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AN EXAMINATION OF PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNICATION IN
PLANTING FOR FOOD AND JOBS IN GBEFI COMMUNITY IN THE
KPANDO MUNICIPALITY, GHANA.

BY

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**AN EXAMINATION OF PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNICATION IN
PLANTING FOR FOOD AND JOBS IN GBEFI COMMUNITY IN THE
KPANDO MUNICIPALITY, GHANA.**

SUBMITTED BY:

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**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE GHANA INSTITUTE OF
JOURNALISM, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN DEVELOPMENT
COMMUNICATION.**

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DECLARATION

I, Francis Sanusi, hereby declare that except for the references which have been duly cited, this thesis titled, “AN EXAMINATION OF PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNICATION IN PLANTING FOR FOOD AND JOBS IN GBEFI COMMUNITY IN THE KPANDO MUNICIPALITY, GHANA.”, which is submitted to the Ghana Institute of Journalism, has never been presented or published either in whole or in part for any other degree in this University or elsewhere.

SIGNED:.....

FRANCIS SANUSI

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SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the preparation and the presentation of this thesis were in accordance with guidelines on supervision of thesis and term paper as laid down by the Ghana Institute of Journalism.

SIGNED:.....

DR. CHARLES ASARE BAMFO

DATE:.....

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to Gladys Doe, my dear mother and my beloved wife, Olivia.

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I thank Almighty God for His grace and mercies. My profound gratitude goes to my thesis supervisor: Dr. Charles Asare Bamfo for his unflinching support and guidance during the course of this study. Also, I express sincere appreciation to madam Elizabeth Ampadu of GIJ Library for the support during the data collection exercise. God bless you all.

ABSTRACT

This study examines participation and communication in Planting for Food and Jobs in Gbefi community in the Kpando Municipality. The study sought to examine the level and extent to which communication and community participation were used in the implementation of the Planting for Food and Jobs programme in Gbefi. The specific objectives were: to identify the communication channel used by PFJ during projects implementation in the Gbefi; to describe the implementation process of the PFJ initiative and to investigate the level and extent of community participation. The research design used by the study was descriptive, hence it involved qualitative processes in collecting data. Data was collected using in-depth interview and focus group discussions. The data were collected from two categories of people: the project participants (farmers) and the Head of Planting for Food and Jobs (PFJ) secretariat of the Kpando Municipal. There were three focus group discussions and an in-depth interview with an informant. The study revealed that there is a participatory structure, however, even though major stakeholders such proven farmers, AEA and dealers in the farms inputs were engaged at the preliminary stage, there is a gap between these groups and the farmers on the ground. On the communication channel, we gathered that the messages did not go down well with the farmers because of the media used. We found out that farmers receive messages better when they are relayed to them through interpersonal or group communication. This finding has impacted negatively on the implementation process and by extension the level and extent of participation in the PFJ programme at Gbefi. Arising from the difficulty of assessing the quality of participation, this study concludes that it is possible to have a frame of reference and guidelines for those involved in community development. Also, it is necessary to have multi-stakeholders' engagement, which would include the farmers at the grassroots in the research process in order to link it more closely with the overall process of communication, participation and development.

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ACRONYMS

AEAs	Agriculture Extension Agents
ADB	Asian Development Bank
BCC	Behaviour Change Communication
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FBOs	Farmers-Based Organisations
GoG	Government of Ghana
HSA	Health Surveillance Assistances
IFAD	International Fund for Agriculture Development
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IPC	Interpersonal Communication
MoFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
PAVIDIA	Participatory Village Development in Isolated Areas
PFJ	Planting for Food and Jobs
SMCR	Sender-Message-Channel-Receiver
WCCD	World Congress on Communication for Development

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Background of the Study

Agriculture has been identified as the sector that contribute immensely to reduction of poverty in Africa (SRID, 2016). Development through agriculture is a priority for the government of Ghana (FAO, 2015). Though the contribution of agriculture to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has fallen in recent times, the sector remains top in its contribution to national development - it contributed about 18.9% to GDP in 2016 (MOFA, 2017) and has regained its place as the largest employer in 2010 closely behind the service sector. It employed 44.7% of the labour force in 2013 (GLSS6, 2014). The government of Ghana introduced a flagship policy called Planting for Food and Jobs (PFJ) in 2017 in a bid to revamp the agriculture sector. The main aim of the programme is to address the fall in growth of agriculture in Ghana. The policy focused on increasing food production and ensuring food security in the country as well as reducing the food import bills to the barest minimum.

The project consists of five key pillars; supply of improved seeds to farmers at subsidised prices (50% subsidy), supply of fertilizer at subsidised prices (50% price cut out), free extension services to farmers, marketing opportunities for produce, and E-Agriculture (a technological platform to monitor and track activities and progress of farmers through a database system) (PFJ, 2017). To ensure self-sufficiency, promote the Ghana beyond aid policy and surplus for export, the PFJ seeks to motivate and encourage farmers to adopt certified seeds and fertilisers through a private sector-led marketing framework, by raising the incentives and complimentary service provisions on the usage of inputs, good agronomic practices, and marketing of outputs over an E-Agriculture platform (PFJ, 2017). The PFJ programme empowered the beneficiaries with knowledge and skills on maximising the benefits of the usage of subsidised inputs like fertilizer through proximity extension services (MOFA, 2017).

The PFJ initiative by GoG is stemmed from the modernization theory which seeks to modernize agriculture through the provision of inputs such as high yielding seedlings, fertilizers, markets and machinery. The proponents of this theory posit that development can be achieved by learning from the western experience where development is likened with economic growth while communication was primarily to give information to the underdeveloped countries about the innovation (Roxborough, 1979). OECD (2014) observed that in order for economic growth to be effective in curtailing unemployment, income inequality and increase food productivity, the deprived communities must contribute to deliver growth and they must also benefit from the growth process. With regard to Ghana's condition where majority of the poor are smallholder farmers (IFAD, 2013), the World Bank (2008) suggests that for poor agriculture-based countries, improvement of agriculture and productivity may yield greater benefits for efforts intended to achieve stable and sustainable economic growth and development.

Being national in scope, PFJ covers all the 216 districts in Ghana where the targeted food crops are cultivated. The programme targets productive and resource poor farmers who are willing to participate and raise their current factor productivity levels. Each participant farmer can access subsidized inputs to cultivate a maximum of only 2 hectares (MoFA, 2017). It is important to mention that prior to the PFJ programme, other policies and programmes had been implemented; however, most have not been entirely successful. For example, in 2008 the fertilizer subsidy programme was introduced by the government of Ghana (FAO, 2015); however, it did not achieve the intended objective because fertilizer application remained considerably low after almost a decade of its implementation. Some of the challenges that contributed to the failure of the fertilizer subsidy programmes to achieve its intended objectives include lack of financial support, late delivery, politicization of distribution, smuggling and

other related corrupt activities, limited use of information and communication technology (ICT) (Jayne, Thomas, Nicole, William & Joshua. 2018; Banful, 2011).

Many of the farmers also have limited access to education and other factors that could enhance participation in agricultural interventions. Previous research in Ghana on participation in agricultural interventions concentrate on resources such as wealth or income and other socioeconomic factors that influence participation while the role of communication and participation is latent (Asante, Afarindash, and Sarpong 2011; Martey, E., P. M. Etwire, A. N. Wiredu, and W. Dogbe. 2014;; Iddrisu, Ansah, and Nkegbe, 2018). For instance, Martey et al observe that, even though fertilizers have been available to the farmers at subsidized prices through national fertilizer subsidy programme since 2008, its influence on adoption remains generally low, due to lack of a comprehensive approach in spurring the participation of the farmers in the programmes.

Although, MoFA (2017) report on the strategic plan for implementation of the PFJ programme mentions that farmers who are willing to participate and raise their current productivity levels (productive poor) and whose land, water, labour and capital stifle the productivity (resource poor) were mobilized through awareness and through associated proven farmers, nucleus farms, Farmer Based Organizations (FBOs), private aggregators and enterprises, the impact on the targeted community is yet to be ascertained. Besides sustenance and people's participation has become a missing key element in the development in the programme (Martey et al., 2014). Therefore, this research, examines the role of communication and participation in the PFJ programme with particular reference to Gbefi community.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The Government of Ghana set a target to modernize agriculture, improve production efficiency, achieve food security, and profitability for farmers through the PFJ programme. However, experts in the field of agriculture have described the PFJ policy as a token to farmers and that it lacks the potential to make the desired impact on smallholder farmers. They touted the PFJ as good on paper but described it as practically weak because it is focused more on the supply of inputs to boost production at the expense of other aspects of the agriculture value chain (PFAG, 2018).

In a research conducted in farming communities in the Northern, Eastern, Brong Ahafo and Greater Accra in 2018, by the Peasant Farmers Association of Ghana (PFAG) in collaboration with Oxfam, Private Enterprise Foundation and other partners, the findings of the research showed that only 17.5 per cent of the total farmer population received fertilizers and seeds under the Planting for Food and Jobs policy while the remaining 82.25 did not get any form of support from the government for 2017. The research further revealed that almost all the farmers who received the inputs were worried that the fertilizers and seeds were not of the best quality and were not supplied at the right time. The findings of the research show that there is a problem with the distribution chain and by extension, participation because not much was done to market the PFJ programme and the produce by farmers, even though it is captured in the strategic plan for implementation of the PFJ (2017-2020) that farmers were to be mobilized for the programme in four ways:

1. awareness creation amongst individual farmers and farming communities on the benefits of the PFJ program through mass media, local information meetings involving private service providers, district offices and embedded agriculture extension agents

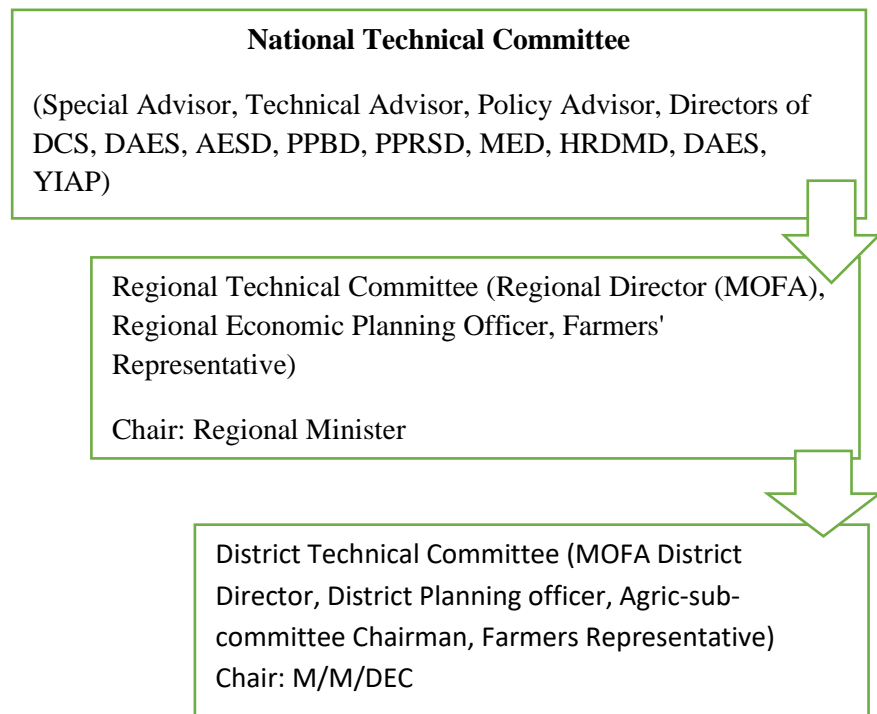
2. 'proven farmers' who have faced the same challenges as their fellow-farmers in the locality but have managed to deviate positively, and are willing to demonstrate and encourage adoption by peer farmers and farmer groups
3. 'nucleus farms' where the primary farm operator often provides support to the smallholders around, in purchasing the inputs and marketing the crop outputs
4. registered Farmer-Based Organizations which can gather and coordinate smallholder farmers who share a common interest in raising their productivity and revenues by availing themselves to opportunities presented by the PFJ.

In addition to the abovementioned, there is the coordination of the PFJ programme which includes implementation structures (*see figure 1*). In the structures the farmer representatives were involved at the second and third tiers of the implementation structures but left out of the first tier which is composed of the National Technical Committee (NTC) members where the key policy decision are made. This raised the question about participation in key policy decision of the beneficiaries - whether the programme is designed for the farmers or by the farmers.

Participation in the PFJ programme is entirely voluntary (PFJ Plan for Implementation, 2017-2020). According to the Plan, "The program will target farmers in rural, urban and peri-urban areas who are willing to participate and raise their current productivity levels (productive poor) and whose land, water, labour and capital constrain productivity (resource poor)". This means that people's capability could play a role in participation. In specific terms, the PFJ programme targets smallholder farmers who often live in deprived areas with numerous infrastructural bottlenecks, and unequal advantages in accessing agricultural inputs. Many of the farmers also have limited access to education and other factors that could enhance capability to participate in agricultural interventions. These gaps reveal that there are

major problems with the implementation and participation in the Planting for Food and Jobs policy therefore the aim of this study is to examine the level and extent to which communication and participation play a role in the implementation of the Planting for Food and Jobs programme in Gbafi.

Figure 1: implementation structures of the PFJ programme



Source: *Plan for Implementation of the PFJ (2017-2020)*

1.3 Research Objectives

Main objective

The study seeks to exam the level and extent to which community participation and communication was used to ensure participation in the implementation of the Planting for Food and Jobs programme in Gbefe Community.

Specific Objectives

1. to identify the communication channel used by PFJ during projects implementation in the Gbefe.
2. to describe the implementation process of the PFJ initiative,
3. to investigate the level and extent of community participation.

1.4 Research Questions

Main research question

How effective was the participatory approach used in the PFJ programme in ensuring ownership and quality participation of Gbefe community?

Specific questions

1. What are the communication channels used during the PFJ implementation at Gbefe?
2. What are the implementation process of the PFJ initiative?
3. What is the level and extent of community participation in the PFJ initiative?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The relevance of this study stems from the need to develop and conceptualize a unique community participation model as a guide to local involvement in community development initiatives. Since community participation in development initiative is low which is generally blamed on the extent to which development agencies involve the beneficiaries, the aim of this project is not only at empowering local people, it also focuses on providing a guide to development agencies on the approach in involving the community for a successful project implementation.

This study provides development agencies with practical working examples on how community participation can be the binding agent between communities and their development partners. The study is useful to civil society, donor agencies and district assemblies who wish to plan and implement communication for development programmes in the future.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The study finds its foundation on two different but interrelated theories namely; The Modernization and Participatory theories of development. The two theoretical perspectives are described below: Modernization theory was developed between 1950 and early 1960 by a number of social scientists – a group of American scholars; prominent amongst them was Talcott Parsons. His interest was prompted by the decline of the old empires. Politicians became keen to show countries pushing for independence that development was attainable under western power other than with the Soviet Union. The key idea of the theory was to solve development problems by “modernizing” underdeveloped countries and directing them on how to be effective in following in the footsteps of western developed countries.

As Roxborough (1979) says,

“This emphasis on entrepreneurship as capital accumulation is the single most pervasive theme in the literature on economic growth. It always appears as the lesson to be learnt from Western experience and to be mechanically applied to the rest of the world so that they can repeat the transition.”

Development was likened with economic growth, and communication was meant to be for the dissemination of information with messages directed at modernizing “backward” countries and their people, and mass media were at the center of communication initiatives because of the overestimated belief that they were extremely powerful in persuading audiences to change attitudes and behaviors, hence the one-way model: Sender-Message-Channel-Receiver (SMCR) was the method used. This media-centric approach, which is rooted from the diffusion perspective was adopted in campaigns meant to induce behavior change.

Participatory theories criticized the modernization paradigm on the grounds that it promoted a top-down, ethnocentric and paternalistic view of development. They argued that the diffusion model proposed a conception of development associated with Western vision of progress. They assumed that the knowledge of government and agencies was correct, and that indigenous populations either did not know or had incorrect beliefs (White, 1996). Because the programmes came from outside villages, communities felt that innovations did not belong to them but rather the government and thus expected the latter to fix things when they went wrong (Servaes 1989). The sense of disempowerment was also rooted in the fact that targeted populations did not have the choice to reject recommendations or introduced modifications to interventions (Mody 1991).

This theory is reflective in the implementation of PFJ programme; it suggests a top-down approach to increasing food production and job creation; in the policy document for instance, farmers were given certified seeds; the program was market-led production of adequate quantities of quality seeds by private enterprises, certified seed companies and agro dealers. Agriculture Extension Agents (AEAs) were deployed to the communities to provide the required logistics and embed them to work closely with the participating farmers. On the other hand, participatory theory considered necessary a redefinition of development communication. One breath of definitions stated that it meant the systematic utilization of communication channels and techniques to increase people's participation in development and to inform, motivate, and train rural populations mainly at the grassroots. Others say development communication needed to be human, rather than media centered.

Agunga (1997) defined communication, in the participatory context as a process of creating and stimulating understanding as the basis for development rather than information dissemination. He posits that communication is the articulation of social relations among people; people should not be forced to adopt new practices no matter how beneficial they seem to be in

the eye of the agencies and government. Rather, people need to be encouraged to participate instead of adopting new practice based on information. Paulo Freira (1980) says development should not aim at domesticating foreign concepts, nor about feeding information, to force local populations to accept Western ideas and practices without asking how such practices fit existing cultures. This will be an authoritarian conception of communication that stood against the essence of communication understood as community interaction and education. Media and technologies were considered more foreign to local communities; it should be used to supplement other than to dominate interpersonal methods. Community-based forms communication such as theatre, song, video, community radio and other activities that required group intervention needed to be promoted (Hamelink, 1990).

In Latin America, miners and peasants' radio in Bolivia, grassroots video in peasant and indigenous movements in Brazil, tape recorder in Guatemala, small-scale multimedia in Peru and other cases in low media based in union and churches were offered as concrete example of participatory communication development (Beltran, 1993). In Canada for instance, "Fogo process" was another experience informed by similar principles in which videos were produced to discuss community issues of people living in remote areas and to communicate with outsiders about their concerns and expectation. Like other theories, participatory theory is not immune to criticism. It has been argued that it was not clear that communities needed to be involved for certain results to be achieved. In certain cases, such as epidemics and related public health issues, swift and top-down intervention could achieve positive results. Participatory communication ignores that expediency may also positively contribute to development. Engaging in grassroots decision-making process is slower than centralized decisions, and much more in cases that requires prompt interventions (McKee, 1992).

Other critics thought that participatory models were premised on Western-styled ideas of democracy and participation that do not fit political cultures elsewhere. Individualism rather than community and conflict rather than consensus lie at the heart of participatory models developed by the West. Those who espoused participatory models admitted the lapses. They argued that teaching negotiation and mediation skills rather than opting for interventions that disempower people in the name of consensus-building was the answer to the criticism (White, 1996). McKee (1992) suggested that it was preferable that projects be carried out in communities where agencies already had linkages. Knowledge about previous problems and characteristics of a given community was fundamental to identify activities and define projects. Existing linkages could provide agents that were familiar with the community who could assist in creating organizations and networks to stimulate participation.

2.2 Summary of Theoretical Framework

The study used the two theories: modernization and participatory to demonstrate linkage with the level of participation of Gbefe farmers in the PFJ programme. These theories are insightful in the implementation of PFJ programme. First of all, using the modernization theory, which suggests a top-down approach to increasing food production and job creation. In the policy document for instance, farmers were given certified seeds; the program was market-led production of adequate quantities of quality seeds by private enterprises, certified seed companies and agro dealers. Agriculture Extension Agents (AEAs) were deployed to the communities to provide the required logistics and embed them to work closely with the participating farmers. By these, it appears that decision was taken at the state level and communities are expected to be disciples to the programme.

In the same vein, it appears the implementation was led by the community; this is because ‘nucleus farms’, who are primary farm operators often provided support to the

smallholders around, in purchasing the inputs and marketing the crop outputs. Again, closely linked to the participatory theory is awareness creation; awareness was created amongst individual farmers and farming communities on the benefits of the PFJ program through mass media, local information meetings involving private service providers, district offices and embedded agriculture extension agents. Hence there seem to be a blend of the two theories in the approach to increase food production and creation of jobs in Gbefi community. It is for this reason a research is feasible; to examine how effective the participatory approach in the PFJ programme.

Literature Review

The review looks at the concept of participation, forms and types of participation and presents some participatory approaches from other related studies. Also, there is a discussion on components of communication, channel and types of communication in development organisation.

Participation has been variously described as a means and an end. As a means, it is defined by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) (2004), who stated that participation is not a goal in itself but a means to achieve an objective. The use of participation should have a clear purpose. As an end, this is defined as the end result after being involved in a programme. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), following Sen (1999), has identified participation as both a means and an end in development projects. As a means, the agency states that participation is a process in which local people co-operate with externally introduced projects to improve outcomes. As an end, participation in itself is a key goal and indicator of human development. When people fully participate, they are agents in, and responsible parties for, their own development. It is essential within agencies, as it is in the field, and as an educational and empowering process necessary to correct power imbalances between rich and poor. It has been broadly conceived to embrace the idea that all “stakeholders” should take part in decision making

and it has been more narrowly described as the extraction of local knowledge to design programmes off site (VSO, 2002).

Participation is involvement by a local population and, at times, additional stakeholders in the creation, content and conduct of a programme or policy designed to change people's lives. Built on the belief that citizens can be trusted to shape their own future, participatory development uses local decision making and capacities to steer and define the nature of an intervention. Adebayo (2000) came up with a list of definitions of participation is key among these is national development. Participation is a voluntary contribution by people to public programmes, contributing to national development. It begins by sensitizing people to increase their receptivity and ability to respond to development programmes, thereby encouraging local initiative. Though participation is defined with emphasis on the involvement of the local people, there is very little participation in shaping the program or criticizing its content.

2.3 VIPP - Visualisation in Participatory Programmes

VIPP supports the visibility and representation of ideas while they are being discussed or presented. The visual aids can be made with local materials, and made in a way as to allow everyone to follow the conversation. VIPP is applicable to any situation where a group of people agree to work together to analyse and plan development activities, or to initiate interactive learning experiences. Two areas are discussed: the humanistic and democratic philosophy underlying VIPP, and the central role of the facilitator who enables the generation of knowledge and dialogue between people without manipulating them. VIPP is hinged on creative processes of dialogue at the grassroots. It allows people to express themselves and to raise concerns about hierarchical decision making in a creative and efficient way. More so, VIPP has the potential of empowering people at many levels of the development process (UNICEF, 1993). It is designed to enhance participation of the entire group. This is done by encouraging participants to write down

what they visualise. Every idea in a group discussion counts and is written down or put in visual form, especially when some of the participants are illiterate. The visualization used should not make any participants uncomfortable. Each and every idea must be separated and written down on a separate card. These are of different colours which are used for the various ideas and at the end a summary of not more than 10-15 words, symbols or drawings are made. The advantages of visualization are many:

- ❖ All ideas are treated the same way and accorded the same importance and attention. It eases learning and thinking processes,
- ❖ It is easier to remember things one has actually seen and it supports working processes by making it easier to come back to certain points that were discussed earlier.
- ❖ It also provides a simple way of keeping an overview of the whole process of developing ideas that can be seen at a glance.

Visualisation is a vital element in participatory methods. Using a questionnaire-based survey, the information is transferred by the words of the interviewee to paper where it becomes the property of the moderator. In contrast, when rural people draw and model their own villages and resources, and visually share the outcome, all those present can identify, discuss, comment, manipulate and alter the results. All can reflect and participate. Chambers (1993) observed that local materials (the ground, seeds, stones, etc) have the advantage of belonging to the local people and are resources that they can use and change with confidence. The study reviewed literature on VIPP and found out that it was used by the PAVIDIA approach. The VIPP was used to stimulate dialogue among the community. It enhanced the participation of the local community. This study used and adopted this approach because it was related to the area under study and the concepts and methodologies used were applied in the study.

2.4 Pretty's Typology of Participation

The Pretty's Typology considers to be the types of participation presented from low to high order:

(a) **Passive Participation:** People participate by being told what is going to happen or has already happened. It is a unilateral announcement by an administration or project management without listening to people's responses.

(b) **Participation in Information giving.** The information being shared belongs only to external professionals. People participate by answering questions posed by extractive researchers using questionnaire surveys or such similar approaches. People do not have the opportunity to influence proceedings, as the findings of the research are neither shared nor checked for accuracy.

(c) **Participation by consultation:** People participate by being consulted, and external agents listen to their views. These external agents define both problems and solutions, and may modify these in the light of people's responses. Such a consultative process does not concede any share in decision making, and professionals are under no obligation to take on board people's views.

(d) **Participation for material benefits:** People participate by providing resources such as labour, in return for food, cash or other material incentives. Much of farm research falls in this category, as farmers provide the fields but are not involved in experimentation or the process of learning. It is very common to find this called "participation", yet people have no capacity to continue the activities when incentives end. These four steps on Pretty's Typology are considered to be low, and he describes them as not having a high level of participation as there is very little sense of ownership and continuity of the project. The next three levels are:

(e) **Functional participation:** People here participate by forming groups to meet predetermined objectives related to the project, which can involve the development or promotion of externally

initiated social organization. Such involvement tends not to be at early stages of project cycles or planning, but rather after major decisions have already been made. These institutions tend to be dependent on external initiators and facilitators, but may later become self-dependent.

(f) In Interactive participation, people participate in joint analysis, which leads to action plans and the formation of new local institutions or the strengthening of existing ones. It tends to involve interdisciplinary methodologies that seek multiple objectives and make use of systematic and structured learning processes. These groups take control/ownership of local decisions, and so people have a stake in maintaining structures or practices.

(g) In Self-mobilization, people participate by taking initiatives, independent of external institutions, to change systems. Such self-initiated mobilization and collective action may or may not challenge existing inequitable distributions of wealth and power. The last three on Pretty's typology are what he considers more participative. Though quite elaborate in its classification, Pretty's Typology may be difficult to use as a scale of measurement because it does not take much consideration of outside external people's influence on the local people's behaviour. Research shows that projects do become more sustainable, appropriate and effective as the level of local participation increases (Narayan, 1995). People are unlikely to commit to projects that are not relevant to them or that they cannot control.

Nevertheless, it is worth considering the view that different levels may be appropriate at different times to meet the expectations of different interests (Wilcox, 1994). In spite of the weakness of Pretty's scale with regard to external influence, this study adopted and modified some elements of the scale to measure participation. The selected elements were functional participation, interactive participation and self-mobilizing. This is so because it was only the last three on Pretty's Typology that were applicable and could be adopted for the study. The nature of the study was from an agriculture perspective and it involved the learning of various

methodologies that were practical in nature, requiring the community to have, in existence groups or committees. Also worth noting is that it involved mobilizing local resources. This was done through social and wealth ranking, terminologies from PRA.

Also, Arnstein (1969) identified levels of citizen involvement in planning processes in the United States and described the levels of participation as the ladder of citizen participation (Tammi, 2008).

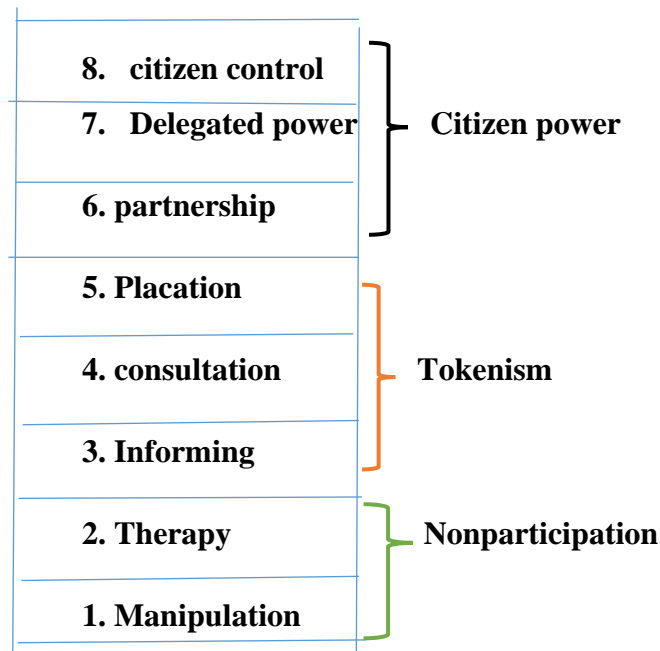


Figure 2. Level of citizen involvement in planning process

Source: Arnstein (1969) adopted by Tammi (2008)

This ladder (*Figure 2*) of citizen participation by Arnstein (1969) is explained by Tammi (2008) as the following;

Firstly, *Manipulation* and *Therapy* which is the 1 and 2 respectively are non-participative. The aim is to cure or educate the participants (Arnstein,1969). The 3, which is *informing* is the most important first step to legitimate participation, however, too frequently the emphasis is on a one-way flow of information and there is no channel for feedback. *Consultation* is a legitimate step attitude survey where neighbourhood meetings and public enquiries take place.

But Arnstein (1969) still feels this is just a window dressing ritual. Besides, placation is where there is a co-option of handpicked 'worthies' onto committees; thus those citizens who are perceived to be well to do are given opportunity to be on some committees. It allows citizens to advise or plan for projects but power holders still retain the right to judge the legitimacy or feasibility of the advice.

In addition, *Partnership* (6) is where power is in fact redistributed through negotiation between citizens and power holders. At this stage, planning and decision-making responsibilities are shared through joint committees. *Delegated power* (7) is where citizens holding a clear majority of seats on committees with delegated powers are allowed to make decisions. At this point the Public has the power to ensure accountability of the programme to them. Citizen control (8) occurs when the have-nots handle the entire activity of planning, policymaking and managing a programme e.g. neighbourhood corporation with no intermediaries between it and the source of funds (Arnstein 1969; Tammi, 2008).

Stephen and Andrew (2013) present a framework for analysing participation in development, in relation to its significance for ownership, and for aid programme and service delivery effectiveness. It incorporates the lessons from a pilot application of the framework to the health sector in Malawi, as well as an examination of the scope for applying the framework to cash transfer programmes. The approach applied for analysing participation is a matrix with rows defined across the project, programme, or policy cycle – design, implementation, and monitoring. The columns of the matrix identify the specific forms of participation, who participates in each form (and whether they do so individually or collectively), their motives, what factors determine the effectiveness of participation, and the results of this participation. The pilot application of the framework in a study of the health sector in Malawi demonstrated that the approach used could

provide informative findings for policy makers on the nature of participation, with potentially significant implications for government, donors and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Table 1. Participation in policy, planning, budgeting and programme design.

Types of participation	Who participates	Motives for participation	Conditions for effective participation	Level of participation	Results of participation
VDCs – Identification of local needs and priorities through VAPs; transmitting plans to ADCs for consideration in district planning process (DIP).	Representatives from each village within VDC, ward representatives, four female representatives and extension worker representatives. Process of community selection/election of members overseen by the chief. Generally, literacy and good standing in the community is required for participation.	Nomination by community; improving wellbeing of community; access to resources and patronage; community standing; legitimacy; power.	Availability of resources, especially non-earmarked funds; willingness of officials and NGOs to provide information; skills of committee members; political neutrality of committee.	System is designed to provide some level of “delegated power”. However, in practice lack of information and discretionary resources means participation rarely rises above level of “consultation”, and is often token	Limited Some allocation of resources for construction of health facilities, mobilisation of self-help through collective community participation in provision of labour (e.g. moulding bricks). Primary impact on small village projects, such as material for building of shelters, pit latrines, bathing areas and boreholes.
ADCs – Identification of local needs and priorities in the Area Development Plans and transmitting plans for consideration in DIPs.	VDC chairperson and vice chairperson, ward representatives, representatives of faiths, representatives of youth and women’s groups in the area, representatives from the business community and chairperson of Area				

	Executive Committee. Very limited participation by women.				
NGO programmes – Support in implementation of the programme. Limited role in design and formulation of projects and programmes.	No representation in planning stage. Districts and traditional authority notified of presence and project aims. Generally, literacy is required.	Bringing development and material benefit to the community.	NGO activities need to be aligned with priorities of the communities. Need for more consultation and involvement of community members at design stage.	Community perception of lack of influence over NGO priorities means participation often restricted to “informing”.	Support in implementation of NGO projects.

Source: *Stephen & Andrew, 2013*

Stephen and Andrew (2013) observed that there is a significant level of community involvement in support for service provision, prevention activities, and community mobilisation for tasks such as building clinics for the under-fives and in other small schemes. There are many sustainable and well-established networks of voluntary action in the health sector, operating through faith-based and other community organisations, as well as through initiatives organised by Health Surveillance Assistances (HSA) and NGOs. Although NGOs can play an important role in developing local capacity (for instance in Village Development Committees (VDCs) and Area Development Committees (ADCs)), much NGO-induced participation is unsustainable and driven by donor and NGO objectives, rather than those of the communities. The extent and effectiveness of community participation around government programmes depends in part on the motivation and capability of HSAs, who vary greatly in their presence and effectiveness in communities. As the first point of contact for communities, the HSA plays a significant role both in promoting local participation and in the provision of information and services. The effectiveness of community

mobilisation for collective action depends on local chiefs, who generally hold their office on a hereditary basis, and vary greatly in their motivation and effectiveness.

Table 2. Common Types of Communication in Development Organizations

Type	Purpose/Definition	Main function
Corporate communication	Communicate the mission and activities of the organization, mostly for audiences.	Use media outputs and products to promote the mission and values of the institution; inform selected audiences about relevant activities.
Internal communication	Facilitate the flow of information within an institution/ project.	Ensure timely and effective sharing of relevant information within the staff and institution units. It enhances synergies and avoids duplication.
Advocacy communication	Influence change at the public or policy level and promote issues related to development	Raise awareness on hot communication methods and media to influence specific audiences and support the intended change.
Development communication	Support sustainable change in development operations by engaging key stakeholders.	Establish conducive environments for assessing risks and opportunities; disseminate information; induce behavior and social change

Source: Mefalopulos, 2008.

2.5 Components of Communication

As indicated by UNICEF (1999), effective development communication relies on the synergistic use of three strategic components. These components are advocacy, social mobilization and behavioural change (or behaviour development) communication. A number of definitions are used in the ComDev field to describe these three basic components of communication

- i. *Advocacy*: Advocacy is communication targeted at leadership and the powers that be to take actions to support programme objectives (UNICEF, 2008).

“Leadership” includes political, business and social leaders at national and local levels.

The advocacy component according to UNICEF (2008) informs and motivates appropriate leaders to create a supportive environment for the programme by taking actions such as: changing policies, allocating resources, speaking out on critical issues and initiating public discussion. Participation is relevant in this context as the voice of the community helps direct advocacy objectives and activities. Mefalopolus (2005) defined advocacy as mainly applied to promote a specific issue or agenda, generally at a national level which is often directed at changing policies or supporting policy-making changes, either addressing policy makers directly or winning the support of the public opinion. The first task of advocacy as stressed by UNICEF (1999) is often to raise awareness in general, yet its ultimate objective is to spark action either from decision-makers or their constituents. The aim is to gain commitment and active support for a development objective and prepare society for its acceptance over the long-term.

The primary aim of advocacy, indicated by Servaes (2000), is fostering public policies that support the solution of an issue or problem. It involves organized attempts to influence the political climate, policy and programme decisions, public perceptions of social norms, funding decisions and community support and

empowerment towards specific issues. Again, Servaes (2008) viewed advocacy at the policy level, as that which is used to assure the high level of public commitment necessary to undertake action by fostering a knowledgeable and supportive environment for decision making, as well as the allocation of adequate resources to attain the campaign's goals and objectives.

- ii. *Social Mobilization*: Social mobilization as defined by UNICEF (2008) is a process of harnessing selected partners to raise demand for or sustain progress toward a development objective. Social mobilization solicits the participation of institutions, community networks and social and religious groups to use their membership and other resources to strengthen participation in activities at the local level (UNICEF, 2008). Consultation with the community is needed here to ascertain which institutions; social, political and religious groups will have the most influence on the primary participants.

The Centre for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA) (2000) opined that “Social mobilization involves planned actions and processes to reach, influence, and involve all relevant segments of society across all sectors from the national to the community level, in order to create an enabling environment and effect positive behaviour and social change”. According to McKee (1992) social mobilization differs from social marketing because it aims to muster national and local support for a general goal or programme through a more open and uncontrolled process with the idea of using as many channels as possible at an accelerated rate.

- iii. *Behaviour Change Communication (BCC)*: Behaviour change communication involves face-to-face dialogue with individuals or groups to inform, motivate, problem-solve or plan, with the objective to promote behaviour change (UNICEF, 2008). BCC according to the International Labour Organization (ILO) (2008) is an “interactive process for developing messages and approaches using a mix of communication channels in order

to encourage and sustain positive and appropriate behaviours”. ILO (2008) argued that BCC has evolved from information, education and communication (IEC) programmes to promote more tailored messages, greater dialogue and increased ownership together with a focus on aiming for, and achieving health-enhancing results.

The Family Health International Website (www.fhi.org) stated that communication for behaviour change aims to foster positive behaviour; promote and sustain individual, community and societal behaviour change; and maintain appropriate behaviour. Its underlying assumption is that individual attitudes and behaviours can be changed voluntarily through communication and persuasion techniques and the related use of effective messages. BCC shifts the emphasis from making people aware to bringing about new attitudes and practice; it tries to understand people’s situations and influences, develops messages that respond to these concerns and uses communication processes and media to persuade people to increase their knowledge and change risky behaviour (UNICEF, 1999). The study will use the above components of communication as indicators to measure how communication is used in sustaining developments projects.

2.6 Channels of communication

Communication channel according to DeVito (1986) is the “vehicle or medium through which signals are sent”. This channel may convey the message visually or aurally. Signal in this study is considered to be the message that is transferred from the project implementers to target beneficiaries and vice versa. Duggal (2011) also defined communication channel as a medium through which a message is transmitted to its intended audience, such as print media or broadcast (electronic) media. Mefalopulos (2008) indicated that for effective design, development planners must have knowledge of the channels available, their potential reach and the intended

result of the messages; thus channels must be selected to fit the participants and the communication task. Colle (2007) also opined that quality professionally-driven development communication programme is characterized by having a rational means for selecting communication channels and target groups that fit the voluntary nature of the behaviour change being proposed.

UNICEF proposed that channels must be selected to fit the participants and the communication task; analysis of these channels will help to prevent the use of a communication channel for the wrong reasons. It is therefore important to consider the characteristics of available communication channels before applying them to a target audience. Mefalopulos (2008) posited that a number of factors should be considered before a specific channel is used. These factors include objectives of the communication intervention- thus whether the communication is to raise awareness, for advocacy or mobilization purposes. Characteristics of the audiences- this looks at the literacy rates and the preferred information sources. Again, the communication specialist should always be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of each channel (Mefalopulos, 2008). However, in many instances, multimedia campaigns have been demonstrated to be more effective than one-medium campaigns in achieving intended results (Coldevin 2003).

For the purpose of this work, medium of communication is defined as the means by which information is delivered to beneficiaries of development projects. Some communication experts and institutions such as Mefalopulos and UNICEF have observed some characteristics of the various channels of communication which is adopted for this study because it summarized the views of Mefalopulos and gave detailed understanding of the various channels.

Table 3: Characteristics of Communication Channel

Channel	Reach	Type of message (simple/complex)	Participatory use
Television	Can reach very large audiences simultaneously if electricity and sets are available and reception is adequate.	Because of its broad scope it is primarily used to provide general information/news/entertainment to nationwide audiences.	Community based programmes allow people to identify themselves with issues being discussed. Live call-in shows helps participation by cross sector of audiences.
Film	Can reach medium-sized audiences depending on availability of projection facilities and electricity.	Can be used/made for general or specialized audiences. Complex messages and scenarios can be depicted.	Generate discussion following screening which is participatory.
Newspaper	Can reach broad literate audiences rapidly.	Specific technical information and news.	Illiterate folks cannot read and understand content. It involves little interaction between readers and stakeholders.
Interpersonal Communication (IPC)	Groups or other individuals.	Good for specific, complex intimate information exchange	Highly participatory if not made top down.

<p>Folk media including Interactive Popular Theatre (IPT)</p>	<p>Small to medium scale reach. With mobile units, the reach can be higher. Good for areas hard-to reach for general media</p>	<p>Simple, easily understood messages with local flavour and with entertainment</p>	<p>Discussion with audience during or at the end of performance enhances participation.</p>
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Source: Adapted from UNICEF, 1999

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the methodology for the study as it gives an overview of the procedures that were used and the reasons for using such procedures. The research aims and objectives guided many of the significant choices through the duration of the research project. Areas discussed include research design, data type and source, sampling technique, unit of analysis, selection of study areas, determination of the sample size, data collection instruments and processing tools, analysis and presentation of data, and the research process.

3.2 Research Design

Social science research involves the use of three methodological approaches namely: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed method (Creswell, 2003). This study employed a qualitative method. The chosen research approach was appropriate for this study, due to its ability to help the researcher identify, describe, and explain the attitudes, actions, and perceptions of people within a social setting, and the meanings they make of their actions (Lindlorf & Taylor, 2002). As indicated by David and Sutton (2004) and Asamoah (2010), the case study approach is an explanatory method which makes it easy to answer the ‘what’, ‘why’, ‘when’ and ‘how’ questions associated with the research. Yin (2003), suggests that such an approach is particularly appropriate when research questions are asking ‘how’ or ‘why’ a phenomenon occurs. This research therefore focused on development projects and how communication and participation was used in the PFJ programme in Gbefi. Gbefi, in the Kpando Municipality was used as a case to examine why some development projects receive low patronage.

3.3 Data Type and Source

The study used both primary and secondary sources of data in order to establish facts and to make the work more empirical. Rich and Ginsburg (1999) argued that “no research approach is complete and flawless; quantitative and qualitative methods have different strength and limitations” hence the need for using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods in this study to avoid the limitations of one method. Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) also stressed that this type of approach produces better outcomes in terms of quality and scope.

3.4 Profile of the Study Community

The Gbefi community is located in the Volta Region in Ghana, under jurisdiction of the Kpando Municipal. Comprising an average of about 350 households, Gbefi community members rely mainly on small-scale subsistence farming for survival. Besides the seasonal growing of crops like the staple food: maize, okro, pepper, rice and cassava, the community also supplements its income through tobacco farming and the rearing of domestic animals. Land ownership is primarily under the control of traditional chiefs (and they have vast arable land). Traditional leadership is quite strong, with local chiefs at the core of a wide range of issues. Knowledge of these institutional arrangements is central to understanding community participation and approaches to developmental interventions.

The area suffers a general lack of health facilities. The only hospital serving the area is located at Kpando, the capital of the municipal, which is approximately 25 kilometres away. As a result, significant reliance is placed on traditional medicine. However, they have access to portable water and electricity. Also they have a community announcement system and a small market 50 metres square. Gbefi is generally quiet on weekdays as the community members, the youth especially, go to the farms early morning leaving the aged who sell basic items outside within the confines of their homes. It is important to note that Gbefi is sandwiched between two major towns

– Kpando and Golokwati with a major road and a bridge leading to Hohoe, Jasikan towards the Oti region to the northern regions of Ghana. Gbefi falls within the tropical zone, and it is generally influenced by the South West Monsoons wind from the South Atlantic Ocean and the dry Harmattan winds from the Sahara. The community is therefore characterized by two rainy seasons, the major one occurs from mid-April to early July and the minor from September to November. The beginning and the end of the rainy seasons are not very distinct and there is sometime rainfall even during the dry period. The average annual rainfall ranges from 900mm to 1,300mm with considerable variations with the time of onset, duration and intensity over the years (Ghana Meteorological Agency, 2010). The double maxima rainfall pattern experienced put the community at comparative advantage in food production and food security. It is an opportunity for the farmers to increase their income annually as a result of the two cropping seasons unlike other areas in the country with single season rainfall (MOFA 2017).

3.5 Research Population

The population for the study included officers at the municipal secretariat of the Planting for Food and Jobs programme, which is made up of leadership of the programme. Also, farmers in Gbefi community, with focus on the youth and women. There were about 56 farmers benefiting from the PFJ. Therefore, a qualitative approach was appropriate because of the limited number.

3.6 Sampling Method/Sample Size

The sampling method for this was purposive in nature, where the target populations were selected based on the fact that they were the most useful source of data for the study (*see figure 4*). A sample size of between 8 to 15 participants was used each of the three focus group discussions (*see table 4*). There was an in-depth interview with the head of the PFJ programme at the Kpando Municipal office of MoFA.

3.7 Instruments

The study used in-depth interview and focus group discussion for the project officer of the PFJ and farmers respectively.

3.7.1 In-depth interview

An interview is a flexible method of data collection; it is a quick tool for collecting information because the researcher is able to get answers promptly. The interview was a good tool for collecting data for this research because the researcher was able to seek clarification from interviewee immediately. White (2005) says an interview provides access to what is inside a person's head and makes it possible to measure what a person knows about his value preferences, beliefs and attitudes. This study used an interview guide to prompt the researcher when collecting the information. During data collection, the respondent was briefed in advance. Information sheet and consent forms was issued to respondents to review and sign, indicating their willingness to participate in the interview. The interview guide was used to probe subject matters that related to the aim and objectives of the research. The interview was recorded electronically. The researcher, in adherence to ethics of social research gave the respondent the option to either remain anonymous or provide his name and titles for purposes of analysis; the respondents willing gave his name and credentials. The interview was transcribed verbatim into QSR Nvivo 10, and coded into major themes that was based on the research questions.

3.7.2 Focus Group Discussion

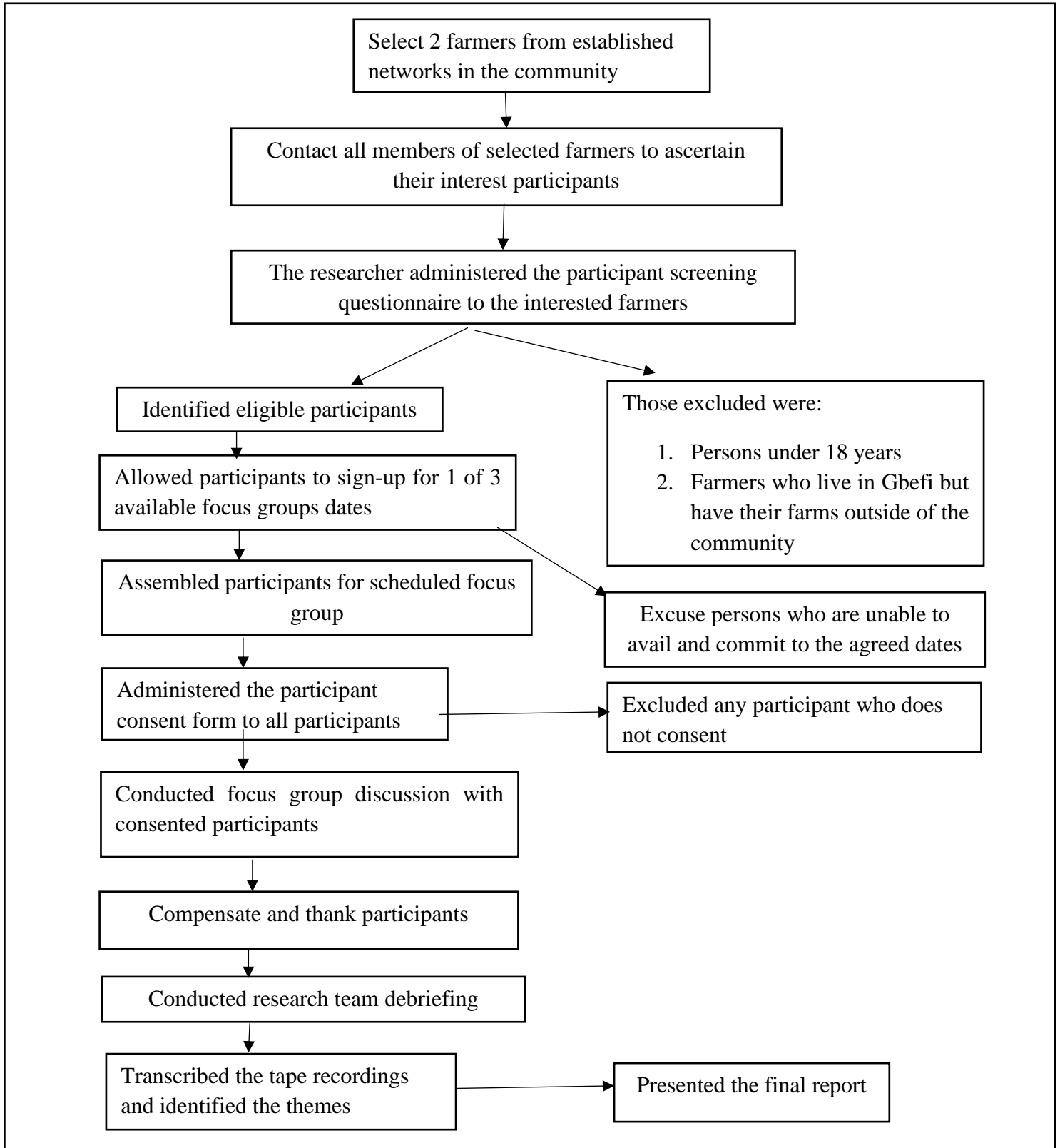
Three focus group discussions were conducted with farmers at Gbefi community. The researcher designed pre-determined questions based on the research questions of the study to elicit responses surrounding participation and communication in the PFJ programme. Themes and trends in the data were identified and used to determine the stages of participation in the programme and the practicality of the communication channel used to reach out to the farmers. The themes

combined with the in-depth interview of the PFJ secretariat were used to arrive at suggestions on improving future intervention programmes.

3.7.3 Study Participants

To facilitate active discussion among participants, the researcher used a purposive-sampling method to recruit participants who had similar characteristics and experiences. We recruited study participants aligned with characteristics of age, occupation, location (*see Table 4*). We formed groups of participants with similar characteristics to facilitate the discussion and achieve theoretical saturation of collected qualitative data. Also, 8 to 10 participants per group was appropriate because it enabled the researcher to engage them more closely. A total of 3 focus groups (A–C) were conducted. This was because of the limited time to conduct and submit the findings of the study. To ensure gender balance, the researcher made sure that there was equal representation of male and female in each focus group (*see table 4*). Focus-group sessions explored participants' experiences and opinions regarding participation, channel of communication and implementation of the PFJ programme.

Figure 3. Procedures in conducting the Focus Group Discussion and Analysis



Sources: Author's construct (2020)

At the beginning of each of the focus groups, the researcher explained the purpose of the study, the role of the moderator, the need for the digital video recorders, sought the consent of participants as they complete the consent form and complete a separate form for demographic which helped to identify the trends among the participants. Data collection included audiovisual recordings, observation of nonverbal communication cues and taking notes at the same time. The three focus group discussions were conducted at the Gbefi community centre. The researcher employed an assistant who worked as co-moderator. The moderator, who doubled as the researcher was responsible for facilitating the discussion using the predetermined questions. The co-moderator administered the demographic survey and operated the recording devices. The table below sums up the locations, times and dates, and number of participants in each focus group.

Table 4. Number of Participants, Locations, Time & Dates of the Focus Group

Focus Group	No. of participants	Gender		Age	Location	Date & Time	Average farm size (Acreage)
		Male	Female	Range			
Group A	10	5	5	19 - 45	Gbefi Community Centre	Tuesday, Sept. 1, 2020. 4:30pm	1.5
Group B	12	6	6	25 - 50	Gbefi Community Centre	Thursday, Sept. 3, 2020. 4:30pm	2
Group C	8	4	4	20 - 35	Gbefi Community Centre	Saturday, Sept. 5, 2020. 4:30pm	2

Sources: *Author's construct (2020)*

The community centre was comfortable and not far from the homes of the participants. The groups were put in a horseshoe formation; this was to ensure participation and psychologically put participants in a position where they all feel equal. The session was recorded using a video

recorder and three microphones that were placed on a table at the centre of the circle. Each session lasted for about 45 minutes. There was plenary session where the participants were encouraged to suggest how to improve future sessions. The moderator of the focus group provided a summary of the key points of the discussion and allow the participants the opportunity to confirm or clarify the points that were discussed. This served as a check such that the participants were satisfied their thoughts were adequately captured by the moderator.

3.8 Data Handling and Analysis

The three focus groups were completed and the researcher transcribed the video recordings. Field notes which include descriptions of any physical nonverbal cues and observations were reviewed. The transcripts were analysed using the thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) explain thematic analysis as a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting themes and patterns within a given data. They posit that thematic analysis is useful method for investigating an under-researched topic, or if the researcher is also a participant whose views on the topic are not known. This thematic was also used to explain the experiences and meanings of the participants based on the assumption that language reflects and allows the participants to articulate their meanings and experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The thematic approach uses the inductive approach for identifying themes through a process of coding the data without trying to fit the data into a pre-existing framework, or the researcher's theoretical interest (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The themes are identified at a semantic level; meaning within the explicit meanings of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The thematic analysis is comprised of six (6) phases: the researcher transcribing, reading, and re-reading the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Then, create codes, or features, of the data. The third phase involves searching for the themes and collating the codes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Lewis (2007) observes that the process involves the identification of concepts as themes if

the concept was expressed with extensiveness, frequency, or intensity. At the fourth phase, the researcher reviews the themes and creates a thematic map. Then, the researcher defines and names the themes, followed by the sixth phase which is writing the final report of the analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the focus group discussion with the three groups and the in-depth interview with the head of PFJ secretariat. The objectives of the study inform the basis of the finding. The objectives of the study were: to investigate participatory structures in the community; to identify the communication channel used by PFJ during projects implementation in the Gbefi; to describe the implementation process of the PFJ initiative; to investigate the level and extent of community participation; and to ascertain the impact of PFJ on the community.

4.2 Findings from the Focus Group Discussion

The themes that were identified, coded and analysed reflect the content across all the focus groups. The researcher identified seven themes from the analysis:

- a. Lack of effective channel of communication; it has to do with information on demand.
- b. There are no known structures as regard to the implementation of the PFJ
- c. Participants have little knowledge of established market by PFJ, for their produce
- d. Unexplained shortage of PFJ fertilizers and seedlings at the peak season.
- e. Low participation in decision making, at any level.
- f. PFJ benefits small holding farmers, large scale farmers are left out.
- g. There is little supervision; it is not effective.

4.2.1 Lack of effective channel of communication

Two main issues were raised with regard to the lack of effective channel of communication: there was communication, however, the information does not reach them early

enough to act upon. In focus group B for instance, a participant made this submission, *“Information does not come on time, anyway, it is better than not having any at all”* The posture here is that participants have become used to the phenomenon after being frustrated by it over a long period of time. When asked about the channel of communication used by the PFJ secretariat to reach out to them, participants identified the community information centre, on radio and rare visit by Agriculture Extension Agents or Technical Officers (known as T.O in Gbafi) from the district level agriculture office to their farms. Almost all participants in groups A and B agreed that information relayed by the T.O is better understood than through the community information centre and on radio. They shared the opinion that the information, such as the process involved in applying the inputs are technical and that the T.O are better positioned to give further information to clarify issues. This is consistent with Mefalopulo (2008) position that interpersonal communication (IPC) is highly recommended for group or other individuals when explaining specific, complex intimate information and it helps ensure high participation.

There was general agreement among participants that information travels wider via radio and community information centre than to have to rely on the T.O who seldom visit their farms. A participant in focus group A said, *“The T.O complains most of the times that he doesn’t have enough fuel to visit the farmers. On occasions that I am in dire need of his service, I have to foot the bill for his fuel before he is able to come to my farm.”* Participants in groups B and C shared similar sentiments as those expressed by another participant in group A. They questioned why the whole of Gbafi, a farming community, should have only one T.O. They seem to be laying the blame on the Ministry of Food and Agriculture for not employing enough T.Os to provide farmers with technical supports. This contradicts the condition given by Stephen and Andrew (2013) in their framework for analysing participation that availability of resources; willingness of

officials and NGOs to provide information and skills will go a long way to improve participation in development programmes.

There was also concern raised about timeliness of the information. The participants rely mainly on rain fed agriculture – and there are two farming seasons in a year: May to August as first season and September to November, the second. Therefore, in situations where the information got to them late, they were unable to act upon them. And on times that they did, the desired results were not met due to the delay in the flow of information. A participant narrated her experience, *“We waited for long hoping that the information on when the new arrival of input will be announced; I even got tired of asking about it. Three days after buying the fertilizer in the open market, and at a costly price, they announced that inputs have arrived, ah! And I have bought from outside. That year I wept because I ran at a loss!”*. Several others narrated their ordeal on the timeliness of supply of inputs.

4.2.2 There are no known structures as regard to the implementation of the PFJ in Gbefi

Closely linked to the theme of lack of effective channel of communication is that the participants seemed not to be aware of a known structure as regard to the implementation of the PFJ. A participant explained her experience: *“When I heard about the programme (PFJ) on radio, I did not know where to get more information; my friends here (pointing to the other farmers) also don't know...”* Most of the participants seem to agree with her because they nodded their heads to that effect. Meanwhile, MoFA (2017-2020) report on the strategic plan for implementation of the PFJ programme states that farmers were mobilized through associated proven farmers, Farmer Based and Organizations (FBOs); this seems to suggest that there are structures in the community through which awareness is created or information is disseminated.

The moderator asked them how they eventually get the inputs. A participant in group C said, *“Me, I get the (PFJ) fertilizer when I go to Kpando market”* Alphonse Mensah said, *“The*

T.O gave me the contact of the dealer (a private seller” who invested into the distribution of PFJ inputs). Several others also narrated their experience in accessing the PFJ inputs. The participants expressed frustration because they believe if they were educated or informed about an implementation structure, they would be able to walk into a designated office instead of going about looking for inputs to buy at unknown or certified PFJ shops in the Municipal capital, Kpando.

4.2.3 Participants have little knowledge of established market by PFJ for their produce

The PFJ programme is designed to create markets for the produce. The MoFA recognises the problem with ready market for the farmers especially during a bumper harvest. A participant in group A narrated how she had to sell her 12 bags of maize at a low price because the price was not going up as envisage meanwhile she was spending a lot of money in preserving the maize. There was an expression of surprise when the moderator mentions that PFJ also offers marketing service for their produce. A question was posed to participants on how they market their produce. A participant said, *“We preserve the maize in our stores, and anticipate a shortage of it, which will mean an increase in price, before we begin to sell...then we convey the maize to the market to sell also.”*

Again the moderator asked if they have had conversation with their T.O about the marketing of their produce, another participant said, *“In our minds, we know the T.O is in charge of the farm activities and not the market part”* here, the participants consider the T.O as being the one responsible for assisting the farmers with technical knowledge in crop production and not the marketing of it. This exposes another gap in the implementation of the marketing aspect of the PFJ. Again, the participants narrated their ordeal anytime they were selling in the buyer’s market (when the demand is low). This make it difficult for them to recoup their investments. There were times when the produce goes to waste and other times, there is extreme shortage. This contradict the set objective by the PFJ to provide marketing opportunities for produce, and E-Agriculture (a

technological platform to monitor and track activities and progress of farmers through a database system) (PFJ, 2017).

4.2.4 Unexplained shortage of PFJ fertilizers and seedlings at the peak season.

Another theme that emerged was the unexplained shortage of PFJ fertilizers and seedlings at the peak season. Not one of the participants understands why there is shortage of PFJ inputs, even though the dealers have enough input in stock. The participants shared their frustration about how the dealers would say they have run short of PFJ inputs. This leads them to no choice than to purchase inputs at the prevailing market price. Unfortunately, the shortage situation mostly occurs towards the beginning of the planting seasons; at the time they are in dire need of the inputs. There was an overwhelming suggestion in all the three focus groups that there should be a reliable timetable for the provision of PFJ input so that they are aware exactly when PFJ inputs will be available. This will help them budget adequately for the inputs. They emphasized the fact that when there is an unexpected shortage, it affects the timing of input application and consequently the plants. A participant in group C said that he has had to reduce fertilizer application to his plants when there was a shortage and that has led to low yield on so many occasions.

4.2.5 Low participation in decision making.

In response to the moderator's question about how they feel about decision making as regard the PFJ, the trend that emerged was that the participants feel their involvement in decision making were not relevant to the success of the programme. A participant said, "*Our ideas will not reach anywhere*". The participants recounted how their member of parliament had distributed organic fertilizers to them, meanwhile the fertilizer was not compatible with the Gbafi soil. Participants also expressed a sense of inferiority complex. They described those in-charge of the PFJ as "*know what is good*" "*give the advice*" "*tell us how to do...*". This suggests low participation in decision making. This view of the participants falls under tokenism in Arnstein's

(1969) levels of citizen involvement in development programme. Similarly, in Pretty's typology of participation, we can classify this level of participation as passive – the People participate by being told what is going to happen or has already happened. Pretty observed that it takes the form of a unilateral announcement by an administration or project management without listening to people's responses.

4.2.6 PFJ benefits small holding farmers; large scale farmers are left out.

The participants observed that PFJ benefits small holding farmers; large scale farmers are left out. All the participants in the focus groups affirmed that Gbafi has vast arable land and the average farmer has over four to five hectares of farm. They complained that a lot of farmers are left off the programme because they are large holder farmers. And indeed, the PFJ is targeted at the small holder farmers (MoFA, 2017-2020). A participant said, *“If the targeted beneficiaries are small scale farmers, why is it difficult to provide them with inputs?”*.

4.2.7 There is little supervision; it is not effective.

One of the key pillars of the PFJ is the provision of free extension services to farmers (MoFA, 2017). The AEAs are the officers responsible for the supervision and provision of this service. This is what a participant said about supervision, *“You call them, sometimes they pick up other times they don't, on days that they pick up and promise to visit the farm, they don't come; I sometimes go to their office before they visit the farm.”* Another participant said, *“They sometimes give excuses that they don't have fuel to power their motorbike”* a participant added that, *“They come to my area but by the time it gets to my turn it was late, they spend a lot of time with the other farmers”* All these sentiments suggests that supervision of the PFJ has not been effective in the Gbafi community.

4.3 Findings from in-depth interview with Head of PFJ Secretariat

The head of the PFJ outlined the players in the implementation of the PFJ programme:

- a. The secretariat of the PFJ
- b. Opinion leaders (serial farmers)
- c. Agriculture Extension Officers (Technical Officers (T.Os))
- d. Dealers of farm inputs.

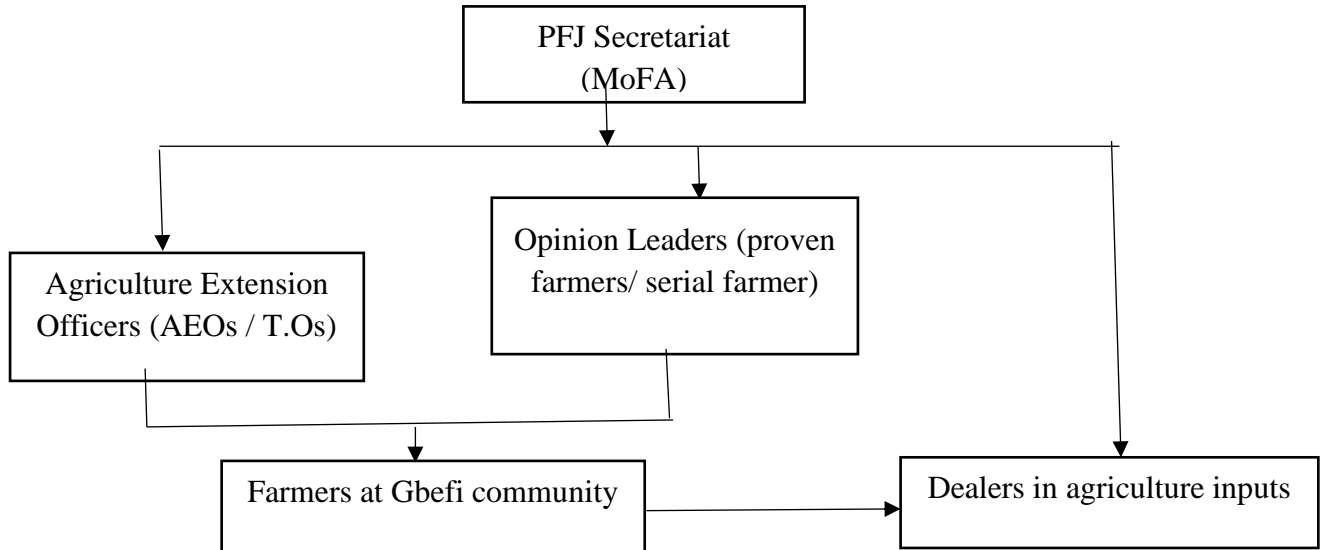
4.3.1 Participation of the Gbefi Community in implementation of PFJ

The head mentioned that before the implementation of the PFJ, the PFJ department at the municipal office organises what he called “*Pre-season farmers’ forum*” where all the stakeholders are assembled and presented with the activities of the farming year. This forum provides insight into the implementation of the PFJ and the opinion leaders and T.Os are expected to relay the messages to the other farmers in the community. This assertion is partially in line with the findings in the focus group discussions with the farmers where participants said that they rely primarily on the T.O for detailed information on the PFJ.

4.3.2 The approach to implementation of the PFJ

When asked about the approaches used to ensure participation in the PFJ programmes. The Head of PFJ mentioned the involvement of proven or serial farmers who are trained in an approach - the result and demonstration approach – where they (the proven farmers) in turn educate their colleagues farmers in the community. The approach involves farmers being taken through the process of input application in order to achieve a buoyant and bumper harvest. This assertion was not the situation on the ground so far as farmers in Gbefi are concern. Instead, the farmers, in a focus group discussion lamented about little and ineffective supervision (the third theme). Closely related to the implementation process is the participatory structure. The Head of the PFJ describes the participatory structure in *figure 4*.

Figure 4. Participatory structure in the PFJ at Gbefi



This structure suggests a stakeholder approach to participation in development programme. The PFJ Secretariat shares ideas with AEAs, business community (Dealers in Agriculture inputs) and opinion leaders. This trickles down to the farmers through the opinion leaders and AEAs. Farmers are expected to act on the information by enrolling with dealers in order to benefit from the PFJ inputs. This structure falls within pretty's functional participation where a group is formed to meet predetermined objectives related to a project. Such involvement tends not to be at early stages of project cycles or planning, but rather after major decisions have already been made.

4.3.3 The role of the PFJ secretariat at the Municipal level

The secretariat creates awareness of the programme; offer technical support as well as endorses list of patronage of PFJ inputs as presented to them by dealers. The dealers are private individuals who are brought into the programme because they have the financial muscles to stock and distribute or sell farm inputs in the community. Basically they purchase the inputs from YARA who are in a contractual agreement with GoG. So the dealers have the data on the number of

farmers, however, the challenge, according to the secretariat is that there is no data on specific community, for that matter Gbefe, since the dealer keeps records of only the names and contacts of farmers.

4.3.4 Challenges with participation of the farmers

Participation is hindered because of the shortage that occurs towards the beginning of the farming season. This is because the GoG gives quota to every MMDAs . In short the secretariat said, “*It is a policy issue.*” The shortage does not mean that there were no inputs in the markets, but the PFJ input tends to run out due to the quota system. This finding supports the revelation in the focus group discussions in the fourth theme where the farmers could not understand the shortage of PFJ inputs at the peak of the season. Again, this contradicts the condition given by Stephen and Andrew (2013) in their framework for analysing participation that availability of resources; willingness of officials and NGOs to provide information and skills will go a long way to improve participation in development programmes.

4.3.5 Channel of Communication

Communication remains crucial in awareness creation. The secretariat mentioned the used public address systems, radio interviews, posters and ambient media as the media used to reach out to the farmers at the grassroots. Meanwhile, concerns were raised by the farmers, during the focus group that they get detailed understanding of programmes when it is explained to them by the T.Os. We can infer from this that, there is a gap in the channel of communication which is inconsistent with Mefalopulos (2008) view that Interpersonal Communication (IPC) enhances participation in development programme as it helps in clarifying technical information.

4.4 Summary of Findings and Conclusions

Conclusively, the rich discussions that ensued in the focus groups enabled the researcher to deduce dominant themes and sub-themes. It was from these themes, we discussed the findings in relation to those from the in-depth interview with the secretariat; links were made to frameworks discussed in the literature review chapter. The study revealed that there is a participatory structure, however, even though major stakeholders such proven farmers, AEAs and dealers in the farms inputs were engaged at the preliminary stage, there is a gap between these groups and the farmers on the ground. On the communication channel, we gathered that the messages did not go down well with the farmers because of the media used. We found out that farmers are more comfortable with information relayed to them through interpersonal or group communication. This finding has impact negatively on the implementation process and by extension the level and extent of participation in the PFJ programme at Gbefi.

In the next and final chapter, the researcher presents a summary, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides conclusions on study findings and offers practical recommendations for future development programmes.

5.2 Conclusions

From the findings, the following conclusions were made based on the research questions:

5.2.1 The communication channels used for the PFJ implementation

On the communication channel used in implementing the PFJ programme, the findings reveal that the PFJ secretariat used public address systems, radio interviews, posters and ambient media as the media used to reach out to the farmers at the grassroots. Meanwhile the farmers consider interpersonal communications more effective channel compare to the used of print media, community information centre and radio interviews as used by the PFJ Secretariat. The farmers prefer to have personal or group interaction with the AEA, that way, they are able to understand the technical advice that are given to them. Besides, farming involves certain protocols or steps which will require close interaction with the experts and supervisors.

5.2.2 The implementation process of the PFJ programme

According to the secretariat of the PFJ, stakeholder approach was used in implementing the programme. The PFJ Secretariat shares ideas with AEAs, business community (Dealers in agriculture inputs) and opinion leaders in pre-season forum and seminars. This trickles down to the farmers through the opinion leaders and AEAs. Farmers are expected to act on the information by enrolling with dealers in order to benefit from the PFJ inputs. The farmers agreed that there seem to be an implementation process, but it has functional problems; the farmers raised concerns about the fact that information do not reach them on time in order for them to act upon directive from the secretariat; an instance was mentioned - unexplained shortage of inputs at the

peak of the farming season and the creation of market that is supposed to be taken care of by the PFJ programme – they are not given adequate information on this challenges.

Also, there is a participatory structure that is designed at the municipal level (*see figure 4*); this structure is in three tiers: from the top is the Secretariat of the PFJ, then the opinion leaders (proven farmers); on the same level is the AEAs and the dealers in farm inputs. The last stage is the farmers, the prospective beneficiaries. However, there seems to be disconnect between the second and last tiers

5.2.3 The level and extent of community participation in the PFJ programme

The level and extent of participation in the PFJ depends on three factors: the level of engagement in decision making; the number of beneficiaries of the PFJ and the availability of the farm inputs. In terms of decision making, the farmers are placed in a passive position; while the opinion leaders (proven) are drawn to the table, the farmers at the grassroots are reduced to taking instructions or they are expected to act on the decision made from the top. Also, scanty records on the beneficiaries made it a challenge in ascertaining the number of farmers from the Gbefi community who benefited from the programme. Finally, on the extent of participation, limiting the beneficiary to two hectares of farm is a disincentive because most of the farmers have on the average, 5 hectares of farm or even more. This seem to disqualify majority of farmers with hectare more than three from benefiting from the PFJ programme. This consequently militated against the number of farmers who fall within the criteria for participation in the research (*figure 3*).

5.4 Recommendations

The conclusion drawn from the findings informs the following proposed recommendations:

- ❖ The PFJ secretariat at the district and municipal level should engage the farmers at the grassroots more directly, in decisions that includes implementation of the PFJ at the local level. This can be achieved by supporting the opinion leaders (proven farmers) to create awareness among their peers, but also empowering the AEAs by resourcing them adequately in order for them to reach out to the farmers.
- ❖ With regards to appropriateness of communication channel, the research findings suggest that group communications and interpersonal communications is more appropriate in reaching out to the farmers. This is because farming is a highly technical venture, and will require detailed information on how to go about applying the inputs; therefore, a one off information will not be enough to achieve this.
- ❖ Again, in order to increase participation, qualification to benefit from the PFJ programme should not be limited to farmers who have up two hectares; it should be opened to all farmers, including large scale farmers and farmers who are into the production of cash crops. Also, the PFJ inputs should be in constant supplies and on time.
- ❖ Monitoring and evaluation should be considered an integral part of the implementation process, that way there will be effective feedback (hence, increase participation) for future planning of developmental programmes.

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APPENDIX

Interview guide for Municipal Secretariat of the PFJ programme

Dear sir,

My name is Francis Sanusi, I am a student pursuing an M.A in Development Communication at Ghana Institute of Journalism (GIJ). In fulfilment of the aforementioned programme, I am conducting a research on the topic:

An examination of participation and communication in Planting for Foods and Jobs (PFJ) in Gbefi community of the Kpando Municipality, Ghana.

The purpose of this interview is to investigate the level and extent to which community participation and communication was used in the implementation of the Planting for Food and Jobs programme in Gbefi Community.

As such, I would be grateful if you allow few minutes of your time for an interview. Your response will be treated confidentially. Meanwhile, should you feel uncomfortable at any point of the interview, you are at liberty to call for a stop. I assure you that the information provided by you will be kept strictly confidential and used for academic purposes only.

Thank you.

1. Who are the players in the implementation of the PFJ programme?
2. What are the approaches used by PFJ secretariat to ensure participation in the PFJ programme in Gbefi?
3. How participatory are the approaches used by PFJ?
4. How applicable have been the approaches you have used?
5. What are the participatory structures for the PFJ implementation?

6. What role do the traditional leadership play in the PFJ programme?
7. How are the project beneficiary involved?
8. What are the communication channels in the implementation of PFJ at Gbefi?
9. How participatory is the implementation process of the PFJ programme?
10. What is the extent of community participation in the PFJ programme?
11. How do participants get access to the PFJ inputs?
12. How do you monitor the farmers' use of the inputs?
13. Has there been an increase in the number of participants since the beginning of the PFJ programme in Gbefi?
14. Has there been an increase in farm yields?
15. What are some of the problems the participants have in the implementation of PFJ programme?
16. What are the benefits of PFJ to the Gbefi community?
17. What measures have you put in place to increase participation of the Gbefi community in the PFJ programme?
18. How do you intend to sustain the PFJ programme in Gbefi?

A guide for Focus Group Discussion

1. How did you get to know about the PFJ programme?
2. What is your understanding of the PFJ programme?
3. What is your motive for participating in the PFJ programme?
4. What role(s) do your chief and assemblyman play in the PFJ programme?
5. How has the Municipal Secretariat of PFJ involved you in programme?
6. What is the extent of your involvement in the PFJ programme?
7. How often do the Municipal Secretariat of PFJ engage you in their activities?
8. What process do you go through in order to benefit from PFJ programme?
9. What channel of communication does the PFJ Secretariat use to reach out to you?
10. How do you find the programme so far?
11. What has been the impact of the PFJ on yields and job creation?
12. Has there been an increase or decrease in farm produce since the programme was introduced?
13. Has there been an increase or decrease in the number of farmers in Gbafi since the programme was introduced to your community?