one of them said that:

Our facilities are accessible to everybody regardless of being a member of a particular faith or not. We focus on the vulnerable and deprived in society. In addition, we see the services as our social responsibility and believe that it is our responsibility to demonstrate the love we preach through caring for the society by contributing to its development and improving the living conditions of the people (FBO Leader, March, 2018).

There were strong indications that the FBOs desire to do more as they planned to expand the existing services within the next five years. To achieve this, they had started to mobilise funds. An example is the Pentecost Church at Abor which had procured land and was mobilising funds to establish a basic school. Also, the Anloga Church of Pentecost had plans to establish Agriculture Training Institution. The plans of these FBOs would contribute to expand access to basic education in the Municipality and help reduce the pressure on the existing government basic schools.

The findings further revealed that the FBOs had many reliable sources of fund including weekly collections, donations, support from NGOs and network organisations. These sources are reliable as long as the churches operate within the week. Additionally, these churches organise annual and mini harvests when church members

make huge donations to the church. Furthermore, the FBO leaders noted that due to the trust they command, rich community members as well as both local and international FBOs contribute towards their development initiatives. With their financial potentials, FBOs would serve as good partners to the Assembly in the provision of basic services.

6.2. FBO Resources were not Adequately Harnessed by KeMa

There were no clear indications that KeMA was harnessing the resources of the FBOs. In-depth interviews with the key informants revealed that many officials of KeMA had not thought about FBOs as one of the avenues to obtain support from. Corroborating the claims of the key informants, one official of KeMA reported that:

The FBOs are not profit-making establishments so we do not think about calling on them to support us with funds to implement our plans. Currently, there is no law that will back such an action by the Assembly (Official of KeMA, April, 2018).

For some officials at KeMA who had thought about this, they intimated that their problem was about how to approach the issue. One of these officials narrated that:

Some of us know that the FBOs have a lot of resources. They have regular weekly collections, special harvest and other fund-raising activities. The problem is how to go about getting them to make some of their resources available to the Assembly (Official of KeMA, April, 2018).

From these respondents, the issue is not about getting the FBOs to make direct financial support to the Assembly but it is about establishing mechanisms and creating the enabling environment for FBOs to increase their investment in the provision of basic services. KeMA might consider strengthening its partnership with FBOs in order to leverage their support.

7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper has highlighted the role of FBOs in filling the resource gaps of KeMA in providing basic social services. With access to large human capital through the skills and talents of members and a variety of funding sources, the FBOs have implemented many development initiatives. Their successful delivery of services demonstrates their potentials and commitment to do more in the future. However, the Assembly has not adequately utilised the human and financial resources of the FBOs.

The recommendations are that KeMA should develop strong relationship with FBOs through regular consultations and deliberations on development challenges and solutions for the Municipality for effective, efficient and successful project cycle. During these processes, KeMA should ensure that FBO activities and the Assembly's MTDP complement each other rather than duplicating efforts in service provision. KeMA should also enter into partnership agreements with FBOs under the public procurement law to provide key services that the KeMA does not have the required funds to provide alone. Furthermore, KeMA should vigorously support the development initiatives of FBOs that are in line with the Assembly's aim of overall development.

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