OPEN ACCESS

Article

Evaluating local governance efficiency through decentralization: Insights from Kenema District Council

Mohamed Yusuf[1], Emmanuel Dauda[2], Vandy Justice Boima Gebeh[3]

[1] Njala University, Department of Peace and Development Studies, Freetown, Sierra Leone
[2] Njala University, Institute of Social Studies, Administration and Management, Freetown, Sierra Leone
[3] Njala University, School of Postgraduate Studies, Freetown, Sierra Leone

Abstract

This study examines how effectively decentralization improves local governance and service delivery in Kenema District, Sierra Leone, focusing on the Kenema District Council (KDC). Its aim is to assess whether the decentralization framework has strengthened local government and made service delivery more responsive and effective. The study employed a quantitative approach and was conducted in four chiefdoms: Nongowa, Lower Bambara, Dodo, and Small Bo. A total of 240 respondents (60 from each chiefdom) participated in a structured survey covering key topics like service delivery, local governance, revenue generation, capacity constraints, and citizen participation. Most respondents indicated that infrastructure and accessibility had improved, especially road networks and public building development, though challenges remain. Issues such as corruption, lack of tax transparency, low revenue, and limited public engagement continue to persist. A significant 68.3% of residents in Dodo Chiefdom identified lack of tax knowledge as a major problem. Over 70% of residents in Nongowa and Small Bo cited corruption as the main reason for not paying taxes. Capacity issues were also noted, with 71.7% of Lower Bambara and 65% of Small Bo residents mentioning low responsiveness and monitoring as obstacles to effective service delivery. The report recommends a comprehensive approach that includes better community education on taxes, stronger monitoring and accountability measures, equitable tax education, and training for local government officials. Implementing these steps is crucial for improving decentralization and supporting local development in Kenema and beyond.

Introduction

Studies on decentralization and how it affects local governance services have become essential, particularly in emerging and post-conflict nations like Sierra Leone. Decentralization is the process by which authority, funds, and duties are transferred from national governments to local organizations to increase responsiveness, efficiency, and accountability in service provision. Since the Local Government Act of 2004, which reinstated local government structures two years after the terrible civil war in the country, reform has been essential in Sierra Leone. By bringing governance closer to the people, this act was intended to strengthen local governments and promote development (Srivastava & Larizza, 2013).

Corresponding Author Mohamed Yusuf ✉ Njala University, Department of Peace and Development Studies, Freetown, Sierra Leone

This case study concerns one of Sierra Leone's most important governmental entities, the Kenema District Council (KDC). The Eastern Province's Kenema District offers a distinct socioeconomic and political environment marked by both the possibility of development and major obstacles, including a lack of funding, inadequate institutional strength, and a track record of political unrest (Fanthorpe & Gabelle, 2013). The Eastern Province's Kenema District offers a distinct socioeconomic and political environment marked by major obstacles and growth opportunities, including scarce financial resources, a lackluster institutional framework, and a history of political unrest (Fanthorpe & Gabelle, 2013).

Although decentralization holds theoretical potential, data from the Kenema District indicate that results have been uneven. Local councils, such as KDC, are in a better position to deal with particular local challenges, but their ability to provide services efficiently is sometimes hindered by a lack of funding, shoddy administrative practices, and low levels of public participation (Mansaray & Jalloh, 2021). Understanding the effects of Kenema's decentralisation on service delivery is essential to evaluate whether the objectives of this governance reform in enhancing development outcomes and empowering local communities have been achieved. The study's conclusions offer insights and recommendations for improving local governance and service delivery in contexts similar to Sierra Leone and other post-conflict regions.

Decentralization in Sierra Leone

The government in Sierra Leone became more centralised in 1972 when local councils were disbanded to consolidate power and destroy what was seen as a platform for breeding new grassroots political elites. Though some town councils continued to function, their effectiveness and programs were remotely controlled by the central government. This was a big blow to decentralisation. This made it hard for people in the area to get good service and representation. After the civil war, the government brought back decentralisation via the Local Government Act of 2004, which set up elected local councils. This approach was meant to promote local governance, peacebuilding, and development by giving communities more power and making people more responsible at the local level. Decentralisation as a way to change how government works aims to make decisions participatory, make public services better, and make local governments more accountable (Shah & Shah, 2022). Decentralisation helps close the gap in development by giving local governments greater power and responsibility. It also gives local populations more say in how things are run (Bahl & Smoke, 2021).

Since the end of its civil war in 2002, Sierra Leone has made a lot of changes to its governance and politics. Decentralisation has been a big part of these changes, which are meant to make government more democratic and services better at the local level (Booth & Cammack, 2022). The Local Government Act of 2004 set up the basis for decentralisation. It gave local councils, such as the Kenema District Council, more power over local development and service delivery (Morris & Moyo, 2020). Despite these reforms, challenges remain in the effective implementation of decentralization. Issues such as inadequate financial resources, capacity constraints, and limited technical skills undermine the effectiveness of local governance (Peters, 2021). The decentralization process in Sierra Leone has faced criticism for not achieving the desired improvements in service delivery, with concerns over the operational capacity of local councils and their ability to manage devolved functions effectively (Gberevbie, 2022).

Kenema District Council and Decentralization

Kenema District, situated in the Eastern Province of Sierra Leone, is essential for examining the effects of decentralisation on local governance. The District ranks among the largest in the nation, and the Council has multiple responsibilities, encompassing education, health, and the rehabilitation of feeder roads and other infrastructure (Kandeh, 2021). The Kenema District Council currently wields considerable influence over these obligations as a result of the decentralisation initiative. This is expected to improve the effectiveness and responsiveness of service delivery.

The Kenema District Council has encountered difficulties in executing its devolved responsibilities. The Council has encountered difficulties in delivering services promptly due to issues such as insufficient funding, inadequate resources, and a shortage of personnel (Sesay, 2022). The efficacy of decentralisation in Kenema is contingent upon the political climate and the level of community engagement in local governance (Kamara & Koroma, 2023).

Some studies indicate that decentralisation has improved local governance, however the impact on service delivery remains ambiguous. Research indicates that the efficacy of decentralisation is contingent upon factors such as the autonomy of local governments, the adequacy of their resources, and the competence of their leadership (Foster & Anderson, 2021). Examining these features in Kenema can elucidate the impact of decentralisation on service delivery in practice.

Theoretical Framework on Decentralization

In examining how decentralization affects local governance service delivery in Kenema, particularly in regard to the Kenema District Council (KDC), this study incorporates several significant theories that explain the relationship between decentralization and the results of service delivery

Decentralization Theory

Decentralization theory forms the foundation of this research, highlighting the redistribution of power and responsibilities from central authorities to local governments. According to Agrawal and Ribot (2014), decentralization improves local governance by promoting responsiveness and accountability in the provision of services. This theory consists of three main components:

- **Political Decentralization** allows local governments to incorporate community needs and preferences into their decision-making processes (Faguet, 2014). This aspect is particularly important in Kenema, as local representation can lead to more customized and effective services.
- **Administrative Decentralization** refers to the transfer of responsibilities to local institutions, thereby enhancing their ability to manage public services effectively (Smoke, 2015). The capacity of the KDC to oversee service provision depends on this administrative empowerment.
- **Fiscal Decentralization** entails the distribution of financial resources and revenue-generating powers to local governments, enabling them to provide services effectively (Jibao & Prichard, 2020). This element emphasizes the necessity for the KDC to secure sufficient funding to adequately serve the community.

Theory of Public Administration

The theory of public administration emphasizes how crucial governance frameworks and procedures are to the efficient provision of public services. According to Ranson (2016), successful governance depends on a number of essential elements:

- The KDC's efficiency is determined by how successfully it uses its resources to provide services (Olowu & Wunsch, 2019). According to the hypothesis, raising operational effectiveness can have a direct positive impact on service quality.
- Accountability studies the procedures that make local governments answerable to the people they represent (UNDP, 2021). Building trust and encouraging involvement between the KDC and the community depends on this.
- Openness in decision-making procedures is emphasized by transparency, allowing the public to comprehend how the KDC distributes its resources (Jibao, 2021). Greater public participation and trust can result from increased transparency.

Theory of Social Capital

According to social capital theory, relationships and social networks promote teamwork and collective effort, which are necessary for efficient government. Putnam (2016) draws attention to the following areas in which social capital is important:

- Community Engagement, which encourages local participation in governance processes and creates accountability and ownership (Olowu, 2020). The community's active involvement in service delivery can be advantageous to the KDC.
- The degree of trust that exists between citizens and local governments is referred to as "trust and cooperation," as it fosters better collaboration (Agrawal, 2021). Establishing trust is essential to efficient governance and service delivery.
- Collective Action highlights the capacity of communities to band together and speak out for their needs, thereby affecting the priorities of local administration (Olowu & Wunsch, 2019). This underscores the importance of community agency in the KDC's operations.

Literature Review

There is a lot of disagreement in the literature over whether decentralization has improved Kenema's local governance service delivery. In terms of effectiveness and results, some researchers have discovered contradictory results. Numerous scholars contend that Kenema's municipal administrations are now more responsive and accountable as a result of decentralization. Jibao and Prichard's (2015) research, for instance, discovered that decentralization increased local revenue collection through taxes and service fees, giving the local government more funding to perform services. Building schools or enhancing waste management systems are two examples of community demands that the local council was perceived as more responsive to, given its closer relationships with the local populace (Jibao & Prichard, 2015). Similarly, Koroma (2017) emphasized how decentralized governance, particularly in Kenema's rural districts, has improved local health and education facilities. Teachers and medical personnel expressed greater levels of satisfaction because the local government was able to respond to problems more quickly and distribute resources more wisely.

Some researchers, on the other hand, say that decentralisation in Kenema hasn't always led to better service delivery. They point to structural concerns such a lack of financial independence, corruption, and a lack of capacity (Kabia & Gbla, 2016). Conteh and Sesay (2020) found that local governments have increased responsibilities, yet they often don't have the resources or skills they need to do their jobs well. For instance, several initiatives were hurt by political favouritism and bad handling of funds, which made it harder to provide services, notably in the health and education sectors.BKabia and Gbla (2016) also say that Kenema hasn't had any fiscal decentralisation yet, and that local governments still rely heavily on intermittent and insufficient transfers from the national government. The local government can't do its job of providing services since it can't keep its finances stable. Fanthorpe's (2020) research shows that decentralisation has sometimes made service delivery more unequal between urban and rural parts in the district, with rural areas sometimes being ignored because they don't have the resources or political power.

Although the literature offers insightful information about the achievements and difficulties of decentralization in Kenema, we contend that the larger political and socioeconomic environment in which decentralization takes place has a significant impact on how successful decentralization is. Decentralization should, in theory, strengthen local governments and enhance service delivery; however, in reality, a lot relies on local capability, governance frameworks, and resource availability. Simply transferring power isn't enough; additional resources needs to be set aside for anti-corruption programs, capacity building, and financial management systems. Kenema's decentralisation has shown some promise, especially when it comes to community involvement. However, if decentralisation is to work in the long run, systemic problems like corruption and dependency on the central government for resources must be fixed.

Future developments should focus on making local governments more financially independent, making local politicians more qualified, and making sure that central and local governments work together better. To hold local governments accountable and make sure that services continue to meet the needs of everyone, especially those in rural areas, it is also important to increase citizen engagement and civil society participation. A complicated picture is painted by how well decentralization has improved service delivery in Kenema during the last ten years. Even if local administration and service delivery have significantly improved most notably in terms of responsiveness and accountability there are still many obstacles to overcome. The body of research makes clear that decentralization is not a cure-all; strong governance frameworks, financial empowerment, and capacity building are all necessary in addition to decentralization. In Kenema, these problems must be resolved if decentralization is to live up to its promise of bettering the lives of local residents.

Method

The study, titled "Evaluating Local Governance Efficiency through Decentralisation: Insights from Kenema District Council," used a quantitative research method to look into how decentralisation has affected local governance, with a focus on community involvement, service delivery, and administrative effectiveness. The study took place in four chiefdoms in Kenema District: Small Bo, Lower Bambara, Nongowa, and Dodo. These chiefdoms were chosen because they are actively involved in local government and are important to the district's social and economic growth. They represent a mix of urban and rural settings,

offering diverse perspectives on decentralization practices and outcomes. There were 240 people that took the survey, with 60 from each of the four chiefdoms. The criteria for inclusion were people who had lived in the chiefdoms since the Local Government Act of 2004 went into effect and had worked in important governance bodies like chiefdom administration offices, Ward Development Committees (WDCs), Local Council, and Constituency Development Committees (CDCs). This method of purposive sampling made sure that the people who took part had enough knowledge and experience with changes to local government throughout time.

A systematic questionnaire was used to gather data. It had both closed-ended and Likert-scale questions that asked people how they felt about the effectiveness, obstacles, and outcomes of decentralisation. The questionnaire asked questions about things like accountability, openness, citizen participation, service delivery, and how well ward committees did their jobs. We used quantitative methods to carefully look at the data. Microsoft Excel was the main tool we used to organise, interpret, and show the results. We assigned each questionnaire a number code based on the different variables we were looking at. These included how people thought about the efficiency of service delivery, how responsive local councils were, how involved people were in Ward Development Committees (WDCs), and how much community needs were taken into account when making decisions. We counted the closed-ended answers and turned them into percentages and frequency distributions. This gave us a clear picture of the most common opinions in the chosen chiefdoms.

Using Excel made it easy to quickly make graphs that compared chiefdoms and showed how people's views on governance varied from place to place. For example, Nongowa and Lower Bambara were happier with how quickly the local council responded, but Small Bo and Dodo were more worried about elite power and the lack of transparency. The visualisation methods used were very useful for showing how public opinion is complicated and how the results of governance vary depending on where you are. After that, these patterns were utilised to figure out how well decentralisation works and what its limits are when it comes to making local government in Kenema District more efficient.

Research Findings

Improved Infrastructure and Accessibility

Decentralisation has allowed KDC to emphasise the advancement of local infrastructure. With assistance from development partners such as the European Union (EU), the Council has restored feeder roads, built more than 40 culverts and bridges, and enhanced transportation connections to rural agricultural areas (European Union Delegation to Sierra Leone, 2024). These initiatives have augmented market access for farmers and facilitated transportation throughout the rainy season, which was before a significant obstacle. The chart below illustrates respondents view on improved infrastructure, taking into consideration the dominant theme selected in each chiefdom.

An examination of the responses from the four chiefdoms indicates diverse perceptions of enhanced infrastructure, shaped by local circumstances. In Nongowa 42 out of 60 responses, signifying a 70% engagement rate, which suggests favourable participation, attributed to noticeable infrastructural enhancements like roads, health facilities, and educational institutions. Lower Bambara had 33 respondents (55%), indicating moderate satisfaction

potentially linked to targeted developmental advancements. Small Bo, with 29 (48.3%), indicates increasing apprehensions around insufficient or inadequately maintained infrastructure. Dodo exhibited the lowest involvement, receiving merely 21 replies (35%), signifying unhappiness or disconnection, likely resulting from ongoing infrastructural neglect.
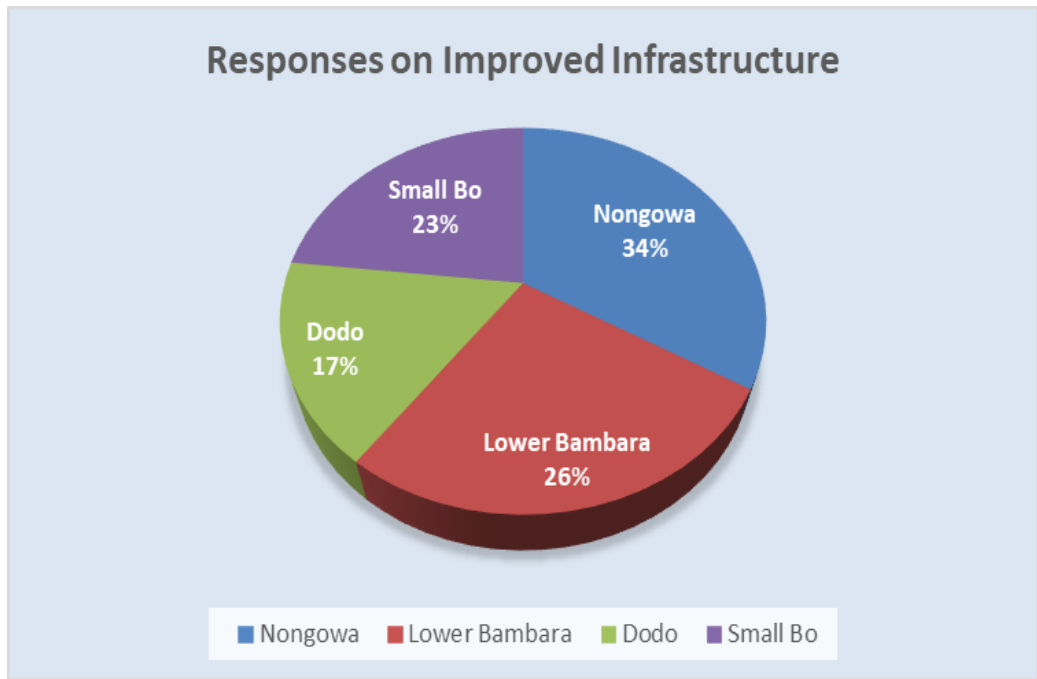

Figure 1. Field Data, 2025

Enhanced Public Service Delivery

Decentralising service delivery has made fundamental services like markets, water, and sanitation better. Building a new market in Tongo Field, a better health facility in Panguma, a multipurpose community centre in Blama, culverts and new bridges in Dodo and clean water facilities in some rural areas have all made life better and boosted the economy (UNCDF, 2023). These services also bring in revenue for the council, which helps it stay financially stable. Figure two shows respondent's views on general service delivery in the study areas.

Of the 60 people who participated in the survey in each chiefdom, 39 (65%) from Nongowa said that service delivery has gotten better, especially in building roads, healthcare, and schools. Lower Bambara had 31 respondents (51.7%), who said that health services and communication had improved a little, but there were still not enough recreational facilities or good roads. Small Bo had 23 responses (38.3%), which shows that education and road networks have improved a little, but health and recreation services are still hard to get to. Dodo had the lowest perception, with only 18 respondents (30%) saying that things had gotten better. They said that problems with cell phone connectivity, healthcare, and roads still exist. The results reveal that service delivery has been better in some areas, but it still needs to be more fair and complete.
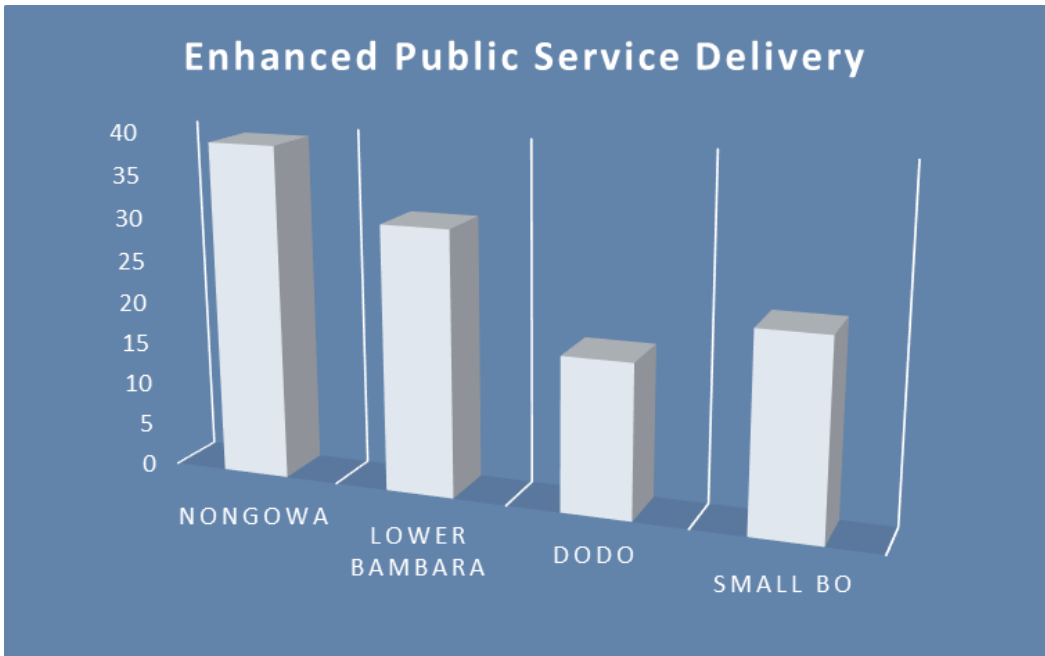
Figure 2. Field Data, 2025

Establishment and Strengthening of Ward Development Committees (WDCs)

The Ward Development Committee plays a crucial role in the decentralized governmental framework of Sierra Leone. It links local communities with the District Council. The establishment and enhancement of WDCs in Kenema have been crucial for advancing participatory governance. These committees, composed of elected and community-nominated members, are responsible for assessing community needs, monitoring service delivery, and relaying information to the council for action. Non-governmental organisations and donor partners have assisted Women's Development Committees in Kenema in project organisation, monitoring, and educating citizens about their rights and obligations (Government of Sierra Leone, 2022). This has increased public interest in participating in the council's decision-making processes. Despite attempts to enhance the efficacy of WDCs, significant issues persist that hinder their capacity to facilitate local development. The figure below illustrates the perceptions of survey respondents regarding the reasons behind the ineffectiveness of WDCs.

A comparison of the reasons why Ward Development Committees (WDCs) are not effective in four chiefdoms shows that different places have different views and institutional limitations. In Nongowa Chiefdom, 28 of the 60 people who answered (46.7%) said that the main reason WDCs weren't successful was because committee members didn't have enough skills. This shows that there are problems with the training, technical abilities, and administrative skills needed to promote development at the local level. In Lower Bambara Chiefdom, 38 out of 60 respondents (63.3%) said that ward councillors making all the decisions was the biggest problem. Respondents said that councillors control the development agenda, which keeps committee members from participating in a meaningful way and makes planning from the ground up harder. In Dodo Chiefdom, which has bad roads, a weak mobile network, and not enough social infrastructure, 45 people (75%) said that corruption was the biggest

problem with the WDCs. This shows that many people think there is mismanagement and a lack of openness, which makes the already bad developmental scenario even worse. In Small Bo Chiefdom, 30 of the 60 people who answered (50%) said that the main problem was the politicisation of development. Political meddling, competition, and party loyalty were said to affect development priorities, which often hurt community cohesion and progress. These results show that WDCs need specific policy and institutional changes right away to make them more active and encourage local government that includes everyone.
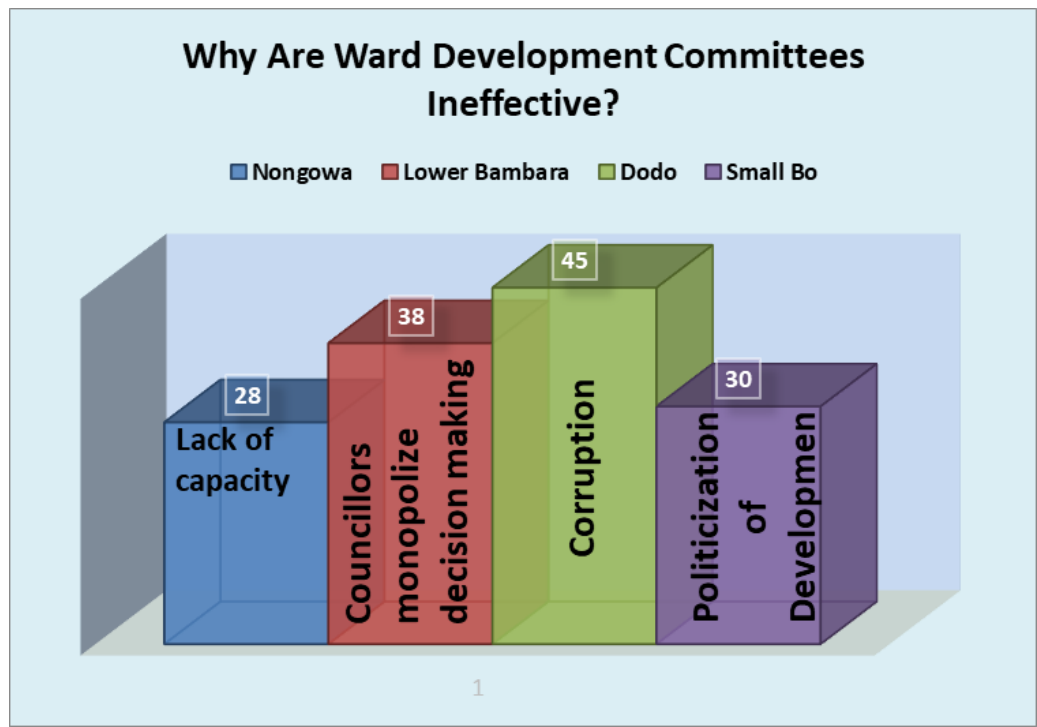

Figure 3. Field Data, 2025

Weak Revenue Generation and Financial Dependence

KDC is having trouble with its own-source revenue, even though it continues to strive for growth. Many residents don't know what their property tax obligations are or don't trust how the revenue is spent (IGR, 2021). Because of this, the Council relies primarily on funds coming from the central government and donors, which often comes late and delays the start of development projects (World Bank, 2021). We asked residents in the four chiefdoms why they don't want to pay taxes.

The comparative study of the four chiefdoms shows that people refuse to pay taxes for different reasons, with corruption and lack of knowledge being the most common. In Small Bo Chiefdom, 33 out of 60 people (55%) said corruption was the main reason. This is probably because the area is semi-urban, so people are more aware of how the council works and when it doesn't do its job. In Dodo, the least developed of the four, 41 out of 60 respondents (68.3%) said they didn't pay their taxes because they didn't know enough about them. They said they only knew about municipal taxes and didn't know about property or commodities taxes.

Lower Bambara found that 36 out of 60 respondents (60%) blamed insufficient tax revenue on poor awareness-raising efforts. This shows that most sensitisation programs only focus on urban regions, leaving rural groups in the dark. In Nongowa Chiefdom, 44 out of 60 respondents (73.3%) also said that corruption is a problem, saying that their taxes don't lead to real progress, which is why they think it's pointless to pay them. Overall, the results show that there is a gap between taxes, accountability, and providing public services. This is made worse by unequal access to civic education and neglect in rural areas.
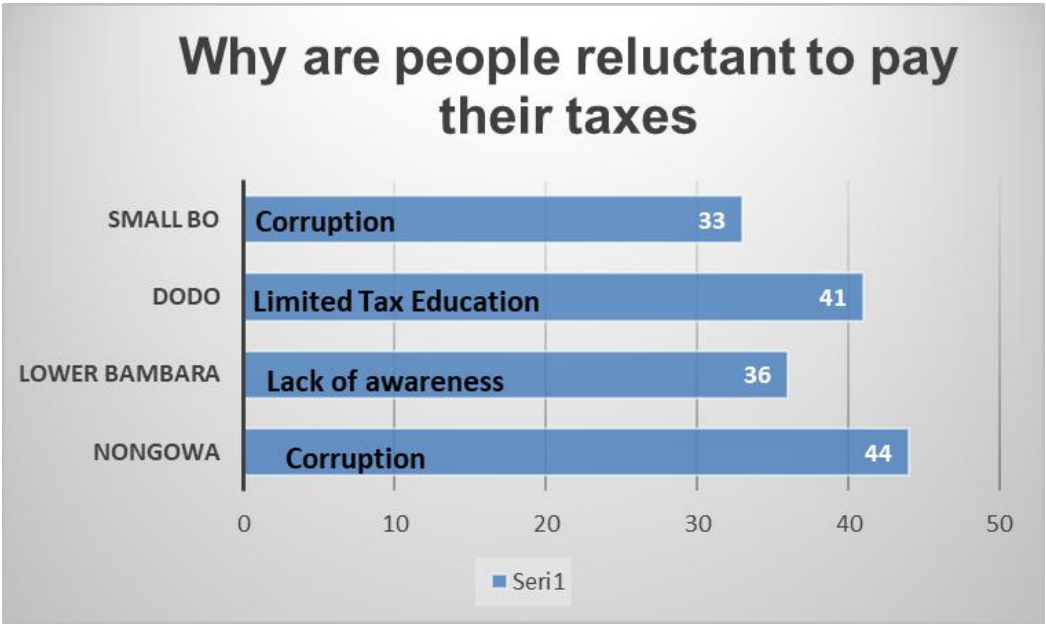

Figure 4. Field Data, 2025

Capacity Constraints and its effects on Service Delivery

Even though the KDC has made progress in improving its institutions, many of its departments still don't have enough people or staff with the right skills. It is hard to plan for long-term development and provide good services when people don't know how to plan infrastructure, M&E (monitoring and evaluation), and digital data management (GoSL, 2022). The table below lists the main replies from each chiefdom about how incapacity affects the delivery of services.

Table 1. Field Data, 2025

Chiefdom	Effects of Incapacity on Servie Delivery	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Small Bo	Poor monitoring of development work	39/60	65.00%
Dodo	Mismanagement of resources	36/60	60.00%
Lower Bambara	Inadequate response to local needs	43/60	71.70%
Nongowa	Low revenue generation	34/60	56.70%

When you look at the responses from the four chiefdoms, you can see that they all have different ideas on how incapacity affects local government. In Small Bo Chiefdom, 39 out of 60 respondents (65%) said that the main problem was that development work wasn't being monitored well enough. This shows that people were worried about gaps in oversight and implementation. In Dodo Chiefdom, 36 people (60%) said that local government wasn't working because resources were being mismanaged. This shows that there are issues with accountability and usage. Lower Bambara Chiefdom had the greatest proportion, with 43 out of 60 respondents (71.7%) saying that the government does not respond well enough to local demands. This shows a big gap between how the government works and what the community wants. In Nongowa Chiefdom, 34 people (56.7%) said that low revenue generation was a key result of incompetence. This shows that the local government is not good at managing money and getting resources to work.

Summary of Key Findings

The research findings show that while there have been big improvements in infrastructure and accessibility, especially in fixing up roads and building public buildings, these improvements aren't happening evenly across all chiefdoms. For example, Dodo and Lower Bambara, which are far away from the main road, still have bad roads and communication problems. There are more decentralised services, including health and education, that are improving public service delivery, but there are still problems because of poor community involvement and irregular supervision. Ward Development Committees (WDCs) have been an important part of government reform, but they aren't working as well as they should because of political meddling, a lack of training, and not enough freedom. The problem of weak revenue generation and financial dependence came up a lot. Many people said that low tax compliance was due to corruption, not knowing about different sorts of taxes, and a lack of faith in the government, especially in rural chiefdoms. Finally, everyone agreed that capacity constraints and their effects on service delivery were a big problem. Respondents said that insufficient institutional and human capacity led to poor monitoring, resource mismanagement, and being unable to respond to local needs. These problems, which are all connected, are still getting in the way of effective decentralisation and long-term local governance.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study reveals that decentralisation has set the stage for grassroots development in Sierra Leone, but its full potential has not yet been realised because of ongoing capacity gaps, insufficient accountability systems, and lack of funds. To really deliver on its promise, decentralisation needs a planned and long-term investment in creating local capacity, improved supervision systems, and giving community-based groups like Ward Development Committees more power. To close the gap between what people expect from the government and what they really get, we need more than just changes to the rules. We also need true political will, civic education, and money that is spent on things that are important to the community. Without these, the current framework for decentralisation could become just an administrative formality instead of a way to bring about real change in local development.

Recommendations

The study's results show that a number of strategic actions need to be taken to improve local governance and make sure that services are delivered effectively at the grassroots level. These suggestions are meant to help with important problems including not having enough resources, not being able to raise enough money, having bad infrastructure, and not having enough people involved.

1. **Capacity Building for Local Council Staff**

Local council leaders and personnel should undergo regular training and mentoring to improve their abilities in planning, budgeting, and project implementation, as well as in administration, technical work, and financial management.

2. **Strengthening Ward Development Committees (WDCs**

WDCs should be given the tools they need to do their jobs well, such as legal recognition, logistical support, and training in community mobilisation and participatory development planning. This will make sure they are good connectors between councils and the people on the ground.

3. **Improve Local Revenue Mobilization**

Councils could increase the number of ways they can make money by digitising tax collection, teaching people about the numerous types of local taxes (such property and commodities taxes), and making sure that revenue management systems are clear to the public to build trust.

4. **Enforce Accountability and Transparency Mechanisms**

Strengthen internal audit units and set up citizen oversight platforms to keep an eye on council projects and public spending, especially in rural and semi-urban areas where people think there is a lot of corruption.

5. **Increased Central Government Support and Oversight**

The Ministry of Local Government and the Ministry of Finance should give timely grants, make sure that local governance regulations are followed, and make sure that resources are fairly distributed among chiefdoms.

6. **Data-Driven Planning and Monitoring**

Encourage councils to use data and evidence from local surveys, and ways for people to give input, to make sure that development priorities match the real needs of the people.

Declarations

Competing interests: The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Publisher's note: Advanced Research Journal remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

References

Agrawal, A., & Ribot, J. (2014). Decentralization improves local governance by promoting responsiveness and accountability in the provision of services.

Conteh, S., & Sesay, M. (2020). Structural impediments to effective service delivery under decentralization: Financial and institutional constraints in Kenema.

Faguet, J. P. (2014). Political decentralization and its role in decision-making processes at the local level.

Fanthorpe, R. (2017). Accountability and transparency in decentralized governance systems.

Fanthorpe, R. (2018). The customization of educational governance through local council involvement.

Jibao, S. S., & Prichard, W. (2015). Financial empowerment and revenue collection in decentralized governance.

Kabia, J., & Gbla, O. (2016). Challenges in capacity and resources for local governments under decentralization.

Putnam, R. (2016). Social capital theory and its role in community engagement and governance.

Sierra Leone Local Government Act. (2004). Decentralization and local governance: Policy and legislative frameworks. Sierra Leone Government Publications.

World Bank. (2017). Fiscal decentralization and local government autonomy.

Mitra, S. (2021). The role of local governments in sustainable development: A case study of Sierra Leone. Sustainability in Public Administration, 4(1), 35–50.

Musa, A. (2019). Access to water and sanitation services in decentralized governance systems.

Roche, F. M. (2019). Public administration and decentralization: How local governments can improve service delivery. International Journal of Public Sector Management, 32(4), 12–28.

Shaw, D., & Singh, J. (2020). Examining the impacts of decentralization on public service delivery in Sierra Leone. Public Management Review, 42(1), 81–99.

Tsegaye, T. (2020). Financial management and its effects on service delivery in local governments. Journal of African Economics, 39(5), 728–745.

Fagence, M. (2017). Decentralization in post-conflict societies: A case study of Sierra Leone. Conflict and Governance Journal, 12(2), 43–58.

Boehm, F., & Gissel, P. (2018). Decentralization and its effects on service delivery in the global South. Journal of International Development, 31(6), 887–904.