

# Assessing The Contributions of The Kenema City Council to The Socio-Economic Development of Kenema City

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## ABSTRACT

Local Government is a body of persons elected by the people entrusted with the responsibility of administering power and authority in a specific locality within the state: such as country, Chiefdom, District, Province etc. The Kenema City Councils as one of the Local Councils in Sierra Leone is part of Local Government which was re-established by the Local Government Act of 2004. The Council is headed by the city Council Mayor and assisted by the Councilors. They are all elected in a direct/popular election for a period of four years. The Administrative head is the Chief Administrator (C.A) assisted by the Deputy Chief Administrator (Deputy C.A) and other working staff. This research study principally assesses the contribution of the Kenema City Council to the socio-economic development of Kenema City. This study provides insight to the origin of the Kenema city Councils, it highlights the roles of the Council, it investigates the major sources of revenue of the Kenema city council and it sounds the general opinion of citizens of Kenema City on the council. Furthermore, it assesses the challenges of the Council and proffer ways of improving the performance of the Council. The methodology, strategies, and techniques used to collect data ranges from the description of study area, population, sources of data and data collection method; which include, Survey of existing documents, questionnaires, interviews and observations. The population sample was 60, including youths, political stakeholders, council staff and key areas or sections in Kenema city.

- This research reveals that the people had adequate knowledge about the history of Kenema city council.
- Citizens were able to highlight key contributions of the Kenema City Council towards developing Kenema city.
- In the area of revenue, this research revealed that the Kenema city council have five major sources they generate revenue from; government grants, rents, market dues, property rates, and NGOs etc.
- The people of Kenema city are relatively pleased with the performance of the Kenema city council in obvious areas.
- It also made it clear that the Kenema city council is not free from corruption.
- Lastly, the findings revealed that the Kenema City Council was not an exception to challenges, but the major challenge is political interference into the operations of the council.

The recommendations of this research are that; to enhance effectiveness of the Kenema city council the central government should provide more grants to the council for development programmers and thoroughly monitored to ensure that the funds are not siphoned by anyone, but used for the intended purpose. The council should sanitize itself by figuring and eradicating corruption within its corridor, Elections should be non-partisan; presently councils are run by political parties. At times when a political party in power is not in control of the council it tends to starve it of funds. And also, employment procedures should be fair and based on merit. Moreover, there should be a level playing field for individuals or companies vying for contracts. Finally, there should be strong and effective monitoring and

supervision system in place so that contractors can deliver quality work. The study is useful to the Government of Sierra Leone, Local Government Development Partners and other stakeholders because it throws light on the challenges of the Kenema City Council which are not quite different from other Local Council across the country and suggesting ways of improving the performance of the Council. This write-up includes five chapters: Chapter one deals with general introduction or background of the research, chapter two deals with review of related literature, chapter three deals with methodology, chapter four deals with presentation and analysis of materials and chapter five deals with summary, conclusion and recommendation.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Local government can be described as some government bodies elected by the people that have administrative, legislative and executive functions on the territories under their jurisdiction. It is defined as an authority that decides certain measures within a given territory. Local Government according to Hasluck (2010) is the sphere of government where local authorities are allowed by law to issue acts or decisions to adjust the way of governance. In his book "Elements of Politics", Sidgwick (Sidgwick, 2014) considers local government as government of some sub organs that have special powers to issue regulations or rules within the area which they manage. So Sidgwick connects this government with its legislative character. Local governance happens when people live in a community and have sufficiently close interaction (Crawford,1999; 15) and to solve their problems they must work together as a group in order to achieve the results they want. Two basic elements that can be distinguished in this government are: management of public services and representation of citizens. These the effectiveness of such governments. According to the definition given by the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development), the local government is based on fiscal governance, legislative and executive authority over an area corresponding to the territorial limit and a certain group of people. Given the above definition, we see that this kind of governance is associated with two important elements, decentralization and local autonomy. *The question what is decentralization arises?* Decentralization is the provision or distribution of certain functions, within administrative, political or economic attributes, from central government to local government. The latter is independent of the center within the territory under its authority (Faguet, 2005; 6). The decentralization of government refers to the systemic effort to delegate to the lowest levels all authority, except that which can only be exercised by central points (Louis Allen, 2017). Thus decentralization is the process of redistribution or dispersing function, powers, to people or things away from a central location or authority. Decentralization or devolution of government functions is necessary because it relieves the central government of the burden of performing various functions. Centralization of authority puts the whole responsibility on the shoulder of the central government which would prove difficult to handle. Under decentralization, the various or divers needs of the localities are not met. Furthermore, it brings the government closer to the people as the forum is created for the operation of government at a local level. Sierra Leone is a constitutional parliamentary republic with three spheres of government: national government, local councils and chieftdom councils. There is no constitutional provision for local government and therefore the Local Government Act 2004 provides the main legal framework for local councils. The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development has responsibility for implementing decentralization and local governance reforms. Local government was a fundamental element of governance in Sierra Leone during the colonial era. The elective aspect of local councils was suspended nationwide in 1972. The district councils ceased to operate, while the Freetown City Council, Bonthe Municipal Council, and the urban council of Bo, Kenema Makeni and Koidu New Sembehun continued to operate as local councils under appointed committees of management. In the 1980s the government decided to resuscitate the district councils and appointed committees of management (Abraham, 1994, Alie, 2007). The local government (the city councils and district councils) were revived in 2004 by the

Local Government Act, 2004. The main aim of the reintroduction of decentralization was to promote good governance and democracy, accountability and transparency, improve service delivery and develop the local economy. There are 19 local councils, made up of six city councils and one municipal council in the urban areas, and 15 district councils in the predominantly rural areas.

### **PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Kenema is the third largest city in Sierra Leone (after Freetown and Bo), and the largest city in the country's Eastern Region. It is the capital of Kenema District and a major economic center of the Eastern Region. At the 2015 National Population and Housing Census, Kenema had a population of 200, 354. Kenema is located approximately 200 miles from Freetown, and 60 kilometers (40 mi) south of Bo. The Kenema City council was established by the local government Act of 2004 to provide development and efficient service for the people of the City. Local government bodies in Sierra Leone have been taught corruption. The central government suspended the local governments in 1972 because of corruption. They were revived in 2004 to provide essential services and promote good governance, since their revival, the Kenema City Council has been doing the work the councils were created to do. The problem statement is that local councils are created to bring development to their localities which include provision of primary education, primary road construction, community health care and other community developments. The council since 2004 had made some efforts in living up to their expectation. The questions are; are they impressively doing their bidding? What are the challenges that hinder their work? And what is the opinion of the local people of their council?

### **AIM**

The aim of the research is to assess the contributions of Kenema City council to the socio-economic development of Kenema City.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the research include the following:

1. To investigate the history of the council.
2. To highlight the role of the council in development of the city.
3. To ascertain the councils' major sources of revenue.
4. To sound the general opinion (performance) of citizens of Kenema City on the council.
5. To assess the challenges of the council in the execution of its functions.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH**

This work is significant for so many reasons; First, it is useful to the public as it would help them understand and appreciate the contribution of the Kenema City Council to the development of the municipality. Second, this work would also try to show the weaknesses of the council and analyze the reasons for the challenges. The knowledge of the challenges of the council would enable stakeholders to reduce the barriers in order to enhance the work of the council. Furthermore, the findings revealed by this research would be used as data by government and non-governmental agencies working to improve the performance of the local councils in Sierra Leone. Also, the research would help sound the perception of the people about Kenema City Council. It would also positively shape their perception about the council. This would help maximize cooperation between the council and the people they serve. A critical scrutiny of the council would help assess the level and impact of decentralization. It would help the readers to appreciate the various levels and degrees of decentralization and devolution. It would be valuable to any other person or organization who may want to undertake similar or further research on this topic and other related topics.

## **HYPOTHESIS**

1. It is assumed that the local councils play pivotal roles in developing their localities.
  2. It is assumed that local councils are ineffective because of corruption and mismanagement.
  3. The decentralization of government functions to the local councils would achieve little or nothing.
- This study/research is intended to prove or disprove the hypotheses above.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **Introduction.**

In this chapters works-books, journals, research reports other related to local government and decentralization are carefully review. Empirical and theoretical dates are analyzed to beef up the knowledge of the research. The literature review is divided into the following areas:

- History/Background of local governments.
- Decentralization.
- Local government in development.
- Role of the Local Councils in the development of their localities.
- Sources of funding of Local Councils.
- General opinion of citizens on the performance of council
- The Challenges of local councils.
- Solutions to those challenges.

## **HISTORY/BACKGROUND OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

Sierra Leone is one of the states where the remnants of these dual structures have persisted most strongly following independence. The modern state of Sierra Leone traces its historical origins back to 1787, when freed slaves (referred to as ‘the Black Poor’) living in England founded a colony on the peninsula of Sierra Leone. In 1808, the colony became a British colony controlled by the British Crown. Accordingly, the territory under British rule expanded, encompassing Freetown (today’s capital), the peninsula where Freetown is located, and the islands nearby. On the other hand, the Colony of Sierra Leone’s hinterland became a protectorate in 1896. Consequently, at the end of the 19th century, a new African colonial state had emerged: The Colony and Protectorate of Sierra Leone, which comprised the Crown Colony (Freetown and its environs) and the Protectorate (the inland area). While the Colony was subject to a system of direct colonial rule headed by the Governor, the Protectorate would be subject to a system of indirect colonial rule, wherein local rulers would carry out tax collections and other administrative affairs under the supervision of a small number of administrators dispatched by the colonial administration. In this discussion paper, I provide an overview of the formation and development of local government in the Protectorate of Sierra Leone. To do so is to effectively unpack the historical process concerning the genesis and development of the bifurcated colonial state in Africa known as Sierra Leone. From the end of the 19th century onwards, a modern system of local government modeled on that of the United Kingdom was gradually introduced into the directly ruled Colony of Sierra Leone, an example being the establishment of the Freetown City Council in 1893. As for the indirectly ruled Protectorate, the colonial authorities did little to develop a Western style system of local government, preferring instead to maintain and leverage the traditional system of rule. Consequently, a system of local government did not officially unfold in the Protectorate until the inter-war period, specifically, 1937.

However, this by no means implies that the Protectorate lacked any system akin to local government during the forty-year period following the declaration of the Protectorate in 1896. Indeed, indirect rule, whereby traditional rulers would govern as ‘native leaders’ under the auspices of the Governor heading the colonial administration, was in a sense considerably akin or analogous to a system of local government. In fact, the system of local government in post-independence Sierra Leone traces its historical origin, at least in part, to

the system of indirect rule that existed in the Protectorate during the colonial era. Initially, the Protectorate of Sierra Leone comprised five administrative districts: Karene, Ronietta, Bandajuma, Panguma, and Koinadugu, each of which was governed by a District Commissioner, a white administrator appointed by the Colonial Governor. The institution that did subsequently develop into a core local government with superior status to the Tribal Authority was the District Council. Established in 1946 along with the Protectorate Assembly, the District Councils consisted primarily of all Paramount Chiefs together with one member elected from each Tribal Authority in the district concerned; they were chaired by a District Commissioner. The role of the District Council was to advise on matters brought by the colonial government, issue proposals to the colonial government or Protectorate Assembly on matters that impact the lives of residents, and formulate guidelines for amending native law and custom (Alie, 1990: 156). However, while the District Councils partially served as local governments in place of the Tribal Authorities, they remained administrative bodies consisting primarily of Tribal Authority delegates, meaning that they had the same problems as the Tribal Authorities: poor administrative capacity and political corruption. Furthermore, the undemocratic rule in central and provincial Sierra Leone had a bifurcated aspect that traces its history to the colonial area; that is, a small elite consisting of politicians, military officials, civil servants, and Lebanese businessmen held the monopoly on political power and economic resources in central Sierra Leone, while the Paramount Chiefs and other traditional rulers enjoyed arbitrary power in the provinces. This situation became one of the underlying factors that both caused and lengthened the Civil War of the 1990s. In an attempt to redress this situation, the government, following the end of the conflict, started focusing its attention on overhauling the system of local government, a task that it is still pursuing today. In May 2002, following the resolution of the conflict, President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah announced in his inaugural address as re-elected president that his government would pursue local government reform, considering it to be an important development issue in post-conflict Sierra Leone. Since then, there has been lively discussion surrounding local government reform, including decentralization, and the government has received support to this end from the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme.

Following these developments, the government enacted the Local Government Act of 2004 in March 2004, and in May of the same year, it implemented local council elections across the country, establishing 19 Local Councils comprising 13 District Councils and six City/Municipality Councils. Thus, Sierra Leone revived local government after a space of 32 years. Since their establishment in 2004, the Local Councils have served as public service providers in many different areas, including public health, education, and infrastructure, and their existence has become well-entrenched in the daily lives of citizens. On the other hand, in 2010, the Government of Sierra Leone announced that it would revive the office of District Officer (former District Commissioner), which had been abolished with the creation of District Councils in 2004. As part of its reforms to local administration to date, the Sierra Leone government has revived the District Councils and city councils, which are primarily composed of democratically elected representatives, positioning them midway between the central government and chiefdoms, and it has strengthened their capacities and pursued the devolution of authority and fiscal powers to them. It will be necessary to keep a close watch on developments in Sierra Leone's form of local government to determine whether this approach will ultimately redress the bifurcated undemocratic governance Sierra Leone inherited from its colonial past, particularly the 'decentralized despotism' that exists in rural areas.

### **Local Government in Ghana.**

Ghana is one of the few African countries that have had a significant experience with a democratic political life. Decentralization in Ghana has a long standing history which goes back to the 1870s. From the years of colonization, through the battles and struggles for independence to this present day, successive



governments have thought of how to create and foster a strong local government while keeping up a vibrant central 174 governments as well (Ayee, 2000:28-31). It should be noted that, because the country was a British colony, it inherited a legacy of a strong unitary system of government that concentrates power and resources at the centre and conservatively devolves less to local governments. Ghana's first attempt at a state-local reform was an administrative decentralization with sectorial ministries organized in territorial hierarchies at the regional and local level. The main objective of this reform was to expand public services to all parts of the country (Awortwi, 2016). After independence in 1957, Kwame Nkrumah under the National Liberation Movement began attempts to bring local governmental changes. The Conventional People's Party (CPP) government under the leadership of Kwame Nkrumah made five provincials, self-governing congregations. 175 The chiefs and the National Liberation Movement (NLM) however became a great constraint to the approach of the CPP government (Knierzinger, The CPP attempted the establishment of a proper and structured local government again through the 1960 constitution. The constitution included a local government Act which asserted that local government should be self-sufficient and responsible for its own financing (Crawford, 2004). In 1966, the CPP ceased to be in government and the National Liberation Council (NLC) took over. This period was characterized by recognizable swings towards the strategy of local governance. All these attempts notwithstanding, the country still had a very weak local government structure (Nkrumah). In fact, according to some authors as (Awortwi 2010, Ahoi, 2017 and Nkrumah 2000), the predominant interest that prevailed in the first move from independence up until the 1970s was that of the central government and not the local government. The military regime led by - National Redemption Council- (NRC) in the year 1974 abolished the distinction, which existed before this date, between the local council and the central government bodies at the local level and established a single structure of the District Councils and assigned to it the responsibility of the totality of government at the local level (Awortwi). In 1982, the PNDC regime issued an 11-point decentralization plan designed to reform the state-local relationship and promote democracy, grass root institutional empowerment, stronger and more effective local governance and all-round government efficiency (Awortwi, 2016: 358, Yebo 1985:66). The regime announced the de-concentration of the central and top level of government and favoured the encouragement of participatory government with great emphasis on the grassroots level. In other words, the philosophy of the regime was to develop a decentralization programme that was meant to 'give power to the people' and bring 'democracy to the doorstep' of the people. In July 1987, the PNDC launched a three-tier local government system. More also, 45 additional local territories were created under the jurisdiction of the district 176 assemblies. The PNDC Law No. 207 which made the local government the highest political and administrative authority at the local level was also later introduced. Despite these tremendous efforts and milestones towards an autonomous local governance, there were elements of centralization in the process. A typical example is the appointment of the District Chief Executives (DCEs) by the central government. This situation is still the case although there has been a great outcry by several stakeholders against this prevailing situation. The 1992 constitution consolidated the laws on local administration and this remains the present and prevailing arrangement of decentralization in Ghana. After, the significant changes brought about by the PNDC regime, the local government of Ghana has not seen any groundbreaking reforms. What happens these days is a few adjustments made by ruling political parties to manage the system and appease the populace of authors and stakeholders criticizing and highlighting the weaknesses of the local government system. Typical examples of this adjustment include the reorganization of constituencies under the Kufuor administration in the year 2004 and most currently the increase in the number of regions and subsequently the regional coordinating council from 10 to 16 this year. Currently the country is preparing to embark on a referendum in December this year to determine whether the DCEs should remain appointed or be elected by universal adult suffrage. This is going to be a huge determinant of change in the trajectory of the local government administration of the country.

#### **Sources of Local Government Funds (Nigeria):**

Since Nigeria became politically independent in October 1st 1960 the need to embark on programs that would improve on quality of life of citizens has featured prominently in most of the policies it has pursued and the objectives it has assigned itself (Aderibigbe Stephen Olomola, “economic development, post-independence in Nigeria”. A very significant part of their policies and objectives is to have a rural focus, for the fact that majority of Nigerians lived in rural areas. The importance of local government institution emanates directly from this fact, because local government institution as the level of government closer to majority of Nigeria citizens are well placed to handle their problems, provide services for them and promote their welfare through the revenue they generated. The idea of creating local government worldwide is to bring people closer to the government with a view to improve their standard of living. However, in consideration of the three arms of government in Nigeria, each of the three tiers enjoyed reasonable degree of Independence and was given function commensurate with it resources, as stated in the doctrine of powers separation and the 1999 constitution. Government council's dealt with services related to education, maintenance of roads and bridges, and were also in charge of local markets etc.

### **Revenue Allocation in Nigeria.**

Discussions on local government finance in most cases touch on the issue of revenue allocation. The term “revenue allocation” is often used in association with such terms as fiscal federalism, resource control, and fiscal decentralization. It has been broadly defined to include the allocation of tax powers and the revenue sharing arrangements not only among the three tiers of government, but also the state governments as well. Fiscal federalism is a system of taxation and public expenditure in which revenue-raising powers and control over expenditure are vested in the various tiers of government within a nation, ranging from the national government to the smallest unit- the local government; Dang, 2013 cited in Sunday et al, 2014 p. 86). Basically, fiscal federalism emphasizes on how revenues are raised and allocated to different levels of government for development (Dang, 2013). According to Nyong (1999), fiscal federalism concerns the relationship among the various levels of government with respect to the sharing of the national cake, assigned functions and tax powers to the constituent units in a federation. He asserts that the important issue in fiscal federalism is revenue allocation formula, sharing of the national revenue among various tiers of government (vertical revenue sharing) as well as the distribution of revenue among states (horizontal revenue allocation). For Ekpo (2003), fiscal federalism is a mechanism in which relations arising from the political decentralization of the public sector functions and responsibilities are resolved. The term deals with the allocation of resources among the three tiers and units of government, and institutions for the discharge of responsibilities assigned to each jurisdictional authority.

Consequently, various Revenue Allocation Commissions were set up at different times to examine and settle the issue of revenue allocation among the three tiers of government- the federal, state and local (Onwioduokit, 2002 cited in Sunday et al, 2014 p. 86). Thus, it is apt to say, that the concept of fiscal federalism was first introduced in Nigeria in 1946 following the adoption of Richards Constitution. The period 1947 to 1952 marked the beginning of sub-national governments in Nigeria because financial responsibilities were devolved to three regions-North, West and East. The most contentious aspect of the nation’s federalism, revenue allocation, remained the responsibility of the colonial masters until Nigeria’s independence (Adesina, 1998) Fiscal federalism became deepened during the military epoch of 1966 to 1990s following the creation of states and local government perhaps as a means of spreading development across the country and satisfying agitations from potential ethnic groups. The era of military rule began with the creation of twelve states in 1967.

### **Sources of Local Government Finance.**

Source of local government finance implies the various means through which local governments generate financial resources to meet their financial obligations in the course of discharging their constitutional functions and duties. There are two major sources of local government finance in Nigeria, namely, internally generated revenue (which is revenue generated within the local government area of administration and it entails local tax or community tax, poll tax, or tenement rates, user fees and loans); and externally generated revenue which refers to the local government funds generated outside the local government area of administration. Internally generated revenue is a strategic source of financing local governments operation and which can be explored given the enabling environment and political will. The level of internally generated revenue by each local government depends on the size of the local government, nature of business activities, urban or rural nature of the council, rate to be charged, instruments used in the collection of revenue, political will and acceptability by the people to pay based on the legitimacy of the council and the socio-cultural beliefs of the citizens regarding the issue of taxation (Anifowose and Enemu, 1999 cited in Sunday et al p. 87). Local governments are constitutionally empowered to control and regulate certain activities in their jurisdiction, and in so doing; they impose some taxes and rates on these economic activities as a way of generating funds for their operations. The various ways local government generate revenue internally are community tax and rates; property (tenement) rates; general/development rates; licenses, fees and charges like marriage registration fees, car/truck licenses; interest on revenues such as deposits, investments, profits from the sale of stocks, shares, etc.; departmental recurrent revenues from survey fees, repayment of personal advances, nursery and day-care centers' fees, rents on local government quarters, etc. ( Atakpa, Ocheni, and Nwankwo, From the foregoing, tax is an imperative ingredient of revenue generation, development and transformation. As Olaoye (2008), puts it, it is a compulsory levy imposed by the government on individuals, companies for the various legitimate functions of the state (and local government). The external sources of revenue to Local government includes: 20% of Federal Government Statutory Allocation, 10% of Internally Generated Revenue of the State, VAT – Value Added Tax, Loans and Advances, Special capital grants, Financial Aid and Assistance from individual and organization. The Local Government Councils (LGCs) have very little influence on their receipts from Federal Allocation/Excess Crude and VAT unless they improve on their infrastructural developments (roads, portable water, health centers, hospital beds/cots) and school enrollments. Grants rarely come and when they do its impact is not well noticed. Following the provisions of the Public Procurement Act or Law Loans can only be taken by the LGCs subject to the approval of the State Government and limited to certain level of the total public debts charges of each LGC. LGCs are therefore limited by huge unpaid gratuities or pensions. The 10% State IGR can be enhanced if the IGR of the State goes up, which LGCs can assist by prompt payment of statutory deductions and ensuring that persons dealing with them present Tax Clearance Certificates as a pre-requisite. The only source that is elastic is the IGR of each council depending on the economic (industries, trading/business) activities.

### **Decentralization.**

Decentralization can be viewed as an extension of delegation. When a part of work is entrusted to other, it is known as delegated. Decentralization extends to the lowest level of organization (UNDP, 1999).

According to a consultancy group named after Louis A. Allen (2011), decentralization refers to the systematic effort to delegate to the lowest levels all authority except that which can be exercised at a central point. Earl P. strongly viewed decentralization as the division of a group of functions and activities into relatively autonomies units with overall authority and responsibility for their operations. Thus, decentralization is concerned with delegation of decision-making authority to the lowest levels in managerial diarchy. It is a process of redistribution or dispersing functions, power away from a central location or authority (Marriam – Webster dictionary, 2013) Decentralization varies so the degree of



decentralization is determined by: Nature of the authority delegated, how far down in the organization is delegated, how constitutively it is delegated, (Ribot, 2003). Decentralization in any area is a response to the problems of centralized systems. Decentralization in government is seen as the solution to problems like economic decline in performance of overloaded services, the demands of minorities for a greater say in local governance, the general weakening legitimacy of the public sector and global international pressure on countries with inefficient undemocratic overly centralized systems (Duan, 2007). Duan (2007) and Ribort (2003) state four general goals of decentralization: participation, diversity, efficiency and conflict resolution. The goal of participation holds that the lowest or least centralized authority which is capable of addressing issue effectively should do so. This includes restructuring redefining and recognizing the authority so that there is a system of co-responsibility between institutive of the governance at the central, regional and local levels. According to Ribot (2005) decentralization is often linked to concepts of participation in decision-making, democracy equality and liberty from high authority. Thus, decentralization enhances democratic voice.

The other second goal of decentralization is diversity plays an important role in decentralization. Johnson (1999) defines diversity to be unique properties of entities, agents or individuals that are not shared by the large group, population, structure. Diversity is a necessary attribute to achieve the self-organizing properties of interest. According to world banks (2013) decentralization is a greater participation by better informed diverse interest. In society will lead to more relevant decisions than those made only by authorities or the national level. UNDP (1999) describes decentralization as a response to demands for diversity another goal of decentralization is efficiency – According to Sherman (1992) and Johnson (1999) decentralization in government programmes tend to increase efficiency and effectiveness due to reduction of congestion in communities, quicker reaction to unanticipated problems, improved ability to deliver services and improved information about local conditions. Economic and political decentralization can help prevent or reduce actual or perceived inequities between various regions or between a region and the central government (Dawn, 2009) Dawn finds that political decentralization reduces intrastate conflict. Louis A. Allen (2011), states the following advantages of decentralizations:

- First, it reduces the burden on the central authority decentralization relieves the central or top executive of the burden of performing various functions. Centralization of authority puts the whole responsibility on the shoulder of central executive. This reduces the time at the disposal of central executives who should concentrate on other important managerial functions. So the only way to lessen their burden is to decentralize the decision-making to the subordinate powers.
- Second, decentralization facilities diversification. A centralized enterprise with the concentration of authority at the top will find it difficult complex to diversity its activities to satisfy the various regions whose needs are diverse.
- Third, decisions and action at the localities the local authorizes are responsive to the local needs and aspiration.
- Fourth, the development of personnel. Decentralization gives opportunity to the un-coming executives and politicians to develop their talents by taking initiatives.

Also, decentralization leads to quick decision-making and the process of decision making would be brought closer to the scene of the action. However, Allene (2011) also mentions certain disadvantages are argued that decentralization is highly beneficial but it can be dangerous unless it is carefully constructed and constantly monitored for the good of the people. Also, decentralization creates problems of coordination of the developed functions. Furthermore, decentralization requires more financial burden. The central government is obliged to finance the various subordinate bodies. Also, decentralization creates conflict particularly when various political parties are involved.

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN DEVELOPMENT**

#### Development:

A multitude of meanings is attached to the idea of development; the term is complex, contested, ambiguous, and elusive. However, in the simplest terms, development can be defined as bringing about social change that allows people to achieve their human potential. An important point to emphasize on is that development is a political term: it has a range of meanings that depend on the context in which the term is used, and it may also be used to reflect and to justify a variety of different agendas held by different people or organizations. The idea of development articulated by the World Bank, for instance, is very different from that promoted by Greenpeace activists. This point has important implications for the task of understanding sustainable development, because much of the confusion about the meaning of the term 'sustainable development' arises because people hold very different ideas about the meaning of 'development' (Adams 2009). Another important point is that development is a process rather than an outcome: it is dynamic in that it involves a change from one state or condition to another. Ideally, such a change is a positive one - an improvement of some sort (for instance, an improvement in maternal health). Furthermore, development is often regarded as something that is done by one group (such as a development agency) to another (such as rural farmers in a developing country). From this point of view, development means an increase in the size or pace of the economy such that more products and services are produced. Conventionally, a common assumption has been that, if an economy generates more products and services, then humans will enjoy a higher standard of living. The aim of many conventional approaches to development has been to increase the size of the economy (economic growth) in order to increase the output of products and services. Of course, without any change in the fundamental economic processes. According to 1998 *Nobel prize winner, Amartya Sen*, Development is **the process of expanding human freedom**. It is “the enhancement of freedoms that allow people to lead lives that they have reason to live”.

#### Local Government:

Local government, according to the long man dictionary of contemporary English (2003) is a government of cities, towns, etc. rather than a whole country. Thus, local government is an administrative machinery established to govern and provide essential services for its localities or areas example, The Kenema District Council, Kono District Council, Koidu New Sembehun City Council, Kenema City Council, Freetown City Council, Kailahun District Council, etc. Local government is the sphere of government closest to the people. Many basic services are delivered by local municipalities and councilors are the politicians closest to communities. Developmental local government means a local government committed to "work with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs and improve the quality of their lives". It should target especially those members and groups within communities that are most often marginalized or excluded, such as women, disabled people and very poor people. Municipalities face great challenges in promoting human rights and meeting human needs, addressing past backlogs and problems caused by malicious planning, and planning for a sustainable future. They can only meet these challenges by working together with local citizens, communities and businesses, and adopting a developmental approach. Developmental Local Government has four interrelated characteristics:

#### **Maximizing social development and economic growth**

Everything that a council/ municipality do should be done to impact as much as possible on the social development of an area. In particular, municipalities must be serious about their responsibility to provide services that meet the basic needs of the poor in their communities in a cost-effective and affordable manner. This could be achieved in two ways:

- Local governments should provide some relief for the poor. ‘Government’ policy is to provide a free basic amount of service for particularly water and electricity to households that otherwise do not have

access to these services. They can also promote social development through arts and culture, the provision of recreational and community facilities, and the delivery of social welfare services.

- Councils have great influence over local economic development and therefore need to work in partnership with local business to improve job creation and investment. It is not the role of local government to create jobs but it can take active steps to improve the conditions in the area for the creation of employment opportunities. When the municipality provides new basic household infrastructure such as water and sewage, contracts should preferably be given to local small businesses that will employ local people.

### **Integrating and coordinating**

In most local areas there are many different agencies that contribute towards the development of the area, such as national and provincial government departments, parastatals, trade unions, community groups and private sector organizations'. Developmental local government must provide leadership to all those who have a role to play in achieving local prosperity. One of the most important methods for achieving greater co-ordination and integration is integrated development planning.

### **Democratizing Development**

Municipal Councils play a central role in promoting local democracy. In addition to representing community interests within the Council, councilors should make sure that citizens and community groups are involved in the design and delivery of municipal programmes. Ward committees and community consultation are important ways of achieving greater involvement. Municipalities can also do a lot to support individual and community initiatives, and to direct them to benefit the area as a whole. The involvement of youth organizations in this regard is particularly important.

### **Leading and Learning**

Extremely rapid changes at the global, national and local levels are forcing local communities to rethink the way they are organized and governed.

### **How do you know if your municipality/local council is developmental?**

Your municipal council is developmental if it is able to deliver on the following:

**Provision of household infrastructure and services** – this includes services such as water, sanitation, local roads, storm water drainage, refuse collection and electricity. Not only are these services a constitutional right but they can help people to support their families, find jobs and develop their skills to start their own small businesses.

### **Creation of Livable, Integrated Cities, Towns and Rural Areas**

Apartheid planning has left deep scars on the way our cities, towns and rural areas look. Cities and towns are racially segregated, with the poor often living in townships kilometers away from the business and industrial areas. The spatial integration of our settlements is critical. It will make our areas economically more efficient since it will be easier and cheaper to provide services, reduce the costs of public transport for workers, and enable social development. Spatial integration is also central to nation building. **Local Economic**

### **Development.**

Local government can play an important role in promoting job creation and boosting the local economy. By providing good quality cost-effective services and by making the local area a pleasant place to live and work in the municipality will have made a good start to sustainable local economic development.

### **What can Municipalities do to ensure that they are Developmental?**

For municipalities to become developmental in nature, they have to change the way that they work. The following are some tools that municipalities must apply to assist them to become more developmental.

### **Integrated Development Planning (IDP) and Budgeting**

Integrated Development Planning is a planning method to help municipalities develop a coherent, long-term plan for the co-ordination of all development and delivery in their area. Municipalities face immense challenges in developing sustainable settlements, which meet the needs and improve the quality of life of local communities. In order to meet these challenges, they will need to understand the various dynamics within their area, develop a concrete vision for the area, and strategies for realizing and financing that vision in partnership with other stakeholders. [See the guide on IDP]

### **Performance Management**

Performance management is a system that is used to make sure that all parts of the municipality work together to achieve the goals and targets that are set. The municipality must have clear goals and specific targets of what has to be done to make sure the goals are achieved. Every department and staff member should be clear what they have to do and how their performance will contribute to achieving overall goals and targets. Performance of individuals, departments and the municipality as a whole should be monitored to make sure the targets are met. Performance management is of critical importance to ensure that plans are being implemented, that they are having the desired development impact, and that resources are being used efficiently.

### **Working together with Local Citizens and Partners**

Building local democracy is a central role of local government and municipalities should develop strategies and mechanisms to continuously involve citizens, business and community groups in processes such as planning and budgeting. One of the strengths of integrated development planning is that it involves the community in development; delivery and democracy have made a good start to sustainable local economic development. The structure of local government in Sierra Leone is historically determined (Abraham, 1994). Sierra Leone consists of western area and three provinces. For administrative purpose the provinces are further divided into 12 districts (now two districts have been added in the Northern Province). The district comprised of chiefdoms ruled by paramount chiefs. There are townships in the provinces where appreciable degree of urbanization has taken place. The chiefdom rulers have local administration charged with specific functions; the districts are ruled by district councils (a form of local government) and the urbanized cities are administered by city councils (other forms of local government. They all play useful roles in providing development services at local level (Abraham 1994). The Freetown municipalities' council is the oldest council in Africa. It was created by royal charter of 1799 (Ibid) the charter made Freetown a municipality with a mayor, alderman and sheriff who were chosen by the governors-in-council. However, the council soon became redundant because of dishonesty and corruption. A municipality act was passed in 1948 to revive the council under the act, Freetown was constituted with a corporation consisting of the mayor, the city council of Freetown the city was further divided into three wards-three (3) councilors were elected from each ward who were to serve for a period of three (3) years. The mayor was elected for a period of one year and was eligible for re-election. The Act prescribed the following functions of the city council:

- a. To keep all roads, streets, lanes, squares and public places well and sufficiently lighted.
- b. To provide public market, slaughter houses and attendant facilities and to regulate the same

- c. To provide for cleansing of all roads, streets, lanes, squares and public places and disposal of refuse.
- d. To issue municipality license for the use of markets and slaughter houses to provide established and maintain parks and other recreational facilities, to provide education facilities, liberties, transport and parks etc. (Abraham 1994, Tangri 1994). The local administration in the province started after 1896 when Britain proclaimed the protectorate of the interior of Sierra Leone.

### **ROLE OF LOCAL COUNCILS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR LOCALITIES.**

According to the International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, local government may be loosely defined as a public organization authorized to decide and administer a limited range of public policies within a relatively small territory which is a sub-division of a regional or national government. In general terms, local governments are public legal entities with special revenues, budgets and personnel who have duties and powers laid down by law, whose decision bodies are determined by the local people to meet the common needs of the local community living in a particular geographical area). Within its historical development, it is seen that the first local administrations were created in order to fulfill the tasks of the monopoly of the central government today such as military structuring, national defense, criminal follow-up and punishment. There are various views and different approaches to the emergence of local governments. However, it is stated that local governments first emerged in Western Europe in the 11th and 12th centuries. Relatedly, the origin of contemporary local government, is attributed to the Western and traditional culture. Modern local government emerged as an answer to a succession of separate needs and demands, and was seen as an expression of freedom of society. Local government appeared in different countries for various reasons. In the Scandinavian as well as other countries, local government surfaced as a deliberate attempt to limit the intrusion of central government in the affairs of local communities. In United States of America (U.S.A), local government institutions grew in response to a combination of citizen demand, interest group pressure and state government acquiescence (Browman & Kearney, 2000): Local government in Turkey did not come about as a result of indigenous development; it was set up without a demand from the public. It was introduced from the top as a result of great influence from the Western world when the country opened up to the outside world. Another major influence was the country's interest in the efficient and effective provision of public services throughout its boundaries (Polatoglu, 2000: 156). In sharp contrast to the U.S.A., but similar to Turkey, local government in Ghana was established in a top-down manner.

It was initiated to promote popular grassroots participation in the management and administration of local governance institutions for improved conditions of life (Ahenkan, A., Bawole N. J. & Domfeh K., 2013: 191). Broadly, local government exists for diverse reasons. The basic reason perhaps has to do with the concept of subsidiarity. The idea of bringing government as close as possible to the citizens of a country. Özer & Akçakaya (2014, 85) broadly group the reasons for the existence of local government into four categories - social, political, administrative and economic reasons. Administratively, it is literally impossible for central government to singlehandedly coordinate all the affairs of a country efficiently and effectively. Politically, local government is a means of instituting a sense of nationalism and participation. Local governance enables people to participate more directly in governance processes and empowers citizens previously excluded from decision making thereby forging a strong sense of involvement and belonging in the citizens of a nation. Local government, because of its direct connection with the grass-root level is a means of economically providing and distributing public services to specific areas and localities of a country. The sphere of authority of the local government at a surface glance may not be on a very grand scale as that at the national or international affairs; however, it has a very central role in the lives of citizens. The local government is very intimate and affects the citizens in all sorts of ways from the cradle to the grave. Like Jackson implies it, local government is the "somebody" that keeps the community tidy



and fit for living; ensures that houses are properly built; the young children have a place to learn; and makes sure that the sick, the poor and aged are tended to. In totality, local government can be viewed as an indigenous government having sway to settle on whatever choice, approaches and guidelines wanted locally with very minimal or no control by any legislature or influence of the central government.

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PARTICIPATION**

Participation simply means the action of taking part in the achievement of a set goal or objective. Creighton mentions participation to be the process by which public concerns, needs and values are incorporated into governmental and corporate decision making. He emphasizes that participation is a two-way communication and interaction, with the overall goal of making better decisions that are supported by the public. Local government participation therefore means, the involvement of “common” community members or electorates in the decisions making process. In other words, the 181 grass-root level hold exercise power, through their involvement, over decisions related to the general affairs of their own communities. According to Davies and Grant, decentralization leads to increased participation. This goes to mean that local government invariably leads to participation. In fact, it is for the sake of participation and self-governance that local government is instituted and vital. Where local government is participatory, it is increasingly responsive to and interactive with the community. Members of the locality have a voice or a say in the administration and governance of that particular place. For this reason, services are increasing provided in response to grass-root and citizen demand and priorities (Centre for Democracy and Governance, 2000). This in turn increases the enthusiasm of citizens and their involvement in projects that the government is championing. A great part of participation in local government is political. Political participation embraces electoral participation in the election of officials at the local level.

Citizens are allowed to choose their own leader through voting. In other word, regular local elections are the heart of the process. Ghana’s local government has fallen short in this area. The appointment of the DCE and the regional ministers as the executive body of the local government undermines participation. Apart from the fact that the citizens at the grass-root level are not given a chance to choose their own leaders, the DCEs in Ghana serve in the power scope of the “president” at the district level. Their position is very key in the function of DAs.

Their power seems not to have boundaries, despite the checks and balances of the General Assembly and the EXECO and its sub-committees. This is mainly because the decisions of the DCEs mostly go unchallenged. Perhaps due to the 30% appointed members who provide partisan support to the DCE thus discouraging prospective challengers to the DCE’s decisions from other elected member (Oluwa & Wunsch, 2004). Therefore, the DCEs are mostly seen to be championing the cause of their affiliated political party and the central government instead of that of the local communities they govern. According to Antwi-Boasiako (2010, 173), political participation encourages government responsiveness and improves 182 efficiencies. This is because citizens have a mandate to replace or retain officials and leaders with poor performance. Participatory governance can also rely on the mechanisms and instrument such as town and interest group meetings, hearings and community involvement in budgeting and planning. This ensures that the local public is generally informed and can provide input concerning key decisions directly at public meetings, occasional surveys or referenda. When an active channel of communication and interaction exist between the leadership and the citizens, the latter tend to participate voluntarily in the locality improvement projects because they “own” them (projects) and feel a stronger sense of responsibility and hence cooperate towards the completion of said projects. Participation is a very vital element in good governance at all levels, be it central or local. Participation being a necessary condition for successful governance however does not mean it is a sufficient one; participation without accountability can result in futility. This paper argues here that participation should go hand in hand with accountability. According to a study conducted in Ghana, it was revealed that participation can be ineffective or just a

mere strategy). Crawford also undertook a fieldwork in some districts in Ghana that showed significant levels of participation (Crawford, but did not imply commensurate grass-root inclusion in final decision making. That is to mean that, though structures may be in place and promote citizen participation through meeting and other avenues (and the citizens themselves may feel some involvement in the process of decision making), this could be entirely illusion. Put differently, the structures are meant merely as smoke screens to offer a sense of true participation but in actual fact are not effective.

### **CHALLENGES FACED BY LOCAL COUNCILS.**

Corruption:

This is the bane of the Nigerian democracy from the top to the bottom. However, some schools of thought believe that the Local Government is the most corrupt of all three tiers. In the last local government elections, most of the seats were won by the political parties in power in the respective states. This is unheard of in a true democracy as the State Governors successfully put their cronies in power and the rights of the general populace to decide was totally shelved aside. Monies meant for payment of the salaries of the employees are siphoned and a lot of ghost workers are in the payrolls, financial figures for projects are inflated and most of the Chairmen rule with an autocratic and parochial attitude and tend to favor some parts of the council over others.

#### **Poor Leadership**

Most of the Local Government Chairmen and Councilors are not qualified for the positions they occupy. Most of them get into these positions either by appointment or blessings of their political godfathers to reward them for their loyalty and service. Most of them do not know what it takes to run their offices and have little or no communication with their governing councils and spend most of their time in their respective State capitals as opposed to their base of operation.

- Another pressing constraint is successive governments' insistence on conserving the executive and administrative powers of chiefs. Without effective tax authority, the councils cannot develop a social contract, as elected service providers, with taxpaying voters and service consumers. Furthermore, they are dependent on the cooperation of chiefs to obtain land for projects, which compromises their planning authority.
- Lack of payroll devolution has hampered coordination between elected councilors and technical staff, with some of the latter seeing the councils as little more than funding agencies.
- Endemic poverty has also constrained the effectiveness of local councils in delivering services and enhancing the voice of poor people. Rural people have become used over generations to surviving with little or no government assistance and that isolation has helped to dampen demand for services. A local culture of "self-help" remains strong.

### **SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN SIERRA LEONE.**

All tiers of government should be made accountable for the distribution of finances and the percentage due to the Local Governments should be increased so that projects can be carried out and salaries paid as at when due. All forms of corruption, selfishness, embezzlement, discrimination should be removed from their vocabulary. Sierra Leoneans should be given their rights to vote for suitably qualified candidates instead of having greedy and unskilled politicians imposed on them. The era of election manipulation whereby one party wins all the seats should be consigned to the past.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses the strategies, techniques used to collect data. It ranges from the description of study area, population, sources of data and data collection method.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The methodologies used to collect the data are; Survey of existing documents, questionnaires, interviews and observations.

### **Description of Study Area**

Kenema City is the headquarters of Nongowa Chiefdom, Kenema District and Eastern Region of Sierra Leone. Kenema City is the third populous city in Sierra Leone, after Freetown and Bo. Kenema City is the headquarters of Nongowa Chiefdom, Kenema District and is the regional headquarters of Eastern Region and thus the seat of the Resident Minister East. It has two councils namely, the Kenema City Council and the Kenema District Council. Kenema City is located in the Nongowa Chiefdom. It is also the seat of the Paramount Chief and the Speaker (Larvai). The indigenes of Kenema city are the Mendes. However other ethnic groups live in the city. Kenema city is sub-divided into two; Gbo-Kakajama, and Gbo-Lambayama respectively. In lieu to the above, Gbo-Lambayama has six sections such as Lambayama, Njaguama, Simbeck, Fonikoh, Ndigbuama, and Nyandeyama. On the other hand, Gbo-Kakajama consist of five sections which are Kissy town, Kpayama, Njaguama, Gbonbotoh, and Gbenderu. Kenema City is a commercial center. Various people converge into the town for business – the Lebanese, Indians, Fula, Mandingo, Temne, Kissi, Limba etc. the lingua franca of the City is Krio, (though Mende language is also widely spoken). Kenema city is gifted with number of youths and their major sources of income is bike riding within the city center There are shops along the streets of Kenema with general merchandise. There are also offices for buying precious minerals like diamond and gold. Some traders are also engaged in buying cash crops such as cocoa and coffee. Kenema City has several Primary and Secondary Schools and the Eastern Technical University of Sierra Leone for advanced and further education. Some prominent schools in Kenema are Government Secondary School (KSS), Holy Trinity Secondary School, Ansarul Islamic Secondary School, Holy Rosary Secondary School, Islamic Secondary School, Ahmadiyya Secondary School, St. James Junior Secondary School etc. The primary schools include St. Charles Lwanga Primary School, SLC Primary School, KDEC Primary School etc.

Most of the Government offices in Kenema are located along Maxwell Khobe Street. The court (both magistrate and high court), Kenema Correctional Center, the ministry of Agriculture, Social Welfare, the District and Provincial Administrative Offices are all found around the axis. The Kenema City Council is located along Maada Bio Street and the Kenema District Council is found along Nyandeyama Road.

Kenema has a number of Banks and Financial institutions. They include Bank of Sierra Leone, Sierra Leone Commercial Bank, Rokel Commercial Bank, Zenith International Bank, Vista Bank, Eco Bank etc.

Figure 1: a map of Sierra Leone showing Kenema District.

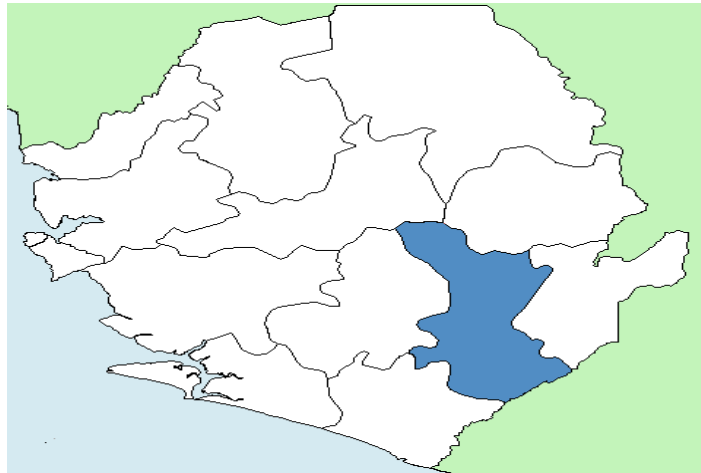
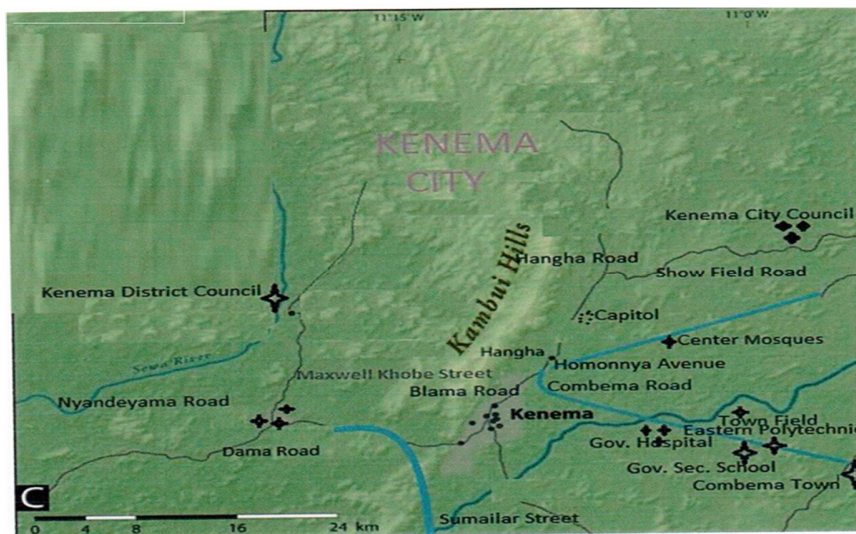


FIGURE 2: Map of Kenema.

Figure 2: Map of Kenema City showing major streets.



## RESEARCH DESIGN

The research is a survey of the contribution of the Kenema City Council in the Socio-Economic Development of Kenema City. It is aimed at sounding the perception of the people of Kenema about the contribution of the council to develop Kenema City. Thus, the work was both a qualitative and a quantitative Research. Questionnaires were prepared and interviews conducted to investigate the social fact.

## Population Size and Frame.

According to the 2015 census, Kenema City had a population of about 75,352. Thus, the research would cover adults – males and females of voting age in the City.

### Sample Population

It was impossible to interview or observe every adult of voting age in the city. A sample of the population was thus used for the collection of the research data. The sections were selected by use of simple random sampling. The sections in the city were listed and numbered in alphabetical order. Ballots were made matching the number of the sections. The ballots were folded and selected at random. The first six sections as listed below made up the sample. Respondents were also selected by the same method. Anybody who was met told the purpose of the research and showed willingness to respond to the research items was automatically made to constitute the sample. Further arrangements as to how the responses were to be collected were agreed. Though some ended not showing up, others did because they were interested in the research topic, being one that hinges on their welfare and development.

**TABLE 1: Showing the sections and sample population**

NO	SECTIONS	RESPONDENTS		TOTAL	PERCENT
		M	F		
1	Nyandeyama	5	5	10	16.6
2	Fisheries	5	5	10	16.6
3	Burma	5	5	10	16.6
4	Simbeck	5	5	10	16.6
5	Tokpombu	5	5	10	16.6
6	City Council	5	5	10	16.6
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Data Collected, 2021.**

- Survey of existing documents
  - Questionnaire
  - Interviews
  - Observation
- a. Survey of existing documents

Text books, journals and other published materials were read and used for the enrichment of the research work. Of particular importance were the local Government Act of 2004, the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone, history of the country by Professor Alie and Arthur Abraham etc.

b. Questionnaire

The use of questionnaires was an important method used to collect the research data. The questionnaire was divided into two sections: Section A dealt with personal details while section B dealt with information relating to the objectives of the research. The questionnaire was pre-tested among colleagues. Corrections were done and the final was printed and distributed among the respondents.

c. Interviews

The interview schedule was arranged with the respondents and done under a conducive atmosphere. Interview guides were prepared. They were made up of open and close- ended questions. The interview guide was based on the objectives and research questions of the research.



d. Observation

Visitations were made to the council and its places of operation. The council workers were keenly observed transacting their daily tasks. Through keen observation, the researcher was able to get first-hand knowledge of the council’s operations in the city.

**Presentation**

The data collected and processed were presented in both qualitative and quantitative forms. The data were presented in frequencies and percentages followed by descriptive narratives. The data are presented in tabular form.

**DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION**

**INTRODUCTION**

This chapter deals with data presentation and analysis. Data collected from the field is organized and presented in tabular form followed by descriptive analysis.

**Objective 1: History of the Kenema City Council**

**Knowledge about the Kenema City Council**

Local councils were introduced in Sierra Leone as part of the democratization process in the 1960s. However, the councils were abolished under the one party All Peoples Congress Party Rule in the 1970’s. Since bad governance was identified as one of the causes of the decade long war, the Ahmed Tejan Kabbah led Sierra Leone People’s Party Government reintroduced local governance in 2004. Irrespective of the foregone, some Sierra Leoneans are not well informed about local councils and their activities. Table 1 shows the knowledge of respondents on the Kenema City Council.

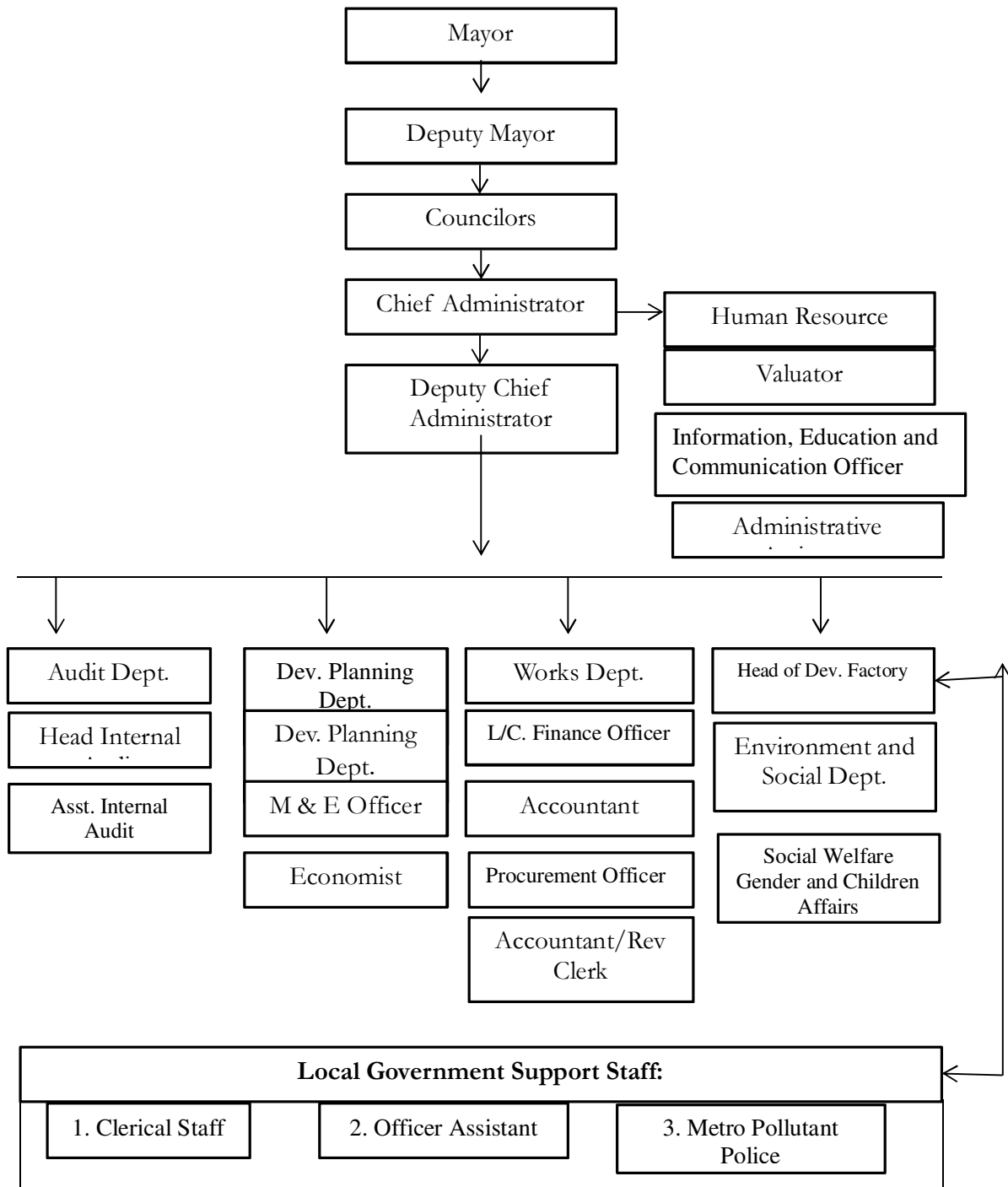
**Table 2: Knowledge of the respondents about Kenema City Council.**

<b>Knowledge of Respondents on Kenema City Council</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>PERCENT (%)</b>
Adequate	20	33
Fair	30	50
No knowledge	10	17
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Data collected, 2021.**

From the table above, 33% of the respondents claimed to have knowledge about the background of the Kenema City Council, 50% had a fair knowledge and 17% had no knowledge of the origin of the Council. From discussions, respondents revealed the Kenema City Council is one of the local councils re-established by the Local Government Act (2004). That the City Council is headed by an elected Mayor. They went further to explain that the councils were suspended in 1974 on allegations of inefficiency due to rampant corruption. Some of the respondents expressed an accurate knowledge about the structure of the council as shown in the organogram below.

Figure 3: Showing the structure of the Kenema City Council.



They explained the hierarchical structure beginning with the Mayor and the councilors who are the political leaders elected for a period of 4 years after which they seek re-election; the administrative staff who are more or less civil servants holding permanent positions and can be transferred from one council to another by the central Government through the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development.

**Objective 2: Highlight the role of the Council in the Development strives of Kenema City.**

#### **4.2 The Role of the Kenema City Council in the Development of the municipality.**

Local councils were established to bring governance to the door step of the people and to champion development programmes in the localities they are found. Table 2 shows in detail the role of the Kenema City Council in expediting development in Kenema city.

**Table 3: Role of the Kenema City Council in the Development of the Municipality**

No	Role of Kenema City Council	Respondents	Percent (%)
1	Cleaning and garbage collection	15	25
2	Building Schools and PHUS (Public Health Units)	10	17
3	Providing cemeteries and maintaining them.	10	17
4	Construction and maintenance of feeder roads	10	17
5	Construction of bridges and culverts	10	17
6	Building markets and maintaining them.	5	8
7	Providing slaughter houses and cool room.	5	8
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

From the table above, the roles of the Kenema City Council are highlighted by the respondents. 25% of respondents stated that the council’s duty is the cleaning of communities and garbage disposal, 17% stated that the council builds schools and peripheral Health Units, provides furniture and learning materials for schools, 17% stated it is the responsibility of the council to provide and maintain cemeteries., 17% of cited the construction and maintenance of roads, 17% stated the council constructs bridges and culverts connecting the sections in the City, 8% of respondents stated that the council builds markets and 8% it provides slaughter houses and cool rooms for the community. From the above, majority of the respondents were very particular about the cleaning and garbage collection role of the council and declared it as a vital part of the contribution in developing the city. They acknowledged seeing garbage collection trucks that were said to be donated by ‘Wealth Hunger Hilfe’ in the strive to clean the city (klin Kenema City). Respondents indicated that the council has also constructed a number of culverts and or bridges along Mustapha Lane, Tejan Street, Gabba Lane, Mohamed Sandy Street, and Freeman Benga Street all in ward 59, Lekpeteih, Constituency 19. Next in the queue, the council is said to have rehabilitated two primary schools; the Methodist Primary School at Hanga, and KMDEC at Bokarie Gbe Street. Another role worth noting is the construction of the PHU at Tommy Drive, Kpayama. The Gbonbotoh market was also rehabilitated by the city council. A reasonable number of the respondents highlighted the provision of cemeteries as another function of the council as it also issues death certificate for the interment of the deceased. SEMBEHUN CEMETERY was identified as one of the places the city council has provided for the people of the municipality of Kenema. Lastly, respondents were quick to hand pick the provision of slaughter house and a cool room more especially the one established at fishery market utilized by both the meat and fish sellers in the city.

**Objective 3:** Ascertain the Councils Sources of Revenue.

#### **Sources of Revenue of the Kenema City Council.**

The councils were established and revived for the purpose of bringing development to the people in the various localities. The point to note however is that development is never cheap. It comes at very high

costs. This means that the councils should have reliable sources of funding if they should grapple with the responsibility of providing development in their respective localities. The table below shows the different sources the Kenema City council is believed to generate revenue from.

**Table 4: Showing the Sources of Revenue of the Kenema City Council.**

SOURCE OF REVENUE	PERCENT (%)
Government Grants	55
Market dues and taxes	20
NGO funds	15
Sales and rents collected	10
Interest on Investment of Council Property	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Data Collected 2021.**

From the table above, the council relies to a greater extent on the central government for fund to execute its various development programmes. 55 percent of funds come from the central government which includes salaries, administrative costs and other expenses etc.: The council generates funds from the collection of dues, e.g., market dues and taxes (local tax from which 20 percent of its finance comes). From time-to-time NGOs and UN Agencies assist with specific projects. The council gets 15 percent of its funds from such for sustenance. 15 percent of the council’s revenue is also acquired from the sale and renting of its property such as halls guest houses and so on.

**Revenue Generated from the various Sources in 2018.**

As shown in table 3 above, the Kenema City Council has diverse sources from which it generates revenue required to carry out its mammoth responsibility of promoting the development of the locality which is one the major reasons for which councils were initially establish and reactivated in 2004. Table 4 shows the quantum of revenue the Kenema City Council generated from the various sources in 2018.

**Table 4.1: Revenue Collected from the main sources in 2018.**

NO	MAIN SOURCE	TOTAL REVENUE COLLECTED {Le}	PERCENTAGE OF GRAND TOTAL
1	Market Dues	837,580,000	8.89%
2.	Licenses	594,481,800	6.30%
3.	Housing and other Property Rates	1,772,246,510	18.77%
4.	Loans and Grants from Central Government	6,183,951,642	65.50%
5.	Interest on Investment of Council Property	52,200,000	0.55%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>9,440,459,952</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Data Collected 2021**

The sources listed in the table above are revealed by the council as the main sources of revenue. It shows the total revenue raised from each of the sources as well as the percentage { % } of the grand total for the 2018 fiscal year. For 2018, a grand total of Nine Billion, Four Hundred and Forty-Four Million Four Hundred and Fifty-Nine Thousand, Nine Hundred and Fifty-Two Leones { **9,440,459,952** } was actualized. As indicated, Loans and Grants from the Central Government accounted for the highest revenue for the fiscal year in the tune of 201 **65.50 %** of the fiscal revenue raised for that year. The second largest revenue collected in 2018 was Housing and other property rates which accounted for **18.77 %** of the fiscal revenue raised for that year. The third highest revenue collected in 2018 was on Licenses which accounted for

6.30% followed by Market Dues with **8.88%** and ranks as the fourth fiscal revenue collected for that year. The least amount of revenue was received from Interests on Investment of Council Property with **0.55%**.

**Table 4.2: Revenue Collected from main Sources in 2019.**

NO	MAIN SOURCE	TOTAL REVENUE COLLECTED {Le}	PERCENTAGE OF GRAND TOTAL
1.	Market Dues	837,580,000	9.23%
2.	Licenses	549,532,869	6.07%
3.	Housing and other Property Rates	1,492,700,231	16.47%
4.	Loans and Grants from Central Government	6,105,342,346	67.34%
5.	Interest on Investment of Council Property	80,410,000	0.89%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>9,065,565,446</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source Data Collected 2021.**

Again, the table above shows the same five main sources of city council revenue for 2019. It shows that the fiscal year grand total of Nine Billion and Sixty-Five Million Five Hundred and Sixty-Five Thousand Four Hundred and Forty-Six Le. **9,065,565,446**. The highest revenue like in the other two years was received from Loans and Grants from the Central Government accounting for **67.34%**. The second highest revenue came from Housing and Other Property Rates which accounted for **16.47%** of the total revenue collected that year while the least revenue source was Interests on Investment of the Council Property. This totaled Eighty Million Four Hundred and Ten Thousand Leones **Le.80, 410, 000** with **0.89%** of the total revenue for fiscal year 2019. From the above, it shows that the Loans and grants collected in 2019 were greater than the other revenue sources. The loans and grants from central government amounted to **Le. 6,105,342,346** with a percentage of **67.34%**. The second largest revenue source in 2019 was on Housing and other Property Rates which amounted to **Le. 1,492,700,231** with a percentage of **16.47%**. It seems that more Property Owners complied with the council to pay their property rates based on awareness raised on how council utilizes its revenue.

The third revenue source in 2019 was Market Dues which amounted to Le. 837,580,000 with a percentage of **9.23%**. When compared with the other two years, it was realized that the amount involved was stagnant though the percentage varied because of changes in the revenue generated from other income sources in the other years. In 2019, it increases a bit as compared to 2018 and 2020. That shows that either the traders paid a fixed amount as market dues to the council for three consecutive years or the collectors failed to disclose the actual amounts collected.

**Table 4. 3: Revenue Collected from the main Sources in 2020.**

NO	MAIN SOURCE	TOTAL REVENUE COLLECTED {Le}	PERCENTAGE OF GRAND TOTAL
1.	Market Dues	837,580,000	8.30%
2.	Licenses	725,230,993	7.18%
3.	Housing and other Property Rates	854,803,849	.47%
4.	Loans and Grants from Central Government	7,584,564,867	75.18%
5.	Interests on Investment of Council Property	87,250,000	0.87%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>10,089,429,709</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source Data collected: 2021**

The table above like the two previous shows the same five main sources of revenue. The fiscal year grand total of **Le. 10,089,429,709** was collected in 2020. It also shows that the highest revenue collected that year again came from Loans and Grants from Central Government in the tune of Seven Billion Five Hundred and Eighty-Four Million Five Hundred and Sixty-Four Thousand Eight Hundred and Sixty-Seven Leones **Le. 7,584,564,867**. This represents Seventy-Five Point One Eight Percent **75.18%** of the total revenue



collected for the fiscal year 2020 more than the previous two years. The second highest revenue collected was Eight Hundred and Fifty-Four Million Eight Hundred and Three Thousand Eight Hundred and Forty-Nine Leones **Le. 854,803,849**. This accounted for **8.47%** of the total revenue collected in 2020. The third highest revenue collected was Market Dues which accounted for **8.30%** followed by Licenses, **7.18%**. The least revenue collected was Interests on Investment of Council Property which accounted for Eighty-Seven Million Two Hundred and Fifty Thousand Leones **Le.87, 250,000** representing **0.87%** for that fiscal year. The table shows that the amount of Loans and Grants from Central Government collected in 2020 **Le. 7,584,564,867** with a percentage of **75.18%** as in 2018 **Le. 6,183,951,642** with **65.50%** and 2019 **Le6,105,342,346** with **67.34%**.

As indicated in table 3 above, council received huge source of revenue on Loans and Grants from Central Government in all three years and it looks like council more depends on loans and grants from central government in order to facilitate or carryout it functions. It also implies that council received a huge amount of Loans and Grants from Central Government which was added to the previous council budgets. It also observed that more funds were allocated to council from the loans and grants received from Central Government and other supporting donor partners. The second highest revenue collected: Licenses **Le725, 230,993** with a percentage of **7.18%** as in 2018 **Le594, 481,800** with **6.30%** and in 2019 **Le.549, 532,869** with **6.07%**. It seems that Licenses were paid more in 2020 and followed by 2018 and 2019 financial year to council. This shows that people complied to pay license rates in an overwhelmed form to the council as compared to 2018 and 2019 respectively. The third highest revenue collected: Housing and other Property Rates {**854,803,849**} made up a percentage of **8.47%** as in 2018 **Le. 1,772,246,510L** with **18.77%** and in 2019 **Le. 1,492,700,231** with **16.47%**. In 2018, more revenue on Housing and Other Property Rates was collected by council with high percentage and later followed in 2019 with some difference in amount and then fall in 2020 to a lowest amount and percentage. This implies that people were willing to pay more rates in 2018 and 2019 but refused to pay in 2020 due to COVID 19 crisis which affected the socio-economic conditions of Property Owners within the city and other related factors such as ignorance. Market dues **Le. 837,580,000** as fourth largest revenue on table 3, but it remained to be constant in amount of three years and low in percentage of **8.30%**, as in 2018 **Le. 837,580,000** with **8.88%** and 2019 **Le. 837,580,000** with **9.23%**. From a clear view of this data analysis, the percentage of Market Dues increased rapidly in 2019 and then followed by 2018 and fall in 2020 due to COVID 19 disease that stroke many traders to embark on businesses and pay their regular dues to the council. As indicated from table 3, Interests on Investment of Council Property as the lowest **Le. 87,250,000** in 2020 with **0.87%** but it increases in 2019 to **Le. 80,410,000**with its percentage of **0.89%** and dropped rapidly in 2018 to **Le. 52,200,000** in percentage of **0.55%**. From this data analysis, council collected more revenues on Interests on Investment of Council Property in 2020 than 2018 and 2019.

**Objective 4: Opinion of citizens of Kenema City on the work of the Council**

**Perception of respondents on the Performance of the Kenema city Council.**

People always have a perception (be it positive or negative) about the activities of other people, institutions and organizations found in society. Table 4 gives a picture of the perception of residents of Kenema City about the activities of the council.

**Table 5: Pperception of Respondents on the Performance of the Council.**

<b>PERCEPTION</b>	<b>RESPONSES</b>	<b>PERCENT (%)</b>
Excellent	20	33
Average	25	42
Poor	15	25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Data Collected 2021**

The perceptions of the respondents were mixed. 33% of respondents stated that the council was doing well in providing development programmes: 42% of respondents stated that the council’s job is satisfactory while 25% of respondents criticized the council for not doing anything developmental. People hold different perceptions about the performance and level of corruption in the Kenema City Council. According to some of the respondents, Kenema City Council has been doing many development activities include the building of markets, culverts PHUs, and other social amenities etc. However, a hand full of respondents were unhappy and were vehemently not impressed with the slow pace of development in Kenema City. Most of them compared Kenema with other major cities in the country, like Bo and Makeni. In their submission, some of them claimed that Makeni has sustainable light, good road network and a lot of employment opportunities, unlike Kenema which is far away from the other two. However, the roads and sustainable light they mentioned for the Bo and Makeni City Councils were not developments done by the councils of those localities, but the central government.

From discussions with respondents, it was learnt that money meant for payment of salaries of the employees is siphoned and a lot of ghost workers are on the payrolls, financial figures for projects are inflated and that most times the mayor rules with an autocratic and parochial attitude. He is said to favor some part of the council over others.

**Perception of Respondents on the Level of Corruption in the Council**

Though the council was in some instances applauded for its development strides, it was also accused in some quarters on the grounds of corruption as shown in table.

**Table 6: Perception of respondents on the rate of corruption in the Council.**

Perception	Respondents	Percent (%)
Very Corrupt	35	58
Corruption is Minimal	20	34
Not Corrupt	5	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Data Collected 2021**

From the table above, 58 percent of the respondents believed the council were very corrupt; while 34 percent of them believed it was minimally corrupt and only 8 percent believed the council was corrupt free.

**Objective 5: Cchallenges Faced by the Kenema City Council in the Execution of its Functions**

**Challenges Faced by the Kenema City Council in Performing its Functions.**

The Kenema City Council is not above challenges. It has numerous bottle necks to contend with in performing its functions as shown in table 5.

**Table 7: Challenges faced by the Kenema City Council in Performing its Functions.**

CHALLENGES	RESPONSES	PERCENT (%)
Limited fund for implementation of projects	20	33
Political partisan interference	10	17
Corruption	20	33
Lack of expertise	10	17
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Data Collected, 2021**

From the table, limited fund for implementation and corruption were two major challenges identified to be faced by the Council. Without adequate funding, it can be difficult to pursue and achieve any appreciable level of development by any institution, agency or organization. However, the problem is compounded by corruption which makes even the small funds available to be siphoned for personal aggrandisement. Next in the queue of the challenges were the lack of trained and qualified workers in some departments within

the council and poor leadership. Such a challenge can undermine the effective operation of the Council because the success of the Council to a greater extent depends on the efficiency of the staff and the leadership style displayed by the management. A respondent told the researcher on grounds of anonymity that most of the people who have held administrative and political positions in the council have not had the requisite qualifications for the positions they have occupied. They get into the positions either by being hand picked or the blessings of their political godfathers to reward them for their loyalty and service. Most of them do not know what it takes to run their offices and have little or no communication with their governing councils and spend most of their time in their respective homes as opposed to their official jobs. The council faces several challenges. The first challenge is limited fund (resources) for the implementation of projects. 33% of respondents stated that the council depends on government and NGOs/UN agencies for fund. To implement its project, the grant is not always forthcoming or it is not enough to implement certain important projects. 17% of respondents asserted that partisan interference hampers the effective operation of the council. If the council is thought not to be favourably attuned to the ruling government, the party governing the state may tend to punish the council by withholding its funds. A respondent categorically stated that that was why the Council lagged behind during the tenure of the outgone government especially that the then mayor proved recalcitrant to cross fences with the government of the time. 33% of respondents identified corruption by council workers including embezzlement, fake contracts and mismanagement as serious impediment to the council. Finally, 17% of respondents stated that the council lacks the expertise in executing certain projects such as engineers for road and building construction.

## **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

The study was undertaken to assess the contribution of the Kenema City Council in the social economic development of Kenema City. The specific objectives were to investigate the origin of the Kenema City Council, to highlight the role of the council in the development of the locality, to assess the challenges of the council and to provide ways of improving the performance of the council. Respondents had adequate knowledge about the history of the council. Secondly, respondents were able to highlighted key contributions of the Kenema City Council; visa vie, cleaning, building markets and culverts etc. In the area of revenue, respondents made mention of substantial areas they think the Kenema City Council gets funding from; grants, NGOs, etc. Furthermore, the perception of the people about the performance and corruption level of the council was somehow relative. A good number of the respondents' view was that the council was doing well in terms of development. Some on the other hand were of the view that the level of corruption in the council was high. They pointed accusing fingers at some of the personnel for fake contracts, contracts awarded for kickbacks, appointments to positions made on party lines and cronyism sometimes leading to square pegs in round holes, embezzlement of funds, dues collectors not properly accounting for money collected and the like. Lastly, the findings revealed that the Kenema City Council was not an exception to challenges as already seen above, but that one major challenge was political interference into the operations of the council.

### **CONCLUSION**

The Kenema city council stands tall in the general evaluation of its performance by the citizens of Kenema city and thus its contributions are appreciable and the council has done well in their strive to foster development in Kenema City.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings and conclusion, the following recommendations are made.

- To enhance the effectiveness of the council the central government should provide grants to the council for development programmers. There are grants that are fixed; they are given to facilitate the routine operations of the council. There are those grants that are tagged to development projects. The projects can only be successfully executed when funds are available. In addition, the use of the funds should be thoroughly monitored to ensure that they are not siphoned by anyone, but used for the intended purpose.
- The council should be effective and innovative in raising revenues. Taxes and dues should be collected and utilized judiciously for development purpose. Council staff in the business of revenue generation should be closely monitored to ensure that they do not make way with the funds they are entrusted to collect.
- The council should sanitize itself by figuring and eradicating corruption. It should be transparent in its activities and must be accountable for all the funds received from the central government, donor agencies or funds it raises at local level from the public.
- To change the perception of the public about the Council, the Council should make its reports accessible to the public. It should constantly engage the radio and ward committee members to inform the public about its activities. As clearly stated in PART XV of the 2004 Local Government Act– “The Local councils shall post on a notice board in a conspicuous place on the premises of the council and on a notice board in each Ward for at least twenty-one days –
  - ✓ monthly statements of financial accounts;
  - ✓ annual income and expenditure statements;
  - ✓ inventories of assets of the local councils;
  - ✓ bye-laws and notices relating to tax rates and fees;
  - ✓ minutes of council meetings; and
  - ✓ Development plans”. (2004 Local Government Act)
- The council should undertake projects that are responsible for the needs of the public. Before undertaking projects, the council should sound the opinion of the public to ascertain their felt needs. Development programmes that are responsive to the needs of the public can be sustainable.
- The council should train its staff in various fields so as to maximize their output. Modern equipment for effective operation should be procured. For instance, caterpillars, septic trucks, excavators etc.
- The council election should be non-partisan. Presently councils are run by political parties. At times when a political party in power is not in control of the council it tends to starve it of funds.
- Employment procedures should be fair and based on merit so that the council cannot have square pegs in round holes.
- There should be a level playing field for individuals or companies vying for contracts. Contracts should be given to those who deserve them.
- Finally, there should be strong and effective monitoring and supervision system in place so that contractors can deliver quality work.

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