

**INVESTIGATING THE POLITICS OF IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL PROTECTION:
STATE FORMATION AND LOCAL POWER CONFIGURATIONS IN GHANA**

A case study of the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) cash-transfer programme

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AM	Assembly Member
CBT	community-based targeting
CCT	conditional cash transfers
CFP	community focal person
CLIC	Community LEAP Implementation Committee
CPE	Constituency Party Executive
CPP	Convention People's Party
CSWO	Community Social Welfare Officer
DCD	District Coordinating Director
DCE	District Chief Executive
DEO	District Education Officer
DHO	District Health Officer
DHIO	District Health Insurance Officer
DLIC	District LEAP Implementation Committee
DP	Development Partner
DPO	District Planning Officer
FBO	faith-based organisation
FGD	focus group discussion
FOAT	Functional Organisational Assessment Tool
GhIPSS	Ghana Interbank Payment and Settlement Systems
GSFP	Ghana School Feeding Programme
GSOP	Ghana Social Opportunities project
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
ICT	Information Communication Technology
LEAP	Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty
LGS	Local Government Service
LMS	LEAP Management Secretariat
MMDA	Metropolitan Municipal and District Assembly
MMYE	Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment
MoGCSP	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
MoLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
MP	Member of Parliament
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NGO	non-governmental organisations
NHIS	National Health Insurance Scheme
NPP	New Patriotic Party
NSPS	National Social Protection Strategy
NYEP	National Youth Employment Programme
OVC	orphans and vulnerable children
PAMSCAD	Programme of Actions to Mitigate the Social Costs of Adjustment
PFI	Participating Financial Institution
PMT	proxy means testing
PNC	Peoples' National Convention
PNDC	Provisional National Defence Council
PoS	point of sale device
PSA	political-settlements analysis
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
SSC	Social Services Committee
SWCDO	Social Welfare and Community Development Organisation
TA	Traditional Authority

ABSTRACT

This thesis shifts the focus on the politics of social protection beyond adoption to implementation. By focusing on subnational- (district-) level implementation, this thesis seeks to resolve a puzzle of why some districts perform better in implementation than others. There is a widespread perception in the literature that poor service delivery is explained by the weak institutional capacities of districts, but if this is the case, then why do some districts do better than others in delivering cash transfers despite having similar existing state capacities? Similarly, it is difficult to discern why some district authorities ensure more impartial distribution than others when a common finding in the literature is that most targeted social-protection programmes are highly politicised and are rarely based on need. This thesis offers insights into these puzzles by undertaking an analysis of the political drivers of uneven implementation outcomes in Ghana's flagship Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) programme. It employs a predominantly comparative qualitative analysis to explore variation in implementation patterns at four sites across the northern and southern parts of the country, using a conceptual framework that combines institutionalist perspectives, which examine historical processes, and a literature on coalitional relations, which highlights the alignments that emerge among elites, the threats to their power and the associated time horizons in producing variation in performance. In so doing, the thesis contributes to ongoing debates on whether structural/historical factors or more contemporary/agential ones play a greater role in shaping state performance, generating several innovative findings. First, the study finds a strong association between legacies of state formation and the degree of effectiveness in LEAP grant delivery, explaining in particular the poor delivery effectiveness in northern compared to southern parts of Ghana. Second, it uncovers a strong association between local power configurations and the degree of effectiveness and impartiality in LEAP targeting at all four sites. Specifically, in terms of the causal mechanisms, sites characterised by political dominance and limited threats of turnover among governing coalitions saw more effectiveness in delivery and impartiality in targeting, whereas those with greater competitiveness and enhanced threats of turnover witnessed less effectiveness and impartiality. Thus, competition leads to reduced time horizons and a greater reliance on clientelist strategies to secure votes, both of which undermine performance. These findings have important policy implications. For example, they stress the need for the Ghanaian authorities to rebalance state capacity across the country through greater investments in the north. They also suggest that the coordination of a stronger coalition of technocratic elites to oversee district-level implementation may be necessary to ensure more inclusive outcomes. Overall, the findings emphasise the need for policy-design mechanisms that may involve the recentralization of major aspects of implementation, to "reach around" the influence of local political and social actors.

DECLARATION

No portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction and rationale

1.1 Introduction

Since the turn of the millennium, social protection has become a “buzzword” across the development community in the Global South (McCord, 2012; Mundial, 2012; Monchuk, 2014). As indicated by Giovannetti (2010, p. 1), social protection refers to

a specific set of actions to address the vulnerability of people’s life through social insurance, offering protection against risk and adversity throughout life; through social assistance, offering payments and in kind transfers to support and enable the poor; and through inclusion efforts that enhance the capability of the marginalised to access social insurance and assistance.

In the Global South, particularly in Latin America and Asia, the provision of social protection through social-assistance programmes in the form of conditional and unconditional cash transfers, and cash for work, has emerged strongly as a means of addressing poverty (Barrientos & Hulme, 2008; Barrientos, 2011). In Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), technical support and financial resources from development partners and, in a few cases, cooperation between Southern governments in Latin America and SSA, have influenced the development and expansion of social-protection programmes, which has resulted in the proliferation of social assistance in particular (Niño-Zarazúa et al., 2012; Cirillo & Tebaldi, 2016; Hickey et al., 2020). The Social Assistance, Politics and Institutions (SAPI) database of the UNU-WIDER has counted about 90 social-assistance programmes across the SSA region between 2000 and 2015, with cash transfers being the dominant type of programme (see Figure 1.1) (UNU-WIDER, 2018; Hickey et al., 2020).

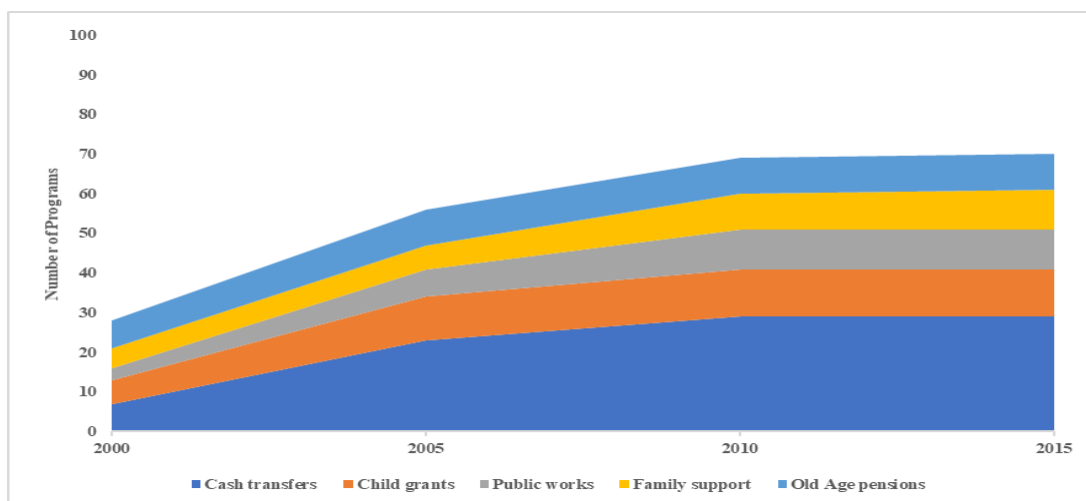


Figure 1.1: The recent evolution of social assistance in SSA by type of programme
Source: Author’s construction following the UNU-WIDER (2018) SAPI database.¹

These social-assistance programmes have taken the form of categorical and poverty-targeted programmes (Coady, Grosh, & Hoddinott, 2004). Whereas categorical targeting refers to systems that seek to reach all eligible individuals in a specified category such as age, status or region to receive benefits, the poverty-targeting denotes strategies to identify suitable individuals, households and groups by varying combinations of poverty, means, assets and category, among others (Devereux et al., 2015, pp. 7, 9). Poverty targeting has dominated social-assistance programmes in Africa. It is worth stating that the proliferation of poverty-targeted social-assistance programmes has, however, not led to increased coverage for all poor people in the subregion (Niño-Zarazúa et al., 2012; Monchuk, 2014; Seekings, 2016). Studies in some SSA and Latin American countries reveal a number of challenges with cash-transfer programmes. These include higher-level challenges around finance, capacity and the ideology and ideas underpinning the social-protection agenda (Monchuk, 2014). Other factors include political manipulation and interference (Kramon, 2019), nepotism and favouritism (Covarrubias et al., 2012; Cnobloch & Subbarao, 2015) and data challenges (World Bank, 2012), amongst others. For instance, the literature exposes varying degrees of political manipulation and interference in the allocation and targeting of these programmes. The result has been that programme allocations are often skewed to cover communities in which politicians have influence or seek to exert control (Stokes et al., 2013; Monchuk, 2014; Nichter, 2014; Kramon, 2019). Other research has highlighted nepotism and favouritism in the process of identifying the poor, which subverts the welfare impacts of programmes (Covarrubias et al., 2012; Cnobloch & Subbarao, 2015). The literature also identifies

¹ UNU-WIDER (2018) Social Assistance, Politics, and Institutions (SAPI) database [online] Helsinki: United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER). Available from: <https://www.wider.unu.edu/project/sapi-social-assistance-politics-and-institutions-database>. [Accessed -04-05-2020].

challenges in generating reliable data with which to select and enrol the “right” recipients, undermining the poverty-reduction impacts of programmes (Wodon, 2012; World Bank, 2012). At the same time, studies in several SSA countries show that existing cash-transfer programmes are often pilot programmes initiated and financed by donor agencies and have weak coordination mechanisms as well as design and capacity deficits. This leads to the irregular and untimely delivery of payments, undermining the ability of the poor to plan effectively, build assets and protect themselves against shocks (Monchuk, 2014).

The assignment of significant responsibilities to subnational state and societal actors and institutions, including the roles of community and household selection, and delivery of grants, is a key feature of many existing social-protection programmes in the Global South, and in SSA in particular (Kramon, 2019). These subnational actors and institutions are characterised by distinct capacities, incentives and commitments. Variations in bureaucratic competences, state resources and relationships between subnational state and societal actors involved in the delivery and supervision of social-protection programmes cannot be delinked from subnational politics (Barrientos & Pellissery, 2012). Thus, the subnational implementation of social-protection programmes has implications for the effectiveness and impartial allocation of benefits and application of targeting procedures that further undermine their development potential (Monchuk, 2014). Even more importantly, it has consequences for *within*-country local variation in the extent to which the same programme is implemented effectively and impartially. This raises questions concerning the necessary and/or sufficient conditions for the effective implementation of social-protection programmes across different regions and districts in the same country to enable the achievement of equitable welfare impacts at all scales.

Various scholars, particularly those focused on Latin America and South-East Asia, have given adequate consideration to some of these critical political questions (see Stokes et al., 2013; Nichter, 2014; Weitz-Shapiro, 2014; Das, 2015). In SSA, analyses of unevenness in the implementation of social protection have largely ignored the role of political factors. As demonstrated by the works of Pruce and Hickey (2017), Wanyama and McCord (2017), Abdulai (2019) and Hickey et al. (2020), among others, SSA scholars rather highlight adoption, national-level policy-design issues and spending levels, even though there is cause to suspect that implementation politics is a factor in the unequitable distribution of social-protection programmes. This research seeks to extend the existing social-protection politics scholarship in SSA and Ghana in particular, by building on an emerging strand of the literature focused on the “missing middle”; that is, implementation at

subnational level (see Abane, 2017; Kramon, 2019), and the politics shaping unevenness in implementation and variation in performance.

1.2 The politics of social-protection implementation in Ghana

Ghana has a long history of social-protection provisioning, which evolved from traditional family and community (informal) arrangements of care and fosterage that predate the colonial era (Ghana National Archives, 1945, 1946). These older forms of social provisioning have not been fully displaced by newer forms, which until recently were limited to small sections of the formal economy (MacLean, 2002; Abebrese, 2011). Like many countries in SSA, it was not until the turn of the millennium that Ghana introduced a new wave of social-protection reforms to address persistent poverty. This followed from the increased role of transnational actors in promoting ideas, providing technical support and financing pilot schemes. The first set of these social-protection schemes included the Basic School Bursary (Capitation Grant) and the Ghana School Feeding Programmes commenced in 2004 (Sultan & Schrofer, 2008; MoGCSP, 2015). This initial set of programmes was followed by the National Youth Employment Programme introduced in 2006 and the flagship Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) social cash-transfer programme initiated in 2008 (MMYE, 2007b).

LEAP is a cash-transfer programme that supplements the basic subsistence needs of several categories of households in extreme poverty, conditional upon (in theory if not in practice) education and health services utilisation (MMYE, 2007a,b; Osei, 2011). The programme currently covers more than 200,000 households across all regions and districts in the country (World Bank, 2016, 2018; Hamel & Flowers, 2018). This translates into more than 1.1 million individual beneficiaries and is equivalent to 43% of the country's extremely poor population (Ablo, 2018; Hamel & Flowers, 2018; World Bank, 2018). Most LEAP households are found in the Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions, corresponding with the higher rates of poverty found in these areas of the country. The three regions encompass 55% of LEAP's total beneficiaries nationwide despite constituting only 17% of the overall Ghanaian population (Hamel & Flowers, 2018). The World Bank (2018), for instance, explains that households in the poorer north of the country are over-represented in the LEAP programme. Notwithstanding this, across the country, districts with the lowest poverty rates have the highest coverage of LEAP as a percentage of the poor. This reflects both the population concentration in Ghana (poor regions have fewer people) as well as the political need to secure national coverage in the programme (World Bank, 2018; Abdulai, 2019) (see Figure 1.2).

LEAP coverage as percentage of poor persons²

LEAP coverage as percentage of population³

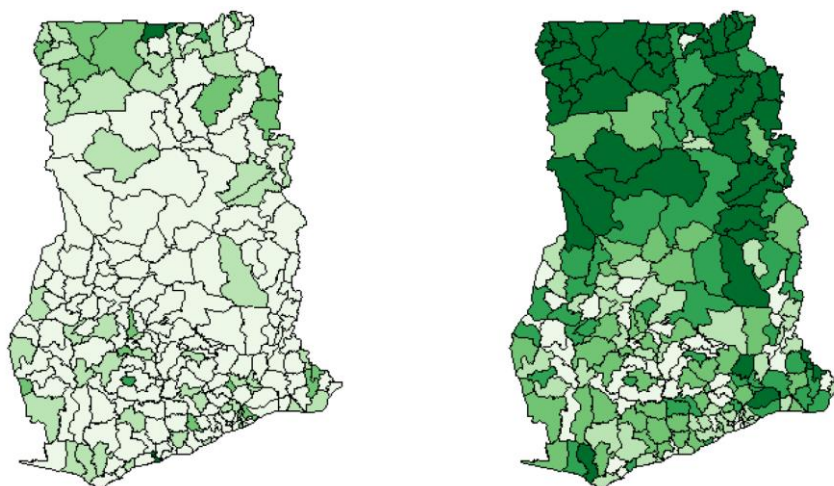


Figure 1.2: Percentages of Beneficiaries of LEAP by District Poverty LEAP

Sources: Adapted from World Bank (2018, p. 23), based on Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection (MoGCSP)⁴ data.

LEAP has generated intense interest among academics, policymakers and development partners since the scaling up of the programme in 2008. Several scholars have examined the policy ideas underpinning the adoption of LEAP as a flagship social-protection measure in Ghana (see Sultan & Schrofer, 2008; Amuzu et al., 2010; Foli, 2016; Abdulai, 2019). Others have focused on evaluating the impacts of LEAP and related social-protection programmes (see Handa & Park, 2012; Handa et al., 2014; De Groot et al., 2015; Oduro, 2015; Angeles et al., 2017). Effective implementation is critical to LEAP's ability to contribute to reducing poverty. There are considerable variations in the scale and effectiveness of LEAP's performance across districts in the country (Gbedemah et al., 2010; Wodon, 2012; Niyuni, 2016). Gbedemah et al. (2010) report that as an administrative cost-saving strategy, while fewer communities are targeted across districts, a larger number of beneficiaries are targeted within communities. However, this practice often leads to fairly high errors of inclusion (more non-poor households included in the list of beneficiaries). Again, Gbedemah et al. (2010) reports that imbalance in distribution of government officers responsible for implementing the programme across districts and communities undermines the ability of some districts to establish oversight committees to administer the programme execution adequately. Some pilot studies have highlighted the role of institutional and organisational constraints in explaining this variation, such as the inconsistent release of resources,

² The darkest colour indicates that over 20% of the poor receive LEAP. The second, third and fourth darkest colours imply that between 15% and 20%, 10% and 15%, and 5% and 10% of the poor get LEAP, respectively. The lightest colour denotes that less than 5% of poor have access to LEAP (World Bank, 2018, p. 23).

³ The colours correspond to five quantiles of the percentage of the population covered by LEAP (World Bank, 2018, p. 23).

⁴ Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP).

inadequate knowledge about the programme, lack of capacity among bureaucrats and weak inter-agency coordination (UNICEF, 2009; Wodon, 2012; Roelen & Karki Chettri, 2014; Niyuni, 2016). However, in Ghana, the implementation of LEAP and, in particular, the subnational politics involved in implementation of the programme remain under-researched. This study seeks to fill this lacuna in the literature by exploring the ways in which subnational politics drive uneven implementation in regard to delivery of benefits, allocation of quotas and the application of targeting procedures in the selection of households and communities. This thesis proposes to use a subnational comparative analysis to examine the uneven delivery of social-protection policies and the role of politics in variable implementation using LEAP as a case study.

1.3 Dominant explanations for uneven social-protection implementation in Ghana and the Global South

The literature, as hinted earlier, indicates that countries in the Global South often adopt a decentralised approach in delivering social-protection programmes (Nichter, 2014; Niedzwiecki, 2018; Kramon, 2019). Decentralisation has been presented as a platform to promote local ownership, increase the supervision of local agents at the community level and foster demands for greater accountability in the allocation and targeting of local services (Smoke, 2003; Larson and Ribot, 2004; Ribot et al., 2006; Dufhues et al., 2011). Yet the inherent challenges with decentralised implementation include the propensity for political manipulation, corruption and leakage, and local capture⁵ (Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2000, 2005; Weitz-Shapiro, 2012, 2014; Stokes et al., 2013). This decentralised approach also raises concerns about the risk of uneven distribution capacities, with implications for variations in effectiveness in local service delivery (Tendler, 1997; De Neubourg, 2002; Besley et al., 2003; Mathauer, 2004). Studies of the *Bolsa Família* (a conditional cash-transfer programme) in Brazil, for instance, show that centralised administration of transfers to beneficiaries enables the programme to circumvent the traps of patronage and clientelism that had shaped past social provisioning via local administrations (Nichter, 2014). Similarly, Tendler (1997), in her study of service delivery in Ceara state in Brazil, has demonstrated that mechanisms that bypassed decentralised forms of governance in order to reach citizens directly were necessary to escape the incapacitating effects of poor organisational competence, patron–client politics and local capture.

Decentralised implementation of social-protection programmes brings to the fore questions about the competences of state actors and institutions charged with implementation. The literature on the

⁵ “Local capture can take the form of elites receiving a disproportionate share of benefits from the scheme, especially when beneficiaries are poorly informed about the programme” (Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2000; Gupta & Mukhopadhyay, 2014, p. 2).

political economy of decentralisation has underlined the role of state-capacity deficits in policy-implementation failures at the subnational level in the Global South (see Crook & Manor, 1998; Jütting et al., 2005; Crook & Ayee, 2006; Booth, 2010). Research by both Jütting et al. (2005) and Crook and Manor (1998) asserts that the weak technical capacity of bureaucrats at the local level may worsen the exclusion of the poor and deepen inequalities, as services may be delivered less effectively than under a centralised system. The established institutional literature in Africa and Latin America has also highlighted the foundational influence of structural factors, such as colonial legacies, on uneven institutional performance (Acemoglu et al., 2001, 2002; Lange & Rueschemeyer, 2005; Mahoney, 2010). In the Ghanaian context, for instance, the existing literature exploring north–south regional differences has identified the limited capacity of state institutions in the north of the country to plan, initiate, implement and monitor local development compared to their southern counterparts. These are attributed primarily to variations in colonial legacies of state formation and social inequalities (Shepherd et al., 2004; Songsore, 2011; UNDP, 2018). Beyond colonialism, the state-building scholarship in Ghana ascribes unevenness in state capacity and performance between the north and south to the influence of precolonial social structures on state formation (see Berry, 2001; Lentz, 2001; MacLean, 2002, 2011; Lund, 2006, 2008). This, in turn, had distinctive impacts on how the colonial enterprise transformed these precolonial social institutions. The effective implementation of decentralised social-protection programmes requires the deployment of elaborate logistics to deliver grants to the remotest locations inhabited by the poor. Given the long-term legacies of precolonial institutions and colonialism on the subsequent development of regional state capacity, it is imperative to examine the linkages between state formation, state capacity and the uneven implementation of LEAP across different areas of the country.

In addition to the long-term influence of precolonial and colonial institutions highlighted above, contemporary power relations also influence decentralised institutional performance. The literature on the political economy of decentralisation suggests that power relations between state actors at the central and local levels directly shape the decentralised provision of public goods (see Crook & Sverrisson, 2001; Crook, 2003, 2017; Larson & Ribot, 2004; Bukenya & Golooba-Mutebi, 2017). In contexts with serious power imbalances between elite and non-elite groups, the decentralised provision of public goods may enhance the power of local elites, who “capture” or monopolise development benefits while undermining efforts at collective action (World Bank, 2000; Das Gupta et al., 2004). In Ghana, research has underscored the crucial role of political-economy dynamics in shaping the performance of decentralised institutions (Crook & Manor, 1998), the implementation of pro-poor policies (Crook, 2003) and the collection of local revenues

(Crook, 2017). The decentralised implementation of LEAP thus raises significant questions about the political economy of local power relations and how they influence the application of the programme's targeting mechanisms and overall performance. The section below outlines some of the political-economy dynamics associated with decentralised social-protection provisioning in Ghana.

First, anecdotal evidence⁶ on the decentralised implementation of social-protection programmes has drawn attention to the increasing role of rent distribution and clientelist politics. This is apparent in, among other things, the selection of districts and communities, the targeting of households and beneficiaries and the constitution and functioning of local-level governing boards. Given the highly competitive political environment at the national level in Ghana, there are strong pressures to use social services and other social goods delivered through decentralised channels to advance patronage and clientelistic goals at the subnational level.⁷ Consequently, the widely held perception in most districts and constituencies is that LEAP households tend to be associated with ruling political regimes at the period of their enrolment (Osei Darko et al., 2014).⁸ Earlier studies on the politics of resource allocation in Ghana have also highlighted the fact that social programmes are closely shaped by "clientelistic" manipulation (see Abdulai, 2014; Abdulai & Hickey, 2016). Studies in Latin America have provided strong evidence of the clientelistic distribution of decentralised social-protection resources for electoral gain (see Weitz-Shapiro, 2012, 2014; Stokes et al., 2013). This study thus examines the extent to which LEAP is being delivered in a clientelistic way or not at the district level.

Second, the decentralised provision of social-protection benefits has heightened the programme's vulnerability to political pressures from national and subnational state-level actors who attempt to allocate the programme's resources to politically influential communities and households with whom they are personally or politically connected (Stokes et al., 2013; Nichter, 2014; Niedzwiecki, 2018). There is anecdotal evidence that political actors at various levels of the state have misused LEAP for political gain. This includes attempts to present the extension of LEAP to localities in their constituencies as a direct result of their lobbying efforts at central- and local-

⁶ Insights into the politics of social provisioning in Ghana as detailed above are based on the author's knowledge of implementation dynamics in social provisioning as a practitioner and researcher at decentralised levels and from media reports of politicisation of LEAP.

⁷ See press clippings (Oye using LEAP funds for politics. Members of the Parliamentary committee on social welfare in Ghana accused the former Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Nana Oye Lithur, of using LEAP for electoral gain. <http://www.accrafm.com/1.8499051> <https://www.modernghana.com/news/662818/oye-using-leap-funds-for-politics.html>

⁸ Osei Darko et al. allude to the fact that there have been concerns raised about the targeting of beneficiaries, "as it has been labelled as benefiting only political party members" since the inception of the programme (2014, p. 3).

government levels.⁹ This has resulted in conflicts between local elites and risks the exclusion of eligible households without political connections.¹⁰ This study draws on a small but growing body of literature on the conditions under which political manipulation of this sort is more or less likely, applying it specifically to the issue of community and household targeting of social-protection programmes.

Third, decentralised provisioning of social protection has amplified the programme's susceptibility to "local capture" by networks of powerful state and non-state actors at the subnational level. The state-building and postcolonial literature has underscored the role of powerful precolonial institutions, reinforced through colonialism, in shaping differential patterns of institutional performance across Africa (see Mamdani, 1996; Herbst, 2000; Berry, 2001; MacLean, 2002; Boone, 2003; Lentz, 2006). Traditional Authorities (TAs) in Ghana, for instance, are important power "brokers" for the mobilisation of political support and powerful actors in their own right at the national and subnational levels (Ray, 2003; Crook, 2005; Crook & Addo-Fening, 2005). Existing studies suggest that these TAs at the district and community level are able to "capture" programme delivery structures and monopolise the benefits to perpetuate their influence at the local level (see Standing, 2014; De-Graft Aikins et al., 2016; Ubink, 2018). In Ghana, given high levels of informality and a lack of payroll records, there is no official data on income. The absence of income data makes it difficult to identify and target poor households for programmes such as LEAP and increases the likelihood that powerful TAs will capture locally implemented social programmes. This, in turn, has important implications for state–society relations at the district level. This research seeks to tap into this literature to examine how the decentralised implementation of LEAP has enhanced the power and legitimacy of TAs while, at the same time, undermining the capacity of the state to deliver LEAP at the district level.

Finally, the decentralised provision of social-protection benefits has the potential to enhance the influence and power that local politicians have over subnational bureaucrats (Evans, 1995; Carpenter, 2001; Brierley, 2016). In Ghana, the Social Welfare and Community Development Organisation (SWCDO) directorate is the main decentralised state department responsible for the implementation of LEAP. The LEAP guidelines afford bureaucrats some level of discretion in their application. Recent literature on decentralised policy implementation in Ghana suggests,

⁹ Member of Parliament for Ningo Prampram, Sam George, appealed to new NPP government to increase the coverage of the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) programme so that residents in rural Greater Accra can benefit.
<http://www.myjoyonline.com/news/2017/March-27th/sam-george-wants-poor-residents-in-rural-accra-to-benefit-from-leap-cash.php>

¹⁰ Members of the NDC party in Ledzokuku constituency in the Greater Accra region accused the former Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Nana Oye Lithur, of sabotaging efforts by their MP to extend LEAP to beneficiaries in their community. They held the view that the minister was using her control of the LEAP to make their MP unpopular.
<https://www.modernghana.com/news/544287/39/ledzokuku-ndc-wants-oye-lithur-stopped-in-her-trac.html>

however, that the exercise of bureaucratic discretion remains a highly contested process (see Agyepong & Nagai, 2011; Sakyi et al., 2011; Koduah et al., 2015; Brierley, 2016; Williams, 2017). Both state and non-state actors have tended to use their political control and leverage over bureaucrats – through the threat of transfers to remote districts or reporting to superiors at the national level – to undermine the exercise of bureaucratic mandates and discretion. This research explores the extent to which local politicians use their control over bureaucrats to sabotage the technocratic application of LEAP implementation procedures.

1.4 Research questions

Drawing from the above puzzles, the key question that this study examines is as follows:

- How and to what extent do politics shape subnational state capacity and performance in the provisioning of social protection in Ghana?

To disentangle this overarching question, the research explores two critical political-economy dynamics to explain the unevenness in social-protection implementation:

1. In what ways do distinct patterns of state formation and state capacity shape unevenness in effectiveness in social-protection provisioning in Ghana?
2. To what extent and under what conditions do local configurations of power shape variations in impartiality in social-protection performance in Ghana?

1.5 Aims and structure of the thesis

The resurgence of social provisioning over the past two decades as an instrument for addressing poverty and inequality in the Global South has brought to fore questions about the role of the state. In particular, the increasing recourse to subnational state structures as instruments for delivery of social-provisioning benefits has ignited concerns about the capacity of the subnational state to pursue its mandate, with implications for effective and equitable distribution outcomes. Whereas the institutionalist literature (see Mahoney, 2000; Acemoglu et al., 2001; Collier & Collier, 2002; Lange & Rueschemeyer, 2005; Bowden & Mosley, 2008; Pierson, 2011) has explained variation in state capacity and performance as being a result of long-run legacies, the political-settlements literature (see Di John & Putzel, 2009; Khan, 2010; Parks & Cole, 2010) has challenged this perspective by drawing attention to how more contemporary power configurations explain variation in state performance. This thesis seeks to investigate whether Ghana's uneven social-protection implementation experience can be better explained by an integrated focus on both long-

run institutional factors and contemporary power relations among contending elite coalitions in society. The thesis is structured into the following chapters.

Chapter 2 explores the four main strands of literature that examine policy implementation and state performance. It begins with a review of successive generations of policy-implementation theories. This is followed by an analysis of the political-sociology literature, including studies of state–society relations that highlight the role of the state, its capacities and its relations with societal actors in the implementation of policies and its consequences for performance and outcomes. The thesis draws insights from the established institutionalist perspective that examines historical processes and the recent political-settlements analysis (PSA) literature, which highlights underlying power configurations to address conceptual gaps in the existing state–society relations literature. The analysis then marries up this state–society relations literature with the political economy of decentralised service delivery and social provisioning in the Global South literature. In doing so, it highlights key political-economy factors associated with the decentralised implementation of social-protection programmes.

Chapter 3 outlines the research strategy, including the conceptual framework and methodology. The chapter commences by establishing the analytical distinction between state capacity and state performance. It then proceeds to set up a conceptual framework that identifies state formation as a cause of state capacity and political configurations as a factor driving the deployment of that capacity, resulting in varying levels of performance. The first element of the conceptual framework is state formation, which highlights the role of institutional path dependencies arising from historical legacies of colonialism in shaping state capacity and, subsequently, state performance (Acemoglu et al., 2001; Lange, 2009; Pierson, 2011; Mkandawire, 2017). The second element is local configurations of power, which demonstrate the influence of contemporary political factors arising from political coalitions, the nature of the threats that elites face and their time horizons on the deployment of state capacity and state performance (see Poteete, 2009; Centeno et al., 2017; Handley, 2017). The framework also specifies the causal mechanisms at play between state formation, local configurations of power and state performance. This section of the thesis also sets out the research design in detail, highlighting the processes underpinning the selection of cases and the methods for the collection of research data. It expands on this with a plethora of primary quantitative and qualitative data, produced through the application of a number of diverse research methods during fieldwork in Ghana. It then configures the analysis by feeding these empirical findings into the conceptual framework, which reflects new theoretical expansions with regard to the politics of social-protection implementation.

Chapter 4 analyses the Ghanaian context of the research and how this shapes the implementation of social protection. It begins by distilling the history of state incorporation and state–society relations in Ghana along with the nature of contemporary political competition and coalitions. This section is followed by a review of decentralisation and the political economy of decentralised service delivery in Ghana. The final section traces the evolution of social protection in Ghana, setting out historical trends in formal and informal social provisioning that have led to the current LEAP programme. It also examines the decentralised structures and mechanisms employed in delivering LEAP’s benefits in Ghana.

Chapter 5 focuses on the influence of distinct patterns of state formation in the north and south of the country and the extent to which this has resulted in variations in the effectiveness of LEAP grant delivery. The chapter finds less effective grant delivery in the north than in the southern part of the country. It also observes that *within* the north and south, delivery is more effective where there is a more limited threat of an electoral turnover at the district level.

Chapters 6 and 7 compare impartiality in state performance between the two districts of the Upper West and Central Regions, respectively. The chapters establish that across the four cases, higher levels of electoral competitiveness are associated with higher levels of coverage but also higher levels of partiality in geographical and household targeting, whereas political dominance is aligned with lower coverage but more impartiality in targeting. In the context of the two southern cases, the stronger influence of traditional leaders has further undermined the degree of impartiality in household targeting, irrespective of the level of political competition.

The final Chapter 8 sets out the conclusions and policy implications as well as the possible future research agenda. The findings of this study suggest that the enduring influence of legacies of state formation remains critical in determining the organisational competences and institutional capacity required to implement social-protection policies at the subnational level effectively. At the same time, local political conditions influence the extent to which existing state capacity is deployed in ways that promote or undermine the foundation for implementation that results from historical legacies. Most importantly, centre–local relations and political mis/alignment between the national and local levels of the party remain embedded in decentralised implementation systems and procedures. This has implications for effectiveness in resource distribution, and impartiality in the allocation of resources and the application of targeting procedures.

CHAPTER 2

State capacity and state–society relations in policy implementation: the role of decentralisation politics

2.1 Introduction

Over the past two decades, there has been growing research interest in the politics of social-protection policies in developing countries (Cirillo & Tebaldi, 2016; Hickey et al., 2020). However, most of this work has focused on the adoption and design of policies and programmes rather than their implementation (see Sultan & Schrofer 2008; Ellis et al., 2009; Devereux & White, 2010; Niño-Zarazúa et al., 2012; Aiyede et al., 2015; Ferguson, 2015; Hickey et al., 2020). There has been some research on implementation of social protection in South Asia and Latin America (see Pellissery, 2006; Weitz-Shapiro, 2012, 2014; Nichter, 2014; Das, 2015; Roy, 2015; Bardhan, 2016; Niedzwiecki, 2018). But, with a few notable exceptions (see Covarrubias et al., 2012; Barrett & Kidd, 2015; Cnobloch & Subbarao, 2015; Kidd & Athias, 2019; Kramon, 2019), the actual process of translating social-protection policies into action and, specifically, the politics around social-protection implementation in Africa remains unexamined.

Given the relevance of implementation to the performance and outcomes of social-protection policies, this chapter explores a variety of perspectives adopted in studies of policy implementation. It begins with a critical review of the overall literature on policy implementation, with a particular focus on how three successive generations of policy-implementation scholarship have failed to deal adequately with the role of politics. The chapter continues with a review of the political-sociology literature on policy implementation, which highlights the importance of state capacity, power configurations and state–society relations as key factors influencing state policy performance. The final section explores studies of decentralised service delivery and social-protection provisioning, with a particular emphasis on the space this has opened for local power relations to shape policy-implementation performance. The conclusion takes the key insights from the literature on policy implementation and puts them into conversation with the more recent literature on the politics of state capacity and performance with a view to constructing a conceptual framework for this study.

2.2 Policy-implementation literature

The implementation of policy has long been the subject of investigation in the fields of policy change and management and among political scientists. Since the 1960s and 1970s, scholars in these disciplines have adopted a variety of different conceptual approaches, resulting in successive generations of implementation theories (Jann & Wegrich, 2006).

The first generation of policy-implementation scholarship focused on studying failures in policy implementation. Led by scholars such as Derthick (1974) and Pressman and Wildavsky (1984), these scholars defined implementation as “the carrying out of the basic policy decision, usually made in a statute, court decisions, and executive orders” (Pressman, 1973, p. 540). While this phase contributed to the development of empirical data on policy implementation and provided the foundation for subsequent policy-implementation research, there was little effort at theory generation (Pülzl & Treib, 2006).

The second generation of policy-implementation research shifted the focus from empirical descriptions of implementation to a more theorised approach that went beyond a focus on legal instruments (Paudel, 2009). This generation of implementation research, which explored variability in implementation over time and across policies and units of government, had two main perspectives: the top-down and the bottom-up (Paudel, 2009). The top-down perspective perceived implementation as a hierarchical, apolitical and administrative process in which decisions are made by a set of powerful higher-level actors and implemented by lower-level actors (Meter et al., 1975; Mazmanian, 1983). The focus of this perspective was on processes immediately following the passage of decisions into law and the perceived outcomes of these processes, not on how the policies were actually implemented or the capacity of bureaucrats to carry this out (Pülzl & Treib, 2006). In the view of these scholars, the most important stage of policy was formulation rather than execution. If policies were adequately formulated and designed at the policymaking stages, implementation failures could be avoided (Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1979). Equally, these scholars suggested that the most critical factor was the extent to which implementation outcomes corresponded to the objectives set out in initial policy decisions (Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975). These scholars therefore argued that any attempt to revise decisions made at the central levels by legitimate representatives of the people or by local networks of administrative actors was undemocratic. Top-down theorists have thus been critiqued for underplaying implementation politics or ignoring the political aspects of policy implementation (Berman, 1978; Baier et al., 1986; Paudel, 2009). They have also been criticised for presenting policy implementation as a

purely administrative process, ignoring the role of other actors in the state and society whose actions shape policy formulation, decision-making and execution.

The bottom-up perspective, on the other hand, perceived policy implementation as a continuum from the initial policy decision process and recognised the agency of lower-level actors in shaping policy decisions through interpretation and execution. Lipsky (1971, 1980), for instance, drew attention to the network of public-service workers (e.g., teachers, social workers, police officers and doctors), who he called “street-level bureaucrats”. He argued that these street-level bureaucrats enjoyed some degree of autonomy at the local level and thus exerted dominance over policy decisions made during implementation. Similarly, Elmore (1979), Hjern (1982) and Hudson (1989) maintained that the influence of local bureaucrats transcended controlling the behaviour of citizens to encompass the exercise of autonomy in pursuit of their own goals over centrally directed decisions. These scholars argued that local networks of administrative bureaucrats and affected groups had a legitimate right to participate in and revise centrally initiated policies based on their own goals and concerns. Thus, implementation of policies starts with macro-level decision-making and continues to the micro level, involving networks of bureaucrats who actually undertake implementation (Matland, 1995; Pülzl & Treib, 2006). The bottom-up perspective has been faulted for exaggerating the role of street-level bureaucrats in policy implementation, including the often unintended consequences of policies (see Grindle & Thomas, 1991; Matland, 1995; Winter, 2003; Paudel, 2009). Bottom-up scholars have also been accused of failing to examine the capacity of street-level bureaucrats tasked with the interpretation and implementation of public policies in multiple levels of the decentralised state (Paudel, 2009). Finally, while both top-down and bottom-up theorists have focused on contrasting goals and dissimilar networks of actors, neither has examined power relations between networks of actors outside the ambit of the state at the policy formulation or execution stage (Pülzl & Treib, 2006).

The third generation of implementation literature aimed to bridge gaps in the earlier generations of scholarship. Scholars such as Scharpf (1978), Ripley and Franklin (1982), and Winter (1990) conceptualised implementation as an evolving process in which policies are constantly reshaped and redefined over time. This perspective captured the role of both national- and local-level actors in policy processes (Pülzl & Treib, 2006). Winter’s (1990, 2003, 2015) integrated implementation model, for instance, suggested that studies should focus on the stated objectives of policies and the characteristics of the policy-formulation process (considering the degree of conflict and how these impact implementation). Scharpf (1978) also introduced an emphasis on the role of policy networks in transforming policy ideas into goals, exploring how actors with varied interests and

strategies can shape implementation processes and outcomes. These scholars incorporated the fact that implementers are political actors in their own right and that the outcome of implementation entails complicated negotiation processes between implementers and central authorities (Pülzl & Treib, 2006). However, as with previous generations of scholarship, the third generation has been critiqued for failing to clearly conceptualise the links between policy decision-making and the processes of policy implementation (Pülzl & Treib, 2006). Again, these scholars have failed to acknowledge networks of actors outside the state as political actors with distinct characteristics that can influence outcomes of policy implementation (Pülzl & Treib, 2006).

Thus, while three generations of policy-implementation literature have examined the role of internal organisational design and the administrative processes of the state, they have largely failed to recognise the influence of external factors (societal) on the capacities of the state and their agents to implement policies. In particular, as the discussions above show, the policy-implementation literature has ignored the political processes shaping implementation. Both the top-down and the bottom-up perspectives do explore the role of legislators and networks of actors in the state's administrative process. However, they fail to examine the role of power relations within networks of social and political actors at multiple levels of both the state and society (outside the ranks of administrative bureaucrats), whose actions shape policy interpretation and execution. Significantly, this obscures the role of informal state–society ties, which are especially important in the context of the Global South, where these ties have a pervasive influence on implementation processes and the capacities of the state (Sellers, 2010; Paudel, 2009). These deficits hinder an analysis of the wider political-economy factors surrounding the capacities of states to implement policies at different levels – local, regional and national – in a Global South context. Given the focus of this research project on subnational power relations among state and society actors (formal and informal) involved in the implementation of social-protection policies (as opposed to the wider research on policy implementation just discussed above), other theoretical insights are needed to adequately investigate how local political factors drive policy implementation and variation in state performance. This is discussed in the next section.

2.3 State capacity, the state–society relations literature and state performance

2.3.1 *Perspectives in the state–society relations literature*

Beyond the approaches described above, political sociologists have examined policy implementation from the perspective of the state through the lens of “state–society relations”.

This literature understands the state as a set of institutions that perform certain basic functions that are essential for the existence of a properly functioning society (Skocpol, 1979; Weber, 1991). The state–society relations perspective examines the interface between the state and society in attempts to solve social problems. From its roots in the political-sociology tradition, this literature contends, among other things, that the state is decisive with regard to collective action in society and that society must provide critical elements of support for a state to be effective (Haggard, 1990; Migdal, 2001; Kohli, 2004; Evans, 2005; Sellers, 2010).

Studies of state–society relations have often been informed by very sharp analytical dichotomies between statist and society-centred perspectives. The statist approach argues that policy implementation can best be understood from the perspective of state officials or other actors within the state. In the perspective of these scholars, the state is an “institutionalised collective power superordinate to other organisations that is sovereign *vis-à-vis* other states, autonomous or distinct from the rest of society, and identified socioculturally with a national collectivity” (Nettl, 1968, as cited in Sellers, 2010, p. 4). This statist conception retains much of the focus on the state that was the trademark of the institutionalism literature, highlighting the role of governmental institutions and their officials (see Friedrich, 1963) and structuralist theories about the independence of the state from class structures (see Poulantzas & O’Hagan, 1973).

The statist approach contends that the organisation of state institutions is subject to different levels of bureaucratic and professional influence within the state itself as well as to external political influences (Amenta and Ramsey, 2004). In the contemporary statist literature, studies mostly concentrate on the substance of policymaking within the state and relations between actors and institutions within the state. The existing literature on political elites or national leaders, and on executive-legislative relations more generally, frequently echoes these concerns. “New institutionalist” work on public management reform is also informed by a statist perspective (see Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004; Barzelay & Gallego, 2006). The statist perspective has been critiqued for assuming an overbearing role of the state in the formulation of policies, institutional

performance and the behaviours of key actors in policymaking, and for overlooking the ways in which non-state actors directly shape how states operate and perform (Sellers, 2010).

In contrast to the statist approach, the society-centred perspective envisions the state as a subset of society, with its capacity to act being closely shaped by its relations with societal forces. This perspective marks a departure not only from statist approaches, but also from structuralist accounts of classes, regions or aggregated economic interests (Sellers, 2010). The society-centred perspective highlights the increasing influence of social movements with the capacity to influence governance in the state and society (Bell & Hindmoor, 2007; Sellers, 2010). The state is presented as a disaggregated, contingent institution open to influence from outside and considerable agency is allocated to societal actors. Groups, individuals and institutions beyond the state thus comprise the main analytical focus, either as a potentially decisive influence on processes and outcomes or as the primary factor in understanding the implications of governance processes. Scholars associated with the society-centred perspective, such as Migdal (2001), argue that the state itself is a network of distinct organisations, each with their own organisational interests and incentives, and each involved in a continuous struggle for domination and accommodation with a range of societal forces across multiple arenas and junctures of state–societal relations. Hagmann and Péclard (2010) similarly suggest that the state in Africa is best understood as a continuous process of negotiation, contestation and bricolage, through a host of profoundly conflictive interactions forged and remade by local, national and transnational actors.

The society-centred approach, which analytically blurs the boundaries between the state and society, has two critical advantages over the statist approach (Pellissery, 2006). First, this perspective offers a vantage point from which to assess the wider impact of the state and its policies on society as a whole. At the same time, this provides a starting point for enquiries into how citizens, workers, neighbourhoods or other small-scale groups and individuals affect policy implementation (Sellers, 2010). Second, the approach disaggregates the state into subunits, which allows for an exploration of the power relations between networks of actors in the state and society at multiple levels and in multiple directions (Pellissery, 2006).

As previously alluded to, the focus in this research is on relations between actors in both the state and society in social-protection policy implementation. Thus, the role of actors beyond the state – and their influence on the processes of the state – is central to the study. Of the two perspectives discussed above, the society-centred perspective thus provides a more insightful basis for the examination of the role of the state and society in decentralised implementation of social-

protection programmes in a Global South context. This perspective presents the state not as a monolithic entity but as a disaggregated collective with multiple layers. The adoption of this perspective allows for the accommodation of subnational dynamics in both the state and society in relation to policy implementation. It also acknowledges the role of social forces and informal social ties at the subnational level, where societal actors are in a constant struggle for domination with the state in multiple arenas. It is thus well suited for examining the implementation of social-protection programmes at the subnational level in the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) context, where informal arrangements in the form of patron–client networks are pervasive.

2.3.2 State capacity and state performance: moving beyond policy process to outcomes

Central to discussions about the state and its relations to society is the concept of state capacity: the ability of a state to undertake its commonly accepted mandates and constrain the actions of actors and institutions within the state while penetrating into the depths of society (Andrews et al., 2017; Centeno et al., 2017). Before delving into state capacity in detail, it is important to establish that there are clear differences between “state capacity” and “state performance”. State performance relates to the actual accomplishments of states: what states are actually able to achieve (Centeno et al., 2017, p. 3). In contrast to the previously analysed implementation literature, which centres on the process of policy implementation, state performance focuses on outcomes of policy implementation. Centeno et al. (2017, p. 12) suggest that state performance must be conceptualised as a combination of state capacity and political processes that shape whether and how state capacity is deployed. Through state performance, states can contribute to reducing poverty among their citizens through social provisioning; nonetheless, the capacity to adequately reallocate resources to alleviate poverty varies within states and from one state to another (Huber & Stephens, 2001).

Returning to the literature on the capacity of states to pursue their mandates, numerous state–society relations scholars have explored the notion of state capacity and its relation to state performance. Most have argued that the concept of state capacity is analytically advantageous, as it enables a distinction to be made between the goals of states and their capacity to carry out their mandates. In defining state capacity, state–society relations scholars adopt different approaches as the concept “varies – across different states, between areas of state activity, and across time” (vom Hau, 2012, p. 3). Migdal (2001, p. xiii), for example, has defined state capacity as “the ability of state leaders to use the agencies of the state to get people in the society to do what they want them to do”. This bears a close resemblance to Mann’s (1984, p. 11) concept of infrastructural power, as the capacity of the state to “penetrate and centrally co-ordinate the activities of civil society

through its own infrastructure and to implement logistically politically decisions throughout the realm”.

Drawing on these conceptions, state capacity comes across as a multidimensional concept incorporating three distinct features: organisational, territorial and relational (Cammett & MacLean, 2011). Acknowledging this multidimensional perspective, vom Hau (2012, p. 4) has defined state capacity as the “ability of states (whether national, regional or local) to apply and implement policy choices within the territorial boundaries they claim to govern”. This ability of states encompasses the competency to protect borders and enact laws to ensure order, enforce contracts, mobilise taxation and incorporate non-state actors within the state. It also entails the ability to provide public goods throughout the territory of the state (vom Hau, 2012). Thus, vom Hau’s (2012) conceptualisation of state capacity, consistent with Cammett and MacLean (2011), highlights three key dimensions: (1) the external embeddedness with non-state actors; (2) the organisational competences of state agencies (bureaucratic competences and organisational culture); and (3) the territorial reach of state institutions (vom Hau, 2012). The review briefly explores these three dimensions of state capacity before returning to an examination of the political factors that drive state capacity (both directly and indirectly), leading to variation in performance.

First, the autonomy of the state from the control of civil society is a critical driver of variation in state capacity. The core analytical factor is the degree to which bureaucrats in the state are able to cooperate with civil society and their interests while maintaining independence and exerting autonomy over their actual mandate (Evans, 1995; vom Hau, 2012). The notion of embeddedness as a component of state capacity draws on the organisation-analytic and class-analytic standpoints. Scholars who adopt the organisation-analytic perspective underscore the ties of the state with civil-society actors and capitalists to facilitate the flow of resources and knowledge. Yet these relations, in their view, must not entail co-optation of the bureaucratic apparatus of the state by capitalists or civil society. Autonomy or external embeddedness with non-state actors thus embodies bureaucratic actors’ ability to act independently of dominant powerful political and economic interests (vom Hau, 2012, p. 6). In reference to the class-analytic perspective, there are two approaches: the first suggests that economic interests control the state. The second contends that although economic interests matter in relations between the state and society, the state has much greater agency to define these relationships. State–society relations scholars who propagate these class-analytic views suggest that states are strongly restricted in their capacities without relations with non-state actors (see Lange & Rueschemeyer, 2005; Jessop, 2008). The ability of states to undertake their mandates derives at least in part from their ties with forces in wider society.

Second, the organisational competences (i.e., bureaucratic competences and organisational culture) concentrate on the internal organisational quality and coherence of states. They also embody the “organisation of social relations within state institutions based on the meritocratic recruitment, hierarchical authority structures, standardised procedures, and impersonalised and coordinated actions of public officials” (vom Hau, 2012, p. 6). Yet recent scholarship in the developing world contends that the organisational competences of states to deliver effectively could also result from the presence of patrimonial procedures and clientelist networks (see Helmke & Levitsky, 2004; Bratton, 2007; Helmke et al., 2007; MacLean, 2010; Muno, 2012). The existence of these networks in the state does not necessarily undercut the capacity of states to achieve their developmental mandates (Gray & Whitfield, 2014; Mkandawire, 2015). Although social provisioning could suffer from the overbearing influence of clientelist networks and patrimonial relations, these scholars suggest that certain forms of patronage are compatible with efforts to build state capacity and deliver public goods effectively (Grindle, 2012).

Lastly, the territorial reach of the state pertains to the geographical spread of state institutions within a given territory (vom Hau, 2012). Vom Hau contends that this dimension of state capacity encapsulates the “capacity of the state to actually penetrate civil society, and to implement logistically political decisions throughout the realm” (Mann, 1984; vom Hau, 2012, p. 4). The emerging research on the territorial reach of the state is analogous to Mann’s notion of infrastructural power, which explores the extent to which states are able to penetrate society (Mann, 1984). In the SSA context, for instance, Herbst (2000) contends that, in rural areas with a low population density, the establishment of state institutions on the periphery of states is contingent on the ability of the state to collect sufficient taxes. Equally, Boone (2003) shows that subnational variations in state capacity are a function of how political authority is organised. To guarantee their success, institutional choices need to fit with local political organisations. In her study of different rural property regimes in West African states, Boone demonstrates that central state leaders might intentionally refrain from state construction in certain areas of their territory to contain the range of conflict within local society. Thus, the ways in which states penetrate their realms remain critical in political performance and outcomes. This ability, in the view of more recent literature, results from domestic politics and power relations among coalitions of elites and domestic conflicts (vom Hau, 2012). It is to these factors that we will turn next.

2.3.3 State formation and local coalitional relations as drivers of state performance

Recent scholarship on state performance has identified two main drivers, namely historical processes of state formation (see Mahoney, 2000; Pierson, 2011) and coalitional power relations (see Doner et al., 2005; Poteete, 2009; Handley, 2017; Doner & Schneider, 2020).

State formation is conceptualised as long-term processes that cause the development of a centralised government structure within a territory where one did not exist prior to its emergence (Bliesemann de Guevara & Lottholz, 2015). It encompasses processes that lead to particular forms and levels of state capacities. Skocpol (1992), among other scholars, contends that historical patterns of state formation explain the capacities of states to undertake their mandates in social policy, with repercussions for state performance. Within the established literature on state formation, geographical factors (see Herbst, 2000; Stasavage, 2010, 2011), external pressures, demographics, inter-state competition and war (see Tilly, 1990; Centeno, 2002) are often depicted as crucial factors determining the development of state capacity (vom Hau, 2012). Other critical sources include ethnic diversity, other forms of social inequality (see Easterly & Levine, 1997) and capitalist development.

In the developing-world context, two major arenas within which historical trajectories shape state capacities are (1) the speed of state formation and (2) patterns of colonialism and other momentous stages in the life of states. In exploring the pace of state-building, the established literature highlights the role of critical junctures such as wars (Mann, 1984; Tilly, 1990) and social revolutions (Goldstone, 1991; Skocpol, 1994) in transforming state capacities. Recent literature suggests that some less dramatic junctures beyond civil strife and colonial conquest also influence the construction of organisational competences, external embeddedness and the territorial reach of states (vom Hau, 2012).

In examining distinct historical events and their legacies, the literature on the developing world underscores colonialism and its role in shaping state capacities (see Mahoney, 2000; Acemoglu et al., 2001; Collier & Collier, 2002; Mahoney & Thelen, 2010; Pierson, 2011). It is worth stating that even though the initially established colonial institutions have ceased to exist in much of the postcolonial world, the colonial state-building enterprise has left in its wake enduring legacies for contemporary state capacities. However, scholars diverge regarding the specific causal mechanisms that they identify as accounting for this relationship. Some point to power relations

and external embeddedness (see Mahoney, 2010), while others focus on organisational competence and infrastructural power (see Lange, 2009) as the channels through which enduring colonial legacies persist in exerting influence on contemporary state capacities. Mahoney (2010), for instance, has suggested that the emergence of patrimonial elites in Mexico, Peru and Bolivia, compared to the formation of long-term entrepreneurial investments in Argentina, Uruguay and Venezuela, was a result of different legacies of Spanish colonial rule. That is, differences in how colonialism was carried out explain contemporary differences in these two sets of states. In contrast, Lange (2009), in his study of the impact of colonialism on development, concludes that precolonial and postcolonial factors account for little variation in development among former British colonies. Rather, the two main forms of British overseas colonialism – *indirect* and *direct* rule systems – exerted a greater decisive influence on the development of state capacities. Lange (2009) argued that indirect rule established collaborative relations between colonial administrators and traditional rulers. As a result, the bureaucratic capacity of the state was underdeveloped and the dominance of patrimonial relationships resulted in weak state capacities. In contrast, direct rule resulted in an elaborate bureaucratic state with an extensive territorial reach (Lange, 2009; vom Hau, 2012). Literature on colonialism in SSA also suggests causal links between colonial enterprises, state-building and postcolonial state capacity and performance (see Acemoglu et al., 2001; MacLean, 2002; Leibfried et al., 2014; Alexopoulou & Juif, 2017). For instance, Boone (1995), in her study of postcolonial state-building strategies in West Africa, showed that the attempt by the post-independence regime in Ghana to centralise control over state power while undercutting and diluting the power of the neo-traditional notables accounted for the creation of new patron–client structures in rural societies to displace existing ones. In the view of Boone (1995), the regime’s redrawing of administrative units in rural settings aimed at destroying the stratum of rural society that enabled it to dilute rural power sources while also manipulating the lines of authority between and within the hierarchically structured political economies of the southern Akan chieftaincies. Thus, wide-ranging institution building in rural societies was merely an attempt by the postcolonial regime to undermine institutions reinforced via colonial indirect rule through a deliberate “rewiring of the circuits” of rural authority (1995, pp. 28–29).

Beyond the colonial enterprise, various transformations in the postcolonial era have also constituted critical episodes in the development of state capacities in the developing world. The emerging literature suggests that decentralisation and democratisation shape state capacities in different directions (vom Hau, 2012). For instance, decentralisation relocates the arenas of the state and has the potential to reduce the organisational capacity of the central state. Yet decentralisation may also extend the state’s territorial reach. Demands to minimise the role of

central government following financial crises in the 1970s, and the promotion of decentralised governance in the 1980s, necessitated a greater focus on the transformative impacts of decentralisation on state capacities (Ndegwa, 2003; Olowu, 2006; Falleti, 2010). It also required a more thorough exploration of relationships with a host of actors and institutions outside the realms of the central state. Importantly, shifts in the arena of decision-making via decentralised governance have led to a greater focus on the influence of clientelist networks and organised rent-seeking. These networks are pervasive in developing-country contexts and have major implications for state performance (Baiocchi, 2006a,b; vom Hau, 2012).

Regarding democratisation, scholars are increasingly interested in the pathways from democracy to the enhancement of state capacity (see Mazzuca, 2010; Grassi & Memoli, 2016). The emerging literature suggests that democratisation transforms the external embeddedness of states in relation to wider civil society. In democratic settings, state officials interact with larger groups of citizens in policy formulation and implementation (Robinson, 2008). Likewise, elections and competitive pressures associated with mass social mobilisation in democratic settings have consequences for the expansion of the infrastructural reach of the state (Slater, 2008). Some emerging scholarship also suggests that democratisation can undermine the exercise of bureaucratic discretion (see Kohli, 2004; Haggard & Kaufman, 2008). The next section delves further into the role of political competition and coalitional relations as a contemporary process shaping the deployment of state capacity and leading to variation in state performance.

The above review has demonstrated that critical historical junctures constitute major factors in shaping the development of state capacity. Specifically, historical legacies such as precolonial, colonial and postcolonial regimes have consequences for subsequent expansions or transformations in state capacity. The analysis also suggests that other momentous factors such as democratisation and decentralisation influence the development of infrastructural reach, organisational competences and external embeddedness with non-state actors. The causal direction of both historical and contemporary factors on the transformation of state capacities, however, remains contested.

In light of the above, the careful justification of plausible critical junctures is necessary in identifying the historical roots of state capacities for inclusive development. This includes a critical analysis of the role of historical legacies in explaining disparities in state capacities subnationally. Furthermore, and alongside historical factors, close attention must be paid to contemporary patterns of state formation and state capacity. This includes the interaction between the territorial

reach of state organisations and local power holders/configurations in different subnational units. Given these concerns, this thesis will seek to strike a balance between historical and contemporary factors in explaining subnational capacities and state provisioning.

Beyond a focus on the *longue durée* in the transformation of state capacity, competition between and within elite coalitions in the state and society has been identified as a major process shaping the deployment of state capacity and variation in state performance. Scholars who perceive coalitional relations as conducive or disadvantageous factors in the deployment of state capacity argue that state capacity results from a “combination of geopolitical pressures with violence (or the threat thereof) in domestic contexts that drive the formation of state-building coalitions and ‘developmental’ political settlements” (vom Hau, 2012, p. 5). The political-settlements literature reaches comparable conclusions, identifying the balance of power between different social forces and the political organisation of those relationships as key processes driving disparities in institutional capacity (Di John & Putzel, 2009; Khan, 2010; Parks & Cole, 2010). From this perspective, distinct patterns of bargaining among contending elites and between elites and social groups result in the formation of alliances based on interests and institutional dynamics. In turn, these alliances shape variation in institutional performance (Laws, 2012). In the view of these scholars, when ruling coalitions are threatened by strong excluded factions and are fighting for their survival, they are unlikely to provide the long-term credible commitments required to invest in new ventures.

Using mainly historical analyses of cases in South-East Asia, studies by Vu (2007) and Slater (2010) highlight the role of elite coalitions and their influence on the forms of state capacity that eventually emerge. Slater (2010), for instance, finds that where elite “protection pacts” (which emerged through a mixture of dominance and threats) existed among key economic and social groups, there was higher willingness to pay taxes to the central state to invest in building state capacity to suppress widespread and unmanageable opposition. Where the coalition was weak and the perception of threats was low, the resulting pact was enfeebled, as elites were unwilling to pay for protection from an authoritarian Leviathan. Vu (2007) also locates the origins of developmental states – in this case, Indonesia and South Korea – in the interplay between elite unity and mass suppression. In the SSA cases, Poteete (2009), Whitfield and Therkildsen (2011) and Handley (2017) find that relations between elites shape the deployment of state capacity, with consequences for institutional performance. Poteete (2009, p. 545) observes that “politicians with broader political support are more apt to believe that they will reap the benefits from investments in state building”. Conversely, politicians with narrow and unstable coalitions will engage in rentier

activities that hinder state-building. Thus, the balance of power in society is central to the capacity of the state to engage in social provisioning.

Within the literature on coalitional relations, threats of political violence against elites and their interests frequently comprise the bedrock for the formation of developmental coalitions. This assertion has strong foundations with the “bellicist approach” (Centeno, 2002), which suggests that wars and the infrastructure resulting therefrom formed the basis for the construction of modern states and their organisational capacities (see Mann, 1984; Tilly, 1990; Skocpol, 1992). The overarching focus of this coalitional-relations literature is that the balance of power in society shapes the deployment of state capacities to redistribute social resources. Thus, the causal mechanism runs from elite conflicts to coalitions to deployment of state capacity, leading to performance (vom Hau, 2012). The alignments that emerge among elites, the threats to their power and the associated time horizons in turn shape the form and performance of states. Much of the literature within this coalitional approach highlights particular pathways – such as infrastructural power, elite deals or mass repression – through which elite coalitions shape the deployment of state capacity and subsequently state performance.

In the context of developing countries, informal institutions dominate and shape the distribution of power and relations between elites and other social forces (Khan, 2010; Parks & Cole, 2010). These informal institutions are frequently clientelist in nature. This is because they rely heavily on informal organisations, typically patron–client networks, as the basis for the exercise of power (see Bratton & Van de Walle, 1997; Chabal & Daloz, 1999; Whitfield, 2011). Formal institutions in developing countries are also shaped by informal institutions and, as a result, play different roles (Khan, 2010).

The coalition scholarship puts interactions between political and bureaucratic elites and wider social organisations at the forefront of the analysis of factors mediating the translation of state capacity into performance. However, a few gaps remain that require critical examination. To start with, the notion of coalitions and the forms that they take need further refinement. Within the state–society relations literature, scholars incorrectly use a variety of concepts interchangeably to unpack the distribution of power among elites, and coalitions in particular. Additionally, most coalition scholarship does not adequately demonstrate how distinctive forms of “intra-elite conflict” – or “intra-elite cohesion” – are documented across different time periods and cases. There is a need to specify the causal mechanisms that lead from coalitions to state performance.

Second, it is necessary to refine the emerging literature on coalitions because inclusive elite coalitions do not necessarily pursue developmental outcomes (Di John & Putzel, 2009; vom Hau, 2012). This is particularly relevant in the context of developing countries with pervasive informal institutions in the form of clientelism. Although an elite coalition might collaborate to operationalise a pact that ensures their political stability and security, they may be unable (or unwilling) to configure this pact to guarantee inclusive redistribution. It is therefore critical to identify the key forces in society, their form of ties with the state and how interactions within and between them facilitate the promotion of inclusive social provisioning. This study thus explores the specific configurations of power among elite coalitions conducive to promoting inclusive social provisioning, even in contexts with pervasive clientelism.

Finally, the geographical dimension of coalition literature requires further exploration. The extant literature focuses on relations among elite coalitions at national levels of the state. Most of the political-settlements literature, for instance, bases its conclusions on national-level relations among elites. In the context of increased democratic decentralisation of states, the interactions and relations between state elites and non-state actors at the subnational level have wide-ranging consequences for the deployment of state capacity and, in turn, for state performance. This thesis seeks to fill this lacuna in the literature by focusing on subnational elite coalitional relations, how they shape state capacity indirectly via political processes and how this leads to variations in performance.

Overall, the state–society relations literature places a spotlight on the state, its capacities and its relations with society in the implementation of policies and resulting disparities in performance. Of the two main perspectives in understanding the role of the state in policy implementation, the review has identified the society-centred approach as the most compatible with the focus of this study. The review has also highlighted the multidimensionality of state capacity. In the developing-world context, the three dimensions of state capacity – external embeddedness, organisational competences and territorial reach – are shaped by formal and informal institutions in the form of clientelism, democratisation and decentralisation. State formation has also been identified as a driver of state capacity and contemporary configurations of power have been shown to be a mediating factor in shaping how existing capacity is translated into performance. The identification of the causal mechanisms between state formation, the local configuration of power and state performance in social-protection implementation constitutes the primary focus of this thesis. The next section therefore reviews the literature on the political decentralisation of social

services and social protection in the Global South, to help identify critical factors mediating state capacity and state performance in the implementation of these policies.

2.4 Decentralisation, service delivery and institutional performance

The decentralisation of the state underlines the significance of exploring policy implementation in the context of state–society relations at the level of districts and regions (Sellers, 2010). Within developing countries, decentralisation also matters in understanding policy implementation because local government delivers so many services.

The decentralisation of the state involves the transfer of power and other resources of interest to local-level actors and institutions (Rondinelli, 1981). Promoted as part of the neoliberal good governance agenda to “roll back the state” in the 1980s and 1990s, decentralisation was in part a response to perceived failures of centralised provision to facilitate effective and efficient service delivery (Ndegwa, 2003; Olowu, 2006; Falleti, 2010).

The vast decentralisation literature is replete with scholarship on the impacts of decentralisation on institutional performance and outcomes. Decentralisation has been presented as a platform to promote local ownership, control of decisions and governance processes (Sellers, 2010). Other scholars suggest that decentralised governance can improve citizen monitoring of government activities, increase the supervision of local agents at the community level and foster demands for greater accountability in the allocation and targeting of local services. Yet the decentralisation of previously centralised decisions and services leaves central-level elites with limited potential options: establishing power bases at the local level through forging alliances with local elites with similar interests; bypassing locally powerful elites through the use of tightly controlled deconcentrated central agencies for implementation; or challenging local elites through the use of political party structures to avoid local capture (Crook & Sverrisson, 2001).

This section explores the political economy of decentralisation and effects on uneven service-delivery performance. The review highlights five key leads in the literature that are worth exploring further: power relations between the national/regional-level and local-level governments; clientelism and patronage; corruption and leakages; local elite capture; and deficits in organisational and local user-group capacity.

2.4.1 Political economy of decentralised service delivery

Brinkerhoff and Johnson (2008, p. 24) suggest that “decentralisation and state–society relations are profoundly political” and have consequences for institutional performance and outcomes. A variety of political-economy considerations can influence decentralisation, from the initial factors affecting the decision to decentralise to the interests and incentives that shape how decentralisation is implemented. Most of the empirical literature on the political economy of decentralisation focuses on the politics of elite interests. This explores how various political stakeholders openly or clandestinely deploy or manipulate institutions and governance structures in chasing personal benefits or furthering their political agenda (Smoke et al., 2013).

The literature on the political economy of decentralised service delivery focuses on how the relationships between central government and local-level actors and institutions, as well as among different local-level actors, shape implementation effectiveness. Some scholars contend that political decentralisation with strong legal frameworks creates local accountability, promotes the legitimacy of local officials and stimulates citizens’ interests and participation in local politics (Smoke, 2003; Larson and Ribot, 2004; Ribot et al., 2006; Dufhues et al., 2011). Others suggest that participatory local governance can improve citizen monitoring of local-government activities and control and the supervision of local agents at the community level, ultimately deepening democratic institutions and structures (von Braun & Grote, 2000; Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2005). In contrast, several potential negative impacts of political decentralisation have been highlighted in the literature. These include political interference, patronage and clientelist relationships between central and local actors, corruption, political and local capture, interference in bureaucratic professionalism and state-capacity deficits (Conyers, 2007). As this review suggests, political-economy factors can either sustain or subvert decentralisation, and the nature and strength of these factors can shift meaningfully over time. Careful assessment of these political factors and how they influence subnational policy implementation is therefore required.

The power relations between the national/regional-level and local-level government are often identified as a key factor in the functioning of decentralised implementation of state policies. The majority of the literature on national and local power relations has, however, taken the form of qualitative case studies at the macro and meso levels (see Jütting et al., 2005; Ribot et al., 2006; Crawford, 2009). This obscures the role of micro-level power relations among actors at the centre and local levels in shaping implementation performance. These macro/meso studies indicate that the links between public agencies and local politicians are of some considerable significance for service-delivery effectiveness (Alesina & Tabellini, 2004; Mookherjee & De Souza, 2004; Besley & Ghatak, 2007). On the one hand, these studies suggest that decentralised implementation has

shaped the distribution of power and resources among actors and in turn transformed the patterns of interactions of actors at the central and local levels (Crook & Sverrisson, 2001). In contrast, decentralised implementation enhances the control of central state elites over local elites and their implementation structures (Bergh, 2004). Centre-based coalitions and groups with vested interests in the local state who face a potential loss of control over resources may undermine the decentralisation process, with consequences for implementation effectiveness (see Crook & Manor, 1998; Crook, 2003).

Beyond the role of national elites in undermining decentralised implementation, Brinkerhoff and Johnson (2008) maintain that decentralisation can also enhance the power and influence of local strongmen who dominate the state and undermine the control of the central government. These local actors tend to undercut service-delivery effectiveness and poverty-reduction outcomes of centrally driven but locally implemented programmes (Bukonya & Golooba-Mutebi, 2020). Overall, gaps remain in the literature in respect of power relations between actors at the national and local levels and between local-level actors. An analysis of power relations among actors at both the central and local levels of the state will therefore form a core focus of this thesis.

The role of political interference, clientelism and patronage in the distribution of resources is another factor undercutting the effectiveness of decentralised service delivery. Most of the work on clientelism and patronage in the distribution of resources has taken the form of case studies (see Jütting et al., 2004, 2005; Crawford & Hartmann, 2008; Hernández-Trillo & Jarillo-Rabling, 2008; Crawford, 2009; Foresti et al., 2013). These studies mainly address the influence of political contestations on clientelism and patronage in the allocation and distribution of decentralised resources (see also von Braun & Grote, 2000; Alderman, 2002; Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2005; Conyers, 2007). The links between political competition, the alignment of national and local parties, and the potential for programmatic or clientelist allocation of social resources remain critical in shaping the performance and outcomes of decentralised policy implementation. Nonetheless, the majority of the extant literature concentrates on identifying how national political competition engenders patronage opportunities and clientelistic appointments, leading to poor decentralised implementation outcomes (Crook & Sverrisson, 2001; Booth, 2010). Only a few studies focus on how decentralisation undermines patronage allocation and clientelistic distribution at micro levels of the state (Crook & Sverrisson, 1999, 2003). This study seeks to fill this gap by examining how decentralised provisioning promotes and undermines patronage allocation and clientelist distribution, leading to variation in service-delivery performance and

outcomes. It also explores how subnational political competition, and the alignment of national and local parties, shape decentralised service delivery.

Closely linked to clientelism and patronage distribution is corruption and leakages in resources, from the centre to the local level, which undermine effectiveness in decentralised service delivery. The introduction of decentralisation was envisioned to overcome problems with clientelism and corruption by presenting avenues for accountability to address the historically entrenched system of political interests that characterised policy implementation. Decentralisation theoretically provides marginalised groups with opportunities to engage decision-makers and create stronger lines of accountability between local politicians and their constituents. Despite this, accountability failures are common under decentralisation, resulting in poor service provision. Besides, fragmentation of the state can result in misallocation of public resources, corruption and leakages, as bureaucrats may overstate costs and/or under-invoice (see Crook & Sverrisson, 1999; von Braun & Grote, 2000; Reinikka & Svensson, 2004; Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2005; Jütting et al., 2005). Much scholarship in this area is quantitative in nature and, as with the literature reviewed above, primarily focuses on the macro and meso levels. Most shows how decentralised transfers lead to leakages in the distribution of resources (see Reinikka & Svensson, 2004; De Grauwe et al., 2005; Ampratwum & Armah-Attoh, 2010). Nonetheless, a few studies have found that, in fact, decentralisation may sometimes undermine the capacity for local elites to corruptly distribute state resources (Crook & Manor, 1998; Crook & Sverrisson, 2001). The connection between corruption and ineffective service delivery is well established. The literature has also highlighted the complex relations between decentralisation, accountability and improved service delivery. This study builds on this literature, using qualitative rather than quantitative methods, to explore how decentralisation undermines accountability or promotes corruption and leakage, and with consequences for effectiveness in social-resource distribution. Application of the qualitative approach enables a critical examination of the situational contexts that influence how decentralisation promotes or undermines corruption. It also permits in-depth and detailed analysis of how decentralisation stimulates or undercuts accountability, using multiple sources of evidence.

Local capture, a factor related to corruption, also features prominently in the literature as a key political-economy issue associated with ineffectiveness in the decentralised delivery of social services and resources (see Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2000; Poteete & Ribot, 2011). Local capture refers to the “skimming off of public resources by influential community members” (Smoke et al., 2013, p. 89). Once again, the literature mainly focuses on the meso and macro levels. The few studies at the micro level do, however, offer some critical insights into the linkages between access

to information and the tendency for elite capture. For instance, some scholars have argued that decentralisation enhances the opportunities for local people to participate in decision-making, leading to improved allocation and targeting of poverty-reduction programmes (see Ahmad et al., 2005; see also Smoke, 2003; Larson & Ribot, 2004). However, literacy and access to information on the part of citizens, particularly among marginalised groups, remains a significant hurdle to inclusive and meaningful participation. Further, other scholars have countered that decentralisation does not promote meaningful local-level participation in decision-making but, instead, could make the system prone to local capture or manipulation by central-government officials (Larson & Ribot, 2004; Andersson, 2006; Andersson & Ostrom, 2008; Poteete & Ribot, 2011). Where individuals at the local level are not meaningfully engaged, decentralisation may only enhance the power of local-level elites who capture the decision-making processes at the village level, while undermining the ability of marginalised groups – such as women – to participate in decision-making (Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2000; Joshi, 2013). Compared to national and regional levels, the issue of elite capture at the local level has received less attention and is treated with less depth in the literature (Smoke et al., 2013). This thesis focuses on micro levels through comparative case studies. It departs from the extant literature, which relies primarily on quantitative methods focused on individual case studies. It thus builds on the limited number of studies that use qualitative approaches to explore how decentralised social provisioning enhances the ability of local elites to capture and (mis)allocate locally distributed resources. It also examines how decentralisation promotes the participation of local vulnerable groups, undermining the tendency for political and local elites to capture locally distributed services.

Bureaucratic professionalism and organisational competences have also been identified as other major factors that affect how decentralisation leads to improvement in development outcomes. The established literature suggests that appropriate capacity, in terms of organisational competences of local bureaucrats, is essential for effectiveness in local service delivery (Tendler, 1997; De Neubourg, 2002; Besley et al., 2003; Mathauer, 2004). Local governments need the capacity to assume their mandates efficiently and meaningfully under decentralisation. Equally, local citizens need the capacity to engage with local governments productively and demand accountability from them. A growing number of studies examine the capacity of local governments and local-government bureaucrats and their role in the effective implementation of policies at decentralised levels (see Larson, 2003; Kivumbi et al., 2004; Jütting et al., 2005; Ribot et al., 2006; Conyers, 2007). Some studies suggest that decentralisation could actually enhance the capacity of bureaucrats and result in improved outcomes through the increased allocation of discretionary powers to local state officials (Tendler, 1997). Conversely, deficits in organisational competences

and an absence of bureaucratic autonomy have been identified as major bottlenecks preventing decentralisation from improving development outcomes. Some studies suggest that problems with local capacity – such as understaffing, personnel attrition, lack of relevant qualifications, underfunding and the lack of familiarity with implementation processes – undermine the delivery of public services (Bird & Rodriguez, 1999; Bergh, 2004; Kivumbi et al., 2004; Jütting et al., 2005; Booth, 2010). This study explores the extent to which decentralisation influences organisational competences and bureaucratic discretion to promote or subvert effectiveness in service delivery and, in turn, performance and outcomes.

Finally, a few studies also focus on the capacity of local citizens or user groups to engage with local-government institutions and hold them accountable. This is presented as a pivotal factor in the effective functioning of decentralised policy implementation (Agrawal & Ostrom, 2001; Dauda, 2004; Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2005; Golooba-Mutebi, 2005; Ampratwum & Armah-Attoh, 2010). Qualitative studies at the meso and micro level offer some valuable insights into the role of citizen capacity in shaping decentralised service-delivery effectiveness (Tendler, 1997; Dauda, 2004; De Grauwe et al., 2005). However, it is worth noting that these issues of local user-group/citizen-group capacity have received significantly less attention than the other issues shaping decentralised policy implementation discussed above. The role of user groups on the effectiveness of decentralised service delivery is therefore examined in this study.

The above review highlights key gaps in the literature that are worth exploring. First, though the literature analysing power relations between national and regional levels is quite dense, few scholars have explored power relations between actors at the national and local levels and between local-level actors, including the implications for implementation effectiveness. Second, there are limited studies exploring how subnational variation in local political competition can moderate or heighten the extent of patronage distribution and clientelistic allocation of resources, leading to variation in service-delivery performance and outcomes. Third, little of the literature has investigated how decentralisation may sometimes undermine the capacity for local elites to corruptly dissipate state resources. Conversely, elite capture and its influence on local implementation performance has received only limited attention in the existing literature. Finally, the influence of deficits in the organisational competences of bureaucrats at the local level, and the role of local user groups in boosting local capacity to demand improved service delivery, remains under-researched.

2.5 Decentralisation, social provisioning and state performance

As discussed briefly above, there is a modest but growing literature examining the implementation of social-protection policies in the Global South (Barrientos & Hulme, 2008). In Latin America, for instance, most of the reviewed research explores the distribution of conditional cash transfers (CCTs) and food-assistance programmes (see Nichter, 2014; Weitz-Shapiro, 2014; Niedzwiecki, 2018). These studies are mainly concerned with programme design and beneficiary behaviours rather than programme implementation. In South Asia, the literature evaluated primarily concentrates on old-age pensions, public-works schemes, school bursaries and food-assistance programmes (see Pellissery, 2006, 2008; Chopra, 2014; Roy, 2015). Most South Asian studies focus on programme implementation through single case studies, while fewer employ comparative approaches. Very few studies examine uneven implementation performance through a political lens involving different levels of the state and society using comparative case studies.

2.5.1 Political economy of decentralised social-protection provisioning

The literature on decentralised social-protection provisioning in the Global South has examined a range of political-economy factors and their influence on implementation outcomes. Political commitment, political interference and clientelism, political mis/alignment, political capture and bureaucratic professionalism and organisational competences constitute the key variables found to shape implementation performance and outcomes (Arulampalam et al., 2009; Mukhopadhyay, 2012; Gupta & Mukhopadhyay, 2014). These factors can either support or undermine the effective implementation of decentralised social-protection programmes. There is a need to assess these political factors and how they affect subnational implementation. The analysis below highlights the main gaps in the emerging literature on the political economy of decentralised social provisioning.

First, most of the emerging literature on social-protection provisioning focuses on clientelist allocation and patronage distribution of resources. The intensity of political competition between parties at the district level is shown to be critical in the clientelist allocation of social-protection resources from the national to the district level and from the district to the community level. This is demonstrated in the studies of Arulampalam et al. (2009), De Neve and Carswell (2011), Nichter (2014), Weitz-Shapiro (2014) and Das (2015). This suggests that it is worth exploring in the context of social-protection implementation in Ghana. Most studies suggest that the intensity of political competition shapes the allocation of grants from the national to the regional state (Arulampalam et al., 2009; Mukhopadhyay, 2012; Gupta & Mukhopadhyay, 2014). In some instances, national-level actors use information on voting patterns to direct grants and release funds

to “swing” states rather than to states that are politically aligned to the central government (Arulampalam et al., 2009). A review of the literature shows that the majority of studies adopt quantitative approaches (see Bardhan and Mookherjee, 2000; Arulampalam et al., 2009; Jha et al., 2009; Bardhan, 2008; Mukhopadhyay, 2012). Fewer studies explore the influence of political competition using mixed or qualitative approaches (Chopra, 2014, 2015; Maiorano, 2014).

Beyond the influence of political competition on resource allocation to regional and district levels, political competition at the local level also influences the local targeting of households, with implications for outcomes. Some of the literature shows how political competition shapes the intensity of patronage practices in localities governed by the ruling state party compared to those governed by opposing parties (Das, 2015; Maiorano et al., 2018). A few studies, however, examine how political competition at the local level shapes patronage allocation to households within localities, based on their association with the ruling party or political opposition (De Neve & Carswell, 2011; Nichter, 2014; Weitz-Shapiro, 2014). This study seeks to build on this literature in two distinct ways: examining how district competition influences community-level allocation in clientelist and programmatic ways; and exploring how competition shapes patronage and clientelism within the household allocation of resources.

Second, corruption and leakages in the distribution of resources constitute another major factor affecting social-protection implementation performance. As indicated earlier, decentralisation may extend the geographical spread of state institutions. An adequate presence of state institutions within a given territory draws decision-makers closer to service users and beneficiaries. It also empowers local social-services providers with in-depth information about beneficiaries. The key objective of decentralised provisioning in a poverty-targeted programme is better access for bureaucrats to local information on the circumstances of the poor. In theory, this information enables local bureaucrats to better target resources at the poor, and some studies have shown that localised implementation promotes effective targeting of beneficiaries and improved institutional performance (Alderman, 2002). In other cases, wider collaborations between local state bureaucrats, civil society and “unionisation” have been credited with improving access to information on the poor and, thus, better targeting (Maiorano, 2014). However, the established literature suggests that decentralised social-protection provisioning has consequences for leakage and corruption, as local officials may end up diverting resources or using them to benefit particular target groups (Weitz-Shapiro, 2012; Winters & Weitz-Shapiro, 2013). For example, studies have identified that the decentralised targeting of workdays in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme empowered local bureaucrats to apportion these allocations

corruptly (Niehaus & Sukhtankar, 2013). Some studies have explored how the decentralised allocation of public-works schemes provided local councillors with another budget to control and an additional resource for the development of patron–client relationships (De Neve & Carswell, 2011). Some other studies have also examined how decentralised allocation of resources heightened the tendency for elite capture (Jha et al., 2009; Roy, 2014, 2015). Hence, the conditions under which decentralised delivery has promoted or undermined corruption and local capture in the allocation and distribution of social-protection programmes is worth examining further in the Ghana context.

Finally, deficits in organisational competences and infringements of the autonomy of local bureaucrats have been found to heighten the propensity for ineffective social-protection provisioning. Some of the emerging scholarship, using qualitative approaches, highlights the relationship between organisational competences and institutional performance at the local level (Carswell & De Neve, 2014; Chopra, 2014). These studies observe that where local bureaucrats have support in respect of personnel, funding and requisite training, implementation outcomes were more inclusive (Carswell & De Neve, 2014). However, other scholars have found that decentralised provisioning in a context of poor human-resources distribution, training and qualifications can weaken the capacity of local bureaucrats and expose them to pressure from local politicians (Maiorano, 2014). These dynamics constitute the focus of this research. Away from the influence of deficits in organisational capacity, there is little literature exploring the influence of elite pressures on bureaucratic professionalism and its consequences for resource distribution and targeting of social resources at the local level. Those studies that do exist reveal that the degree of independence bureaucrats enjoy from local political actors and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) influences their ability to effectively implement their mandates. Where bureaucrats enjoyed higher autonomy, performance was higher, and vice versa (Maiorano, 2014; Brierley, 2016; Kramon, 2019). This study builds on this emerging literature by tracing the links between the degree of organisational competence and bureaucratic autonomy on the one hand and decentralised state performance on the other.

Overall, three main gaps have emerged in this review of the literature of the political economy of decentralised social provisioning. To begin with, studies focused on public-works schemes in South Asia have identified the intensity of political competition, the nature of political alignments between local and national parties, power relations between nationally and locally based elites, clientelism and patronage, and corruption and capture as key mediating factors shaping decentralised implementation and performance. Centre–local political competition between parties

at the national and district level remains crucial in the allocation of decentralised social-protection resources. Nonetheless, local-level inter- and intra-party political competition is also critical for resource distribution, with implications for inclusive social provisioning. Moreover, the influence of political contestations on the clientelist allocation and patronage distribution of decentralised resources also shape decentralised implementation performance. Importantly, corruption and leakage in decentralised delivery thrives on a lack of transparency and limited access to information, with implications for uneven implementation outcomes. There is a need to understand how these factors mediate the promotion or subversion of state capacities, power relations and state performance.

In the second place, studies in both South Asia and Latin America have identified political and local capture as critical factors shaping variation in performance. In the context of South Asia, the role of class and caste in elite capture is well established. Yet these studies have limited insights into capture involving powerful social actors such as traditional leaders, which is a critical aspect of civil society in the SSA context. In this context, local traditional leaders often act as power brokers between the political leadership and the citizenry. They also serve as agents of development at the community level. Hence, there is a need for more research on how powerful social actors, such as traditional leaders, facilitate or undermine local capture in decentralised social provisioning, with consequences for transparent and equitable distribution.

Lastly, the review has established the existence of strong relationships between deficits in organisational competences, bureaucratic discretion and institutional performance at the local level. The emerging literature shows that an effective and accountable bureaucracy is a prerequisite for successful state-led forms of social provisioning. It also demonstrates the ways in which informal networks shape the capacity and autonomy of subnational bureaucrats to deliver on their social-provisioning mandates. However, many of the South Asian studies reviewed focused on public-works schemes rather than CCTs, which are a different type of programme involving different delivery mechanisms. CCTs require specific competences of state bureaucrats and the deployment of requisite logistics at the local level. Further, given that bureaucrats have to undertake their mandate in a context of influential political and social elites, this has the potential to undermine their autonomy. This study thus seeks to contribute to this literature by examining the specific conditions and circumstances that allow bureaucrats in the SSA context to act developmentally, even in the context of endemic clientelist networks.

2.6 Chapter summary

This review of the literature provides critical insights for constructing a conceptual framework for understanding the drivers of variation in performance in decentralised social-protection provisioning (see Chapter 3). It has covered both the policy-implementation and state–society relations literatures. Drawing on the society-centred perspective of the state–society relations literature, it has examined how the state accommodates new forms of institutions in society, increasing its capacity and also creating new forms of relations with actors in society. From this vantage point, the study has approached state capacity as a multidimensional concept incorporating three distinct characteristics: external embeddedness, organisational competences and territorial reach. It has analysed legacies of state formation as a factor in driving the expansion of state capacity. It has also examined the literature on how configurations of power mediates the deployment of state capacity, leading to variation in state performance.

This review has also drawn upon knowledge from the established political economy of decentralised service delivery and the emerging literature on the political economy of social protection. Insights from this literature have enabled the identification of key social relationships mediating the decentralised implementation of policies in Global South contexts, with consequences for unevenness in state performance. Together, these factors form the key ingredients in the construction of the conceptual framework on the politics of social-protection implementation, as set out in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

Conceptual framework and research strategy

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the design guiding this research. It begins with a detailed exploration of the conceptual framework. The framework traces causal mechanisms from legacies of state formation to state capacity. It also specifies pathways from political configurations to state performance. In addition to the detailed conceptual framework, the chapter sets out the case selection, research strategy and methodology guiding this research.

3.2 Conceptualising state capacity and state performance

This section presents a conceptual framework for exploring the political drivers of policy implementation with regard to the decentralised provision of social protection. It builds on the key strands of the state–society relations literature identified in Chapter 2 to construct a framework on politics of social-protection implementation. This framework identifies legacies of state formation as a driver of state capacity, and the configuration of power as a mediating factor that elicits the deployment of existing state capacity leading to state performance.

States play essential roles in the implementation and performance of policies. As discussed in the previous chapter, state performance relates to the actual accomplishments of states: what states are actually able to achieve (Centeno et al., 2017). Yet the performance of a state cannot be disconnected from the resistance it might face or the extent of the collaboration it might enjoy in the pursuit of its goals (Centeno et al., 2017). Thus, state performance must be conceptualised as a combination of state capacity and political processes that shape whether and how state capacity is deployed. In contrast to state performance, state capacity relates to the extent to which state institutions are able to undertake their commonly accepted mandates in terms of “organizational design, training, cohesion, and reach” (Centeno et al., 2017, p. 4). This research builds on Cammett and MacLean’s (2011) and vom Hau’s (2012) multidimensional conceptualisation of state capacity, which highlights three distinct dimensions: internal, external and territorial components. The internal component relates to the administrative competences of state institutions pertaining to expertise and levels of professionalism, while the external component relates to embeddedness in society. The final constituent relates to the territorial reach of the state as highlighted in Chapter 2.

How each of these three components of state capacity interact with political dynamics to produce varying levels of state performance is a function of the presence of formal and informal institutions. In the context of the developing world, the existence of informal networks does not necessarily undercut the capacity of states to achieve their developmental mandates. Indeed, the presence of certain forms of informal networks can sometimes reinforce efforts to build state capacity and deliver public goods successfully.

3.3 Pathways to state performance: tracing state formation and local configurations of power

The literature review in Chapter 2 suggests two main drivers of state performance, historical processes of state formation and state capacity, and more contemporary configurations of power, including at the local level in the context of decentralised provision. As indicated in Chapter 2, state formation denotes the long-term processes that cause the development of a centralised government structure within a territory where one did not exist prior to its emergence (Bliesemann de Guevara & Lottholz, 2015). By focusing on state formation, this study explores the extent to which variation in implementation performance in given periods was influenced by institutional path dependencies arising from historical legacies (see Lange, 2009; Bebbington et al., 2017). In terms of local configuration of power, the research identifies two sub-notions: the nature of political competition and the balance of power among political and social actors (Khan, 2010; Parks & Cole, 2010). By focusing on local configurations of power, this thesis explores the extent to which differences in implementation performance in prescribed periods of time were affected by contemporary political factors arising from political coalitions, the nature of threats faced by elites and the time horizons of elites (see Poteete, 2009; Centeno et al., 2017; Handley, 2017).

3.3.1 Historical legacies of state formation as driver of state capacity

State formation is relevant in transforming capacities of states. This is because the process of capacity-building by states remains a long-term enterprise (vom Hau, 2012; Centeno et al., 2017). That said, given the strong influence of institutional and political legacies in many countries around the world, state formation remains pertinent to the nature and functioning of present-day capabilities of states (Collier & Collier, 2002; Pierson, 2011; vom Hau, 2012).

In the context of the developing world, major arenas in which historical trajectories shape the speed of state formation are momentous events in the life of states, including the patterns of colonialism. First, the speed and duration of state-building influences state capacity. The established literature suggests that critical episodes such as wars and revolutions catalyse state-

formation processes and result in alterations to the existing capacity of states through the disruption of existing institutions of those states. Second, colonialism emerged as a strong historical force in state formation, with consequences for alteration in state capacities (Centeno et al., 2017; Mkandawire, 2017). The analytical emphasis of this institutionalist literature is that colonialism and postcolonial legacies have an influence on the expansion on the territorialised dimensions of state power and organisational competences. Significantly, some scholars associated with this literature concentrate on how colonial transformation of precolonial state-building structures via what are now called Traditional Authorities (TAs) shape post-independence state capacity, particularly in respect of the relations between non-state actors and state bureaucrats.

The main argument proffered in the above state-formation literature is that momentous events remain critical in driving the speed and direction of state formation, leading to disparities in transformation in state capacities. Early/faster state incorporation is sometimes associated with better deployment of state resources within the territory of the state. In contrast, late or slower state incorporation is sometimes associated with lower distribution of state resources. Importantly, while direct rule under colonialism was associated with the development of elaborate bureaucratic institutions with territorial reach, indirect rule was associated with underdeveloped bureaucratic institutions and formation of patrimonial relationships (Lange, 2004, 2009; Richens, 2009). Colonial legacies and the transformations thereof remain critical in identifying the cause of unevenness in state capacities, given the recognition of the role of the *longue durée* of state-building. Yet the fact that the existence of relatively strong precolonial state institutions or capacity expansions in the early postcolonial period have sometimes resulted in high or low performance over time makes a focus on colonialism alone insufficient. Besides, given the fact that countries sometimes develop significant state-capacity expansions despite their varied historical capacity endowments (which have resulted in sudden over- or underperformance), necessitates the exploration of factors beyond colonialism as structural causes of state capacity.

Thus, this research examines the role of historical legacies – precolonial structures, colonialism and postcolonial state institutional and political structures – in shaping contemporary capacities of states. To examine the extent to which historical legacies of state formation shape state capacity and performance, the study hypothesises that:

- Higher levels of state formation are associated with strong state capacity, leading to high state performance in social-protection provisioning.

- Lower levels of state formation are associated with weak state capacity, leading to low state performance in social-protection provisioning.

3.3.2 Local configurations of power as a mediating factor of state capacity leading to state performance

The configuration of power is a critical intervening factor influencing how existing state capacity is translated into state performance. The contemporary literature suggests that the nature of power configurations is informed by the degree of competition between political parties and the nature of political coalitions. Competition between and within political parties in the state influences how existing historical endowments of states are deployed, leading to state performance (Centeno et al., 2017; Handley, 2017). Equally, Centeno et al. (2017) suggest that political coalitions remain essential in determining how state capacity is transformed into a multiplicity of outcomes. Political coalitions are “a group of actors that coordinate their behaviour in a limited and temporary fashion to achieve a common goal” (Fogarty, 2007, p. 1). The coalitional literature argues that political coalitions, the threats of violence and resistance they encounter and/or the support they garner in society affect the deployment of state capacity, which is translated into variation of performance. The analytical focus of emerging coalitional literature is premised on the proposition that the balance of power amongst powerful actors in society affects the organisation of capacities leading to state performance (vom Hau, 2012). It builds on the more contemporary literature, which attributes the underlying political settlements and the political organisations of those relationships as a driver of disparities in performance in respect of economic growth, the promotion of social order and the redistribution of social resources. There is thus the need to specify the different coalitions in society that intervene in the deployment of state capacity towards pursuing or (undermining) inclusive social provisioning. There is also the need to understand how states exert their capacity as well as how they engender and demonstrate support from society using available political mechanisms.

The fulcrum of the argument of coalitional scholarship is that the deployment of state capacities to stimulate growth and facilitate inclusive social provisioning is shaped by the balance of power among contending elite actors and social forces in society, with consequences for variation in state performance (Di John & Putzel, 2009; Khan, 2010). In the view of this literature, the causal mechanism runs from elite conflicts to the emergence of coalitions to the deployment of existing state capacity, leading to performance (vom Hau, 2012). In turn, the alignments that emerge among elites, the threats to their power and the associated time horizons shape the form and performance

of states (Slater, 2010). Consequently, threats of political violence against elite coalitions frequently constitute the bedrock of alliances among state-building coalitions. This position is consistent with the analysis of North, Wallis and Weingast (2009), who contend that state-building is an inherently political process as institutions of state exist to manage conflicts and the threat of violence from powerful social forces. “Dominant coalitions”, and the interactions among the elites embedded in these coalitions, shape the deployment of state capacities, leading to variation in state performance. Thus, where the ruling coalition perceives the threat to its power as weak, given its perceived dominance in relation to other elite and non-elite groups, it may enable them to adopt longer-term horizons to promote developmental reforms through effectively buying-off opponents (provisioning pacts). In contrast, where the ruling coalition perceives greater challenges to its power, it may resort to using clientelist routes to maintain control and loyalty through the formation of new elite alliances. To assess the extent to which local configurations of power intervene in the deployment of existing state capacity, resulting in varying levels of performance, the study propositions the following relationships:

- Limited threats of turnover are associated with strong state performance in the provisioning of social protection.
- Enhanced threats of turnover are associated with weak state performance in social-protection provisioning.

The influence of configurations of power on state performance has thus become the subject of increased academic inquiry (vom Hau, 2012). In examining the ways in which the political agency of elites and coalitions mediates the deployment of state capacity, which ultimately leads to state performance, the literature explores two contemporary dynamics as being particularly important: democratisation and decentralisation. In respect of democratisation, the literature has shown the ways in which intensified political competition in the context of continued clientelism can undermine the ability of state officials to take tough decisions and influence the types of projects that states pursue and the political distribution of public resources. In terms of decentralisation, the literature has revealed that much as decentralisation promotes an extension of the territorial reach of states, aside from the potential for enhancing central control, it can also displace the arenas of the state and reduce its organisational capacities. Significantly, shifts in the arena of decision-making via decentralised governance are directly shaped by local power relations between actors in the state and society. In the context of the developing world, where patron–client networks are pervasive, decentralised delivery increases the predisposition for clientelist allocation and patronage distribution, together with corruption and leakage in distribution of public goods

(Carbone, 2011, 2012; Whitfield & Therkildsen, 2011). Decentralised implementation also intensifies susceptibility for local capture by powerful social actors, including traditional leaders (Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2000; Baldwin & Strauss, 2019).

This research, cognisant of the relevance of democratisation and decentralisation in shaping the deployment of state capacities directly and indirectly, especially in the context of the Global South, examines the specific configuration of elite coalitions and their electoral turnover threats across different cases as factors mediating the deployment of state capacities, leading to variation in social-provisioning performance.

3.3.3 Operationalising state performance in a targeted social-protection programme

As indicated in Chapter 2, state performance results from a combination of a state's initial capacity and the contemporary political context (Centeno et al., 2017, p. 3). This section of the research operationalises state performance in social-protection implementation based on two main outcomes: *effectiveness* and *impartiality*.

The research assesses effectiveness in the delivery of grants to households in conformity with established payment cycles. Effectiveness can be defined as “the capability of producing a desired result or the ability to produce desired output. When something is deemed effective, it means it has an intended or expected outcome” (Lock Lee, 2018, p. 1). Walker and Bechet (1991, p. 235, citing Drucker, 1973) distinguished effectiveness from efficiency. In their view, “effectiveness relates the results of activities to the achievement of objectives (i.e., ‘are we doing the right things?’) whereas efficiency relates the yield of outputs to the energy, time, or resources applied as inputs (i.e., ‘are we doing things right?’)” (Drucker, 1973, as cited in Walker & Bechet, 2001, p. 235). In the view of these scholars, effectiveness is the ability of states to deliver collective goods that will enlarge the capabilities of their citizens. Thus, the ability of states to deliver resources to the identified groups within a specified period of time demonstrates effectiveness, which is an outcome of state capacity.

Within the social-protection literature, the assessment of effectiveness centres on the quality of provision, though this is difficult to measure. Some indicators relate to the timeliness of grant transfers, the regularity of transfers and adherence to a predictable delivery process (European Union, 2017, p. 21). For social grants to be effective, they must be delivered in a reasonable time frame, on a regular basis and in full to “protect poor households from the impacts of shocks,

including erosion of productive assets and minimizing negative coping practices; while helping to build capacity over time, smoothing consumption and allowing for investments” (Calef et al., 2017, p. 5). Again, for grants to be effective, they must reach beneficiaries in agreed locations that are accessible to and within a short travel distance from their communities, minimising the financial and temporal costs of assessing grants. Significantly, delivery is effective where beneficiaries receive their grants without experiencing the inconvenience of long waiting periods. Hence, regularity, timeliness and the capacity to deliver grants at locations accessible to recipients are important measures of effectiveness.

Based on this discussion and for the purposes of this study, this research assesses regularity in terms of the payment period per cycle and timeliness in terms of the punctuality of officials at payment centres. The study also measures accessibility in terms of the distance households must travel to receive grants and the waiting period in respect of the length of time recipients queue to access their grants. Where grants are administered on a regular basis, the distance to pay points is shorter than in the other districts and the length of time it takes beneficiaries to receive their grants is shorter, the process is classified as *more effective*. *More effectiveness* means that recipients can expect regular and punctual distribution. They are also able to receive their grants after a shorter waiting period at locations within their communities. In contrast, where grant delivery is characterised by an irregular pattern and tardiness in the delivery schedule, where the distance to pay points is longer than in the other districts and where recipients spend longer times at pay points to access grants than in the other districts, the process is said to be *less effective*. *Less effectiveness* means that Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) programme recipients cannot predict when the payments will take place and that payment sessions are characterised by tardiness on the part of the service provider. In addition, in a context of *less effectiveness*, recipients access their grants after a longer waiting period at locations outside their own communities.

This research has also examined impartiality in the implementation of social-protection programmes in respect to the application of guidelines in the selection of eligible communities and households. This is critical to ensure that the distribution of benefits is guided by transparent and formal rules for these programmes to achieve their desired welfare effects and poverty-reduction outcomes (Kramon, 2019). Strömberg (2000, as cited in Rothstein and Teorell, 2008), for instance, has defined impartiality as a procedural norm in the exercise of public power. Cupit (2000), in contrast, adopts a broad view, conceptualising impartiality as “acting in ways that are unmoved by certain considerations such as special relationships and personal preferences” (p. 170). Building on this scholarship, Rothstein and Teorell (2008) view impartiality as an attribute of various

administrative procedures and practices adopted by persons with governmental authority. This is a narrower view of the concept of impartiality, as it relates to bureaucrats in the application of their mandates. Thus, where impartiality is applied to the recruitment of a civil servant it suggests that selection is based on qualifications agreed upon and cast in advance of the recruitment process as the *sine qua non* for the position. On the other hand, where recruitment is partial and based on clientelist logics, personal contacts and payment of bribes, the principle of impartiality is undermined. Rothstein and Teorell (2008) further argue that impartiality should go beyond the extent to which bureaucrats can uphold the rules to ensure that membership of groups as defined by guidelines in relation to public service delivery are the actual beneficiaries. It pertains to the ability of bureaucrats to identify, coordinate and regulate access to the programme as defined in the policy guidelines.

Within the context of social-protection provisioning, impartiality suggests the provision of benefits in the absence of bias, exclusion and discrimination in reaching the most vulnerable groups irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, religion or political beliefs (Tearfund, 2000; Harvey et al., 2007). The emerging social-protection literature suggests that for social programmes to achieve their desired welfare effects and poverty-reduction outcomes, mechanisms and criteria for selecting and targeting households must be *impartial* – “where the distribution of benefits is guided by transparent and formal rules and access is not contingent on political behaviour or related to political considerations” (Stokes et al., 2013, as cited in Kramon, 2019, p. 2).

In the context of LEAP implementation, this research explores impartiality in terms of allocation and targeting of communities and households. Given the lack of official benchmarks and the limited number of cases examined in this research, this thesis evaluates impartiality in targeting in relative terms. There is *more impartiality* where there is stringent and transparent application of the policy guidelines in the face of opposition from politicians, social and special-interest groups at the district and community levels in the allocation and selection of communities and households.¹¹ In contrast, there is *less impartiality* when bureaucrats are unable to transparently uphold the rules to identify, coordinate and regulate access to actual target groups, as well as non-rule-based application of guidelines by bureaucrats and an absence of support from politicians to enforce the application of guidelines. In a context of *less impartiality*, allocation to districts, communities and households is not based on transparent application guidelines and is instead in

¹¹ This is not to discount that fact that the guidelines themselves could be partial (e.g., setting criteria that would favour a political important region) but this is beyond the scope of analysis of this research.

favour of politically influential groups, while access to the programme is informed by informal rules. There is also no political support to enforce rule-based application of the programme guidelines.

The framework below (Figure 3.1) traces the causal pathways from state formation and local configurations of power that may shape how well states perform in delivering social protection in effective and impartial ways.

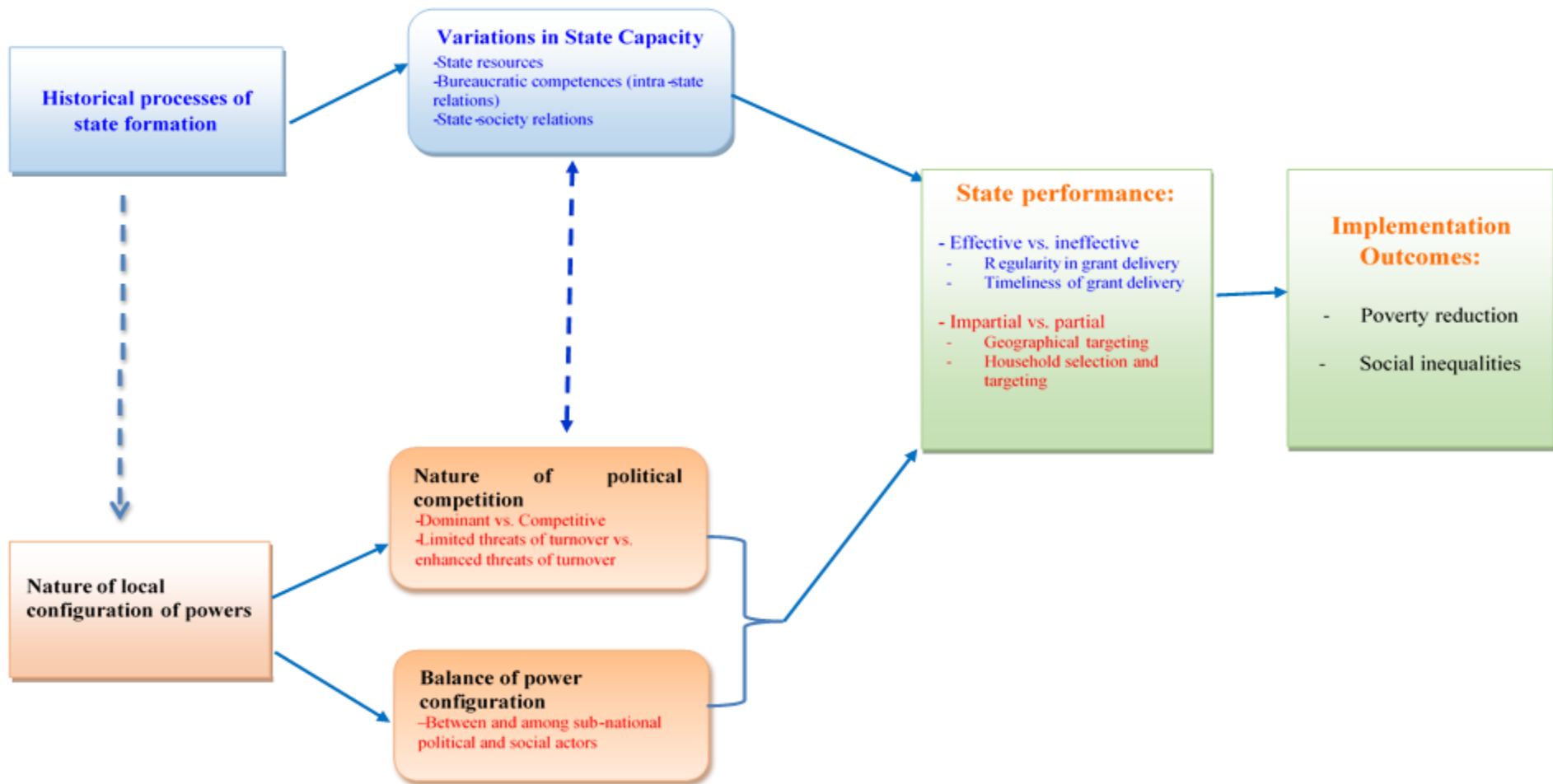


Figure 3.1: The conceptual mapping of the politics of social-protection implementation
 Source: Author's construction, drawing on adaptations of Centeno et al.'s (2017) and Lavers' (n.d.).

3.4 Research design

This section documents the research design and justifies the relevance of the comparative case-study approach used for the research. Following the above introduction, the section sets out a detailed description of the philosophy and methodology guiding the research. It then proceeds to discuss the processes for selection of cases for tracing decentralised implementation of LEAP in two regions in Ghana, the research techniques and the data-collection methods. It also delineates key challenges that the researcher encountered in the 9 months of data collection in the case-study regions and districts, ethical considerations and methodological limitations.

3.4.1 Ontological and epistemological perspective

Central to any social science inquiry is the philosophical foundation that identifies the best strategy for achieving the research objective (Blaikie, 2000, p. 122). This study adopts the critical-realist tradition in understanding the underlying drivers of state capacity and state performance. Critical realists contemplate social reality as “socially constructed by unobservable underlying structures [Harré] and mechanisms produced by the material and non-material (cognitive) resources of social actors [Bhaskar]” (Blaikie, 2000, p. 108). The philosophy of critical realism identifies reality from the domains of the empirical, actual and real. While the empirical comprises observable events, the actual involves all events irrespective of whether or not they are observed. The real incorporates the underlying tendencies, relations and structures that produce these events. Blaikie and Priest (2018, p. 6) suggest that “the main distinguishing feature of critical realism is its view of causality”. This is distinct from positivism and interpretivism.

The former suggests that knowledge should be based on established patterns (regular sequences) and relationships (between phenomena) present in observations or data. The latter, however, proposes that knowledge should be based on social accounts that social actors can give of their activities, the actions of others and their social situations (Blaikie & Priest, 2018). Critical realists use hypothetical descriptions of ways in which underlying structures and mechanisms might operate in the real-world context and proceed to identifying these mechanisms in the field (Blaikie, 2000, p. 109; Blaikie & Priest, 2018).

In respect of ontology, which embodies the researcher’s notions about the type of social reality, critical realists suggest an ontology that explains observable phenomenon with reference to the underlying structures and mechanisms (Blaikie, 2003, 2011). At the level of epistemology, which

pertains to the ways in which knowledge of social reality is generated, critical realists adopt a retroductive research-design strategy. Retroduction is grounded in the logic of transcendental or scientific realism and has been advocated by Bashkar and Harre as an alternative to both positivism and critical rationalism (Blaikie, 2003). The retroductive approach aims to discover underlying mechanisms to explain observed regularities in a real-life context (Blaikie, 2003). The retroductionist epistemology involves “working back from what is known to the unknown; by starting with a regularity and trying to discover an explanation for it” (Blaikie & Priest, 2018, p. 7).

This research adopts a “critical-realist” ontology and a “retroductive” epistemology. This philosophical foundation underlies the researcher’s design of the politics of social-protection implementation conceptual framework. The conceptual framework underlying this study is based on a critical-realist logic. This is because it aims at linking state formation as a cause of state capacity and political configurations as a factor that drives the deployment of that capacity, leading to state performance. The rationale for choosing this tradition over the more extreme cases of the positivists and the social constructivists includes, but is not limited to, the following: first, the eclectic nature of the critical-realism approach accommodates the underlying multiple philosophical foundations of the theories and the conceptual framework of this research; second, the critical-realism tradition is most suited to the research objective of identifying causal mechanisms, as it allows the researcher to explore hypotheses embedded in theories that specify particular mechanisms that should lead to regular outcomes; and, third, the critical-realism tradition offers a methodologically pluralist approach that can accommodate the multiple philosophical foundations of the theories and conceptual frameworks from which this research borrows in designing the current framework (Patomaki & Wight, 2000, p. 225). Significantly, the tradition presents added value to the researcher’s choice of methodology and techniques used in data collection.

3.5 Methodological approach

This study adopts a mainly qualitative research strategy to explore the ways in which local politics influences variation in impartiality and effectiveness in social-protection programme implementation in Ghana. The qualitative research approach is most suitable for this research as it enables a “socially constructed nature of reality” consistent with the critical-realism tradition (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 8). Whereas the emerging political economy of decentralised social-protection provisioning in Latin America has used quantitative approaches (with few exceptions),

those of South Asia and the few SSA studies have clearly elucidated problems with subnational implementation of social-protection programmes using a combination of quantitative and qualitative research approaches. The qualitative approach enables the researcher to draw on multiple sources of evidence. It also permits a critical examination of the situational contexts that influence the inquiry. This research builds on the qualitative approaches used in previous research by Chopra (2014) and Roy (2015).

The main qualitative research strategy for this research is the case-study method. The case-study approach “allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events ... and relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion” (Yin, 2003, p. 3). Case-study research permits a detailed exploration into an aspect of a social phenomenon to enable researchers to understand complex social phenomena and test for explanations that are generalisable to other similar events, while at the same time allowing for the discovery of other factors that may not have been anticipated (George & Bennett, 2005, p. 5).

Within the case-study arena, the comparative case-study approach is the most suitable as it allows the researcher to isolate various strands of the research puzzle: state formation and the local power configuration leading to uneven state performance. A comparative case-study design provides the best way of unpacking the relations of the state with non-state actors, the internal organisational quality and coherence of states and the geographical spread of state institutions within a given territory that underlie state performance in social-protection provisioning (vom Hau, 2012, p. 26). This is critical, as the type and form of civil society varies across localities, the distribution of bureaucrats is unequal across regions and the extent of the spread of the state diverges. These have consequences for the delivery of social protection across regions and districts. While the approach is useful for this research, it suffers from shortcomings related to comparability and generalisability of its findings. Notwithstanding the limitations of the comparative case-study strategy, it enables the researcher to delve deep into the district and subdistrict patterns of state formation and local configuration of power in explaining variations in social-protection implementation performance.

3.5.1 Case selection

The researcher endeavours to select regions and districts that are illustrative of different types of state formation and local power configurations, because of the current geographical spread of LEAP in all ten administrative regions across Ghana.¹² The study compares cases selected from two regions in Ghana with different histories of state formation. A justification for the choice of these regions is set out below. From two regions, the researcher selects four districts with known variations in subnational political dynamics. The researcher undertakes further community-level case selection following reviews of district-specific LEAP implementation data and after initial discussions with key stakeholders in the selected districts. This approach of comparing cases, although iterative in many ways, provides an opportunity to enrich the research process (Pellissery, 2006).

Comparison of four districts does not imply systematic comparison to explain all the differences between districts and communities currently implementing the LEAP programme in Ghana. These districts are illustrative of ideal types but not necessarily representative of all similar districts. This research explores variation in implementation performance of LEAP at the subnational level in Ghana. It provides an opportunity to capture a balanced view of interactions of actors in the state and society in implementation of the LEAP programme. This is because single district and community cases could be biased by a specific local situation. Similar comparative approaches have been used in the selection of case studies in studies conducted by Migdal (1988), Pellissery (2006), Chopra (2014), Roy (2015) and Ampratwum et al. (2019).

Thus, the process of case selection reflects variation in both the pattern of state formation and the type of local power configuration. To adequately address these specific questions tracing causal relations between state formation and state capacity on the one hand and local power configuration on the other, the research adopts the stratified regional and district case-selection processes detailed below.

Regional-level selection: the state-formation literature on Ghana, as detailed in Chapter 4, highlights disparities in structures of the state based on patterns of state formation. The state-building literature of Ghana shows wide geographical disparities and social inequalities between

¹² Ghana previously had ten regions until after 2018, when a referendum in four regions culminated in the creation of six additional regions.

the north and the south of the country (Ladouceur, 1973; Clark, 1990; Shepherd et al., 2004). The policies of postcolonial regimes have been unsuccessful in bridging the north–south divide, with implications for poorer institutional performance and service-delivery outcomes in the north (Plange, 1984; Tsikata & Seini, 2004; Abdulai & Hulme, 2015).

Drawing on these disparities in the north and south of the country – because of the result of the patterns of state formation – this research, for the purpose of case selection, stratifies the country into two clusters: the northern cluster and the southern cluster. The three Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions form the northern cluster, while the six Western, Ashanti, Eastern, Brong Ahafo, Central and Greater Accra Regions form the southern cluster. It is worth stating that the Volta Region, although located in the southern part of the country, constitutes an outlier, as a large part of the current region previously formed part of the former British Togoland Protectorate, which was incorporated into the unitary state of Ghana under a United Nations supervised plebiscite in 1956 (Amenumey, 1976; Bening, 1983, 1984).

Second, Ghana has been variously described as a competitive clientelist political system,¹³ in which the only effective means of maintaining political stability between competing elite factions is to cycle power between them (Oduro et al., 2014; Abdulai & Hickey, 2016). As discussed in Chapter 4, scholars have highlighted the increasingly intense electoral competition between the two main parties, the ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC). To some extent, this is a reflection of the nature of the political organisations in the country. It also demonstrates the embeddedness of patron–client forms of politics in the Ghanaian political arena (Abdulai & Hickey, 2016). Given the focus on power configuration, this research sought to compare two types of political party systems at the district level: stronghold party systems and competitive party systems. Figure 3.2 below presents the regional selection of cases based on state formation and configuration of power.

¹³ The country has held six successive elections within the Fourth Republic to date, including two peaceful transitions of power between the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and New Patriotic Party (NPP) (Gyeke-Dako & Oduro, 2013). There is also a strong ethno-regional basis to electoral competition in Ghana's Fourth Republic (Jockers et al., 2010; Abdulai & Hickey 2016).



Figure 3.2: The regional case-selection framework based on state formation and configuration of power

Source: Author's construction, 2020.

Using the north–south divide as an indicator of patterns of state formation, the following forms the cases for regional selection. The research identified Ashanti, Eastern, Brong Ahafo, Central, Western and Greater Accra as those regions with high state formation, while the Upper West, Upper East and Northern Regions represent those regions with low levels of state formation.

For case selection, the research selected the Central Region to represent the southern belt of the country. The Central Region has a long history of colonial engagement (Hymer, 1970), which has bequeathed it a legacy of physical infrastructural development and an economy far in excess of

regions in the north (Howard, 1978), along with the presence of hierarchical TAs that undergird the complex relationships between traditional leaders and subnational political and bureaucratic elites. Over the past two decades, the Central Region has recorded lower levels of poverty than regions in the northern parts of the country (Ghana Statistical Service, 2018). Case-by-case comparisons of some districts within the region have consistently reported lower averages. Notwithstanding the relatively lower poverty levels, multiple districts in the region were selected at the inception of the LEAP programme in 2008.

For regions with low levels of incorporation into the state, the research purposively selected the Upper West Region to represent the northern sector. The region has the shortest history of colonial engagement (Brukum, 1999; Lentz, 2006), which accounts for the limited legacies of state capacity compared to regions in the south (Blench, 2006; Ghana Statistical Service, 2013a). Unlike other parts of Ghana, large majorities of ethnic groups in the Upper West Region had a history of predominance of stateless groups in the precolonial era, underpinning the existing weak relationships of the TAs in this region with political actors (ODI, 2005; Lentz, 2006; Awedoba, 2006; Ankisiba, 2013). The Upper West Region has a mediocre history of decreasing poverty and inequality incidences as compared to regions in the southern parts of the country (Ghana Statistical Service, 2018). Figure 3.3 below presents a map of Ghana showing the Central and Upper West Regions.



Figure 3.3: A map of Ghana with the Central and Upper West Regions highlighted

Source: University of Manchester Cartographic Unit, 2019.

District-level selection: this involves a process of identifying two districts in the Central and Upper West Regions, respectively, that depicted divergence in levels of political competition. To establish the configuration of power, the research used the level of political competition as a proxy. Hence, districts with a history of strongholds of major political parties represent the districts with limited threats of turnover, while districts with a history of non-alignment to major political parties represent the districts with enhanced limited threats of turnover.

A review of the presidential and parliamentary elections data of the Central and Upper West Regions from 2000 to 2016 shows four political party strongholds in the two regions. The four stronghold constituencies in the Central Region are Agona West, Assin South, Upper Denkyira East and Upper Denkyira West. These are all associated with the NPP. The four stronghold constituencies in the Upper West Region are Wa Central, Wa West, Jirapa and Nadoli Kaleo, and these are associated with the NDC. In terms of non-aligned or swing regions, the review of the presidential and parliamentary elections data of the Central and Upper West Regions from 2000 to 2016 identifies six constituencies in the Central Region and three constituencies in the Upper West Region. The six districts in the Central Region that show strong non-alignment are Agona East, Cape Coast, Mfantiman West, Gomoa West, Abura Aseibu Kwamankese and Awutu Senya West. The three districts in the Upper West Region that illustrate patterns of non-alignment are Wa East, Sissala East and Lawra. Figure 3.4 sets out the regional- and district-level selection of cases based on state formation and local configuration of power.

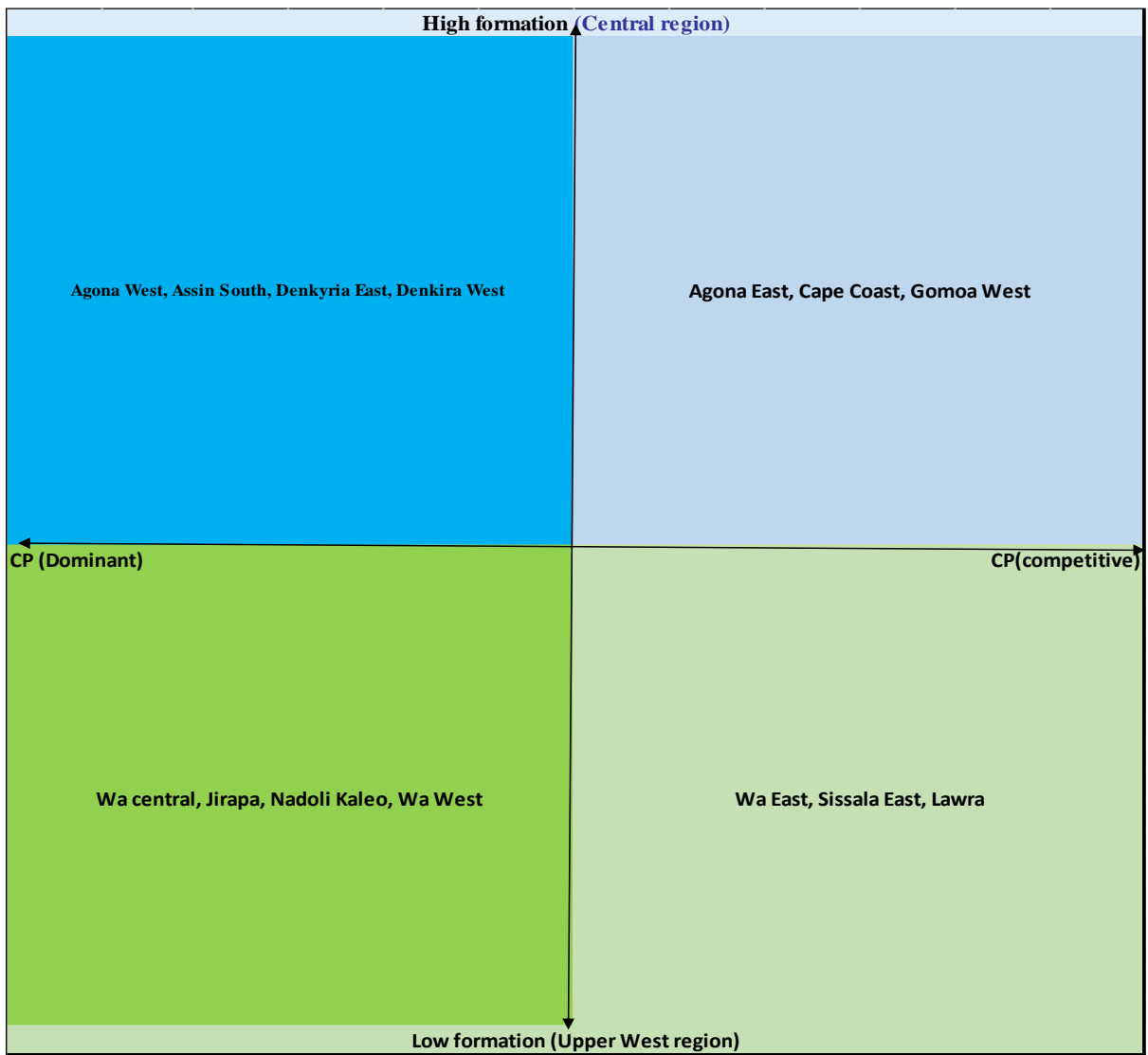


Figure 3.4: The district case-selection framework based on state formation and configuration of power
 Source: Author's construction, 2020.

In order to establish a reference point for comparison based on the levels of implementation of LEAP at the district level, in this research the selection of cases was limited to LEAP districts that share similar characteristics (numbers of communities) and that form part of the districts that joined the programme in 2008. Appendix 1 shows the list of LEAP districts in the Upper West and Central Regions, their dates of enrolment and the numbers of communities implementing the programme. The assumption is that districts that began the programme in 2008 would show similar histories and features of implementation, in order to facilitate an effective comparison of cases to trace the causal mechanisms from state formation and configuration of power leading to variation in state performance. The selection of districts with similar histories of implementation would also enable the researcher to control for variation in the timing of roll-out and to explain uneven implementation from just the influence of the patterns of state formation and the nature of the local power configurations.

A review of the stronghold districts of the Upper West and Central Regions shows that Wa West and Assin South Districts, which joined the LEAP programme in 2008, constituted the best fit for effective comparison of the LEAP implementation trajectories. For the final selection of stronghold districts in the Upper West and Central Regions based on state formation, the level of political competition and the LEAP implementation characteristics see Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: The dominant districts in the Upper West and Central Regions with the associated LEAP data

Region	Districts	Year LEAP Targeted
Upper West	Jirapa	2008
	Jirapa	2015
	Wa West	2008
	Wa West	2016
Central	Assin South	2008
	Assin South	2015
	Agona West	2008
	Agona West	2008

Source: LMS data, 2018.

A review of the competitive constituencies in the northern sector of the country indicates that Sissala East is the most suitable in the Upper West Region, with similar histories of LEAP implementation between 2008 and 2015 (see Table 3.2 below). In the competitive districts in the Central Region, Gomoa West emerged as the best case, given the history of LEAP implementation between 2008 and 2015 and the nature of political competition.

Table 3.2: The competitive districts in the Upper West and Central Regions, with the associated LEAP data

Region	Districts	Year LEAP Targeted
Upper West	Sissala East	2008
	Sissala East	2015
	Wa East	2008
	Wa East	2015
Central	Gomoa West	2008
	Gomoa West	2015
	Agona East	2008
	Agona East	2015

Source: LMS data, 2018.

Table 3.3 shows the district case-selection model: Wa West and Assin South represent the dominant cases, whereas Sissala East and Gomoa West illustrate the competitive cases. Regional maps of Ghana showing the four districts for the research are presented in Figure 3.4.

Table 3.3: The Ghana LEAP case-selection model

		Local Power Configuration	
		Dominant	Competitive
State Formation	High (Central)	Assin South	Gomoa West
	Low (Upper West)	Wa West	Sissala East

Source: Author's construction, 2018.

3.5.2 Profile of cases selected in Upper West and Central Regions

Wa West District

The Wa West District is located in the south-western part of the Upper West Region (WWDA, 2016b). The total area of the district is approximately 1,492.0 km², representing about 10% of the region's total land area (WWDA, 2016a). Settlements in this rural district are sparsely scattered.

The majority of the population in the district is concentrated in Wechiau, the district capital (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014e). The district has the highest poverty incidence (92.4%) in Ghana (Ghana Statistical Service, 2015, 2018). The poverty rate in the district is higher than the Upper West Region average of 70.7%.

Given this history of acephalous systems among the Dagaaba and Birifor, chieftaincy was the most momentous innovation that the colonial authorities introduced and it gradually reordered, or at least overlaid, older concepts of belonging and authority (Lentz, 2006). Yet the immediate post-independence epoch not only witnessed a pulling apart of structures of the colonial state, but also a dismantling and weakening of the colonial order of “administrative” chieftaincy as chiefly authority, succumbing to governmental power (Awedoba, 2006, 2009). These dynamics shaped the weak relations of chiefs in relation to the subnational state actors in the district.

Of the politically dominant constituencies in the Upper West Region, the NDC has won every presidential election in Wa West, winning an average of 63% of the presidential vote between 2000 and 2016. The NDC’s Joseph Yieleh Chireh retained the parliamentary seat for the NDC, with an average of 54% of the vote in the district between 2000 and 2016. Ethnic alliances, formed between the historically marginalised acephalous Birifor and Dagaaba against the centralised Wala ethnic group, continue to shape party politics in the district. The dominance of the NDC in the district underlined the limited threats of turnovers and longer time horizons of the then ruling NDC coalition in the district. Figure 3.5 illustrates the vote shares of the NDC, the NPP and the Peoples’ National Convention (PNC) in Wa West District, respectively.

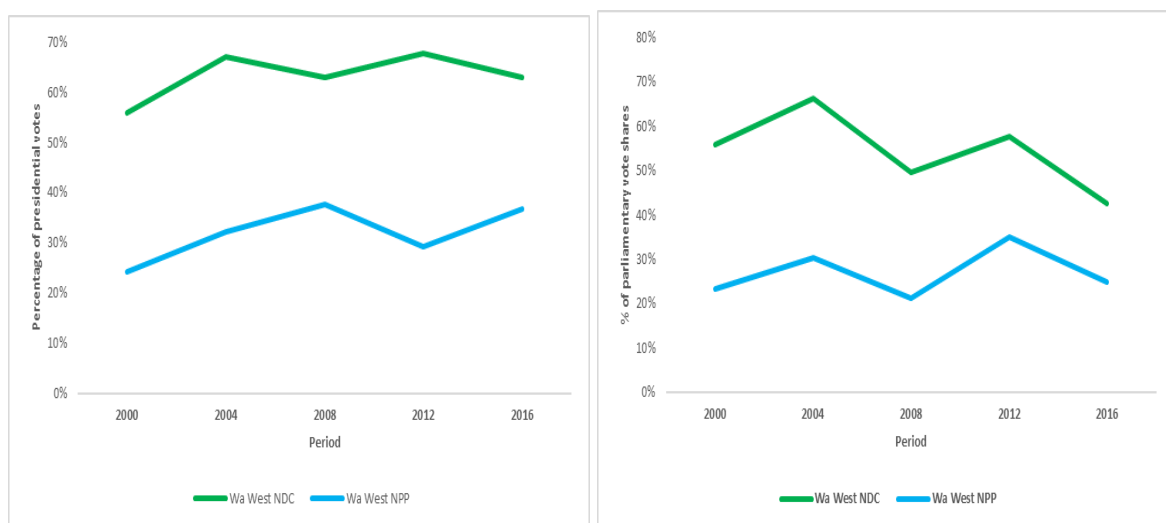


Figure 3.5: The NDC, NPP and PNC presidential and parliamentary vote shares in Wa West District

Source: EC Ghana, 2018.

It is worth stating that, as a decentralised administration, Wa West District formed part of the Wa Native authority created under colonial rule in 1930s (Brukum, 1997, 1999). In 2004, the district was carved out of the Wa East District, with Wechiau as the capital (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014e; WWDA, 2016a). The district has nine out of 27 decentralised departments (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013e; WWDA, 2016a,b), together with five Area Councils and 140 Unit Committees (WWDA, 2016a).

Sissala East District

Early scholars (see Tamakloe, 1931; Rattray & Westermann, 1932) identify the Sissala people as one of the first groups of settlers in the north-western part of the Upper West Region. Being predominantly farmers, the Sissala people lay claim to large stretches of land (Grindal, 1972). Settlements in the district are far apart, but populations are concentrated in large districts closer to the district capital Tumu (see Figure 3.7 below). The Sissala East District has the second least poverty incidence in the Upper West Region, declining from 84% in 2005/06 (UNDP, 2011) to 47.3% in 2012/13 (Ghana Statistical Service, 2015).

The existing literature (see Tauxier, 1912; Goody, 1954; Grindal, 1972; Awedoba, 2006, 2009; Lentz, 2006) describes the Sissala people as politically acephalous, as they have no history of centralised authority patterns. The appointment of local notables as chiefs during the colonial epoch in the early 1930s¹⁴ set the tone for many of the chieftaincy disputes (Grindal, 1972; Awedoba, 2009), but also for the weakening of the capacity of chiefs in relation to state actors, political party representatives, Assembly Members (AMs) and youth associations (Lentz, 2006). It is worth stating that since the immediate post-independence era, traditional leaders within the Sissala area have often resorted to political party actors at the central and subnational levels of the state to boost their claims to lands and paramountcies (Lentz, 2001).

The Sissala East District is one of the few competitive districts in the politically dominant Upper West Region. Since 2000, political power has alternated between three main parties in the district – the NDC, NPP and PNC – which have attained 41%, 34% and 22%, respectively, of the presidential vote across five elections (2000–2016). At the parliamentary level, the NDC exerted political control in the Sissala constituency prior to 2000 despite the strong historical links of the

¹⁴ Three native authorities were created in the then North-Western Province. These were Wa, Lawra and Tumu, representing the Wala, Dagaaba and Issala ethnic groups (Bacho & Derbile, 2006).

Sissala people with former President Dr Hilla Limann’s PNC¹⁵ and the NPP. In 2000, a localised unwritten political alliance between the NPP and local PNC leadership in the district ensured that the PNC remained politically dominant at the parliamentary level, whereas the NPP maintained the presidential control of the district (see Nugent, 1999). The NDC defeated the PNC in 2008. However, it lost its political control over the district to the NPP in 2016, following increased protracted intra-party conflicts within the local NDC party. The competitiveness of politics in the district, resulting in the constant alternations of Members of Parliament (MPs), has underpinned the intensified threats of electoral turnover and the shorter time horizons of the local governing coalitions. Figure 3.6 illustrates the vote shares of the NDC, NPP and PNC in the Sissala East District.

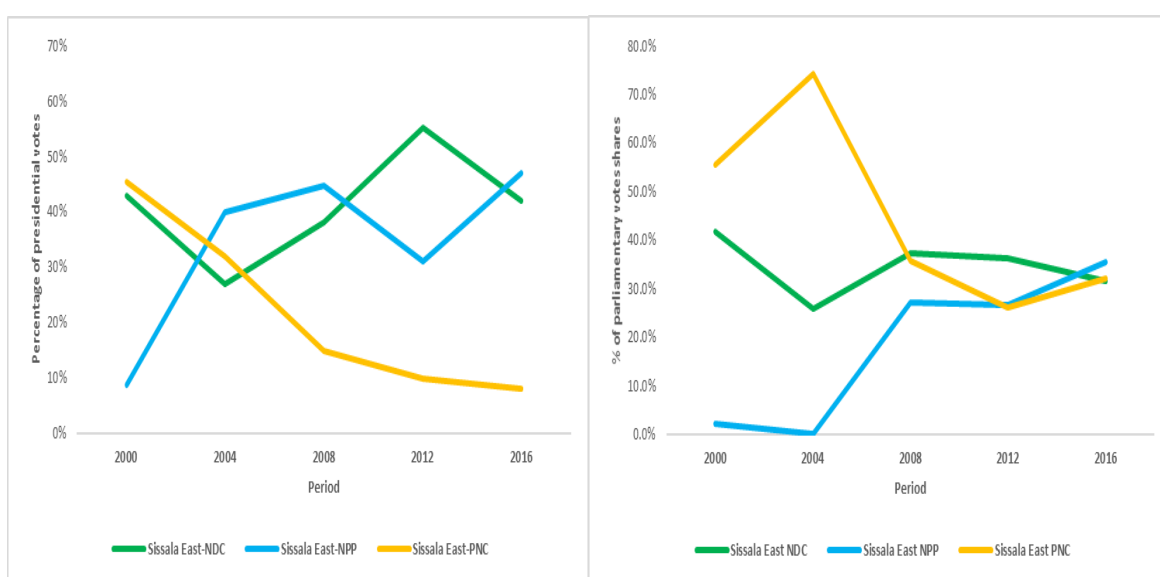


Figure 3.6: The NDC, NPP and PNC presidential and parliamentary vote shares in the Sissala East District

Source: EC Ghana, 2018.

In terms of district administration, the Sissala District was created under colonial rule as the Tumu Native Authority (Grindal, 1972; Bacho & Derbile, 2006). In 2004, the district was split into two for the first time: into the Sissala West and Sissala East District Assemblies, with their capitals in Gwollu and Tumu, respectively (Bacho & Derbile, 2006). The district has 12 out of the 27 decentralised departments (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014d; SEDA, 2017a,b). The district has one Town Council, four Area Councils and 21 Unit Committees (SEDA, 2017a).

¹⁵ The district’s strong historical association with the Peoples’ National Party (PNP), now the Peoples’ National Convention (PNC) of Hilla Limann, has underpinned the intermingling of the PNC in the competitive political arrangements in the district.

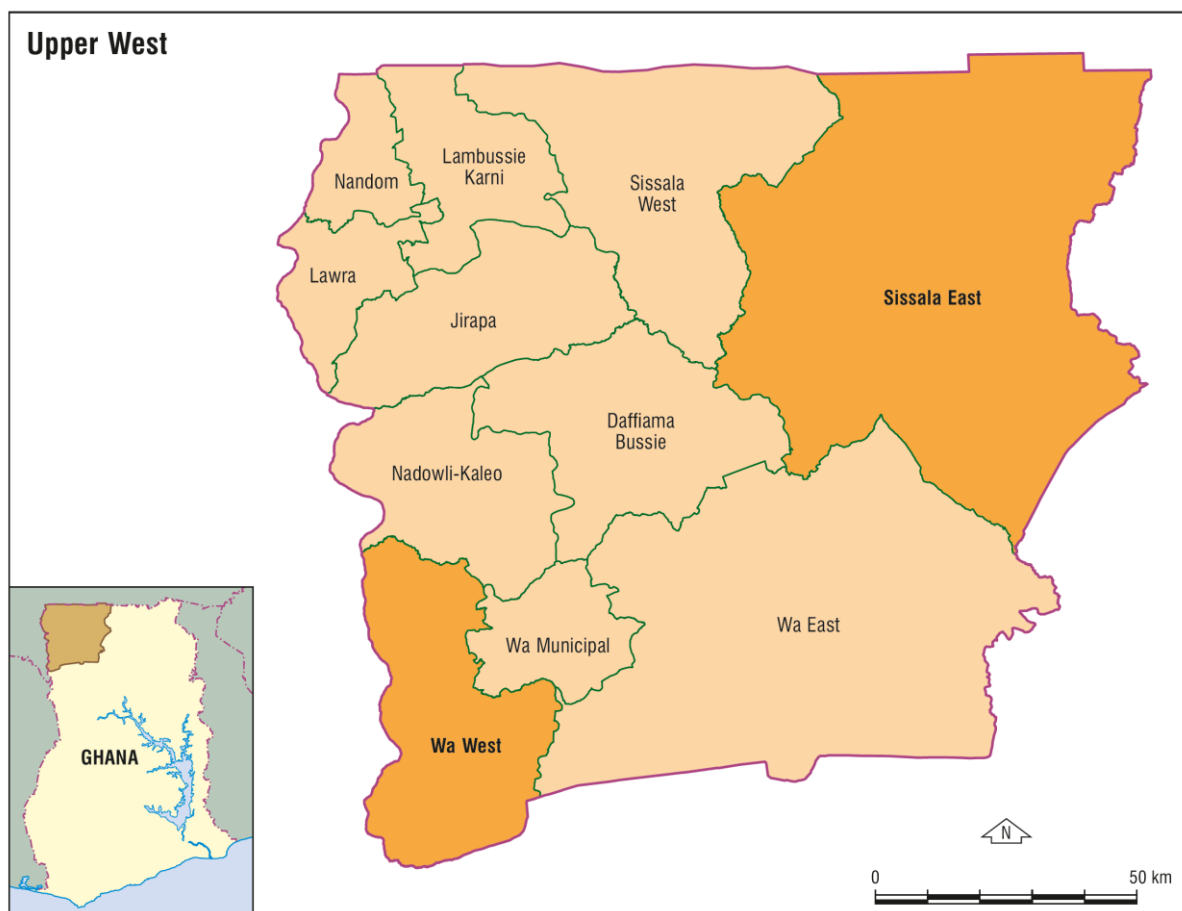


Figure 3.7: A map of the Upper West Region with the two highlighted districts

Source: University of Manchester Cartographic Unit, 2019.

Assin South District

The Assin South District is located in the forest hinterland of the Central Region. The district is the largest in the Central Region, covering a total land area of 1,187 km², which is 12% of the total land area of the Central Region (9,826 km²) (ASDA, 2018a). The settlements and the large majority of the population in the district are relatively concentrated except in the areas around the forest and palm plantations (see Figure 3.10). The district's poverty incidence of 23.6% lies slightly above the regional poverty incidence of 19.6% (Ghana Statistical Service, 2015, 2018).

The traditional political systems of the Assin people were originally comprised of two autonomous traditional areas, the Assin Attendansu (or Atandanso) and the Assin Apemanim (or Apimenem) (Assanful, 2017). In the colonial era, the two paramountcies in the Assin area were transformed into the Assin Native Authority, with Praso as its headquarters. In the postcolonial era, the transformation of the Assin Native Authority (previously led by chiefs) into the Assin local-

governance system, coupled with the historical economic power of the Assin chiefs, influenced the relationship between chiefs and the District Assembly. Importantly, the re-emergence of multi-party politics in the Fourth Republic metamorphosed the historical rivalries between the Assin Attendensu and Assin Apemanim paramountcies into partisan support for the NPP and NDC, respectively. This resulted from the attempt by political elites in the district to rally voters by tapping into the legitimacy of chiefs to canvass and win political power (Owusu-Sarpong, 2003).

At the level of political party competition, the NPP has dominated politics in Assin South since 2000, winning an average of 59% of the presidential vote across five elections. Though this average of the presidential vote share masks significant variations, it underlines the moderate threats of electoral turnover in the district, the stronger holding power and the longer time horizons of the governing coalitions. The NPP has dominated the Assin South parliamentary seat since 2000. Dominic Fobih of the NPP won the Assin South seat with an average of 57% of the votes since 2000, underscoring the limited threats of turnovers and longer time horizons of the governing coalitions in the district. Yet, as in the case of the presidential vote, the gap between the NPP and NDC candidates narrowed in the 2008 and 2012 parliamentary elections, widening again in 2016. Figure 3.8 shows the vote shares of both the NDC and the NPP in Assin South District since 2000.

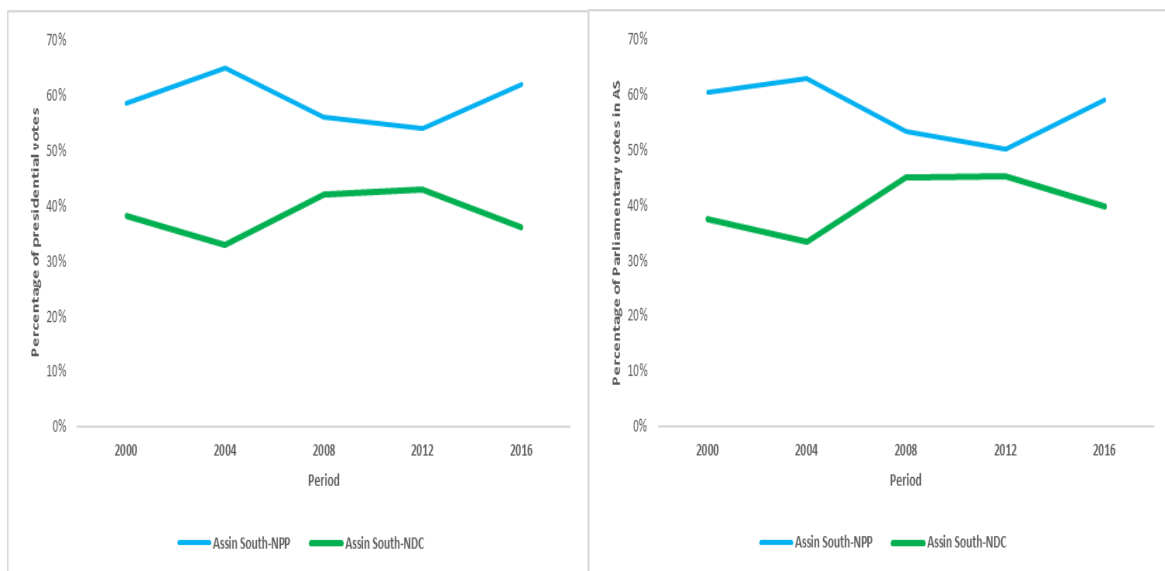


Figure 3.8: The NPP and NDC presidential and parliamentary vote shares in the Assin South District

Source: Electoral data, 2018.

Finally, the Assin South District, as an administrative unit, was carved out of the former Assin District Assembly in 2004, with Nsuaem/Kyekyere, located on the traditional boundaries of the

two paramountcies, as the district capital. Historically, Assin Fosu served as the headquarters of the Assin Native Authority. In 1988, the Assin Native Authority was transformed to become the Assin District Assembly. There are 15 out of the 27 decentralised departments of the state in the district. The District Assembly has no Urban or Town Council, but it has six Area Councils, 25 electoral areas and 86 Unit Committees (ASDA, 2018a, b).

Gomoa West District

The Gomoa West District is located in the coastal part of the Central Region of Ghana. The district covers an area of 514.2 km², which is 5.2% of the total land area in the Central Region (GWDA, 2018). The settlements and large sections of the population are concentrated and well connected by roads due to the history of state formation in the district (see Figure 3.10). In respect of poverty incidence, Gomoa West District is the tenth poorest out of the 21 districts in the Central Region of Ghana, with a poverty ranking of 22.6% below the national average of 24.2% (Ghana Statistical Service, 2015, 2018).

The political administration of the Gomoa people in the precolonial era consisted of three divisions: Gomoa Assin, Efuwa Ajumako and Gomoa Ajumako. These divisions were later merged into two main paramountcies: Gomoa Assin (Akyempim) and Gomoa Ajumako (Atiemo, 2015). The Gomoa chiefs possessed strong social and economic power due to their engagement with the European traders in the coastal sections of the district in the precolonial and colonial eras. In the postcolonial period, the paramountcies of the Gomoa were transformed into the Gomoa Native Authority, with Apam as the capital. The modification of the original three Gomoa divisions into two paramountcies for the purposes of the Gomoa Native Authority, however, laid the foundation for legal and judicial contestations over the legitimacy of the Gomoa Ajumako and Gomoa Akyempim paramountcies *vis-à-vis* the state. Significantly, multi-party politics has reignited the acerbic relations between the two paramountcies along partisan and factional lines, as traditional leaders, entangled in power struggles, attempt to boost their political legitimacy through cooperation with local politicians, with implications for local configurations of power.

Of the many politically competitive districts in the Central Region, political power has cycled between the NPP and NDC parties in the Gomoa West constituency, although the NDC has a longer history of control over the district. No party has completely dominated politics since 2000. The NDC and NPP have attained 49% and 47%, respectively, of the presidential vote on average between then and 2016. At the parliamentary level, no party has dominated the Gomoa West parliamentary elections since 2000. Candidates of both the NDC and NPP have won the seat, with

46% of the parliamentary vote on average since 2000, highlighting the enhanced threats of turnovers and the shorter time horizons of the governing coalitions in the district. The NPP won the seat from 2004 to 2008 with a 30% difference. The NDC won in 2008 and 2012 with margins of 10% and 17%, respectively, over the NPP candidates. In 2016, the NPP took the seat from the NDC. The recurrent swings in power among the two major political parties in the district underscored the heightened threats of electoral turnover, the weaker holding power and the shorter time horizons of coalitions. Figure 3.9 shows the vote shares of both the NDC and the NPP in the Assin South and Gomoa West Districts since 2000.

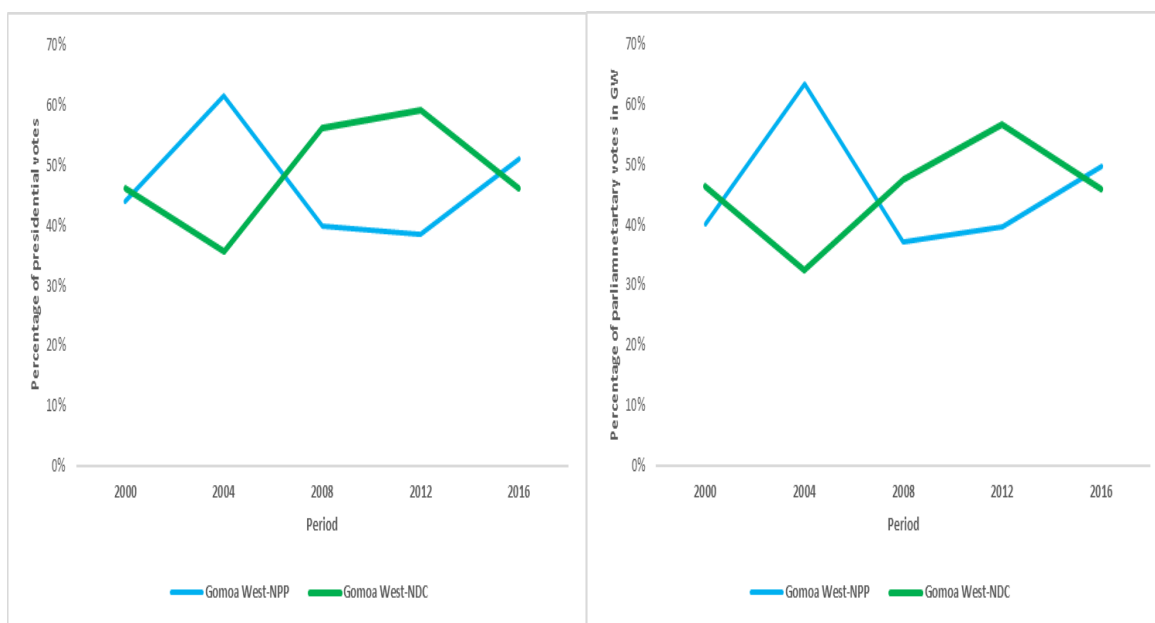


Figure 3.9: The NPP and NDC presidential and parliamentary vote shares in the Gomoa West District

Source: Electoral data, 2018.

At the administrative level, the Gomoa District formed part of the Gomoa–Awutu–Effutu–Senya District Council before 1988. The Gomoa District Assembly was carved out of the above council that year. The district was further divided into the Gomoa West and Gomoa East Districts in 2008. The district contains 18 of the 27 administrative departments and attracts a high quantity and quality of human resources due to its proximity to the regional and national capitals, as well as the abundance of legacy social infrastructure. The district has one Urban Council, two Town Councils and four Area Councils. There are 52 AMs and 180 Unit Committees in the district (GWDA, 2018).

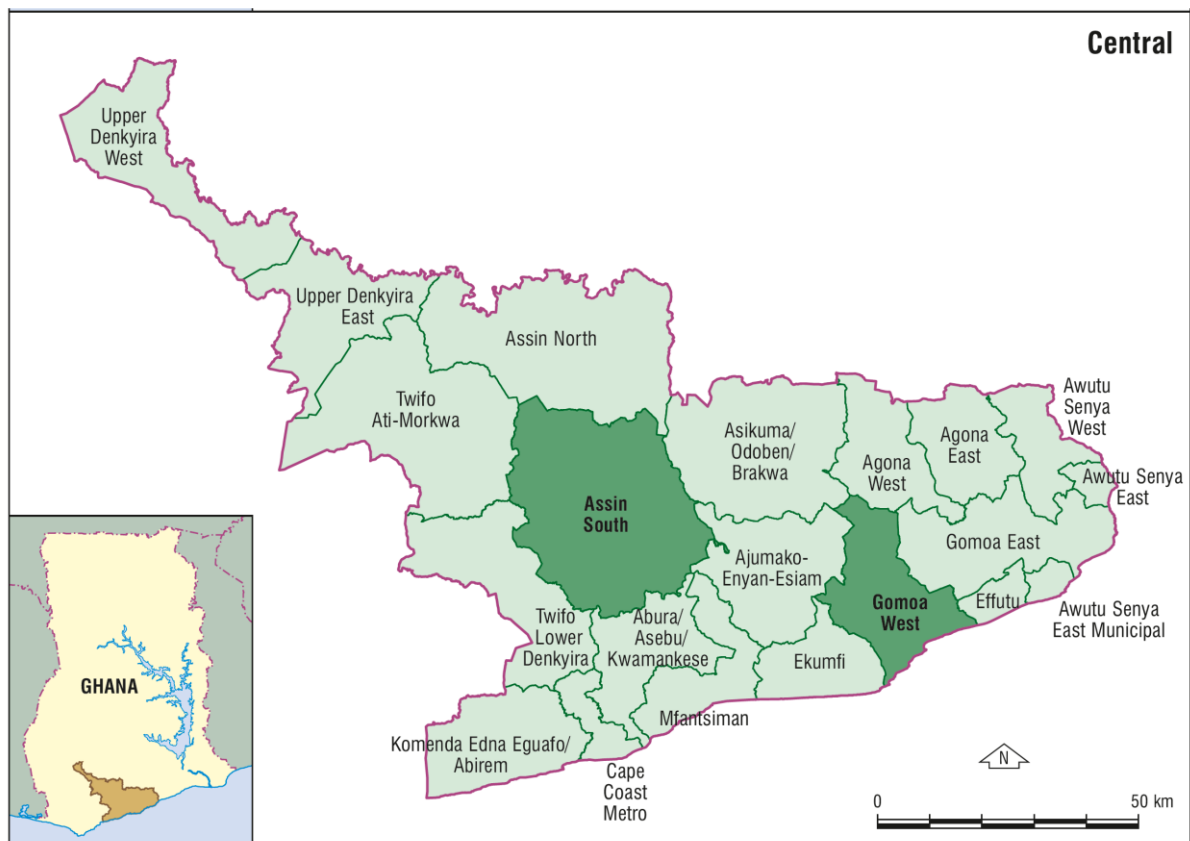


Figure 3.10: A map of the Central Region with the two cases highlighted

Source: University of Manchester Cartographic Unit, 2019.

3.6 Data-collection methods and analysis

The comparative case-study approach, as employed by the majority of the decentralised social provisioning literature, relies on multiple sources of evidence, with the need for data to converge in a triangulating fashion (Yin, 2003, pp. 3, 14). By adopting the comparative case-study approach, this research drew on a combination of analytical narratives (process tracing) based on document reviews, in-depth interviews with key informants, focus group discussions (FGDs) and structured observations.

Bennett (2010) and Collier (2011) have emphasised process tracing as a fundamental tool for qualitative analysis, especially among scholars who undertake within-case analysis based on qualitative data. Defined as a “systematic examination of diagnostic evidence selected and analysed in light of research questions and hypotheses”, process tracing, as an essential form of within-case analysis, can contribute decisively to describing political and social phenomena and to evaluating causal claims (Collier, 2011, p. 823). Process tracing is suitable for tracking unevenness in the performance of social-protection programmes across districts by examining the

causal mechanisms from (1) patterns of state formation and (2) the nature of the coalitional relations within subnational units of governance in shaping implementation.

It is worth stating that while process tracing provides a meaningful way of establishing “intervening causal processes – the causal chains and causal mechanisms – between independent variables”, it also provides a path to identifying the causal mechanisms by means of the “outcome of the dependent variable” (George & Bennett, 2005, p. 206). Most importantly, process tracing provides some measure of validity to the causal mechanisms identified, while at the same time ruling out possible alternative hypotheses (George & Bennett, 2005).

Given the choice of this research to use process tracing, interviews with key informants and document reviews constituted key data sources tracing back from performance outcomes to state capacity and the configuration of local power. In addition, FGDs and observations constituted the other qualitative data-collection techniques and methods for examining the LEAP implementation dynamics in the four districts.

3.6.1 Key-informant interviews

Key-informant interviews constituted the first source of data for this research. The researcher conducted a total of 260 interviews. Interviewees for this research were selected through purposive sampling techniques. For the most part, the key informants, such as Social Welfare and Community Development Organisation (SWCDO) bureaucrats, District Chief Executives (DCEs), Members of Parliament (MPs), AMs, political party leaders, TAs, members of the District LEAP Implementation Committees (DLICs) and Community LEAP Implementation Committees (CLICs), were purposively selected based on their knowledge of the implementation practices. That aside, the snowball technique was employed to identify elite networks at the district and community levels to select these key actors based on their knowledge of the contestations, negotiations and adaptations that took place on a regular basis in the implementation of LEAP. This raises the question of the representativeness of the interview sample, despite its usefulness in accessing hard-to-reach populations such as elites (Bergh, 2004). However, Tansey (2007) suggests that non-probability sampling approaches enable the selection of respondents relevant to the specific focus of the research. Consequently, the researcher made strenuous efforts to reach people across a range of opinions, especially around the most contentious issues.

At the national level, the researcher conducted 15 high-level interviews with officials in charge of LEAP implementation in Ghana. Participants included officials of the LEAP Management

Secretariat (LMS) (the former Head and Operations Director), the current Deputy-Director of the LMS, consultants to and directors of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP), which oversees the LEAP programme, civil-society actors in social protection, Development Partners (DPs) and academia, among others (see the appendices for the full list of respondents). These key stakeholders provided critical insights into the current LEAP programme overview, national-level political factors influencing LEAP and social-protection implementation, political drivers of expansion and the financing of LEAP. Interviews with these stakeholders also highlighted challenges with LEAP implementation from the perspective of national actors.

The research used semi-structured interview guides to elicit information from key informants in the four cases at the district and subdistrict levels from February to October 2018. As shown in Appendix 2, interviewees were selected from different backgrounds including MPs, DCEs, District bureaucrats, SWCDO bureaucrats, political party executives and politically appointed persons, TAs, elected and appointed local councillors and Unit Committee members, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and faith-based organisation (FBO) officials. Table 3.4 shows the breakdown of 260 respondents interviewed for this study across the four sites and at the national level.

Table 3.4: The categories of interview respondents at the subnational and subdistrict levels

Interview categories	Gomoa West	Assin South	Wa West	Sissala East	Total per category
DCE DCE/Former DCE	2	1	3	2	8
MP/Former MP	1	1	1	1	4
DSW officials	2	2	2	2	8
District Bureaucrats	6	5	5	6	22
Assembly members	7	8	11	10	36
DLIC members	3	5	4	3	15
Political party executives	8	9	8	9	34
Traditional Authorities	4	4	2	2	12
CLICs	13	15	16	14	58
Beneficiaries	10	15	18	20	63
Total interviews	56	65	70	69	260

Source: Author's field data, 2018.

The interviews mainly occurred at district capitals and in selected communities with large numbers of LEAP beneficiaries in their districts. The researcher interviewed respondents at district capitals because these were the best vantage points to grasp the functioning of the bureaucrats, politicians and other actors as the key arena for policy implementation. Beneficiaries and members of the community governance structures were interviewed in their villages. The visits to the large number of communities enabled the researcher to understand the formal and informal power arrangements, which are difficult to observe without a referral from a trusted person.

In terms of modalities and logistics, the researcher conducted interviews in the southern parts of the country in English and Twi (Akan), depending on the informant's language preferences. In the Upper West Region, the research operated across five different languages: English, Wala, Dagaaba, Sissala and Twi. Field assistants with competence in local languages in the research sites interpreted discussions between the researcher and interviewees, especially those from the communities, to enable respondents to express themselves in a nuanced manner and focus on the substance of the interview rather than on finding the right words to articulate their thoughts. Though this approach could have introduced some imbalance in power between respondents and interpreters, loss in translation and potential misinformation, the researcher mitigated the potential influence of the interpreters by using people with demonstrated minimum sociolinguistic competences and the ability to communicate between the dominant languages of the study localities. Again, the researcher ensured that female interpreters facilitated female interviews and that a male interpreter interviewed male respondents. A few respondents who could communicate

in Twi (Akan) preferred to engage the researcher in Twi. The researcher mainly engaged bureaucrats in English.

Most interviews were recorded, except for some four interviews (two at national level; one in Assin South and one in Wa West) where respondents indicated an unwillingness to have their interviews recorded. The researcher thus took copious notes during the interviews with such respondents. The researcher transcribed all interviews from the fieldwork, including all those that involved the use of interpreters.

In representing the interview data in the text, the researcher has interwoven the voices of informants through direct quotations when they support the assessment with more forceful and insightful illustrations and explanations. Information has been routinely triangulated. When this was not possible, it is explicitly stated in the text. Most of the interviews are anonymised to ensure confidentiality and to reduce difficulties for respondents once the thesis is published. The interviews are numbered in the text and are detailed in the footnotes and appendices. In the text, “senior bureaucrat” refers to an informant with at least the rank of district director or equivalent in the subnational state. To verify the quality of the data sources, a list of information on informants’ identity was to be separately provided to the thesis examiners and then destroyed after the thesis examination.

3.6.2 Focus group discussions

The researcher also engaged community focal persons (CFPs) and Community LEAP Implementation Committee (CLIC) members and selected beneficiaries at the community level using FGDs from February to October 2018. The FGD allows for “the explicit use of group interaction to produce data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in a group ... it provides an excellent method at establishing the why behind the what in participant perspectives” (Morgan, 1996, as cited in Threlfall, 1999, p. 102).

The use of the FGD enabled the participants to reflect on the responses of other participants, which enriched the data that the research generated. However, there were a few problems given the challenge of communication, especially in the northern Ghana cases. The researcher ensured that appropriate interpreters helped the moderators to undertake the discussions. The research team also ensured that groups were organised by gender and status to reduce the potential power imbalances. Table 3.5 shows the number of FGDs at the district and community levels.

Table 3.5: The categories of FGD participants at the subdistrict level

Focus Group Discussions	Gomoa West	Assin South	Wa West	Sissala East	Total
District officials	1	1	1	1	4
Beneficiaries and CLICs	3	4	4	9	20
Total FGDs	4	5	5	10	24

Source: Author's field data, 2018.

3.6.3 Documentary analysis

Documentary analysis formed the third line of investigation for this research. The key documents that the research analysed included archival information, evaluation reports and the internal memos and reports of the LEAP secretariat. The study also analysed historical quantitative data from the LEAP secretariat, the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS), the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) and the Local Government Service (LGS). The researcher further reviewed public records at the Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD) in Accra to examine colonial policies and programmes on social welfare in the southern and northern parts of the country. The researcher documented some relevant historical information to incorporate into the research and augmented gaps in the national-level data with information from the Central and Upper West Region offices of the PRAAD.

3.6.4 Observation

Observation constituted the last major source of information for the study on the implementation of LEAP. Observation yields detailed, thick descriptions of the interactions between actors in the state and society in the specific context in which they occur (Blaikie & Priest, 2018; Bryman, Bresnen, Beardsworth, & Keil, 1988; Burawoy, 1991). In the context of the LEAP research, some of the researcher's observational activities included: spending time at the four LEAP district offices in the Upper West and Central Regions; joining SWCDO and bank officials on visits to payment centres in communities in Gomoa West and Sissala East; and following SWCDO officials and enumerators as they undertook the sensitisation and enrolment of potential LEAP households in the Assin South and Wa West Districts. Some of the observations also focused on the interactions between elites (political and policy), bureaucrats, potential beneficiaries, and rural notables as they identified households and delivered LEAP benefits and the interactions of elites under the DLIC and CLIC platforms, as well as beneficiary forums. The researcher also observed DLICs and CLICs at their meetings and, immediately after the meetings, captured some of these observations as field notes. Each of these situations brought new insights into the social

relationships of actors in the state and society within the community and districts as they undertook implementation of the policy.

At the national level, as part of processes for the researcher to establish a working relationship with national-level stakeholders as well as gain updated information on LEAP implementation and various Government of Ghana social-protection programmes, the researcher participated as an observer at the Ghana Productive Safety Nets Projects pre-appraisal meeting of the Ghana government and DPs in Accra. The pre-appraisal meeting afforded the researcher the opportunity to map out the key actors and changes in the key actors since the last general elections in December 2016, which resulted in electoral turnover. The researcher drew insights from the appraisals of key implementation phases of LEAP to review and adapt aspects of the national and district research protocols.

3.7 Data analysis

The researcher transcribed and processed the qualitative data from the interviews, FGDs, field observation notes and archival reports in the individual case studies using Nvivo version 12. Nvivo enabled the researcher to highlight and examine the themes and concepts emerging from the in-depth interviews and FGDs. Given the critical-realism perspective of the study, many of these themes were preordained and derived from the conceptual framework, whilst others were generated inductively during the process of data analysis. These themes were subsequently recoded to facilitate coding and analysis and linked to the emerging analytical categories and research questions.

The researcher also triangulated the findings of the qualitative data analysis to existing quantitative data on LEAP implementation procured from the LMS and other national levels. Some of the sources of these secondary data include the GSS, the NDPC and the LGS in Ghana.

3.8 Challenges with fieldwork and research activities

The researcher encountered several challenges prior to and during fieldwork in Ghana. The first challenge to the fieldwork was the staff strike within the UK higher-education sector between 22 February and 20 March 2018, which delayed the release and approval of the ethical clearance letter. Following the late release of the ethical clearance letter, the strike also affected the release of the fieldwork approval forms to enable the researcher to begin the fieldwork on time. In addition to the late release of the fieldwork approval letter, the university staff strike also delayed the approval of funding from the School of Environment, Education and Development (SEED) for the

researcher to begin the research on schedule. Indeed, it took two additional months of delays before the SEED office released funding for the research.

In Ghana, the researcher encountered several challenges at the national level due to the bureaucratic processes of seeking clearance from national-level officials to facilitate subnational data collection. For instance, to obtain clearance from the MoGCSP, it took the researcher 2 months of using formal and informal lobbying processes to secure the letter. Once the letter from the MoGCSP had been obtained, the researcher sought permission from the LEAP Operations Manager to engage SWCDO officials at the subnational level. The next challenge was the busy work schedules of the national-level respondents at the MoGCSP, LMS, DPs, in academia and civil society organisations. Most of these directors and other senior public servants were constantly engaged in meetings or travelling from one location to the other and, as such, this made it difficult for them to honour their scheduled appointments. It mostly took about three visits before a participant honoured their scheduled appointment.

The other challenge was the unwillingness of some officials (especially deputies) to participate in the interviews because of the perceived politically sensitive nature of social protection in Ghana and the politics of social provisioning following the change in government and subsequent reassignment of directors and officers at the ministry. The final challenge that the researcher encountered with data collection, especially at the multiple sites in the northern part of Ghana, was the harsher terrain and varied language peculiarities. To maintain a representative number of respondents per district as indicated before the fieldwork, the researcher invested in personal resources and logistics to augment the financial resources allocated by the SEED, which were inadequate to reach the high numbers of respondents, the distant locations of communities from the district capitals and logistics and human resources, including the translators required to complete the data-collection exercise, especially in the two northern Ghana cases.

3.9 Ethical considerations and positionality of the researcher

This research was conducted in consonance with recommended ethical procedures for a PhD dissertation at the University of Manchester. The researcher adhered to the procedural, situational, relational and existing guidelines that ensured quality data collection and analysis. Prior to the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, the researcher appropriately informed all respondents about why they were being identified and selected for the study. Most importantly, the researcher sought consent from all respondents before the commencement of the study.

Respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. They were also assured that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

It is worth stating that the researcher's previous position as a senior researcher with CDD-Ghana may have created some perception of bias in the collection of data from national and district officials. However, this challenge was handled by providing each respondent with in-depth information about the researcher's current professional status and relationship with this specific research. The researcher also tried to build trust with respondents before commencing the interviews.

In respect of the data analysis, the researcher crucially self-evaluated his own level of objectivity through the adoption of the critical-realism ontology and the retroductive epistemological approach in interpreting the data. This included the researcher being conscious of his own personal beliefs and understandings of how politics operates in relation to social-protection provisioning and service delivery and using these to guide his behaviour towards respondents and interpretations of their data.

3.10 Chapter summary

The state, and its capacity to undertake established mandates within a specified territory while penetrating the depths of civil society, has re-emerged as an important topic of development research. Whereas the institutionalist literature has examined variation in state performance from the perspective of historical factors, the contemporary state–society relations research has highlighted the role of coalitions, their threats of turnover and their time horizons in shaping the deployment of existing state capacity, leading to state performance. This thesis has sought to examine the drivers of state capacity and state performance from the perspectives of legacies of state formation and configuration of power at the subnational level. Finally, the critical-realism tradition has constituted the philosophical foundations of the research and guided not only the construction of the conceptual framework but also the qualitative approaches, data-collection methods and analytical approaches that the research has adopted.

CHAPTER 4

State formation, political competition and decentralised social provisioning in Ghana

4.1 Introduction

The implementation of social protection takes place within specific political settings. Based on the framework outlined in Chapter 3, the main political factors are the history of state-building and the north–south divide, the nature of political competition and the specific political dynamics shaping the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) programme. This chapter provides a context for situating the analysis of these political settings. The chapter begins by tracing the history of state formation in Ghana, including an account of the drivers of the historically informed social disparities between the north and south of the country. It continues with an exploration of the role of precolonial social organisations in colonial state formation and the influence of colonialism and post-independence regime strategies on the transformation of precolonial social structures, with consequences for the contemporary power configuration. The chapter then details the contemporary history of political competition in Ghana as well as the nature of the political coalitional relations that are at the heart of the present national power configuration, with implications for service delivery and social provisioning. It then further outlines the history and structure of decentralised governance in Ghana, the challenges faced in the implementation of decentralisation in the past three decades and the role of political-economy dynamics in driving institutional performance and outcomes. Finally, the chapter details the history of social-protection implementation in Ghana and discusses more recent social-protection reforms, including the flagship LEAP programme and its decentralised implementation structures.

4.2 State formation in Ghana

This section traces the history of state incorporation and state formation in Ghana. It finds that the nature of state formation from the precolonial and colonial era led to uneven institutional endowments between the north and south of the country in the postcolonial epoch, as illustrated by the cases of the Central and Upper West Regions. This has implications for the expansions of state capacity and state performance in social provisioning.

4.2.1 State formation and variation in state capacity

The origins of the economic and social inequalities between the north and south of Ghana are largely due to: geography – the lower rainfall in the north and the savannah vegetation; historical legacies of inequality established in precolonial and colonial times; and the failure of postcolonial policy to depart from established patterns of underinvestment in the north compared to the south (Shepherd et al., 2004).

Scholarship on precolonial Ghana highlights the role of economic and political factors in driving early attempts at state formation, with implications for state capacity in the colonial era and thereafter. The precolonial literature underscores the critical role of conquests to control the trans-Saharan trade routes in the formation of large empires in the southern and middle belts in many parts of the precolonial territory (Hymer, 1970; Clark, 1990). The need to protect and ensure the security and control of trading routes formed the strong basis for accumulation of economic resources (taxes and tributes), military powers and political control. In this era, commercial centres and populations were concentrated in the southern belt of the country. In the northern parts of the territory, there was neglect of the more dispersed settlements and consolidation of links with the few kingdoms with centralised political authorities. This resulted in the establishment of outposts of powerful empires of the south, such as the Ashantis, and the appointment of officials from these empires along the major trade routes in the north for purposes of tribute accumulation and revenue collection out of the slave, gold and salt trades (Shepherd et al., 2004). There was no deliberate attempt to develop the territories of the north *per se* during this era (see Wilks, 1963, 1964, cited in Hymer, 1970).

The arrival of European traders in the 14th and 15th centuries further promoted state formation in the southern part of the territory to the neglect of the north. The concentration of European traders on the coast of the Gulf of Guinea led to changes in the direction of the trade route from inland towards the coast (Hymer, 1970). The result of these economic alterations was the development of commercial centres along these coastal trade routes, concentration of populations in the forest belts of the territory (see Wilks, 1963, 1964 in Hymer, 1970) and, importantly, the cessation of the lucrative role of northern brokers and traders in the trans-Saharan gold, salt and kola trade (Abdulai, 2014). These transformations in economic dynamics were aggravated in the 16th century and beyond, as various tribal groups with access to European guns, gold and forest resources “jockeyed for control of inland trade routes and along the coast” (Hymer, 1970, p. 16).

In the southern states of the Gold Coast, the Central Region (then part of the Western province of the Gold Coast) had the longest history of colonial engagement, accounting for the lasting legacies of colonial investments in infrastructure (Hymer, 1970). The Central Region, located partly along the Atlantic coastline and partly in the resource-rich forest belt, revealed a case of high state formation due to its initially strong endowments in colonial infrastructure, resulting in better road and electricity connectivity. Within the region (see Figure 4.1), the Gomoa people occupied the location immediately to the east of the Fante on the coast in the late 17th century and their territory extended westwards beyond its present boundary into the hinterlands (Law, 2012). Apam, the capital of the Gomoa people, was a major trading centre for gold, palm oil and salt from the interior when it was held by the Dutch colonial authorities, leading to the deployment of legacy infrastructure such as roads, post offices, police outposts and health centres (Atiemo, 2015). Additionally, the legacy of the early and long contact with European traders, missionaries and colonisers was demonstrated in the growth of Christianity, with its network of educational institutions and churches scattered around the area (Atiemo, 2015). The Assin, or the Accany people, on the other hand, occupied an area north of the confluence of the Pra and Ofin rivers (Boahen, 1973, p. 108). Though located in the immediate hinterland and not on the coast, the Assin constituted one of the historically important confederates in the British Gold Coast colony. Scholars such as Dickson (1966) and Boahen (1973) attest to the mercantile dexterity of the Assin people as they annexed an influential middleman role between the gold-producing Ashanti and all the European trading stations between Elmina and Winneba at the beginning of the 18th century (Boahen, 1973).



Figure 4.1: Maps and plans of the Gold Coast/“Mohamm. Händler auf der Goldküste”
 Source: Basel Mission Archives, (1907).

In contrast to the southern part of the country, some scholars have asserted persistent underdevelopment of the isolated regions of the northern territories, which had abundant labour forces that were useful to the colonialists for the cultivation of plantations, cocoa farms, railways and the mines in the southern parts of the country (Thomas, 1973; Quist, 2003). British colonialists’ capitalist accumulation tended to “under-develop” the north and “provided the basis for the post-colonial politics of regionalism” (Ladouceur, 1973; Plange, 1984, p. 30). Further, it led to insufficient state capacity to deliver development in the northern part of the country (Shepherd, 1979; Ladouceur, 1973; Konings, 1986). Ladouceur suggests that during the direct administration of the north (compared to indirect rule in the south), no attempts were made to develop the economies of the north (Ladouceur, 1973, 1979). Ladouceur contends that “only the

feeblest of efforts were made to promote the economic development of the Northern Territories” (1973, p. 66). The colonial state invested in basic resources rather than long-term infrastructure projects due to the cost and difficulties of mobilising revenues and administering taxes in the vast territories of the north (Ladouceur, 1973; Lentz, 2006).

Additionally, the regime undermined the deployment of infrastructure, education and health facilities in the north (Thomas, 1973). Indeed, up until the 1930s and 1940s, there were no schools and health facilities in the territories (Thomas, 1973; Plange, 1984; Brukum, 1997). This was especially true for the Upper West Region, located in the extreme north-west of Ghana, bordering Cote d’Ivoire to the west and Burkina Faso to the north (Dixon, 2014). Previously known as the North-West Province, this area had a shorter encounter with colonialism (see Figure 4.2). The first successful entry of Europeans to the North-West Province took place in the latter part of the 19th century (Bening, 1995), compared to the 14th century in the south, thus accounting for the historically low penetration of the colonial state presence in the form of roads, post offices and rail infrastructure, among others (Ward 1958; Ladouceur, 1973; Blench, 2006). Within the region, the Wa West District formed part of the Black Volta District, which later became the North-Western Province, created by British colonial authorities in 1907. The Sissala District, on the other hand, formed part of the Tumu District, located in the north-western part of the region (Lentz, 2001; Awedoba, 2009).

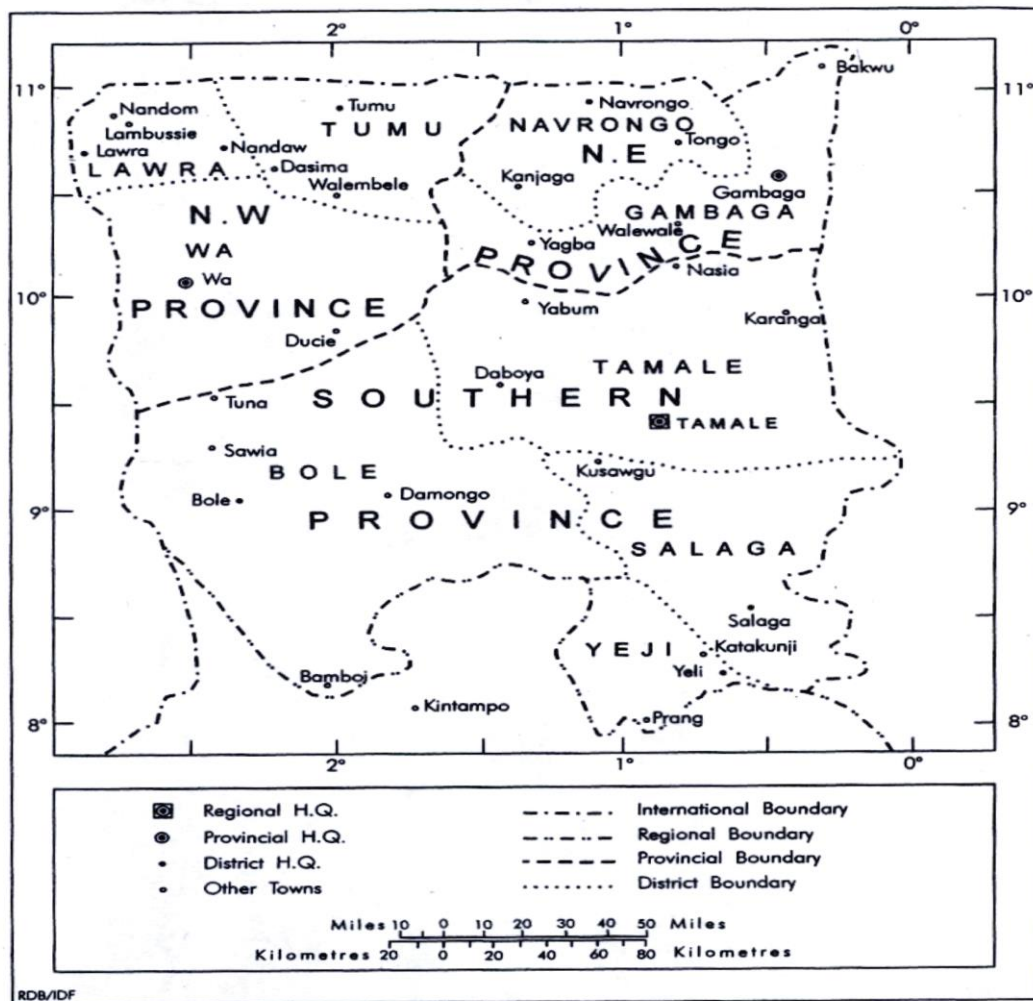


Figure 4.2: Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, Provinces and Districts, 1907.
Source: Lentz (2006, p. 54).

Scholars (see Goody, 1957; Lentz, 2006) have attributed the poor incorporation of the then northern territories of Ghana to various causes. The first reason assigned for the low state formation was the predominance of segmentary, stateless groups in the precolonial era. The second reason was the attempt of the British colonialists to preserve their on-going experiment of reconfiguring “stateless” social organisations in the north-west through the installation of mainly Muslim (Wala and Gonja) chiefs in acephalous communities (Lentz, 2006). These administrative chiefs acted as useful auxiliaries to the British district colonial officers (Ladouceur, 1979; Lund, 2009). The third reason bordered on the British colonial authorities’ attempt to create a labour reservoir for conscription into the Gold Coast Constabulary and the military regiments, as well as the gold mines, railway construction sites and cocoa plantations in the south of the country using mostly Dagaaba and Birifor youth (Thomas, 1973; Lentz, 2006; Lund, 2009). The last reason is

the late exposure of the region to European Christian missionaries, based partly on the political calculations of British colonialists to isolate the North-West Region from the influence of French and German colonialists, respectively (Ladouceur, 1973; Thomas, 1973, 1974; Lentz, 2006).

The tactics of the pre-independence and postcolonial regimes have not aimed at bridging the north–south divide. At the political level, it was not until 1946, when the Northern Territories Territorial Council was formed, that Northern representatives gained inclusion in the Gold Coast Legislative Council (Ladouceur, 1973; Plange, 1984, p. 42). The limited participation of northern elites in the politics of the colonial and immediate independence era, among other things, was a corollary of the low level of educational development in the north (Ladouceur, 1973). Northern elites mainly found themselves in opposition to groups calling for independence, setting the pace for their exclusion from meaningful political engagements at the arrival of independence (Shepherd et al., 2004, p. 1). A review of debates preceding Ghana’s independence showed that the northern elites were suspicious of their southern counterparts, as they perceived that the precolonial relationships, where the Ashantis acted as “black imperialists” and exploited northerners through tribute collections and the slave trade, might continue to persist under independence (Shepherd et al., 2004).

Even at independence, the Nkrumah-led Convention People’s Party (CPP) regime used various strategies of “containment” to attract specific northern elites, using the “fruits of pork barrel politics” that benefited specific individual northern elites to the disadvantage of the wider northern population (Shepherd et al., 2004, p. 1). Again, though the debates preceding independence and the immediate post-independence era centred on laying out clear development initiatives aimed at bridging the north–south divide, these compensatory poverty-reduction initiatives (targeting human development, and the provision of local infrastructure), failed to materialise in meaningful ways to transform the north (Ladouceur, 1973). For instance, though the Nkrumah regime proposed to bridge disparities between the north and south through the Seven-Year Development Plan (1963–1970), “paying special attention to the modernizing of agriculture in the savannah areas of the Northern and Upper Regions” (Dickson, 1975, p. 110, as cited in Abdulai et al., 2018), most of the proposed industrial projects remained in the south.¹⁶ Though a review of literature showed massive investments in education and health infrastructure by the Nkrumah regime,

¹⁶ This is not to negate the fact that the Nkrumah regime nonetheless invested in several agro-processing activities and large-scale irrigation programmes in the north (Abdulai et al., 2018).

particularly in the north (Songsore & Denkabe, 1995; Quist, 2003; Songsore, 2011), in respect of quality and outcomes of social-services provision, strong regional disparities in outcomes of education and health remained (Tsikata & Seini, 2004; Songsore, 2011; UNDP, 2018).

State policies in the 1980s and 1990s further exacerbated social and economic inequalities between the north and south of Ghana (Shepherd et al., 2004; Vanderpuye-Orgle, 2004). Public investments in physical and financial infrastructure in the north remained underdeveloped during most of the structural-adjustment era, despite the considerable donor support to improve access to feeder roads, electricity, water, communication and transport networks, among others, in the north (Konadu-Agyemang, 2000; Shepherd et al., 2004).

In the Fourth Republic (1993 to present), several initiatives have been taken to bridge the north–south divide. The various policy documents produced as part of the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) framework have sought to supplement poverty-reduction efforts in the north through the distribution of targeted resources in public expenditure on infrastructure, especially electricity, health, education and water and sanitation, sometimes along pork-barrel lines. The difficulties that pork-barrel politics create for tackling spatial inequality, with the drive to ensure that all Members of Parliament (MPs) are able to take home some pork undermining more spatially targeted initiatives, often result in thinly spread resources and discrimination against the poorer regions of the north (Abdulai, 2014). These distributional problems are then further exacerbated by the weaker implementation capacities in the north. In respect of human development, disparities between the north and the south remain significant. Despite the establishment of the University of Development Studies in Tamale and the accompanying Tamale Teaching Hospital, and considerable donor and non-governmental organisation (NGO) investments in secondary and primary school and healthcare infrastructure in the north, the northern part of the country remains disadvantaged in the provision of quality health and education facilities and personnel (Mohan, 2002; Shepherd et al., 2004; UNDP, 2018). Comparatively, there are significant gaps in the capacity of governance institutions in the north (Shepherd et al., 2004; UNDP, 2018; World Bank, 2018). The weak administrative capacity in the north is reflected in the reluctance of many public-service personnel to accept postings there (Shepherd et al., 2004). Further, the enhanced civil-society support focusing on “service delivery”, channelled through NGOs, tends to set up parallel systems, which subverts the capacity of the state to undertake its mandates in service delivery (Mohan, 2002, p. 140).

4.2.2 Traditional Authorities and precolonial state formation in Ghana

The existing state-building scholarship has underscored the ways in which precolonial social organisations such as TAs shaped the state-formation process and set the platform for colonial state-building efforts (see Berry, 2001; MacLean, 2002; Boone, 2003; Lund, 2006). It has also highlighted how the ensuing patterns of state formation under colonialism transformed these historical social organisations and the wider state–society relations, especially in respect of a bricolage of non-state actors attempting to usurp the power and authority of the state (Boone, 2003; Lund, 2006).

The state-building literature about Ghana underscores the role of powerful social organisations in the formation of the state in the precolonial era. In this epoch, key factors that shaped rural social structures and organisations included settlement patterns, land tenure and inheritance regimes, modes of production, class and communal structures (Boone, 2003). Given these rural structures and social organisations, two distinct forms of traditional institutions emerged in the southern and northern parts of Ghana, respectively. The first were the centralised states with hierarchical structures, under the control of powerful chiefs with the capacity to facilitate land allocation and resources at the community level (Arhin, 2001; Boone, 2003; Lund, 2006). These states were located mainly in the southern and middle belts of the country. In these states, including the Fanti, Akyem and Ashanti, the hierarchy of authority was centralised and embedded in the lineage structures of the society. According to Clark (1990), centralised traditional institutions in the southern part of the country were “highly militarized with urban centres of trade and administration and a sense of political identity” (Crook, 2007, p. 25).

In what is now known as the Central Region, located in the southern part of the country and host to two of the field sites explored here, chiefs boosted their power through control over people and land (Assanful, 2017). Chiefs saw to the general development of their area and fought to protect their subjects as well as their territorial jurisdiction before the advent of colonial rule (Assanful, 2017). Within the territory, the political systems of the Assin people were originally comprised of two autonomous traditional areas: the Assin Attendansu (or Atandanso) and Assin Apemanim (or Apimenem), with strong historical links to the Golden Stool in the Ashanti, and the Akyem kotoku stool in the Eastern Region, respectively (Assanful, 2017). The Assin chiefs enhanced their economic power through their engagement in the transatlantic slave and gold trade in the colonial

epoch (Dickson, 1966; Boahen, 1973). In the Gomoa Area, on the other hand, the political administration had three divisions: Gomoa Assin, Efua Ajumako and Gomoa Ajumako. These divisions were later merged into two main paramountcies, Gomoa Assin (Akyempim) and Gomoa Ajumako (Atiemo, 2015). In the Gomoa area, where chiefs located in communities along the coastal areas traded in gold and salt, their counterparts in the forest hinterlands traded in palm oil and cocoa, which enhanced their holding power (see Atiemo, 2015). Consequently, the chiefs played critical roles in state formation, ranging from the protection of trade routes between local merchants with Sahelian and North African trade networks, through resisting the establishment of European outposts on the coast, to preventing trade between Europeans and local intermediaries. In the view of Daaku (1964, 1970), the formation of sizable empires in the hinterland of Ghana was a direct result of the desire for territorial expansion by force of arms to protect the economic viability of groups in the changing relations of precolonial societies. Thus, as Clark (1990), MacLean (2002) and Austin (2004) suggest, the attempt by southern political empires to expand their territory, control the trade route, accumulate tributes and consolidate power formed a primary basis for the formation of stronger indigenous states.

In contrast to the centralised states, most societies in the northern territories of Ghana were stateless, with no hierarchical traditional monarchs. This was particularly apparent in the north-westernmost region of the country, host to the two other field sites explored here, where societies were “governed through loosely linked segmentary forms of political authority” (Ankisiba, 2013, p. 15). The *Tendaana*/earth priest was virtually the only office outside the localised group of agnatic kinsmen. This priest performed religious and a number of administrative functions (Awedoba, 2006, 2009; Lentz, 2006). Earth priests also controlled access to land as legitimate representatives of the lineages of the original settlers (Crook et al., 2007; Lund, 2008, p. 71). Within the Upper West, the acephalous Birifor, Dagaaba and Lobi constituted the three main groups that inhabited the area south of Wa in the precolonial era (Goody, 1957; Lentz, 2001, 2006). The existing literature describes the Sissala people as politically acephalous because they have no history of centralised authority patterns (see Tauxier, 1912; Goody, 1954; Grindal, 1972; Awedoba, 2006, 2009; Lentz, 2006). The absence of centralised kingdoms and associated bureaucratic state systems in many parts of the north contributed to the weak formation of the state that characterised many areas of the northern part of the country outside of the polities of the Dagomba, Mamprusi, Gonja and Wala (Lentz, 2006). Among other scholars, Lentz (2006) contends that the predominance of stateless institutions in the precolonial era undermined the

emergence of strong state institutions. Further, it inhibited the capacity to ensure effective protection against raiders and slave traders, extraction of tributes and taxes, as well as resolution and adjudication of tribal conflicts.

In the colonial era, the British colonial authorities reinforced precolonial institutions of chieftaincy in the southern and middle belts of the country, thereby promoting an indirect relationship between the state and rural communities (MacLean, 2002, p. 65). Crook et al. (2007) suggest that in the colonial era, the native-authority institutions attempted to accentuate the institutional, legal and economic benefits of chieftaincy. This created a powerful “customary elite with enormous wealth”, acting as a major force in the colonial society. Under the Native Administration Ordinances of 1883, 1927 and 1935, chiefs and their village councils of elders had responsibility for administering the individual localities. They had powers for legal, judicial and general welfare of these localities, although the ultimate exercise of these powers was subject to the supervision of European Commissioners (McLaughlin & Owusu-Ansah, 1994). The legal and judicial powers of chiefs were enhanced alongside their economic capacities.

In comparison, the history of chieftaincy in the northern territories was a “child of British colonialism” (Crook & Addo-Fening, 2005, p. 2), as the chiefs were mainly a creation of British colonial rule, based on the Akan state model (Arhin, 2001; Lund, 2009; Ankisiba, 2013). By adopting a direct rule system in the north, some studies suggest that the character of the British colonial administration in the north was to “make existing forms of authority practically powerless” (Wilks & Ferguson, 1970, as cited in Plange 1984, p. 39). The administration thus created “administrative chiefs” from existing local notables among the Dagaaba, Birifor and Sissala who possessed “no traditional basis of authority, privilege, tribute or reverence” (Plange 1984, p. 40) and no power of decision-making to administer villages on a day-to-day basis (Grindal, 1972; Brukum, 1997; Lentz, 2006; Lund, 2006). These “administrative”/“invented” chiefs were responsible for the administration of the people, with political responsibility for the population within the village territory (Lund, 2008, p. 71; Lund, 2009). Yet the fact that these “chiefs” lacked full ritual and traditional legitimacy “sowed the seeds for the chieftaincy disputes and current conflicts with both Tindaanas and with ‘subject people’” in the postcolonial era (Crook et al., 2007, p. 29). It also weakened the capacity of chiefs in relation to the vast tapestry of state and non-state actors in these societies (Grindal, 1972; Lentz, 2006; Lund, 2006). Thus, the colonial

legacy altered the very fabric of Ghanaian societies, including the forms of authority in centralised and non-centralised societies (Crook et al., 2007).

In the postcolonial era, constitutional reforms in the run-up to independence witnessed the stripping of the administrative and judicial powers of chiefs (Robertson, 1973; Crook, 1986; Dunn & Rathbone, 2000). Specifically, the Nkrumah regime pitched local communities against chiefs and their village councils as it “forced chiefs to raise contributions for local ‘development’ funds, without being able to exercise authority over them” (Amonoo, 1981, pp. 160–161). The Nkrumah regime perceived that the domestic social and political goals could be “achieved faster if [they] were not hindered by ... traditional chiefs – who might compromise with Western imperialists” (McLaughlin & Owusu-Ansah, 1994, p. 34). Subsequently, the constitutional reform in 1954 effectively “ended the election of assembly members by the tribal [traditional] councils” (McLaughlin & Owusu-Ansah, 1994, p. 29). At the same time, the regime still attempted to symbolically enhance the powers of some chiefs who supported its rule through their co-optation into the “running of local communities as opinion leaders” (Awinsong, 2017, p. 125). These reforms in the relations of the state with traditional leaders manifested differently in the south compared to the north. For instance, in the cases of the economically powerful chiefs in the south, the regime sought to undermine the holding power of those aligned with the opposition while augmenting the status of some chiefs aligned with the ruling party, even within the same paramountcies.

In the case of the economically weak chiefs with feeble holding power in the northern part of the country, the Nkrumah regime not only pulled apart the structures of the colonial state but also dismantled and weakened the colonial order of “administrative” chieftaincy, as chiefly authority succumbed to governmental power (Awedoba, 2006, 2009). Specifically, the regime meddled in chieftaincy issues in the north-western part of the region, deposing chiefs who did not support them and installing new chiefs in their place. The Nkrumah regime’s interference in the chieftaincy situation accounts not only for the innumerable chieftaincy disputes pending in the Sissala and related districts (Awedoba, 2009) but also the weakening of the powers and boundaries of chiefs in the North-Western Region of the country (Awedoba, 2009).

Despite the obvious attempts by the Nkrumah regime to curtail the power of chiefs, traditional rulers maintained their independence from the state through an “unwritten agreement” flowing

from colonial-era legacies (Nugent, 2010). The efforts by the Nkrumah regime to intrude into society by eclipsing the powers of chiefs while extending the “circumscribed limits” of the state “which were at once spatial and institutional” (Nugent, 2010, p. 47) were met with intense resistance, contributing to his overthrow in 1966 (Rathbone, 2000; Allman & Rathbone, 2001). The subsequent “deal” with the Busia regime in the Second Republic to preserve the residual powers of chiefs and their control over territories, particularly in respect of land, formed the basis for the subsequent cordial relations between the Ghanaian state and chiefs (Nugent, 2010).

In the Fourth Republic era, the balance of power between chiefs and state authorities continues to evolve. Consistent with Boone’s (2003) assertions, Crook and Addo-Fening (2005) indicate that chiefs wield considerable political authority at the national and local levels, drawing from the official recognition of their status and their social and economic power. Although TAs are less prominent today, the institution of chieftaincy retains a considerable amount of legitimacy in spite of frequent contestations by alternative institutions such as local government, political parties, youth associations and religious institutions (Ray, 2004; Crook, 2005; Crook & Addo-Fening, 2005). Indeed, Ghana’s 1992 Constitution confines the powers of chiefs to control over land and settling civil disputes within their communities. Yet, chiefs often fill the gaps in areas where state capacity is weak (Ray, 2003; Owusu-Sarpong, 2003). Frequently, chiefs take an active role in mobilising communities both civilly and politically. A constant feature of Ghana’s competitive politics is the attempt by political parties and politicians to rally voters by tapping into the legitimacy of chiefs to canvass and win political power or gain control of the central state in its various forms, although the latter is prohibited (Crook, 2005; Crook & Addo-Fening, 2005). At the same time, TAs in jurisdictions with a history of contestations have sought to boost their legitimacy through alignment with ruling parties (Boafo-Arthur, 2003; Jonah, 2003; Crook, 2005; Lentz, 2006).

As highlighted in Sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 above, the distinct patterns of state formation in the precolonial and colonial eras highlight the strong bequests of state resources and competences in the south compared to the weak legacy of infrastructure and resources in the north. At the same time, variations in colonial adaptations to precolonial social structures and organisations underpin the contemporary variations in state–society relations in the southern and northern parts of the country. Understanding how these variations in state formation and state–society relations interplay with the nature of political competition constitutes the major focus of this chapter.

4.3 Political competition and coalitions in Ghana

This section outlines the changing nature of political competition and political coalitions in Ghana from pre-independence to the current Fourth Republic era, with a particular focus on the two main political traditions that have dominated political competition during this period. Ethnopolitical factors rather than ideological factors have shaped the intensity of competition between the country's main political party traditions. This section suggests that competitive politics, steeped in clientelist relations, has become a critical driver of elite coalitional politics and, more importantly, social-protection policy formulation and implementation in Ghana's competitive political system. It also contends that competitive politics and coalitional relations have the potential to politicise the distribution of social-protection programmes.

4.3.1 Political competition in Ghana from pre-independence to the Fourth Republic

The nature of contemporary political competition in Ghana has antecedents in the historical formation of parties and political activities in the decade preceding independence. The first political party that emerged in the then Gold Coast was the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC). Joseph Boakye Danquah, a lawyer and historian and later Kofi Busia, a sociologist were the principal leaders of the UGCC. Launched in 1946, the UGCC opposed colonial rule and called for self-government in the "shortest possible time" through "legitimate and constitutional means" (Apter, 1963). The leadership of the UGCC were mainly lawyers and business elites, who traced their ideals to the Aborigines Rights Protection Society and the Congress of British West Africa. They adopted a moderately liberal (conservative) orientation in their political struggles (McLaughlin & Owusu-Ansah, 1994; Morrison, 2004). In contrast to the UGCC, the CPP, led by Kwame Nkrumah, constituted the first major opposition movement. Formed in 1949, the CPP advocated "self-government now"/"independence now". This party mobilised groups of workers, women, servicemen and school-leavers with diverse interests, which underlined the party's more radical orientation in their political struggles and importantly the CPP's social welfarism ideological position of improving the well-being of citizens through employment, educational and social provision (McLaughlin & Owusu-Ansah, 1994; Morrison, 2004). Outside the CPP which was fundamentally opposed to the ethnic identification of parties and tribal politics as a whole, other political parties, often ethnic, religious or regional in orientation, emerged subsequently to promote the struggle for independence (Allman, 1993).

Political competition in the pre-independence era percolated into the First Republic (1957–1966) as the various political parties promised tailor-made state interventions in the form of infrastructure and the supply of social facilities (Nugent, 2010). Before independence in 1957, the CPP won elections for the Legislative Assembly under the 1951 and 1954 Constitutions (Austin, 2000; McLaughlin & Owusu-Ansah, 1994). Other political parties that contested the 1956 elections included the then Northern People’s Party, the National Liberation Movement, the Togoland Congress and the Ghana Congress Party (Austin, 2000). As previously indicated, most of the political parties that contested elections in the pre-independence era made strong ethnic-based appeals (Howard, 1978). Consequently, after independence, the CPP government was still threatened by sectional and ethnic cleavages prompting Kwame Nkrumah to introduce a torrent of repressive measures in an attempt to stabilize the state and undermine political competition, resulting in a situation of “neither freedom nor justice and certainly not democracy” (Austin, 2000, p.146). The legislations introduced to undermine political competition include the Preventive Detention Act passed in 1958 which was operated under executive directives (Austin, 2000), Avoidance of Discrimination Act, Deportation Act and the Emergency Powers Act (Austin 1970). Specifically, a new republican constitution in 1960 bestowed extensive powers to the Nkrumah regime, including authority to discretionarily revoke the appointment of a Chief Justice, remove and appoint judges. The country thus slipped into single-party dictatorship (Austin, 1970) as the Nkrumah regime declared a one-party state and thereby banning all political parties except the CPP from operating as part of a policy of political consolidation (Morrison, 2004). By the mid-1960s, Nkrumah's rigid rule had created increased bitterness both within the CPP and from prohibited groups, resulting in the eventual overthrow of the regime in February 1966 (Austin, 1970, 2000; Morrison, 2004).

In the Second Republic (1969–1972), relics of the disintegrated UGCC metamorphosed into the Busia-led Progress Party (PP) (Morrison, 2004; Austin, 2000). Academics, business leaders and professionals dominated the PP. The National Alliance of Liberals (NAL) and the People’s Action Party formed the key opposition parties that contested the 1969 elections (Luckham & Nkrumah, 1975). In the 1969 parliamentary elections, the PP gained 59% of the popular vote (McLaughlin & Owusu-Ansah, 1994), yet the regime was short lived, as Busia was overthrown on 13 January 1972 through the military intervention of Colonel Acheampong’s National Redemption Council (Fobih, 2008). Throughout the political contestations in the Second Republic, ethnopolitics

manifested itself in ugly political bargaining, as Akans overwhelmingly voted for the PP while Ewes voted massively for the NAL (Chazan, 1988).

The Third Republic (1979–1981) witnessed relatively intense political competition between political parties, with strong foundations in the ideals of the UGCC/PP and the CPP, respectively. The key political parties were the Hilla Limann–led People’s National Party (PNP) and the opposition Popular Front Party (PFP) and United National Convention (UNC). The PNP included people of conflicting ideological orientations, although it had an avowedly lineal connection with the then defunct CPP (Austin, 1970; McLaughlin & Owusu-Ansah, 1994). Unlike its CPP precursor, the PNP attracted support from “a series of wealthy patrons” (Chazan, 1988), in addition to the “trade-union leaders, farmers, students, clerks and the urban dispossessed” associated with the Nkrumah tradition (Morrison, 2004, p. 425). The opposition PFP and UNC, however, all aligned to the Danquah/Busia tradition (Morrison, 2004). Ethnic politics was reinvented in the 1979 elections, which saw the PFP representing the pro-Akan parties, ethnic groups in the northern Ghana populating the PNP and the UNC typifying Ewes, Gas and a small group of disgruntled Akyems (Gyimah-Boadi & Debrah, 2008). It is worth stating that though the PNP won 71 of the 140 legislative seats against the PFP and UNC, the administration survived for only 27 months, as Rawlings’ Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) overthrew it in a *coup d’état* in 1981 (Austin, 2000).

Contemporary political competition under the present Fourth Republic (1993 to present) persists between two main political forces, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and demonstrates an evolution from distinct ethnic and/ or ideology-based political traditions to strong ethno-regional politics (Jockers et al., 2010; Oduro et al., 2014; Abdulai & Hickey, 2016), as highlighted briefly in Section 3.5.1. Political power has alternated between these two parties in 2000, 2008 and 2016, with elections won by very slim margins (Gyimah-Boadi, 2009; Bob-Milliar & Paller, 2018). Unlike the case of the first three republics, the Fourth Republic has witnessed the evolution of a third political force, the NDC, outside the strict Nkrumah–Danquah/Busia traditions but surely adopting much of the populist nature of the Nkrumah tradition. The NDC emerged from the populist vestiges of Rawlings’ military regime (1981–1992). The party exploited Rawlings’ popularity in the Volta and northern parts of the country to reinforce its support base, while tapping into the rural patron–client networks of the Nkrumah era (Whitfield, 2011, 2018). Though the ideals of the NDC bear some ideological affinity

with the Nkrumahist tradition, the leadership often denies these relations and often makes incursions into the market economy (Sandbrook & Oelbaum, 1997). The Nkrumah tradition has also been maintained via the ongoing CPP and PNC in the Fourth Republic but in much-reduced form.

In contrast, the NPP traces its support from the Danquah/Busia tradition. The NPP attracts support from new and highly educated technocrats, intellectuals and business and professional elites (Whitfield, 2009; Jockers et al., 2010; Osei, 2013), while maintaining strong alliances with traditional leaders (Morrison, 2004). The NPP has its strongholds in the Ashanti and Eastern Regions, while the Volta, Oti and Northern Regions (Northern, Savannah, North-East, Upper West and Upper East) have voted strongly for the NDC. These dynamics demonstrate the strong ethno-regional dynamics of politics in Ghana (Morrison, 2004; Jockers et al., 2010; Abdulai & Hickey, 2016). The remaining regions of Brong Ahafo, the Central Region, Greater Accra and the Western Region are “swing” regions. The NPP has consistently performed better in urban centres in the South – Accra, Kumasi, Cape Coast and Sekondi-Takoradi – in all seven elections. However, the competition from the NDC through migrant labour has been intense, winning more than 30% of the vote in Kumasi in the NPP-dominant Ashanti Region, for instance (Morrison, 2004).

In specific reference to the Upper West sites of two of this project’s case studies, the NDC has been dominant since the commencement of the Fourth Republic (Bob-Milliar & Paller, 2018). The NDC has won every election in the region, this being largely attributable to the strong association of the creation of the region with former President Rawlings of the then PNDC. In the Wa West District, for instance, the NDC has won every presidential election, with over 63% of the votes (Electoral Commission of Ghana, 2016). Ethnic alliances formed between the historically marginalised acephalous Birifor and Dagaaba against the centralised Wala ethnic group continue to shape party politics in the district. The Birifor and Dagaaba are aligned to the NDC while the Wala are associated with the NPP. In contrast, Sissala East is one of the most competitive districts in the Upper West Region. Political power has alternated between three main parties in the district: the NDC, PNC and NPP as stated in Chapter 3.

In the Central Region, power has alternated between the NDC and NPP, as no political party has dominated politics in the region since the start of the Fourth Republic (Morrison, 2004; Morrison & Woo Hong, 2006). The Gomoa West District is one of many politically competitive districts.

Historically, the Gomoa people had a long association with the CPP as Kojo Botsio, a stalwart of the party, hailed from this area. This political influence of the CPP rolled over to the NDC in 1992, given the Rawlings factor and the appointment of key Gomoa social and traditional elites into the PNDC and NDC administrations. The influence of these historical political factors has been waning over time, with large parts of the coastal areas of the district shifting their political allegiance to the NPP. In contrast to Gomoa West, Assin South constitutes one of only a few dominant districts in the politically competitive Central Region. The majority NPP mobilises support from the indigenous Akan population, whereas the minority NDC rallies political support from migrants who work on the many plantations and cocoa farms in the district.

4.3.2 Political coalitions and nature of power configurations in Ghana

In Ghana's Fourth Republic, the increasingly intense competition for political power has highlighted the "high tendency for inter- and intra-elite factionalism" (Whitfield, 2011; Bob-Milliar, 2012; Oduro et al., 2014, p. 7). Indeed, the return to competitive multi-party democracy, albeit still characterised by strong ethno-regional voting (Jockers et al., 2010; Abdulai & Hickey, 2016), has not changed the clientelist character of politics in Ghana, although Lindberg and Morrison (2005) argue that it is possible to identify more programmatic shifts. For the most part, scholars have suggested that multi-party politics has "marked a return to competitive clientelism" (Whitfield, 2011, p. 2). These scholars have asserted that "pork barrel allocations of state resources to reward followers have become a dominant strategy for maintaining political power by elites across the political divide" (Lindberg & Morrison, 2008; Abdulai & Hulme, 2015, p. 4; Hirvi & Whitfield, 2015). Mohan et al. (2017) suggest that the very nature of the clientelist political settlement in Ghana has ensured that political elites build and maintain coalitions with the capacity to compete for elections and win power. These coalitions are motivated through extensive patron-client networks. Abdulai and Hickey (2016) equally state that the increasingly intense electoral competition between the two main parties and the evolution of political party platforms reflect the nature of political organisations and embeddedness of patron-client forms of Ghanaian politics. According to Carbone (2011), these clientelist networks have implications for dynamics of elite and social group relations and state capacity. Indeed, Bob-Milliar (2014) suggests the fact that political parties in Ghana have required significant organisational capacity at the local level to succeed in closely fought elections has enhanced the power and influence of intra-party factions. The result has been that it has incentivised visible social policies and provisioning with the aim of showing their concerns for local constituencies (Carbone, 2011). Prempeh and Kroon (2012) have

also suggested that increased consolidation of patronage-driven politics has resulted in “political incentives and public investment with short-term electoral pay-offs as opposed to investments in long-term”. In this political environment, influential public officials often “ignore what the budget says and dispose of public monies according to other decision processes” (Killick, 2010, p. 28). The result of these dynamics is that election cycles in Ghana are consistently associated with patterns of fiscal excesses (World Bank, 2018).

Thus, the nature of electoral politics has become a critical driver of coalitional politics and the significant causal mechanism of competitive clientelism in Ghana. At the same time, these national-level political coalitional dynamics have had ramifications for the configuration of power and state capacity in Ghana’s decentralised service-delivery architecture. These in turn have had consequences for the politicisation of distribution of social protection at decentralised levels of the state.

4.4 Decentralisation and the political economy of service delivery in Ghana

The politics of decentralisation is a critical aspect of policy implementation in Ghana. Two key elements that have characterised decentralised implementation are the role of local political competition and the character of local coalitions of political elites, with consequences for service-delivery performance and outcomes. The section below briefly traces the political transformations leading to the introduction of Ghana’s decentralisation reforms. It also highlights political-economy factors as critical features of the decentralisation policy and practice.

4.4.1 History and structure of local government in Ghana

Decentralised governance in Ghana dates to the introduction of the colonial administration’s “Indirect Rule” in 1878 (Ayee, 2000; Crawford, 2004). During this era, the colonial administration indirectly maintained control over native territories through native political institutions, by investing them with powers to “establish treasuries, appoint personnel and undertake local functions” (Nkrumah, 2000, p. 55; Crawford, 2004). In the post-independence era, the Nkrumah regime and its successive regimes largely adopted a preference for centralisation of powers of the state, typical of many post-independence African regimes (see Crawford, 2004, citing Tordoff, 1997). The regime thus adopted more lukewarm efforts at reinvigorating decentralised governance systems (Nugent, 2010).

It was not until 1988 that the Rawlings PNDC administration introduced a formal structure of political and administrative decentralisation (Ayee, 1994; Crook, 1999; Crawford, 2004). Under PNDC Law 207, a dual hierarchical structure of central- and local-government institutions “operated in parallel” (Crawford, 2004, p. 7) with the objective of improving delivery of public goods and services, responsiveness to citizens’ demands and citizens’ participation in the planning and resolution of local problems (Ayee, 2000; Debrah, 2014). Both the 1992 Constitution and the Local Government (LG) Act of 1994¹⁷ reinforced the local-governance system in Ghana (Crook, 1999; Awortwi, 2010).

Figure 4.3 illustrates the four-tier structure of Ghana’s decentralisation system. Legislation, policies and guidelines determine the relationships that exist between central- and local-government entities. The central government maintains the policymaking role and a vertical relationship with local-government institutions. The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MoLGRD) is the main central-government agency responsible for promoting the development of decentralised government systems (Blampied et al., 2018). At the subnational level, the first level is the Regional Coordinating Councils (RCCs), which oversee, coordinate, backstop, monitor and evaluate the assemblies in their jurisdictions (Zakaria, 2013). From the initial ten RCCs, the number of regions has increased to 16 RCCs in 2018. The change in the number of regions has resulted from the political campaign promises of both the NDC and NPP parties, a constitutional review and a referendum in the affected regions (Gyampo, 2018; Kendie, 2019).

Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) make up the second tier of the decentralised system. The MMDAs act as implementing entities and have primary responsibility for planning, financing and delivering services to local people. The MMDAs operate on the principle of improving accountability and fostering greater participation of citizens in public decision-making, as well as better targeting of public services to the poor (Alam & Koranteng, 2011; Zakaria, 2013; World Bank, 2018). From the initial 110 Assemblies in 1988, there are currently 260 local authorities made up of six Metropolitan Assemblies, 109 Municipal Assemblies and 145 District Assemblies.¹⁸ There are currently 11 districts in the Upper West

¹⁷ The Local Government (LG) Act of 1994, Act 462 has been amended with the Local Governance Act, 2016. Act 936

¹⁸ <http://www.ghanadistricts.com/Home/LinkData/7090>

Region and 21 in the Central Region.¹⁹ The key factors that determine the creation of an Assembly are the population size and settlement characteristics of the area (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Ghana, 2016). There is, however, a widespread perception that political considerations have underpinned the creation of districts in many regions of the country (Bening, 2012; Ayee, 2013; Ahwoi, 2017; Resnick, 2017; Ofei-Aboagye, 2018).

Subdistrict structures form the third and fourth tiers of the local-government system and are critical to the effective functioning of assemblies. These structures include Town, Area and Zonal Councils and Unit Committees, respectively, which serve as the bridge to reaching out and receiving input into local planning, budgeting, implementation and monitoring of development programmes from the community level (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Ghana, 2016).

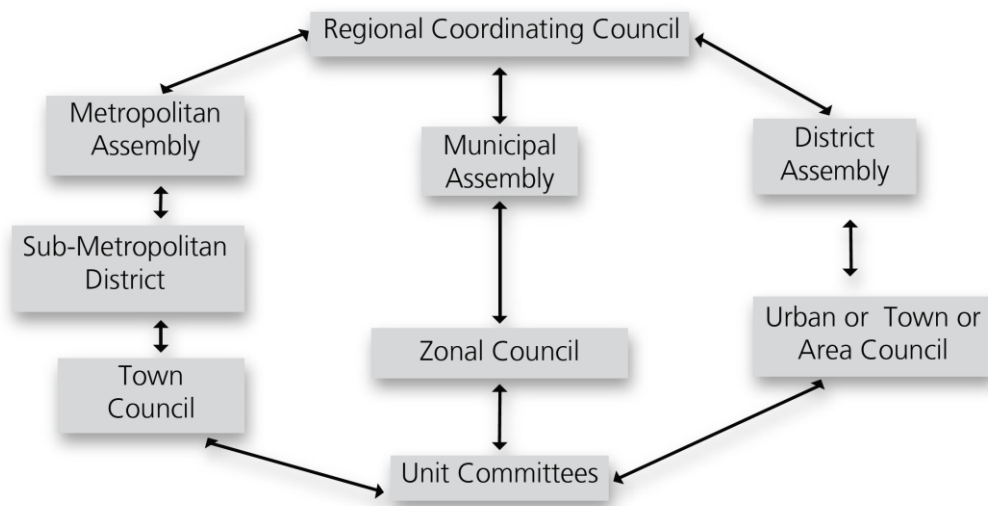


Figure 4.3: The local-government structure

Source: Introduction to Ghana’s Local Government System, ILGS, 2008, as cited in Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Ghana (2016, p. 17).

Reviews of decentralisation in Ghana in the past three decades suggest that the progress of decentralised governance has been slow (see Ahwoi, 2010; Ofei-Aboagye, 2018, p. 6). Ofei-Aboagye (2018, p. 4), for instance, asserts that “more had been achieved in the area of political redesign of the decentralisation process than in administrative re-organization and fiscal

¹⁹ <https://lgs.gov.gh/index.php/central/>

decentralisation”. Specifically, in respect of fiscal decentralisation, local assemblies have only been able to raise 30% of their income from their internally generated sources (Biitir & Assiamah, 2015; Ofei-Aboagye, 2018). The majority of the funding for local governments has come from central-government transfers and donor sources, which are routinely insufficient, unpredictable and unreliable (Ayee, 2008; Ofei-Aboagye, 2018; World Bank, 2018). In addition, municipal governments remain poorly equipped in terms of budget planning, preparation, execution and accounting, with many demonstrating weak compliance with regulatory frameworks, including procurement and contract management (World Bank, 2018). In respect of administrative decentralisation, progress has been uneven in the sense that functions and/or officials have been deconcentrated, but the systems of line management and accountability remains confusing (Couttolenc, 2012; Blampied et al., 2018).

The passage of the Local Government Service Act 656, LI 1961, or Departments of District Assemblies Commencement Instrument in 2009, which saw to the reassignment of professional and technical personnel to head the 27 departments of the various MMDAs, has not yielded much success in this regard (Crook, 1999; Debrah, 2014; Ofei-Aboagye, 2018). For the most part, civil servants employed at the district level are seen as having dual allegiances to their parent ministries and sectors as well as to the assemblies in which they are operating, depriving districts of committed and sustained services (Awortwi, 2010).

There is no holistic tool for assessing the performance management of local-government institutions and key actors manning key positions within the local-governance system (Zakaria, 2014; Abane & Phinaitrup, 2017; Ofei-Aboagye, 2018). Given this, key stakeholders (government, NGOs and civil society) in the decentralisation regime have designed varied mechanisms for performance management. The Functional Organisational Assessment Tool (FOAT) (now renamed the District Performance Assessment Tool, or DPAT) and the District League Table (DLT) are two such performance instruments (CDD/UNICEF, 2017). These instruments provide annual assessments of compliance and sector results, respectively, though they are both limited in their coverage and do not adequately reflect the effects on the recipients of assembly services. The DPAT assesses the performance of the assembly as a body and concerning its obligations to citizens, and primarily checks compliance of MMDAs with administrative processes. The DLT, on the other hand, ranks the level of progress in delivering key basic services in health, education, sanitation, water, governance and security at the local-government level (CDD/UNICEF, 2017).

Other forms of performance measurement include annual reporting systems administered by the Local Government Service (LGS), annual performance reporting by the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) and sector reviews, particularly in the health and education sectors. Districts across the country take these assessments quite seriously. Concerning the DPAT, for instance, districts go the extra mile to score high points, as the release of the District Development Funds is contingent on DPAT performance.

Local-government performance in Ghana has been mixed (Ofei-Aboagye, 2018). Crook and Manor (1998) and more recently CDD-Ghana (2015) report that large numbers of citizens (over 70% and 64%, respectively) are not satisfied with the performance of their MMDAs. Trend analysis of the Ghana Afrobarometer data shows that the majority (70% of respondents) “strongly disapprove” or “disapprove” of the performance of their local government (Okuru & Armah-Attoh, 2015). Crook (1994) found that since the introduction of democratic decentralisation, development output had increased only marginally, as it had failed to respond to citizens’ demands. Schiewer (1995) also reported that “community-level aspirations [of local citizens] were completely ignored” in drawing up district plans (Schiewer, 1995, p. 304). Debrah (2014) suggests that “the masses are still disconnected from the local elites and that the neglect of the grassroots in the decision-making process has meant that opportunities for communicating local preferences upwards are greatly circumscribed” (p. 51). Crook and Manor (1998) earlier suggested that Ghana’s decentralisation system seemed to perpetuate a system of power and patronage driven from the central level of the state to create alliances with some rural elites while excluding others.

4.4.2 Political economy of Ghana’s decentralised public service delivery system

Political dynamics are at the heart of the relatively strong or poor performance of local-government systems (Robinson, 2007; Cabral, 2011; Smoke et al., 2013). Ghana’s local-governance structure envisages a non-partisan subnational system for service delivery and proposes no space for political parties to “sponsor candidates, campaign or play a role in the life of District Assemblies” (Crook, 1999, p. 114). Yet, the structure of the local-government architecture creates continuous interfaces between political and social actors with horizontal and vertical relationships, resulting in a politicised decentralised system (Tettey, 2006, 2011; Gyimah-Boadi, 2009; Adusei-Asante, 2012). Some of these political actors include District Chief Executives (DCEs), MPs and Constituency Party Executives (CPEs). Other social actors include Assembly Members (AMs), TAs and faith-based organisations (FBOs). Each of these actors operates in a different space, yet

in the informal local-governance setting, strict institutional boundaries are harder to identify. Besides, these actors possess different motivations, resources and have different effects, and thus shape the local-governance systems in multiple ways. For instance, scholars have suggested that the fact that Ghana's Constitution empowers the Executive President to appoint DCEs and a third of the councillors in local assemblies rather than their being elected ensures a "partisan central government superimposed on a non-partisan local government system" (Crook, 1999; Antwi-Boasiako, 2010; Tettey, 2011; Adusei-Asante, 2012). Awortwi (2010, p. 625) has further suggested that the appointment of DCEs ensures that only "politically loyal cadres" head the administration of the local assemblies and, worse still, elected councillors or the people could not remove them from office. Local ruling political party executives are influential with regard to the decision of the President in the appointment of the DCEs in addition to serving as part of the 30% appointed AMs (Crook, 1999; Crawford, 2004; Awortwi, 2010; Debrah, 2016). These appointees are sometimes posted to critical committees in the District Assembly to entrench the hold of the ruling party over the assembly and its functioning. Indeed, Crook (2003, p. 85) affirmed that "District Assemblies were designed as tools to co-opt local elites where possible, using centrally controlled power and patronage systems, and excluding opposition elites where necessary". Gyimah-Boadi (1990) suggests that the appointment of 30% of local councillors was only meant to enable the then PNDC regime to prepare a cohort of locally based political elites in advance of broader democratisation of the country. Mohan (1996) similarly contends that the actual implementation of decentralisation revealed the PNDC regime's motive of legitimising itself and injecting the interest of central government into the local level. That said, MPs are elected on partisan political platforms. MPs are ex officio members of District Assemblies and serve on the tender committees of Assemblies (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Ghana, 2016). Political mis/alignment often influences conflicts between MPs and DCEs and is further exacerbated by intra- and inter-party dynamics at the district level.

Beyond the DCE and the MP, Traditional Authorities (TAs) are special elements in civil society that forge relationships with MMDAs at the local level and the central state via partisan affiliations. Despite the absence of formalised institutional linkages to MMDAs (Kendie et al., 2008), traditional leaders provide alternative channels of representation for the citizenry and the social capital that they offer often puts them in the arena of local coalitional politics. Though traditional leaders have lost their one-third membership of District Assemblies under the Local Government Law 1988 (PNDC Law 207), local governments continue to consult and engage the authority of

chiefs in making decisions, which require local-level implementation (Boafo-Arthur, 2003; Owusu-Sarpong, 2003; Ray, 2004, p. 5). This is especially the case in districts in the southern part of the country, where hierarchical TAs maintain an almost “power sharing” role with the local state.

Thus, given the challenge of operating a non-partisan local government in a partisan national government environment, the politicisation of subnational governance institutions, polarisation in decision-making in assemblies, tensions around control over district-level public facilities and excessive ruling party control over District Assembly leadership constitute key features of the current local-government system in Ghana (Ofei-Aboagye, 2018). For instance, Abdulai (2014) found that educational resources were being disproportionately allocated along clientelist lines influenced by the character of the ruling coalition in power and the manner in which regional elites were incorporated. At the level of MPs, centre–local factors influence the common strategy of MPs to focus on providing “club goods” to their constituents as a way of winning elections (Lindberg, 2010; Abdulai, 2014). As indicated by Abdulai and Hickey (2016, p. 66), MPs in power who are cabinet members often use their positions to “influence allocation of public resources towards the constituents upon whom their electoral mandates depend”. Consequently, Miguel and Zaidi (2003) found that government expenditure on education became consistently higher in districts that had voted for the ruling party in parliamentary elections. In contrast, Banful (2011) asserts that swing districts received more funding from the central government.

The disproportionate allocation of public projects and goods to influential groups by centre-based actors was replicated among local elites and coalitions at the local level (Crook, 2017), resulting in over-expenditure in visible goods and “quantity” outcomes prevailing over quality outcomes. For instance, in the context of maternal health service provisioning, Abdulai et al. (2018) reported that ruling coalitions tended to prioritise visible infrastructural projects in health at the expense of functioning health systems, which required difficult reform measures. In the context of education service delivery, Ampratwum (n.d.) similarly found that ruling coalitions tended to fulfil the visible projects in their political manifestos to the neglect of more quality-based reforms. Ampratwum et al. (2019) additionally found that threats of electoral turnover and the time horizons of ruling coalitions shaped the kinds of local service-delivery reforms – in this case, education – that local officials were willing and able to pursue. Indeed, in politically dominant subnational states where local governing elite coalitions faced limited electoral pressures of turnover, they

were able to drive up improved learning outcomes through the institution of difficult education reforms compared to their counterparts in competitive districts, who tended to adopt short-term approaches. These were largely unwilling to promote reforms that involved penalising socially and politically significant constituencies such as teachers and their unions.

At the level of relations between local assemblies and TAs, Crook (2005) highlights the tendency for chiefs and their representatives to capitalise on their political connections with rival party traditions to capture local assemblies' initiatives in their communities. These tendencies are similar across different fields. For instance, in the area of land administration, Ubink (2018, p. 937) has established that the reforms to improve the quality of customary land administration only enhanced the power of traditional leaders to “administer and regulate communal land, without the need for accountability”, leading to capture of the local land revenues. Equally, in the mining sector, Standing and Hilson (2013, p. 7) have revealed that decentralised distribution of mining revenues through traditional councils and stools only enhanced the power of chiefs and increased the susceptibility of these funds to local elite capture and political corruption at the community level.

4.5 Social-protection provisioning in Ghana

This concluding section traces the evolution of social-protection provisioning in Ghana, with a particular focus on the mechanisms and structures associated with the decentralised implementation of LEAP.

4.5.1 Social-protection provisioning from pre-independence to the present

The provision of social welfare in Ghana evolved from informal arrangements in the precolonial era to limited state provisioning through a decentralised rather than a centralised system in the colonial period. In the precolonial era, the family, village councils and chiefs served as key actors responsible for the provision of welfare and protection of the vulnerable (MacLean, 2002; De-Graft Aikins et al., 2016). During the colonial era, the administration indicated that “where indigenous cultures and social structures were already in existence when they were colonized, the people had to work out their own methods of dealing with social problems” based on the resources available (Ghana National Archives, 1946, p. 6; Ghana National Archives, 1950). MacLean shows that it was only in “1939 that the British colonial authorities introduced the Colonial Development and Welfare Act and created a new Department of Social Services” to provide limited forms of social welfare and protection (MacLean, 2002, p. 70). Following the passage of the Act, the

Colonial Social Welfare Advisory Committee directed the colonial territories to raise local resources from the people, not the colonial government, for the provision of limited social welfare where there was agitation for social services and welfare, especially among the war veterans and urban elites (Ghana National Archives, 1946, 1950). Review of colonial records on the nature and form of social-welfare provisioning in the colonial era shows three distinct patterns: a preference for general human-capital development over welfare, an inclination to maintain the traditional social structures and their roles and the decentralisation of welfare provisioning.

First, the British colonial authorities demonstrated a preference for the provision of welfare in the form of general human-capital development (mass education, health, nutrition and housing) compared to specific protection of the vulnerable (Ghana National Archives, 1945, p. 6; Ghana National Archives, 1946). Two central factors influencing this preference for human capital were limitations on financial resources from England to the colonies following the Second World War and the determination to boost the capacities of the population in the colonies to support their families while discouraging a reliance on public social welfare (Ghana National Archives, 1946, 1950; MacLean, 2002). As Commissioner Beeton, the then Acting Commissioner of the Central Province of the Gold Coast intimated, “I do not think an extension of cash benefits [is] appropriate to present conditions in the Gold Coast” (Ghana National Archives, 1945, pp. 5-7).

Second, the authorities showed an inclination to maintain the traditional social structures as primary providers of social welfare, whereas the state, albeit in its decentralised form, could provide some semblance of support at urban centres. The colonial authorities made some concessions for limited welfare provisioning rather than social security for urban centres such as industrial towns, which were frequently associated with “destitution, child vagrancy, prostitutions, housing shortage, delinquency”, which were outside the range of traditional family systems (Ghana National Archives, 1945, p. 6). Besides, migrants to these urban spaces could not easily call upon traditional social support mechanisms when they fell on hard times (Ghana National Archives, 1945). Instead, they relied on home-town associations plus, sometimes, the insurance of land. At all times, however, colonial Commissioners argued that “the time has not come for old age pensions or the dole” to support the poor (Ghana National Archives, 1945, p. 7).

Third, the colonial authorities recommended “decentralisation to be necessary so that the policy of welfare may be worked out in close relation to the conditions, needs and desires of the people”

(Ghana National Archives, 1950, p. 3). Thus, the administration of social welfare was organised based on provincial and district administration. The colonial authorities, therefore, sanctioned the recruitment and training of local social-welfare workers to undertake social-welfare provision (Ghana National Archives, 1946). These fieldworkers were to be locally recruited from persons with only primary education and those people could be trained for 1–2 years and stationed in villages (Ghana National Archives, 1946). Social-welfare workers were mandated to perform the following functions: family case work; domestic property management and help in the care of home and children (during and after school). Further, they were to care for the sick, assist with youth leadership and take on delinquent and difficult cases. Other responsibilities included special moral supervision of women and girls (Ghana National Archives, 1946). In addition, a review of existing colonial documents (see Ghana National Archives, 1950) has clearly demonstrated a preference for strong collaboration with local non-state actors such as churches, voluntary societies and members of the local communities in the promotion of social services and welfare in the Gold Coast (MacLean, 2002).

In the postcolonial era, social-welfare provisioning took a somewhat different pattern from the colonial format. Under the Nkrumah regime, from 1957 until 1966, the state emphasised the provision of health and education infrastructure and services to larger sections of the population as part of a nation-building project (MacLean, 2002). The regime targeted the needs of the growing urban areas and the “dtribalised” Ghanaians who had lost touch with their traditional roots and social networks; relied on decentralised local governments and voluntary organisations to support primary and middle schools and rural health provisioning; and facilitated the passage of the Social Security Act of 1965 beyond what was envisaged in the Beveridge Plan (MacLean, 2002).

In the Second and Third Republics, however, social services and welfare policies shifted from the urban population to incorporating the needs of the rural poor. The Busia regime (1969–1972), for example, undertook increased investment in rural housing, feeder roads, electrification, health centres and water projects (MacLean, 2002; Attah, 2017). At the same time, the regime required local communities to support the state through the supply of building materials, communal labour and special financial donations to support community projects (MacLean, 2002). There were also a few instances where the regime required health facilities to charge minimal user fees to complement the provision of services, particularly for the urban population (Attah, 2017).

The Acheampong military regime unsuccessfully tried to bridge investments in social welfare through increased housing investments in urban areas and food production with the “Operation Feed Yourself and Operation Feed the Nation” in many of the rural areas (MacLean, 2002, p. 70). During this period, the state relied mainly on grassroots-based NGOs and decentralised faith-based bodies for the provision of social welfare. The recourse to user fees in the provision of education and health services in the 1970s, under international pressure, significantly undermined access for the urban poor and rural populations, respectively (Morales-Gomez et al., 2000; Attah, 2017).

In the 1980s, long periods of economic and political malaise in the country undermined both social-services provisioning in the areas of health and education as well as the provision of welfare. The PNDC regime, faced with local political pressure, worked with its international partners to introduce the Programme of Actions to Mitigate the Social Costs of Adjustment (PAMSCAD) in 1988, to address the problems of mass underemployment and unemployment. This was done through the targeting of financial assistance and employment opportunities for poor and vulnerable persons (Hutchful, 1994; Sowa, 2002). Reviews of the implementation of the PAMSCAD showed limited success, as the demands placed on beneficiaries often undermined their interest in participating in the programme (Hutchful, 1994; MacLean, 2002; Sowa, 2002).

The 1990s similarly witnessed relatively limited reforms in the sphere of social provisioning. Increased demand for user fees and cost-recovery initiatives in the education and health sectors resulted in undermining reduction in outpatient and school attendance (Sowa, 2002). The major exceptions were reforms in the Social Security Law 1991 to replace the Provident Fund Scheme of 1965 and the Free Compulsory Basic Education reforms (MacLean, 2002).

Overall, while informal coping strategies dominated precolonial-era welfare arrangements, the colonial-era welfare regimes combined traditional practices and a combination of limited decentralised formal provisioning. Post-independence era welfare arrangements evolved from centralised state provisioning to a combination of traditional welfare arrangements and the increased introduction of user fees for social-services provisioning.

4.5.2 Social protection and LEAP implementation in contemporary Ghana

The turn of the millennium saw the introduction of reforms in social-protection provisioning in Ghana. Following the country’s assumption of the Highly Indebted Poor Country status, the World

Bank and other development partners (DPs) assisted the Kufuor government to design the GPRS (phase I, 2003–2005). The first set of related social-protection reforms that were launched in 2004 included the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), the Capitation Grant Basic School Bursary and the Ghana School Feeding Programme. Under the GPRS (phase II) from 2006 and 2009, the Kufuor government introduced the National Youth Employment Programme and the flagship LEAP social cash-transfer programme (MMYE, 2007b).

LEAP provides cash grants to extremely poor households. The programme aims at alleviating short-term poverty while promoting long-term human-capital development. The programme commenced with a small pilot in the three northern regions of Ghana (Jones et al., 2009). The then ruling NPP regime scaled up the pilot to 21 districts targeting 1,654 beneficiary households (MMYE, 2007a, b). The announcement to scale up the programme was met with a mixed reaction from the public (Daily Graphic, 2008; Foli, 2016). The major opposition party perceived that the LEAP programme was aimed at buying votes ahead of the crucial 2008 elections (Sultan & Schrofer, 2008; Grebe, 2015a; Abdulai, 2019). Following the successful pilot in 2008, the programme has witnessed a series of geographical and beneficiary household expansions across regions and districts in Ghana in 2012, 2015 and 2016, sometimes ahead of key national elections and internal political party primaries (Grebe, 2015a; Abdulai, 2019).

The programme currently covers over 213,000 households and over one million individuals across all 16 regions (Ablo, 2018; MoGCSP, 2018). The majority of the LEAP beneficiaries are women (56%), given their combined roles as mothers and caregivers in most Ghanaian societies (MoGCSP, 2018). LEAP targets elderly persons (over 65 years old) without support, persons with disability with severe incapacitation, orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and pregnant women and/or children under 12 months old (Handa et al., 2013; Angeles et al., 2017). Households receive grant amounts, ranging from GHS64–106 (US\$15–24) per bimonthly payment cycle. The amount that a household receives is determined by the number of eligible members in the household (MoGCSP, 2016a).

LEAP is centrally driven but implemented through decentralised structures involving state and societal actors. Figure 4.4 below illustrates the three-tier structure for LEAP implementation at the subnational level. The Department of Social Welfare and Community Development (SWCDO) forms the first of the three-tier subnational LEAP implementation system. The department has sole

responsibility for implementation of the programme, under the oversight of the LEAP Management Secretariat (LMS) of the MoGCSP (MMYE, 2007a; MoGCSP, 2015). The LEAP manual mandates the presence of at least ten officials: five dedicated to the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) and another five responsible for the Department of Community Development Organisation (CDO) (MMYE, 2007a). The key responsibilities of the SWCDO include support of targeting and enrolment processes, case management, supervision of grant delivery and monitoring of complementary services. At the community level, Community Social Welfare Officers (CSWOs) liaise between the SWCDO, community volunteers and households.

Whereas the district SWCDO directorate coordinates the activities of the District LEAP Implementation Committee (DLIC), the Community SWCDO officials organise the Community LEAP Implementation Committees (CLICs) (World Bank, 2016). First, the DLIC undertakes the identification of LEAP communities. It facilitates the recruitment of enumerators and community volunteers in compliance with the LEAP implementation manual. The DCE chairs the DLIC while the Director of SWCDO is secretary to the committee. Other members of the DLIC include a representative of the Social Services Committee, of Assembly representatives, the District Director of the Department of Social Welfare (DSW), the District Education Officer (DEO), the District Health Officer (DHO), the District Planning Officer (DPO), the District Information Officer (DIO), the District Health Insurance Officer (DHIO), a Church representative and representatives of the NGOs in the districts (MMYE, 2007a; MoGCSP, 2015). The MPs and TAs have no role in the mandate of the DLIC. On the other hand, the CLICs play key roles in the identification of extremely poor households for enumeration by the district's appointed enumerators. The CLICs work with several existing community structures to monitor school attendance among children in LEAP households, NHIS registration and renewal among LEAP households and registration of births. The CLIC has a membership of between eight and ten persons, with membership including Community Heads or their representatives, Teachers, nurses, NGO representatives and five community members who can demonstrate the awareness and capacity to support the programme within the community and compiling appeals (MMYE, 2007a). It is worth stating that the LMS has commenced processes of replacing CLICs in most communities with community focal persons (CFPs). This has resulted from the challenge of finding groups of persons committed to volunteering for the programme over long periods of time.

More recently, reforms in the LEAP delivery mechanisms, promoted mainly by DPs such as DFID, and the UNICEF to implement efficiency in targeting and delivery mechanisms, have meant the appointment of two key institutions that interface with the SWCDO directorate in the attainment of their mandates. These two institutions are the independent enumerators²⁰ and the Participating Financial Institution (PFI), under the ambit of the Ghana Interbank Payment and Settlement Systems (GhIPSS).²¹ In the case of the PFIs, they undertake delivery of grants in concert with SWCDO officials who know the communities and households. The independent enumerators centrally evaluate and qualify potential beneficiaries in real time, using a centrally operated proxy means testing (PMT) mechanism.

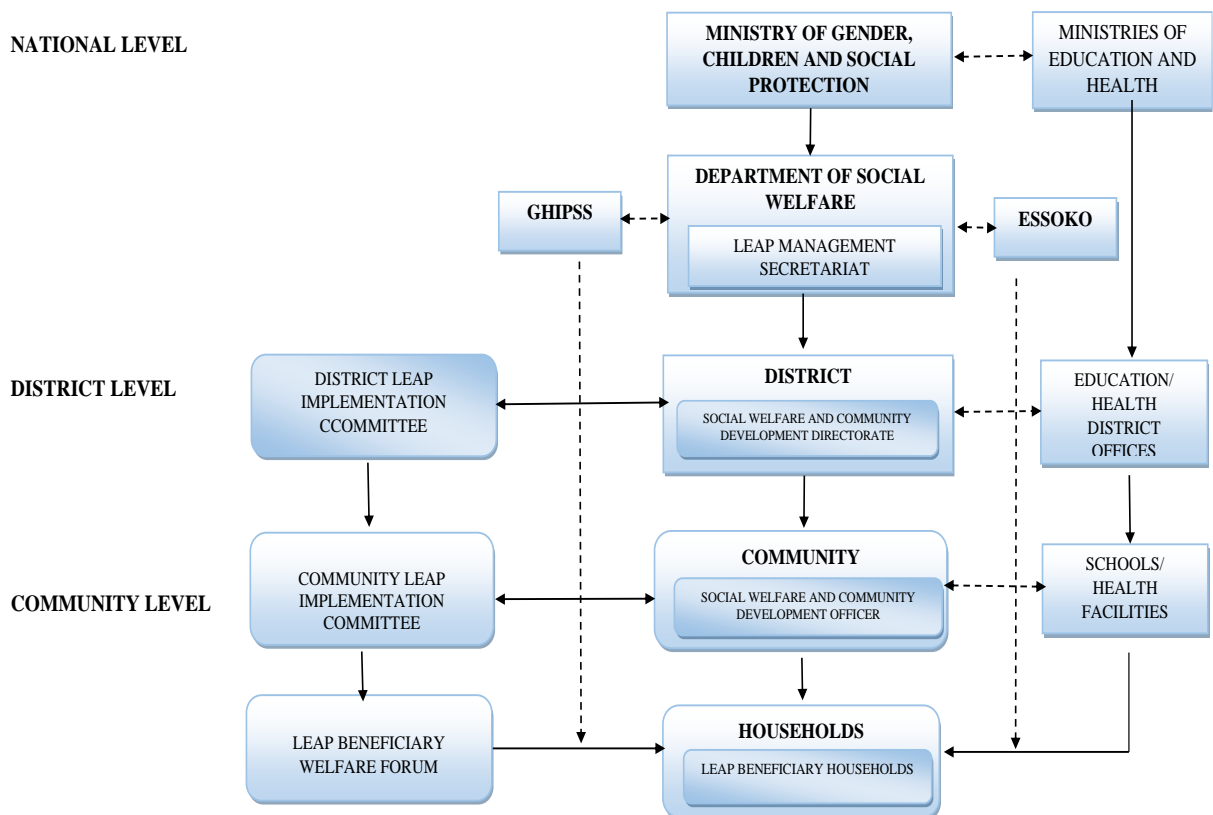


Figure 4.4: The structure of the decentralised LEAP implementation
Source: Author’s adaptations of Ayala (2010).

²⁰ ESOKO, a private data-collection company, to enumerate beneficiaries using Android tablets. The company recruits and appoints enumerators centrally for LEAP data collection independent of the DSW at the district. It centrally evaluates and qualifies potential beneficiaries in real time using a centrally operated proxy means testing mechanism developed by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection. Finally, ESOKO centrally enrolls beneficiaries and communicates to the LMS and DSW for community announcement to proceed.

²¹ The GhIPSS facilitates the electronic payment of beneficiaries through its networks of Participating Financial Institutions (PFI) located within a radius of 5 km of the communities of the beneficiaries. The PFI must pay beneficiaries using the Ezwich platforms and verify them using a biometric fingerprint device.

There are varied implementation mechanisms for targeting LEAP communities and households. For instance, in terms of geographical targeting, which involves the identification and selection of deprived communities within the district based on a poverty score, the DLIC uses a set of poverty indicators. These indicators include the prevalence of adverse health conditions such as a high incidence of guinea worm, Buruli ulcer and HIV/AIDS; the level of NHIS registration; the availability of and access to quality basic social services; the prevalence of child labour or child trafficking; and the degree of geographical isolation (MMYE, 2007a, p. 29). Figure 4.5 presents a pictorial presentation of the indicators for geographical and community targeting.

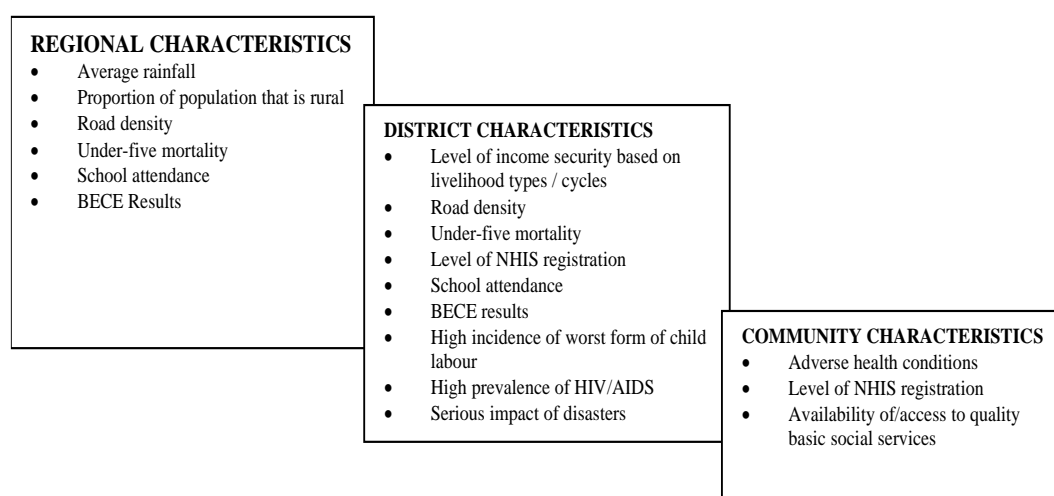


Figure 4.5: Indicators for geographical and community targeting
Source: MMYE (2007a, b).

Following the selection of communities, the CLIC deploys a combination of community-based targeting and PMT mechanisms in the selection of eligible households.²² The CLIC identifies potentially eligible households based on a set of indicators including households with extremely poor members who are elderly (over 65 years old), disabled or caring for OVC. The selected households are subjected to means testing through the administration of a questionnaire. The data is entered and filtered in an attempt to ensure that most eligible households are selected from the list. The list is presented to the community for validation. This validation meeting presents an occasion for community members to raise concerns and appeals about the inclusion or exclusion of households in the targeting process (MMYE, 2007a). The CLIC informs the final set of selected beneficiaries about their entitlements and the procedures, terms and conditions of the programme.

²² A household consists of a person or group of related or unrelated persons who live together in the same housing unit, who share the same housekeeping and cooking arrangements, and who acknowledge one adult male or female as the head of the household. They are considered as one unit (MMYE, 2007a).

The SWCDO subsequently issues the selected households with LEAP ID cards and biometric cards to facilitate payments. Households also nominate primary and secondary caregivers to collect payments on behalf of the beneficiaries that are not readily available. Figure 4.6 illustrates the indicators for household targeting.

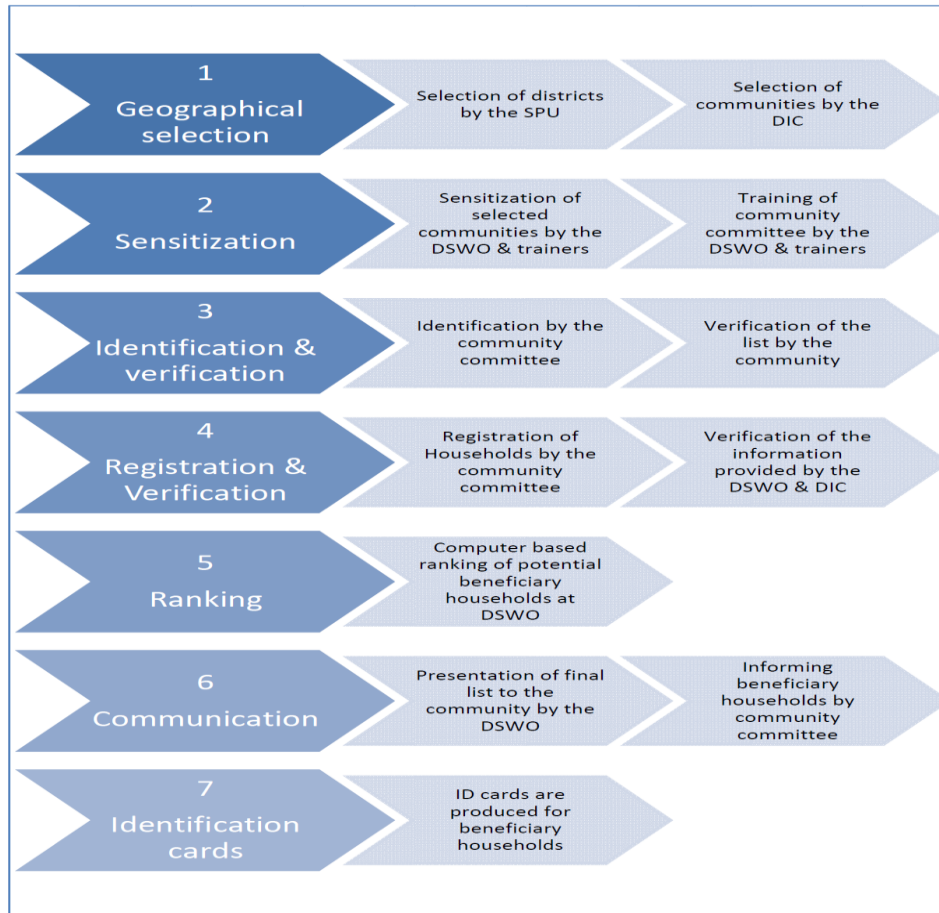


Figure 4.6: Indicators for household targeting
Source: MMYE (2007a, b).

Beyond targeting of communities and households, the SWCDO coordinates with the PFIs to undertake delivery of grants to LEAP beneficiary households. Previously, the Ghana Post Company Limited undertook grant delivery using manual payment systems (MMYE, 2007a). Figure 4.7 below illustrates the flow chart for the LEAP payment process. Since 2015, the MoGCSP, with support from DPs such as DFID, UNICEF and the World Bank, has signed a contract with the GhIPSS platforms to undertake the payment of grants using biometrically verifiable cards (the Ezwich) on electronic point of sale (PoS) devices. The GhIPSS contract involves the provision of technology that enables online and offline processing of smart-card

transactions and ensures the settlement of transactions taking place on PoS terminals. The GhIPSS contract also requires the issuance of smart cards to beneficiaries, as well as biometric verification of beneficiaries to ensure fully secure and integrated payment. Significantly, the application of this contract at the subnational level has led to the subcontracting of key aspects of grant delivery through PFIs, with varying resources and competences.

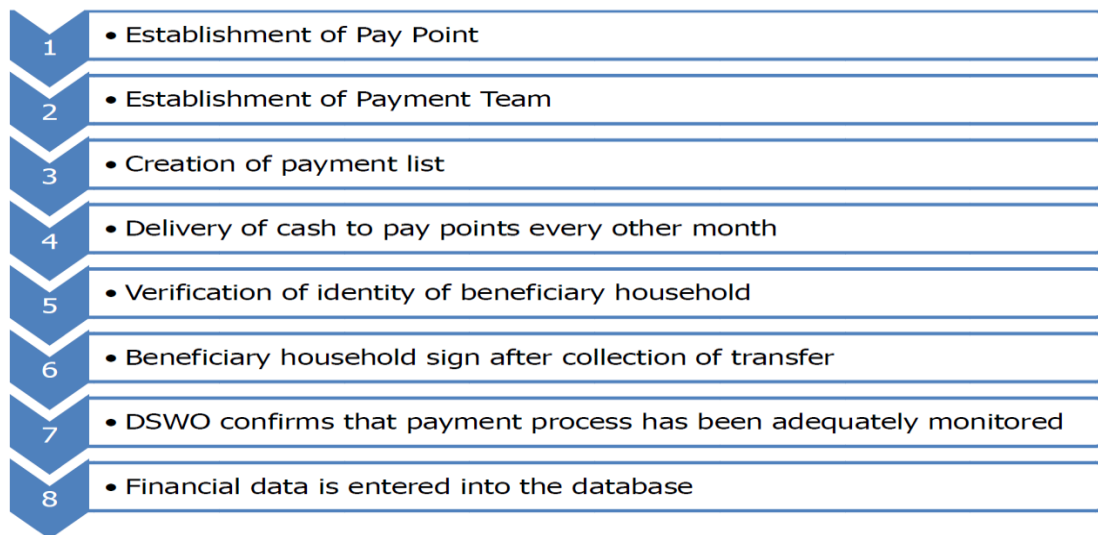


Figure 4.7: The flow chart of the LEAP payment process
Source: MMYE (2007a, b).

Case management is one of the key functions of LEAP implementation at the district level. The SWCDO officials receive, investigate and resolve cases from beneficiaries and other stakeholders at the district and subdistrict levels on the implementation of LEAP. Although LEAP is not a conditional cash-transfer programme, few households, particularly those with orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), and pregnant and lactating mothers, are required to observe conditionalities. Some of these conditions include regular school attendance, abstinence from all forms of child labour, regular antenatal attendance and registration of births. For the most part, the CLICs are responsible for the monitoring of co-responsibilities (MMYE, 2007a).

4.6 Chapter summary

This chapter has pointed to the fact that the decentralised implementation of social-protection programmes including LEAP requires capacity within decentralised state structures. Yet, based on historical legacies, there is good reason to expect districts in the south of the country to do better than those in the north. Across districts in the north and south, it is also justifiable to expect

politically dominant districts to perform better than their competitive counterparts, this deriving from questions about whether the nature of political competition will shape the degree to which existing capacities are mobilised to deliver social-protection programmes according to scale.

CHAPTER 5

Do different histories of state formation shape the capacity to deliver LEAP effectively in the Upper West and Central Regions of Ghana?

5.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the influence of state formation and state capacity on the delivery of Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) grants to households in the Upper West and Central Regions of Ghana. State formation, as indicated in Chapter 2, is defined as a long-term process that involves the development of state structures within a territory. As indicated in Chapters 2 and 3, state formation directly shapes the extent of state capacity in three specific aspects: territorial reach, bureaucratic competences and intra-state relations, and external embeddedness (state–society relations) (vom Hau, 2012; Centeno et al., 2017). In respect of LEAP grant delivery, more effective delivery is defined as a situation where grants are administered on a regular and timely basis, the distance to pay points is shorter and the length of time it takes beneficiaries to receive their grants is shorter, without having to queue long periods to receive grants (MMYE, 2007a), with less effective delivery reflecting the converse situation. This chapter focuses mainly on between-region comparisons and explores whether the distinct patterns of state formation that characterise the northern and southern regions of Ghana have endowed them with different levels of state capacity, and whether this in turn shapes the performance of delivering LEAP in an effective manner.

The conceptual framework set out in Chapter 3 hypothesises that, *ceteris paribus*, higher levels of state formation will generate more effective implementation and lower levels of state formation will generate less effective performance. Given the low state formation and the resulting weak state-capacity legacies in the Upper West Region, the delivery of grants is expected to be less effective. In contrast, the expectation for LEAP delivery in the Central Region, with its higher level of state formation, is more effective delivery. By focusing on state formation, this research seeks to explore the extent to which institutional path dependencies arising from historical legacies of colonialism and postcolonial institutional arrangements influence variations in effectiveness in LEAP grant delivery (Pierson, 2011; vom Hau, 2012; Centeno et al., 2017).

Contrary to the established literature, which suggests that state capacity is historically determined, more recent debates signal that local configurations of power can shape both state capacity *and* state performance, in terms of whether or not residual levels of state capacity are deployed effectively (Centeno et al., 2017). Consequently, where the configuration of power generates a significant threat of electoral turnover, one would expect lower effectiveness in grant delivery, *ceteris paribus*. In contrast, where the configuration of power engenders a limited threat of electoral turnover, we would expect higher effectiveness in grant delivery. As previously highlighted in Chapter 3, within the Upper West Region, Wa West demonstrates a case of political dominance where elites face limited threats of electoral turnover, whereas Sissala East is a politically competitive district. The elites in this district faced a greater threat of being turned over. Within the Central Region, Assin South demonstrates an electorally dominant district, whereas Gomoa West is an electorally competitive district.

Almost consistent with initial expectations, this chapter finds that the Central Region districts performed better than their Upper West counterparts in terms of the effective delivery of LEAP grants (see Table 5.1, which is an aggregate of multiple performance tables to be presented below). The research also finds that the configuration of power *within* regions further mediated the effects of state capacity, whereby the two districts characterised by limited threats of electoral turnover (Wa West and Assin South) delivered LEAP more effectively than their regional counterparts characterised by heightened threats of turnover (Sissala East and Gomoa West).

Table 5.1: LEAP delivery effectiveness in the Upper West and Central Regions

Region	District	State formation	Local Configurations of Power	Performance in LEAP Delivery
Upper West	Sissala East	Low	Political Competitive	Least Effective
Upper West	Wa West	Low	Political Dominant	Intermediate
Central	Gomoa West	High	Political Competitive	More Effective
Central	Assin South	High	Political Dominant	Most Effective

Source: Author's summaries based on LMS payment data and fieldwork data, 2018.

The next section details the links between state formation and state capacity in the Upper West and Central Regions. Section 5.3 presents a classification of state effectiveness in LEAP transfer delivery, drawing on extensive fieldwork in four districts in the Upper West and Central Regions. Section 5.4 explores the influence of state capacity on effectiveness in LEAP grant delivery across the two regions. Section 5.5 examines how local configurations of power in the four districts shape variation in the state effectiveness of LEAP implementation across the four districts, before the final section concludes.

5.2 The links between state formation and state capacities in the Upper West and Central Regions

Building on the discussion of historical processes of state formation in Chapter 4, this section explores the nature of state capacity in the Upper West and Central Regions in terms of three main dimensions: state resources, bureaucratic competences and intra-state relations, and state–society relations.

The disparities in the nature of state formation in the Upper West and Central Regions originate in the precolonial, colonial and postcolonial regime strategies. Regarding the deployment of state resources, the Central Region is better resourced compared to the Upper West Region. First, the Central Region enjoys better road links than the Upper West (see Table 5.2). Weak investments by colonial and post-independence regimes in road infrastructure, both between the Upper West and other regions and within districts in the Upper West Region, account for this situation, as indicated in Chapter 4. Connections to many communities in the Upper West region were mainly through non-motorable routes and footpaths, particularly in the more rural Wa West District. Given the poor road networks in the Upper West Region, bureaucrats either travel long distances via motorbikes or on foot to reach communities,²³ with implications for the efficiency of service delivery. Second, the Central Region possesses better access to the electricity grid than the Upper West Region (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013b). In most parts of the Upper West, delivery of services requiring the use of electricity could only occur in a few communities, requiring potential clients receiving electronic transfers to travel to those few urban communities with access to electric power.²⁴ Third, the Central Region displays better telecommunication connectivity (both via landline and via mobile signal) than the Upper West Region. This is the case despite the

²³ Int. respondent WWAM05; SSBT01

²⁴ Int. respondent WWBT12; WWAM06; SSBT01; SSBT04

presence of forest reserves and oil-palm plantations that cause intermittent mobile connectivity in some communities within Assin South, for example.²⁵ In the Upper West Region, however, the long distances of rural communities from major urban centres and the weak deployment of telecommunication infrastructure, in addition to interference in various frequency bands due to radio signals from neighbouring countries, undermine mobile communication reception in many communities.²⁶ Thus, poor connectivity to the national electricity grid and weak telecommunication coverage in the Upper West Region (resulting from poor national government investments in the north over time) undermined the ability of the subnational state structures to effectively deliver on their mandates at the community level.²⁷

Table 5.2: The availability of basic infrastructure in the Upper West and Central Regions

Indicators	Road density (km of road per km ²)	Percentage of dwelling units using electricity	Percentage of persons 12 years and older owning mobile phone	Percentage of persons 12 years and older accessing Internet
Wa West	3.23	9.5	9.7	0.6
Sissala East	0.99	36.3	21	1.4
Upper West	1.71	30.9	21.7	3.1
Gomoa West	3.99	70	36.1	2.3
Assin South	2.7	42	30.5	1.7
Central	3.2	66.1	44.9	7
National	3.18	64.2	47.7	7.8

Source: Author's calculations based on reports from the Ghana Statistical Service (2014a,b), WWDA (2016a), GWDA (2017), ASDA (2018a,b) and SEDA (2018).

Compared to their Upper West counterparts, districts in the Central Region demonstrated an improved record of financial-resources extraction and logistics mobilisation to facilitate district- and community-level implementation of programmes. The presence of established local economic activities to support tax mobilisation as well as the presence of forest resources boosted the capacity of districts in the Central Region to access financial resources²⁸ (Shepherd et al., 2004). In the Upper West Region, on the other hand, the lower levels of commercial trade and farming activities undermined local revenue generation.²⁹ Regarding the availability of logistics, districts in the Central Region possess greater logistical resources than their Upper West counterparts,

²⁵ Int. respondent ASCL01

²⁶ Int. respondent WWBT13; WWAM05; SSBT02; SSBT04

²⁷ Int. respondent WWBT12; WWCL19

²⁸ Int. respondent ASBT04; GWAM04; GWBT04

²⁹ Int. respondent WWAM10; WWAM06; SSBT04; SSBT05

where bureaucrats have reported receiving inadequate supplies from the state for the prosecution of their mandates (see Table 5.3).³⁰ This was largely informed by the limited resource availability in the northern regions compared to the well-resourced southern parts of the country, as indicated in Chapter 4. The limited ability of districts in the mostly rural Upper West Region to raise local revenues and the inadequate supply of logistics from the national offices often subverted the ability of local bureaucrats in the region to undertake their mandate.³¹

Table 5.3: The availability of logistics in the Upper West and Central Regions

	Upper West		Central	
	Wa West	Sissala East	Assin South	Gomoa West
Office spaces	Inadequate	Inadequate	Adequate	Adequate
Desktop computers	Adequate	Inadequate	Adequate	Adequate
Laptop computers	Inadequate	Inadequate	Inadequate	Inadequate
Record and filing systems	Adequate	Inadequate	Adequate	Adequate
ICT facilities	Adequate	Inadequate	Adequate	Adequate
Official vehicles	Inadequate	Inadequate	Inadequate	Inadequate
Official motorbikes	Adequate	Inadequate	Adequate	Adequate

Source: Author's summaries based on WWDA (2016a), ASDA (2018a, b), GWDA (2018) and SEDA (2018).

The greater availability of state resources in the Central Region compared to the Upper West Region results from innumerable investments in infrastructure by historical colonial and postcolonial regimes in the southern parts of the country.

Regarding bureaucratic competences, the study found that the number of bureaucrats varied between the Central and Upper West Regions (see Table 5.4). Social Welfare and Community Development Organisation (SWCDO) staff availability per 1,000 poor people in the Central Region was 0.44, compared to 0.24 in the Upper West. Again, the ratio of SWCDO staff availability per 1,000 LEAP beneficiaries in the Central Region was 3.75, whereas that of the Upper West was 0.78. These patterns in regional SWCDO staff distribution were repeated across all four districts in the two regions. Multiple interviewees in the Upper West Region emphasised

³⁰ Int. respondent ASBT01; ASBT04; GWBT01; GWBT04

³¹ Int. respondent SSBT01, SSBT02; SSBT04

that departments of the District Assemblies were understaffed,³² with bureaucrats often refusing postings to this under-resourced region. Equally, most bureaucrats served the minimum period and often requested transfer to more accessible districts.³³ On the other hand, the departments of the District Assemblies in the Central Region were overstaffed, as bureaucrats preferred to work in this region. Their preference was due to the region's proximity to the national capital and the availability of resources.³⁴

Table 5.4: The human-resources capacity in the Upper West and Central Regions

Category	Current No. of Staff/1,000 poor population	Current No. of Staff/1,000 LEAP beneficiaries	Current No. of Staff/1,000 LEAP Households
Wa West	0.05	0.29	1.16
Sissala East	0.19	0.32	1.27
Upper West	0.24	0.78	3.12
Gomoa West	0.27	2.11	8.45
Assin South	0.37	2.18	8.71
Central	0.44	3.75	15.01
National	0.37	1.82	11.94

Source: Author's summaries based on 2018 data from LMS and on Ghana Statistical Service (2018).

In terms of the quality of bureaucrats and elected leaders (as indicated by the level of educational training), districts in the Central Region were again advantaged over their Upper West Region counterparts. Notably, although the minimum qualification for many public-service positions at the district level was a university degree, staff in the Upper West had rarely attained this qualification (see Table 5.5).

³² Int. respondent WWBT17; WWBT13; WWAM07; SSAM12; SSAM05; SSBT04; SSBT05

³³ Int. respondent SSBT04; SSBT05

³⁴ Int. respondent ASBT02; ASBT04; ASBT05; GWBT01; GWBT03

Table 5.5: The qualifications of district officials in the Upper West and Central Regions

	Upper West		Central	
	Wa West	Sissala East	Assin South	Gomoa West
Member of Parliament (MP)	UG degree and professional qualifications	Grade 8	PHD degree	MA degree
District Chief Executive (DCE)	Diploma	Diploma	UG degree	Professional qualification
District Coordinating Director (DCD)	Diploma	Diploma	UG degree	UG degree
Presiding member	Diploma	Diploma	UG degree	UG degree
Finance Director	UG degree	UG degree	Studying toward MA degree	Studying toward MA degree
Planning Director	UG degree	UG degree	MA degree	MA degree
Health Director	UG degree	UG degree	MA degree	MA degree
NHIS Director	Diploma	Diploma	UG degree	UG degree
Education Director	Diploma	Diploma	Studying toward MA degree	Studying toward MA degree
Information Director	Diploma	Diploma	UG degree	UG degree
SWCDO Director	UG degree	MA degree	Studying toward MA degree	Studying toward MA degree

Source: Author's construction from fieldwork data, 2019.

In terms of intra-state relations, clear differences existed between the two regions, with more decentralised state departments established in the Central Region compared to the Upper West Region (see Table 5.6). The absence of many of these necessary decentralised departments in the north means that citizens in the Upper West have had to rely on other regions where the services are provided or, at worst, forego the right to access such services.

Table 5.6: Decentralised departments in the Upper West and Central Regions

MMDA Departments	Wa West	Sissala East	Assin South	Gomoa West
Central Administration	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Finance Department	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Education Youth and sports	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Health Department	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
National Health Insurance Department	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Agric Department	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Physical Planning	No	Yes	No	Yes
Social Welfare and Community Development	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Natural Resources, Game and Wildlife	No	Yes	Yes	No
Trade and Industry	No	No	Yes	Yes
Urban Roads Department	No	No	No	Yes
Works Department	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Waste Management	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Information Department	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Birth and Death Department	No	No	Yes	Yes
Controller and Accountant General	No	No	No	Yes
Statistical Service	No	No	No	Yes
Non-Formal Education	No	No	Yes	Yes
Library Board	No	No	Yes	Yes

Source: Author's construction based on LGS (2015), WWDA (2016a), GWDA (2017), ASDA (2018a,b) and SEDA (2018).

Finally, in respect of state–society relations, the distribution of Assembly Members (AMs) and Unit Committee members at the subdistrict level varies considerably in the Central and Upper West Regions (see Table 5.7). Interestingly, whereas districts in the Upper West are sparsely populated and highly dispersed, those in the Central Region are densely populated and evenly spread across the land area. These inequities in the distributions of elected AMs and Unit Committee members in these two regions mean that officials in the north maintain jurisdiction over vast areas but smaller populations compared to their counterparts in the south of the country. Importantly, although Ghana’s decentralisation system envisions the presence of non-partisan elected and appointed AMs and Unit Committee members, most appointed and elected AMs in all four districts across the Upper West and Central Regions held political party positions.³⁵ Equally, local ruling party executives and foot soldiers were often appointed as Zonal Council members and resourced to undertake revenue mobilisation on behalf of their District Assemblies.³⁶

Table 5.7: The distribution of subdistrict personnel and structures in the Upper West and Central Regions

Districts	Elected Assembly member area / Land area (100 km ²)	Unit Committees/ Land area (100 km ²)
Wa West	1.2	7.1
Sissala East	0.4	2.2
Upper West	1.6	3.3
Gomoa West	7	35
Assin South	2.1	10.5
Central	5.4	14.3
National	2.7	7.0

Source: Author’s summaries based on WWDA (2016a), ASDA (2018a,b), GWDA (2018) and SEDA (2018).

The evidence presented in Section 5.2 suggests that the differential legacies of state formation in the Upper West and Central Regions have led to significant differences in the levels of state capacity enjoyed by each region. This is expected to shape the effectiveness of the delivery of LEAP programmes.

³⁵ Int. respondent WWAM05; ASAM04; GWAM04

³⁶ Int. respondent WWCL26; GWBT07; ASBT02; SSBT05

5.3 The classification of state effectiveness in LEAP delivery

This section presents a classification of effectiveness in the delivery of grants in conformity with established time schedules and regularity, waiting times and travel distances to pay points. The research finds that the two districts in the Central Region delivered LEAP more effectively than the Upper West Region sites. However, the study also finds that the effectiveness of delivery varied *within* regions, with politically dominant districts outperforming their more competitive regional counterparts in both regions. The factors shaping the variations in delivery effectiveness are traced in the following sections.

Ensuring that the LEAP transfers reach beneficiary households in a reasonable time frame, on a regular basis and in full is crucial to protecting the poor from the impacts of shocks and allowing for investments. At the initial stages of the programme, transfers were channelled through Ghana's Postal Service, which had the greatest countrywide coverage of all financial institutions. Since 2015, the Ghana Interbank Payments and Settlement Systems (GhIPSS) platforms using subcontractees at the district level undertake payment of grants using biometrically verifiable cards (the Ezwich) on electronic point of sale (POS) devices. The district SWCDO directorate is the key subnational state institution resourced from the LEAP Management Secretariat (LMS) and the District Assembly to coordinate these subcontractors (referred to as Participating Financial Institutions, or PFIs) under their jurisdictions to facilitate the responsibility of grant delivery on a regular and timely basis. The ability of SWCDO officials to engage these PFIs to deliver grants in the shortest time possible, on a regular basis and with the least inconvenience to households is shaped by existing subnational state capacities. The transfers are paid out every other month to either the beneficiary household head or an appointed deputy for the household. For the payment process to run smoothly, the SWCDO must compose payment teams, establish pay points in different communities, prepare the list of eligible recipients per community, which will form the basis for the PFI to verify the beneficiary households or their deputies, and deliver the transfers to pay points. The LEAP payment process also requires that SWCDO officials, in collaboration with the District LEAP Implementation Committee, to monitor the delivery of grants actively. Finally, the SWCDO has to prepare monitoring and financial reports for the LMS after each payment cycle (MMYE, 2007a). For this reason, the effective performance of the PFIs with regard to LEAP grant delivery requires that local governments have the capacity to deploy them and monitor their performance effectively.

First, Table 5.8 depicts the regularity in grant delivery in the Upper West and Central Regions. The table draws on data from interviews on the experiences of beneficiaries and their expectations of receiving transfers before and after 2015 reforms in transfers. Column A provides an illustration of beneficiaries' experiences with regularity of payment prior to the introduction of the 2015 reforms. Column B indicates experiences with regularity in grant delivery following the introduction of the reforms, which transformed the payment process from manual to electronic delivery systems.³⁷

Table 5.8: Experiences with regularity in LEAP grant delivery in the Upper West and Central Regions

District	Regularity in grant delivery prior to 2015	Regularity in grant delivery since 2015	Aggregate Regularity (A+B)	Ranking on regularity in payment
	(A)	(B)	(C)	D
Wa West	At the initial stages of the program, delivery of the grant was infrequent. They waited for long periods sometimes up to six months to receive their grants (Int. respondent WWCL11; WWCL21).	"Sometimes they will delay but when they delay, they pay them back but recently they no longer delay" (Int. respondent WWCL21). "The timing for payment is a major problem. When they say every two months and when its time they do not come, so their inability to do regular payments is a problem for us in this district" (Int. respondent WWCL26).	Irregular	3
Sissala East	There was increased irregularity in the delivery of grant prior to 2015 (Int. respondent SSCL05; SSFGD04; SSFGD09).	Payments are supposed to take place every two months but sometimes they do not come until another month starts (Int. respondent SSCL05). "with this E-payment, we have never honoured our time schedule" (Int. respondent SSBT01). "The payment is very irregular here. We cannot tell the day they will come" (Int. respondent SSCL03).	Very irregular	4
Assin South	There were many delays... sometimes, throughout the year cycle, instead of meeting six cycles, we did three or four cycles. We did not complete all the cycles (Int. respondent ASBT01).	Grant delivery took place the very week the SWCDO received the payment alert. Nevertheless, payments were sometimes rescheduled to the second week when the release of funds coincided with the payment of salaries of public servants at the end of the month (Int. respondent ASBT07; ASBT01). The grant takes place regularly every two months. There are no delays in the delivery (Int. respondent ASBT07). So, some of the	Very regular	1
Gomoa West	"People kept pressuring me when the grant delayed" (Int. respondent GWCL10). There were several instances of infrequent and irregular payment during the era of the Ghana Post Company Limited prior to 2015 (GWFGD01; GWFGD03; GWFGD04).	"There is no problem with the payment cycle since the introduction of the electronic payment system, there were bits of delays at times but that has been rectified" (Int. respondent GWCL06). Now it takes place in the first week of the bi-monthly cycle (Int. respondent GWBT01; GWBT02; GWBT07).	Regular	2

Source: Author's construction based on interview data for Gomoa West, Assin South, Wa West and Sissala East, 2018.

Table 5.9 indicates the distance that beneficiaries need to travel to receive their grants in the Upper West and Central Regions. The LEAP guidelines require the SWCDO to collaborate with the PFI to establish pay points at "agreed locations" to reduce the cost of travel and the cost of accessing the grant (MMYE, 2007a, p. 24). Table 5.9 draws on data from the LMS on LEAP beneficiary households per pay points (column A), the distribution of pay points (column B), the size of the

³⁷See Int. respondents WWCL11; WWCL21; SSFGD04; SSCL05; ASBT01; ASCL04; GWCL10; GWCL06

district in square kilometres (km²) (column C) and the average area served by pay points (km²) (column D) (for example, calculated as 1187/51 km² for Assin South) in each of the four districts. Column E shows the ranking of the distribution of payment points.

Table 5.9 shows that, on average, the area served by each pay point in the two cases in the Upper West was much greater than those in the Central Region, with the result that beneficiaries need to travel longer distances to receive transfers. This greater travel distance and time in the Upper West suggests that the state has not invested in the infrastructure (roads, more pick-up places, mobile phone delivery etc) to equalise the time/distance recipients need to cover in order to access the grant.³⁸ A comparative analysis of the travel time and distance reveals differences within the Upper West Region. For example, beneficiaries in the Sissala East District travel longer distances to reach a pay point than those in Wa West. Within the Central Region, each beneficiary in Assin South and Gomoa West travels a shorter distance to reach a payment point. This suggests that beneficiaries in the Central Region take less time to travel to pay points and equally incur less financial cost, as they do not have to use motorbikes or commercial transportation to reach pay points.

Table 5.9: The travel distance in the Upper West and Central Regions

Districts	Beneficiaries per pay point	Payment points	Land size (km ²)	Area served by paypoints (km ²)	Ranking on distribution of pay points
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
Wa West	108	32	1856	58	3
Sissala East	392	20	4744	237	4
Assin South	20	51	1187	23	2
Gomoa West	25	38	514	14	1

Source: Author's construction based on LMS 2018 household data and on road and land data (SEDA, 2014; WWDA, 2016a; GWDA, 2017; ASDA, 2018b).

Table 5.10 shows an indication of the number of people served by each pay point. This has implications for how long recipients spend at payment centres to receive grants. The LEAP manual

³⁸ Int. respondent WWAM27; WWBT12; FGDWW01; WW02; Int. respondent SSBT01; SSCL03

indicates that, at pay points, beneficiaries are manually identified using photographs and electronically authenticated by their biometrics. Payment is only issued to households or their appointed deputies after the biometric LEAP identity cards have been verified (MMYE, 2007a, b). Column E of Table 5.10 shows how many people are served at each location and device per day³⁹ in each of the four districts. Analysis of Table 5.10 shows that, on average, LEAP households in the Sissala East wait longest to receive transfers at pay points. This is because only a few people can receive their grants during each payment cycle, which involves the use of a single verification device. In contrast, Wa West deals better with the challenge of more LEAP beneficiaries over a wide land area by setting up many more payment centres and deploying more (at least four) payment devices on each payday. In the Central Region, although the two districts are similar with regard to the time recipients spend receiving their grants, Assin South seems to have overcome the challenge of large numbers of beneficiaries spread over a substantial area of land through the establishment of more pay points and the deployment of adequate POS devices commensurate with the numbers of LEAP beneficiaries.

Table 5.10: The ratio of LEAP beneficiaries to payment devices in the Upper West and Central Regions

Districts	Number of Beneficiaries	Number of Payment days	Number of point of sale (POS) devices used for payment	Number of payment points (PP)	Avg. No. of beneficiaries served per PP per POS per day	Ranking on Time taken to receive grant
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)
Wa West	3455	8	4	32	3.37	2
Sissala East	3923	10	1	20	19.62	4
Assin South	1033	5	2	51	2.03	1
Gomoa West	947	4	2	38	3.12	2

Source: Author's construction based on LMS payment data, 2018.

Finally, Table 5.11 below summarises data from the above three tables. The data from Tables 5.8–5.10 is subsequently ranked on an ordinal scale from 1 to 4, with 1 being the most effective and 4 representing the least effective. Overall, as shown in Table 5.11, the Upper West cases demonstrate

³⁹ This is calculated as $1033 / (5 * 2 * 51)$ for Assin South

more irregular grant delivery and longer travel distances, and thus are classified as less effective compared to the Central Region. Across the four cases, Assin South illustrates a case of most effectiveness, as transfer delivery involves shorter waiting times, shorter travel distances and very regular grant delivery. Sissala East demonstrates a case of least effectiveness, as transfers are irregular and households travel longer distances, as well as waiting for longer times at pay points. Wa West demonstrates a case of intermediate effectiveness in the delivery of grants, where transfers are irregular, the travel distance is longer but the waiting times are very short. Gomoa West exemplifies more effectiveness, as transfers are characterised by shorter waiting times and shorter travel distances, but payment dates can sometimes be irregular due to the location of the PFI outside the region.

Table 5.11: The LEAP payment effectiveness index in the Upper West and Central Regions

District	Ranking on regularity in payment	Ranking on distribution of pay points	Ranking on Time taken to receive grant	Rank index (i.e. average ranking Score)	Performance
Assin South	1	2	1	1.3	Most effective
Gomoa West	2	1	2	1.7	More Effective
Wa West	3	3	2	2.7	Intermediate
Sissala East	4	4	4	4	Least effective

Source: Author’s construction based on Tables 5.8, 5.9, and 5.10.

5.4 Cases of how state capacity shapes state effectiveness between regions

This section details the influence of state capacity on the observed differences in effectiveness in the two regions in respect of LEAP grant delivery. The section finds clear differences in the north and south in respect to the dimensions of state resources and bureaucratic competences and the ways in which this influenced LEAP delivery. The study draws on qualitative evidence from extensive interviews to show that the data on state capacity presented in Section 5.2 can directly explain the patterns identified in Section 5.3.

The below discussion on how state capacity shapes effectiveness in grant delivery focuses heavily on the role of SWCDO officials in the delivery of LEAP grants, as this is the most important aspect of the “competency” dimension of state capacity discussed here. The LEAP manual mandates a bimonthly cycle of delivery of cash grants. In pursuit of this mandate, the district SWCDO directorate, which has the mandate to coordinate the delivery of transfers, is resourced from the

LMS and the District Assembly, where possible, to facilitate grant delivery on a regular and timely basis. The SWCDO must establish a payment team to oversee the delivery of transfers, which involves the biometric verification of beneficiaries to ensure fully secure and integrated payments. The SWCDO depends on a cadre of locally available staff and a host of district-level structures such as the District LEAP Implementation Committee (DLIC) to supervise and ensure conformity with the programme timelines and delivery patterns. The SWCDO further synchronises with community structures such as the Community LEAP Implementation Committee (CLIC) to reach beneficiary households with information on payment sessions. The introduction of the payment reforms in 2015 resulted in SWCDO officials engaging with private-sector institutions to assist in delivering the transfer to beneficiaries at accessible locations within the district.

State resources –The level of resource availability (physical infrastructure, financial and logistics) to support the rapid delivery of LEAP was lower in the Upper West compared to the Central Region. In the Upper West Region, poor road networks and the inaccessibility of many communities by road due to the inability of the state to invest in the infrastructure (roads, more pick-up places, mobile phone delivery among others) to facilitate delivery of the transfer both hampered the siting of pay points at the community level and increased the travel time for beneficiaries to receive their grants. Beneficiaries had to travel long distances to receive their transfers at central locations in the district, thus incurring temporal and financial costs that offset the value of the transfer itself.⁴⁰ The lead SWCDO bureaucrat in Wa West confirmed that due to the inaccessibility of LEAP communities,

beneficiaries travel between 5 km to 15 km from their homes either on foot, bicycle or motor-king trucks [tricycles] due to the vast and scattered nature of settlements in the district. (Int. respondent WWBT12, male, 5 years at SWCDO)

As in Wa West, the siting of payment points in communities with accessible road networks in the Sissala East District meant that LEAP recipients had to travel longer distances at a cost to themselves to access their grants.⁴¹ An interview with a CLIC member revealed that

we have to travel to Nmanduano to receive the grant. Sometimes also, we go to Sakai. We walk along the road. When it is market day, we rent a motor-king to go to the payment community. (Int. respondent SSCL10, female, 4 years as CLIC member)

⁴⁰ Int. respondent WWCL11; WWBT17; WWCL26; FGDWW2; FGD WW5; FGD WW4

⁴¹ SSFGD01; SSFGD06; SSFGD09; SSFGD10

In addition, poor connectivity to the national electricity grid and weak telecommunication coverage in the Upper West Region undermined the ability of the SWCDO staff to set up many pay points at the community level.⁴² The SWCDO bureaucrat in Wa West bemoaned that

there is a [telecommunication] network problem in the district, there are a lot of places with interference in the network so sometimes we can set up payment centres in only few communities or have to move to another location and wait for the network to improve. (Int. respondent WWBT12, male, 5 years as SWCDO official)

This situation contributed to congestion at payment centres.⁴³ Interviews in Sissala East also confirmed that the inability to create many payment points led to delays at payment centres:

there are always large crowds of beneficiaries when they come to do payment. We go to the payment centre very early in the morning, but it takes time to get the money, so we return in the night. (Int. respondent SSCL07, female, 6 years as CLIC member)

SWCDO officials in Wa West and Sissala East also attested to sometimes facing financial constraints that affected their ability to mobilise the payment team on time.⁴⁴ Consequently, CLIC members in both districts lamented that they often received information about payment at very short notice, reducing their inability to reach all beneficiaries.⁴⁵ As a CLIC member in the Sissala East District reported,

the SWCDO office sends information about the day of payment very late. They always send it through the *trotro* [commercial transport] drivers but they bring it to my community only when it is market day. (Int. respondent SSCL03, male, 4 years as CLIC)

On logistics, the limited availability of logistics in the Wa West and Sissala East District undermined the ability of SWCDO officials to deliver grants promptly. A senior bureaucrat in the Wa West District confirmed that

the directorate is plagued by challenges in the provision of logistics. The motorbikes being used for implementation of LEAP activities came from the Ghana Social Opportunities project (GSOP)⁴⁶ as the LEAP office has not supported the district with new means of transport. (Int. respondent WWBT12, male, 5 years in SWCDO)

Equally, SWCDO officials in Sissala East lamented that

⁴² Int. respondent WWBT12; WWCL19

⁴³ Int. respondent SSBT02; WWAM27

⁴⁴ Int. respondent SSBT04; SSBT02; WWBT13; WWAM06

⁴⁵ Int. respondent WWCL17; WWCL18; WWCL19; WWCL21; WWCL23; SSCL03; SSCL04; SSCL10

⁴⁶ Ghana Social Opportunities Project (GSOP) is a World Bank project that involves targeting poor communities with public works programmes

when we started the LEAP, after four to five years we were given some motorbikes which did not last for even a year. Then just recently, we were given some bikes under the GSOP project, but they are also broken. (Int. respondent SSBT01, male, 12 years in SWCDO)

Again, SWCDO officials in the Upper West cases confirmed the inadequate availability of Information Communication Technology (ICT) and filing systems to undertake their double mandates of social-welfare provisioning and development of communities.⁴⁷ Interviews with the SWCDO director in the Sissala East District revealed that

we do not have adequate computers and printers to do the registration of the households. We cannot store the data well and when beneficiaries come to follow-up with payment problems, it is always difficult to retrieve their information. (Int. respondent SSBT01, male, 12 years in SWCDO)

In the Central Region, however, the better coverage of road and ICT infrastructure resulting from the higher state formation ensured more rapid delivery of LEAP grants. The presence of improved road networks in the Central Region enabled SWCDO officials to undertake transfers in the community.⁴⁸ An interview with a CLIC member in Gomoa West confirmed that

the bank people come to our community here in Ajumako [a community in Gomoa West District] to do the payment. When a beneficiary is not available when they come to the community, the beneficiary can go to Apam [the commercial capital of the district] and cash their own money from the bank. (Int. respondent GWCL01, female, CLIC member)

Hence, for the most part, beneficiaries in both Assin South and Gomoa West did not have to travel out of their communities to receive their grants.⁴⁹ Besides, payment sessions usually lasted for shorter periods due to the higher levels of internet connectivity.⁵⁰ An interview with a CLIC member in the community revealed that

the payment system is very convenient. It takes only a short time to receive your money. We form a queue, and they call your name, and you present your card to collect your money. (Int. respondent GWCL10, female, CLIC for 4 years)

Moreover, the adequacy of the financial resources supplied by the LMS, plus reliable financial support from District Assemblies and non-governmental organisation (NGO) projects in Assin

⁴⁷ Int. respondent SSBT01; Field observations

⁴⁸ Int. respondent ASBT01; ASBT02

⁴⁹ GWFGD01; GWFGD03; GWFGD06; GWFGD07

⁵⁰ Int. respondent ASBT07; ASBT02; GWBT01; GWBT07

South and Gomoa West, ensured rapid mobilisation of LEAP community structures to facilitate payments on schedule in the Central Region.⁵¹ SWCDO officials in Assin South confirmed that

as for LEAP, financially we don't have problems. The department gets financial allocation from the LMS to undertake its LEAP mandate. The District Assembly also supports the department with financial resources from the Internationally Generated Funds. (Int. respondent ASBT01, male, 10 years as SWCDO official)

Likewise, SWCDO officials in Gomoa West confirmed their ability to mobilise resources to inform beneficiaries through the CLICs and text-message alerts ahead of payment sessions.⁵²

Significantly, a good availability of logistics in the form of office space, ICT equipment and motorbikes, among others, in the Central Region, facilitated speedier grant delivery.⁵³ In both Assin South and Gomoa West, though the SWCDO directorates did not have official vehicles acquired in the name of their directorates, SWCDO officials confirmed that their District Assemblies provided vehicles from their pool of vehicles to enable their directorates to monitor payments of LEAP grants.⁵⁴ As the District Chief Executive (DCE) for the Gomoa West District confirmed,

when they [the SWCDO directorate] were going to undertake payment, social-welfare officers arranged for a date and the District Assembly provided them with a vehicle to facilitate the payment. (Int. respondent GWAM02, male, 8 years as politically appointed official of the District Assembly)

The SWCDO directorates in the two Central Region districts also reported that

we have motorbikes from the LEAP and the GSOP projects. We do not even use the motorbikes most of the time. The District Coordinating Directorate has assigned a vehicle to assist the community work. We give the LEAP motorbike to the officers of the other departments to undertake community visits in the remote communities. (Int. respondent ASBT02, male, 4 years at SWCDO directorate)

In respect of the provision of ICT equipment, bureaucrats in both Assin South and Gomoa West revealed that there were fewer challenges with the provision of ICT equipment in the SWCDO office.⁵⁵ The SWCDO bureaucrat stated that

since we inaugurated the district in 2004, we have received support in the form of computers, printers, and filing systems to manage the department from UNICEF and

⁵¹ Int. respondent ASBT01; ASBT02; GWBT02; GWBT01

⁵² Int. respondent GWBT02; GWBT01; GWFWD02; GWFGD04; GWFGD01

⁵³ Int. respondent ASBT01; ASBT04

⁵⁴ Int. respondent ASBT02; ASBT04; GWBT02; GWAM02

⁵⁵ Int. respondent ASBT04

USAID. The LMS also recently provided additional laptops and printers to support the office. (Int. respondent ASBT01, male, 10 years as SWCDO official)

Thus, the low capacity that characterised the two Upper West districts informed the low deployment of state resources leading to irregular delivery of LEAP to recipients. It also accounted for the long travel distances to payment centres. This contrasted with the two southern cases, where improved distribution of state resources as a result of high state capacity facilitated more effective grant delivery, as households received their transfers regularly and without travelling out of their communities.

Bureaucratic competences constitute another critical dimension of state capacity that influences effectiveness in grant delivery. The design of LEAP envisions the presence of technocratic staff to coordinate payment-related issues and inform beneficiaries/caregivers about payment systems, their benefit amounts, the location of pay points and the specific paydays (MMYE, 2007a). For grant delivery to take place, the centrally based LMS sends payroll information on beneficiaries to the subnationally based SWCDOs. In addition to ensuring that all e-payment accounts of beneficiaries are credited fully, the SWCDO prepares quarterly reports on financial management and operational management to the LMS, to track grant delivery and identify challenges in delivery mechanisms (MMYE, 2007a).

The clear differences in the quantity and quality of SWCDO personnel between the Upper West and Central Regions had direct implications for the ability to deliver LEAP grants at designated locations on schedule.⁵⁶ There were higher numbers of SWCDO staff in the Central Region compared to the Upper West Region. In the Upper West, SWCDO bureaucrats in the Wa West and Sissala East Districts revealed that staff numbers were inadequate *vis-à-vis* the large numbers of LEAP households and other social-welfare tasks that the directorate had to undertake on a regular basis.⁵⁷ Bureaucrats in the two Upper West districts further revealed that the inadequate availability of staff meant that the SWCDO directorates performed a double mandate of managing not only Social Welfare activities but also the CDO activities.⁵⁸ An interview with the senior SWCDO bureaucrat in the Sissala East District affirmed that

⁵⁶ Int. respondent LMS01

⁵⁷ Int. respondent WWBT12; SSBT01

⁵⁸ Int. respondent SSBT01; SSBT04

there is a lack of adequately trained staff to undertake social-welfare provision in the district. In fact, the proportion of allocation to the two departments, seven for community development and three for social welfare, is unfairly skewed against the Social Welfare department, which makes staff overwork. (Int. respondent SSBT01, male, 12 years as SWCDO officer)

Bureaucrats in Upper West highlighted the difficulties created by staffing shortages:⁵⁹

the inadequate staff number makes it difficult to adhere to the schedule of payment. LEAP payment takes a lot of time and we spend all day in the field. So, we arrange to commence payment only when we have one or two staff of the department of the planning to help with the monitoring of the payment. (Int. respondent WWBT13, male 4 years at SWCDO)

In terms of training attendance, SWCDO officials in both Wa West and Sissala East indicated that

the region and the district is very far from Accra [the national capital]. Sometimes when we have to attend a training programme, it takes about two days to get there and return on time. We therefore prioritize and attend only a few training programmes. (Int. respondent SSBT02, female, 4 years as SWCDO official)

The infrequent attendance at training programmes by SWCDO bureaucrats in the region resulted in their inability to address problems with grant delivery more speedily.⁶⁰ The senior SWCDO official lamented that

the directorate has a list of forms with replacement data for beneficiaries and caregivers, and/or deceased beneficiaries but we have to enter all the information electronically before we can submit them to the Case Management Unit in Accra. The LMS templates for the capture of cases are very complicated. We are not conversant with them so we still use the manual case-management and reporting system. (Int. respondent SSBT01)

Interviews with CLICs and beneficiaries in the two districts confirmed very slow responses to payment problems.⁶¹ A CLIC member who participated in one of the focus group discussions indicated that

since we migrated to this e-payment system, there are some people in my community whose transfers are no longer coming. We have reported the problems with the payment system to the office [SWCDO directorate] but it has taken 12 months already. The office is not telling us why the transfers are not coming again. (Int. respondent SSCL03, male, 4 years as CLIC member)

⁵⁹ Int. respondent WWBT12; SSBT01

⁶⁰ Int. respondent WWBT13; WWBT12; WWAM06; SSBT01; SSBT02; SSBT05

⁶¹ Int. respondent SSCL03; SSCL05; SSFGD02; SSFGD08; SSFGD03; Int. respondent WWCL28; WWCL29

Reflecting the quantity and quality of competences, officials in the Upper West revealed challenges with the preparation and inconsistencies in the submission of LEAP monitoring and financial reports to the LMS.⁶² Interviews with SWCDO bureaucrats in Sissala East, for instance, showed that

there are limited human resources and ICT logistics to prepare and transmit these manual forms into electronics for quick submission of the monitoring reports. (Int. respondent SSBT01, male, 12 years in SWCDO)

Equally, interviews with a senior SWCDO bureaucrat in Wa West revealed that

inadequate numbers of staff at the department make it a challenge to prepare the LEAP financial as well as the monitoring reports on time. The directorate has other reports to prepare in respect of its child protection, community development among other portfolios, and LEAP takes all the time to monitor payment and also draft the report on the payment every quarter. (Int. respondent WWBT12, male, 6 years as SWCDO official)

Consequently, SWCDO officials in the two districts in the Upper West Region reported delays in the submission of monitoring and payment reports to the LMS.⁶³ Analysis of official data from the LMS revealed gaps in the submission of financial and monitoring reports by the two districts, corroborating the extent to which inadequate numbers of quality staff in the districts in the northern part of the country influence the tracking of LEAP delivery.

In the Central Region, on the other hand, the staff numbers of the SWCDO directorates were adequate considering the number of LEAP beneficiaries and related social-welfare tasks that the directorate had to perform.⁶⁴ Discussions in the two districts indicated that the SWCDO directorates sometimes appeared overstaffed, as some officials refused to go on transfer when posted out of the region.⁶⁵ An official in the Assin South District revealed that as a result of the availability of personnel,

at the minimum we [the SWCDO directorate] send three officials to go with the payment team. One member of staff assists the bank people to check the cash. The other officer sensitises the households on the use of the grant and compliance to the LEAP conditions. (Int. respondent ASBT02, male, 4 years at SWCDO)

⁶² Int. respondent WWBT12; SSBT01

⁶³ Int. respondent WWBT12; SSBT01

⁶⁴ Int. respondent ASBT01; GWBT01; GWBT04

⁶⁵ Int. respondent ASBT02; GWBT02

Equally, interviews in Gomoa West showed that there were at least eight staff, with three solely devoted to LEAP and Social Welfare tasks.⁶⁶ The department also had two National Service Personnel allocated to the department, who assisted with case-management responsibilities.⁶⁷ Hence, in respect of LEAP delivery, the bureaucrats indicated that at the minimum, two SWCDO officials were delegated to support LEAP payment operations at any point in time.⁶⁸

Available information and interviews also revealed that most of the staff of the SWCDO directorates held appropriate academic qualifications to support their positions.⁶⁹ Further key-informant interviews revealed that the SWCDO directors in both districts were pursuing advanced-level training to boost their capacities in social-welfare management.⁷⁰ Interviews with the SWCDO official in the Assin South District revealed that

I am pursuing another master's degree programme at the University of Cape Coast at the Central Region capital. I do not have to travel far from the district. I go every two weeks. I am in my second year now. (Int. respondent ASBT01, male, 10 years as SWCDO official)

Further discussions revealed that SWCDO staff in the Central Region attended more training programmes to enhance their management of LEAP and the solution of cases relating to payments.⁷¹ The lead bureaucrats in Gomoa West, for instance, revealed that

we have attended several training sessions on the LEAP payment process. I remember we attended a workshop at Volta Serene Hotel and the issue of deceased beneficiaries of the programme came up for discussion. (Int. respondent GWBT01, male, 6 years in SWCDO)

Interviews with bureaucrats in the two districts confirmed that the frequent attendance on training programmes in respect of LEAP by SWCDO bureaucrats in the Central Region improved the ability of SWCDO officials to expeditiously address problems with grant delivery.⁷² The SWCDO bureaucrat attested that

through the meetings and workshops, we have been equipped with the case-management systems to report and resolve payment problems. At the training sessions we met the

⁶⁶ Int. respondent GWBT01

⁶⁷ Int. respondent GWBT02

⁶⁸ Int. respondent GWBT02; GWBT01; GWBT07

⁶⁹ Int. respondent ASBT01; GWBT02; GWBT01

⁷⁰ Int. respondent ASBT01; GWBT02; GWBT01

⁷¹ Int. respondent ASBT02; GWBT02; GWBT01

⁷² Int. respondent GWBT01; GWBT02; ASBT01; ASBT02

service providers, so sometimes when the transfer amount is not showing on the recipient's card, we call them directly. (Int. respondent ASBT01, male, 10 years as SWCDO official)

Beneficiaries in the two districts of the Central Region established that bureaucrats often responded quickly to queries about replacement of beneficiaries or primary caregivers and replacement of cards, among others.⁷³

Mirroring the quantity and quality of competences, discussions with SWCDO bureaucrats in Central Region showed that preparations and submissions of financial and payment reports to the LMS were consistent with the LMS guidelines.⁷⁴ Discussions with SWCDO officials in Assin South confirmed that the directorate prepared the monitoring and payment reports promptly after the completion of every payment cycle.⁷⁵ They also submitted financial reports on the utilisation of LEAP funds to the LMS on a quarterly basis.⁷⁶ As the bureaucrat at Gomoa West indicated,

I have designated one of my assistants to prepare the financial reports after the payment cycle. The bank people provide the printout of the payment, and we [SWCDO] reconcile the amount paid out and we also complete the template for the report for submission to the LMS every quarter. (Int. respondent GWBT01, male, 6 years as SWCDO director)

Thus, state formation as a driver of state capacity shaped better delivery of LEAP in the Central Region compared to the Upper West Region, suggesting that institutional path dependencies arising from historical legacies of colonialism and postcolonial institutional arrangements have implications for effectiveness in the delivery of decentralised social-protection provisioning (MacLean, 2002). Higher state capacity resulting in the availability of quality personnel in the two southern districts contributed to the ability of local SWCDO officials to regularly facilitate and supervise grant delivery without delay. It also ensured the increased access to training and capacity development among SWCDO officials in the two southern sites to address challenges with payment quickly, as well as to establish robust financial-reporting and case-management systems. This contrasted with their counterparts in the Upper West Region, where low state capacity undermined access to adequate staff to regularly facilitate and supervise grant delivery promptly. It also subverted the ability of the SWCDO in those northern districts to facilitate LEAP implementation and their capacity to report on payment processes promptly as outlined in the

⁷³ Int. respondent ASFGD02; ASBN07; ASBN04; GWFGD03; GWFGD07; GWBN06

⁷⁴ Int. respondent ASBT01

⁷⁵ Int. respondent ASBT01

⁷⁶ Int. respondent ASBT01

LEAP manual. Poor road connectivity in districts in the northern part of the country also subverted the ability of bureaucrats to attend training programmes to enhance their skills, which ultimately affected the quality of services provided to LEAP beneficiaries in that part of the country.

5.5 Cases of how power configurations shape state effectiveness within regions

This subsection explores the extent to which configurations of power shape the deployment of state capacity leading to variation in effectiveness of transfer delivery *within* regions. As hypothesised in Chapter 3, the study found less effectiveness in the politically competitive Sissala East and Gomoa West Districts compared to the politically dominant Wa West and Assin South Districts (see Table 5.11 above). The analysis below examines the extent and nature of political involvement in LEAP transfer delivery structures in the four districts, with implications for variation in the degree of effectiveness.

As previously stated in Chapters 2 and 3, the local configuration of power constitutes a critical mediating factor shaping how state capacity translates into state performance. In respect of delivery of LEAP transfers, the LEAP manual charges the district SWCDO directorate with the responsibility to coordinate the delivery of transfers to households in the “shortest time possible, on a regular basis and in full” (MMYE, 2007a, p. 33). To accomplish this task, the SWCDO must decide, with the postal service or the PFI, on the most strategic locations for siting pay points. The manual also mandates the DLIC (a committee of technocrats) and the Social Services Subcommittee embedded within the District Assembly system to oversee the delivery of grants. These committees undertake their mandate with support from the Assembly by reporting problems experienced and proffering solutions to the SWCDO directorate, as well as verifying, through monitoring visits to pay points, whether beneficiaries are receiving their payments on a regular basis and in full (MMYE, 2007a). The SWCDO also establishes a LEAP implementation committee at the community level, especially where a Unit Committee does not already exist in a LEAP community. The CLIC comprises local leaders, bureaucrats and non-state actors. In respect of delivery of transfers, the committee is mandated to inform beneficiaries ahead of the payment dates, organise beneficiaries for the payment sessions and assist beneficiaries with appeals relating to payment challenges (MMYE, 2007a). Reflecting this assignment of mandates, various political and bureaucratic officials within and outside the District Assemblies and communities, respectively, engage the SWCDO directorate and its paying partners in delivering transfers. As demonstrated below, how these state and societal actors interact with the SWCDO directorates is

shaped by local configurations of power in these districts, which has implications for variations in effectiveness in the delivery of transfers.

The structure and functioning of the DLIC and CLIC were comparable in both the Upper West and Central Regions. However, the extent to which technocrats and politicians constituted and influenced the functioning of these DLICs and CLICs depended on the local configurations of power *within* a region. In the competitive districts of Sissala East and Gomoa West, where enhanced threats characterised elite relations, attempts by politicians to capture and interfere in LEAP transfer structures undermined the delivery processes, leading to a lowering of effectiveness in outcomes.

In the Sissala East District, where enhanced threats again characterised elite relations, the nature of political competition undermined the formation of the DLIC as outlined in the LEAP manual. This resulted from the politicised distribution of LEAP in this competitive electoral setting.⁷⁷ Interviews revealed that, contrary to the requirements of the LEAP manual,

political actors at the Sissala East District rather than technocrats dominated the DLIC ... the DCE and a few politically connected members of the District Assembly, and constituency executives of the then ruling NDC party associated with the DCE's faction made decisions about LEAP. (Int. respondent SSBT01, male, 12 years in SWCDO)

The political control of the DLIC in the district resulted in ruling political party leaders such as the National Democratic Congress (NDC) Member of Parliament (MP), the NDC DCE, the NDC Constituency Party Executives (CPEs) and AMs aligned to the ruling party featuring actively in decisions pertaining to LEAP transfers.⁷⁸ As discussed in Section 5.4, poor infrastructure distribution in the Sissala East District affected the ability of SWCDO officials to freely site payment centres in every LEAP community in the district. In recognition of this challenge, SWCDO bureaucrats strategised to establish payment centres at central locations within the district that were within the reach of paying communities and thus required beneficiaries to travel only relatively short distances from their communities.⁷⁹ The senior SWCDO bureaucrat confirmed that

because we have close to 4,000 households, we needed to identify locations with better communication network in the district where we could set up pay points to verify the

⁷⁷ Int. respondent SSBT01; SSAM02; SSAM05; SSCL05

⁷⁸ Int. respondent SSBT01; SSBT04

⁷⁹ Int. respondent SSBT01; SSBT02

beneficiaries quickly and finish the payment on time. (Int. respondent SSBT01, male, 12 years as SWCDO official)

Interviews exposed that, contrary to the preference of the SWCDO bureaucrats, political elites in the district, particularly the ruling party's DCE and MP (who were aware of the intensity of local political competition), insisted that if the SWCDO had to set up a few locations, then these had to be in pro-NDC communities within the district. This was to enable the ruling party to demonstrate to its loyalists and to opposition supporters that the ruling party was taking care of its members through LEAP transfers.⁸⁰ Interviews revealed that the MP, who had lobbied for the LEAP allocations, preferred the location of the pay centres to be in the pro-NDC communities, as this helped to improve the visibility of the programme among her constituents.⁸¹ As the SWCDO bureaucrat indicated,

the DCE asked us [the SWCDO] to ensure that we do the payment in those communities. The MP also wanted us to go to her communities so that the party people will know she is taking care of them. (Int. respondent SSBT02, female, 4 years as SWCDO official)

Interviews with SWCDO officials further showed that the insistence on payment locations favourable to the ruling party often meant that the SWCDO officials had to travel long distances to remote locations, which affected their ability to finish the payment on time. As the senior SWCDO bureaucrat lamented,

the road terrain in the district is very harsh and distances between communities are very far, far apart ... there is one community, Bawisiebelle, it is over 100 kilometres from Tumu [the district capital] before you get there and yet they demanded we go there to do the payment. How do you finish and go to other communities? (Int. respondent SSBT01, male 12 years as SWCDO official)

Importantly, the use of pro-NDC communities as the main payment locations in Sissala East meant that whereas beneficiaries in these communities travelled a short distance, those located in opposition-supporting communities needed to travel longer distances in order to receive their transfers.⁸² As some beneficiaries bemoaned,

we often travel longer distances at our own expense to the payment centres. Sometimes too we travel to the district capital to access the transfer. (Int. respondent SSBN09, female, 2 years as LEAP beneficiary)

⁸⁰ Int. respondent SSBT01

⁸¹ Int. respondent SSBT02

⁸² Int. respondent SSCL04; SSFGD08; SSFGD10

Interviews in the district also established that in respect of the PFI to support the SWCDO, political elites rather than technocrats made the decision to approve the PFI.⁸³ The bureaucrats indicated that the NDC MP and the then DCE led the process of liaising with the GhIBPSS in the award of the contract to the local PFI, without consultation with the SWCDO directorate.⁸⁴ As the SWCDO bureaucrat stated,

the MP and the DCE did not engage us at all about the bank. We were not consulted. The bank just informed us that they had been appointed to assist us to deliver the grant, so when it is time, we should present the list and do the schedule ... so they go with us to do the payment. (Int. respondent SSBT01, male, 12 years as SWCDO official)

Interviews with both senior SWCDO and planning bureaucrats indicated that the PFI had close connections with the husband of the MP (who was also one of the ruling party's financiers in the Upper West Region) and thus provided financial support to the campaign of the ruling party in the district.⁸⁵ An elected AM intimated that

the PFI is very influential when it comes to politics in this district. They finance various political activities within the district. (Int. respondent SSAM01, male, 16 years as AM and PNC politician)

Consequently, despite the PFI's limited logistical and human-resources capacities to undertake transfers to the large numbers of households in the district, local politicians approved its appointment to assist the SWCDO to deliver transfers.⁸⁶ The political connections of the PFI with key NDC politicians in the district have also undermined the ability of SWCDO officials to engage them to confront the PFI about irregularities, and delays in grant delivery in the district.⁸⁷

The enhanced threats of turnover that characterised elite relations in the district influenced the increased interference by political elites in the delivery of transfers to households. This was demonstrated through the siting of payment locations in politically influential communities, and the approval of the PFI for the delivery of the transfers irrespective of its capacity to undertake speedy transfer delivery.

⁸³ Int. respondent SSBT01; SSBT04

⁸⁴ Int. respondent SSBT01

⁸⁵ Int. respondent SSBT01

⁸⁶ Int. respondent SSBT01; SSBT04

⁸⁷ Int. respondent SSBT02; SSBT01; SSCL03

Despite these interventions from politicians, the bureaucrats confirmed that ruling party executives and appointees did not pay serious attention to monitoring how well the SWCDO was delivering the transfers to households.⁸⁸ The SWCDO bureaucrats revealed that

typically, when we are doing the payment in the communities, the NDC DCE and NDC MP do not attend these programmes. Every payment date, I inform the DCE through the District Coordinating Director (DCD) but, he does not attend. (Int. respondent SSBT01, male, 12 years in SWCDO)

Because the DLIC did not attend the payment sessions, complaints about challenges with regard to grant delivery were often not taken seriously or addressed. The lack of action by the DLIC to address problems with transfer delivery resulted in poor delivery processes.⁸⁹ The SWCDO officials indicated that though they had complained about the non-adherence of the PFI officials to the payment timetable, the district political officials did nothing to address the problem.⁹⁰ The SWCDO lamented that

with this e-payment, we have never honoured our time schedule. Normally I draw the itinerary, I will send it to the bank, but they will never say anything. On the day for us to implement, they will say that no, they have a problem, either the car has been sent for other errands, or they have no funds to undertake the payment. (Int. respondent SSBT01)

Yet, ahead of elections within the party or inter-party elections, the MP visits the payment centres to interact with the beneficiaries.⁹¹ One SWCDO official recounted that

the MP only comes to the payment centres when the elections are close. She follows us to most of the communities to talk to the beneficiaries. When it is not elections, they fear the pressure and demands from the people. (Int. respondent SSBT02, female, 4 years at SWCDO)

Also, ahead of intra-party elections, ruling party constituency executives and AMs aligned to the ruling party participated in payment events.⁹² They often attempted to compile cases relating to payment challenges for the attention of the SWCDO directorate.⁹³ This enabled ruling party aligned

⁸⁸ Int. respondent SSBT01; SSBT02

⁸⁹ Int. respondent SSBT01

⁹⁰ Int. respondent SSBT01

⁹¹ Int. respondent SSBT01; SSBT02; SSAM04

⁹² Int. respondent SSAM05; SSAM06; SSCL09; SSBT02

⁹³ Int. respondent SSAM05; SSAM06; SSCL09; SSBT02

AMs to claim credit that the ruling party cared for the welfare of its members through the extension of the LEAP programme to reward loyal and committed members.⁹⁴

In terms of the community-level actors that oversee LEAP implementation, discussions with senior SWCDO bureaucrats revealed that due to the increased political competition in the district, the CLICs were political actors in LEAP communities, rather than health and education service workers, as recommended by the LEAP manual.⁹⁵ As an AM intimated,

CLICs are branch and polling station executives of the ruling party. Some are foot soldiers aligned to ruling party political leaders. (Int. respondent SSAM10, male, AM)

These party officials incorporated the CLIC as part of the ruling party structures.⁹⁶ Interviews pointed to CLICs participating in payment sessions.⁹⁷ As a CLIC indicated,

I organise the households whenever the office sends information about the transfer. The information comes late all the time, but I go round to them all to go for the money. (Int. respondent SSCL10, female, NDC member and CLIC leader in Sakalu)

However, the SWCDO bureaucrats in the district reported that the CLICs participated actively in the payment event only when they were beneficiaries themselves or deputies of some of the households.⁹⁸ As the SWCDO official indicated,

CLIC members send the information to the households to come to the paying centres whenever we are ready to do payment. But they do not come to the place unless they are also beneficiaries of the grant. (Int. respondent SSBT02, female, 4 years at SWCDO)

Where CLICs had elected to assist grantees to retrieve their grants from the district capital if they had issues with their payment or biometric cards, they often demanded financial compensation from the grantees in return.⁹⁹ A CLIC in Jijen community confirmed that

the SWCDO does not give us any money or resources to cover the cost of organising the beneficiaries. When we help them [the households] go to Tumu to retrieve the money, they have to pay us for the time and the transport cost. (Int. respondent SSCL05, male, local politician with 10 years as CLIC)

⁹⁴ Int. respondent SSCL06; SSAM04; SSAM12; SSCL01; SSCL108

⁹⁵ Int. respondent SSCL05; SSCL06; SSCL03; SSCL04)

⁹⁶ Int. respondent SSTA01; SSAM03; SSAM09

⁹⁷ Int. respondent SSCL05; SSCL06; SSCL03; SSCL04; SSBT01

⁹⁸ Int. respondent SSBT02

⁹⁹ Int. respondent SSCL07; SSCL07; SSCL10; SSFGD02; SSFGD05; SSFGD10

Interviews with bureaucrats revealed that though they were aware of the demands from the CLICs because they were community party executives and foot soldiers of the ruling party, the issue often became politicised.¹⁰⁰ As a SWCDO official intimated,

in Bendei we arrested a CLIC member who was taking money from the beneficiaries. But the man's brother was the ruling party constituency communication secretary. Before we could even go and give our statement to the police in Tumu, the MP and the DCE called the police to release him. Now we cannot do anything when we get complaints from the beneficiaries. (Int. respondent SSBT02, female, 4 years at SWCDO)

Thus, in Sissala East, the nature of political competition shaped the political capture of the DLIC, which undermined the capacity of local bureaucrats to hold the PFI to account on transfer delivery standards, resulting in limited effectiveness in transfer delivery. It also underpinned the heightened interference of political actors in delivery processes. Chapter 6 discusses in greater detail how local political factors in the Sissala East District shaped the targeting of communities and households.

Similarly to Sissala East, interviews in the politically competitive Gomoa West District in Central Region revealed that political actors played various roles in making decisions regarding the distribution of transfers to LEAP households in the district.¹⁰¹ The intensity of local political competition explained the increased role of politics and politicians in influencing the LEAP transfer processes.¹⁰² As the SWCDO official indicated,

the main problem that is actually affecting the LEAP programme here is the political interference. That is our major challenge. As a technocrat you are not free to take decisions or manage the programme based on your information. Everything boils down to the politicians. (Int. respondent GWBT01, male, 6 years as SWCDO official in the district)

Interviews exposed that

there is no DLIC in this district ... politicians are given the information at the national level and they inform the technocrats on the actions they have taken in response to the programme. (Int. respondent GWBT03, male, 8 years at District Assembly)

¹⁰⁰ Int. respondent SSBT02; SSBT01

¹⁰¹ Int. respondent GWAM17; GWAM15

¹⁰² Int. respondent GWAM02; GWAM03; GWAM04; GWAM05

Given the strong influence of political leaders in this politically competitive district, decisions about the locations of transfers in the district were made by political leaders rather than the bureaucrats. According to a SWCDO official,

when I took over the LEAP office in the district in 2012, the payment points were already there. The previous officer was paying in those locations with the postmaster. So, when we started the e-payment, the DCE instructed that we use the same locations for the payment. (Int. respondent GWBT01, male, 6 years as SWCDO official in the district)

Further interviews revealed that most of these locations where payments took place were meeting venues associated with the ruling NDC party in the constituency.¹⁰³ Some of the payment locations were also the forecourts of the palaces of traditional leaders and/or the homes of AMs aligned to the ruling NDC party.¹⁰⁴

Interviews with political leaders and AMs associated with the NDC showed that the choice of these locations worked better for the local political leaders, as almost all community LEAP facilitators and committee members also doubled as ruling party executives (given the intensity of inter- and intra-political competition in the district).¹⁰⁵ The SWCDO officials intimated that they had no mandate to change the locations of the payment centres due to the difficulties they might encounter with local political leaders in this competitive district.¹⁰⁶ As one SWCDO official stated,

in this district, who are you as a technocrat to contend with a whole DCE? When you are given instructions by the political head, you cannot question. For me I do not want to get into trouble with the politicians. Even if the location is not favourable, we cannot change it. (Int. respondent GWBT01, male, 6 years as SWCDO official in the district)

Another bureaucrat lamented that

the problem with implementation of LEAP is the double standards regarding the role of politicians. They say one thing to the politician, and they tell the technocrats another thing. It makes it difficult for the technocrat to act according to the instructions as set out in the payment manual. When you go against the politicians you have yourself to blame. No one is ready to defend you. (Int. respondent GWBT04, male, 6 years at District Assembly)

¹⁰³ Int. respondent GWAM16; GWAM15

¹⁰⁴ Int. respondent GWCL05

¹⁰⁵ Int. respondent GWBT01; GWBT02

¹⁰⁶ Int. respondent GWBT01; GWBT02

While these payment locations enabled local party executives to present payment sessions as party events,¹⁰⁷ beneficiaries or their deputies who were not core ruling party members or opposition party supporters included in the programme tended to travel further out of their communities and at their own expense to access their transfers as a result of the location of the payment points.¹⁰⁸ Interviews with some beneficiaries also revealed that LEAP households or their deputies who did not want to experience demands from ruling party foot soldiers at these payment centres sometimes preferred to access the LEAP grants directly from financial institutions located in the coastal communities in the district whenever they received alerts on their mobile phones.¹⁰⁹

Political interference in the decisions about LEAP payment points thus undermined LEAP effectiveness, as some households incurred greater costs to access their grants.

In respect of approving a PFI to assist the SWCDO in the delivery of transfers, the enhanced threats of turnover that characterised elite relations influenced decisions in the district. Interviews with politicians and bureaucrats indicated that the political actors rather than the technocrats played the lead role in facilitating the approval of the PFI to assist the SWCDO in the delivery of the grants.¹¹⁰

The bureaucrats reported that

the DCE only informed us that a PFI based at the national capital had been awarded the contract to deliver the transfers to replace the post office people. We do not know how the decision was made. Nobody in the district discussed the choice of the PFI with the directorate. (Int. respondent GWBT01, male, 6 years as SWCDO official)

Further interactions with politicians in the district revealed that ruling party political elites, particularly the MP, played a key role in the approval of the appointment of the PFI to assist the SWCDO to deliver the transfers.¹¹¹ Interviews in the district showed that the limited influence of the SWCDO over decisions about the PFI and its rules of engagement undermined their ability to engage the PFI directly on challenges with delivery of grants. A SWCDO indicated that

when you report to LMS or the District Assembly that the PFI is not working well, it will amount to reporting the politicians that brought them to the district. (Int. respondent GWBT01, male, 6 years at SWCDO)

¹⁰⁷ Int. respondent GWBT07; GWBT03; GWCL08

¹⁰⁸ Int. respondent GWAM15; GWCL05; GWFGD04; GWFGD08

¹⁰⁹ Int. respondent GWBT01; GWBT02; GWCL10

¹¹⁰ Int. respondent GWBT01; GWBT02

¹¹¹ Int. respondent GWBT07

Consequently, though the district had good road infrastructure and communities were not far apart, delivery did not always go according to schedule. Interviews with AMs and CLICs confirmed that payment events often started late in the morning because the PFI had to commute for 2 hours from the national capital to the district to undertake grant delivery.¹¹² An AM stated that

the payment starts around 11:00 am. The people have to wait for them, but they do not come early. When it's payment day the people cannot go anywhere or do anything the whole day. (Int. respondent GWAM05)

The fact that the PFI officials commuted from outside the Central Region meant that there was always pressure on the SWCDO to ensure that households were paid within a very short space of time.¹¹³ This development meant that beneficiaries sometimes had to wait at payment venues late into the night in order to receive the LEAP transfer.¹¹⁴ Field observations in the Gomoa West District confirmed these instances of grant delivery in the night.¹¹⁵ As a SWCDO official reported,

we sometimes finish payment at 19:00 pm or 20:00 pm in the night. When we are paying the people have to wait for us [the payment team] to receive the grant. (Int. respondent GWBT02, female, 4 years at SWCDO)

Local SWCDO officials also lamented that, given the association of the PFI with local political elites, they abstained from confronting them about deploying the most competent personnel to undertake delivery using offline processes.¹¹⁶ The bureaucrats confirmed that where there were challenges with the internet communication network required to verify the beneficiaries before delivery of the transfers, the process was often delayed and beneficiaries had to wait for long hours in order to receive their grants.¹¹⁷

In respect of monitoring of LEAP payment sessions, the technocrats in the district did not monitor the delivery process as stipulated in the LEAP manual. Rather, political leaders aligned to the ruling party participated in monitoring LEAP grant delivery as a result of the intensity of the local politics.¹¹⁸ The competitive nature of politics further restricted LEAP monitoring to AMs aligned to

¹¹² Int. respondent GWBT01

¹¹³ Int. respondent GWBT01

¹¹⁴ Int. respondent GWBT02

¹¹⁵ Int. respondent GWBT01; GWBT02; GWBT07

¹¹⁶ Int. respondent GWBT01; GWBT02; GWBT07

¹¹⁷ Int. respondent GWBT01; GWBT02; GWBT07

¹¹⁸ Int. respondent GWAM02; GWBT03

the ruling party and, in particular, to those associated with the DCE faction. Some AMs aligned to the NPP indicated that the then NDC DCE warned them to stay off the LEAP programme.¹¹⁹ This directive resulted in limited policing of the grant-delivery exercise in some communities by AMs.¹²⁰ Yet, in communities where the AM was aligned to the NDC party, because they played a role in the appointment of the CLICs, these AMs assisted in the organisation of beneficiaries for payment¹²¹ and also ferried information from recipients to the SWCDO about payment challenges.¹²² An AM representing Gomoa Dawuramong recounted that

the beneficiaries call me all the time to make complaints about the LEAP and I send the information to the LEAP office at Apam. For the complaints we have made a lot to the director and now we have a big problem. The people think I have gone to collect the money and spent it and there are lot of such cases. (Int. respondent GWAM17, male, NDC party chairperson in Dawuramong community)

Interviews in the district showed that AMs and party members who monitored transfer sessions did not readily report the accurate picture on the ground in respect of the challenges that some households or their deputies encountered in receiving the transfer.¹²³ SWCDO bureaucrats reported that

the information on some of the payment challenges and irregularities in LEAP delivery does not always filter to us at the district office. If the DLIC was working, they could pick some of the information quickly for the office to address them. (Int. respondent GWBT01, male 6 years at SWCDO)

The interviews also established that the politically appointed DCE occasionally undertook monitoring visits to LEAP communities during the payment events.¹²⁴ According to the immediate past DCE,

what I did as a DCE was that because I want to ensure that the proper thing is done, I'd accompany them [the SWCDO and bank officials] to one or two communities and supervise how the payment is being done but I did not go to all the communities. (Int. respondent GWAM02, male, 8 years as appointed political leader)

¹¹⁹ Int. respondent GWBT07; GWBT03

¹²⁰ Int. respondent GWAM02; GWAM12; GWAM18

¹²¹ Int. respondent GWAM17; GWAM08; GWAM11; GWAM13

¹²² Int. respondent GWAM17; GWAM08; GWAM11

¹²³ Int. respondent GWBT02; GWBT01

¹²⁴ Int. respondent GWAM06; GWAM02

Like the DCE, the interviews revealed that the MP only participated in and monitored the LEAP transfer delivery ahead of internal party primaries and the general elections, when he was campaigning for support from voters in the district.¹²⁵ As a SWCDO official confirmed,

the MP only comes with us to the LEAP communities when they are doing the primaries and the elections. They tell the people to vote for them because they will bring more LEAP benefits to their communities. (Int. respondent GWBT06, male, 7 years at District Assembly)

Bureaucrats corroborated that in between elections, the DCE and MP did not visit the payment venues.¹²⁶ This was a result of the fact that non-beneficiaries often accosted politicians at payment centres and demanded inclusion in the programme.¹²⁷ These demands from community members at payment centres occasioned the unwillingness of the DCE and the MP from showing up at the payment events in the district.¹²⁸

At the community level, CLICs existed in all LEAP communities in the Gomoa West District,¹²⁹ but these CLICs mainly acted as an extension of the ruling party, as local party executives including chairpersons, secretaries and women's organisers automatically became members of CLICs.¹³⁰ This was because of the competitive politics in the district. An AM confirmed that

honestly, the CLIC was politically formed in communities in the district. The executives of the NDC party in power at the time were put in charge of LEAP. (Int. respondent GWAM12, male, 8 years as elected AM)

The SWCDO officials also confirmed that while the LEAP manual required the appointment of non-partisan persons as CLICs and CFPs, this was hardly the case in most situations, and this made it difficult for the SWCDO to discipline them.¹³¹ As the SWCDO bureaucrat stated,

the leadership of the community is supposed to be devoid of politics but most of the time political people are involved so it is difficult to hold them to account for their actions. (Int. respondent GWBT01, male 6 years at SWCDO)

¹²⁵ Int. respondent GWBT02; GWBT01

¹²⁶ Int. respondent GWBT02; GWBT07

¹²⁷ Int. respondent GWBT07; GWBT01

¹²⁸ Int. respondent GWAM01; GWAM01

¹²⁹ Int. respondent GWCL08; GWCL09

¹³⁰ Int. respondent GWAM12

¹³¹ Int. respondent GWBT01

CLIC members confirmed their active participation and direct involvement in the mobilisation of beneficiary households ahead of the payment cycles.¹³² Field observations also confirmed CLIC members participating in payment sessions and helping to resolve disagreements between beneficiaries and their primary caregivers over the sharing of the grants among household members.¹³³ Yet because most of the CLICs were party executives, LEAP payment events were used as party events.¹³⁴

While the active involvement of these politically connected persons ensured easy mobilisation of LEAP households or their deputies ahead of payment events, as well as speedier resolution of cases pertaining to transfers, it also exposed them to extortion.¹³⁵ Beneficiaries reported that

Because most of the CFPs are political party representatives when they connive to receive the cash after the demise of any beneficiary, the SWCDO cannot do much. (Int. respondent GWBN08, female)

Though the SWCDO acknowledged these problems with some CLICs demanding token amounts from LEAP recipients to cover their mobilisation costs, they could hardly deal with them because of their political connections.¹³⁶ SWCDO officials conceded that

When we took over, there were some reports of CLICs and officials that took some of the grant for mobilisation fees from beneficiaries in most communities. In addition, politically appointed caregivers insisted on sharing the grant with beneficiaries. We asked them to desist from taking money from the beneficiaries. (Int. respondent GWBT01, male, 6 years at SWCDO)

Therefore, the enhanced threats that characterised elite relations in the politically competitive Gomoa West District underpinned the heightened interest of district-level political actors in transfer delivery processes. However, it undermined the ability of the local SWCDO officials to discipline local CLICs who failed to report on challenges with transfers or who engaged in extortion from the LEAP recipients.

¹³² Int. respondent GWCL01; GWCL08; GWCL02

¹³³ Field observations; Int. respondent GWCL07; GWCL09

¹³⁴ Int. respondent GWCL07; GWCL09

¹³⁵ Int. respondent GWBT01; GWCL09; Field observations

¹³⁶ Int. respondent GWBT01; GWCL07; Field observations

In contrast to the politically competitive Sissala East and Gomoa West Districts, in the politically dominant Wa West and Assin South, where limited threats categorised elite relations, the longer-term horizons of the political elites enabled them to invest in institution-building and a more rules-based approach, and to build productive relationships with bureaucrats that allowed them the autonomy to do their work of promoting more effective delivery of LEAP.

In Wa West District, where local officials had faced limited threats of turnover as a result of the political dominance of the ruling party since 2000, the DLIC was mainly technocratic and existed as an independent entity. This resulted from the fact that local politicians, including the four-term MP and two-term DCE, did not attempt to use the delivery of LEAP transfers purposefully for political gains.¹³⁷ Interviews in the district established that the DLIC was made up of departmental heads of various units of the District Assembly, such as the District Planning Officer (DPO), the District Health Officer (DHO), the District Education Officer (DEO) and the District Health Insurance Officer (DHIO).¹³⁸

Reflecting its technocratic composition, the DLIC in the district collaborated with the SWCDO directorate in strategising on the most effective means of getting households to receive their transfers without having to incur high transport and time costs. Interviews with bureaucrats exposed that though a community-level distribution of transfers might have been preferred, the DLIC and the Social Services Committee of the Assembly arranged with the SWCDO and its paying PFI to undertake transfer delivery at central payment locations within the district.¹³⁹ The SWCDO official indicated that the DLIC took this decision because of their knowledge of the inaccessibility of many parts of the district by road and that this might require beneficiaries to travel out of their communities to receive their LEAP transfers:

Most of the communities do not have roads. If we attempt to do payment in every community, we cannot deliver all the transfers before the end of the payment cycle. The district is vast, and communities are far from each other. (Int. Respondent WWBT12, male, 6 years as SWCDO official)

DLIC members also revealed that the committee worked together with the DCE and the Social Services Committee (SSC) to identify suitable locations within the district as payment centres,

¹³⁷ Int. respondent WWBT12

¹³⁸ Int. respondent WWBT12; WWBT13; WWAM12

¹³⁹ Int. respondent WWBT12; WWAM06

which contrasted with the situation in Sissala East, where elites insisted on inaccessible politically useful locations. According to a member of the SSC,

We selected market communities for the payment centres. These were more accessible locations, and it was easy to get public transport to these centres. Most of the people were more likely to be familiar with the market centres. (Int. Respondent WWBT12, male, 6 years as SWCDO official)

Interviews in the district revealed that by identifying these central payment centres, grant delivery took place over a short period of time, thereby saving the financial institution and the SWCDO officials a lot of travel time.¹⁴⁰ Yet this arrangement by local political elites meant that AMs had to bear some of the financial costs of transporting LEAP beneficiaries to the payment centres.¹⁴¹ As an Assembly man intimated,

whenever is time for payment, I organise a motor-king [tricycle] to transport them from the community to the payment centre to collect the grants. This costs some money, but these LEAP beneficiaries are my people, and they are all poor. (Int. respondent WWAM27, male, bureaucrat, and AM and CFP)

The limited threats that characterised elite relations influenced the process of choosing and approving the PFI that handled the cash on behalf of the SWCDO. Interviews with bureaucrats exposed that the process of identifying the PFI to facilitate grant delivery was informed by technocratic rather than political considerations.¹⁴² The DLIC and the Social Service Committee of the Assembly held various consultations to arrive at a decision pertaining to the PFI.¹⁴³ As the senior SWCDO bureaucrat stated,

there is a small financial institution in the district, and it does not have a single POS device. So when the district started the e-payment system, the Committee agreed that we need a financial institution that can help facilitate the delivery of the transfer in a short time. (Int. respondent WWBT12, male, 6 years as SWCDO officer)

Interviews with the former DCE confirmed that

The LMS and the GhIPSS wanted the local financial institution [the GN Bank] to do the payment. But the DLIC and the Social Services Committee agreed that we need to bring in a financial institution that can help facilitate the delivery of the transfer in a short time. So,

¹⁴⁰ Int. respondent WWBT12; WWAM06

¹⁴¹ Int. respondent WWBT17; WWAM27

¹⁴² Int. respondent WWAM06; WWBT12; WWAM10

¹⁴³ Int. respondent WWAM10; WWAM07

we wrote letters to the regional office and LMS. The MP was given a copy of the letter to add his voice. (Int. Respondent WWBT12, male, 6 years as SWCDO official)

The political dominance of the district and the associated limited threats of turnover that characterised ruling party elite relations enabled the DLIC to take a decision that was free from the demands of political interference and patronage but recognised the infrastructure challenges of the district. In particular, it ensured that the SWCDO and the DLIC could engage the PFI to provide the requisite resources to deliver LEAP speedily, given the high numbers of beneficiary households in the district.¹⁴⁴

That said, bureaucrats and political leaders confirmed that the DLIC mainly policed the LEAP payment process.¹⁴⁵ The DLIC visited the LEAP payment centres to supervise and verify the delivery of transfers.¹⁴⁶ An interview with the former DCE of the district corroborated the active involvement of the DLIC in the monitoring of LEAP payment events. The former DCE, who was the chairperson of the DLIC, revealed that

whenever it is time for LEAP payment, we go on monitoring to the payment centres. We [the DLIC] go with the payment team [SWCDO and PFI], the District Coordinating Director, some other supervisors of the departments of the District Assembly join in the monitoring exercise. (Int. respondent WWAM06, male, 6 years as politically appointed leader)

The DLIC reported on payment challenges and engaged the SWCDO and PFI officials in resolving the problem by attending payment events. This supervision by the DLIC ensured that beneficiaries got information about the delivery of transfers on time.¹⁴⁷ In the words of the NDC DCE,

we talk to the beneficiaries to use the money well to support their families. When they [SWCDO and the payment team] are paying, we dedicate two or three days to the programme and follow them from one payment centre to the other until they complete the process. (Int. respondent WWAM06, male, 6 years as appointed political leader)

Discussions with other political actors in the district revealed that AMs took an active part in the LEAP payment sessions.¹⁴⁸ An AM intimated that

¹⁴⁴ Int. respondent WWBT12; WWBT13

¹⁴⁵ Int. respondent WWAM06; WWTA30

¹⁴⁶ Int. respondent WWAM06; WWBT17

¹⁴⁷ Int. respondent WWAM27; WWBT17; WWAM09; WWCL26

¹⁴⁸ Int. respondent WWAM06; WWAM08; WWAM09; WWAM05; WWAM10

sometimes when they are going for payment, I give the information to CLIC to mobilise them. Sometimes too, I go to the payment centres to monitor what is going on there. I take part in organising into queues and help those who cannot identify their payment cards and the information required before the bank officials had them the LEAP cash. (Int. respondent WWAM27)

The presiding member of the General Assembly confirmed that AMs in the district monitored the LEAP grant delivery. They constitute themselves into a local taskforce on LEAP and visit the payment centres to oversee the process by which actual beneficiaries receive the grant.¹⁴⁹ Further, interviews with AMs revealed that they also created platforms at the General Assembly and the Social Services Committee (SSC) of the Assembly for officials of the SWCDO to render accounts on LEAP disbursements on a periodic basis.¹⁵⁰

At the level of the community LEAP structures, most CLICs had been appointed because of their previous roles in assisting their communities in education and health sensitisation programmes undertaken by NGOs and the District Assembly.¹⁵¹ Discussions with local SWCDO bureaucrats indicated that most CLICs were mainly community teachers and health volunteers.¹⁵² Interviews in the district revealed that most CLICs actively participated in the LEAP payment events to ensure that households that were due to receive payments had adequate information on the payment venues and the dates and payment times. As a CLIC intimated,

I organise the beneficiaries to go the payment centres. The information does not get to us early but I always relay the information to them. I go to the payment centre with them. Some of them ... if you do not go with them, they cannot go. I keep their cards for them too. (Int. respondent WWBT17, male, bureaucrat and CLIC leader, Mette)

Beneficiaries and community bureaucrats who participated in the focus group discussions also revealed that CLIC members in the district assisted beneficiaries to safely keep their ID cards, replace lost Ezwich cards and replace deceased beneficiaries.¹⁵³ For example, the CLIC member in Vieri, one of the communities, reported that

whenever households have problems with the payment cards, we accompany them to the district officer in Wechiau [the district capital] or the bank in Wa, the regional capital, to address the problem. (Int. respondent WWCL29, male, 4 years as CFP)

¹⁴⁹ Int. respondent WWBT12; WWBT17

¹⁵⁰ Int. respondent WWC12; WWBT17; WWAM09; WWAM07

¹⁵¹ Int. respondent WWBT13

¹⁵² Int. respondent WWBT12

¹⁵³ Int. respondent WWCL29; WWBT17; WWFGD03. WWFGD01

Consequently, political dominance and the limited threats of turnover that characterised elite relations in Wa West reinforced the increased autonomy of bureaucrats to facilitate LEAP delivery processes and decisions without political interference from key ruling party elites. It also opened the space for CLICs to freely monitor and support the process of transfer delivery to LEAP households. These political factors accounted for the intermediate effectiveness of grant delivery despite the district's history of low state capacity. Chapter 6 further elucidates on these political dynamics in the district on LEAP targeting.

Equally, in the politically dominant Assin South, the nature of politics enhanced the role of technocrats in LEAP delivery, leading to more effective outcomes. Interviews with bureaucrats and political leaders showed that the DLIC existed as an independent subnational structure of technocrats. Officials of the SWCDO, charged with establishing district and community structures, had been at the forefront of setting up the DLIC in conformity with the LEAP guidelines. The committee members included planning, information, education, health and social welfare directors, as well as a representative of a local NGO.¹⁵⁴ This was largely consistent with the LEAP guidelines. Interviews with bureaucrats showed that whereas the NDC DCE and the selected AMs participated in the DLIC deliberations, the NPP MP was not directly consulted.¹⁵⁵ As a SWCDO bureaucrat indicated,

the District Coordinating Director was the chairperson of the DLIC but after some time they changed and so it is the DCE who is chairing the DLIC right now. (Int. respondent ASBT01, male, 10 years in SWCDO)

Interviews in the district showed that the DLIC and the SWCDO arranged to undertake community-level delivery of LEAP transfers in most of the communities, to ensure that beneficiaries received their grants on time without travelling out of their communities:

payment takes place in the LEAP communities. We pay at the community centres, the church halls or the forecourts of the chief palace if the community does not have a centre. (Int. respondent ASBT02, male, 4 years in SWCDO)

¹⁵⁴ Int. respondent ASBT01

¹⁵⁵ Int. respondent ASBT01; ASAM08; ASAM04; ASAM15

The bureaucrats in the district also corroborated that engagement with the DLIC ensured that the delivery of grants often took place on time.¹⁵⁶ The SWCDO reported that in communities located in the forest reserves and palm plantations, with patchy internet service, however, the DLIC recommended to the payment team that they identify central locations for those communities, to ensure that many beneficiaries were verified over a shorter period without having to travel too far.¹⁵⁷ The SWCDO official recounted that

before the bank took over from the post office, we sat down with DLIC and the bank officials. We agreed that in the LEAP communities in the forest reserves we need to pay them in the nearest community with better road and internet coverage. (Int. respondent ASBT01, male, 10 years as SWCDO official)

Further interviews established that the DLIC played an active role in nominating the PFI, which assisted the SWCDO in delivering the transfers due to the limited inter-party competition between the NDC and the NPP. Interviews with bureaucrats showed that members of the DLIC and the SSC undertook a series of engagements with PFIs within and outside the district before approving the contract of the PFI.¹⁵⁸ As the senior SWCDO bureaucrat revealed,

the DLIC had serious challenges with how the post office people were doing the payment so when the proposal came for a bank to undertake payment, there were extensive consultations before the Assinman rural bank was accepted to undertake the delivery of the transfer. The DLIC insisted on a PFI that was familiar with the terrain of the district. (Int. respondent ASBT01, 10 years at SWCDO office)

Interviews with bureaucrats and political actors confirmed that the new NDC DCE who had been appointed to replace the then NDC MP candidate (a former DCE) did not meddle in the work of the DLIC.¹⁵⁹ A member of the Committee intimated that

we were already at an advanced stage when the new DCE was confirmed by the Assembly. The technocrats mainly took the decision on approving Assinman Rural Bank to deliver transfers. (Int. respondent ASBT04, 6 years at District Assembly)

Despite the PFI's small financial portfolio, interviews with SWCDO officials exposed that consistent engagements between the bank officials, the DLIC and the SWCDO led to their ability

¹⁵⁶ Int. respondent ASBT07; ASBT04; ASBT06

¹⁵⁷ Int. respondent ASBT01

¹⁵⁸ Int. respondent ASBT01; ASBT02

¹⁵⁹ Int. respondent ASBT07; ASBT04

to ensure more effective delivery than their counterparts in other districts. The bank official recounted that

we agreed that we had to acquire two more POS devices if we could do the payment while still continuing to serve customers at the bank. We also decided to pay offline mostly so we can pay even when there is no internet. We secured a small generator on standby too so we can undertake payment even when there is no electricity. (Int. respondent ASBT07, male, 2 years as PFI officer assigned for LEAP)

The DLIC was more prominent in taking decisions that promoted effective delivery of the grant as a result of the limited threats that characterised elite relations in the Assin South District.

In addition to taking decisions in respect of the processes for ensuring effective grant delivery, the DLIC in Assin South monitored the payment sessions to get first-hand information on the processes and challenges with grant delivery.¹⁶⁰ The SWCDO official reported that

the DLIC mostly joined the SWCDO directorate to visit the payment communities. The assembly provided vehicles for the DLIC to follow us to the payment centres most of the time. We go as a team and we even invite the Assembly Members. (Int. respondent ASBT01, male, 10 years in SWCDO)

The participation of the DLIC in the monitoring of the LEAP payment process ensured that the SWCDO and its PFI partner were more responsive to the needs of the recipients in respect of resolving challenges with the delivery of grants.¹⁶¹ The involvement of the DLIC also ensured that beneficiaries received information on transfer use, particularly in relation to fulfilling their obligations in respect of complementary services.¹⁶²

Beyond the involvement of the DLIC in monitoring LEAP payment events, interviews in the Assin South District revealed that NPP dominance of the district influenced the active participation of AMs (many aligned to the NPP) in overseeing and demanding accountability about payment processes in their communities:

it is the Assembly Members. They are always fighting with the office. They say we must inform them at the assembly before we go and do the payment in their communities. They want to know everything that we do in their communities. (Int. respondent ASBT02, male, 4 years in SWCDO)

¹⁶⁰ Int. respondent ASBT02

¹⁶¹ Int. respondent ASBT04; ASBT01

¹⁶² Int. respondent ASBT02

Discussions with SWCDO officials indicated that AMs voted funds from the District Assembly for them to monitor LEAP payments independently and that they often hauled the SWCDO officials to the SSC to explain grant-payment strategies and the concerns of beneficiaries with grant deliveries.¹⁶³

Increased intra-party competition within the governing NDC party in the district also influenced the increased monitoring of payment events by NDC officials. Interviews indicated that payment sessions caused beneficiaries to converge at the community centres to receive their transfers. It was the presence of these crowds that gingered up ruling party politicians (the NDC DCE and the NDC parliamentary candidate) into occasionally showing up to engage recipients at payment events, especially ahead of internal party primaries and the general elections.¹⁶⁴ The community SWCDO bureaucrat exposed that

prior to the elections in 2016, whenever we went for payment and gathered the people, the former DCE who was standing as the NDC parliamentary candidate came to the forum and took advantage to inform them [LEAP recipients] of her vision and the contributions of her service in their enrolment on the LEAP programme. (Int. respondent ASBT02, male, 4 years in SWCDO)

In terms of community-level transfer processes, the CLICs were made up of Unit Committee members, representatives of Traditional Authorities (TAs) and local ruling party leaders who linked the party to their communities¹⁶⁵ – a clear departure from the initial stages, where teachers and nurses constituted the CLICs. This was due to the increased intra-party competition within the ruling party ahead of the party parliamentary primaries.

Interviews in the district exposed that CLIC members regularly organised beneficiaries to receive their grants.¹⁶⁶ Community bureaucrats confirmed that CLIC members regularly organised beneficiaries to receive their grants.¹⁶⁷ The SWCDO officer confirmed that

when we are making payment, there is a CLIC member who attends the payment session and counts the money for beneficiaries before the amount is given to them. The paymaster

¹⁶³ Int. respondent ASBT01; ASBT02

¹⁶⁴ Int. respondent ASBT02

¹⁶⁵ Int. respondent ASAMO4; ASAM08; ASAM07; ASBT02; ASBT01

¹⁶⁶ Int. respondent ASCL01; ASCL08; ASFGD01; ASFGD02

¹⁶⁷ Int. respondent ASCL01; ASCL08; ASFGD01; ASFGD02

gives the money to the CLIC person to verify before handing over the cash to beneficiaries. (Int. respondent ASBT01, male, 10 years in SWCDO)

This was because many of the LEAP beneficiaries were mainly persons who were related to CLIC members and traditional leaders in the communities in some way.¹⁶⁸

Overall, the limited threats of turnover that characterised elite relations in Assin South explained the active role of the technocratic DLIC in the district-level LEAP processes, leading to more effective delivery. Nevertheless, the intra-elite contestations within the then governing NDC (due to the alignment between the governing elite and the national party) reinforced the active involvement of local ruling party candidates at payment events, to demonstrate their role in lobbying for the programme to the district and communities. These political dynamics are further discussed in Chapter 7.

5.6 Chapter summary

This chapter suggests that historical processes of state formation remain a powerful driver of how effectively LEAP is delivered in the Upper West and Central regions. This research echoes the wider literature that contemporary state capacities and state performances have deep historical and contextual roots (Mahoney, 2000; Acemoglu et al., 2001; Lange, 2009; Mkandawire, 2016, 2017).

That said, the chapter also establishes that disparities in local power configurations also shape the varying degrees of effectiveness identified *within* each region. This is consistent with the emerging literature view that political agency and political context matters in the extent to which state capacity is actually deployed and in the impact this has on levels of state performance (Poteete, 2009; Centeno et al., 2017; Handley, 2017).

Finally, it is important to account for the role played by issues of programme design, which transformed the grant-delivery process from manual to electronic systems and rendered programme delivery more effective in districts with existing high levels of state capacity compared to those with weak state capacity. Other key unexpected factors that shaped unevenness in LEAP grant delivery in the two regions included centre–local political mis/alignments between parties in/out of power at the national and subnational levels. Importantly, history and the experience of

¹⁶⁸ Int. respondent ASBT02

management of other donor-funded programmes constituted a critical factor that shaped the observed variations in the delivery of grants in the two regions. A detailed discussion on the conceptual framework and other variables highlighted above is presented in Chapter 8.

CHAPTER 6

Political configurations and LEAP distribution in northern Ghana

6.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the politics of state performance in implementing the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) programme in the Upper West Region, focusing on the extent to which local configurations of power within the region shape the extent of coverage and impartiality in targeting LEAP districts, communities and households.

As discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, the Upper West Region is located in the deprived north-western part of the country and suffers from higher levels of poverty as compared to regions in the southern parts of the country (Ghana Statistical Service, 2018). Across the region, there are variations in the incidences of poverty and inequality as well as the quality of district-level governance.

In the context of contemporary politics, the Upper West Region has been characterised as an electoral stronghold for the National Democratic Congress (NDC) (Bob-Milliar, 2014). However, the politics within parts of the region illustrates competitive patterns, mirroring some of the wider national competitive clientelist politics (Whitfield, 2009; Hirvi & Whitfield, 2015). In the Sissala East District of the region, no political party has exclusively dominated power since 2000. The competitiveness of politics in the district at the level of inter- and intra-party elections has underpinned the intensified threats of electoral turnover and the shorter time horizons of the governing coalitions in the district. In Wa West District, on the other hand, the NDC has dominated politics since 2000, winning an average of 63% of the vote. The dominance of the party in the district and the associated limited threats of turnover that have characterised governing-elite relations have enabled a longer-term vision to arise. This chapter examines whether differences in the level of subnational political competition between districts, and associated differences in the local configuration of power, shapes variation in impartiality in the targeting of LEAP in the Sissala East and Wa West Districts.

As outlined in Chapter 3, impartiality suggests that the provision of benefits is guided by transparent and formal rules and that access is not contingent on political behaviour or related to

political considerations (Stokes et al., 2013, as cited in Kramon, 2019, p. 2). In respect of LEAP targeting, *more impartiality* is where there is stringent and transparent application of the policy guidelines in the face of opposition from politicians and social and special-interest groups at the district and community levels in the allocation and selection of communities and households.¹⁶⁹ In contrast, there is *less impartiality* when bureaucrats are unable to transparently uphold the rules to identify, coordinate and regulate access to actual target groups, as well as the non-rule-based application of guidelines by bureaucrats.

The conceptual framework detailed in Chapter 3 leads the research to propose that, in the districts where the governing coalitions are faced with heightened threats of turnover, LEAP targeting would be characterised by less impartiality. In contrast, where the governing coalitions are faced with limited threats of electoral turnover, targeting would be characterised by more impartiality. This led us to expect that LEAP targeting would be less impartial in the Sissala East District, where the governing elites face heightened threats of turnover, than in the Wa West District, where the governing elites face limited threats of electoral turnover. However, the coverage rates, in terms of LEAP communities and households, would be higher in Sissala East than in Wa West. Consistent with prior expectations, the findings presented in this chapter show that LEAP coverage in the Sissala East District was higher than in Wa West. In respect of targeting, Sissala East revealed a case of less impartiality compared to more in the Wa West District.

In the following sections, the chapter examines how the local political dynamics shapes the allocation of LEAP by national government to the districts (and the political lobbying involved). This is followed by an analysis of how local power configurations shape impartiality in the allocation of quotas to communities within districts. The chapter then explores the influence of political configurations on the selection of households within communities. The final section concludes the chapter.

6.2 Geographical targeting of districts

This section explores the allocation of LEAP quotas by national government to the districts. Specifically, it examines the political lobbying involved in securing these allocations to districts. The study finds higher allocations of LEAP to the Sissala East District to be swayed by pressure

¹⁶⁹ This is not to discount that fact that the guidelines themselves could be partial (e.g., setting criteria that would favour a political important region) but this is beyond the scope of analysis of this research

from the district (and the government) compared to Wa West. The study finds that local power configurations and the associated threats of turnover, and the ways in which these interacted with the strength of the connections between local and national ruling party politicians, constituted the main drivers of the variation in geographical targeting of districts in Ghana.

The established literature on the expansion of LEAP in Ghana suggests that domestic political calculations and the incentives generated by Ghana's competitive political system shaped the geographical allocation of districts (see Jones et al., 2009; Abdulai, 2020). Abdulai (2020) contends that competitive clientelist pressures played important roles in the time and speed of LEAP expansions. This lends credence to the assertions of Jones et al. (2009, p. 48) that decisions about the selection of LEAP districts were driven more by "consideration of geographical spread than by explicitly targeting areas of extreme poverty". Abdulai (2020) further highlights that the key factor that accounted for the expansion of LEAP without the application of technocratic advice was "pressure on the sector minister (and programme implementers) from politicians such as District Chief Executives (DCEs) and Members of Parliament (MPs), who see the LEAP as a means to deliver some 'pork' to their constituents" (2020, p. 22).

Interviews with national-level elites for this research confirmed that local political elites lobby for LEAP to boost their political fortunes.¹⁷⁰ According to a key national official interviewed for this research,

Members of Parliament come to the LEAP secretariat and request that they want LEAP to be expanded in their constituency or get more communities in their constituency on the LEAP programme. DCEs also come to the secretariat to request that they want LEAP to be expanded to communities in their districts. (Int. respondent LMS03, male, former bureaucrat)

Other LEAP officials also confirmed that MPs and DCEs presented formal letters to request LEAP for their districts. However, the officials cautioned that the decision to approve such a request was informed by the district poverty profiles indicated by the Ghana Statistical Service. A senior LEAP bureaucrat recounted that

we receive petitions from MPs especially. This was more prominent when the entire country was not covered by LEAP, so MPs lobbied to gain allocations for their districts. In addition, the District Chief Executive writes using the poverty profile of the district to

¹⁷⁰ Int. respondent LMS01; LMS03; LMS05; LMS09

make a case for the expansion of LEAP. (Int. respondent LMS 02, male, bureaucrat at LMS, Accra)

These patterns of lobbying of the central state (via the LMS) for LEAP by local politicians in response to pressures are not uniform across districts. Rather, the case studies suggest that the incentives for district officials in the Upper West to lobby the central state and the influence of this lobbying within the national government varies depending on the electoral competitiveness of the district in question and not necessarily the incidence of poverty.

The Upper West Region has a history of high poverty incidence compared to regions in the southern parts of Ghana (see Table 6.1). Within the region, poverty levels are higher in Wa West District than in Sissala East District. The Sissala East District has a population of 55,764, out of which 26,399 persons, constituting 47.3%, are classified as poor (UNDP, 2011; Ghana Statistical Service, 2014c; SEDA, 2014, 2017b). In Wa West District, there are 80,382 people in the district, out of which 74,297, constituting 92.4%, are characterised as poor persons (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014e, 2015; WWDA, 2014, 2016a).

Table 6.1: A summary of the poverty and LEAP indicators

Indicators	National	Upper West	Sissala East	Wa West
Population	24,658,823	688,328	55,754	80,382
Number of households	5,467,136	110,175	8,652	11,486
Number of poor persons	6,800,000	477,631	26,399	74,297
Number of LEAP households	213,043	36,558	3923	3455
Number of LEAP Individuals	852,172	146,232	15,692	13,820
Number of communities	18,646	1286	68	227
Number of LEAP communities	6760	578	51	47
Poverty Incidence (%)	23	70	47	92
Extreme Poverty Incidence (%)	8	45		
Level of inequality (%)	42	50	43	42
LEAP households as % of number of households	4	33	45	30
LEAP Individuals as % of population	3	21	28	17
LEAP individual as % of poor persons	13	31	59	19
LEAP communities as percentage (%) of communities	36	45	75	21

Source: Author's field data, 2018.

Notwithstanding differences in the population and proportion of poor persons between the two regions, there are more LEAP households in Sissala East compared to the Wa West District, as demonstrated in Table 6.1 above. Presently, there are 3,923 LEAP households in Sissala East and

3,455 in the Wa West District. Regarding the distribution of LEAP communities, there are 51 LEAP communities out of the 68 communities in Sissala East District. In contrast, there are 47 LEAP communities out of the 227 communities in the Wa West District.

Figures 6.1 and 6.2 exemplify LEAP households as a percentage of the population and poor persons in the Sissala East and Wa West Districts. Analysis of data on LEAP coverage in the Upper West Region shows that LEAP, as a percentage of the population in the Sissala East District (45%), was higher than in the Wa West District (30.1%).¹⁷¹ Furthermore, while LEAP households as a percentage of poor persons in Sissala East District were 59%, those of Wa West District were 18.6%.

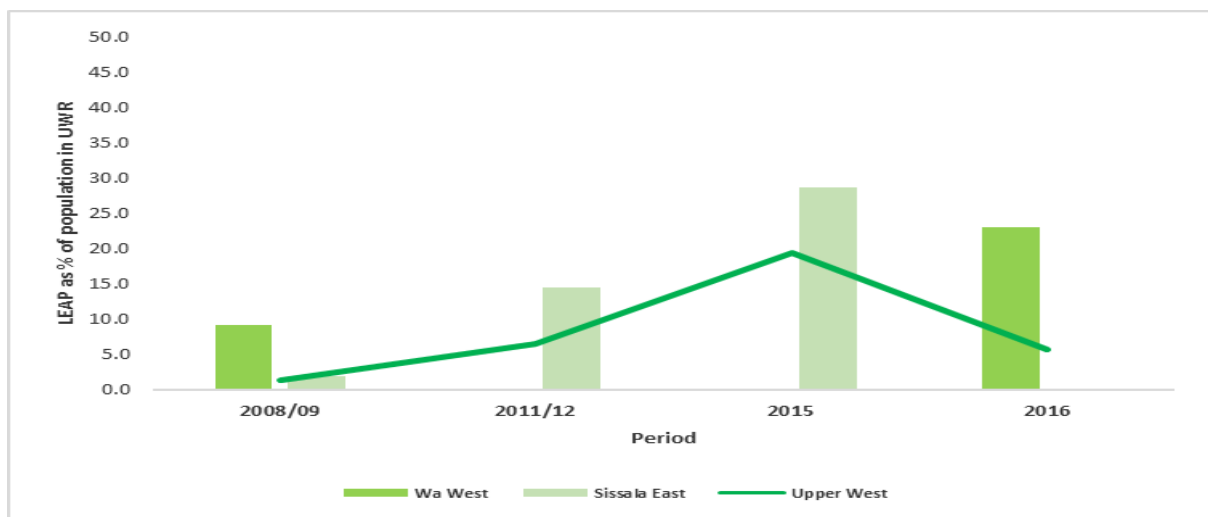


Figure 6.1: The increase in LEAP beneficiaries as a percentage of the population in Wa West and Sissala East

Source: Author's calculations based on LMS data, 2018.

¹⁷¹ Whereas population in Wa West is 81,348, that of Sissala East is 56,528 (GSS, 2014)

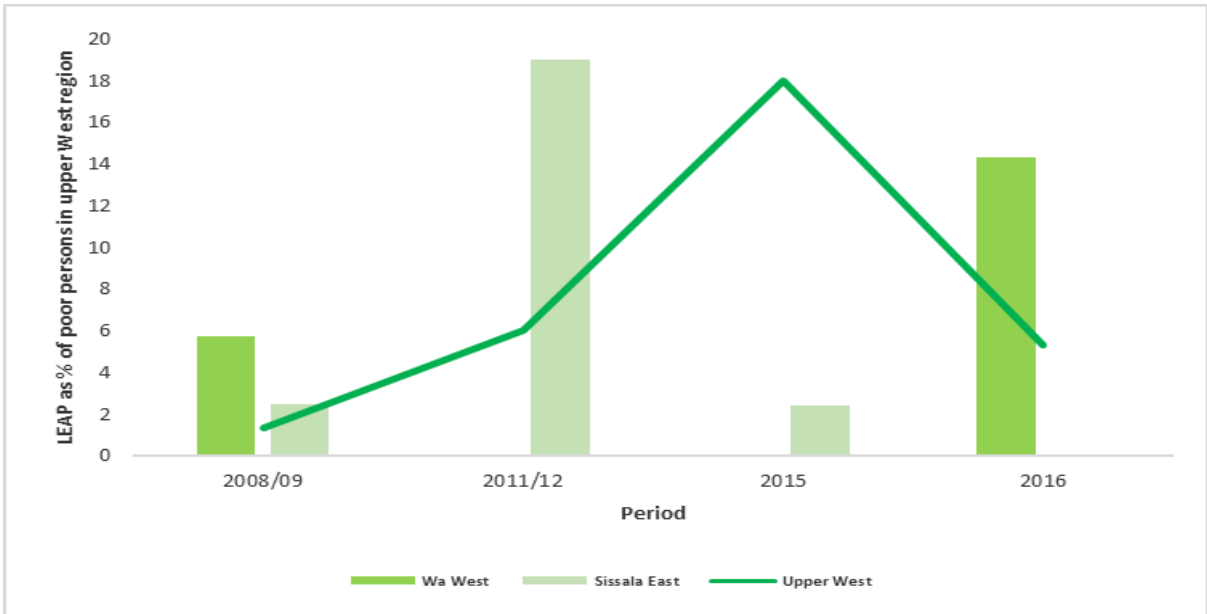


Figure 6.2: The increase in LEAP beneficiaries as a percentage of the poor persons in the Wa West and Sissala East Districts

Source: Author’s calculations based on LMS data, 2018.

Further analysis as illustrated in Figure 6.3 below indicates that the LEAP communities, as a percentage of the communities in the Sissala East District, constituted 75%, compared to 20.7% in the Wa West District.

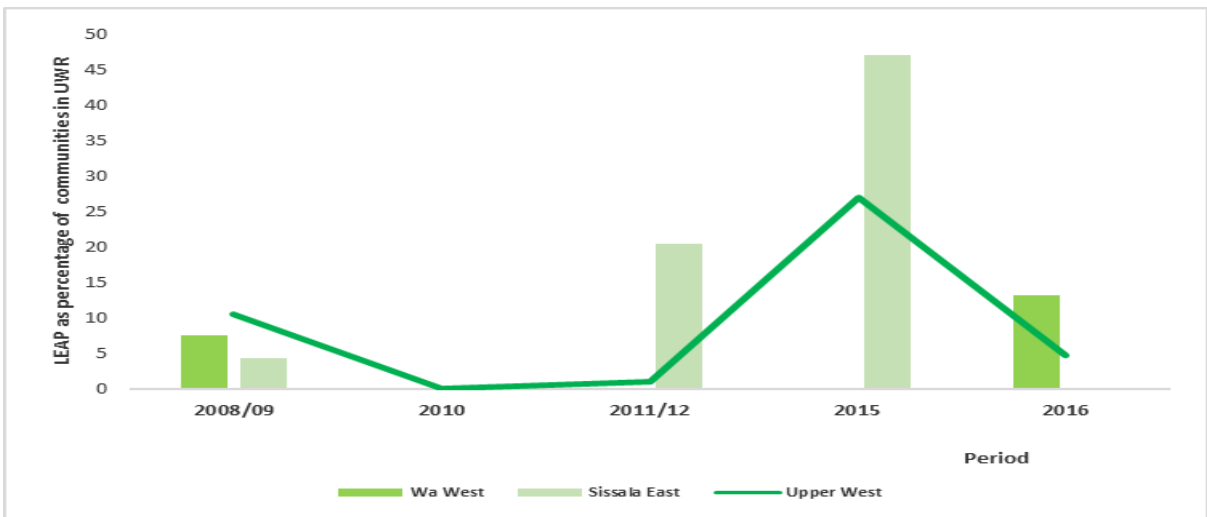


Figure 6.3: The percentage of the LEAP community expansions per number of communities in the Sissala East and Wa West Districts

Sources: LMS (2018), SEDA (2018) and WWDA (2018).

Analysis of Figures 6.1–6.3 shows that Sissala East District (despite the lower proportion of poor persons) benefited from more LEAP allocations and expansions between 2008 and 2016 compared to its Wa West counterpart. The faster pace of expansion, in addition to higher allocations of households and communities in the politically competitive Sissala East District compared to the Wa West District, illustrate how local power configurations, interlinked with the strength of connections between local ruling party elites and national politicians, shaped the geographical distribution of LEAP to districts in the Upper West Region. These patterns of LEAP allocations also illuminate how political lobbying by local politicians influences national-level resource distribution. The analysis below discusses the specific mechanisms through which local configurations of power underline higher coverage of communities and households in Sissala East compared to Wa West.

In Sissala East, bureaucrats and politicians underscored the persistent competition among political elites in the district as the main driver of higher LEAP community coverage as a proportion of the poor communities. According to one key informant, who was an NDC party executive as well as an Assembly Member (AM),

intense competitive politics brought so many LEAP projects and enhanced the development of the district. Political leaders are aware that if you get to power in this district and do not work extra hard, ... they will not be voted for again. This fear of being voted out of office led to the MPs and DCEs striving among themselves to bring more LEAP and social-protection projects in order to protect their positions. (Int. respondent SSAM02, male, 12 years in District Assembly)

For instance, despite the lower numbers of poor communities, the district experienced two LEAP expansions in 2011 and 2012 (as shown in Figures 6.1–6.3), at a time when the NDC DCE was preparing to contest with the NDC MP in the internal party primaries. The MP used her ability to lobby for LEAP and other social projects to boost her claim for renewal of her parliamentary mandate, while the DCE also lobbied for more LEAP, using her networks to demonstrate that she would make a better representative of the party in Parliament.

Key-informant interviews with the Presiding Member and the Chair of the Social Services Committee (SSC) of the Assembly indicated that the MP at the time (Halutie) and the then DCE (Alijata) did not work together. They consistently undermined each other in the hope of being voted the NDC parliamentary candidate in the 2012 elections. Consequently, the MP, who also

doubled as Minister of State at the presidency, lobbied for LEAP communities and beneficiaries using her contacts at the presidency and the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP). She did not involve the DCE in the district, or the district Social Welfare and Community Development Organisation (SWCDO) officials, to ensure that the entire “credit” for lobbying for LEAP accrued solely to her efforts at the national level.¹⁷² At the same time, Alijata, the NDC DCE, mandated the SWCDO to formally write to the Regional Coordinating Councils (RCCs) and the LEAP Management Secretariat (LMS) to seek expansion of the LEAP communities from the three provided in 2008. Alijata, without consulting the MP, took copies of SWCDO letters to the MoGCSP and the LMS. She also used her contacts with key NDC National Executive Council members to advocate for more LEAP communities and beneficiaries, given that her partner was a financier of the NDC in the Upper West Region. Alijata informed the General Assembly of the district that LEAP and all other social-protection projects in the district resulted from her “hard work”, “lobbying” and stewardship.¹⁷³

Equally, in the 2015 LEAP expansion, discussions with bureaucrats and politicians at the district level detailed that competition for claims of credit featured prominently among the then NDC MP and NDC DCE for the district. According to these key informants, the LEAP expansion occurred ahead of the NDC MP primaries, where Alijata, by then the NDC MP, was seeking re-election, while facing competition from the NDC DCE Saborh, as well as other candidates associated with the former NDC MP Halutie. Bureaucrats at the Planning Unit and an AM indicated that, between 2013 and 2016, the two key political personalities in the district were not working together. Whereas the MP claimed she lobbied for the LEAP expansion, the DCE indicated that his application for expansion through the regional and national channels led to the LEAP expansions. The MP, using her networks in Parliament and the NDC national leadership, lobbied for more LEAP quotas for the district, with a view to targeting communities that supported her MP bid but not previously covered in the 2012 LEAP expansion. Saborh, as DCE, also used district structures to petition the LMS to extend more LEAP quotas to the district. He lobbied his contacts at the MoGCSP and other influential Sissala elites in the NDC at the national level to garner support for more LEAP communities and beneficiaries for the district in 2015, ahead of the NDC primaries.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷² Int. respondent SSAM03; SSAM14

¹⁷³ Int. respondent SSAM03; SSAM14

¹⁷⁴ Int. respondent SSBT05; SSAM09

In Wa West, on the other hand, bureaucrats and politicians emphasised that the absence of competitive pressures among elites in the district was the main driver of slower allocations of LEAP to the district.¹⁷⁵ An interview with a bureaucrat confirmed that

the NDC is the dominant party in the district. The majority of the people vote NDC and the Member of Parliament has always been around. The people always say that *te ja wo ye* [we are all one] ... (Int. respondent WWBT17, male, 6 years at District Assembly)

Key informants in the district revealed that because the NDC always wins in every election, the governing elites have adopted a long-term vision as there is little need to win votes using distribution of resources targeting individuals.¹⁷⁶

Bureaucrats confirmed that the awareness among the political leaders in the district, particularly the four-term MP, that they cannot be voted out led them to focus on securing infrastructure projects rather than LEAP and other social programmes.¹⁷⁷ According to one of the former DCEs,

we've been one of the largest beneficiaries of Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETFund) projects and Community-based Health Planning and Services (CHPS) compound projects from the Ghana Health Service, I must say ... we had over 19 three-unit classroom blocks for primary schools, and daycare centres, 17 CHPS compounds, 29 communities connected to the national electric grid and over ten borehole projects, and the establishment of communication masts to boost mobile connectivity for communities along the borders with Burkina Faso. (Int. respondent WWAM10, male, 12 years as elected political leader)

Interviews with political elites in the district revealed that the MP used his influence at the national level to ensure that the district was allocated many physical infrastructural projects.¹⁷⁸ The MP played a less active role in securing LEAP and other social-protection programmes in contrast to physical projects for the district.¹⁷⁹ Interviews with both politicians and bureaucrats showed that the MP deferred issues about LEAP to the DCE and other bureaucrats associated with the district at the national level. The former DCE confirmed that

at the initial stages, we did not involve the MP in lobbying for the LEAP. We did presentations to regional and national LEAP officials for them to increase the numbers of communities and beneficiaries. We also made the district Social Welfare Director do a

¹⁷⁵ Int. respondent WWAM06; WWAM10

¹⁷⁶ Int. respondent WWAM06

¹⁷⁷ Int. respondent WWBT15; WWBT17; WWAM27

¹⁷⁸ Int. respondent WWAM06; WWAM10

¹⁷⁹ Int. respondent WWAM07

letter to the regional and national directors of LEAP in Accra to request for more LEAP to the district. (Int. respondent WWAM06, male, 6 years as appointed political leader)

Bureaucrats revealed that the Wa West District was one of the first districts in the Upper West Region to benefit from LEAP.¹⁸⁰ As of 2009, the district had more LEAP households and communities than others in the region. Interviews with a senior SWCDO bureaucrat confirmed that

LEAP was piloted in the district in 2007. The previous NPP regime expanded the pilot LEAP programme in the district and allocated 17 LEAP communities in 2008. These communities were different from those that took part in the pilot programme. (Int. respondent WWBT12, male, 6 years as SWCDO)

Consequently, using formal channels to lobby for LEAP, the LMS expanded the number of beneficiaries in the existing communities rather than increasing the number of communities.¹⁸¹ Further interviews with other informants revealed that because of the engagement of local officials, the district received emergency rather than regular LEAP allocations to communities that suffered flooding.¹⁸² A former member of the SSC of the District Assembly reported that

ten communities in the district benefited from emergency LEAP in 2009 and 2013 when there was flooding in the communities on the banks of the White Volta.¹⁸³ (Int. respondent WWBT17, male, 6 years at District Assembly)

In 2016, the DCE led the process of lobbying for an increase in LEAP allocations using official channels. As the DCE pointed out,

we had to present the figures of the communities and households on LEAP *vis-à-vis* the poverty level and the requirements and qualifications for LEAP communities and beneficiaries. (Int. respondent WWAM06, male, 6 years as appointed political leader)

In addition, political leaders in the district enlisted the support of the MP to push for more LEAP allocations to the district.¹⁸⁴ This was after an independent candidate had emerged from the ranks

¹⁸⁰ Int. respondent WWBT12

¹⁸¹ Int. respondent WWBT12

¹⁸² Int. respondent WWCL11; WWBT12; WWAM06

¹⁸³ “The worst floods were recorded on 6 September 2009 in the White Volta basin, after a rise in water level as a result of heavy rainfall caused water from the Bagre dam to be spilled. Prior to this flood event, there had been experiences of some flooding in the White Volta basin in September 2007 and 2008. In the 2007 event, the three regions of Northern Ghana (the Upper West, Upper East and Northern Regions) were impacted by the floods, resulting in over 300,000 people being affected” (GWP-WA, 2016). <https://www.gwp.org/contentassets/072ea8d4a6aa463496c44bebd24b5cc9/ghana-ifm-needs-assessment-report-ghana-final.pdf>

¹⁸⁴ Int. respondent WWBT12

of the ruling NDC to contest the MP's fourth-term bid.¹⁸⁵ Local ruling party leaders impressed upon the NDC MP that he should use his connections in the ruling government to lend support to the lobbying process to ensure an increase in LEAP allocations from the LMS. As the DCE pointed out,

The MP was given a copy of the letter from the SWCDO to use his personal networks in Parliament and the LMS to follow up with the district SWCDO bureaucrat's letter advocating for more LEAP spaces for the district. (Int. respondent WWAM06, male, 6 years as appointed political leader)

Following the MP's and DCE's lobbying of national-level officials, the LMS allocated 30 LEAP communities to the district in 2016, which increased LEAP as a percentage of communities from 13% in 2008 to 24%, as shown in Figure 6.3. It also increased LEAP as a percentage of the population from 9% in 2008 to 23% in 2016, as shown in Figure 6.1.

Thus, despite the high numbers of poor persons in the Wa West District, the limited intensity of political competition in the district undermined the urge to use LEAP to woo voters. Rather, the political elites focused on providing resources to serve the needs of local communities as opposed to individuals. These local political factors influenced the limited role of more powerful political actors in the district in lobbying for LEAP in the initial period. The result of these patterns was the infrequent expansions of LEAP in the district between 2009 and 2016.¹⁸⁶

Overall, heightened threats of turnover and the shorter time horizons of the governing coalitions, interfacing with centre–local relations, and the political alignment of the local and national parties shaped the higher coverage of LEAP in Sissala East District. In comparison, limited threats of turnover and longer time horizons influenced the lower allocation and coverage in the Wa West District. The subsequent discussions highlight some of the ways in which local power configurations in the two districts shaped the degree of impartiality in targeting of communities and households within the Sissala East and Wa West Districts.

6.3 Geographical targeting of LEAP communities

This section presents the findings on political factors influencing less impartiality in the targeting of communities in Sissala East District compared to more impartiality in Wa West District.

¹⁸⁵ Int. respondent WWBT17; WWBT15

¹⁸⁶ Int. respondent WWAM06; WWAM10

The degree of impartiality in the community targeting of LEAP is closely shaped by the role played by the District LEAP Implementation Committee (DLIC). As explained in Chapter 4, the LEAP manual mandates the establishment of a DLIC, made up of key bureaucrats and non-state actors, to oversee the selection of communities and allocation of household quotas. These stakeholders must have deep insights into poverty and vulnerability in the district. The DLIC uses a set of poverty indicators in selecting the communities. Per the LEAP guidelines, the main factors for consideration in community targeting include a high incidence of diseases, child labour/child trafficking, geographical isolation, the level of National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) registration and the availability of/access to quality basic social services (MMYE, 2007a, p. 29).

In the Sissala East District, the bureaucrats indicated that the DLIC, as outlined in the LEAP operations manual, did not exist as an independent structure.¹⁸⁷ Interviews showed that during the pilot in 2008, the then Director of the SWCDO constituted the DLIC, with departmental heads serving on the committee as outlined in the LEAP guidelines. Even then, the DLIC did not function.¹⁸⁸ Instead, only selected AMs with close political and social connections with the then New Patriotic Party (NPP) DCE constituted themselves into an *ad hoc* committee for the selection of communities and the allocation of beneficiaries per community.¹⁸⁹ Similarly, between 2009 and 2016, when the NDC controlled political power at the national level, the DLIC did not exist as outlined in the LEAP guidelines. For the most part,

Political actors at the district rather than technocrats dominated the DLIC ... the DCE and a few politically connected Assembly Members, and Constituency Party Executives (CPEs) of the then ruling NDC associated with the DCE's faction made decisions about LEAP. (Int. respondent SSBT01, male, 12 years in SWCDO)¹⁹⁰

In the Wa West District, however, the bureaucrats indicated that the DLIC existed as an independent entity. As previously stated in Chapter 5, the DLIC was constituted with departmental heads. The District Chief Executive chaired the committee and the SWCDO officer served as the secretary. The MP retained some influence on the mandate of the committee, although he did not directly serve on the DLIC. The district administration provided some financial and logistical

¹⁸⁷ Int. respondent SSBT01

¹⁸⁸ Int. respondent SSBT01

¹⁸⁹ Int. respondent SSAM05; SSAM04; SSBT04

¹⁹⁰ Int. respondent SSBT01; SSAM02; SSAM05; SSCL05

support to the DLIC outside of the support from the LMS. This additional support enabled the DLIC to undertake monitoring of targeting events outside the usual mandate of identification and selection of communities, recruitment and training of members of communities to serve as enumerators, among others. A bureaucrat at the district summed up these sentiments about the DLIC:

the committee becomes active, when there is work for it to do, ... that one they will be meeting frequently, and you know, their work, comes when there is LEAP expansion ... but the assembly also provides fuel to the committee to go round to communities during registration of beneficiaries. (Int. respondent WWBT12, male, 5 years in SWCDO)

As per the LEAP manual, the DLIC selects LEAP communities from a list of poor communities using a number of indicators. These include pockets of high incidence of diseases, child labour/child trafficking, geographical isolation, adverse health conditions, the level of NHIS registration and the availability of/access to quality basic social services. In Sissala East District, interviews with political actors who acted as “DLIC” indicated a limited awareness of the criteria for the selection of LEAP communities. The majority reported that all communities in the district were poor and thus were equally eligible for LEAP.¹⁹¹ This view was inconsistent with the listed indicators for determining eligibility for LEAP communities.

Further, in the Sissala East District, given the absence of an “independent” DLIC as outlined in the LEAP manual, discussions with bureaucrats and assembly officials in the district showed that geographical targeting did not conform to the LEAP guidelines.¹⁹² Key-informant interviews with top bureaucrats¹⁹³ and social elites¹⁹⁴ in the district indicated that in the 2011 and 2012 targeting, the then NDC DCE, Alijata, selected communities for LEAP without recourse to technocrats at the SWCDO.¹⁹⁵ This was done in collaboration with AMs aligned to the local NDC and local NDC political party executives aligned to her faction.

Discussions with key bureaucrats indicated that Alijata ensured that only politically supportive communities continued to benefit from LEAP, without consideration of their need:¹⁹⁶

¹⁹¹ Int. respondent SSCL01; SSCL04; SSCL08

¹⁹² Int. respondent SSBT01; SSBT02; SSBT04; SSAM14

¹⁹³ Int. respondent SSBT01; SSBT02; SSBT04

¹⁹⁴ Int. respondent SSAM14

¹⁹⁵ Int. respondent SSBT04; SSAM02; SSAM05; SSCL05

¹⁹⁶ Int. respondent SSAM07; SSFGD10

LEAP was given to communities that provided 100% to the ruling NDC party and party candidates in internal party primaries. (Int. respondent SSBT04, female, 6 years at District Assembly)¹⁹⁷

Analysis of the polling station level election data of the Sissala East District indicates that LEAP expansion in 2011 targeted NDC communities, as 18 of such communities voted NDC in the 2008 elections, prior to their enrolment, and in the 2012 elections, after enrolment. Only seven of the communities enrolled had voted NPP in the 2012 election before enrolment. These patterns of distribution support suggestions that the NDC used LEAP to deepen support in their communities rather than to attract non-NDC communities or voters. Consequently, the majority of the poorest communities in the district, with smaller population distributions, were largely not covered by LEAP.¹⁹⁸ For instance, discussions with some political actors that supported Halutie's MP bid against Alijata indicated that

Alijata punished Jijen for not voting for her in the primaries. Jijen was left out in LEAP expansions in 2012. Alijata visited Jijen and told a durbar of chiefs in the community that the community would not be targeted for LEAP as a result of the failure of the community to support her candidature in party primaries. Bendei and Sentie, which supported her MP election bid, benefited from LEAP expansions in 2012. (Int. respondent SSCL05, male, local politician with 10 years as CLIC)¹⁹⁹

In the 2015 LEAP targeting, political elites targeted communities that voted NDC in previous elections.²⁰⁰ Analysis of the polling station level election data *vis-à-vis* the LEAP data shows that of the 36 communities targeted in the 2015 LEAP expansion in the district, 35 voted NDC in the 2012 elections before enrolment. Discussions with senior NDC party functionaries in the district indicated that the selection of LEAP communities ahead of the NDC primaries in the constituency reignited the conflict between the NDC DCE, the NDC MP and the NDC constituency party chairperson, the latter of whom was aligned to the Halutie faction.²⁰¹ Whereas Alijata (now as MP) insisted that LEAP could be targeted at communities that promised to support her re-election bid, Saborh, the new NDC DCE, held a contrary view. Saborh, who was a compromise candidate (as Alijata's proposed DCE had been rejected on three occasions),²⁰² insisted that LEAP was sent to

¹⁹⁷ Int. respondent SSBT04; SSCL05; SSAM12; SSAM04; SSTA01

¹⁹⁸ Int. respondent SSBT04; SSAM14

¹⁹⁹ Int. respondent SSCL05

²⁰⁰ Int. respondent SSAM14; SSBT02

²⁰¹ Alijata had not succeeded in facilitating the appointment of an NDC DCE allied to her interests against that of the faction of Halutie, the former NDC MP and Minister of State under the NDC I administration under the Mills administration (2009-2012) (SSBT02; SSBT05; SSAM05)

²⁰² "The NDC as a party in the Sissala East District is totally disunited and many thought Johnson Saborh could have been a remedy. It was not long after his confirmation that issues of his ambition to become the next MP came to light. This ambition of his made him to pitch himself to a camp as reported by the Chronicle Newspaper of

communities that he perceived could support his parliamentary candidate's bid. Thus, the LEAP communities were selected without consideration of the district poverty map.²⁰³ Further discussions with NDC party elites showed that Saborh, as DCE, targeted communities that were mainly allied to the former NDC MP's support base. Discussions with senior political leaders in the district showed that Saborh attempted to boost his grip of the local NDC leadership ahead of the NDC parliamentary primaries. This was in the run-up to his contesting against the incumbent MP, Alijata. Thus, Saborh's strategy of LEAP community targeting in 2015, in contrast to Alijata's, was largely informed by the internal party conflict within the NDC.²⁰⁴

In Wa West District, however, several interviews with DLIC members, who occupied bureaucratic positions, indicated strong awareness of the official indicators for the selection of communities.²⁰⁵ In contrast, interviews with AMs who represented the SSC on the DLIC indicated that

all communities in the district were poor and thus were in need of LEAP. (Int. respondent WWAM27, male, bureaucrat and Assembly Member with 16 years in the District Assembly)²⁰⁶

Interviews with bureaucrats and political elites in Wa West District showed that targeting of communities in 2008/09 was characterised by less impartiality. Political actors and bureaucrats indicated that during the pilot in 2008, when NPP controlled power at the national level but not in the district, LEAP community indicators did not always form the basis for the selection of communities. There were inconsistencies in the application of the LEAP geographical selection criteria, as the NPP, through its centrally appointed DCE, targeted mainly Wala ethnic group communities associated with their party, to the neglect of the poorer Birifor and Dagaaba communities associated with the NDC. The political and bureaucratic actors indicated that in 2008, most of the LEAP communities were located in the most accessible parts of the district associated with the NPP's Wala ethnic group, along the major highways. For instance, the NDC MP's community, Lassie, was not part of the LEAP communities but the district capital, Wechiau (also associated with the Wala ethnic group), was.²⁰⁷ Thus, the lack of alignment between centre and district in 2008 meant that the political configuration was divided at that time, with an NPP DCE,

03/10/14. The paper reported that Johnson Saborh fielded his candidates who now dominate the NDC executives in the constituency." (Fuseini, 2014) <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/features/The-First-Six-Months-Of-The-New-Sissala-East-DCE-339555>

²⁰³ Int. respondent SSAM09

²⁰⁴ Int. respondent SSAM01; SSAM09; SSAM12

²⁰⁵ Int. respondent WWAM6; WWAM10; WWBT12

²⁰⁶ Int. respondent WWAM27

²⁰⁷ Int. respondent WWBT12; WWAM07

despite it being an NDC stronghold. The result was the politicised allocation of LEAP to communities.

In the case of the 2016 LEAP community expansion (when the NDC controlled power at both the national and district levels), the geographical targeting of communities was characterised by more impartiality. This was because political considerations played a limited role in the targeting of LEAP communities. Interviews with members of the DLIC indicated that

poverty rankings of the communities in the district based on the 2010 population census of communities in the district, rather than political considerations, formed the basis for the selection of LEAP communities. Communities with higher poverty scales were targeted for LEAP. (Int. respondent WWAM06, male, 6 years as centrally appointed political leader)²⁰⁸

Discussions with political and bureaucratic elites confirmed the dominance of technocratic considerations in the selection of LEAP communities in 2016. The former leader of the General Assembly of the district revealed that

we found out later that some of the communities the DLIC selected in 2016 had never voted for the NDC. Yet we had to maintain them and include them on the list of LEAP communities. Some party officials requested that the “NPP” communities had to be changed and replaced with other communities known for voting for the NDC in previous elections. But the then DCE [Dasaana] insisted that as much as possible, CPEs should stay off the LEAP community targeting processes. (Int. respondent WWAM10, male, 12 years as elected political leader)²⁰⁹

An interview with the then DCE also confirmed that

if you have 150 poor communities out of 227 and you must select only 30 communities, then you may look at equitable distribution because as DCE you superintend over the whole district. So, you must look at equitability and fairness. The people-minded politicians will say that it is OK for LEAP to go to only communities that voted for them, forgetting that unfair distribution only deepens the gulf between them and communities that do not vote for them. For me, I consulted the MP on the distribution of communities, but I also ensured that the assessment of communities was fair, and I can stand on my feet and defend the selection of the communities. (Int. respondent WWAM06, male, 6 years as centrally appointed political leader)²¹⁰

²⁰⁸ Int. respondent WWAM10

²⁰⁹ Int. respondent WWAM10

²¹⁰ Int. respondent WWAM06

Key political actors in the district indicated that the then NDC DCE, Dasaana, who was from the minority Wala ethnic group and had ambitions of becoming a future successor to the Birifor NDC MP Yieleh Chireh, decided to ensure a more balanced selection of the communities from all the Area Councils. Some key political actors in the district confirmed that Dasaana mandated the DLIC to propose a list of potential communities. The DCE convinced the entire DLIC and AMs on the SSC that, as much as possible, poor inaccessible communities needed to benefit from LEAP. In addition to the then DCE (Dasaana) seeking a consensus from the DLIC and the leadership of the SSC of the Wa West District Assembly, discussions with local political actors showed that the DCE sought support from the NDC MP, Yieleh Chireh, who had no formal mandate in LEAP implementation.²¹¹ According to these informants,

because the DCE and MP were on good terms, they put their heads together and reviewed the list of LEAP communities to ensure balance. Any time the MP lobbied for programmes at the national level, he passed it through the DCE to also communicate to the District Assembly and the local NDC party to ensure that most deserving communities got the projects. The DCE therefore ensured that the MP made relevant input to all district programmes, including the list of LEAP communities. (Int. respondent WWBT12, male, 5 years in SWCDO)²¹²

More discussions with political actors and bureaucrats at the Wa West District confirmed the elaborate consultations between the MP and DCE in approving the DLIC's list of communities.²¹³ In the case of the 2016 LEAP geographical expansion, these sessions between the DCE and the MP ensured that the 30 LEAP communities represented the poorer communities in the inaccessible parts of the district.²¹⁴ Thus, the presence of alignment between centre and district between 2009 and 2016 meant that the political configuration in the district was more balanced, as the district was the national ruling party's stronghold. The result of this was more impartial allocation and targeting of communities.

In sum, the local configuration of power in the two districts, sometimes interacting with political mis/alignment in terms of which party was in power at the national level, influenced the degree of impartiality in the LEAP community targeting. In Sissala East District, the enhanced threats of turnover incentivised local political elites to sideline the technocrats and capture the process,

²¹¹ Int. respondent WWAM27; WWAM10

²¹² Int. respondent WWBT12; WWAM27

²¹³ Int. respondent WWAM27; WWBT; WWAM07

²¹⁴ Int. respondent WWAM27

effectively using LEAP as “pork” to reward loyal communities. In contrast, the limited threat of electoral turnover enabled a more technocratic approach to community targeting that subverted opportunities for political capture.

6.4 Household targeting within LEAP communities

This section examines variation in household targeting in the two districts. The study found variation in the impartiality of household targeting in the Sissala East and Wa West Districts, consistent with initial expectations. Analysis of the key-informant interviews at the village level in the two districts confirmed that the heightened threats of turnover and the short time horizons of the local elites resulted in less impartiality in Sissala East District. Limited threats of turnover and longer time horizons of the governing coalitions, on the other hand, ensured more impartiality in targeting in Wa West District.

A key feature of LEAP beneficiary targeting, as stated in Chapter 4, is the use of a combination of community-based targeting (CBT) and proxy means testing (PMT). The CBT process involves the appointment of a small group of key community actors with knowledge of household conditions in the community to agree on a list of poor households for consideration for LEAP. This small group constitutes the Community LEAP Implementation Committee (CLIC). Membership of CLICs is largely informed by the community leadership, and often includes AMs, Unit Committee members and TAs based on their knowledge of and commitment to voluntary activities in the district. The CLIC undertakes targeting of households in LEAP communities using the list of indicators set out in the LEAP manual. In addition to CBT, the targeting of LEAP beneficiaries at the community level requires the use of PMT, which involves the assessment of households with regard to their poverty status (Monchuk, 2014). The LEAP manual mandates that households identified through the CBT are assessed using proxies believed to be correlated with household poverty status on a detailed questionnaire (MMYE, 2007a; Wodon, 2012). The LMS guidelines recommend that enumerators appointed by the DLIC administer standard questionnaires to households proposed by CLICs. The data from households targeted by the community-based process is entered and filtered in an attempt to rank all households to ensure that most eligible households are selected from the list for enrolment on the LEAP programme (MMYE, 2007a; Wodon, 2012).

In Sissala East District, CPEs and AMs aligned to the governing faction in the ruling NDC (instead of the DLIC and Community Social Welfare Officers, or CSWOs) identified persons favourable to their party interest to constitute the CLICs in all LEAP communities.²¹⁵ For the most part, these political actors held various political positions at the branch and polling station levels of the party, and sometimes acted as polling agents for particular political leaders during internal party primaries.²¹⁶ These party officials incorporated the CLIC as part of the ruling party structures and adopted LEAP as one of the party's mechanisms to address the welfare concerns of local NDC party loyalists.²¹⁷ Interviews with CLICs showed that most CLIC members were mainly illiterate farmers and traders, and not health and education service workers and volunteers, as recommended by the LEAP manual.²¹⁸

Knowledge and awareness of indicators for the identification of eligible households formed a critical component of the mandate of CLICs. In Sissala East District, CLIC members demonstrated limited knowledge of categories of persons qualified for LEAP. The CLICs indicate that “all households in the district are poor and thus should benefit from LEAP”, irrespective of their poverty status.²¹⁹ Given the limited knowledge of indicators for targeting LEAP households, beneficiary targeting largely did not conform to the dictates of the LEAP manual, as politically connected actors influenced beneficiary targeting in almost all cases. For instance, under the NPP in 2008, NPP polling station executives who also doubled as CLIC members identified poor households sympathetic to the NPP party in these communities for enrolment on the LEAP programme. This was done to reward poor party members for their loyalty to the party, but also to demonstrate to Peoples' National Convention (PNC) members, who were in an alliance with the NPP, that they should continue their support of the NPP in order to benefit equally from this “old age pension”.²²⁰ In 2011/12, discussions with community stakeholders, such as Unit Committee members and non-beneficiaries, indicated that CLIC members ensured that their preferred households got enrolled on LEAP.²²¹ Further discussions indicated that NDC local party executives and foot soldiers associated with Alijata

²¹⁵ Int. respondent SSBT01; SSTA01; SSAM04; SSAM14

²¹⁶ Int. respondent SSAM10; SSAM09; SSAM13; SSAM02; SSAM12

²¹⁷ Int. respondent SSTA01; SSAM03; SSAM09

²¹⁸ Int. respondent SSCL05; SSCL06; SSCL03; SSCL04

²¹⁹ Int. respondent SSBT01; SSAM02; SSCL01

²²⁰ Int. respondent SSBT01; SSAM01

²²¹ Int. respondent SSAM06; SSAM10; SSAM12; SSAM14

handpicked beneficiaries based on their perception of their political influence in society. If they realised that you are an influential party member and that you have the capacity to influence people to do the voting, they will come and select you. This led to the vulnerable persons losing out in the selection of the programme. (Int. respondent SSAM04, male, local politician with 12 years in District Assembly)²²²

Beyond identifying influential party members for LEAP, discussions with local community actors indicated that Alijata, as DCE, visited communities and participated in LEAP household identification. Most senior bureaucrats and AMs from Bendei, Nmanduano and Vamboi recounted that Alijata personally visited their communities. They indicated that he was active in selecting vulnerable party members and promised to advocate for an increase in the proportion of LEAP beneficiaries in communities when voted in as MP in the 2012 parliamentary elections.²²³

Interviews with senior bureaucrats showed that the 2015 beneficiary targeting followed a similar trajectory to that of 2011/12. Local NDC party executives aligned to the DCE faction facilitated the appointment of some NDC branch executives to form the CLIC in LEAP communities. This process ensured that a majority of CLIC members were aligned to the DCE.²²⁴ In addition, the DLIC assisted the nomination of enumerators who had strong political and familial links to NDC-constituted party executives associated with the then DCE faction in the local NDC party, against the then NDC MP's faction.²²⁵

In the Wa West District, in contrast, the limited threats of turnover and the longer time horizons of the governing coalitions shaped the more rule-based household targeting of LEAP. Discussions with stakeholders showed that during the 2008 LEAP pilot, when the NPP controlled national power but the district had an NDC MP complementing an NPP DCE, the directors of the SWCDO formed CLICs in the LEAP communities without the involvement of the DLIC as required by the LEAP procedures. The majority of the CLIC members had personal relations with SWCDO officers and/or Unit Committee members and AMs.²²⁶ Given that these CLICs, formed in 2008, were mainly persons with private relations with the SWCDO officials, most became dysfunctional following the transfer of these officials from the district. Subsequent to the collapse of the CLICs in most LEAP communities, interviews with senior SWCDO bureaucrats indicated that they had

²²² Int. respondent SSAM04; SSAM09; SSAM14

²²³ Int. respondent SSAM02; SSAM06; SSAM12; SSBT02

²²⁴ Int. respondent SSAM06; SSAM10; SSAM12; SSAM14

²²⁵ Int. respondent SSBT01; SSAM02; SSTA02; SSAM12

²²⁶ Int. respondent WWAM06; WWAM10; WWCL21

to pick local bureaucrats such as health volunteers and/or education supervisors in each community, due to a directive from the LMS to replace non-performing CLICs with community focal persons (CFPs) prior to the 2016 expansion.²²⁷ Further interviews with LEAP bureaucrats at the national level indicated that the appointment of these volunteers was to improve the sustainability of community LEAP structures beyond the activities of household targeting and delivery of grants.²²⁸

The CLICs/CFPs in most LEAP communities in the Wa West District displayed mixed familiarity with the criteria for selection of households. Interviews revealed that whereas most of the CLICs that participated in the pilot LEAP communities demonstrated faint knowledge of the indicators/categories of beneficiaries, the CFPs that participated in the 2016 LEAP beneficiary targeting demonstrated strong familiarity with the categories of LEAP beneficiaries set out in the LEAP guidelines.²²⁹ Discussions with bureaucrats and political elites revealed that intense collaboration between the NDC MP, the NDC DCE, the NDC local community executives and AMs aligned to the NDC ensured that CFPs undertook LEAP household targeting based on the LEAP indicators and without much interference from NDC sympathisers in the communities. The greater impartiality that characterised household targeting was mainly attributed to the strong influence of the technocratic DLIC in the appointment of local bureaucrats, such as circuit supervisors and community health volunteers, as CFPs. These replaced the non-functional CLICs. These bureaucrats acting as CFPs were mainly influential but non-partisan persons in their communities. They were also the more educated members of their communities compared to the Unit Committee members, local party executives and foot soldiers. This capacity enabled them to resist demands from NDC local political elites, who insisted on registering their members on LEAP ahead of persons who the CFPs had identified. A CFP recounted an experience in one of the communities where the AM tried to impose a list of persons on the CFP:

One assembly woman brought names to me through one of the community members and she insisted I should work with that list as the poor persons who should be on LEAP. I just threw the paper somewhere and I followed the protocol for targeting which we had been taught at the training. When I was leaving that part of the community, the Assembly Member summoned me and asked why I had not complied with her list of households. She told me she would report me to the district officers. (Int. respondent WWCL02, male, 4 years as CLIC)

²²⁷ Int. respondent WWBT12

²²⁸ Int. respondent LMS01; LMS02

²²⁹ Int. respondent WWCL24; WWCL29; WWAM14

Interviews with other CFPs and district bureaucrats confirmed the innumerable threats from local influential and party persons, whose attempts to interfere in LEAP household targeting were resisted. According to the senior LEAP bureaucrat,

some of them [political leaders] will give empty threats and it will scare you, if you are alone, and they threaten you till you give in to their demands. But I often told them that the CFPs had been given express instructions from the SWCDO office and the DCE to follow the guidelines in targeting households. (Int. respondent WWBT12, male, 5 years in SWCDO)

These threats resulted from the negative perceptions of party foot soldiers that LEAP should be given as a reward. Discussions with the Presiding Member and former DCE revealed that

some NDC people felt that if you are affiliated to the ruling government then you should benefit from LEAP. (Int. respondent WWAM10, male, 12 years as elected political leader)

In the view of the NDC party members, the NPP shared LEAP with its loyalists in 2008 and thus the NDC executives in the district needed to appreciate their longstanding support of the NDC party by freely giving LEAP to its members in the local communities.²³⁰

Nonetheless, the fact that district bureaucrats and CFPs had been assured support from the political actors to use the LEAP guidelines in the targeting of households enabled them to stand up to persons who tried to usurp their role in the targeting of LEAP households in 2016. Consequently, whenever foot soldiers or party executives reported CFPs to the DCE or the MP, they often sided with the bureaucrats and urged the party workers to respect the rules. For instance, the senior SWCDO bureaucrat recounted that

there was a guy who brought a letter to demand inclusion on LEAP and there was no attachment to the document. I asked him to take it back and include the attachment and resubmit the letter. He took the letter and rather sent it to NDC DCE, and the DCE called me [bureaucrat] to come and explain my side of the issue. I picked the letter, I mentioned in front of the DCE that he [the applicant] did not add the attachment. The DCE subsequently informed him to go and do the necessary attachments before his application could be considered. (Int. respondent WWBT12, male, 5 years in SWCDO)

The former presiding member confirmed that

²³⁰ Int. respondent WWAM10

we interacted with our senior officers at the RCC, who said we should ensure the poor people in the district should benefit from LEAP. They told us that as much as possible we [political actors] needed to stay off LEAP household targeting, because it would not yield any long-term benefit to the party. If we assessed the NPP targeting in 2008, it did not help them [NPP]. It rather divided their members and executives. (Int. respondent WWAM10, male, 12 years as elected political leader)

The application of this fiat for political actors to provide autonomy for bureaucrats in household targeting was not without consequences. For instance, a political actor further argued that, in 2016,

in some communities they [people] refused even to vote when their names were not captured on the LEAP programme and they learnt that hundreds of people from their neighbouring communities like Vieri were going for their money while they were neglected after their loyal support to the ruling NDC party. (Int. respondent WWCL02, male, 4 years as CLIC)

Furthermore, local executives and AMs who enforced the DCE's directives for party people to desist from interfering in household targeting were voted out in the NDC party's branch and constituency elections as punishment for siding with the local CFPs/bureaucrats against the party foot soldiers.

Generally, political elites, bureaucrats and beneficiaries in various communities in the Wa West District affirmed that the 2016 LEAP household targeting was markedly different from that of 2008. Whereas discussions with several CFPs and other community stakeholders indicated that CFPs used the LEAP categorisations in the selection of beneficiaries in the 2016 expansion, discussants at the various FGDs attested to CFPs complying with the guidelines for beneficiary identification.

Finally, in respect of the application of the PMT processes, discussions with key informants in the Sissala East District revealed that the politically constituted "DLIC" recruited politically connected persons as enumerators to undertake questionnaire administration and the listing of names of party members aligned to Alijata's faction at the community level against the former NDC MP Halutie's faction. This act was in contravention of the LEAP guidelines, which required the Directorate of the SWCDO, in concert with the DLIC, to recruit enumerators from the district to assess potential households using a standard questionnaire issued by the LMS. Following the limited scope of SWCDO bureaucrats in the appointment of enumerators in Sissala East District, most of the enumerators were not thoroughly trained in the administration of the PMT questionnaire. Given their limited knowledge of the PMT process, the enumerators used a "light"

targeting approach across several communities in the 2015 targeting, which accounted for the oversampling of beneficiaries. For instance,

in Bendei and Vamboi, husbands, wives and dependent children were registered separately so each person could receive LEAP individually, leaving other vulnerable households within the communities grossly under-represented. (Int. respondent SSAM04, male, 8 years elected leader and 2 years appointed political head of the district)

These politically connected enumerators not only oversampled from households, but also attempted to profit from the administration of the PMT questionnaires. Interviews in some communities revealed that in the 2015 household targeting, some enumerators collected money from persons who had not been selected by the CLICs and who administered questionnaires to them.²³¹ Further, local enumerators, in collaboration with the local NDC Party Executives acting as CLICs, often coached party members on the best responses to the assessment questionnaires.²³²

In Wa West District, on the other hand, interviews with beneficiaries in many of the 2008 pilot LEAP communities indicated that officials of SWCDO, rather than enumerators, tasked the CLIC to compile the list of widows/widowers and households with orphans and they were subsequently invited to the registration centres for enrolment on the programme without any assessment.²³³ In 2016, however, the majority of beneficiaries attested that

there were some young people [university graduates outside the office of the SWCDO] who came here [village] so the people could explain their poverty situation and they will register them on the programme. So, everybody who was selected based on the category ... an old-age person, persons with disability like blind persons and pregnant women ... came for the registration [assessment] ... But some of them they registered but their names didn't come. (Int. respondent WWCL23, female, 2 years as CLIC)²³⁴

Yet in the 2016 expansion, discussants of the FGDs recounted that, on many occasions, CFPs had to push away non-qualified persons who also presented themselves for enumeration.²³⁵ In a few cases, however, beneficiaries reported that CFPs could not ward off non-qualified persons because they were presented by the community NDC party officials.²³⁶ In some other instances, local NDC party executives, and some AMs, wrote down the names and voter identification numbers of their

²³¹ Int. respondent SSBT01; SSBT02; SSAM12

²³² Int. respondent Int. respondent SSBT02; SSBT01

²³³ Int. respondent WWCL21; WWAM10; WWFGD02; WWCL13

²³⁴ Int. respondent WWCL23

²³⁵ Int. respondent WWAM14; FGDWW2; FGD WW04

²³⁶ Int. respondent WWB03; WWCL02

ethnic group members before the arrival of enumerators in their communities. These anomalies in the 2016 targeting, lower than the cases in 2008, often resulted in people from the non-LEAP communities being enumerated ahead of those poor persons identified by CFPs in the LEAP communities.²³⁷

The above evidence highlights the ways in which local power configurations shaped LEAP beneficiary targeting in the Sissala East and Wa West Districts. The above discussions point to the influence of enhanced threats of turnover and the shorter time horizons of the governing coalitions on the less impartial LEAP household targeting in the Sissala East District, leading to use of LEAP beneficiary targeting as a tool for political manipulation and patronage. At the same time, limited threats of turnover and the longer time horizons of the local governing coalitions shaped more impartial LEAP household targeting in the Wa West District.

6.5 Chapter summary

This chapter has explored the politics of LEAP implementation in two districts in the Upper West Region of Ghana. The NDC's dominance of politics in the region influenced regional-level elite coalitional relations. Yet variations in local configurations of power within the region, coupled with issues of ethnic fragmentation and contestations about the legitimacy of traditional institutions, shaped the contemporary state performance.

The chapter has examined in detail the drivers of variation in LEAP performance in two districts with comparable patterns of state formation but divergent power configurations. Holding state formation across the two districts constant, the study has proposed that variations in power configuration may explain any unevenness in LEAP performance in the Upper West Region.

The chapter has found less impartiality in the LEAP geographical, community and household targeting in the Sissala East District. Enhanced threats of electoral turnover in the Sissala East District underpinned the swifter expansion but increased non-adherence to the targeting guidelines. In comparison, the study has found more impartiality in targeting in the Wa West District. The limited threats of turnover that characterised elite relations in the Wa West District influenced

²³⁷ Int. respondent WWAM06; WWB03

infrequent expansions of LEAP but stringent and transparent application of the LEAP targeting guidelines in the allocation and selection of communities and households.

Drawing on the above expositions, centre–local relations and political mis/alignment between the local and national party also influenced variations in LEAP performance in the Sissala East and Wa West Districts. The personal ambitions of local state officials and the personal political strategies of some district-level politicians constituted supplemental but expected local factors that shaped the local configuration of power, with implications for impartiality in targeting.

CHAPTER 7

Political configurations and LEAP distribution in southern Ghana

7.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the politics of implementing the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) programme in Ghana's Central Region. It focuses on two districts, Gomoa West and Assin South, which share a similar history of state formation but differ in terms of the local configuration of power. The analysis explores whether the local configuration of power has shaped the degree of impartiality in targeting LEAP districts, communities and households.

The Central Region has a history of the presence of hierarchical social organisations in the precolonial era and long experience with colonial engagement (Hymer, 1970). This has bequeathed the region with a legacy of physical infrastructural development and economy far in excess of regions in the north (Howard, 1978). Notwithstanding the better record of reducing poverty in the region than those in the northern parts of the country, there exist variations in poverty incidence across districts, particularly between inland districts and their coastal counterparts (Ghana Statistical Service, 2018).

In contemporary electoral terms, the Central Region is a “swing” region (Morrison, 2004; Morrison & Woo Hong, 2006), with both the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP) having a good chance of success in elections. Despite the swings that characterise politics in the region as a whole, variations exist at district levels, as demonstrated in the cases of Gomoa West and Assin South. In Gomoa West, for instance, no political party has completely dominated politics since 2000. The NDC and NPP have attained 49% and 47%, respectively, of the presidential vote on average between then and 2016.²³⁸ In the Assin South District, on the other hand, the NPP has dominated politics since 2000, winning an average of 59% of the presidential vote across five elections, underscoring the limited threats of turnover and the longer time horizons of the governing coalitions.²³⁹ Yet a review of the voting patterns demonstrated in parliamentary elections, especially between 2008 and 2012, showed a narrowing

²³⁸ Author's analysis of Ghana Electoral Commission presidential elections results from 2000 to 2016. <https://ec.gov.gh/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/2000-PRESIDENTIAL-ELECTION-RESULTS-UPDATE.pdf>

²³⁹ Author's analysis of Ghana Electoral Commission parliamentary election results from 2000 to 2016. <https://ec.gov.gh/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/2000-Parliamentary-Details.pdf>

of the gap between the NPP and NDC candidates, indicating enhanced threats of turnover within that period.

The pronounced presence of hierarchical Traditional Authorities (TAs) in the region adds a further level of complexity to local politics, with chiefs becoming entwined within both partisan politics and administrative governance at district level (see MacLean, 2002; Boone, 2003; Crook, 2005, 2007). It is these complex configurations of power within the region that this chapter explores in respect of LEAP implementation in Gomoa West and Assin South Districts, with reference to variations in the process of allocating LEAP quotas to districts and targeting LEAP to communities and households.

As outlined in Chapter 3, the framework guiding this thesis has identified state formation and the local configuration of power as drivers of state performance. To test how the local configuration of power – encompassing both political competition and the relative cohesion of local political elites – has influenced LEAP performance, the study holds state formation constant across the two districts. Thus, the framework leads to the proposition that governing coalitions faced with heightened threats of electoral turnover, fragmentation and shorter time horizons are associated with less impartiality in targeting. In contrast, governing coalitions faced with limited threats of electoral turnover, cohesion and longer time horizons are associated with more impartiality in targeting.

Given that the threat of turnover in Gomoa West is higher than in Assin South, *ceteris paribus*, the expectation for LEAP is less impartiality in targeting in the former district. The findings presented in this chapter suggests that impartiality, understood here in terms of whether the rules for selecting districts/communities/households were applied or not, was higher in Assin South compared to Gomoa West, where the allocation of LEAP was more overtly politicised for partisan gain. However, the coverage rates, in terms of LEAP communities and households, were higher in Gomoa West than in Assin South. The local power configurations and the associated threats of turnover, interacting with connections between local ruling party elites and their national-level patrons, constituted the main drivers of the variation in LEAP targeting in these two districts.

The chapter is organised as follows. The next section presents an analysis of the geographical targeting of LEAP districts and the political drivers of variation in allocation of quotas by the

national government following lobbying by district elites. The third and fourth sections analyse the selection of communities and households, respectively, and the political strategies that underpin variations in impartiality in targeting. The final section situates the findings of the chapter *vis-à-vis* the conceptual framework guiding the study.

7.2 Geographical targeting of districts

This section charts the allocation of quotas of LEAP places to Gomoa West and Assin South Districts. Specifically, the analysis explores how LEAP places are allocated to districts and the political drivers shaping lobbying for LEAP in the two districts. The study finds the higher allocations of LEAP to the Gomoa West District to be swayed by pressure from the district (and the government) compared to Assin South. The local configurations of power and the intersecting relations between local and national ruling party politicians constituted the drivers of variation in the allocation of quotas by national governments.

As previously indicated in Chapter 6, domestic political calculations and the incentives generated by Ghana's competitive political system shaped the geographical allocation of districts (see Jones et al., 2009; Abdulai, 2020). Reflecting this context, demands from District Chief Executives (DCEs) and Members of Parliament (MPs), who see LEAP as a means of delivering some 'pork' to their constituents, rather than the application of technocratic advice, characterised the expansions of the programme. Consequently, lobbying for LEAP using formal and informal channels influenced variations in allocations to districts in the Central Region of Ghana.

The poverty incidence in the Central Region is similar in the Gomoa West and Assin South Districts, as illustrated in Table 7.1 below. The Gomoa West District has a population of 132,833, of which 29,967 (constituting 22.6%) are classified as poor persons (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014b; GWDA, 2017, 2018). In contrast, there are 102,069 people in the Assin South District, of which 24,066, constituting 23.6%, are characterised as poor persons (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014a; ASDA, 2018a).

Both the Gomoa West and Assin South Districts have benefitted from more LEAP quotas than they should, given their relatively low poverty levels. There are 974 and 1,033 LEAP households, respectively, and approximately 3,788 and 4,132 individual beneficiaries, respectively, in these districts, as demonstrated in Table 7.1 below. Regarding communities, there are 38 LEAP

communities out of the 78 communities in the Gomoa West District.²⁴⁰ In contrast, there are 53 LEAP communities out of the 170 communities in the Assin South District.²⁴¹

Table 7.1: A summary of the poverty and LEAP indicators

Indicators	National	Central	Gomoa West	Assin South
Population	24658823	2113763	132833	102069
Number of households	5467136	526764	32715	23200
Number of poor persons	6800000	415143	29967	24066
Number of LEAP households	213043	12188	947	1033
Number of LEAP Individuals	852172	48752	3883	4545
Number of communities	18646	3500	78	170
Number of LEAP communities	6760	330	38	53
Poverty Incidence (%)	23	19.6	22.6	23.6
Extreme Poverty Incidence (%)	8	2.1		
Level of inequality (%)	42	42	39.2	39.4
LEAP households as % of number of households	4	2.3	2.9	4.5
LEAP Individuals as % of population	3	2.31	2.92	4.45
LEAP individual as % of poor persons	13	11.7	13	18.9
LEAP as percentage (%) of communities	36	9.4	48.7	31.2

Source: Author's field data, 2018.

Figures 7.1 and 7.2 show LEAP allocations as a percentage of the population and of poor persons in the Gomoa West and Assin South Districts. The analysis shows that LEAP households as a percentage of the population in Gomoa West (2.9%) were lower than in Assin South (4.5%). Further reviews showed that LEAP households as a percentage of poor persons were lower in Gomoa West (15.4%) compared to Assin South (27%). Thus, though the distribution of poor people was relatively similar across the two districts, the rate of household allocation of LEAP to Gomoa West was relatively lower compared to Assin South.

²⁴⁰ The number of LEAP communities in both districts have been increased since the time of the fieldwork in 2018

²⁴¹ The district also received ten emergency LEAP communities in 2010, following the flooding of some low-lying areas of the district

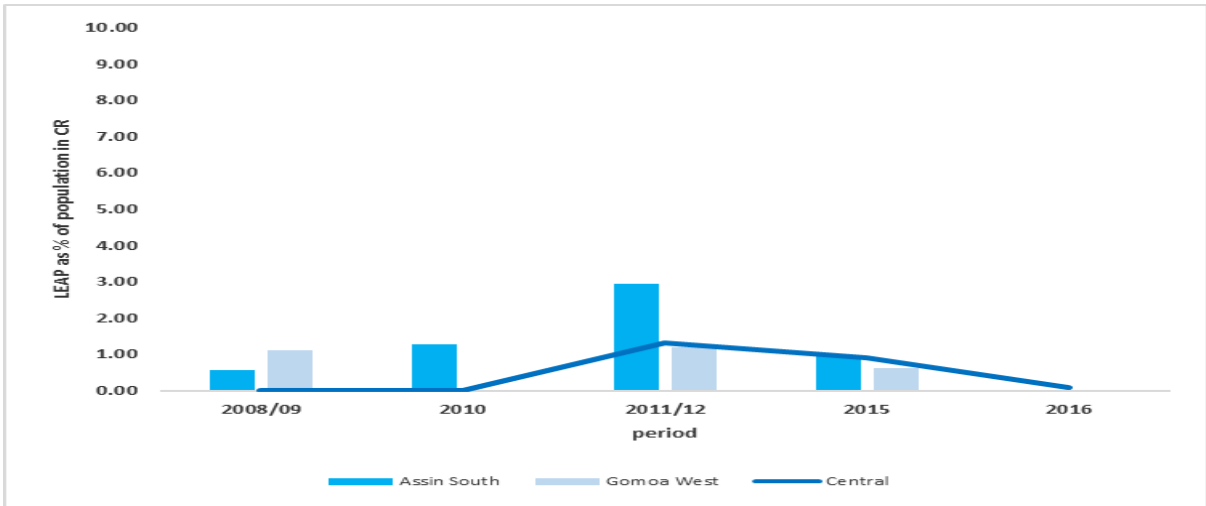


Figure 7.1: The increase in LEAP households as a percentage of the population in the Assin South and Gomoa West Districts, respectively.

Source: LMS data, 2018.

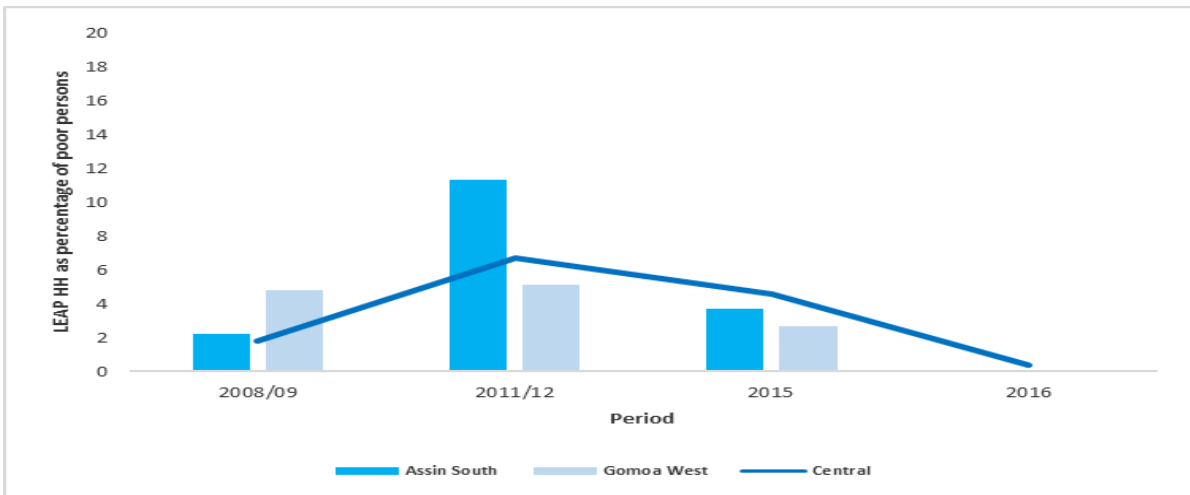


Figure 7.2: The increase in LEAP households as a percentage of poor persons in the Assin South and Gomoa West Districts

Source: Author's calculations based on LMS data.

Figure 7.3 also illustrates LEAP as a percentage of the communities in the Gomoa West and Assin South Districts. An analysis of the LEAP community allocations indicates that the LEAP communities as a percentage of the number of communities in Gomoa West constituted 48.7%, while in Assin South they constituted 31.2%.

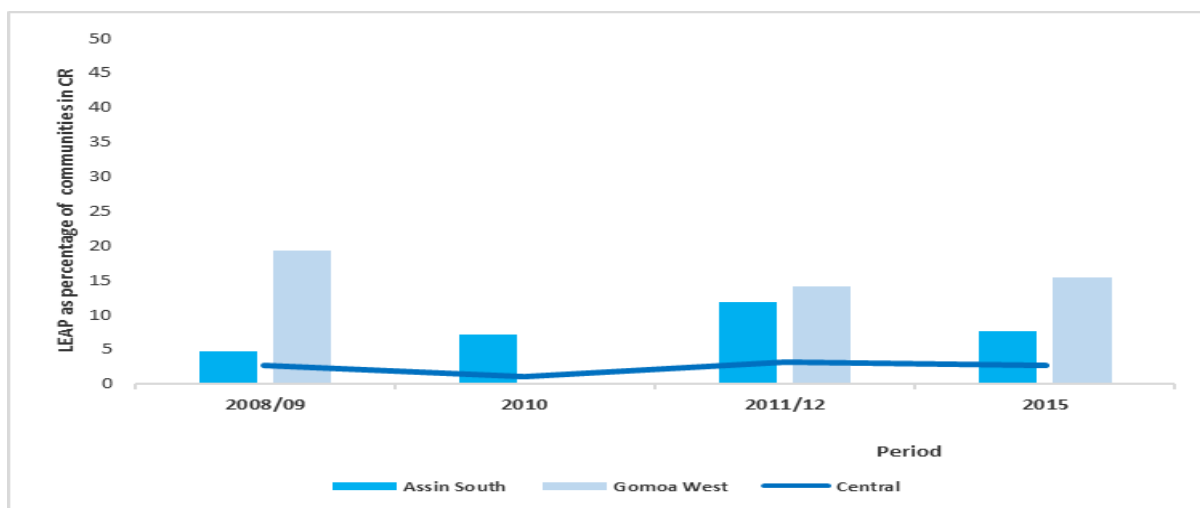


Figure 7.3: The percentage of the LEAP community coverage per number of communities in the Assin South and Gomoa West Districts.

Source: Author’s calculations based on LMS 2018 field data.

Figures 7.1–7.3 show that the percentage of LEAP communities was higher in Gomoa West compared to Assin South. Yet the allocations of households display higher LEAP as a percentage of the population and of poor persons in Assin South compared to Gomoa West. The patterns of allocation of LEAP to these two districts illustrate how local power configurations, interlinked with the strength of connections between local ruling party elites with national politicians, shape the lobbying and distribution of LEAP in the Central Region. The section below elucidates in precise detail the political drivers of the allocation of LEAP to the Gomoa West and Assin South Districts.

In Gomoa West, contestations among local NDC and NPP members largely shaped lobbying and advocacy for an increase in LEAP communities and households. The heightened threats of electoral turnover and shorter time horizons of the ruling elite coalitions in this politically competitive district underlined the acrimonious approaches to lobbying for LEAP. This involved using formal and informal contacts at the national and regional levels. Interviews with bureaucrats and politicians revealed that, in 2008, the NPP MP, who faced competition from the then NPP DCE Joyce Aidoo and the NPP young professional, Edwin Abakah Williams in internal party primaries,²⁴² took advantage of the alignment of the local and the national party to lobby for LEAP communities. This was despite the relatively lower incidence of poverty in the district. The MP, Joe Hackman, lobbied for LEAP through the powerful Parliamentary Committee on Defence and

²⁴² <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Eight-NPP-members-to-contest-Gomoa-West-Primaries-38663>

Interior, where he served as vice-chairperson.²⁴³ Faced with immense local competition, the MP used his influence and personal connections to secure an allocation of 15 LEAP communities to the district ahead of the 2008 competitive elections.²⁴⁴

In the case of the 2011/12 expansions, which occurred ahead of the NDC internal party primaries and the competitive elections in 2012, for instance, the then former NDC Central Region Minister Ama Benyiwa-Doe, working together with the then NDC MP Francis Arthur, collaborated to lobby for more LEAP communities for the district. This action was taken as part of measures to consolidate the foothold of the NDC in the district after snatching the parliamentary seat from the NPP in the 2008 elections.

In the 2015 expansion, the NDC DCE Theophilus Aidoo Mensah lobbied separately for LEAP communities and household allocations without the involvement of the NDC MP Francis Arthur and the then influential NDC former Regional Minister Ama Benyiwa-Doe. The two-term NDC DCE, who wanted to contest with the NDC MP in the internal party primaries despite opposition from the local NDC executives, made several cases for an increased allocation of LEAP communities and households using official contacts at the LEAP Management Secretariat (LMS) and the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP).²⁴⁵ At the same time, the then NDC MP (who had gained considerable influence in Parliament as the leader of the Central Region caucus of the NDC) actively petitioned for more LEAP communities, as he was up for re-election in the internal party primaries. The NDC MP followed up for more LEAP communities at the ministerial level, using his parliamentary clout to secure 12 additional LEAP communities.²⁴⁶ Hence, the intensified threats of turnover and shorter time horizons of the ruling coalitions in the Gomoa West District informed the uncoordinated approaches to lobbying for LEAP expansions without focusing on the potential impacts of those LEAP expansions on households in the district. Thus, though lobbying by local political actors resulted in national authorities allocating more LEAP communities to the district (49% of communities), especially ahead of the internal party primaries, only a few households in these communities actually qualified for LEAP. Consequently, as a proportion of the poor persons in Gomoa West, LEAP covered 13% by the end of 2016, similar to the Central Region average, as seen in Figure 7.2 above.

²⁴³ Daily Graphic, Friday 9 December 2005

²⁴⁴ Int. respondent GWBT06

²⁴⁵ Int. respondent GWAM02; GWAM06; GWBT06

²⁴⁶ Int. respondent GWMP02; GWAM02; GWAM04; GWAM06; GWBT01

In the politically dominant Assin South District, on the other hand, relatively limited inter-party competition but intense intra-party contestations and the associated shorter time horizons of the intra-party elites in this district shaped the process of lobbying for LEAP. This resulted in allocations of higher numbers of communities and households within existing LEAP communities.

In 2008, cooperation between the then NPP MP Dominic Fobih and NPP DCE Ms Millicent Alice Kuranchie, taking advantage of the alignment of power between the local and national party, lobbied for the extension of LEAP to this inland district. The MP, who had doubled as minister for the portfolios of education, environment and forestry, among others, used his ministerial clout in the then ruling NPP government to demand an extension of more infrastructure projects for the district and for social resources including LEAP in his constituency. As the constituency organiser of the NPP revealed,

as for projects you can't take it away from Prof. Fobih as the MP. He made a mark in every community in the district. If not school infrastructure, then market structures. If not markets then Community-based Health Planning and Services compounds or KVIP [sanitation facilities] ... so under the leadership of the MP [Dominic Fobih], physical infrastructure in the district improved considerably. He helped the district so much. But perhaps the problem was that he did not help with many people-centred programmes like LEAP. (Int. respondent ASAM08, male, 8 years as elected member of District Assembly)

Interviews in the district showed that in 2008, the LMS allocated LEAP to the district following the extension of the pilot LEAP programme to poor districts. This was after the NPP MP, while serving as a minister of state in the then ruling regime, collaborated with the NPP DCE and used formal structures of the state, including the LMS, to lobby for LEAP. The result of this lobbying was the assignment of eight communities and 130 households to the district.

In 2009, after the NDC had won power at the national level and the subsequent appointment of the 2008 NDC MP candidate Sabina Appiah Kubi as DCE of the district, the local NDC elites began a campaign for more LEAP communities. The main argument for these local NDC campaigners was that the previous NPP regime had targeted LEAP at NPP households in NDC-dominant communities in the 2008 LEAP expansion. In 2010, the then NDC DCE, Sabina Appiah Kubi, used her contacts at the presidency to lobby for more LEAP in the district, to promote her local

acceptance.²⁴⁷ While she had planned to recontest the MP position as an NDC candidate, she did not consult the then NPP MP Dominic Fobih, even though he had immense experience as a result of his time as a minister and MP. Given the plan to use programmes such as LEAP to boost the local appeal of the NDC, the LMS extended 12 LEAP communities to the district. This was in addition to ten emergency LEAP communities following the flooding of some low-lying local communities.²⁴⁸

In 2012, ahead of both internal party primaries and the general elections, the then NDC DCE Sabina Appiah Kubi, who was facing internal opposition from chiefs and Assembly Members (AMs) aligned to the NDC, leveraged her links and closeness to persons at the presidency to lobby for 20 more LEAP communities in her district. This was to boost her political chances in the local NDC party and with the general population.²⁴⁹ The DCE wanted to demonstrate to communities in the district that she was resourceful and had the right connections at the national level to secure programmes and projects.

In 2015, ahead of the internal party primaries, the then NDC DCE Nana Kwabena Adjei Anomafo, who also wanted to be elected as the NDC party candidate and actually challenged the former NDC DCE Sabina Appiah Kubi in the internal party primaries, lobbied for LEAP via the LMS using formal application processes to the MoGCSP.²⁵⁰ The then NDC DCE wanted to use mainly community-level distribution of social resources, including LEAP, to build a support base within the local NDC. Key-informant interviews revealed that Nana Kwabena Adjei Anomafo, as DCE, cooperated with local party officials to lobby for additional LEAP communities and households.²⁵¹ At the same time, the former NDC DCE and MP candidate of the NDC party used her contacts at the presidency to lobby for more LEAP. Hence, given the differing levels of lobbying for more LEAP communities and households among NDC local elites in the district who were contesting in the local primaries of the ruling party, an additional 13 LEAP communities and 221 households were allocated. This led to the relatively higher numbers of LEAP households covered in the district compared to others. Intra-party contestations within the ruling party at the local level influenced the use of political connections to lobby for more LEAP households, especially in

²⁴⁷ Int. respondent ASBT01; ASBT04

²⁴⁸ Daily graphic Tuesday 19 January 2010

²⁴⁹ Int. respondent ASBT01; ASBT04

²⁵⁰ Int. respondent ASAM05; ASAM04

²⁵¹ Int. respondent ASAM04

communities with existing LEAP members. These patterns underpinned the 19% LEAP coverage as a proportion of households in the Assin South District.

In general, heightened threats of turnover and the shorter time horizons of the governing coalitions shaped the local elites' use of their connections with ruling party national elites to lobby for higher allocation of LEAP communities in Gomoa West District. Equally, while gradual shifts in inter-party competition influenced expansions in allocations to communities, intense intra-party conflicts among local ruling party elites influenced the higher allocation of LEAP in Assin South. The subsequent discussions highlight the political drivers of the LEAP allocations in these two districts.

7.3 Geographical targeting of LEAP communities

To understand the politics of LEAP implementation, the study discusses variations in impartiality in geographical targeting of communities in the two districts. It assesses how local configurations of power affect the formation and functioning of the district LEAP structures that are responsible for the geographical targeting of communities. The research finds lower levels of impartiality in Gomoa West compared with Assin South.

Geographical targeting of communities, as indicated in Chapter 4, involves the identification and selection of communities within the district based on a poverty score. Per the LEAP guidelines, the main factors for consideration in community targeting include a high incidence of disease, child labour/child trafficking, geographical isolation, the level of National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) registration and the availability of/access to quality basic social services (MMYE, 2007a, p. 29). The LEAP manual mandates the formation of an independent District LEAP Implementation Committee (DLIC) made up of state and non-state actors to oversee the selection of communities and the allocation of household quotas, which are subsequently approved at the national level. These stakeholders must have deep insights into poverty and vulnerability in the district. Yet, the formation of this subnational structure, as well as its functioning, is not merely a technocratic but also a politicised process. It is worth stating that reforms by the LMS in 2015, in the southern part of the country, introduced a centralised selection of communities using poverty data from the Ghana Statistical Service. This reform meant that communities were selected at the national level and details sent to districts for approval.²⁵² The LMS communicated the list of

²⁵² Int. respondent LMS02

selected communities for the local DLIC to oversee the identification of households in the preselected communities. The extent to which coalitions of local elites battled for capture and control of the geographical targeting of community processes is examined in the cases of Gomoa West and Assin South.

In Gomoa West, bureaucrats confirmed that the DLIC did not and had never existed as outlined in the LEAP manual.²⁵³ Rather, key political actors such as the DCE, Constituency Party Executives (CPEs) and AMs aligned with then ruling NDC party, along with a few bureaucrats favourable to the ruling NDC party, oversaw LEAP implementation.²⁵⁴ Interestingly, the NDC MP, who had no mandate in terms of LEAP, was an influential voice in the determination and selection of LEAP communities between 2009 and 2016.²⁵⁵ According to a senior planning bureaucrat,

the DLIC does not exist ... the DCE and a few people in his inner circle were invited to deliberate on the LEAP communities. (Int. respondent GWBT04, male, 6 years at District Assembly)

Interviews in Gomoa West revealed that political actors such as party executives, AMs and even some senior bureaucrats showed limited knowledge of key indicators for the selection of LEAP communities.²⁵⁶ As a senior coordinating bureaucrat indicated,

population and economic activities formed the criteria basically for selecting households. In addition, demands from Assembly Members and traditional leaders to the DCE also formed the basis for selection of communities. (Int. respondent GWBT03, male, 8 years at District Assembly)

The political capture of the DLIC by actors with limited knowledge of LEAP's manual on community targeting indicators meant that the geographical targeting procedures in the Gomoa West District lacked impartiality. Senior bureaucrats indicated that the experience of heightened inter-and intra-party competition, and the related factionalisation of political actors, particularly the NDC DCE Theophilus Aidoo Mensah, the NDC MP Francis Arthur and the NDC former Central Region Minister Ama Benyiwa Doe, incentivised the political manipulation of the geographical targeting processes. Importantly, local actors tapped into their contacts with

²⁵³ Int. respondent GWBT01; GWBT02

²⁵⁴ Int. respondent GWBT01; GWBT04

²⁵⁵ Int. respondent GWBT01; GWAM02

²⁵⁶ Int. respondent GHAM02; GWAM06; GWAM04

nationally based actors such as the sector minister responsible for LEAP and LMS officials to directly intervene in community targeting to curb local political capture.

As previously indicated, no party dominates political power in Gomoa West, as the NDC and NPP have cycled in and out of power since 2000. The threat of losing political power thus shaped relations between elites in the then ruling NDC and the distribution of resources at the district level. Consequently, in 2009, influential persons within the then ruling NDC, rather than technocrats, seized the LEAP community targeting processes. Discussions with senior Social Welfare and Community Development Organisation (SWCDO) bureaucrats revealed that the NDC DCE, the NDC MP and the NDC CPEs targeted communities that mainly favoured the NDC and had previously voted NDC rather than NPP.²⁵⁷ Analysis of the polling station level election data of the Gomoa West District showed that more than half of the LEAP communities targeted in 2009 had voted for the NDC in the 2008 elections. Further analysis shows that half voted NDC in the 2012 elections, after enrolment.

Equally, in 2011/12, the NDC DCE ensured the targeting of mainly NDC communities with LEAP irrespective of their poverty status. Analysis of the polling station level election data of the Gomoa West District showed that the 2011/12 LEAP expansion targeted NDC-dominant communities. Indeed, the communities were mainly NDC-dominant communities, as all 11 communities voted NDC in the 2012 and 2016 elections as well. In the words of the then DCE,

it was my responsibility as DCE to ensure that NDC communities benefited from the LEAP programme. (Int. respondent GWAM02, male, 8 years as appointed political leader)

In-depth interviews with a senior SWCDO bureaucrat confirmed that in 2012,

once the politicians [DCE and NDC CPEs] knew that they had more sympathisers from this particular community whether the community was due the programme or not, they just selected the community. (Int. respondent GWBT01, male, 6 years in SWCDO)

As an AM indicated,

we lobbied bureaucrats directly for LEAP but those of us who aligned to the ruling NDC party also used our connections to the DCE to reinforce our claims for LEAP and he brought LEAP to Dawurampong [an urban community within the district]. Int. respondent GWAM17, male, 12 years as elected member of District Assembly)

²⁵⁷ Int. respondent GWBT01; GWAM02

The 2015 targeting, however, coincided with the highly competitive NDC party primaries within the Gomoa West constituency. The NDC MP was seeking re-election as the NDC MP candidate, whereas the NDC DCE, who had previously supported the MP, was also contesting the election as an NDC MP aspirant. At the same time, the former Central Region Minister, Ama Benyiwa-Doe, was supporting an influential party financier, who had the support of the presidency, to contest for the position of MP. Hence, despite the centralisation of community targeting resulting from the 2015 reforms indicated above, the intensity of local political competition for the MP candidacy created fertile ground for local NDC elites to sometimes tap into their nationally based networks to alter the preselected communities in favour of their political interests. Interviews with SWCDO officials showed that the then NDC DCE, who drew much of his support from the coastal belt of the district, attempted to influence the distribution of LEAP to communities that supported his campaign. The DCE used his control of resources at the assembly to attract influential AMs in the district to his faction and promised to extend LEAP to their communities if they supported his MP bid.²⁵⁸ Consequently, AMs aligned to the DCE pressured SWCDO bureaucrats and reinforced their claims for an extension of LEAP to their communities. As a senior bureaucrat revealed,

the Assembly Members then started pressuring us, the bureaucrats, and so the DCE demanded we included their communities. (Int. respondent GWBT01, male, 6 years in SWCDO)

Yet, given the DCE's limited political connections at the national level, the minister in charge of the MoGCSP, a close associate of the presidency, called the DCE personally and instructed him to stay away from community targeting.²⁵⁹ Interviews with the DCE also confirmed this call from the then minister, ordering him to desist from interfering with the LEAP communities that had been preselected (per the 2015 reforms), as the nationally based officials had precedence over local considerations.²⁶⁰ Equally, an assistant to the senior SWCDO bureaucrat indicated that when the list of LEAP communities was sent from the LMS in 2015, the NDC former Regional Minister and MP for the constituency, Ama Benyiwa-Doe, aligned to the NDC MP aspirant for 2016, Samuel Fletcher (who had national-level connections but weak local presence), contacted her directly to substitute some of the communities with new ones that were favourable to the interests of her candidate, who drew support mainly from the coastal communities. But the bureaucrat

²⁵⁸ Int. respondent GWBT01; GWAM17

²⁵⁹ Int. respondent GWBT01

²⁶⁰ Int. respondent GWAM02

revealed that

I firmly stood my ground and told her it won't be possible because there are orders from above so I can't deviate from my duties. So, I told her to personally go and lobby in Accra for any changes to the list. (Int. respondent GWBT02, female, 6 years at District Assembly)

Though the NDC DCE and the former NDC Central Region Minister²⁶¹ were unsuccessful in their quest to change the 2015 list of communities, the NDC MP,²⁶² who was an influential member of the NDC Central Region caucus in Parliament, succeeded in enlisting the support of the sector minister to change the initial LEAP communities to ones that favoured his re-election ambition. The MP took advantage of the alignment of the local party with the national NDC party in power to enforce his demand for substitution of some of the LEAP communities. According to the senior SWCDO bureaucrat,

the NDC MP, who already had some communities from his stronghold forest-inland belt of the district in the initial list, also wanted an additional number of communities on his side. The MP was mounting pressure on us [SWCDO officials] asking for communities to be added to favour his political ambitions. When I turned him down and told him these communities were selected by the LMS in Accra, the MP then went to the extent of visiting the then minister of the MoGCSP, Nana Oye Lithur. So Nana Oye Lithur had to call me [SWCDO official] at one point ... So she [the minister] told me [SWCDO official] that she is sending a circular to the LMS [under her direct supervision] and I should go ahead and work in the communities that the MP was agitating to add to the LEAP communities in the district. The minister subsequently added the MP's list of communities and circulated an updated list of LEAP communities for the Gomoa West District. (Int. respondent GWBT01, male, 6 years in SWCDO)

As the NDC constituency chair for the district indicated,

as for politics in Gomoa West, it is "destroy to take". (Int. respondent GWAM06, female, 4 years as appointed member of District Assembly and elected party official)

Hence, in order to progress, one must destroy the chances and opportunities of one's contenders. The former DCE for the district underscored this feature of local politics. According to him, the desire to outperform other political competitors underpinned the confusion that surrounded the distribution of resources, including LEAP communities, in the district. In his words,

²⁶¹ Following the demise of President Mills, the former NDC minister and women's organiser's influence was waning (Int. respondent GWBT04)

²⁶² Hon. Arthur, MP for Gomoa West, served on the following committees during his first term in Parliament. Finance, Local Government, and Employment, Social Welfare and State enterprises committees from 2009 to 2012. In the second term in Parliament from 2012 to 2016, he served on the following committees: Standing Orders Committee and Public Accounts Committee

the choice of LEAP communities and other social services always brings confusion between the MP and the DCE ... the MP wants the communities to go one way or the other, the DCE wants others to go this way, leading to divisions and conflicts in the district. (Int. respondent GWAM02, male, 8 years as appointed political leader)

The empirical data on the voting patterns of communities in the district lends credence to the politicised allocation of the local LEAP communities. Indeed, analysis of the polling station level election data of the Gomoa West District showed that most of the communities targeted for LEAP expansion in the district in 2015 were largely NDC. Of the 21 communities, 18 were NDC dominant communities based on the 2012 election results. A review of the 2015 expansion of LEAP in relation to the 2016 election results also showed that most of the communities targeted for the 2015 expansion were NDC communities, as all those communities voted NDC in the 2016 elections.

In Assin South, on the other hand, interviews with bureaucrats and political leaders showed that the DLIC existed as an independent subnational structure of technocrats, as previously stated. Officials of the SWCDO, charged with establishing district and community structures, had been at the forefront of setting up the DLIC in conformity with the LEAP guidelines. The DLIC was made up of heads of the decentralised directorates of the District Assembly, as well as a representative of a local NGO.²⁶³ This was largely consistent with the guidelines of the LEAP guidelines. Interviews with bureaucrats showed that whereas the NDC DCE and selected AMs participated in DLIC deliberations, the NPP MP was not directly consulted.²⁶⁴ As a SWCDO bureaucrat indicated,

the Coordinating Director was the chairperson of the DLIC but after some time they changed and so it is the DCE who is chairing the DLIC right now. (Int. respondent ASBT01, male, 10 years in SWCDO)

The interviews established that members of the DLIC in the district showed a good level of awareness of the community targeting indicators.²⁶⁵ According to the senior planning bureaucrat, who also served on the DLIC,

We looked at the vulnerability of these communities. We used the poverty profiles of communities in the district and selected communities that had a history of vulnerability

²⁶³ Int. respondent ASBT01

²⁶⁴ Int. respondent ASBT01; ASAM08; ASAM04; ASAM15

²⁶⁵ Int. respondent ASBT01; ASBT04

with more aged people who were taking care of orphans, and those with more persons with disability in their households in the communities. (Int. respondent ASBT04, male, 6 years at District Assembly)

Given the relatively technocratic composition of the DLIC, poverty indicators, as outlined in the LEAP manual, featured strongly in the targeting of LEAP communities. Interviews with bureaucrats and political actors confirmed that NDC DCEs often permitted bureaucrats to select LEAP communities using the district poverty map. Another bureaucrat equally averred that

NDC DCEs were aware of the strong influence of Traditional Authorities in resource distribution in the district. Therefore, to avoid accusations of targeting NDC communities, they left the selection of LEAP communities to the DLIC. (Int. respondent ASBT05, male, 8 years at District Assembly)

There were, however, a few instances where the district's political leadership reviewed the DLIC's final selection of LEAP communities in order to incorporate political factors.²⁶⁶ Discussions with SWCDO bureaucrats showed that, for instance,

in 2008, the NPP DCE presented a small number of communities to replace the communities selected by the DLIC. It was close to the 2008 elections and the NPP DCE indicated she needed to add one or two communities for "technical" [political] reasons. Similarly, in 2010 and 2012, the then NDC DCE proposed a few lists of communities which she indicated were important to her as she was also contesting on the ticket of the NDC as MP aspirant. (Int. respondent ASBT01, male, 10 years in SWCDO)

Unlike 2010 and 2012, the geographical targeting in 2015 involved a centralised targeting process in which the LMS presented a list of LEAP communities to the SWCDO. Yet, the then DCE, Nana Kwabena Adjei Anomafo, who was also contesting as the NDC MP aspirant in the NDC internal primaries, used his influence to change some communities. Interviews in the district revealed that the DCE argued that his reason for changing some of the preselected communities was to ensure balanced coverage of the territorial areas of the two main TAs. According to the senior SWCDO bureaucrat,

the DCE sought permission from the LMS in Accra to replace some of the communities to balance the distribution of the district. Because other than that the centrally targeted list would create some chieftaincy problems as most of the communities were mainly located in the Attendensu Traditional areas. (Int. respondent ASBT01, male, 10 years in SWCDO)

²⁶⁶ Int. respondent ASBT04; ASBT03

Notwithstanding this justification from the DCE, discussions with NDC political actors showed that the actual intent of the DCE was to ensure the inclusion of his preferred communities in the NDC's Apemanim Traditional areas at the expense of his rival NDC MP aspirant's Attendensu Traditional area.²⁶⁷ Thus, in Assin South, much as bureaucrats mainly facilitated LEAP geographical expansion through the vehicle of the DLIC, political actors intervened in the final determination of communities in the district.

The foregoing evidence suggests that the local power configuration in the two districts shaped variations in impartiality in the LEAP geographical targeting. In Gomoa West, strong threats of electoral turnover and the short time horizons of the governing coalitions heightened the local elites' incentives to capture and intervene politically in the geographical targeting. However, in Assin South, the limited threats of turnover and the long time horizons of the governing coalitions tempered the proclivity for local capture of the LEAP structures and political manipulation of the geographical targeting procedures. Significantly, the presence of powerful traditional authorities (TAs), divided equally along the partisan lines of the NPP and NDC, promoted a balanced distribution of the LEAP communities.

7.4 Household targeting within LEAP communities

This section assesses the variation in household targeting in the two districts. The study found limited impartiality in both the Gomoa West and Assin South Districts. This was driven by both the degree of threats of turnover and also the capture of the programme by local elites. These political and social elites, such as traditional leaders and AMs, often offloaded their dependents on to the LEAP programme.

As indicated in Chapter 4, household targeting involves the identification and selection of extremely poor households and households with the following categories of persons in the community: persons above 65 years of age, caregivers of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and persons with disabilities (PWDs) and without productive capacity. The LEAP manual mandates the establishment of a Community LEAP Implementation Committee (CLIC) to undertake the identification of extremely poor households. Reflecting the important role of the CLIC in the identification of LEAP households, the manual recommends the appointment of an

²⁶⁷ Int. respondent ASAM05

independent body of local elites (community leaders or representatives of community heads,²⁶⁸ teachers, nurses, NGO representatives) as well as influential community members with an in-depth knowledge of household poverty and vulnerability. It is worth stating that the LMS has commenced processes of replacing CLICs in most communities with community focal persons (CFPs). This has resulted from the challenge of finding groups of persons committed to volunteering for the programme over long periods of time. Given the prominence of CLICs in household targeting, the formation and functioning of CLICs have not only been the subject of political contestation but, also, their outcomes remain deeply politicised, as the cases of Gomoa West and Assin South reveal.

The highly competitive nature of party politics in Gomoa West District extended into the ostensibly non-partisan arena of district-level politics, with local AMs aligned to the NDC and NPP competing for influence in the District Assembly, as also outlined in Chapter 5. This was coupled with factional relations between the NDC MP and the NDC DCE and their respective supporters. Given these fragmentary relations, local NDC party executives, especially those aligned to the DCE, exerted control over district-directed but community-implemented social resources, including LEAP. Interviews with CLIC members,²⁶⁹ AMs²⁷⁰ and bureaucrats²⁷¹ showed that CLICs existed in all LEAP communities in the district. Nevertheless, these CLICs mainly acted as an extension of the NDC party, contrary to the LEAP guidelines. Discussions revealed that most CLIC members were ruling party local executives, including chairpersons, secretaries and women's organisers. The senior SWCDO bureaucrat in the district confirmed that

When we went to the communities what we got was that CLIC members were either a branch executive, or a polling station executive. Most of the CLICs were party executives of the ruling NDC party. (Int. respondent GWBT01, male, 6 years in SWCDO)

An AM also indicated that

Honestly, the CLIC was politically formed in communities in the district. The executives of the NDC party in power at the time were put in charge of LEAP. (Int. respondent GWAM12, male, 8 years as elected member at District Assembly)

²⁶⁸ Traditional Authorities and their representatives are thus active in the formation of the CLIC and informally supervise the functioning of CLICs in their communities

²⁶⁹ Int. respondent GWCL08; GWCL09

²⁷⁰ Int. respondent GWAM09

²⁷¹ Int. respondent GWBT06; GWBT01

Further, interviews with other senior bureaucrats laid bare the modalities of politicisation of CLICs in LEAP communities. According to these bureaucrats, in most cases when a community was selected for LEAP, the then NDC DCE, Theophilus Aidoo Mensah, engaged NDC-aligned traditional leaders or their representatives²⁷² and/or NDC aligned AMs to mobilise the local NDC executives to constitute themselves into the CLIC in order to administer LEAP.²⁷³ In communities where AMs and traditional leaders were aligned to the NDC, these two actors facilitated the constitution of the CLIC.²⁷⁴ In communities where the AM was not aligned to the NDC, the leadership of the local NDC party, in consultation with TAs²⁷⁵ politically aligned to NDC, appointed persons favourable to the interest of the party as CLIC members.²⁷⁶

It is worth stating that, following the reforms in 2015 where the LMS attempted to replace non-performing CLICs with CFPs, NDC local political elites continued to dominate CFPs that dominated LEAP community structures in the Gomoa West District. Interviews in LEAP communities showed that almost all CFPs were persons who were politically connected within the ruling NDC party, as they also held important community-level positions either as Unit Committee members or information centre owners in their communities.²⁷⁷ As these two CFPs confirmed,

I am the CFP because I hold many positions in the community. I am a Unit Committee member. I am also an owner of a football team and many more ... I am also the women's organiser for the NDC in the community. (Int. respondent GWCL09, female, 8 years as elected community party leader)

I am the Unit Committee chairman and I also work at the information centre. I was also NDC branch chairman some years ago when LEAP was brought to my community. (Int. respondent GWCL01, female, 8 years as elected community leader)

The multiple sources of power of persons appointed as CFPs in the district enabled them to hijack LEAP at the community level. Hence, an association with the ruling party and, to some extent, influential NDC-aligned traditional leaders became the sole route for guaranteed enrolment of even poor party members.²⁷⁸

²⁷² Int. respondent GWBT01

²⁷³ Int. respondent GWAM02; GWAM15

²⁷⁴ Int. respondent GWBT01

²⁷⁵ Int. respondent GWTA03; GWTA01

²⁷⁶ Int. respondent GWBT01; GWAM14

²⁷⁷ Int. respondent GWCL09; GWCL08; GWCL07

²⁷⁸ Int. respondent GWCL08; GWAM14; GWCL05; GWAM15; GWAM18; GWAM12

Further, in Gomoa West, local CLIC members and political leaders did not conform to the LEAP targeting procedures in the selection of households. Interviews with bureaucrats confirmed that CLIC members, many of whom were NDC foot soldiers, bulldozed their way to enrolling very old and vulnerable party members on LEAP to demonstrate the “caring” nature of the party for loyal party members.²⁷⁹ According to the former NDC DCE,

once the community was targeted for LEAP, NDC party members had to be the beneficiary households. (Int. respondent GWAM02, male, 8 years as appointed political leader)

Interviews with key informants revealed that in 2009 and 2012, political leaders in the district made use of the fact that LEAP was targeted at their party members.²⁸⁰ These leaders were able to achieve this by engaging party members as members in the committee that had the mandate to identify LEAP households.²⁸¹ An AM aligned to the ruling NDC party confirmed the local politicisation of LEAP.²⁸² He indicated that

LEAP in this district is political, and we channelled the LEAP through the party people. (Int. respondent GWAM15, male, 6 years as elected member of District Assembly)

Beneficiaries who participated in the focused group discussions also shared the view that LEAP was a political tool in the district.²⁸³ Participants held the view that LEAP was a “relief” meant to mitigate the plight of vulnerable party members.²⁸⁴ A discussant indicated that

LEAP is a political relief, our party [NDC] is distributing money to poor NDC people. (GWFGD06, female participants in Denkyira community)

Yet, in the case of the 2015 targeting, where an independent body of enumerators had been appointed to assess CLIC/CFP-identified households, household selection was informed by “who knows you”, even beyond the initial “whom you know”.²⁸⁵ Interviews in the district pointed to local party people scheming to ensure that only party members were identified for LEAP. These local political actors often required that party members should have previously played various

²⁷⁹ Int. respondent GWBT01; GWAM02

²⁸⁰ Int. respondent GWAM02

²⁸¹ Int. respondent GWAM15

²⁸² Int. respondent GWAM15

²⁸³ GWFGD01; GWFGD07

²⁸⁴ GWFGD01; GWFGD07

²⁸⁵ Int. respondent GWAM06

roles in the activities of the ruling party in their community.²⁸⁶ In other instances, households that were selected for LEAP in their communities were required to demonstrate their commitment to the ruling party by presenting some evidence or proof of party membership.²⁸⁷ A local party executive reported that

CLICs often required some evidence or proof of party membership/commitment of the potential households or persons associated with eligible households at the community level. (Int. respondent GWAM15, male, 6 years as elected member of District Assembly)

In addition to the political leaders, ruling party aligned TAs jostled with their AM counterparts to have their dependents on LEAP. Discussions with bureaucrats indicated that these local traditional leaders sought to enrol their close families on LEAP to reduce their dependency on these leaders for support and not necessarily to improve their livelihood status.²⁸⁸ According to the assistant SWCDO bureaucrat,

chiefs [for instance] wanted to at least ensure that more people in their households who were dependent on them enrolled on LEAP to lessen the burden on them. (Int. respondent GWBT02, female, 10 years as SWCDO official)

A CLIC in one of the communities intimated that

the chief secured LEAP for his children, family and other members of his household ... And his place was taken by his wife. (Int. respondent GWCL10, male, 6 years as LEAP leader)

Unlike Gomoa West, Assin South is a politically dominant district, with the NPP facing limited threats of electoral turnover. Yet the political records in the district between 2009 and 2012 showed a narrowing of the gap between the NPP and NDC, suggesting an enhanced threat of turnover and shorter time horizons among the NDC and NPP elite coalitions. As a result of these political dynamics, local NDC community executives, taking advantage of their party's control of the District Assembly through appointment of the DCE, asserted themselves at the community level in the distribution of resources. These local party executives acted as bona fide instruments for the conveyance and control of district-directed but community-implemented programmes, including LEAP. Hence, though teachers and nurses, among others, constituted the CLICs at the initial stages

²⁸⁶ Int. respondent GWBN06; GWBN04; GWAM15

²⁸⁷ Int. respondent GWBN06; GWBN04; GWAM15

²⁸⁸ Int. respondent GWTA03; GWTA01

in 2008, by 2010 and 2011/12, local NDC community party executives, who formed the lowest base of the party structure, had often taken up roles as CLICs, in contravention of the LEAP guidelines. Interviews with bureaucrats and AMs showed that

Initially if a teacher was available, he could be part of the CLIC, an Assembly Member could be part but if persons with these professional backgrounds were not present in the community, members of Unit Committees or something could be part. (Int. respondent ASBT01, male, 10 years in SWCDO)

Subsequently, CLICs became mainly NDC local leaders, foot soldiers and/or influential persons that linked the NDC party to their communities.²⁸⁹

In addition to party officials, representatives of TAs served on CLICs.²⁹⁰ This was mostly the case in the Apemanim Traditional areas, where the chiefs were mainly aligned with the NDC, compared to the Attendensu Traditional areas, where the chiefs were known to align with the NPP. As a CLIC member in Ochiso, in the Apemanim Traditional area, indicated,

I was a secretary to the chief, and I was appointed together with two opinion leaders to assist the LEAP committee in the community. (Int. respondent ASCL03, male, 8 years as community elected leader and representative of traditional leader)

Further to TAs, AMs and/or Unit Committee members who were aligned to the NDC were co-opted as members of CLICs. A CLIC member intimated that

I used to help the then assemblyman with his work and I was the youth organiser for the NDC. So one day he came and told me that there is a programme at the district and he had succeeded in lobbying for the community to be included so when the officials come to the community we will go around with them and show them the needy, orphans and disabled persons. (Int. respondent ASCL04, male, 4 years as LEAP leader)

In 2015, even after reforms to replace the politicised and unreliable CLICs with CFPs, the influence of political party executives and politically connected AMs did not wane. Rather, the influence of political considerations was enhanced, as the appointed CFPs were mainly NDC local leaders or persons linked to the NDC party.²⁹¹ TAs and AMs aligned to the NDC subsequently approved these party-appointed CFPs.²⁹² As a CFP explained,

²⁸⁹ Int. respondent ASAMO4; ASAM08; ASAM07; ASBT02; ASBT01

²⁹⁰ Int. respondent ASBT01

²⁹¹ Int. respondent ASAM08; ASAM07; ASBT02

²⁹² Int. respondent ASTA01; ASTA02

I was a treasurer for the NDC at the community. I was also the Unit Committee member before I became the focal person. (Int. respondent ASCL08, male, 4 years as LEAP leader)

In terms of the processes of household targeting in Assin South, interviews with local CLICs and CFPs showed a strong awareness of indicators for targeting LEAP beneficiaries.²⁹³ Consistent with their high awareness, CLIC members and CFPs selected eligible LEAP households based on the LMS-outlined indicators.²⁹⁴ In addition to the LMS indicators, eligible households had to possess qualifications of either being politically affiliated to the ruling party or possessing a strong familial association with CLIC members or TAs in the community.²⁹⁵ As a senior SWCDO bureaucrat and an AM separately observed,

CLICs selected their family members and households that were close to them as though they were poor households ... They also overlooked other poor eligible households due to their personal problems with those households. (Int. respondent ASBT01, male, 10 years in SWCDO)

from different communities, CLICs had all their family members lined up on the list of beneficiaries in the same household. (Int. respondent ASAM14, male, 8 years as elected member of District Assembly)

In the view of the senior SWCDO bureaucrat, LEAP is perceived as

a political good the ruling NDC party is distributing to its poor and vulnerable members. (Int. respondent ASBT01, male, 10 years in SWCDO)

Interviews with the presiding member of the assembly confirmed that CLIC members shared LEAP only to households that were affiliated with the NDC. They made sure that they had field agents to scout out their members and attend to them first.²⁹⁶ The presiding member of the general assembly also confirmed that

at Kotobabi they [NDC CLIC members] shared LEAP to households who were affiliated with NDC. They made sure they had field agents to scout out their members and attend to them first. (Int. respondent ASAM04, male, 16 years as elected member of District Assembly and elected party leader)

²⁹³ Int. respondent ASCL01; ASCL02; ASCL03; ASCL04

²⁹⁴ Int. respondent ASBT01

²⁹⁵ Int. respondent ASBT01

²⁹⁶ Int. respondent ASAM04.

As the senior SWCDO bureaucrat indicated,

the political leaders wanted to ascertain the political affiliations of the selected household. They took the list and cross-checked for themselves. (Int. respondent ASBT01, male, 10 years in SWCDO)

Further discussions with AMs in the district showed that, following factional differences between the then NDC MP aspirant and the NDC DCE (who also wanted to contest in the NDC MP primaries in 2015), belonging to the then NDC DCE's faction was a more vital criterion for LEAP household eligibility.

Outside of the desire to enrol politically connected persons, discussions with bureaucrats and AMs showed that traditional leaders aligned to the NDC also clamoured to enrol their close family relations on LEAP. As one of the DLIC members indicated,

Traditional Authorities and opinion leaders come in to request for protocol for households. They come with their own list of poor households who they perceive as deserving and requiring to be on LEAP. (Int. respondent ASBT04, male, 6 years at District Assembly)

Further, interviews with traditional leaders showed that having family members on LEAP was a way of relieving themselves of the burden of having to provide for them.²⁹⁷ Traditional leaders from both paramountcies expressed appreciation to the politicians for enabling them to enrol persons close to them on the programme. As one Attendensu chief indicated in an interview,

I was very thankful to the chief executive [DCE] when he told me LEAP has been extended into my community because I would be relieved of some financial burdens. (Int. respondent ASTA02, male 5 years as traditional leader)

Equally, a traditional leader associated with the Apemanim paramountcies revealed that

having more members of my community on LEAP relieved me of the financial burden of providing for the poorest people in my community. (Int. respondent ASTA01, male, 10 years as traditional leader)

Beyond the identification of potential households, the LEAP manual mandates the DLIC to appoint enumerators to assess and validate the social conditions of households that are eventually selected as beneficiaries. The enumerators use questionnaires to capture data that gives some indication of

²⁹⁷ Int. respondent ASBT04

the poverty context of identified households in the community. This data is entered into a computer and filtered in an attempt to ensure that most eligible households are selected from the list. The list is presented to CLICs and communities for validation (MMYE, 2007a). It is worth stating that following the reforms in 2015, the LMS appointed a private data-collection company to enumerate beneficiaries. The enumerators tasked by this private institution replaced the district-appointed enumerators. This company centrally evaluates and qualifies potential beneficiaries in real time using a centrally operated proxy means testing (PMT) mechanism developed by the MoGCSP. The appointment and functioning of enumerators, and the application of PMT in the enrolment of LEAP households, remain profoundly politicised, as the cases of Gomoa West and Assin South reveal.

In Gomoa West, interviews with bureaucrats and local political actors exposed that in enrolling enumerators, the DLIC ensured the appointment of party foot soldiers and local party executives as local enumerators in 2009 and 2012 rather than SWCDO bureaucrats. This was mainly because some of these household heads were not available at the time of the assessment, although local party executives and traditional leaders had presented their names to the SWCDO officials as households eligible for LEAP.²⁹⁸ In 2015, an independent body of persons undertook the assessment of LEAP beneficiaries in the district. Every household earmarked for LEAP was assessed before their enrolment on the programme. Yet, prior to the arrival of the enumerators, local political leaders acting as focal persons went around communities to collate details of all ruling-party persons nominated for LEAP.²⁹⁹ Some of the details included the names, voter identification details and party membership cards, among others.³⁰⁰ This pre-registration and verification constituted a critical sieving process, as non-party persons who felt they were eligible could not avail themselves at the community LEAP assessment centres.³⁰¹ Moreover, the ruling NDC dominated CLICs and NDC AMs undertook extensive “coaching” of persons and household heads targeted for LEAP. As the former NDC DCE suggested,

with these poor people if you don’t coach them they will give responses that will lead to their disadvantage [disqualification], so you always have to be coaching them on the best responses to qualify them for the programme. (Int. respondent GWAM02, male, 8 years as appointed political leader)

²⁹⁸ Int. respondent GWBT01

²⁹⁹ Int. respondent GWAM13; GWBT01

³⁰⁰ Int. respondent GWAM13; GWBT01; GWBT02

³⁰¹ Int. respondent GWAM18; GWAM17; GWCL08; GWAM15; GWFGD01; GWFGD03

It was thus not surprising when the NDC AM for Dawurampong, the largest urban settlement in the NDC dominant inland part of the district, concluded that

those who were strong and not the poorest qualified for LEAP and those who are most vulnerable couldn't be assessed for LEAP. (Int. respondent GWAM17, male, 12 years as elected political leader)

Indeed, even where poor persons were enrolled on LEAP,

it was those with affiliations with the ruling party who would be more likely to be selected and could attribute their selection to the earlier registration undertaken by the local party executives. (Int. respondent GWAM18, male, 7 years as elected member of District Assembly)

Overall, local configurations of power shaped less impartial LEAP household targeting in the Gomoa West District. Enhanced threats of turnovers at the inter- and intra-party levels underpinned the use of LEAP as a tool for political manipulation and patronage. The presence of powerful traditional leaders, fragmented along intra-party factional lines in the then ruling NDC, further heightened the local capture and patronage-based LEAP household targeting.

In Assin South, likewise, to facilitate qualification of their preferred households, CLIC members outmanoeuvred the established LMS assessment processes. As previously indicated, CLICs targeted poor households with strong familial and/or political connections. Yet, state bureaucrats formally assessed these households for enrolment on the programme, especially in 2008 and 2012.³⁰² In 2015, following the introduction of independent enumerators, however, the CFPs composed their own lists of households eligible for assessment. This ensured that only politically and familially connected households presented themselves for registration and assessment.³⁰³ According to senior SWCDO bureaucrats,

during the sensitisation instead of the community focal persons [CFPs] letting everybody come around, you see that some few people will come around and the few people coming are all from one [the ruling] party ... CFPs try to know the political affiliation of all persons presented for enumeration. (Int. respondent ASBT01, male, 10 years in SWCDO)

Another member of the DLIC, the planning bureaucrat, indicated that

³⁰² Int. respondent ASBT01

³⁰³ Int. respondent ASBT01

The focal person had his own criteria for which he was running the selection process, and this was politically biased. (Int. respondent ASBT04, male, 6 years at District Assembly)

Like the planning officer, an AM who also held a political position confirmed the politicisation of the 2015 assessment. According to the AM,

there was too much secrecy involved in the 2015 household targeting. Some NDC people even did not hear about it. They went to the households instead so the representative took them to only the NDC households to write their names because at least if some households are selected, it will be an achievement for them [the NDC party]. (Int. respondent ASAM08, male, 8 years at District Assembly and political party leader)

Thus far, household targeting in Assin South had shifted from being more impartial in the initial stages to becoming less impartial from 2012 to 2015. This occurred ahead of the ruling NDC party internal primaries, reflecting the ways in which centre–local dynamics and the influence of the ruling party at the national level shaped impartiality in resource distribution at the local level. The above also showed the increasingly influential role of local traditional leaders in community-level decision-making processes, with implications for impartiality in household targeting.

This evidence, as presented above, demonstrates how local inter- and intra-elite fragmentation in Gomoa West shaped variation in impartiality in LEAP household targeting. In Gomoa West, partisan considerations and connections to important chiefs and influential opinion leaders formed the foremost considerations for LEAP households, ahead of the established LEAP criteria, resulting in more non-poor persons qualifying for the programme ahead of eligible poor households. In contrast, in Assin South, partisan considerations were marginal qualification criteria for potential households meeting the established LEAP indicators. The conclusions and policy implications of the foregoing discussions further elucidate how local power configurations shaped unevenness in the LEAP implementation procedures and outcomes in the two districts. They have also assessed how the findings confirm the advantages of the framework.

7.5 Chapter summary

This chapter has explored the politics of LEAP implementation in two districts in the Central Region of Ghana. The Central Region has the longest history of colonial engagement, which has bequeathed it with a lasting legacy of infrastructure endowments. The presence of hierarchical

TAs dating to the precolonial era undergirds the complex relationships between traditional leaders and subnational political and bureaucratic elites in the region.

As previously highlighted in the framework guiding this research, the two main pillars driving variation in LEAP performance are patterns of state formation on the one hand and local configurations of power on the other. To illustrate if the local configuration of power was the main driver of allocation of LEAP to districts and communities and the targeting of households, respectively, the study held state formation constant. As proposed earlier, the study found that limited threats of turnover were associated with more impartiality in targeting. Enhanced threats of turnover, on the other hand, were associated with less impartiality in targeting.

The study found higher coverage of LEAP communities in Gomoa West compared to lower coverage in Assin South. In respect of targeting, the study observed less impartiality in the LEAP geographical targeting in Gomoa West compared to more impartiality in Assin South. At the level of households, targeting in both Gomoa West and Assin South was characterised by limited impartiality, with the latter experiencing a relatively lower degree of impartiality. Enhanced threats of turnover, coupled with connections of local ruling party politicians with their national counterparts, influenced variations in allocations to these two districts. In respect of allocations to communities and household selection, enhanced threats of turnover, coupled with the presence of hierarchical TAs legitimising their authority through partisan and factional political relations, underscored the variations in impartiality in targeting in Gomoa West. On the other hand, limited threats of turnover, coupled with the presence of hierarchical TAs divided along partisan lines, influenced the varying degree of impartiality in LEAP targeting in the Assin South District.

Thus, the key unexpected factors that shaped unevenness in the performance of LEAP in these two southern Ghana districts with similar state formation but differing power configurations included centre–local relations and the degree of political mis/alignment between the local- and national-level parties. This was despite the implementation reforms introduced in 2015, which should have curtailed the influence of local political elites over processes for selection and identification of communities and households. Other supplemental factors that shaped the observed variation in the two districts involved the personal ambitions of local party officials occupying district-level positions in order to contest for elective positions and the personal political strategies of some district-level politicians.

CHAPTER 8

Conclusions and policy implications

8.1 Introduction

This final chapter summarises the main findings of the thesis, which has tracked the effectiveness and impartiality of Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) implementation in the Central and Upper West Regions of Ghana, and reflects on the academic and policy implications that flow from these findings. It revisits the conceptual framework and places these findings into conversation with wider debates concerning the political drivers of state performance, particularly with regard to the balance between historically shaped patterns of state formation and state capacity and more contemporary configurations of power.

The puzzle this thesis has explored was why some decentralised authorities perform better in social-protection implementation than others, and whether this variation could be traced back to the political drivers identified within the literature on state capacity and performance (e.g., Centeno et al., 2017). Given the widespread perception of weak institutional capacities of decentralised state structures leading to poor service delivery, why do some districts do better than others in delivering cash transfers, regardless of existing state capacities? Again, given the wide-ranging sense that targeted social-protection programmes are often highly politicised, rather than based on need, why do some decentralised authorities ensure more impartial distribution than others?

The growing body of literature on social-protection implementation in Africa as a whole, and Ghana in particular, has centred on impact evaluations of these programmes (see Handa et al., 2013; De Groot et al., 2015; Oduro, 2015; Ragno et al., 2016; Angeles et al., 2017). The few studies (see De-Graft Aikins et al., 2016; Foli, 2016) that have examined political-economy factors leading to adoption of these policies in Ghana have barely scratched the surface of the politics and neglect the design and implementation of the programme (the exception being Abdulai, 2020). Yet, decentralised implementation of social-protection policies raises significant questions pertaining both to the dynamics of power among local and centre-based elites (Crook & Manor, 1998; Crook, 2003; Bukenya & Golooba-Mutebi, 2020) and to the capacity of subnational state institutions to evenly deliver on their mandate of social redistribution and inclusive development (Tendler, 1997; Andersson, 2004; Jütting et al., 2005; Booth, 2010).

This concluding chapter is structured as follows. Section 8.2 provides a brief overview of the main findings of the study in relation to the existing literature. Section 8.3 reflects on the politics of social-protection implementation framework and illustrates the causal mechanisms that link local power configurations and legacies of state formation to variations in both the effectiveness and impartiality of social-protection delivery. Section 8.4 restates the main conclusion of the study in relation to wider debates around social-protection policies and cash transfers in particular, as an effective means of addressing persistent poverty, highlighting key contributions, policy implications and areas for future research.

8.2 Summary of empirical findings

The findings of this study, as presented in Chapters 5–7, suggest that both state formation and local power configurations have directly shaped the implementation of LEAP, although each have tended to have stronger effects on different aspects of delivery. The *effectiveness* of grant delivery has been found to be shaped mainly by historically informed levels of state capacity, with a minor but still significant mediating role played by the local configuration of power. To some extent, local power configurations, interacting with state capacity and shifts in policy design, have enabled weaker local governments to overcome their weakness and therefore enabled policy implementation to become more effective. Meanwhile, the local configuration of power has exerted a strong influence over the pace of allocation/coverage of LEAP to districts. It has also shaped the degree of impartiality in the targeting of communities and households. Centre–local relations and the degree of political mis/alignment between the parties in power at the local and national levels, interacting with the nature of the local power configurations, also have salience for the impartiality of targeting.

The first key finding relates to the enduring influence of state formation and state capacity in shaping the effectiveness of grant delivery in some districts in Ghana. In the southern part of Ghana, the presence of legacy resources in the form of infrastructure (including roads and transport networks, and now also Information Communication Technology, or ICT) and the higher quality and quantity of the bureaucrats has facilitated more effectiveness of LEAP delivery (Chapter 5). In the northern parts of Ghana, limited bequeaths of legacy and contemporary state resources and the limited availability of bureaucratic competences have undermined state performance in delivering LEAP (Chapter 5). These findings suggest that institutional path dependencies arising

from historical legacies of colonialism, and reinforced by postcolonial-era policies, have implications for effectiveness in the delivery of decentralised cash transfers. Specifically, they confirm Lange's arguments that organisational competence and infrastructural power are the most critical mechanisms by which enduring colonial legacies persist in exerting influence on contemporary state capacities. However, this diverges from Mahoney's argument that power relations and external embeddedness remain the central causal pathway through which historical factors shape contemporary state capacities. In respect of decentralisation, this finding confirms Crook and Ayee's (2006, p. 1), suggestion that "deficiencies in training and incentives structures for bureaucrats" undermined state performance in spite of expansion in the scope of work of decentralised institutions. Importantly, this finding corroborates the institutionalist scholarship of De Neubourg (2002), which suggests that countries can largely deploy stronger social-protection initiatives effectively when they already possess high levels of institutional structure and capacity, and bureaucratic integrity.

Second, the nature of power configuration, interacting with state capacity, has influenced variation in degrees of effectiveness beyond the foundation laid by the legacies of state formation. Hence, in the north, where both districts had experienced similarly low levels of state formation, the district characterised by political dominance delivered LEAP more effectively than the district characterised by greater threats of electoral turnover. A similar pattern pertained in the south. Consistent with the works of Whitfield and Therkildsen (2011), this study has found that competitive and clientelist political environments have repercussions for both the levels of organisational competences that emerge and how they are deployed. This finding is consistent with Slater (2008), who argues that elections and competitive pressures associated with mass social mobilisation in democratic settings influence the willingness and capacity of states to deliver broad public goods. It proceeds further to demonstrate that beyond infrastructural power, competitive pressures do shape the extent to which bureaucratic competences and autonomy are deployed to deliver social and public goods.

Third, local power configurations, interacting with centre–local relations and political alignment, have shaped the allocation of LEAP to districts. In the two politically competitive districts where elites faced enhanced threats of turnover, the pace of expansions and the proportion of coverage of LEAP was high. This contrasted with the situation of low coverage in the politically dominant districts where elites faced limited threats of turnover. The study also found that to meet citizen's

expectations to secure more LEAP grants, communities and households, District Chief Executives (DCEs) and Members of Parliament (MPs) (as well as MP aspirants), often relied on lobbying. Thus, national-level political elites were lobbied to facilitate the extensions of the programmes to their communities (see Chapters 6 and 7). These findings suggest that how local political conditions interact with national political factors is critical in determining the pace of expansion and distribution of social resources in the context of a centrally controlled but locally managed programme. Consistent with the existing literature, the study has found that clientelist distributions are shaped at least partially by demand-side factors and that the electoral threats that politicians face encourage them to seek resources through which they can secure political loyalty (see Lindberg, 2003, 2010). Crook and Manor (1998), Crook (2017) and Ayee and Crook (2003) all attest that in Ghana, local-level elites have often tapped into their political connections with powerful central-level politicians to access state resources and undermine other local-level politicians. This has resulted from local representatives being judged by constituents based on the number of projects they can marshal into their communities using their linkages with influential central-level patrons.

The fourth major finding of this thesis has been that the level of impartiality in the targeting of communities and households respectively was shaped most directly by the configuration of power. In districts with limited threats of turnover (Chapters 6 and 7), political elites forged collaborative relationships with bureaucrats to undermine the capacity of local ruling party elites to politically manipulate community targeting in favour of politically influential communities. This contrasted with the cases in the competitive districts (Chapters 6 and 7), where the incentives facing political actors enabled them distribute LEAP as “pork” to reward politically loyal communities. This finding resonates with Khan’s (2010, 2012) suggestions that, in competitive clientelist systems, the need to win elections influences politicians to adopt policies that distribute rents or appropriate public resources for short-term gains to influential factions in ways aimed at ensuring their political survival. This finding also echoes the political economy of institutions literature in Ghana (see Lindberg & Morrison, 2008; Lindberg, 2010), which suggests that “‘pork barrel’ allocations of state resources to reward followers have become a dominant strategy for maintaining political power”. It also resonates with the literature on the political economy of decentralisation, which suggests that decentralised allocation often exposes service provision to patronage and reinforces centre–local clientelist relations (Crook & Sverrisson, 2001; Ayee & Crook, 2003; Crook, 2017). The persistence of clientelist and patronage distribution patterns undermines developmental

outcomes of social-services provision, notwithstanding the fact that this form of politics seems to ensure that resources get to more people faster.

In respect of household targeting within LEAP communities, the evidence presented in Chapters 6 and 7 suggests that in the districts with limited threats of turnover, local political leaders, collaborating with bureaucrats, undermined the ability of ruling party elites and foot soldiers to distribute LEAP to households along patronage lines. In the districts with enhanced threats of turnover, however, beneficiary household targeting was characterised by political interference, as local party elites targeted ruling party and influential households to the neglect of those lacking the “right” political connections. This finding also resonates with the political-settlements analysis (PSA) literature of Khan (2010, 2012), in that in clientelist contexts, institutional enforcement is underpinned by informal rules and undermines formal rules through the use of personalistic ties and preferential treatments for favoured clients in exchange for political support. The fact that politicians in these districts with enhanced threats of turnover rewarded previous political behaviour rather than seeking to woo new supporters suggests that parties aim to win by mobilising their base through material inducements, rather than competing for swing voters (Lindberg & Morrison, 2005; Lindberg & Weghorst, 2010; Asunka, 2016, 2017; Resnick, 2017). That might signal that the relationship with their support base hinges on the distribution of resources and not necessarily on ideological or some kind of symbolic allegiance. Importantly, the findings on the cases of the districts with the limited threats that experienced more impartiality resonate with the findings of Alderman (2002), where decentralisation contributed to overcoming some of the dangers presented by patronage and corruption. Alderman (2002) suggests that improved access to information among local bureaucrats enables them to better target resources at the poor in the context of decentralised programme implementation.

The last major finding also relates to impartiality and focuses on the role of Traditional Authorities (TAs) and the varying degree of capture of local LEAP structures. This was particularly significant in the two cases located in the southern part of Ghana, to some extent, where colonial adaptations to precolonial social structures and organisations had enhanced the holding power of hierarchical TAs *vis-à-vis* the state. This finding is consistent with Lange’s (2009) assertions that the enhanced role of TAs under British indirect rule facilitated patrimonial relationships between rulers and subjects/clients. Indeed, within the two southern cases, the study found that the nature of the local power configuration influenced the extent to which these hierarchical TAs facilitated the capture

of the LEAP structures responsible for the targeting of communities and households. Ultimately, the strong holding power of the hierarchical TAs in the southern districts, and their close links to political parties, underpinned the less impartiality in targeting of households, as demonstrated in the strong familial connections of LEAP households to influential traditional leaders (Chapter 7).

This is consistent with Migdal's (1988) and Hagmann and Péclard's (2010) suggestions that state-initiated policies are products of the contests and bargaining within the state and between various actors in the society within which the state is embedded. The inability of the state to effectively control powerful strongmen and other non-state actors, as demonstrated in the two cases in southern Ghana, undermines the state's ability to exert wider social control, with consequences for state capacity and performance. Again, the findings echo the literature on the political economy of decentralisation, which suggests strong links between local officials, networks of local strongmen and politicians, which could undermine the accessibility of citizens to locally provided state services. In respect of Ghana specifically, this finding is consistent with Crook and Addo-Fening's (2005) arguments that traditional rulers and their representatives tend to capitalise on their political connections with rival party traditions in the central and local states to capture local assemblies' initiatives in their communities for private gain. Thus, beyond confirming the association between the presence of traditional leaders and the tendency for capture of local services, this study has specified the mechanism by which local power configurations determine the extent to which local strongmen would succeed in appropriating locally delivered services for private benefit.

8.3 Reflections on the conceptual framework

This section returns to the key debates on the politics of social protection implementation framework guiding this research. It explores how politics shape state capacity and state performance in decentralised implementation of the programme. It begins by detailing key explanations relating to the core variables of the framework. These individual variables are subsequently mapped to demonstrate the causal mechanisms that flow between them to influence state performance. The sections below demonstrate the extent to which the conceptual framework has achieved its outlined objectives.

8.3.1 State capacity and state performance

As highlighted in Chapter 3, at the heart of the successful implementation of new policies is the capacity of the state to constrain actions of actors legally and impartially in the state. Of equal

importance is the ability to demonstrate organisational competences through effectiveness in penetrating the depths of civil society within a given territorial boundary (Andrews et al., 2017). As vom Hau (2012) suggests, tracing variations in state capacity in social provisioning requires close attention to the specific characteristics of structures of state and relations in society. Centeno et al. (2017) make an analytical distinction between state capacity and state performance, with the latter conceptualised as the actual accomplishments of states. Thus, to arrive at an understanding of state performance, an appreciation of state capacity and politics and how they intertwine is critical.

In general, when Centeno et al.'s (2017) insights on state capacity leading to state performance are applied to the two regional cases in Ghana, the politics of social protection implementation framework performs well, but offers new insights into how state capacity shapes different dimensions of programme implementation in dissimilar ways. It also has salience for explaining the underlying drivers of variation in subnational state performance even beyond what the political-settlements literature offers, for instance. Specifically, it identifies competition between and within governing coalitions in the state and society as a major process shaping the deployment of state capacity and variation in state performance. Critically, the two identified underlying drivers of state capacity in the cases of the north and south of Ghana, legacies of state formation, and local configurations of power also mapped on to variations in grant delivery effectiveness, rate of coverage and targeting impartiality. That said, aside from the significant differences between regions in the north and south in terms of effectiveness, differences in impartiality between the regions were not significant. Rather, differences between districts within regions were significant in terms of the rate of coverage and impartiality. The fact that districts with limited threats of turnover experienced low coverage but more impartiality in targeting and vice versa suggests that the configuration of power plays a more significant role than state formation with regard to these dimensions of programme delivery (although this would need to be tested further in a wider range of districts with similar characteristics).

In terms of the two drivers of state performance – that is, the local configuration of power and state formation – while the former had clear implications for the rate of coverage and impartiality in targeting, the latter had demonstrable significance for effectiveness in respect of grant delivery. First, Centeno et al.'s (2017) approach acknowledges path dependency and context specificity as ingredients underpinning state performance. This was clearly consistent with the state-formation

literature (see Acemoglu et al., 2001, 2002; Lange and Rueschemeyer, 2005; Lange, 2009; Mahoney, 2010), which demonstrates that institutional factors have consequences for transformation in state capacities as well as influencing the provision of services. Second, the findings of this thesis have clearly demonstrated that political regimes and the threats they face influenced the pace of expansions, and impartiality in respect of the identification of eligible communities and households (Chapters 6 and 7). Centeno et al. (2017) suggest that deployment of state capacity to achieve social inclusion is a political and not a technocratic process, as it is subjected to the push and pull of politics. In their view, capable states do not simply dictate policies; they are deployed by political actors with political objectives. Political actors can do this only when they can mobilise powerful coalitions behind themselves.

Nevertheless, the findings suggest that although the conceptual framework presents a valuable launch pad for the study of state capacity and state performance, other factors also need to be accounted for, either within it (if possible, as perhaps with centre–local relations and party alignment) or alongside it (e.g., programme design). This thesis has demonstrated in Chapter 5 the need to acknowledge reforms in policy design, as this is not fully captured in the conceptual framework. Chapters 6 and 7 have also illustrated that centre–local relations and differences in the alignment between the party at the national and local levels are useful additions to the conceptual framework. This was perhaps due to Centeno et al.’s (2017) focus on national rather than subnational levels of governance.

8.3.2 Legacies of state formation and state performance

In respect of the historical/structural factors, this thesis has sought to prove that patterns of state formation contribute to explaining variations in state capacities, with implications for state performance. Centeno et al. (2017, p. 9, citing Collier & Collier, 1991) suggest that the tracing of state formation as a cause of state capacity draws from the acknowledgement that institutions originate at historically specifiable “critical junctures” where specific cleavages are possibly addressed. Mkandawire (2010, 2017) further suggests that historical processes such as patterns of colonialism and socioeconomic inequalities influenced the development of state capacity. Equally, the vast institutionalist literature on state-building in Africa (see Acemoglu et al., 2001, 2002; Lange & Rueschemeyer, 2005; Mahoney, 2010) suggests that the forms of incorporation in the colonial enterprise had implications for the development and subsequent deployment of state

capacities leading to performance. Hence, in African states where processes of colonial-era state formation took place primarily through the form of “decentralised despotism” (Mamdani, 1996), variation in subnational performance cannot be examined without a focus on historical state-capacity endowments.

In terms of the precise legacies of state formation, the findings of this thesis indicate that delivery of grants in the north and south of Ghana, respectively, generally fit the proposed framework. Overall, while low state formation characterised regions in the north, leading to less effectiveness, high state formation characterised regions in the south, leading to more effectiveness in grant delivery. Evans (1995, p. 11), for instance, suggests that “states vary markedly in their structures and relationships with societal actors and that different combination of these create different capacities for state action” (Evans, 1995, as cited in Houtzager & Moore, 2005, p. 16). In the African context, these findings are consistent with Herbst’s (2000) suggestions of the general inability of African states to integrate and project state power equally in the rural hinterlands. Equally, Mamdani (1996) suggests that “the fundamental consequence of colonial ‘indirect’ rule was the institutionalisation of a bifurcated state, with dichotomous types of state structures and modes of power”. Thus, colonial rule did not only make use of, but actually deepened, precolonial social cleavages and organisations as it differentially incorporated regions and ethnic groups into the colonial and imperial economy (Mahoney, 2000; MacLean, 2002; Boone, 2003; Lange, 2009; Sjögren, 2015).

This thesis, however, has found some relative differences in the degree of effectiveness in grant delivery even between sites with similar state formation. It has found that at the politically dominant site in the northern part of the country, delivery was more effective than at the politically competitive site in the same northern part of the country. A similar pattern was observed in the southern part of the country, where implementation was more effective at the politically dominant than the politically competitive site. These findings are consistent with Centeno et al.’s (2017) argument that political conditions mediate the extent of deployment of existing state capacity, leading to variations in performance.

The thesis has found that other critical but supplemental factors in the conceptual framework that shaped the observed variations in the two regions and four sites included, but were not limited to, experience with management of donor-funded programmes and reforms in policy design. Though

reform in policy design remains critical in delivery of transfers across regions, the framework did not fully capture it. Without considering reforms in policy design, it would be difficult to explain, for instance, shifts from manual to electronic transfer delivery systems across regions, with implications for variations in effectiveness between the north and the south. Thus, reforms in policy design need to be factored into the framework to stimulate a more nuanced analysis.

8.3.3 Local power configurations and state performance

Turning to the role of power configurations as a reflection of the interplay of political competition and power relations and institutions, this thesis has shown that local configurations of power directly shape whether residual levels of state capacity lead to state performance. Centeno et al. (2017) suggest that political coalitions and their degree of time horizons influence not only state performance directly but also the deployment of state capacity. They further argue that “the performance of a state cannot be separated from the demands placed on it, the resistance it might meet in accomplishing its goals, and the degree of support or cooperation it enjoys” (Centeno et al., 2017, p. 12). Thus, in assessing state performance, it is essential to critically analyse the specific coalitions and their roles in promoting or undermining the deployment of state capacity.

In terms of the specific local power configuration, the findings of this thesis indicate that each of the four case studies generally fits in ways hypothesised by the conceptual framework. Overall, the two sites with limited threats of turnover were characterised by low coverage but more impartiality in targeting. This contrasted with the situation at the two other sites with enhanced threats of turnover, which were characterised by high coverage but less impartiality in targeting. These findings were consistent with the existing works of Huber and Stephens (2012) and more recently Handley (2017).

This thesis also found significant differences between the forms of governing coalitions in the north and the south of the country, with implications for variations in impartiality in targeting. For instance, despite both politically dominant and competitive sites in the north and south being characterised by limited threats of turnovers and longer time horizons, those in the north possessed less fragmentary local power configurations compared to their southern counterparts, leading to increasing bottom-up pressures and social expectations. This resulted in a low rate of coverage but more impartiality in targeting. This was largely a result of the presence of hierarchical traditional leaders with strong political connections, to intervene in the exercise of political and bureaucratic

authority. While the state-formation literature (or its path-dependency variants) (see Crook & Addo-Fening, 2005; Lange, 2009, 2005; Baldwin & Strauss, 2019) suggests a largely positive relationships between the presence of TAs and service delivery, this study demonstrates that the existence of such authorities can help form the kinds of local power configurations that can undermine social-services delivery outcomes and promote local capture of decentralised policies. This was consistent with studies by Ubink and Amanor (2008), Standing (2014) and Ubink (2018).

The thesis has established that, in general, centre–local relations and political mis/alignment constituted critical unexpected factors that shaped the local configuration of power, with implications for variations in impartiality in targeting. That aside, the extent of poverty incidence, ethnic homogeneity and heterogeneity, as well as the presence of other donor-funded programmes, constituted supplemental factors that shaped variations in effectiveness in respect of coverage and impartiality in targeting.

8.3.4 Centre–local relations, and political mis/alignment and state performance

As previously stated in Section 8.3.1, the thesis has emphasised the interplay of centre–local relations and political mis/alignment between the party at the national and local state as useful additions to the conceptual framework. Though the literature on the political economy of decentralisation has underscored centre–local relations as critical to the success or failure of local public service and social provisioning including on Ghana, via Crook (2017, 2003), this literature has yet to focus on decentralised cash transfers, which are a different type of social service involving different types of delivery mechanisms. The few exceptions are Nichter (2014) and more recently Niedzwiecki (2018), who both focus on Latin American cases.

The findings of this thesis, as set out in Chapters 6 and 7, show that local power configurations interplayed with relations of local and centre-based elites in shaping the level of impartiality in coverage and targeting. In dominant districts, local elites tended to tap into their central-level contacts to enhance the capacity and autonomy of technocrats in decision- making over the programme against other local elites, while at the same time boosting the capacity of local bureaucrats to promote impartiality. In the competitive districts, however, local elites employed their contacts at the centre of the state to lobby for more LEAP communities and households in response to bottom-up pressures and the local expectations of constituents. They also tapped into connections with centre-based elites to undermine other local elites and/or usurp the autonomy of

local bureaucrats. This they did by threatening them with transfers to remote districts with limited social infrastructure or reporting them to their superiors at the national level (Brierley, 2016). This ultimately influenced the application of targeting mechanisms in conformity with established guidelines, with implications for variations in impartiality (Chapter 5).

That said, Chapters 5–7 of the thesis have revealed that differences in alignment between the party at the national and district level, respectively, have important implications for resource allocation and adequacy, the competences of bureaucrats, intra-state relations and state–society relations. In the districts with a history of political dominance, partisan alignment between local and national politicians resulted in increased impartiality and effectiveness, as local actors used their central-level connections to create buffers for local bureaucrats using the formal channels of the state. Though this slowed the pace of expansion of the programmes, bureaucrats had greater freedom to implement targeting following the laid-down criteria. In competitive districts, however, political alignment sometimes further deepened local intra-party factional divisions, as ruling party elites jostled to take advantage of the alignment with the ruling party and national resources to outcompete other factions or oust them from power during internal party primaries. Consequently, local elites deployed their connections with national-level patrons to lobby for more allocations. The end results were higher coverage and more frequent expansions of the programme. This is consistent with the existing literature in Ghana, which has highlighted a strong association between political alignment and clientelist decentralised allocation and distribution of resources (see Brierley, 2010; Lindberg, 2010; Banful, 2011; Abdulai & Hickey, 2016; Ampratwum et al., 2019). Thus, a clear understanding of the causal links between centre–local relations and political mis/alignment on the one hand, and the local configuration of power on the other, reveals how the distribution of power and the power relations between multiple layers and arenas of the state underpin unevenness in state performance.

8.4 Contributions, policy implications and future research

8.4.1 Contributions

This thesis makes several contributions to the study of state–society relations and, more specifically, to the decentralised implementation of social-protection policies in the Global South as a pathway to addressing poverty. The thesis has proposed a new conceptual framework that enables the combined coverage of two significant drivers of state performance and has

subsequently tested it through systematic application to case studies in the northern and southern parts of Ghana. Application of the conceptual framework, although to four typologically chosen cases studies, has generated significant insights for Ghana's social-protection reforms, answering key unexplained features of observed implementation trajectories and establishing the groundwork for more extensive studies in this vein.

It is worth emphasising that while this thesis has demonstrated how the new framework's explanatory capabilities could be augmented to offer added value, it has also highlighted the obvious limitations of the framework to fully explain variations in performance irrespective of how much it is readjusted. This is a result of the small number of cases tested in the framework as well as the range of exogenous factors that cannot be fully captured by the framework. The small number of cases prevents the study from making excessive claims, as it is difficult to rule out that the observed "patterns" might be shaped by more idiosyncratic factors that might have little to do with the broad structural explanations outlined in the framework.

This comparative analysis has highlighted drivers of both bad and good performance in social-protection implementation. Through this focus on drivers of successful policy implementation in contexts with generally weak state capacities (Grindle, 1997; Tandler, 1997), the study has contributed to the literature that attempts to isolate pathways to developing state capacity even in the midst of bureaucratic failures (Evans, 1995; Crook, 2010; Porter & Watts, 2017). Also, by focusing on implementation failures even in relatively well-endowed states with strong state capacities (Dunleavy, 1995), this thesis has clearly articulated the connections between agential and contemporary issues, such as political leadership, political coalitions and electoral incentives, and structural and historical factors, such as colonialism, historical inheritance, "initial conditions" and state-capacity drivers leading to state performance. Accordingly, the unique contributions of this thesis lie in the examination of micro and macro drivers of good and poor performance in the emerging social-protection sector in the Global South.

Turning further to Ghana-specific contributions, the thesis has contributed to a new and more systematic approach to studying the politics of social-protection implementation in Ghana (see Handa et al., 2014; Abane, 2017; Angeles et al., 2017; Abdulai, 2019). It has focused on implementation, which is an important complement to the existing social-protection research focused on institutional drivers of adoption of the LEAP cash-transfer programme. In addition, the

thesis has offered a more politically nuanced account of LEAP implementation than hitherto existed in the literature.

Further, this thesis has contributed to the established scholarship on the political economy of decentralised service delivery (see Crook & Sverrisson, 2001; Ayee & Crook, 2003; Crawford, 2004, 2009, 2010; Ampratwum & Armah-Attoh, 2010; Crook, 2017; Ampratwum et al., 2019) and the nascent social-protection delivery literature (see Lynch, 2013; Afrane, 2015; Effa Adu-Okoree, 2016; Fusheini, 2016; Abane, 2017) through a focus on mechanisms for the targeting and delivery of cash transfers as a means of addressing poverty. This is essential to redress the balance, given the focus of the emerging literature on the implementation of public-works programmes.

Finally, by focusing on the subnational/decentralised state, the study has highlighted the local power configuration, which is often neglected in the burgeoning PSA literature in Global South countries.

8.4.2 Policy implications

The reintroduction of social-protection reforms in Ghana at the turn of the new millennium resulted in the formal launching of the flagship LEAP cash-transfer programme in 2007. These reforms have, however, raised critical questions about the capacity of the state to deliver on its mandate of promoting social inclusion, maintaining organisational competences and incorporating non-state actors within the state. It has also provoked questions about what kinds of political regimes and coalitions are required to target the poor in more socially inclusive ways.

First, the study has demonstrated that the enduring influence of legacies of state formation is critical in determining the organisational competences and institutional capacity required to implement LEAP effectively. Hence, the Ghanaian authorities need to rebalance state capacity across the country through greater investments in the north. This may include, at a general level, the provision of telecoms, electricity, roads and transport networks. At the specific level, it may involve the recruitment and training of Social Welfare and Community Development Organisation (SWCDO) officials as well as the provision of logistics such as vehicles and ICT equipment, among others. Additionally, the findings of the thesis have demonstrated that, to ensure more effective decentralised LEAP implementation, donors and Development Partner (DPs) need to move beyond their support for the national LEAP policymakers and coordinators and instead offer

support to the dispersed decentralised units of the state. Development partners need to work with the centre but target and channel resources directly to support the districts, to ensure that the capacity at the base of the pyramid is enhanced to undertake implementation evenly, leading to a more balanced and sustained performance across the regions.

Second, the study has found that the nature of political configurations has influenced variation in the degrees of effectiveness beyond the foundation laid by the legacies of state formation. This finding suggests that local political conditions appear to influence the extent to which existing state capacity can be deployed in ways that promote or undermine effective delivery. There is thus the need for district authorities to build and coordinate a stronger coalition of technocratic elites to oversee implementation at the district and community levels. Where the local configuration of power works against the formation of a technocratic coalition, then the programme design could be strengthened to offset these conditions. That said, expanding the coalitions at the local level to incorporate the broader mass of civil-society organisations even beyond traditional leaders and professional representatives could reduce the power of politically partisan actors over targeting decisions, which could undermine impartiality. In contrast, a stronger coalition of political, bureaucratic and civil-society actors in overcoming institutional constraints, as demonstrated in the recent work of Bukenya and Golooba-Mutebi (2017), Ampratwum et al. (2019) and Hickey and Hossain (2019), could enhance the enforcement of programme guidelines, leading to the delivery of higher-quality social services.

Third, in respect of selection and targeting at the district and community levels, the local political conditions in the district facilitated the political manipulation and patronage-based distribution of LEAP to varying degrees at all sites. Whereas limited threats undermined tendencies for political manipulation, enhanced threats facilitated political interference and patronage distribution of the programme, to the exclusion of the poor and vulnerable households. There is a need to institute mechanisms to reduce the negative influence of political and social actors on the partiality of programmes, for instance, policy-design mechanisms that can “reach around” such actors. The research suggests that the current attempt by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP), through the advice and support of DPs, to recentralise major aspects of targeting, enrolment and grant delivery through reliance on external resources and capacities is commendable and needs to be sustained for the long term, as happened in the cases of Brazil and Mexico (Lindert et al., 2007; Nichter, 2014; Niedzwiecki, 2018). Nonetheless, for improved LEAP

performance, there is a need to continue to enhance the capacity of the local SWCDOs, District LEAP Implementation Committee (DLICs) and Community LEAP Implementation Committee (CLICs) to ensure greater accountability and local supervision in the implementation processes undertaken by even external parties. Again, the availability of adequate information on the implementation process could improve participation and promote more self-selection at the community level while removing the shadow cast over the programme as a reward for political loyalty. There is need for DPs to resource the district- and community-level actors in civil society and the media to promote information on household qualification criteria as well as the reasoning underpinning the distribution of LEAP grants to the socially excluded.

The LMS should institute procedures to make processes of entry into the programme more transparent, provide user-friendly bureaucratic channels for appeals and solving problems, and institute more robust and inclusive oversight mechanisms. Moreover, the LMS must inform the public about these measures. A clear message outlining the terms of a programme is a critical first step in lowering clientelistic tendencies, which feeds on the misapprehensions and susceptibilities of low-income populations. Residents of local communities must be encouraged to use several channels to report suspected fraud, including a toll-free number to national level officials.

There is further need to ensure that the Ghana National Household Registry, which incorporates the information of poor households in the country, is completed, and put in the control of technocrats from the LMS and MoGCSP. The database must also be made accessible to the public so that other state institutions and civil society at the national and district level can match the persons identified as truly poor people in their communities. Importantly, there is need for the LMS to undertake a biannual audit of all LEAP households to ensure that non-qualified and deceased beneficiaries are removed from the LEAP database to promote transparency and accountability in the implementation of the programme.

Next, this thesis has demonstrated that decentralised provisioning without adequate checks and balances may simply enhance the power of local political and societal elites. As illustrated at the two sites in the southern part of Ghana (where colonial adaptations to precolonial social structures had enhanced the holding power of hierarchical traditional authority *vis-à-vis* the state), local chiefs attempted at varying levels to capture not only the local LEAP structures but also the direct benefits of the programme for their dependents. There is a need, therefore, for broader stakeholder

engagement at the national and district level, including the wider civil society, to boost public ownership and avoid the tendency for capture by a few societal and political elites. The experiences of the dominant districts reveal that inclusive coalitions of non-partisan Assembly Members (AMs) and religious, ethnic and tribal/traditional leaders, in addition to the technocrats, could help implementation in order to achieve its intended mandate. There is a need for alternative strategies for different power configurations. It is also essential for local bureaucrats and non-state actors/parties to help bridge the information gaps, especially in the ethnically and religiously diverse northern parts of Ghana, to increase the social inclusion of the programme.

Finally, given the embeddedness of centre–local relations in Ghana’s decentralised implementation system, striking the right balance between centre and local-governance control over LEAP implementation process is critical to prevent both local capture and, at the same time, total recentralisation of the programme. Further, to limit the influence of political mis/alignment, the state, through the MoGCSP, must design intergovernmental institutional arrangements and transfers to minimise political interference over decision-making and the allocation of resources across governmental levels. Importantly, DPs must adopt more pragmatic measures in dealing with the state at the national and subnational levels to avoid stoking the existing problematic subnational political-economy dynamics resulting from national–local political mis/alignment.

8.4.3 Areas for future research

This thesis has argued that variations in LEAP implementation performance in Ghana depend on the intricate relations between local power configuration and legacies of state formation. It is worth noting, however, that the conceptual framework guiding this thesis has only been tested against a limited number of cases, with $n = 1$ for each type of district. As such, the first challenge might be to test the framework much more widely across a larger number of these types to see if the findings hold. This is particularly critical for external validity.

That said, the findings of this thesis align with arguments, by scholars such as Centeno et al. (2017) and Niedzwiecki (2018), that variation in subnational implementation performance of social policies results from the interplay of political conditions ranging from “political coalitions”, “political alignment” and “policy legacies” to “territorial infrastructures”. As demonstrated in the complex interplay of centre–local relations on the one hand and local configuration of power on the other, the findings illustrate the continuous embeddedness of subnational arenas of states

within national state processes, with implications for variations in performance. This suggests that the initial framework requires some modifications and much more generalised testing to fully capture and enhance the understanding of how these centre-level factors interplay with local factors to shape uneven performance. In this regard, extended research on the power relations between subnational and national political elites is critical to fully comprehend the role of political coalitions in decentralised social-protection implementation, notably in the light of the indigenisation of existing pilot programmes.

This thesis has further highlighted the critical role of political mis/alignment on subnational performance. In the wake of ongoing local-governance reforms in Ghana to make the election of local councillors and chief executives partisan, the role of political mis/alignment on subnational performance cannot be discounted. The introduction of partisanship at the local-government level no doubt has implications for the complexity of local politics, but also for organisational competences. Hence, an avenue for future research is to examine the influence of political mis/alignment on implementation mechanisms and performance in other areas of social protection, education and health in a context of local-based political actors elected on partisan platforms.

The framework in Chapter 3 also suggests that local clientelist politics shapes variations in LEAP performance. In this context, the framework needs to be tested in other domains and with regard to different types of public goods, to see if it still holds in other areas of local implementation. This research could be applied to trace the recent passage of the Pre-Tertiary Education Bill and further decentralisation of health delivery in Ghana. The proposed legislation to further decentralise the implementation of the education and health sectors compares well with decentralised LEAP implementation and is thus likely to be subjected to local clientelist politics, as the current research has demonstrated.

Given that various instances of political and local capture characterised LEAP implementation, an avenue for further research is to explore the influence of hierarchical TAs and local political leaders in capturing and manipulating decentralised social-protection provisioning. The framework in Chapter 3 suggests that intra-state and state–society relations remain critical in shaping both state capacity and the local power configuration, with implications for performance. Consequently, an understanding of how territorial authorities with varying holding power, and

interacting with local political elites, shape variation in social-protection performance in Ghana and other Global South contexts is essential.

Finally, insights from the politics of social protection implementation framework could be tested more broadly in Ghana and in other Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries, particularly those seeking to expand their social-protection reforms. Such studies could take the form of comparative subnational country case analysis compared to this current comparative single-country case study. Kenya and Zambia, for instance, fit a competitive clientelist political system. Thus, their subnational social-protection implementation reforms offer an excellent comparison to the Ghana experience. Alternatively, a comparative research effort could explore the implementation of subnational social-protection reforms in Ghana's competitive clientelist system and Uganda's and Tanzania's dominant party systems. These kinds of studies would certainly be interesting, given not only their different legacies of state formation but, more critically, the distinct local power dynamics resulting from the interactions of their national and decentralised governance architectures.

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APPENDIX 1: LIST OF LEAP DISTRICTS AND COMMUNITIES IN THE UPPER WEST AND CENTRAL REGIONS

REGION	DISTRICT	NUMBER OF COMMUNITIES	YEAR TAGARTED
Upper West	Daffiama Bussie Issa	6	2008
Upper West	Daffiama Bussie Issa	9	2014
Upper West	Daffiama Bussie Issa	29	2015
Upper West	Jirapa	7	2008
Upper West	Jirapa	48	2015
Upper West	Lambussie Karni	27	2008
Upper West	Lambussie Karni	37	2015
Upper West	Lawra	27	2008
Upper West	Lawra	30	2016
Upper West	Nadowli Kaleo	4	2008
Upper West	Nadowli Kaleo	10	2014
Upper West	Nadowli Kaleo	50	2015
Upper West	Nandom	7	2008
Upper West	Nandom	39	2015
Upper West	Sissala East	19	2008
Upper West	Sissala East	32	2015
Upper West	Sissala West	18	2008
Upper West	Sissala West	17	2014
Upper West	Sissala West	50	2015
Upper West	Wa	5	2008
Upper West	Wa	47	2015
Upper West	Wa East	15	2008
Upper West	Wa East	20	2012
Upper West	Wa East	32	2014
Upper West	Wa East	14	2015
Upper West	Wa West	17	2008
Upper West	Wa West	30	2016

REGION	DISTRICT	NUMBER OF COMMUNITIES	YEAR TAGARTED
Central	Agona East	6	2008
Central	Agona West	22	2008
Central	Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam	17	2008
Central	Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa	10	2008
Central	Assin North	37	2008
Central	Assin South	40	2008
Central	Cape Coast	19	2008
Central	Gomoa West	30	2008
Central	Komenda-Edina-Egyafo-Abirem	28	2008
Central	Twifo-Ati Mokwa	14	2008
Central	Twifo-Heman-Lower Denkyira	12	2008
Central	Ekumfi	6	2012
Central	Mfantseman	10	2012
Central	Abura-Asebu-Kwamankese	21	2014
Central	Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam	11	2014
Central	Ekumfi	10	2014
Central	Mfantseman	18	2014
Central	Agona East	17	2015
Central	Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam	11	2015
Central	Assin North	12	2015
Central	Assin South	13	2015
Central	Ewutu Senya	13	2015
Central	Gomoa West	12	2015
Central	Komenda-Edina-Egyafo-Abirem	1	2015
Central	Twifo-Ati Mokwa	7	2015
Central	Twifo-Heman-Lower Denkyira	7	2015
Central	Upper Denkyira East	14	2015
Central	Upper Denkyira West	8	2015
Central	Abura-Asebu-Kwamankese	2	2016
Central	Effutu	30	2016
Central	Ewutu Senya East	29	2016
Central	Gomoa East	30	2016
Central	Komenda-Edina-Egyafo-Abirem	1	2016

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

List of in-depth interviews at national level

No.	Interview ID	Description of key informant	Location	Date
1	LMS01	Bureaucrat at LMS I-W	Accra	March 19, 2018
2	LMS02	Bureaucrat at LMS II-T	Accra	March 09, 2018
3	LMS03	Former bureaucrats at LMS-F	Accra	March 08, 2018
4	LMS04	Former bureaucrats at LMS-D	Accra	March 08, 2018
5	LMS05	Former bureaucrats at LMS	Accra	March 26, 2018
6	LMS06	DP social protection expert I-S	Accra	April 13, 2018
7	LMS07	DP social protection expert II-M	Accra	April 12, 2018
8	LMS07	DP social protection expert III-S	Accra	March 27, 2018
9	LMS08	CSO social protection expert I-G	Accra	March 22, 2018
10	LMS09	Academic social protection expert II-R	Accra	March 23, 2018
11	LMS010	National social protection expert I-M	Accra	April 11, 2018

List of In-Depth Interviews and Focus Group Discussions in Gomoa West District (GWD)

No.	Interview ID	Description of key informant	Location	Date
1	GWMP02	Former member of parliament for Gomoa West (2012-2016)	Accra	April 30, 2020
2	GWAM01	District Chief Executives (2017-date)	Apam	April 27, 2020
3	GWAM02	Former District Chief Executives (2009-2016)	Apam	April 18, 2020
4	GWAM03	Presiding members of District Assembly	Apam	April 26, 2018
5	GWAM04	former Presiding members of District Assembly (2012-2016)	Apam	April 27, 2018
6	GWAM05	Chairperson of social Services committee	Tarkwa	April 26, 2018
7	GWBT01	District Director of Social Welfare (2012-date)	Apam	April 23, 26, 2018
8	GWBT02	Deputy District Director of Social Welfare (2012-date)	Apam	April 19, 2018
9	GWBT03	Deputy District coordinating directors	Apam	April 16, 2018
10	GWBT04	Dep Planning officer	Apam	April 16, 2018
11	GWBT05	NHIS director	Apam	April 16, 2020
12	GWBT06	NCCE director	Apam	April 16, 2020
13	GWAM06	NDC Chairperson/ former government appointee	Mozano	April 26, 2018
14	GWBT07	NDC Youth organiser/ Bureaucrat	Apam	April 09,18, 2020
15	GWAM08	NPP women organiser/ school feeding leader	Nduem	April 21, 2018
16	GWAM09	NDC women organiser/ former government appointee	Apam	April 24, 2018
17	GWAM10	NDC communications officer	Ankamu	April 26, 2018
18	GWAM11	NPP Chairperson/ current DCE	Apam	April 27, 2018
19	GWTA01	Ankamu Traditional area	Ankamu	April 18, 2020
20	GWTA02	Ajumako Traditional area	Ajumako	April 18, 2020
21	GWTA03	Baamuhene of Onyadze	Onyadze	April 18, 2020
22	GWTA04	Queen mothers' association	Apam	April 18, 2020
23	GWAM12	Asempanye	Asempanye	April 20, 2018
24	GWAM13	Mampong	Mampong	April 25, 2018
25	GWAM14	Denkyira	Denkyira	April 25, 2018
26	GWAM15	Dunkwa/Mankessim	Dunkwa	April 25, 2018
27	GWAM16	Nduwem	Nduwem	April 21, 2018
28	GWAM17	Dawurampong	Dawurampong	April 21, 2018
29	GWAM18	Tarkwa	Tarkwa	April 25, 2018
30	GWCL01	Ajumako Ansah	Ajumako Ansah	April 20, 2018
31	GWCL02	Bibiano	Bibiano	April 20, 2018
32	GWCL03	Nduem	Nduem	April 21, 2018
33	GWCL04	Asempanye	Asempanye	April 20, 2020
34	GWCL05	Gomoa Mankessim	Mankessim	April 25, 2018
35	GWCL06	Mampong	Mampong	April 25, 2018

36	GWCL07	Akwakrom	Akwakrom	April 19, 2018
37	GWCL08	Dawurampong	Dawurampong	April 21, 2018
38	GWCL09	Kokofu	Kokofu	April 19, 2018
39	GWCL10	Gomoa Nkran	Gomoa Nkran	April 21, 2018
40	GWCL11	Obokrom	Obokrom	April 19, 2018
41	GWBN01	Denkyira 01	Denkyira 01	April 19, 2018
42	GWBN02	Denkyira 01	Denkyira 01	April 19, 2018
43	GWBN03	Mampong	Mampong	April 25, 2018
44	GWBN04	Denkyira 01	Denkyira 01	April 25, 2018
45	GWBN05	Denkyira 02	Denkyira 02	April 25, 2018
46	GWBN06	Kokofu	Kokofu	April 19, 2018
47	GWBN08	Kumasi 01	Kumasi 01	April 19, 2018
48	GWBN09	Kumasi 02	Kumasi 02	April 19, 2018
49	GWBN10	Obokrom	Obokrom	April 19, 2018
50	GWBN11	Ajumako Ansah	Ajumako	April 20, 2018
1	GWFGD01	Ajumako	Ajumako	April 19, 2018
2	GWFGD02	Gomoa Damang	Damang	April 17, 2018
3	GWFGD03	Gomoa Dawurampong	Dawurampong	April 21, 2018
4	GWFGD04	Gomoa Bewadze	Bewadze	April 16, 2020
5	GWFGD05	Gomoa Damang	Damang	April 17, 2018
6	GWFGD06	Denkyira	Denkyira	April 19, 2018
7	GWFGD07	Gomoa Kumasi	Kumasi	April 19, 2018
8	GWFGD08	Gomoa Obokrom	Obokrom	April 19, 2018

List of in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions in Assin South District (ASD)

No.	Interview ID	Description of key informant	Location	Date
1	ASMP02	Former member of parliament for Assin South (2012-2016)	Accra	May 22, 2018
2	ASAM01	District Chief Executives (2017-date)/ former NPP chairperson	Nsuaem/Kyekyere	May 19, 2018
3	ASAM02	Former District Chief Executives (2009-2012)	Nsuaem/Kyekyere	May 21, 2018
4	ASAM04	Presiding members of District Assembly/ Jakai Assembly member	Nyankumasi	May 17, 2018
5	ASAM05	former Presiding members of District Assembly (2012-2016)/ Assembly member for Ochiso	Nsuaem/Kyekyere	May 07, 2018
6	ASAM06	Chairperson of social Services committee/Assembly member for Tumforkor	Nsuaem/Kyekyere	May 19, 2018
7	ASBT01	District Directors of Social Welfare (2007-date)	Nsuaem/Kyekyere	May 18, 2018
8	ASBT02	Deputy District Directors of Social Welfare (2012-date)	Nsuaem/Kyekyere	May 07, 2018
9	ASBT03	Deputy District coordinating directors/school feeding coordinator	Nsuaem/Kyekyere	May 16, 2018
10	ASBT04	Planning officer	Nsuaem/Kyekyere	May 17, 2018
11	ASBT05	Information director	Nsuaem/Kyekyere	May 16, 2018
12	ASBT06	NHIS director/Assistant	Manso	May 17, 2018
13	ASBT07	Bank Officer	Nsuaem/Kyekyere	May 18, 2018
14	ASAM06	NDC Constituency Secretary/ former government appointee/ assembly member	Manso	May 07, 2018
15	ASAM07	NPP constituency treasurer and Assembly member for Kruwa	Kruwa	May 08, 2018
16	ASAM08	NPP constituency organiser and assembly member for Bosomadwe	Bosomadwe	May 09, 2018
17	ASTA01	AttendensuTraditional area	Assin Fosu	May 17, 2018
18	ASTA02	ApemanimTraditional area	Assin Praso	May 17, 2018
19	ASAM12	Akrofuom	Akrofuom	May 10, 2018
20	ASAM13	Dadieso	Dadieso	May 10, 2018
21	ASAM14	Ngresi/NPP polling station chairperson	Ngresi	May 09, 2018
22	ASAM15	Kwatta	Kwatta	May 09, 2018
23	ASCL01	Tabil former committee/ traditional authority representative	Tabil	May 07, 2018
24	ASCL01	Andoe/NDC polling station chairperson	Andoe	May 09, 2018
25	ASCL02	Ochiso/NDC polling station executive/	Ochiso	May 07, 2018
26	ASCL03	Sibinso former committee/ traditional authority representative	Sibinso	May 05, 2018
27	ASCL04	Akrofuom /NPP branch chairperson	Akrofuom	May 10, 2018
28	ASCL05	Kruwa	Kruwa	May 08, 2018

29	ASCL06	Jakai former committee/ traditional authority representative	Jakai	May 08, 2018
30	ASCL07	Besease	Besease	May 04, 2018
31	ASCL08	Dadieso/ NPP youth organiser	Dadieso	May 10, 2018
32	ASCL09	Ampemkrom/NDC polling station executive	Ampemkrom	May 08, 2018
33	ASCL10	Kwatta/ former committee member/NPP branch coordinator/ Traditional Authority secretary	Kwatta	May 03, 2018
34	ASCL11	Dominase/ Unit committee treasurer/Assin Adubiase NPP coordinator	Dominase	May 03, 2018
35	ASCL12	Assin Darman/traditional authority representative	Assin Darman	May 05, 2018
36	ASBN01	Besease	Besease	May 04, 2018
37	ASBN02	Dadieso	Dadieso	May 10, 2018
38	ASBN03	Akrofuom	Akrofuom	May 10, 2018
39	ASBN04	Tabil	Tabil	May 07, 2018
40	ASBN05	Andoe	Andoe	May 09, 2018
41	ASBN06	Kruwa	Kruwa	May 02, 2018
42	ASBN07	Ngresi	Ngresi	May 05, 2018
43	ASFGD01	Besease	Besease	May 04, 2018
44	ASFGD02	Assin Damang	Assin Damang	May 05, 2018
45	ASFGD03	Tabil	Tabil	May 07, 2018

List of in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions in Wa West District (WWD)

No.	Interview ID	Description of key informant	Location	Date
1	WW01	Unit committee members	Balamboi	June 21, 2018
2	WWCL02	CLIC leader	Balleo Filli	June 19, 2018
3	WWB03	Beneficiary	Chogsia	June 15, 2018
4	WWCL02	CLIC leader	Chogsia	June 15, 2018
5	WWAM05	NDC politician and assembly member	Dabo	June 21, 2018
6	WWAM06	Former NDC DCE	Wechiau	June 18, 2018
7	WWAM07	NDC politician and assembly member	Dorimon	June 19, 2018
8	WWCL08	CLIC leader	Dorimon	June 19, 2018
9	WWAM09	Former Assembly member	Dorimon	June 19, 2018
10	WWAM10	Former Presiding member and DCE	Wechiau	June 20, 2018
11	WWCL11	Former CLIC and Assembly Member	Ga	June 15, 2018
12	WWBT12	SWCDO bureaucrat	Wechiau	June 20, 2018
13	WWCL13	CLIC leader	Kulingu	June 12, 2018
14	WWAM14	Assembly Member and CLIC leader	Lassie	June 14, 2018
15	WWBT13	SWCDO bureaucrat	Wechiau	June 12, 14, 2018
16	WWCL16	Traditional leaders and CLIC leader	Maase	June 13, 2018
17	WWBT17	Bureaucrat and CLIC leader	Mette	June 19, 2018
18	WWCL18	CLIC member	Naha	June 15, 2018
19	WWCL19	CLIC leader	Nyoli	June 14, 2018
20	WWAM20	Assembly Member	Nyoli	June 14, 2018
21	WWCL21	CLIC leader	Piisie	June 13, 2018
22	WWB22	beneficiary	Piisie	June 13, 2018
23	WWCL23	CLIC Leader	Poyentanga	June 15, 2018
24	WWCL24	CLIC Leader	Siriyiri	June 12, 2018
25	WWB25	Beneficiary	Siriyiri	June 12, 2018
26	WWCL26	Assembly member and CLIC leader	Tanina	June 21, 2018
27	WWAM27	Bureaucrat and assembly member and CFP	Tokali	June 20, 2018
28	WWCL28	CFP	Varempare	June 14, 2018
29	WWCL29	CFP	Vieri	June 14, 2018
30	WWTA 30	Traditional leader and former assembly appointee	Wechiau	June 14, 2018
31	WWTA31	Traditional leader	Tokali	June 19, 2018
Focus group discussion				
1	FGDWW01	Beneficiaries	Wechiau Boa 1	June 21, 2018
2	FGDWW02	Beneficiaries	Lassie	June 14, 2018
3	FGDWW03	Beneficiaries	Kulingu	June 12, 2018
4	FGD WW04	Beneficiaries	Vieri	June 14, 2018
5	FGD WW05	Beneficiaries	Tokali	June 20, 2018

List of in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions in Sissala East District (SED)

No.	Interview ID	Description of key informant	Location	Date
1	SSAM01	PNC Politician and Assembly member	Tumu	July 15, 2018
2	SSAM02	NDC politician and Assembly member	Bendei	July 19, 2018
3	SSCL01	NDC politician and CLIC leader	Bendei	July 14, 2018
4	SSAM03	PNC politician and assembly member	Bujan	July 13, 2018
5	SSCL02	NDC politician and CLIC leader	Bujan	July 18, 2018
6	SSAM04	DCE, NPP politician and assembly member	Challu	July 20, 2018
7	SSCL03	CLIC leader	Challu	July 13, 2018
8	SSCL04	NDC politician and CLIC Leader	Dangi	July 13, 2018
9	SSBT01	Local SWCDO bureaucrat	Tumu	July 22, 2018
10	SSBT02	Local SWCDO bureaucrat	Tumu	July 13-15, 2018
11	SSAM13	NPP politician and Assembly member	Gwossi/ Santejan	July 19, 2018
12	SSBT03	Information Service Department bureaucrat	Tumu	July 18-19, 2018
13	SSCL05	NPP local politician and CLIC leader	Jijen	July 14, 2018
14	SSAM04	NPP politician and assembly member	Kong	July 20, 2018
15	SSCL06	NDC member and CLIC leader	Kong	July 12, 2018
16	SSCL07	NDC member and CLIC leader	Kowie	July 12, 2018
17	SSAM05	NDC politician and Assembly member	Kupon	July 19, 2018
18	SSTA01	Traditional Leader	Kupon	July 19, 2018
19	SSAM06	NDC politician and Assembly member	Nmanduano	July 18, 2018
20	SSAM07	NDC politician and Assembly member	Nabulo	July 19, 2018
21	SSCL09	NDC member and CLIC leader	Peign	July 13, 2018
22	SSAM14	Presiding Member	Tumu	July 19, 2018
23	SSBT04	Planning department Bureaucrat	Tumu	July 20, 2018
24	SSBT05	Planning department Bureaucrat	Tumu	July 21, 2018
25	SSAM08	NDC politician and Assembly member	Sakalu	July 20, 2018
25	SSCL10	NDC member and CLIC leader	Sakalu	July 13, 2018
27	SSAM09	NDC politician and Assembly member	Sakai	July 13, 2018
28	SSAM10	NDC politician and Assembly member	Tarsor	July 19, 2018
29	SSCL11	NDC member and CLIC leader	Tarsor	July 13, 2018
30	SSTA02	Traditional Leader and LEAP beneficiary	Timbaka	July 21, 2018
31	SSAM11	Assembly member	Tumu	July 19, 2018
32	SSAM12	NDC politician and Assembly member	Vamboi	July 20, 2018
Focus group discussion				
1	SSFGD02	Beneficiaries	Challu	July 13, 2018
2	SSFGD01	Beneficiaries	Bendei	July 14, 2018
3	SSFGD03	Beneficiaries	Dangi	July 14, 2018
4	SSFGD04	Beneficiaries	Kong	July 12, 2018
5	SSFGD05	Beneficiaries	Nmanduano	July 13, 2018
6	SSFGD06	Beneficiaries	Peign	July 13, 2018

7	SSFGD07	Beneficiaries	Sakalu	July 12, 2018
8	SSFGD08	Beneficiaries	Tarsor	July 12, 2018
9	SSFGD09	Beneficiaries	Vamboi	July 14, 2018
10	SSFGD10	Beneficiaries	Kowie	July 12, 2018

APPENDIX 3: SAMPLE INTERVIEW AND FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDES

MODULE 1: DISTRICT-LEVEL OFFICIALS

This module has three in-depth interviews with district Assembly officials (DCDs, Assembly members, PMs, DLIC and DSW officials) and political actors at the district level (MPs, DCEs and political party executives) level. Discuss between yourselves and agree which researcher will carry out which interview.

Good day. My name is (SURVEYOR'S NAME). I am working on behalf of a research project being carried out by Edward Ampratwum of the University of Manchester, UK. The research is an independent research project being undertaken as part of a doctoral research and has no ties to any political party or any government or institution in Ghana.

Mr Ampratwum is conducting in in-depth research in **Four** selected districts in two regions in Ghana to systematically assess the implementation of the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty programme as a social-protection mechanism to alleviate the impacts of extreme poverty on households. The results will help improve on the policymaking process towards enhancing social protection and development in Ghana and also enrich the data for the writing of the doctoral thesis.

The research is completely confidential and the researcher will not collect your name or identifiable information. Your participation in this research is completely voluntary and there is no penalty should you decide not to participate. At any time, you may choose not to answer any or all questions. You will receive **no compensation** for participating. The IN-DEPTH interview will take approximately **40 minutes**.

[If respondent agrees to proceed] *We can do this interview in Twi, Ewe, Ga, Dagbani or English. Please, tell me which language you would like to use.* [If interviewer does not speak selected language, then make an appointment for later in the day with a member of the team who speaks that language.]

1.1 District Assembly officials (DCE, DCD and MDA bureaucrats, PMs, Assembly members, members of SSC)

1.1.1 Development plans and trajectories

- What are the main development priorities for this district/community in the next 5 years? (economic, social, environmental)
- Have any outside investors come to the community? What investments have they made? (agriculture, industry, business)
- Are there many migrants coming to the community? From where and to do what activities?
- Do many people migrate out of the community?
- Which groups tend to leave? (e.g., youth, landless, lacking livestock, male/female)
- Where are the most common destinations?
- Is urban migration a major concern for the government?
- Does the community take any initiatives to limit migration to towns and cities?
- Can you walk me through the role district assemblies (DAs) play in social-protection provisioning? **Probe for the following:** the principles/philosophy underlying the social-protection regime in your district? Existing mechanisms for promoting support to vulnerable people in this district; who (MPs, Assembly members and DCEs, NGOs/FBOs)? Where? How and what process? key factors/considerations that inform the provisioning of support for vulnerable persons in the district; additional considerations /requirements placed on potential

beneficiaries of the district-sponsored social-protection programmes (e.g. , voting preferences, party memberships etc.?)

- Can you walk me through the Local Government Service link-ups in the provision of social-protection services at the district level? **Probe for the following:** What are the key gaps? Capacity of districts of social-welfare officials or District Social Services Committee members? How do coordinating directors at the MMDAs and planning officers facilitate effective implementation of social protection when they report to different institutions at the national level? What are the missing links/disconnects between national and regional-/district-level systems of implementation?

RO initiative – follow-up questions

1.1.2 LEAP

- What are the main causes of poverty and vulnerability in this community?

Choose as many as are relevant and provide brief details

Cause	Details
Inadequate/unreliable rainfall	
Population growth	
Land shortages	
Soil erosion	
Loss of productive land (infrastructure development, urban expansion, dams, plantations)	
Dependency syndrome	
Other	

- Can you tell me something about the implementation of the LEAP programme in this district? **Probe for the following:** Can you recount how the district came to be associated with the programme? Who (MPs, Assembly members and DCEs, NGOs/FBOs) were the key actors facilitating its introduction and implementation? Where? How and what process?
- Can you walk me through the role DAs play in the implementation of LEAP? Targeting, governance, payment processes. **Probe for the following:** How does the involvement of the DA and its structures promote/undermine effective implementation of LEAP? In what ways do capacity challenges at district level affect targeting of beneficiaries?
- What are the main challenges that you face in implementing LEAP? How could these be addressed?
- Is your performance as a district official assessed with Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)? If so, what are the targets in the KPIs in relation to poverty and vulnerability reduction and LEAP?
- Do you have specific targets related to LEAP?
- What are the possible rewards for meeting your targets?
- What are the possible penalties for failing to meet them?

1.2 DISTRICT SOCIAL WELFARE/LEAP IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER/DLIC MEMBERS

Begin with the social-welfare desk. However, some of the following questions may require further interviews with relevant officials such as the district social-welfare office and members of committees on LEAP transfers.

1.2.1 Administration and performance

- Does the district leadership divide responsibility for particular communities within the district? If so, what are the responsibilities of these people?

- Is your performance assessed with Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)? If so, what are the targets in the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)?
- Can you walk me through the role district assemblies (DAs) play in social-protection provisioning? **Probe for the following:** The principles/philosophy underlying the social-protection regime in your district? Existing mechanisms for promoting support to vulnerable people in this district; who (MPs, Assembly members and DCEs, NGOs/FBOs)? Where? How and what process? Key factors/considerations that inform the provisioning of support for vulnerable persons in the district; additional considerations/requirements placed on potential beneficiaries of the district sponsored social-protection programmes (e.g., voting preferences, party memberships etc.?)
- Can you walk me through the Local Government Service link-ups in the provision of social-protection services at the district level? **Probe for the following:** What are the key gaps? Capacity of districts of social-welfare officials or District Social Services Committee members? How do coordinating directors at the MMDAs and planning officers facilitate effective implementation of social protection when they report to different institutions at the national level? What are the missing links/disconnects between national and regional-/district-level systems of implementation?
- Can you walk me through the process for relocating LEAP from MMYE/MELR to MoGCSP? How has the relocation of the programme from MMYE to MoGCSP shaped the implementation of the programme? **Probe for the following:** staff strength, recruitment vs. turnover; impact on reporting, coordination and links to complementary services to beneficiaries; capacity of DSW personnel.

1.2.2 LEAP background information

- Can you tell me something about the implementation of the LEAP programme in this district? **Probe for the following:** Can you recount how the district came to be associated with the programme? Who (MPs, Assembly members and DCEs, NGOs/FBOs) were the key actors facilitating its introduction and implementation? Where? How and what process?
- Are there specific targets related to LEAP? If so, what?
- Are you required to meet any other targets or quotas in addition to the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)?
- What are the possible rewards for meeting your targets?
- What are the possible penalties for failing to meet them?
- What are the main challenges that you face in implementing LEAP?

RO initiative – follow-up questions

1.2.3 Targeting

- [Can you explain to me the process of geographical targeting in the district and community? **Probe for the following:** Who (MPs, Assembly members and DCEs?) Where? How and what process? List of considerations informing targeting? How likely is the process to be influenced by political considerations of the constituency or the region?
- [Can you take us through the community selection and validation of LEAP beneficiaries? Who is involved? How and at what stage? **Probe for the following:** The extent to which political considerations and power arrangements in the district/community influences the process. To what extent could beneficiary names sent for DSW confirmation change due to influence of politics?]
- Are all the people that require support included in LEAP? Does the region set a limit for the number of communities and beneficiaries covered in this district?
- How do you respond when there are insufficient places on LEAP to cover vulnerable communities/households in need?
- Are you under pressure to expand access to LEAP from the communities?
- Is there currently a limit to the number of members of a household covered by LEAP? Does this present any problems?
- Did you previously try to implement full household targeting in this district? Did you face any challenges in doing this?

- Is the targeting system effective in identifying the poorest and most food insecure? What are the problems?
- Can you walk me through the role DAs play in the implementation of LEAP? Targeting, governance, payment processes. **Probe for the following:** How does the involvement of the DA and its structures promote/undermine effective implementation of LEAP? In what ways do capacity challenges at district level affect targeting of beneficiaries?
- Can you comment on the DLIC? **Probe for the following:** Are DLICs utilised in the targeting process? What role do they play? Who are the key members and what are their relations to political and powerful elites? What factors inform the selection? Are they motivated in the functioning of the programme in any way? How do members of the DLIC relate to the political and powerful actors at the district and community level in LEAP targeting, registration, payment and monitoring of conditionalities of beneficiaries?
- To what extent are community members involved in the selection of potential beneficiaries? **Probe for the following:** Can you take me through the functioning of CLICs and what type of capacity and resources they are equipped with to undertake their mandates, i.e., mobilisation of potential beneficiaries, sensitisation of beneficiaries and facilitating payment of beneficiaries? what considerations in your view shape the work of CLIC members in the implementation of their mandates?
- Is there any attempt to balance the involvement of different ethnic groups and political activists in LEAP? If so, who does this?
- Are Traditional Authorities or religious leaders involved in targeting? How influential are they in decision-making of who gets targeted?

RO initiative – follow-up questions

1.2.4 Appeals system

- How often does the district social-welfare office receive appeals from the community case management/Appeals Committee that they have been unable to resolve?
 - What proportion of these cases are based on recommendations of political elites (DCEs, MPs, government appointees, political party executives)?
 - What proportion of potential LEAP beneficiary cases are based on the recommendations of non-political actors (Assembly members, Unit Committee members, Traditional Authorities and CSOs (FBOs and NGOs)?
- What sorts of cases are they unable to resolve and why?
- How does the district handle these cases? What capacities exist at the subnational level in implementing case management?
- Has the single-window case-management system influenced the processes in any way? **Probe for the following:** challenges and successes?

RO initiative – follow-up questions

1.2.5 Governance structures

- Can you comment on the DLIC? **Probe for the following:** Are DLICs utilised in the targeting process? What role do they play? Who are the key members and what are their relations to political and powerful elites? What factors inform the selection? Are they motivated in the functioning of the programme in any way? How do members of the DLIC relate to the political and powerful actors at the district and community level in LEAP targeting, registration, payment and monitoring of conditionalities of beneficiaries?
- To what extent are community members involved in the selection of potential beneficiaries? **Probe for the following:** Can you take me through the functioning of CLICs and what type of capacity and resources they are equipped with to undertake their mandates, i.e., mobilisation of potential beneficiaries, sensitisation of beneficiaries and facilitating payment of beneficiaries? What

considerations in your view shape the work of CLIC members in the implementation of their mandates?

- What role do these CLICs/DLICs play in these activities?
- Do CLICs/DLICs play any role in monitoring progress?
- Do CLICs/DLICs play any role in linking LEAP beneficiaries to complementary services and productive/financial inclusion programmes?

RO initiative – follow-up questions

1.2.6 Payment/Addressing leakages

- Can you comment on the LEAP payment system? How and how often are payments made? And who is involved in the processes (DCEs, MPs, DSWs, TAs, political party executives, Assembly members)? Who facilitates the receipt of benefits at the community levels, for example?
- Can you describe the process for ensuring the implementation of an accurate and effective payment mechanism to beneficiaries? What are the operational challenges of getting LEAP grants to beneficiaries at the district/community level? Give examples.
- Can you comment on the ways in which the introduction of new payment systems [influenced by ICT-mobile money and Ezwich has shaped the quality and quantity of benefits received at the community level? **Probe for the following:** What existed before? Have the changes reduced leakages in transfers to beneficiaries?
- What forms of pressures do implementors encounter when there are delays in the payment of LEAP transfer amounts to beneficiaries? Who [MPs and local political actors, DCEs, Assembly members] and when and under what conditions?
- Can you share your experience on how beneficiaries perceive the LEAP transfer amounts they receive? **Probe for the following:** Who in their view is providing the resources for LEAP? Do beneficiaries attribute their being on the programme to the lobbying of politicians in their communities? Do beneficiaries perceive that a change in government could affect their receipt of the grant? Or their presence on the programme [LIU/DSW]?

1.2.7 Links to complementary service, livelihoods and graduation

- Do you have specific performance targets for linking LEAP beneficiaries to complementary service such as NHIS, birth registration, school feeding, etc.? **PROBE:** What are the main challenges to raising NHIS registration and renewal among LEAP households?
 - How much of your Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of DSW officers is tied to this mandate?
 - Were you set specific targets set for linking beneficiaries to productive and financial inclusive programmes (crops and livestock; off-farm income generation; employment) in the district? How much of your Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) is associated with this mandate?
 - Do livelihood activities focus on just one member of a household or can several members be involved in different activities?
 - Are men and women involved in different sorts of livelihood activities? **Probe:** In a male-headed household, who is the focus of the livelihood activities? In a female-headed household, who is the focus of the livelihood activities?
 - Do you feel that you have received adequate training on these different pathways to be able to carry out your duties effectively?
 - Do you have sufficient resources to carry out your duties effectively?
 - Are the other organisations involved in these pathways functioning effectively?
 - Crop and livestock: Farmer Training Centres; Cooperatives Agency; MFIs?
 - Were you set specific targets for graduation in the past?
 - Are there enough LEAP beneficiaries who are ready to graduate to meet your targets? If not, what did you do?

- What considerations are informing the reassessment and re-certification of current LEAP beneficiaries?

1.2.8 Graduation of beneficiaries

- Can you walk me through the strategies for exiting current beneficiaries of LEAP? **Probe for the following:** What livelihood opportunities have been created for existing beneficiaries to successfully graduate from the programme? What types of productive capacities have been given to terminal beneficiaries over the period of implementation?
- Who, and what transparency processes, would be employed in the re-certification of LEAP beneficiaries? Which factors would be considered? **Probe for the following:** Is there a sense that the current beneficiaries have adequately been empowered out of poverty or they were politically recruited from the league of party supporters at the district levels?

MODULE 2: COMMUNITY OFFICIALS

This module has seven in-depth interviews with community-level officials and members of CLICS/Community Focal Persons (CFLs). Discuss and agree which researcher will carry out which interview.

1.3 Community social-protection team

Interview the community social-protection officer and CFL manager/CLIC chair (either jointly or together). In some cases, they may refer you to specialists (e.g., DAs, HEWs) working on particular issues. If so, ask relevant questions to these people.

1.3.1 Community social-protection structure

- How many subunits are there? What role do they play in community organisation?
- How do district assembly and political party structures interact at the community level?
- What roles do Assembly members play in delivering development interventions (social-protection programmes) at the community level?
- What roles do Unit Committee members play in delivering development interventions (social-protection programmes) at the community level?
- What lower-level party structures are in place?
- Are the structures working as planned? If not what are the problems?
- What role do party executives play in delivering development interventions (social-protection programmes) at the community level?

RO initiative – follow-up questions

1.3.2 Community leadership (Assembly men and women and Unit Committee members, party executives)

- How long have you been in office?
- Who was your predecessor and why did s/he leave?
- What are the main development priorities for this community in the next 5 years? (economic, social, environmental)
- What specific challenges does the community face?
- How could the community administration be improved?
- Is your performance as community leadership (CSWO, CFP, Assembly men and Unit Committee members, party executives) assessed with a balanced scorecard? If so, what are the targets in the scorecard? (*clarify whether these are the same or different for the chair and manager*)
- Are you required to meet any other targets or quotas other than a scorecard?
- Do you have specific targets related to the LEAP beneficiaries?
- What are the possible rewards for meeting your targets?
- What are the possible penalties for failing to meet them?

RO initiative – follow-up questions

1.3.3 LEAP

- What are the main causes of poverty and vulnerability in this community?
Choose as many as are relevant and provide brief details

Cause	Details
Inadequate/unreliable rainfall	
Population growth	
Land shortages	
Soil erosion	
Loss of productive land (infrastructure development, urban expansion, dams, plantations)	
Dependency syndrome	
Other	

- Can you tell me something about the implementation of the LEAP programme in this community?
Probe for the following: Can you recount how the community came to be associated with the programme? Who (MPs, Assembly members and DCEs, NGOs/FBOs) were the key actors facilitating its introduction and implementation? Where? How and what process?
- Can you walk me through the role assembly members/MPs, DCEs and party executives play in the implementation of LEAP? Targeting, governance, payment processes? **Probe for the following:** How does the involvement of the DA and its structures promote/undermine effective implementation of LEAP? In what ways do capacity challenges at district level affect targeting of beneficiaries?
- What are the main challenges that you face in implementing LEAP? How could these be addressed?
- Is your performance as a district official assessed with Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)? If so, what are the targets in the KPIs in relation to poverty and vulnerability reduction and LEAP?
- Do you have specific targets related to LEAP?
- What are the possible rewards for meeting your targets?
- What are the possible penalties for failing to meet them?

RO initiative – follow-up questions

Is there a Community LEAP Implementation Committee? Who are the members of the Community LEAP Implementation Committee? How many CLIC members are there currently in the community? Do they have particular specialisations?

Role (e.g., Chairman, DA, HEW)	Name	How were they selected?

- What are the main responsibilities of this CLIC ? Are CLIC members responsible for particular parts of the community?
- What roles do CLIC members play in the targeting of LEAP beneficiaries?
 - How well is the CLIC structure functioning at present?
 - How could it be improved?
- How well is the CLIC working?
- What specific challenges does it face?
- How could these be addressed?

RO initiative – follow-up questions

Who are the members of the community case-management/Appeals Committee?

Role	Name	How were they selected?
Community Council member		
DA		
1–2 members of CCC	1. 2.	
Social worker		
Male elder representative		
Female elder representative		
Others		

- How well is the Committee working?
- What specific challenges does it face?
- How could these be addressed?

RO initiative – follow-up questions

1.4 Community Focal Person (CFP)/CSWO

This could be conducted jointly with more than one DA at the same time, or with multiple interviews and conversations with different DAs.

1.4.1 Administration and performance

- Where are you from originally?
- How long have you been in your current role? Is it your first posting or were you in another community previously?
- What are the main challenges you face in relation to social welfare? What could be done to make this work better?
- What are the main challenges you face in relation to LEAP? What could be done to make this work better?
- Is your performance assessed with a balanced scorecard?
- Are there specific targets in your scorecard related to LEAP? If so, what are they?
- What proportion of your total scorecard is linked to LEAP?
- Are these targets reasonable given capacity constraints? (financial and human resources)
- Do you have a copy of the Programme Implementation Manual? Is it easy to understand? Do you use it regularly in your activities?
- Do Traditional Authorities or religious leaders play any role in LEAP administration? If so what? (e.g., targeting communities and beneficiaries, organising payments, handling appeals)
- What activities are being undertaken to promote the productive and financial inclusion of LEAP beneficiaries? By whom?
- What are the main challenges to raising LEAP enrolment? What could be done to make this work better?

RO initiative – follow-up questions

1.4.2 Targeting

- [Can you explain to me the process of community targeting in the district and community? **Probe for the following:** Who (MPs, Assembly members and DCEs?) Where? How and what process? List of considerations informing targeting? How likely is the process to be influenced by political considerations of the constituency or the region?
- [Can you take us through the community validation of LEAP beneficiaries? Who is involved? How and at what stage? **Probe for the following:** The extent to which political considerations and power arrangements in the district/community influences the process. To what extent could beneficiary names sent for DSW confirmation change due to the influence of politics?]
- Are all the people that require support included in LEAP? Does the district set a limit for the number of beneficiaries covered in this community?
- How effectively is the Community-based Targeting in this community?
- What are the main challenges that it faces?

- Are all the people that require support included in LEAP? Does the region set a limit for the number covered?
- How do you respond when there are insufficient places on LEAP to cover everyone in need?
- Are you under pressure to expand access to LEAP? Who from?
- Are CLICs utilised in the targeting process? What role do they play?
- How well is the CLIC system operating in the community?
- What activities do they carry out? Is the targeting system effective in identifying the poorest and most food insecure? What are the problems?
- Do the CLICs have specific responsibilities for LEAP implementation? How do people feel about their contributions to the CLIC?
- Is there currently a limit to the number of members of a household covered by LEAP? Does this present any problems?
- Did you previously try to implement full household targeting? Did you face any challenges in doing this?
- Is there any attempt to balance the involvement of different communities/ethnic groups, party members in LEAP? If so, who does this?
- Are Traditional Authorities or religious leaders involved in targeting? How influential are they in decision-making?
- How do LEAP participants view the programme?
 - As a right to which they are entitled?
 - As a gift from the government?
 - As an exchange? What are they expected to do in return?

RO initiative – follow-up questions

1.4.3 Appeals system

- How well is the Community Appeals Committee working?
- When people dispute the targeting system, do they file an appeal with the appeals committee? Or do they approach other influential people? (Traditional Authorities or religious leaders, political leaders)
- How does the CLIC/community handle these cases? What capacities exist at the subnational level in implementing case management?
- Do Traditional Authorities or religious leaders play any role in the appeals system? If so, what?
- Are many unresolved appeals passed to the district? What ones? **Probe for the following:** Challenges and successes?

RO initiative – follow-up questions

1.4.4 Transfers/Payments

- Who receives the transfers in a household? Is it always the household head for the whole household or those that engage in public works?
- Can you comment on the LEAP payment system? How and how often are payments made? And who is involved in the processes (DCE, MP, DSW, TA, political party executives, Assembly members)? Who facilitates the receipt of benefits at the community levels, for example?
- Can you describe the process for ensuring the implementation of an accurate and effective payment mechanism to beneficiaries? What are the operational challenges of getting LEAP grants to beneficiaries at the district/community level? Give examples.

- Can you comment on the ways in which the introduction of new payment systems [influenced by ICT-mobile money and E-ZWICH] shaped the quality and quantity of benefits received at the community level? **Probe for the following:** What existed before? Have the changes reduced leakages in transfers to beneficiaries?
- What forms of pressures do implementors encounter when there are delays in the payment of LEAP transfer amounts to beneficiaries? Who [MPs and local political actors, DCEs, Assembly members] and when and under what conditions?
- Can you share your experience on how beneficiaries perceive the LEAP transfer amounts they receive? **Probe for the following:** Who in their view is providing the resources for LEAP? Do beneficiaries attribute their being on the programme to the lobbying of politicians in their communities? Do beneficiaries perceive that a change in government could affect their receipt of the grant? Or their presence on the programme?

RO initiative – follow-up questions

1.4.5 Governance structures

- Can you comment on the CLICs? **Probe for the following:** Are CLICs utilised in the targeting process? What role do they play? Who are the key members and what are their relations to political and powerful elites? What factors inform the selection? Are they motivated in the functioning of the programme in any way? How do members of the CLIC relate to the political and powerful actors at the district and community level in LEAP targeting, registration, payment and monitoring of conditionalities of beneficiaries?
- To what extent are community members involved in the selection of potential beneficiaries? **Probe for the following:** Can you take me through the functioning of CLICs and what type of capacity and resources they are equipped with to undertake their mandates, i.e., mobilisation of potential beneficiaries, sensitisation of beneficiaries and facilitating payment of beneficiaries? What considerations in your view shape the work of CLIC members in the implementation of their mandates?
 - What role do these CLICs play in these activities?
 - Do CLICs play any role in monitoring progress?
 - Do CLICs play any role in linking LEAP beneficiaries to complementary services and productive/financial inclusion programmes?

RO initiative – follow-up questions

1.4.6 Links to complementary services and programmes

- Do you have any responsibility for promoting enrolment in the NHIS birth registration, school feeding etc. among LEAP beneficiaries? If so, what activities? **Probe for the following:** What are the main challenges to raising NHIS registration and renewal among LEAP households?
- Are there specific targets in your balanced scorecard related to the NHIS? If so, what targets and what proportion of the total score?
- Are LEAP recipients required to register to join the NHIS in order to receive care?
- Are LEAP recipients required to renew their NHIS membership at a charge or for free?
- Do you have any responsibility for delivering political messages to the community in addition to your development work?

RO initiative – follow-up questions

1.4.7 Links to livelihoods

- Were you set specific targets set for linking beneficiaries to productive and financial inclusive programmes (crops and livestock; off-farm income generation; employment) in the district? How much of your Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) is associated with this mandate?
- Do livelihoods activities focus on just one member of a household or can several members be involved in different activities?
- Are men and women involved in different sorts of livelihood activities? Probe: In a male-headed household, who is the focus of the livelihood activities? In a female-headed household, who is the focus of the livelihood activities?
- Do you feel that you have received adequate training on these different pathways to be able to carry out your duties effectively?
- Do you have sufficient resources to carry out your duties effectively?
- Are the other organisations involved in these pathways functioning effectively?
 - Crop and livestock: Farmer Training Centres; Cooperatives Agency; MFIs?

Graduation

- Were you set specific targets set for graduation in the past?
- Are there enough LEAP beneficiaries who are ready to graduate to meet your targets? If not, what did you do?
- What considerations are informing the reassessment and re-certification of current LEAP beneficiaries?

1.5 Members of Community LEAP Implementation Committee (CLIC)

Choose one or more of each of the male and female elected representatives on the Community LEAP Implementation Committee. This should be someone who has been on the CLIC for an extended period and has good knowledge of its operation. The male researcher should interview the male representative and the female researcher should interview the female representative.

1.5.1 Roles and responsibilities

- How long have you been working on the CLIC?
- How were you selected for the committee?
- Where do you get information about the roles and responsibilities of the committee?
- If necessary, prompt for: DAs, training, Programme Implementation Manual.
- Do you have a copy of the Programme Implementation Manual? Is it easy to understand? Do you use it regularly in your activities?

RO initiative – follow-up questions

1.5.2 Targeting

- How effectively is the CLIC working in this community?
- What are the main challenges that it faces?
- Are all the people that require support included in LEAP?

- How do you respond when there are insufficient places on LEAP to cover everyone in need?
- Are you under pressure to expand access to LEAP? Who from?
- Do people approach you to try to influence the decision-making process? (e.g., family, friends, individuals, elders, clan leaders, etc.)
- Are DLICs and CLICs utilised in the targeting process? What role do they play?
- Is there currently a limit to the number of members of a household covered by LEAP? Does this present any problems?
- Did you previously try to implement full family targeting? Did you face any challenges in doing this?
- How long do LEAP participants usually stay on the programme?
- Have LEAP members ever been rotated on and off the programme from year to year? Why is this the case?
- Is there any attempt to balance the involvement of different ethnic groups and political party supporters in the LEAP? If so, who does this?
- Are Traditional Authorities, opinion leaders or religious leaders involved in targeting? How influential are they in decision-making?
- How do LEAP participants view the programme?
 - As a right to which they are entitled?
 - As a gift from the government?
 - As an exchange? What are they expected to do in return?
- Are there discussions about reassessment and re-certification of LEAP households? What considerations are informing these decisions? **Probe for the following:** political etc.?
- What happens if a LEAP beneficiary is not adhering to their conditionalities? **Probe for the following:** birth registration, child labour, school attendance.

RO initiative – follow-up questions

MODULE 3: EXPLORATORY FOCUS GROUPS

This module comprises ten focus group discussions on LEAP. Each focus group should comprise approximately 6–8 participants, according to the descriptions below.

1.6 Focus groups on LEAP

Introduction

Greet them and introduce the research assistant and myself. Remind them of the issue of confidentiality and anonymity, which is fully explained in the information and consent form that they completed. Check if they have any questions from the information and consent form about the research. Remind them that they are free to decline to answer any of the questions or to leave the discussion at any time.

Objective

Here, the key focus for discussion is to gain insight into how people are selected for inclusion in the programme and who influences this process. This will involve a combination of the government officials and committees that have responsibilities in LEAP implementation. However, frequently, other influential individuals and groups in the community may seek to or succeed in influencing the process.

The key thing is to understand the process by which this happens – not just peoples’ perceptions of whether targeting is fair or not, but how different groups exert influence on decision-making. Make note of any particularly interesting points and examples that could be followed up in individual interviews.

Participants – Eight to ten people identified through key informants

1.6.1 LEAP participants

Introductory questions

- How well is the LEAP functioning in this district?
- If the programme stopped tomorrow, what do you think the people in the district would do?

Targeting

Community level

- How are communities selected to participate in LEAP in this district?
 - If necessary, prompt regarding the roles of the MPs, DCEs, DCDs, PMs, Assembly members, DSW officials, DLICs and community verification forums: public display of the list of participants and an open community meeting to discuss the list.
- Are any of the following involved in selecting LEAP communities?

- MPs and DCEs?
- PMs and Assembly members?
- DLICs and DSW officials?
- Political party representatives and other bureaucrats?
- Traditional Authorities or religious leaders and CBO executives?
- Is the community targeting process in this district fair? Why?
- Which considerations inform the processes for community selection? Do you think that LEAP selection is influenced by ethnicity, political or other considerations? If so, how?
- Do personal relationships (family, friends) and political (party membership) views influence LEAP community targeting?
- Are other requirements/demands made of programme communities to receive benefits? (party membership, involvement in other government programmes – credit, agricultural packages, health insurance etc.)
- What would happen if you did not do these things?
- If you had responsibility to distribute LEAP resources in this district, which communities would you include in the programme?
- Would you give every community a small amount or give a larger amount to just the poorest communities? Why?

Beneficiary household level

- How are people/households selected to participate in LEAP in this district?
 - If necessary, prompt regarding the roles of the DCEs, DAs, Assembly Members, Unit Committees, CLICs, CFPs, CBTs and community verification forums: public display of the list of participants and an open community meeting to discuss the list.
- Are any of the following involved in selecting LEAP participants?
 - MPs and DCEs?
 - PMs and Assembly members?
 - DLICs and DSW officials?
 - Political party representatives and other bureaucrats?
 - Traditional Authorities or religious leaders and CBO executives?
- Is the household targeting process in this district fair? Why?
- Do you think that LEAP selection is influenced by ethnicity, political or familial considerations? If so, how?
- Do personal relationships (family, friends) and political (party membership) views influence LEAP targeting?
- Are other requirements made of programme participants to receive benefits? (voting preferences, party membership and involvement in other government programmes – credit, agricultural packages, health insurance etc.)
- What would happen if you did not do these things?
- If you had responsibility to distribute LEAP resources in this community, who would you include in the programme?
- Would you give everyone a small amount or give a larger amount to just the poorest people? Why?

RO initiative – follow-up questions

Appeals

- If your community was excluded from the LEAP programme, to whom would you go to complain?
- If you were unhappy at being excluded from LEAP, to whom would you go to complain?

- If necessary, prompt for traditional authorities, opinion leaders, religious leaders, district social-welfare managers, DCEs, MPs, presiding members, local assembly members, government appointees at Assembly, DLIC members, CLIC members, CBO executives, Unit Committee member chairs, political party representatives, District Appeals Committee.
- Would these people be able to influence the decision?

RO initiative – follow-up questions

Complementary services/coordination

- Do programme administrators monitor household compliance with conditions (enrolment and renewal of NHIS, birth registration, education conditions, abstinence from child labour, among others)
 - Are there penalties for non-compliance with LEAP conditionalities? What are they?

RO initiative – follow-up questions

Perceptions of the programme

- How do voters in the districts where LEAP is implemented perceive their relationship with the state and the government in power? Do they feel obliged to the state or do they feel that it is in exchange for their previous political support?
- Who is responsible for the support you receive through LEAP?
 - If necessary, prompt for presidents, MPs, DCEs, DAs, Assembly members, Traditional Authorities or religious leaders, foreign donors, NGOs, ruling parties or national government.
- Why do you think that they provide this support?
- Do you think that they expect anything in return for this support?
 - If necessary, prompt for loyalty, party membership, voting preferences.
- For those who are not selected for LEAP, what alternative sources of support are there?

Conclusion

I have come to the end of my interview. Thanks again for your time. I hope I can come back to you if there are any issues I wish to clarify. (Let me confirm your primary contact information.)

I have been asking all the questions so far; at this point, I want to find out if you have any questions for me. Also, is there anybody else who is as knowledgeable as you that you might recommend that I talk to for the purposes of this research?