



FINAL REPORT
(First Roundtable Session)

**LEVERAGING PRIVATE SECTOR'S
PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT**

THE CASE OF GHANA



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Executive Summary

This report summarizes major points of discussion from the first Roundtable Discussion on 'Leveraging Private Sector Participation in Local Economic Development (LED) in Ghana' held on 9th November, 2016 at Cleaver House, Accra, Ghana. Shear Power Ventures, Ghana, convened the roundtable discussion with sponsorship from Ghana Free Zones Board and Rural Enterprises Programme. The roundtable discussion brought together representatives and individuals from various institutions who are directly or indirectly involved in local development and private business. The impetus to conduct the roundtable discussion stems from the need to entrust the private sector with a more central role in the planning and implementation of LED in Ghana for greater socio-economic impact. In order to attain an inclusive approach to LED, a roundtable discussion was considered an important starting point for constructive dialogue amongst key stakeholders in the field of LED. The intent of the first roundtable was to inform, engage, and consult with stakeholders on global perspectives, the LED policy in Ghana; current practice and impact, as well as ascertain some knowledge about private sector's level of awareness and experience of the subject:

This is the first of a series of four (4) intensive roundtable discussions that will be held within a twelve (12) month period with the main actors of LED in Ghana. The method used for this roundtable discussion were presentations, group discussions and questions and answers. There were five presentations. The first presentation centered on the definition and overview of LED. The second concentrated on private sector participation in LED in Ghana. The third presentation focused on Ghana's LED policy framework, and the fourth presentation gave an overview of the Rural Enterprises Programme (REP) LED initiatives since 1994. The final presentation sought to give the private sector an alternative view, and pointed to initiatives that private sector can undertake independently of government. Questions and discussions followed each presentation. This was followed by group discussions and presentation of group views. The general conclusion among participants was that, the inclusion of the private sector in LED will stimulate the development of local economies but this requires a paradigm shift in the national LED policy and a legal backing.

1. Introduction

Ghana continues to face key development challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality. Given the importance of achieving the goals of a better life for all Ghanaians, there is a need to explore development alternatives which can lead to a more inclusive form of economic development and growth. In the light of this, LED has been seen as a viable alternative to top-down development strategies, and a more flexible and effective approach to simultaneously enhance economic growth and reduce poverty. However, what needs to be recognised is that the private sector remains largely neglected within the conventional LED policy formulation and implementation in Ghana. Recognizing that the private sector needs to be entrusted with a more central role in the planning and implementation of LED in Ghana, Shear Power Ventures (SPV), in partnership with GFZB, NBSSI and REP seeks to organize a series of four (4) intensive Roundtable discussions within a twelve (12) month period with the main actors of LED in Ghana. The objectives are to:

- Obtain a clear understanding of LED
- Outline clear, agreed roles among actors
- Propose incentives to attract sustained private sector participation
- Harness sustainable collaboration, information sharing and strategic linkages among actors
- Obtain a legal framework to support private sector commitment

To this end, the first in the series of the roundtable discussions was organized on November 9, 2016 at Cleaver House, Accra. The discussion was led by professional and experienced development experts (*appendix I*). Participants were from selected stakeholder institutions of the public and private sectors, civil society, traditional leaders, NGOs and donor partners (*appendix II*). Participation at the event was very impressive with nearly all key stakeholders participating. The discussions were conducted in plenary and thematic group sessions (*appendix III*).

2. Opening

The program opened with welcome remarks by Ms. Shirley Quist-Thompson, Director of Operations at Shear Power Ventures (*appendix IV*). She explained that the roundtable discussion was to provide a semi-formal opportunity for brainstorming and contributing ideas towards addressing the existing gaps in LED policy and implementation in Ghana. In an introductory statement, the CEO of SPV, Adwoa Buahema Christian said though Ghana has an LED policy in place more needs to be done about its implementation, adding that with so many changes happening worldwide, the 21 century provides a good opportunity for countries like Ghana to work towards advancing LED. She expressed satisfaction with the participation of representatives from the NDPC as a critical stakeholder in

providing the broad framework for LED policy formulation. She reminded participants that soon countries of the developed world may be “shutting their doors to developing countries”, reiterating “we must learn to do things for ourselves so that our children do not have to go knocking on doors to get the basic comforts of life.” She urged participants to be guided by what has already been done in LED, interrogate what more needs to be done to get private sector fully engaged, and work together to promote the private sector to lead and drive the process of development.

3. Presentation I

Giving the first presentation (*LED: From the global to the Ghanaian perspective*) Dr. Mensah explained the meaning of LED and argued that LED has eluded a standard definition. He maintained that the definition of LED in Ghana is based on the 2010 MLGRD Decentralization Policy Framework which states that “LED is the process by which local governments, local businesses and other actors join forces and resources to enter into new partnership agreements with each other or other stakeholders to create new jobs and stimulate economic activity in municipalities, towns and villages.” He also gave the historical evolution of LED, attributing its beginnings to Western Europe (1950s and 1960s), North America (1960s and 1970s), East Asia (1980s and 1990s), Latin America, South Asia, and Africa. He added that NGOs have also played a significant role in promoting LED across the globe. He argued that in its operation, LED can either have a “pro-poor” or a “pro-growth” focus.

He further examined LED in South Africa and explained that the policy and practice of LED has become remarkably well established in South Africa as a result of several legal provisions. He cited examples of successful LED initiatives from Alicedale (Eastern Cape), Richards Bay and Midlands Meander. As a result, LED in South Africa ranges from tourism, place promotion, business attraction, support for small and micro-projects, community projects, targeted poverty relief, training and job-creation schemes.

Giving an overview of LED in Ghana, Dr. Mensah indicated that, the pre-independence period up to 1987 could largely be described as the “lost decades of LED in Ghana” as the emphasis was more on national development. From 1988, initiatives shifted towards local development. These initiatives include the GRATIS project and NBSSI, decentralisation policy, 1992 Constitution; LG Act of 1993, Act 462; NDPC Act of 1994, Act 479 (all give backing to district assemblies to ensure local development), REP, and Presidential Special Initiatives (Garments and Textiles, Agri-business [Cassava and Oil Palm] and Salt industries). In 2014, the MLGRD officially formulated and launched a national LED policy framework and LED manual. These two policy documents ushered Ghana into a “*policy maturity*” period for LED. Dr. Mensah stated that in spite of all these attempts to promote LED, it is still implemented

in the old top-down fashion and the commitment of relevant actors is in doubt. He added that the ILO, GIZ and UNDP have implemented a number of LED projects while a number of NGOs have been engaged in local development and empowerment of the local people.

3.1 Question & Answer: Discussion Session I

The presentation generated an exciting Question & Answer session during which participants made a number of observations and also raised issues as follows:

Participants wanted to know exactly what LED is and practical examples of LED initiatives. The presenter explained that LED represents a broad array of initiatives ranging from small to medium level activities that can be taken at the local level to improve and revive the local economy so that the poor, young, and women can get jobs in order to gain sustainable income. Examples of LED initiatives include tourism development, craft making, garment making, brick-making, light engineering, and a host of others at the local level.

Participants were however of the view that LED exists more on paper than in practice. Therefore, they wanted practical examples of LED initiatives that have worked in Ghana. The presenter indicated that this could be true partly because the concept of LED is subject to several interpretations, and partly because LED is at its inception stage in Ghana and more on a pilot basis. The ILO, UNDP and GIZ, however, have been instrumental in implementing actual LED initiatives in Ghana. For instance, in the Effutu Municipality, Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam District, Mfantseman Municipality, Awutu-Senya District, etc., ILO has embarked on a number of LED initiatives such as Oil Palm Processing, fish processing, gari processing and fashion design. The GIZ LED initiative helps small and medium enterprises to expand their businesses in order to improve their output and income. In its bid to promote LED, the GIZ set light industrial zones in selected districts in the Brong Ahafo, Ashanti, Central, Western and Northern Regions. The programme provides finance for grid extension, advisory services and training programmes for the light industrial areas. The UNDP has been supporting income generation and promoting sustainable livelihood schemes through capacity building training and financial support for individuals to start or expand their businesses.

Finally, participants wanted to know government's role in LED. In a response, the presenter said, government role is critical and it is the responsibility of government to provide an enabling environment such as roads, electricity, tax rebates, physical infrastructure, resourcing the local governments, among others so that LED can thrive.

4 Presentation II

In his second presentation (*Private Sector and Local Economic Development: A Mutually Rewarding Endeavour*), Dr. Mensah argued that the participation of the private sector is a vehicle for expanding LED implementation in Ghana. Therefore, central and local government need to engage the private sector in refining, prioritizing and designing appropriate LED strategies that will unlock local potentials and transform the local economy into a vibrant and dynamic one. He enumerated a number of LED opportunities and initiatives in Ghana that could be exploited through the District Assemblies. Among these are Pro-poor tourism, Agritourism/Agrotourism, Aquaculture, Cassava production and processing, Cashew production and processing, Kente production, Clay Mining, and many others.

He asked participants to consider the key question of how to get the private sector to take the lead in LED and be proactive in moving it forward. He called on the GFZB to attract private companies into localities and use them as instruments to drive growth. Dr. Mensah drew attention to the South African experience where almost 90% of the local population is engaged in local private sector activities with enormous benefits. Drawing lessons from private sector participation in LED in South Africa, Dr. Mensah then compared LED in South Africa to that of Ghana and listed four important features that differentiate one from the other, namely: territorial, governance, integration and sustainability dimensions. He concluded with a set of policy recommendations for the central and local governments as well as the private sector to ensure successful LED implementation in Ghana.

4.1 Question & Answer: Discussion Session II

Participants were of the view that the private sector can be a catalyst for LED in Ghana; the difficulty however, has to do with accessing financial support from banks. Indeed, most banks and financial institutions in Ghana are reluctant to extend credit facilities to SMEs and start-ups – considering them as high risk ventures. Generally, interest rates on bank loans are unbearable and do not favour small businesses. This therefore leads to the question “How did South Africa deal with this hurdle?” The presenter made the point that, South Africa instituted the LED Fund as the key instrument for stimulating LED. Under the mandate of this Fund, municipalities could apply for the funding of LED projects, such as cultural tourism initiatives, the promotion of agro-processing, the development of business incubators or human resource programmes. Even though, some level of LED activities in Ghana is financed through the REP, NBSSI, and DACF, Ghana could learn lessons from South Africa.

Again, participants wanted to know the role of the community in LED and how to make the community own the projects and be responsible for the businesses that were set up? The presenter maintained that community participation is vital in LED — as hosts and beneficiaries of LED activities

communities have a significant role to ensure the development, successful implementation and sustainability of LED programs. Thus, communities can actively lend their support to the private sector and cooperate with them to make LED a success. However, in Ghana, much of what happens at community level in relation to LED is ad-hoc and informal. Therefore, it is important to give communities the opportunity to be involved in LED and enable the benefits of LED to be distributed throughout the community. The challenge is that, local communities may not have the financial resources, but they have the natural resources such as land and human resource.

In a set of comments, the Executive Secretary of the GFZB, Mr. Albert Twum Boafo, outlined the concept of the Free Zones. He explained that the concept applies to every business that is export oriented and it offers incentives such as: 100% tax and duty rebates, retention of 100% profits and no tax on profits for up to eight (8) years. In spite of these incentives, he said there are challenges in implementing the free zones concept. He enumerated some of these as energy shortages. Also, because of an overemphasis on revenue collection from taxing imports, the medium to long term view of establishing companies so that businesses can contribute to revenue through the PAYE tax system is not a priority. He advocated a holistic approach to removing the impediments and also moving away from over focusing on oil and cocoa, adding that “the aggregation of non-traditional revenues is higher than the inflows from the traditional sectors of the economy.” He stressed the need to give LED initiatives the chance to grow and be firmly rooted before rushing to levy taxes on them. Mr. Twum Boafo urged government, financial institutions, private sector and civil society organizations to come together and propose a model that would define the dynamics for accelerating business growth and locality development.

In an intervention, the Deputy Minister for Culture and Tourism, Hon. Dzifa Gomashie who spoke to the program in her capacity as the Queen Mother (Mama Dramedo I) of Aflao traditional area, was of the view that for LED to work there must be greater interest in District Assembly politics so as to influence local level governance and policies. She expressed concern about the Ghanaian attitude of overly admiring the culture of other countries, pointing out that Ghana’s strength lies in its cultural heritage “and yet that is the aspect of our life that we denigrate the most” she said. A number of contributors also pointed to the need for support structures to be decentralized and active at the district level in order to facilitate the requisite documentation for certification of products and export. The group called for LED initiatives to be visible in rural areas to promote community interest, commitment and ownership. Participants also commented on problems associated with land acquisition and use, and observed the rapid rate at which foreigners were acquiring land from traditional rulers. They proposed

that land owners should be assisted to have shared ownership in the various industries and ventures that are created in their areas.

5. Presentation III

Mr. Edem Senanu's presentation (*The LED Policy in Ghana*) sought to respond to the fundamental question: How to generate meeting points where entrepreneurs can go and expect to get results. He presented on the national framework for LED and highlighted the fact that the LED policy and framework provides for three (3) levels of platforms or meeting points around economic development issues. These include (i) A national LED platform, (ii) Regional LED platforms and (iii) District LED platforms which are to meet regularly to discuss and resolve economic development issues at each level. Mr. Senanu then focused on the District LED platform which is to be facilitated by the economic sub-committee of each District Assembly and emphasized that this is a crucial vehicle in tackling private sector concerns and challenges at the local level. He noted that the District LED platform brings together on a regular basis, representatives from the Private Sector, Local Government, Civil Society Organizations, Traditional Authority and Financial Institutions (Micro Finance, Rural Banks etc.) to consider economic development issues and find ways of addressing these in each district.

He emphasized that this is where business men and women who have various challenges e.g. obtaining land, utilities, financing, road or other infrastructure challenges etc. can engage with key local authorities and representatives to get accelerated results. If local bye-laws or policies need to be established to address private sector concerns on taxes, roads etc, this platform is to initiate these processes, if financing is an issue, the financial institutions and their representatives there are to consider how to address these, if land is a challenge the traditional authorities there are to intervene and provide solutions, if advocacy is required civil society will provide that support. Mr. Senanu recommended that full implementation of this policy measure is required for Ghana to adequately benefit from the LED policy and that greater sensitization of District Assembly leaders such as DCEs and DCDs on how promoting the platform to address local economic challenges will improve the business environment, grow enterprises and thereby increase internally generated funds through taxes, fees and levies to boost assembly resources is key.

5.1 Question & Answer: Discussion Session III

The presentation generated a vibrant Question & Answer session during which participants made a number of observations and also raised issues as follows:

Participants wanted to know the processes by which LED policy was formulated. The presenter explained that, the Ghana LED Policy is really bottom-up since in developing it, there was nation-wide consultation and engagement with local communities. Therefore, it was the representative views of all Ghanaians that were put together as a policy on how to develop the economies of local communities in Ghana. He added that, it is actually local centered and it is expected to be driven by local communities. The presenter however, added that, post LED policy studies have shown that there is a disconnection between the design and the implementation of the policy. The policy itself is bottom up but the implementation is top down.

6. Presentation IV

In his presentation (*The Rural Enterprises Programme [1994-2016]: A Case Specific LED Initiative*) Mr. George Afriyie, Institutional Development Officer, REP, indicated that REP was the 3rd phase of the Rural Enterprises Project Phases 1 and 2 which were implemented between 1995 and 2002 and was being implemented for 8 years (from 2012 to 2020) in 161 districts nationwide at the cost of 185 million US Dollars, with funding support from the GOG, IFAD and the African Development Bank. The aim of REP is to improve the livelihood and income of the rural poor, micro and small entrepreneurs with the developmental objective to increase the number of businesses that generate income, growth and employment opportunities. Mr. Afriyie outlined four technical components of the REP as follows: Business Development Services, which aims to upgrade technical and entrepreneurial skills at the rural level; Agricultural Commodity Processing Infrastructure Development, meant for upgrading rural technology through acquisition and development of agro-processing equipment, prototypes and technology dissemination; Access to Rural Finance which aims to enhance access to finance through financial institutions, and finally the Institutional Development which aims to strengthen and mainstream support systems within the public and private sector institutions.

He identified the target group for REP as the entrepreneurial poor, particularly women and the vulnerable including the youth, institutional partners (from both public and private sectors) and local business associations/umbrella organizations. He commended the program for developing a strong institutional framework for implementation at the District level and said the operational sectors include (a) Farm based businesses such as mushroom cultivation, grasscutter/rabbit rearing, poultry, beekeeping and fish farming; (b) Pre and Post-harvest activities including animal traction, threshing, sorting, crop drying, storage & transport. Others are processing of cereals, vegetables, seeds, tubers, fish and meat and then soap making, baking and confectionery. He also identified primary fabrication and repair (welding & fabrication, carpentry & joinery, auto mechanics, foundry & blacksmithing), adding

that traditional craft like textiles, leatherworks and handicraft were also viable areas of operation. In his view, the program has created many new businesses and jobs and formalized some existing businesses.

He concluded that, going forward after Midterm Review, REP will be opening up to private sector BDS and Technology Service Providers, transforming the management and operation of the Rural Technology Facilities (RTFs) into Public Private Partnership, enhancing the professional image of the Business Advisory Centres (BACs) and providing them with the necessary support to enable them leverage additional funding from various sources to sustain their operations.

7. Presentation V

David Ofosu-Dorte's (Esq.) extempore presentation (*Pro-growth LED: Leveraging impact through the Private Sector*) took participants into an alternative perspective; focusing on initiatives that private sector itself can take without waiting for government. He explained that the private sector must look for innovative ways to influence government to benefit them. Therefore, the first way to go is for Ghanaian private businesses to demand greater attention from government and lobby for a Minister for Business as distinct from Ministers for Trade or Private Sector. By lobbying as a body, and obtaining a Minister of Business, it was much more likely that their voices will be heard and their petitions/demands met. He said such actions may likely produce a Parliamentary Sub-Committee on Business. Mr. Ofosu-Dorte also urged businesses to demonstrate more seriousness by forming coalitions for engaging government so that they can be taken seriously. This also requires that mediocrity in the private sector must be eliminated or significantly reduced so that standards are improved and recognized. Also, it is not wise for businesses to engage in politicization as this is seen as a characteristic of weakness. He argued that many private sector businesses are unable to market themselves because they fail to scale up their projects and products. There is therefore, an urgent need for strategic planning in the private sector. Family businesses, for instance, must be run on sound corporate business principles so that they can expand, and not based on relations and family ties. To him, the situation where private businesses alienate their staff is not helpful because it only results in staff cheating and underperforming.

Mr. Ofosu-Dorte urged the private sector players to focus less on external support (IMF etc.) to grow the sector and rather look at maximizing the benefits of local seemingly "little" "low-hanging fruits", citing uniquely Ghanaian brands such as shear butter and kelewele. He posited that some private sector businesses cannot get access to capital because the projects are not co-owned and as a result risk is not shared. Co-owned businesses generally pull personal resources together to undertake projects which have potential for better results and higher profits. And in the event of risk or losses, the risk is shared

leading to less affect. Finally, he expressed the view that LED initiatives need to start small and through creativity and innovation gradually grow to levels of mass production.

7.1 Question & Answer: Discussion Session IV

Mr. Ofosu Dorte's thought-provoking speech prompted participants to engage in a lively discussion session that elicited important views. The discussion brought to the fore that rapid changes in leadership at the District level governance structures such as Assembly members, District Chief Executives etc. has a negative impact on the business environment at the local level. Participants agreed that government's support is important, but the direction must come from the private sector itself. This is because, interventions such as GRATIS, EDAIF, BAF among others have not been effective and therefore business leaders must themselves interact with influential members of the Executive and also create common interest networks to advocate for support. Mr. Ofosu Dorte argued that businesses must advocate for the Ghana Investment Promotion Council's (GIPC's) focus and structure to adapt to the existing dynamics in the local market as well as work for foreigners. When asked "what can District Assemblies and government do to help LED businesses", he responded that LED businesses should not expect much from either the District Assemblies in their current form nor from government because Parliamentary Sub-Committees mimic the Executive arm of Government. Therefore if there is no Minister of Business then it follows that most likely there can be no Parliamentary Sub-committee that will work in the interest of business.

8. Group Analysis & Collation: Plenary Review of Group Discussions

Participants continued the discussions in two (2) working groups representing the Public and Private Sectors. Group 1 deliberated on Public Sector and Group 2 on Private Sector in support of LED. Both groups were provided with the following guidelines:

1. What has Public/Private Sector done?
2. Why is it not working?
3. How can Public/Private Sector make it work?

8.1 Group 1

Following their deliberations on the Public Sector, members of the group reported as follows:

Question 1: What has Public Sector done?

- a) The public sector has formulated various policies and interventions towards LED such as the NBSSI, GRATIS project, REP, PSI, LED policy framework and LED manual
- b) The public sector has trained key actors

- c) The Public Sector has mainstreamed LED in all national plans and budgets
 - d) It has strengthened regulatory bodies
4. Question 2: Why is it not working?
- a) LED is not working because it has been done on a pilot rather than full scale implementation as such the effects/benefits have not been felt
 - b) The implementation approaches adopted are not sustainable
 - c) There have been resource challenges (financial & human)
 - d) The attitude of leaders has been negative
 - e) Poor awareness of LED initiatives
 - f) Lack of political will at the level of local governance
 - g) Lack of coordination and cohesive approach leading to duplication and subsequently the full effect is lost
 - h) Lack of local ownership, participation and accountability
5. Question 3: How can Public Sector make it work?
- a) Effective coordination among all the institutions responsible for local development
 - b) Regional and local presence of supportive institutions
 - c) Inclusion and continuous engagement between government and private sector to ensure feedback
 - d) Create awareness
 - e) Address the bottlenecks
 - f) Engage the Private Sector

8.2 Group 2

The group discussed the Private Sector and concluded as follows:

Question 1: What has private sector done?

- a) Private Sector has successfully identified areas for initiatives
- b) The sector has created jobs at the local level
- c) It has successfully liaised with District Assemblies and District Chief Executives to implement certain LED initiatives
- d) It has improved the revenue generation opportunities at the local level

Question 2: Why has it not worked?

- a) The Ghanaian attitude and mindset
- b) Business management skills are not recognized
- c) Not taking advantage of available business development services
- d) Lack of information about policy, standardization and other opportunities
- e) Poor access to factors of production (land, potable water etc.)

Question 3: How can the Private sector make it work?

- a) A change in the mindset of public and private sector actors
- b) The need to have local leaders elected so that they are accountable
- c) Decentralization of public institutions
- d) Reduction in the cost of doing business through segregation of taxes, fees & charges etc.
- e) Simplification in the steps of certification, registration and other processes
- f) Promotion of business advocacy and lobbying
- g) Creation of the factors of production (land banks etc.)

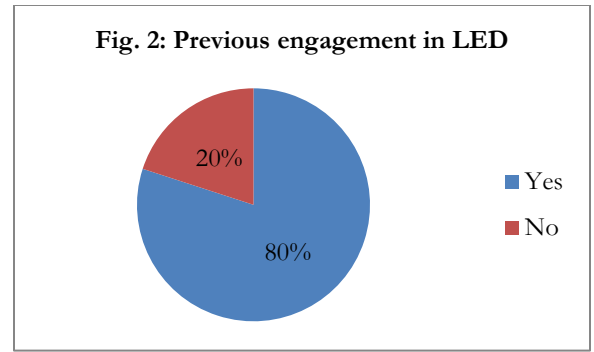
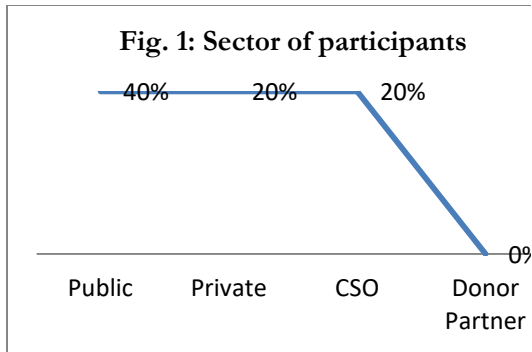
It is noteworthy that Group two deviated in addressing question 3, listing for the most part how public sector can make it work, rather than how private sector can make it work . This raises the question whether it may be a reflection of a dependency mindset of the private sector on government?

9. Surveys

Two surveys were administered: Pre and post event survey.

9.1 Pre-event survey

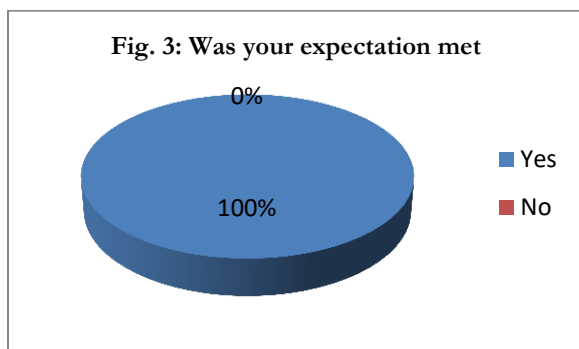
The purpose of the pre-event survey was to gauge the understanding of participants on the concept of LED, whether they have had any engagement in LED and their expectations before the programme began. Figure 1 and 2 shows the sector from which the participant came and previous engagement in LED respectively.



80% of participants had had prior engagements in LED, while 20% had no previous engagement. Those who had previous engagement in LED were mainly as a result of working on a number of local development issues. Two of the respondents were involved in the development of Ghana’s LED policy; one had worked on LED as part of the district medium term development plan at the Ketu South Municipality and three had engaged LED as part of working for NGOs. Unsurprisingly, the 80% who had previous engagement in LED had an appreciable level of understanding of LED while that of the rest appeared to be low. Participants had various expectations of the roundtable discussion. They include: (a) to have a clear understanding of LED, (b) to reshape the current LED policy, (c) to know how best to implement LED differently in Ghana, among others. These expectations clearly show the the interest and seriousness of the participants about LED.

9.1 Post-event survey

The post event survey was conducted to find out if participants’ expectations were met and to suggest ways that could improve the next roundtable discussion. As shown in figure 3, all participants indicated that their expectations were met.



Some of the expectations that were met include: (a) attained much understanding of LED and LED interventions in Ghana, (b) this platform

will help address the challenges of local businesses, (c) they have got to know some institutions that can support their LED initiatives. Figure 4 and 5 below shows participants ratings of the organisation and content of the event. These responses demonstrated that participants felt very enlightened and appreciative of the event.

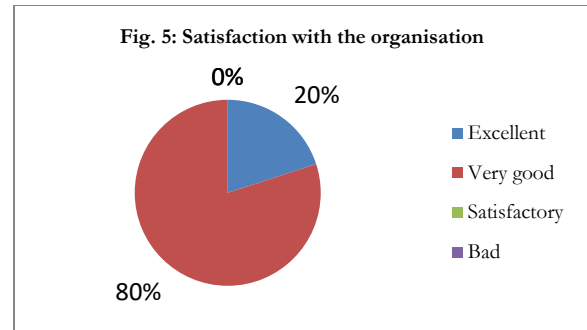
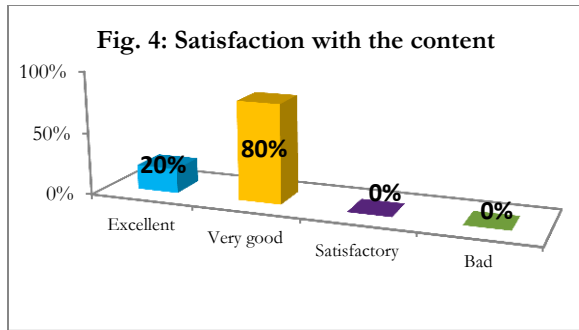


Figure 4 illustrates that 20% of participants scored the content of the event as excellent and 80% scored it as very good. No participant scored the content as satisfactory or bad. Similarly, in Figure 5, 20% of participants thought the event was excellently organized, while 80% rated the organization as very good. No participant rated organization as satisfactory or bad.

Several suggestions were made that could help make the next roundtable discussion even more successful and beneficial. These include the invitation of more participants from all sectors and especially SMEs to share their ideas, experiences, challenges and benefit from the discussion, the need to bring in people in government who are directly in charge of LED to listen to concerns of the private sector, and allocate more time for discussions even if it means two days. One participant advocated for the commissioning of a nation-wide LED study so that the findings can be discussed in the next roundtable. Overall, findings from this survey suggests that the program was a success and participants really benefited from it.

10. Summation of Event and Next Steps

The concept of LED, though important, is elusive to the extent that it represents a number of viable initiatives that can be taken at the local level to revive the local economy, provide jobs for the poor, women and the young. LED recognizes inclusivity and multi-stakeholder participation, with the objective of creating and promoting decent work. The private sector has a key role to play as an engine of growth and employment creation, not only at the national but also at the local level. The private sector is a big driver of change. The private sector can launch LED initiatives to support and complement local governments' entrepreneurship promotion programs and together, create an enabling business environment that balances economic and social wellbeing.

Ghana has over the years engaged in minimum level of LED and mechanisms are gradually being put into place to support the emerging reality of LED. These ranges from the decentralization policy, the GRATIS project, NBSSI, REP, presidential special initiatives, ILO, UNDP and GIZ supported activities. As part of LED, the REP aims at improving the livelihood and income of the rural

poor, micro and small entrepreneurs with the developmental objective to increase the number of businesses that generate income, growth and employment opportunities. Indeed, government has shown its commitment by formulating the national LED policy and the LED manual for District Assemblies. The implementation of the LED policy is supposed to fully harness the economic potentials of the districts for job creation, greater poverty reduction and sustainable livelihoods.

The resounding sentiment among all participants was that the inclusion of the private sector in LED will stimulate robust and inclusive growth and the development of local economics. Therefore, it was recommended that incorporating the private sector into the LED requires a paradigm shift in the national LED policy and a legal backing.

Summarizing the proceedings, CEO of Shear Power Ventures reiterated the 12-month timeline for conducting the Roundtable discussions and outlined the next steps as well as the way forward. She indicated that the information gathered would be collated and a core group will be constituted from each session to drive the subsequent processes. Ms. Ewradwoa Christian said SPV was committed to maintaining constant exchanges with all participants and stakeholders, and disclosed that the next roundtable will be held in March 2017 with a different set of participants so as to achieve a broad based consultation. Delivering the closing remarks and vote of thanks, the Board Chairperson of NBSSI, Mrs. Peace Judith George restated the need for a strong advocacy group, an enabling environment, reduced cost of borrowing, and simplified processes of certification as necessary prerequisites for a vibrant LED to thrive.

11. Conclusion

LED presents enormous opportunity for private sector investment in Ghana's energy, transport, forestry, industry and agricultural sectors. Globally, the private sector is increasingly becoming a major stakeholder in LED. Indeed, there has been a revival of interest in the private sector largely due to its increased size and its contribution to efforts that seek to address the challenges of development such as poverty reduction, unemployment and economic development. The private sector is critical to unlocking the potential of localities. The private sector has particular competencies which can make unique contributions to LED through finance, market knowledge, expertise, innovation, and technology. The inclusion of the private sector in LED will stimulate robust and inclusive growth and the development of local economics. It is therefore recommended that (a) central and local governments work in collaboration with the private sector to unlock the potential and transform the local economy into a vibrant and dynamic one; (b) central and local governments provides the enabling environment for private sector participation in local economies; (c) central and local governments make deliberate policies

aimed to attract foreign investors that can operate at the local level; (d) put in place a LED Fund (LEDF) that would support the private sector operating at the local level; (e) local governments should prepare Investment Guides to showcase the immense potentials in their localities; (f) the private sector should contact local governments for investment opportunities in their localities; and (g) central government should come out with a legal backing for private sector participation in LED.

Appendix I: Speakers

1. James Kwame Mensah

James Kwame Mensah (PhD, MPhil & BA) is a development researcher and consultant with invaluable expertise. With a background in Development Administration, Public Administration, and Sociology with Political Science, Dr. Mensah has demonstrable understanding and appreciable knowledge of issues concerning local economic development, poverty, development management, public management, local government, organizational development, policy evaluation, human resource management and talent management. He has consulted for organizations such as Center for Poverty Policy Studies (CENPOPS), Ecumenical Association for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (ECASARD), Microfinance and Small Loans Center (MASLOC) and Africa Institute of Management Science (AIMS). Dr. Mensah has publications in peer-reviewed and reputable academic journals such as *International of Productivity and Performance Management*, *Management Research Review*, *Journal of Public Administration and Governance*, *International Journal of Manpower*, *Journal of African Studies and Development*, among others.

2. Kwami Edem Senanu

Mr. Kwami Edem Senanu is a Management and Development Consultant who has twenty years working experience with fifteen years post-qualification experience in providing consulting and training services. He holds a Project Management Professional (PMP) certification from the Project Management Institute – USA, a Masters in Development Management (MDM) private sector/business specialization from the Ghana Institute for Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) and a BSc in Biochemistry and Food Science from the University of Ghana. His general areas of expertise are Research and Assessments, Governance, Citizen Government Engagement and Social Accountability, Public Policy Advocacy, Local Economic Development, Business Management and Development. Mr. Senanu was the National Project Coordinator for the UNDP Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Project from 2007 – 2011. He was the lead facilitator for the National Local Economic Development Technical Committee/Working Group from 2010 – 2013. This team worked to produce the LED Policy for Ghana as well as its operational manual. He has contributed and led the production of several development and governance reports in Ghana. Currently he is the Executive Director for Africa 2000 Network, Ghana and is the Managing Consulting for Alpha Primus Ltd.

3. David Ofosu-Dorte

David Ofosu-Dorte (Esq.) is Senior Partner – AB & David. He founded AB & David in Ghana in 1998 and has grown it to become a pan-African law firm with ability to assist clients in 23 African countries through its branches, affiliates and best friends network firms. In 2014, the firm earned distinction as the first African law firm to be awarded the Lexcel accreditation by the Law Society of England and Wales. Lexcel is a mark of the highest standard in law practice. In 2015 and 2016 the firm won the Legal Week's African Legal Awards "African Law Firm of the Year: Small Practice" two times in a row. His extensive work on advising businesses in Africa also led to a CNN interview on doing business in Africa. He was also recognized in Nigeria for his insights on Africa business and between 2012 and 2014 he served as the non-Nigerian committee member on the National Competitiveness Council in Nigeria (NCCN).

Appendix II: List of Participants

| PARTICIPANTS | | | PARTICIPANTS | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Name | Organisation | Designation | Name | Organisation | Designation |
| George Afriyie | REP | Dev't Officer | Daniel Mends | Dannes Ent | CEO/NBSSI Client |
| David Pessey | E & D Associates | NBSSI BOD | Joejo Wodow-Hammond | CalBank | Credit Manager |
| Obed Danquah | Morgan International Community School | Founder | Roseline Ashigbui | Delchris Ventures | CEO |
| Kwaku Adjei-Fosu | NDPC | Deputy Director Ag. Regional Manageress | Michael Kissi Boateng | NDPC | Plan Assistant |
| Philomina Dsane | NBSSI | | Nanahemaa Awindor | AQWCLN | Continental Board Chairperson |
| Hon. Abla Dzifa Gomashie | AQWCLN | Ghana President | Alfred Anatsui | Premier Production | Production Manager |
| Dzordzie Klu | Tuurosun Enterprise | NBSSI Client | Zainab Ballans | Tuurosun Enterprise | NBSSI Client |
| Joe Tackie | PSDS/MOTI | CEO | Ziblim Alhassan | GFZB | Head of Administration |
| Kwadwo Twum Boafo | GFZB | Executive Secretary | Grace Ofori-Amoako | Grace Foods | CEO |
| Innocent Adamadu | AIFASSOD | President | Daniel Austin | ECG | Ag. Manager |
| KE Senanu | Africa 2000 Network | Executive Director | Stanley Martey | GWCL | Director, PR/Communications |
| Mangowa Ghanney | Ministry of Finance | Director, Legal Dept. | Shirley Quist Thompson | Shear Power Ventures | Director of Operations |
| Joseph Ankamah | Local Govt. Services Secretariat | Head, PA | | | |
| ORGANIZER/ FACILITATOR | | | FACILITATOR | | |
| Ewradwoa Buahema Christian | Shear Power Ventures | Organiser/ Co-Facilitator | Fiiifi Baidoo | KBJ Consultancy | Facilitator |
| RAPPORTEUR | | | | | |
| Jeannette Quarcoopome | Qinnovate | Rapporteur | | | |
| SPEAKERS | | | | | |
| Dr. James K. Mensah | UPSA/UGBS | Researcher/ Consultant | David Ofosu-Dorte (Esq) | AB & David | Snr. Partner |
| Kwame E. Senanu | Africa 2000 Network | Executive Director | George Afriyie | REP | Institutional Development Officer |

Appendix III: Program for First LED Roundtable Discussions

| ACTIVITY | DURATION | RESOURCE |
|--|---------------|--------------------------|
| Arrival and registration of participants | 8:00 – 8:30 | Admin |
| Welcome Address and Introduction of the event | 8:30 – 8:40 | Shear Power Ventures |
| Introduction of participants and icebreaker | 8:40 – 8:55 | Facilitator/Participants |
| Presentation 1: LED: From the global to the Ghanaian perspective | 9:00 – 9:10 | Dr. J. K. Mensah |
| Plenary: Q & A: Discussion | 9:10 – 9:30 | Facilitator |
| Presentation 2: LED and Private Sector: An endeavour of mutual benefits | 9:30 – 9:40 | Dr. J. K. Mensah |
| Plenary: Q & A: Discussions | 9:40 – 10:00 | Facilitator |
| Address | 10:00 – 10:05 | Key sponsor - GFZB |
| B R E A K: 10:15 – 10:30 | | |
| Summary of key issues | 10:30 – 10:35 | Facilitator |
| Presentation 3: The LED Policy in Ghana | 10:35–10:45 | Mr. K. E. Senanu |
| Plenary: Q & A: Discussions | 10:45 – 11:00 | Facilitator |
| Presentation 4: The Rural Enterprise Program (1994-2016):A Case Specific LED Initiative | 11:00 – 11:10 | George Afriyie |
| Plenary: Q & A: Discussions | 11:10 – 11:15 | Facilitator |
| Presentation 5: Pro-growth LED: Leveraging impact through the Private Sector. | 11:15 – 11:30 | David Ofosu-Dorte (Esq.) |
| Plenary: Q&A: Discussions | 11:30 – 11:40 | Facilitator |
| Group Analyses & Collation | 11:40 – 12:10 | Facilitator |
| Plenary review of group discussions | 12:10 – 12:30 | Facilitator |
| L U N C H: 12:30 – 13:00 | | |
| Summation of Event and next steps | 13:00 – 13:15 | Shear Power Ventures |
| Closing remarks & Vote of Thanks | 13:15 – 13:30 | NBSSI BOD Chair |

Appendix IV: Welcome Address

Good morning ladies and gentlemen. May I take this opportunity to welcome you all to this intensive Roundtable event and thank you for honouring our invitation. My name is Shirley Quist-Thompson and I am Director of Operations at Shear Power Ventures; the organizers of this event. Today's event is the first of a series of four scheduled to take place within 12 months. Our goal is to advocate a more central role for private sector in the planning and implementation of Local Economic Development; and to facilitate stronger partnerships between the key stakeholders; namely, Local government, private sector, donor organizations, civil society organizations, and NGO's. Emerging economies such as China, India, and South Africa, have been on a steady trajectory of growth and development due to deliberate actions taken through integrated partnerships between government, private sector, community-based organizations, NGOs and some donor partners. The important role that private sector has played to buoy localities and livelihoods in these economies cannot be over-emphasized.

In Ghana today, while LED has been pursued over decades as a key solution to reducing poverty in communities and promoting growth, its impact has indeed been too feeble to propel Ghana into a competitive, robust, pro-growth economy in the global marketplace. And that is why you and I are here today. To review what we currently have, and to think through how best to help accelerate Ghana's development process through LED to maximize mutual benefits.

Shear Power Ventures is a development oriented small Ghanaian company committed to facilitating change and development in organizations and communities. We want to express our sincere gratitude to the Ghana Free Zones Board, Rural Enterprise Program, and NBSSI who readily partnered this event to help see it through the expected end; and also to all the resource persons here with us. We encourage you to roll up your sleeves, relax, and let's get to work in an orderly, informal, and productive atmosphere. I hope you enjoy every bit of this experience. Once again, on behalf of the CEO of Shear Power Ventures, Ewradwoa Buahema Christian and myself, welcome and thank you for coming.

Appendix V: Presentations

PowerPoint Presentations used at the event are available and will be emailed upon request.

THANK YOU