

Building Stronger Municipal Sub-Structures:

A Baseline Analysis of Kalpohini Zonal Council in the Sagnarigu Municipality



SPECIAL DEDICATION

This baseline report is specially dedicated to the memory of Rahat Is-mail, a former intern of Simba Ghana, whose dedication and contribution to this work will remain an important part of its history. Rahat played a valuable role in the implementation of this baseline study, particularly in data collection and data analysis. Through her commitment, enthusiasm, and willingness to contribute, she played a valuable role in generating and analyzing the evidence that informed this report. Sadly, Rahat passed away before the completion of this work. Her contribution, however, remains reflected in the findings and outputs of the study. We dedicate this report to her memory with sincere gratitude and appreciation for the contribution she made during her time with Simba Ghana. May Allah forgive her shortcomings, accept her good deeds, grant her Jannatul Firdaus, and grant strength and comfort to her family, colleagues, and loved ones. May her memory continue to inspire us.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides a baseline of the development profile, institutional capacity, and operational functionality of the Kalpohini Zonal Council (KZC) in the Sagnarigu Municipality. It contains findings from the Kalpohini and other Zonal Councils in the Sagnarigu Municipality.

The central findings are clear: The Zonal Councils have a relatively strong institutional foundation but weak operational conversion. The baseline recorded 100% respondent confirmation that the Kalpohini Zonal Council, for instance, met the required structural framework, while 89% of respondents had tertiary education and two-thirds had served for at least three years. Yet only 44% reported attending at least three Council meetings during the preceding twelve months; only 28% of administrative records were properly archived; 33% reported active participation in Annual Action Plan preparation; 22% reported active support for revenue mobilization/property-rating data collection; and only 28% reported that the relevant sub-committees met regularly.

Operational constraints are not simply a matter of member knowledge. 78% of respondents identified the lack of basic computer hardware, laptops and printers as a primary impediment; 83% identified the absence of reliable transportation as a major constraint to field monitoring, community engagement and revenue-related activities; and 72% of members consider internal sub-committees dormant or insufficiently functional. The evidence also highlights the need for standardized reporting, better record-keeping, targeted capacity strengthening, performance-linked administrative support, stronger revenue-data systems and formalized opportunities for Zonal Councils to feed prioritized local needs into the Assembly's Annual Action Plans.

The emerging picture is therefore best understood as an implementation gap rather than an institutional legitimacy gap. The KZC and other ZCs appear to possess the human capital and statutory platform required to perform their role, but lack the minimum operating environment, predictable routines, incentives, information systems and municipal integration mechanisms necessary to translate that platform into consistent results.

The report therefore recommends a practical transition from structural compliance to functional performance. The immediate priorities are:

- (i) equip the Zonal Council secretariat;
- (ii) establish a standardized meeting, reporting and records-management system;
- (iii) reactivate statutory sub-committees;
- (iv) formalize the ZC's role in participatory planning;
- (v) strengthen local revenue and property-data functions using appropriate digital tools;
- (vi) create a transparent mechanism for operational support and legitimate performance incentives; and
- (vii) establish a simple results-monitoring dashboard against which the Assembly and partners can track progress.

Contents

SPECIAL DEDICATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	iii
LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS.....	vi
1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT.....	1
2. PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND ANALYTICAL QUESTIONS	1
2.1 OBJECTIVES	1
2.2 ANALYTICAL QUESTIONS.....	1
3. DEVELOPMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT.....	2
3.1 SAGNARIGU MUNICIPALITY	2
3.2 DECENTRALIZATION AND LOCAL ACCOUNTABILITY	2
3.3 PUBLIC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND LOCAL REVENUE	2
3.4 STRATEGIC RELEVANCE TO THE 2026–2029 PLANNING CYCLE	2
4. METHODOLOGY AND EVIDENCE QUALITY	3
4.1 BASELINE DESIGN.....	3
4.2 STAKEHOLDER-ENGAGEMENT STREAM.....	3
4.3 EVIDENCE-STRENGTH CLASSIFICATION	3
4.4 IMPORTANT DATA-QUALITY OBSERVATIONS	4
5. FUNCTIONALITY BASELINE	4
5.1 RESPONDENT AND HUMAN-CAPITAL PROFILE	4
5.2 GOVERNANCE, PARTICIPATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY	5
5.3 REPORTING AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT	5
5.4 LOGISTICS AND PHYSICAL OPERATING ENVIRONMENT	5
5.5 SUB-COMMITTEE FUNCTIONALITY	6
5.6 PLANNING AND ANNUAL ACTION PLANS.....	6
5.7 REVENUE MOBILIZATION AND PROPERTY DATA.....	6
5.8 UNIT COMMITTEE COORDINATION	6
5.9 FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION	7
6. DEVELOPMENT PROFILE AND GOVERNANCE ECOSYSTEM	7
6.1 ZONAL COUNCILS AS A LOCAL INFORMATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY NODE	7
6.2 THE PLANNING–DATA–REVENUE NEXUS	7
6.3 DIGITAL MODERNIZATION OPPORTUNITY	7
6.4 INSTITUTIONAL INCENTIVES	7
6.5 INCLUSION AND CITIZEN RESPONSIVENESS	7
7. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT: WHAT THIS EVIDENCE ADDS	8
7.1 STAKEHOLDER-VALIDATED POLICY PROPOSITION	9

8. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION	9
8.1 FROM STRUCTURAL COMPLIANCE TO FUNCTIONAL CAPABILITY	9
8.2 FIVE INTERACTING BOTTLENECKS	9
8.3 A SYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE	9
8.4 WHAT SHOULD NOT BE INFERRED	9
9. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE SAGNARIGU MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY	10
10. PRIORITY INTERVENTION FRAMEWORK	10
10.1 RECOMMENDED MINIMUM FUNCTIONALITY STANDARD	11
11. IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP	12
11.1 GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENT FOR IMPLEMENTATION	13
12. BASELINE PERFORMANCE AND MONITORING FRAMEWORK	13
12.1 Proposed ZC Functionality Scorecard	14
13. RISKS, ASSUMPTIONS AND MITIGATION	15
14. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION	16
14.1 RECOMMENDATIONS	16
1: Address Logistical Challenges Through Targeted Resource Allocation	16
2: Institutionalize Standardized Administrative Reporting & Compliance	16
3: Improve Zonal Councils Sub-Committees' Meetings and Establish Performance Incentives	16
4: Leverage Sub-District Capacity for IGF Mobilization & Data-Driven Planning	16
14.2 CONCLUSION	16
References	17
Annex 1. Baseline Indicator Matrix	17

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1: EVIDENCE-STRENGTH CLASSIFICATION	3
Table 2: Demographic and Institutional Profile	5
Table 3: Stakeholder-Engagement Evidence and Its Implications for Zonal Council Functionality	8
Table 4: Priority Intervention Packages for Strengthening Zonal Council Functionality	10
Table 5: Recommended Minimum Functionality Standards for Zonal Councils	11
Table 6: Implementation Roadmap	12
Table 7: Baseline Performance and Monitoring Framework	13
Table 8: Proposed ZC Functionality Scorecard	14
Table 9: Risks, Assumptions And Mitigation	15
Table 10: Baseline Indicator Matrix	17
Figure 1: Demographic and Institutional Profile	4
Figure 2: Reported Priority Areas for Operational Support	6

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAP – Annual Action Plan

CDD-Ghana – Center for Democratic Development – Ghana

CoP – Community of Practice

E4D – Evidence for Development

GHS – Ghana Health Service

ICT – Information and Communication Technology

IGF – Internally Generated Funds

KZC – Kalpohini Zonal Council

MCE – Municipal Chief Executive

MPCU – Municipal Planning Coordinating Unit

MTDP – Medium-Term Development Plan

PFM – Public Financial Management

RAG – Red-Amber-Green

ZC – Zonal Council

ZCs – Zonal Councils

1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Ghana's decentralization framework is intended to bring public decision-making, planning, resource mobilization, and accountability closer to citizens. Article 240 of the 1992 Constitution provides for a decentralized local-government system. It emphasizes the transfer of functions, powers, responsibilities, and resources, adequate local-government capacity, sound financial bases, and effective citizen participation¹. The Local Governance Act, 2016 (Act 936), provides the principal statutory framework for local governance and sub-district structures².

Within this framework, Zonal Councils constitute an important interface between Municipal Assemblies and communities. Their practical value therefore depends not only on whether the structure exists, but on whether it can convene, document decisions, communicate with the Assembly, support planning and revenue functions, supervise or coordinate lower-level structures, and maintain a credible feedback loop with communities.

This baseline was undertaken to establish a practical evidence base for the **Evidence for Development (E4D) Project** and to inform policy engagement with duty bearers. The report brings two evidence streams together so that the baseline functions not only as a diagnostic document but also as a usable management and policy reference.

2. PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND ANALYTICAL QUESTIONS

The purpose of this report is to provide an evidence-based picture of Zonal Councils' functionality and to establish a clear baseline against which institutional strengthening can be monitored during the 2026–2029 development cycle.

2.1 OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the Zonal Councils' structural, governance, and operational functionality.
2. To document the Zonal Councils' development and institutional context within Sagnarigu Municipality.
3. To define priority interventions and practical performance indicators for the Sagnarigu Municipal Assembly, Zonal Councils, and development partners.

2.2 ANALYTICAL QUESTIONS

- a) Do the Councils have the structural and human-capital foundation required to perform their mandate?
- b) Are governance routines, meetings, records and reporting systems functioning consistently?
- c) Can the Councils perform their community engagement, planning, Unit Committee coordination and revenue-support functions?
- d) What logistical, institutional and incentive barriers explain the gap between potential and actual output?
- e) What actions can reasonably be taken by the Municipal Assembly and partners to move ZCs toward sustained functionality?

¹ Judicial Service of Ghana – Constitution, Decentralization and Local Government: <https://judicial.gov.gh/jsweb/index.php/decentralization-and-local-government>

² Local Government Service – Local Governance Act, 2016 (Act 936): <https://lgs.gov.gh/local-governance-act-of-2016-act-936/>

3. DEVELOPMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

3.1 SAGNARIGU MUNICIPALITY

Sagnarigu Municipality is a rapidly urbanizing area with a youthful population, a significant education and service-sector presence, agricultural activity, and expanding infrastructure. The 2021 Population and Housing Census recorded a municipal population of 341,711, comprising 278,865 urban residents and 62,846 rural residents³. This demographic scale and urban-rural mix increase the importance of effective local information systems, participatory planning, and responsive sub-district governance.

The municipality's development trajectory also makes spatially grounded information increasingly important. Land-use and spatial-planning legislation establishes a decentralized planning architecture for sustainable human settlements and spatial development⁴. For Zonal Councils, this reinforces the practical importance of community-level information, local mapping, settlement-development monitoring and systematic transmission of community priorities into municipal planning processes.

3.2 DECENTRALIZATION AND LOCAL ACCOUNTABILITY

The constitutional logic of decentralization links administrative decentralization to capacity, resources and citizen participation. The implication for Zonal Councils is significant: a Zonal Council that is legally constituted but lacks the means to convene, document, travel, collect information and communicate results represents incomplete decentralization in practice. The evidence therefore points to a resource-and-systems problem as much as a governance problem.

3.3 PUBLIC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND LOCAL REVENUE

The Public Financial Management Act, 2016 (Act 921), provides the statutory framework for managing public funds, assets, liabilities and related public-sector financial responsibilities⁵. The Zonal Councils' role in supporting revenue mobilization should therefore be framed within the Assembly's broader financial-control system. The Zonal Councils' ability to improve property-rating data collection and local revenue support is best implemented through clearly delegated tasks, capacity-building training, approved procedures, appropriate supervision and documented returns rather than informal collection arrangements.

3.4 STRATEGIC RELEVANCE TO THE 2026–2029 PLANNING CYCLE

This baseline positions the strengthening of Zonal Councils within Sagnarigu Municipality's 2026–2029 development Plan⁶, particularly around institutional accountability, participatory planning and digital modernization. The baseline consequently treats Zonal Councils' functionality as a cross-cutting governance enabler rather than a stand-alone administrative issue.

³ Ghana Statistical Service – 2021 PHC General Report, Population of Regions and Districts: https://www.statsghana.gov.gh/gssmain/fileUpload/pressrelease/2021%20PHC%20General%20Report%20Vol%203A_Population%20of%20Regions%20and%20Districts_181121.pdf

⁴ Land Use and Spatial Planning Authority – Land Use and Spatial Planning Act, 2016 (Act 925): <https://luspa.gov.gh/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/ACT-925-LUSP.pdf>

⁵ Ministry of Finance – Public Financial Management Act, 2016 (Act 921): <https://mofep.gov.gh/sites/default/files/acts/PUBLIC-FINANCIAL-MANAGEMENT-ACT-2016.pdf>

⁶ Sagnarigu Municipal Assembly. Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP) 2026–2029

4. METHODOLOGY AND EVIDENCE QUALITY

4.1 BASELINE DESIGN

The study used a descriptive cross-sectional design. It focused on the Kalpohini Zonal Council and collected primary data through a structured questionnaire administered using KoboCollect. The respondent pool comprised 18 participants drawn from the Council's Community of Practice (CoP) membership and related technical roles. A census approach was used for the members available during the baseline meeting.

4.2 STAKEHOLDER-ENGAGEMENT STREAM

The stakeholder-engagement stream added evidence and interpretation arising from engagement with key stakeholders, including Assembly Members and Unit Committee Members. However, the stakeholder engagement did not apply a separate stakeholder sample size, sampling frame, interview guide, or fieldwork dates. Therefore, this report does not treat the additional engagement evidence as a second quantitative survey. Instead, it uses the stakeholder engagement to validate, deepen, and operationalize the quantitative findings.

4.3 EVIDENCE-STRENGTH CLASSIFICATION

Table 1: EVIDENCE-STRENGTH CLASSIFICATION

EVIDENCE TYPE	EXAMPLES	USE IN THIS REPORT	CONFIDENCE
Quantitative baseline	18 respondents; percentages on meetings, records, equipment, transport, AAP, revenue and committees	Primary baseline indicators	High for the assessed respondent group; limited for wider generalization
Stakeholder engagement synthesis	Operational constraints; reporting; sub-committee functionality; policy priorities	Contextual validation and action design	Moderate; methodology for the engagement is not fully documented
Official secondary data	2021 Sagnarigu population; national decentralization and PFM framework	Context and legal/policy framing	High
Analytical interpretation	Implementation-gap diagnosis; prioritization; implementation roadmap	Decision support	Evidence-based inference

4.4 IMPORTANT DATA-QUALITY OBSERVATIONS

- a) The 18-person baseline is small and purposive in practical terms because it reflects CoP members available at the baseline meeting. Findings are therefore interpreted as a council-level diagnostic rather than a population survey.
- b) Several indicators are perception/self-report measures. They are useful for functionality diagnosis, but they are triangulated with administrative records, meeting minutes, bank statements, reporting logs, property-data records, and field-visit evidence.
- c) The term '100% compliance' is treated cautiously. The baseline establishes respondent confirmation of structural compliance, and it's not interpreted as an independent legal audit unless documentary verification has been completed.

5. FUNCTIONALITY BASELINE

5.1 RESPONDENT AND HUMAN-CAPITAL PROFILE

The KZC's membership profile is a major institutional asset. The baseline recorded 67% male and 33% female respondents; 83% were aged 30–49; 89% had tertiary education; and 66% had served for three years or more. The profile suggests a council with substantial technical and experiential capacity, although the gender distribution indicates scope for stronger gender balance in participation and leadership processes.

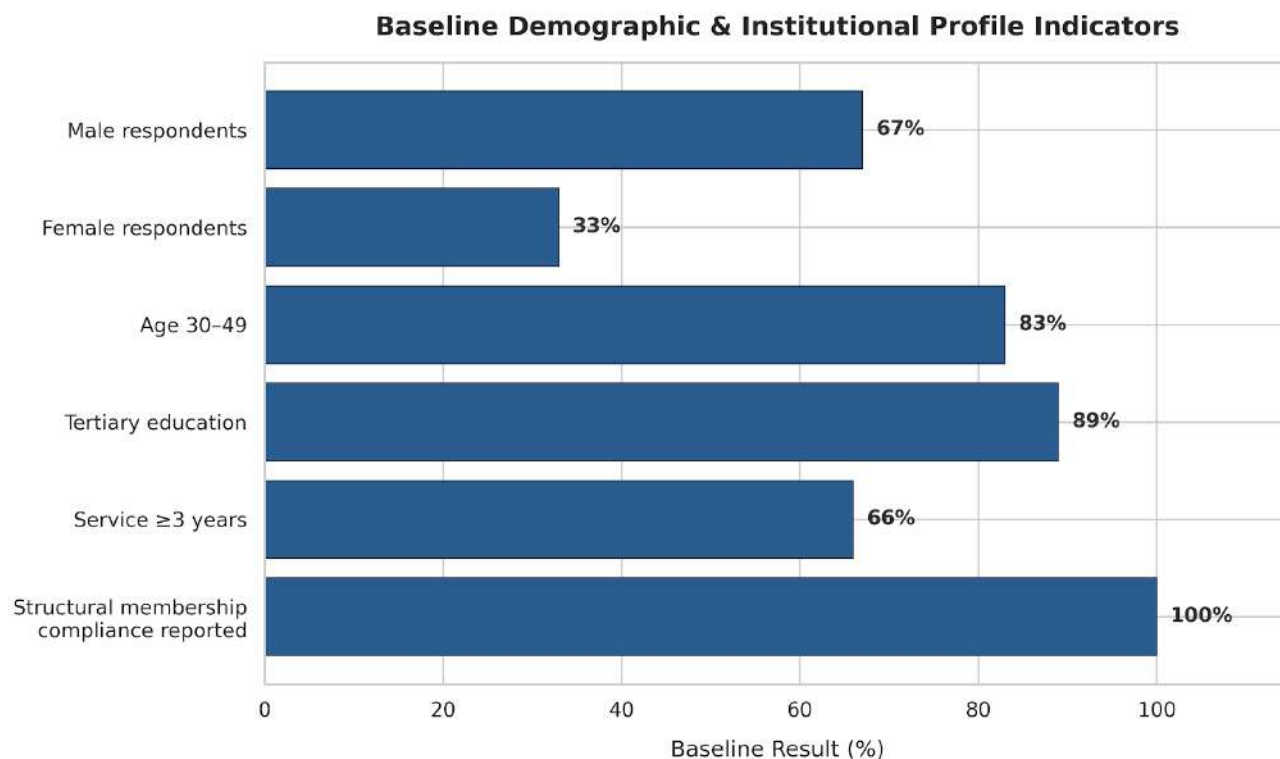


Figure 1: Demographic and Institutional Profile

Table 2: Demographic and Institutional Profile

INDICATOR	BASELINE RESULT	INTERPRETATION
Male respondents	67%	Male-dominated membership profile
Female respondents	33%	Meaningful female representation, but not parity
Age 30–49	83%	Predominantly working-age membership
Tertiary education	89%	Strong formal educational base
Service ≥ 3 years	66%	Considerable institutional experience
Structural membership compliance reported	100%	Strong formal institutional foundation; documentary verification recommended

5.2 GOVERNANCE, PARTICIPATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The strongest governance finding is the gap between formal structure and routine participation. Although all respondents confirmed the Council's required structure, only 44% reported attending three or more meetings in the preceding year. Only 28% of administrative records and meeting minutes were reported as properly archived. The Council therefore has a functioning institutional shell but insufficiently institutionalized routines for meeting, documenting, tracking, and communicating decisions.

5.3 REPORTING AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT

The evidence indicates that 44% of respondents did not know the required reporting frequency to the Municipal Assembly, while responses concerning actual reporting frequency were fragmented. The stakeholder engagement, however, reinforces the need for standardized administrative and financial reporting and recommends refresher training, record-keeping tools, and standardized physical filing systems. This combined evidence suggests that reporting weakness is primarily a systems problem: roles, calendars, templates, filing arrangements, and feedback mechanisms are not sufficiently institutionalized.

5.4 LOGISTICS AND PHYSICAL OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

The evidence confirms logistics as the most immediate operational bottleneck. 78% identified basic computer hardware, laptops, and printers as a primary impediment. 83% identified the absence of reliable transportation as a major constraint on field monitoring, community engagement, and revenue-related activity. The priority-ranking exercise placed office equipment, laptops, printers, and transport among the leading operational needs.

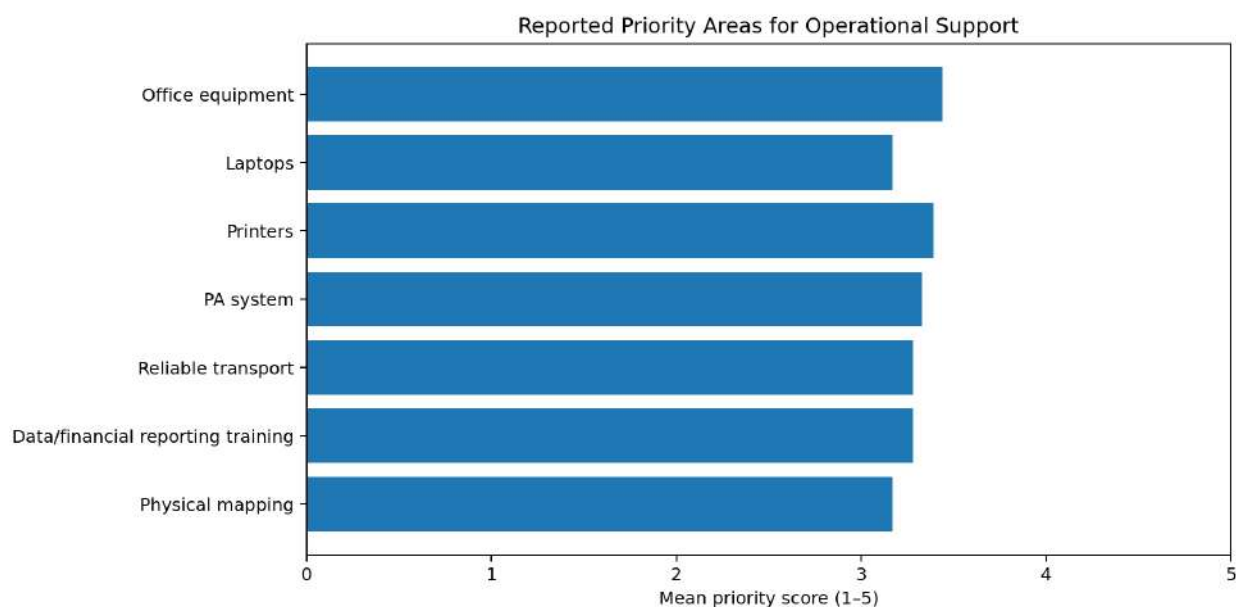


Figure 2: Reported Priority Areas for Operational Support

5.5 SUB-COMMITTEE FUNCTIONALITY

Only 28% of respondents indicated that the Development & Services and Finance & Administration sub-committees held meetings regularly. The stakeholder engagement, however, adds that members and sub-committees need a stronger understanding of their mandates, roles, and responsibilities and recommends quarterly submission of minutes as a condition for administrative support. This is an important shift from viewing inactivity merely as a participation problem to treating it as a governance-system problem requiring mandates, calendars, outputs, accountability and support.

5.6 PLANNING AND ANNUAL ACTION PLANS

Only 33% of respondents reported active participation in preparation of the Municipal Assembly's Annual Action Plans. The stakeholder engagement evidence notes that the Municipal Planning Coordinating Unit should formally open consultation windows through which Zonal Councils can submit prioritized zonal needs for consideration in subsequent AAPs. This recommendation provides a concrete institutional mechanism for correcting the planning disconnect.

5.7 REVENUE MOBILIZATION AND PROPERTY DATA

Only 22% of respondents reported active support for revenue generation or property-rating data collection. The stakeholder engagement evidence indicates that property-rate revenue collection has been ceded to Zonal Councils but that technical staff and data-collection officers face capacity constraints. The recommended use of digital tools such as KoboCollect to map local business establishments and improve local revenue data should be implemented as part of the Assembly's approved revenue-management and data-governance arrangements.

5.8 UNIT COMMITTEE COORDINATION

Only 44% of respondents confirmed regular coordination meetings or supervisory visits with Unit Committees. This indicates a weakened governance chain between the Zonal Council and lower-level

community structures. A revitalized coordination mechanism should include a regular calendar, visit records, action points, and escalation of unresolved issues to the Assembly.

5.9 FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

The baseline recorded that 83% confirmed the Council maintained a bank account and regularly submitted financial returns with pay-in slips. This is one of the stronger procedural findings in the baseline and should be protected while the wider reporting system is strengthened. Any expansion of revenue-related roles should preserve segregation of duties, documentation, authorized banking arrangements and reconciliation requirements under the Assembly's financial-control framework.

6. DEVELOPMENT PROFILE AND GOVERNANCE ECOSYSTEM

6.1 ZONAL COUNCILS AS A LOCAL INFORMATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY NODE

The evidence suggests that the Zonal Councils should be conceptualized not simply as a meeting body but as a local governance information node. Its potential contribution spans community needs identification, local project monitoring, Unit Committee coordination, local revenue intelligence, social accountability and feedback to municipal planning. The absence of equipment, transport, and record systems therefore has multiplier effects: a logistics constraint becomes a planning constraint, an accountability constraint, and potentially a revenue constraint.

6.2 THE PLANNING–DATA–REVENUE NEXUS

Three functions identified in the baseline: participatory planning, property/revenue data, and field monitoring, are operationally interconnected. Zonal Councils that can map communities, document needs, verify local infrastructure, and maintain basic administrative records are better positioned to contribute credible information to municipal planning and revenue processes. Conversely, weak mobility and record systems reduce the quality and timeliness of information available to the Assembly.

6.3 DIGITAL MODERNIZATION OPPORTUNITY

Using KoboCollect for local data collection is strategically important: This creates an opportunity to move from a one-off dataset to a simple recurring sub-district information system. The immediate objective should not be technological complexity but reliable, standardized collection of a small number of decision-useful indicators.

6.4 INSTITUTIONAL INCENTIVES

Only 39% of respondents expressed high motivation to perform their duties. Evidence from the stakeholder engagement links this to the absence of operational allowances or logistical stipends. The response distinguishes legitimate reimbursement or approved sitting/meeting allowances from poorly designed incentives. Performance support should be transparent, budgeted, tied to defined outputs where appropriate, and consistent with public-sector financial controls.

6.5 INCLUSION AND CITIZEN RESPONSIVENESS

The Zonal Councils' role in local accountability depends ultimately on whether citizens can see a connection between participation and municipal action. The stakeholder engagement therefore appropriately emphasizes local radio awareness, local consultation windows and stronger revenue

communication. This model is a two-way communication cycle: communities provide information and priorities; the Zonal Councils document and transmit them; the Assembly responds; and the Zonal Councils communicate decisions and implementation status back to communities.

7. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT: WHAT THIS EVIDENCE ADDS

The stakeholder engagement adds an important policy-facing layer to the baseline. It moves the analysis from 'what is wrong?' to 'what should the Municipal Assembly do about it?' The evidence does not overturn the baseline diagnosis; rather, it strengthens the causal interpretation and identifies institutional entry points for action, as illustrated in the table below:

Table 3: Stakeholder-Engagement Evidence and Its Implications for Zonal Council Functionality

BASELINE	STAKEHOLDER-ENGAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE	IMPLICATION
78% equipment constraint	Secretariat lacks basic computers/printers; reporting and databases are affected.	Treat equipment as core governance infrastructure, not discretionary office furniture.
83% transport constraint	Field inspections, community engagement, and revenue activities are constrained.	Create a predictable transport solution rather than ad-hoc travel arrangements.
44% reporting-frequency awareness gap	Need standardized administrative and financial reporting, filing and institutional memory.	Introduce a reporting calendar, templates, registers and supervisory review.
28% regular sub-committee activity	Sub-committees need mandate clarification, training and output accountability.	Reconstitute functionality around defined quarterly outputs.
33% AAP participation	MPCU should open formal zonal consultation windows.	Institutionalize the route by which local priorities enter AAPs.
22% revenue support	Property rating and local business data require technical capacity and digital tools.	Build a controlled sub-district revenue-data function.
39% high motivation	Operational costs and lack of incentives affect participation.	Develop legitimate, transparent operational support mechanisms.

BASELINE	STAKEHOLDER-ENGAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE	IMPLICATION
Weak public visibility	Local radio can support awareness of ZC mandates and revenue mobilization.	Add a citizen-facing communication component to functionality reforms.

7.1 STAKEHOLDER-VALIDATED POLICY PROPOSITION

The combined evidence supports a practical proposition: Zonal Councils' functionality is most likely to improve when the Municipal Assembly treats the Zonal Councils as part of its operating architecture rather than as a largely autonomous community committee. This means linking the Councils to municipal planning, finance, administration, data systems, and communication routines, while maintaining clear statutory roles and accountability lines.

8. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

8.1 FROM STRUCTURAL COMPLIANCE TO FUNCTIONAL CAPABILITY

The baseline reveals a classic implementation gap. The Zonal Councils' structural legitimacy, education profile, and accumulated experience create a high potential ceiling. Yet the operating environment is insufficient to convert this capacity into predictable outputs. The result is Zonal Councils that can exist formally without consistently functioning as an effective sub-district governance platform.

8.2 FIVE INTERACTING BOTTLENECKS

1. **Operating infrastructure:** inadequate computers, printers, stationery and transport restrict basic execution.
2. **Administrative routines:** irregular meetings, fragmented reporting and weak records management undermine continuity and accountability.
3. **Internal governance:** inactive sub-committees weaken specialization, collective decision-making and follow-through.
4. **Municipal integration:** limited AAP participation and weak Unit Committee coordination reduce the Council's influence in the wider governance chain.
5. **Motivation and support:** members face personal costs and limited formal support, weakening sustained participation.

8.3 A SYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE

These bottlenecks should not be treated as isolated. For example, providing a laptop without a reporting protocol may improve capacity but not output; creating a transport arrangement without a field-visit plan may produce movement without accountability; training sub-committees without a meeting calendar and output requirement may not reactivate them. The intervention package therefore needs to combine resources, routines, responsibilities and feedback mechanisms.

8.4 WHAT SHOULD NOT BE INFERRED

1. The baseline does not establish the absolute amount of revenue potentially recoverable through improved property-rate or business data.
2. The baseline does not provide a statistically representative estimate of citizen satisfaction with the KZC.

3. The baseline does not independently verify the legal status of every committee, account, or reporting process.
4. The stakeholder engagement summary does not provide methodological detail to calculate new population-level percentages beyond those already reported.
5. The 2021 municipal population should not be interpreted as the population of the Kalpohini Zonal Council or all Zonal Councils in the Sagnarigu Municipality.

9. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE SAGNARIGU MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY

The following outlines key functional areas within Zonal Councils and examines the potential institutional implications for the Sagnarigu Municipal Assembly if operational weaknesses persist at the sub-district level. Specifically, it highlights how gaps in Zonal Council participation, data collection, record-keeping, and resource allocation can undermine broader municipal performance, revenue generation, planning effectiveness, and public trust.

1. **Institutional Performance:** Operational weaknesses in Zonal Councils disrupt the flow of information, monitoring, and feedback between municipal planning and the community level.
2. **Planning Quality:** Low participation from Zonal Councils limits how effectively Annual Action Plans incorporate documented local priorities.
3. **Revenue Performance:** Inadequate property or business data combined with limited Zonal Council involvement restricts the Assembly from sustaining an accurate local revenue base.
4. **Accountability:** Incomplete reporting, minutes, and records obscure decision-making processes, implementation progress, and outstanding issues.
5. **Citizen Trust:** Repeated community input without visible action or feedback risks making public participation feel unrewarding and ineffective.

10. PRIORITY INTERVENTION FRAMEWORK

The recommended response is organized around six mutually reinforcing intervention packages as illustrated in the table below:

Table 4: Priority Intervention Packages for Strengthening Zonal Council Functionality

PACKAGE	CORE ACTIONS	LEAD ACTORS	TIMING
1. Minimum Operating Package	Computers/laptops, printer, stationery, filing materials and basic secretariat infrastructure.	Municipal Administration / Finance & Administration	Immediate
2. Mobility and Field Monitoring	Predictable municipal transport allocation or shared transport schedule; field-visit log and reporting.	Municipal Administration / KZC	Immediate
3. Governance and Reporting System	Annual meeting calendar, reporting calendar, standard templates, minutes	KZC / Municipal coordinating units	September-December

PACKAGE	CORE ACTIONS	LEAD ACTORS	TIMING
	register, action tracker and physical/digital filing.		
4. Sub-committee Reactivation	Mandate orientation, quarterly meetings, minutes submission, action tracking and performance review.	KZC / Assembly	September-December
5. Planning, Data and Revenue	Zonal consultation window, property/business mapping, KoboCollect data tools, data-quality checks and controlled revenue support.	MPCU / Finance / KZC / relevant technical units	September to December
6. Citizen Communication and Accountability	Local radio awareness, feedback mechanisms, public communication on ZC functions and revenue responsibilities.	Assembly / KZC / partners	September 2026-March 2027

10.1 RECOMMENDED MINIMUM FUNCTIONALITY STANDARD

The table below presents the recommended minimum functionality standards for Zonal Councils, based on the identified institutional, operational and governance gaps.

Table 5: Recommended Minimum Functionality Standards for Zonal Councils

DOMAIN	MINIMUM STANDARD FOR A FUNCTIONAL ZC
Leadership	Clear office bearers/roles; documented responsibilities; functioning meeting leadership.
Meetings	Predictable annual calendar; regular Council meetings; attendance and action tracking.
Sub-committees	Relevant statutory committees meet regularly and produce documented outputs.
Records	Minutes, resolutions, correspondence, financial records and reports are systematically filed and retrievable.
Reporting	Standardized monthly/quarterly reporting schedule aligned to Municipal Assembly requirements.
Planning	Documented zonal priorities are submitted through a defined municipal consultation window.
Field work	Planned field visits occur with transport access, visit records and follow-up actions.
Revenue/data	Defined, supervised data-collection roles with digital tools and documented handover/returns.

DOMAIN	MINIMUM STANDARD FOR A FUNCTIONAL ZC
Citizen interface	Regular community engagement and accessible feedback/communication mechanisms.
Accountability	Quarterly internal performance review against agreed indicators.

11. IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

The table below provides a phased roadmap for implementing the recommended actions, with clear timelines, expected outputs and responsible actors to support systematic improvement in Zonal Council functionality.

Table 6: Implementation Roadmap

PERIOD	PRIORITY ACTIONS	EXPECTED OUTPUT	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
0–30 days	Confirm KZC functionality plan; agree reporting calendar; verify committee composition/mandates; identify equipment and transport requirements.	Approved KZC functionality improvement plan.	MCE / Municipal Coordinating Team / ZCs
31–90 days	Procure minimum equipment; establish filing system; train members/technical staff; establish meeting and reporting registers.	Operational secretariat and standardized routines.	Assembly / ZCs / partners
3–6 months	Reactivate sub-committees; initiate zonal planning consultations; begin regular Unit Committee coordination.	Quarterly committee outputs and documented zonal priorities.	ZCs / MPCU / relevant departments
6–12 months	Deploy digital data collection for property/business mapping; strengthen revenue reporting; establish radio/public communication cycle.	Improved local data and citizen awareness.	Finance / MPCU / ZCs / Communications
12–24 months	Institutionalize performance reviews; integrate KZC indicators into municipal monitoring; refine support mechanisms.	Sustained KZC performance management system.	MCE / Municipal Management

11.1 GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENT FOR IMPLEMENTATION

1. Municipal Chief Executive / Municipal Management: provide policy direction, resource allocation and inter-departmental coordination.
2. KZC leadership: manage Council routines, meetings, records, community interface and implementation tracking.
3. Municipal Planning Coordinating Unit: institutionalize zonal consultation and integrate validated priorities into planning processes.
4. Finance/revenue functions: define controlled roles for revenue and property-data support and ensure financial accountability.
5. Technical departments: provide technical guidance for field monitoring, data collection and service-related reporting.
6. Simba Ghana / E4D partners: provide targeted technical assistance, evidence generation, capacity strengthening and social-accountability support, subject to agreed project scope.

12. BASELINE PERFORMANCE AND MONITORING FRAMEWORK

The following framework converts the diagnostic findings into a practical monitoring baseline. Where the study did not measure an indicator, the baseline is marked 'Not established' rather than estimated.

Table 7: Baseline Performance and Monitoring Framework

DOMAIN	INDICATOR	BASELINE	SUGGESTED 2027 TARGET	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
Governance	Council structural compliance	100% respondent confirmation	Maintain	Documentary verification of structure
Participation	Members attending ≥ 3 meetings/year	44%	$\geq 80\%$	Attendance register
Records	Administrative records properly archived	28%	$\geq 90\%$	Records audit
Reporting	Members aware of required reporting frequency	56%	$\geq 90\%$	Member survey/spot check
Sub-committees	Relevant committees meeting regularly	28%	$\geq 80\%$	Minutes and attendance
AAP	Members reporting active AAP participation	33%	$\geq 75\%$	AAP consultation records

DOMAIN	INDICATOR	BASELINE	SUGGESTED 2027 TARGET	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
Revenue	Members actively supporting revenue/data functions	22%	≥70%	Task logs / revenue-data records
Unit Committees	Regular coordination/supervisory activity	44%	≥80%	Visit/meeting records
Equipment	Members identifying equipment as primary constraint	78%	≤20%	Annual functionality survey
Transport	Members identifying transport as primary constraint	83%	≤20%	Annual functionality survey
Motivation	Members reporting high motivation	39%	≥75%	Member survey
Digital data	Routine zonal data collection using standardized digital tools	Not established	Operational	KoboCollect/data system records
Citizen communication	Regular public awareness mechanism	Not established	Quarterly	Radio/public engagement log

12.1 Proposed ZC Functionality Scorecard

For management purposes, the Assembly and partners may consider a simple quarterly scorecard built around five domains: governance, administration/records, planning, revenue/data and citizen interface. The scorecard should be used as a management tool rather than as a punitive ranking system. A Council should be assessed against agreed standards and provided with corrective support where performance falls below the threshold.

Table 8: Proposed ZC Functionality Scorecard

DOMAIN	ILLUSTRATIVE INDICATORS	SUGGESTED QUARTERLY RATING
Governance	Meetings, attendance, committee activity, action follow-up	RAG
Administration	Records, reporting timeliness, filing completeness	RAG
Planning	Zonal consultations, priorities submitted, feedback received	RAG
Revenue & data	Data collection, mapping, returns, data quality	RAG

DOMAIN	ILLUSTRATIVE INDICATORS	SUGGESTED QUARTERLY RATING
Citizen interface	Engagements, radio/community communication, feedback closure	RAG

13. RISKS, ASSUMPTIONS AND MITIGATION

The table below highlights the key risks that may affect implementation, their potential effects, and the proposed mitigation measures to support sustained Zonal Council functionality.

Table 9: Risks, Assumptions And Mitigation

RISK/ASSUMPTION	POTENTIAL EFFECT	MITIGATION
Equipment is procured without maintenance/support	Assets become unusable or underutilized.	Assign custodians, maintenance budget and basic ICT support.
Transport remains ad-hoc	Field monitoring remains irregular.	Adopt a shared municipal transport schedule with field plans.
Training is delivered without follow-up	Knowledge does not translate into routine practice.	Use coaching, templates, spot checks and quarterly reviews.
Sub-committee allowances are introduced without output controls	Cost increases without functional improvement.	Link approved support to documented meetings/outputs and financial controls.
Zonal priorities are collected but not acknowledged by the Assembly	Citizen participation may become tokenistic.	Introduce a formal response/feedback field in AAP consultation records.
Revenue data collection lacks quality control	Inaccurate property/business records can affect revenue and trust.	Use standardized forms, validation checks, and supervisory review.
Digital tools are introduced without data governance	Privacy, duplication or data-quality problems.	Define access, ownership, validation, backup and responsible-use protocols.

14. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

14.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

To strengthen the functionality of the Kalpohini, Chogu, and Kanvili Zonal Councils, the following actionable measures are recommended for adoption by the Municipal Assembly's leadership:

1: Address Logistical Challenges Through Targeted Resource Allocation

- The Municipal Assembly should procure computers, printers, and stationery for the Kalpohini and the other two Zonal Council secretariats.
- The Municipal Assembly should provide dedicated means of transport for each Zonal Council to facilitate routine community field visits, monitoring, and revenue mobilization.

2: Institutionalize Standardized Administrative Reporting & Compliance

- The Municipal Assembly should collaborate with development partners to provide refresher training for Zonal Council technical staff on data-driven administrative and financial reporting, to improve evidence generation and usage in reporting.
- The Municipal Assembly should deploy record-keeping tools and standardized physical filing systems to secure institutional memory.

3: Improve Zonal Councils Sub-Committees' Meetings and Establish Performance Incentives

- The Municipal Assembly should direct zonal councils to structure a performance-based sitting allowance for sub-committee members to offset out-of-pocket costs and reactivate dormant sub-structures.
- The Municipal Assembly should make it mandatory for the Zonal Councils' Development Planning, Social Services, and Finance and Administration sub-committees to submit quarterly meeting minutes as a condition for administrative support disbursement.

4: Leverage Sub-District Capacity for IGF Mobilization & Data-Driven Planning

- The Assembly should formally delegate specific local revenue collection and data-gathering tasks to the Zonal Council staff, utilizing modern digital tools like KoboCollect to map local business establishments.

14.2 CONCLUSION

The evidence confirms that the Kalpohini Zonal Council and other Zonal Councils should not be characterized as institutions lacking legitimacy or human capacity. Rather, they are institutions whose statutory platform and human capital are being under-converted into operational results. The combination of strong educational attainment, institutional experience, and reported structural compliance creates a credible foundation for reform.

The subsequent stakeholder engagement adds important specificity to this study. It identifies basic equipment, transportation, standardized reporting, records management, sub-committee functionality, revenue-data capacity, planning integration and citizen communication as practical entry points. It also places responsibility more clearly at the level of Municipal Assembly systems and management

decisions rather than locating the problem solely within individual Council members. The strategic opportunity is therefore to establish a minimum viable operating system for the Zonal Councils and connect it deliberately to the Assembly's planning, finance, data and accountability architecture. If implemented as an integrated package, the proposed reforms can turn the Councils from a formally constituted structure into a predictable source of local information, community priorities, field intelligence, revenue data and accountability feedback.

The Municipal Assembly does not need a broad diagnostic of the Zonal Councils; what is needed is a jointly owned functionality-improvement plan with clear responsibilities, resource commitments, quarterly milestones and a small set of measurable indicators. This baseline can therefore serve as the reference point for tracking whether the identified operational bottlenecks are actually being removed and whether improved inputs translate into improved governance outputs.

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5. Land Use and Spatial Planning Authority – Land Use and Spatial Planning Act, 2016 (Act 925): <https://luspa.gov.gh/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/ACT-925-LUSP.pdf>
6. Sagnarigu Municipal Assembly. Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP) 2026–2029

Annex 1. Baseline Indicator Matrix

Table 10: Baseline Indicator Matrix

INDICATOR	RESULT	SOURCE / NOTE
Structural framework	100% Yes	Respondent confirmation; documentary verification recommended.
Tertiary education	89%	18 respondents.
≥3 meetings in previous 12 months	44%	Attendance self-report.
Administrative records properly archived	28%	Baseline baseline.
Mandate understanding	94%	Respondent baseline.
High motivation	39%	Respondent baseline.

INDICATOR	RESULT	SOURCE / NOTE
<i>AAP participation</i>	33%	<i>Respondent baseline.</i>
<i>Revenue/property-data support</i>	22%	<i>Respondent baseline.</i>
<i>Unit Committee coordination</i>	44%	<i>Respondent baseline.</i>
<i>Bank account/returns</i>	83%	<i>Respondent confirmation.</i>
<i>Regular sub-committee meetings</i>	28%	<i>Respondent baseline.</i>
<i>Equipment constraint</i>	78%	<i>Respondent baseline</i>
<i>Transport constraint</i>	83%	<i>Respondent baseline</i>