

## **HUMAN SETTLEMENT COUNTRY PROFILE GHANA**

### **Decision-Making**

#### **Programmes and Projects**

- A. Providing Adequate Shelter for All
- B. Improving Human Settlement Management
- C. Promoting Sustainable Land-Use Planning and Management
- D. Promoting the Integrated Provision of Environmental Infrastructure: water, sanitation, drainage and solid waste management
- E. Promoting Sustainable Energy and Transport Systems in Human Settlements
- F. Promoting Human Settlement Planning and Management in Disaster-Prone Areas
- G. Promoting Sustainable Construction Activities
- H. Promoting Human Resource Development and Capacity-Building for Human Settlement Development

### **Status**

#### **Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising**

#### **Information**

#### **Research and Technologies**

#### **Financing**

#### **Cooperation**

**Decision-Making:** A new decentralized planning and decision making system which was promulgated in the late 1980's is now being strengthened and operationalised. Essentially, the system is designed to restructure the political and public administrative machinery of Ghana for development and decision-making at both the national and local levels.

The system is however defined by the combined provisions of four main pieces of legislation (laws), namely the Civil Service Law of 1993, Act 327, the Local Government Act of 1993, Act 462, the National Development Planning Commission Act of 1994, Act 479, and the National Development Planning (Systems) Act of 1994, Act 480.

The system of human settlements planning and development is characterized by multi-agency involvement, hence overall responsibility for planning revolves around the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC), the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD), the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, the Ministry of Works and Housing (MWH) and the Ministry of Environment and Science. Whilst their respective roles and mandates, even though, have not been explicitly defined and as such result in duplication of responsibilities and sometimes conflict between agencies, have been limited to policy directives at the national level. At the District level, however, the co-ordination and overall responsibility rests with the various District Assemblies. Besides there are a variety of non-governmental agencies also involved in the decision making process as far as human settlement development is concerned. The international community through donor-assisted projects is becoming a major partner in decision making.

**Programmes and Projects:** *Poverty:* As a means of reducing poverty in the country, two national development strategies were prepared in the mid 1990s. These are the Ghana Vision 2020-the First Step (1996-2000) and the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (2000-2002) I-PRSP. The Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) is a programme of actions and policy reforms seeking to accelerate national growth in a manner consistent with poverty reduction. The policies and programmes in the GPRS are integrated in the strategic plans of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) through the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF).

*Atmosphere:* Planned Activities in Industry – Fuel switching from residual oil to gas in boiler and the Energy Sector Support Programme has been the on-going programmes and include in their scope, discouraging slash and burn practices in agriculture, managing degraded lands, combating desertification, promoting afforestation and agro-forestry.

The involvement in regional network for systematic observation and building capacity for adaptation to climate change are programmes aimed at promoting a better understanding of the processes and consequences of changes in the atmosphere.

A. Providing Adequate Shelter for All: Within the past decade a number of policies and programmes have been initiated to address the needs of the homeless and the poor in society. These include issues on land tenure, non-conventional shelter delivery and support for rural housing development. So far, some success has been achieved with pilot projects to upgrade seven (7) slum communities in Accra, Kumasi, and Takoradi and to provide access roads to some deprived parts of Accra as well. Private sector participation in shelter provision has been facilitated through the creation of an enabling environment and in training programs in artisanal skills development development for improvement in housing construction. The District Assemblies (DAs) and collaborating agencies such as Ghana Real Estate Development Association (GREDA) under the Strengthening Community Management Programme (SCMP) have vigorously pursued the provision of housing estates especially for the workforce in the formal sector. The Village Infrastructure Project (V.I.P) implemented from 1998 to 2003 also sought to enhance the quality of life of Ghana's rural poor through increased transfer of financial and technical

resources for adequate shelter provision. To further enhance shelter provision for all, the National Rural Housing Strategy and National Shelter Strategy were formulated.

**B. Improving Human Settlement Management:** A number of projects that will eventually promote sustainable settlements have been initiated or implemented. Notably, among these are the upgrading of infrastructure in selected district capitals and institutional capacity building of corresponding District Assemblies, the preparation of 5-year development plans by District Assemblies, the preparation of the first medium term national development framework, community infrastructure upgrading for selected low-income communities, and the construction of waste treatment facilities in over 30 major settlements, the construction of drainage systems, the Border Town Strategic Planning Programs which seek to control on a sustainable basis, the growth of selected Border towns such as Elubo and Dzodze, the Korle Lagoon Ecological Restoration Project and Hazard Mapping under

Greater Accra Metropolitan Area(GAMA) have all been efforts made ensure sustainable human settlement management .

**C. Promoting Sustainable Land-Use Planning and Management:** Over the last few years measures (projects and programmes) have been undertaken to promote sustainable land-use planning and management including the following; The implementation of the Land Administration Project (LAP) which is a community driven land-use planning and management programme to introduce a more sustainable land management system, the formulation of a comprehensive land policy framework that offers direction for efficient management and use of land, the ratification of the convention on wetlands (the Ramsar Convention) and the implementation of the Wetlands Management Project with the establishment of five coastal Ramsar sites and the promulgation of the wetland management (Ramsar Sites) Regulations L.I 1659.

In addition, plans are far advanced for the promulgation into law of planning standards and guidelines under a Strategic Plan for Greater Accra Metropolitan Area (GAMA) to protect the various areas identified for protection under South East Greenbelt Project. Hazard area identification and delineation in the country has also been undertaken.

The Ghana Environmental Resource Management Program (GERMP) was initiated to fill the gap in environmental data. This has been found to be of importance paramount to effective and sustainable management and planning of land-use in the country.

**D. Promoting the Integrated Provision of Environmental Infrastructure: water, sanitation, drainage and solid waste management:** As part of public policy to ensure integrated provision of environmental infrastructure, a manual for infrastructural development in human settlements has been compiled. The plan sets out the reservation areas along roads for the provision of infrastructure. The plans also advocate for the review of the National Building Regulation L.I 1630

**E. Promoting Sustainable Energy and Transport Systems in Human Settlements:** *Energy:* The specific strategies and policies relating to specific sectors dealing with consumption and consumption patterns include the promotion of renewable energy sources and the specific issues addressed are the promotion and use of new and renewable sources of energy, innovative technologies for sustainable consumption and the use of economic rates for utilities while taking account of their social costs.

Energy consumption constitutes a critical area of concern to the country. A number of programmes are therefore being promoted. One specific programme relates to the use of more efficient and low-energy consuming bulbs to replace most of the incandescent bulbs being used throughout the country. Though

these new bulbs are more expensive than the traditional ones, a programme of awareness creation has been mounted as a means of drawing attention to the advantages of the bulbs, which are presently being imported into the country. The private sector is expected to take on the importation of these energy-efficient bulbs later. Other national programmes include the promotion of the use Liquefied Petroleum Gas for cooking to replace the use of fire wood, especially in the rural areas, and the promotion of the use of improved cooking stoves for more efficient burning of charcoal. Under the Capacity 21 Programme, energy-saving local cook stoves have been introduced to many rural communities. One specific programme has been the District Capital Electrification Programme.

Notable success has been recorded in areas of privatization and cost-recoverable measures for the provision and maintenance of selected urban services such as refuse collection, improvement of selected highways and the provision of electricity and water.

*Transportation:* As part of government plans to ensure sustainable means of transport there has been the need to rationalize and improve the existing network to include pedestrian walkways and bicycle lanes making it efficient and safe for motorists, cyclists, pedestrians and all other road users. The introduction of bicycle lanes in the Tamale municipality for example has contributed greatly to promoting sanity on the roads. The use of mass transit facilities such as buses and railways to reduce traffic congestion has been introduced and is being implemented through public private sector partnership with the basic aim of reducing congestion on the roads. In addition, plans have been initiated to revitalize the rail transport system while air travel has been liberalized and privatized

F. Promoting Human Settlement Planning and Management in Disaster-Prone Areas: The National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO) was established by Act 517 (1996) as the main institution responsible for the management of disasters in the country. The organization has formulated and is implementing Disaster Management Plans at the National, Regional and the District levels to as much as possible prevent and mitigate the effects of disasters. One of the most frequent disasters that occur in the country has been flooding. However, not many studies have been carried out in the management of floodwaters in the urban areas. In Accra, several master plans have been prepared to mitigate flooding. The Hydrological Services Department recently initiated a short-term programme to desilt all primary drains also as away of reducing floods.

G. Promoting Sustainable Construction Activities: A number of public agencies and private sector institutions are involved in the promotion of Sustainable Construction Activities. The Rural Housing Department of NADMO is engaged in the improved housing construction in the flood prone areas of the three Northern Regions. The Building and Road Research Institute and Council for Scientific and Industrial Research have introduced new technologies and products such as the Shingle Roof Technology

H. Promoting Human Resource Development and Capacity-Building for Human Settlement Development: to The re-introduction of the spatial planning option at the Department of Planning Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), has helped to replenish the rather depleting stock of physical planners and strengthened the capacities of over 30 District Assemblies in the implementation of the World Bank Urban infrastructure projects, Urban 3, 4, and 5, and capacity upgrading at key sector agencies particularly in the roads sub-sector. The Urban Environmental Sanitation Programme and the Accra Sustainable Programme(ASP), as well as the Accra Metropolitan Environmental Health Initiative have been of significant assistance to the development of the human resource base. On account of the recent upsurge in the need for technical skills to meet the demand for housing and its corresponding infrastructure, technical and vocational institution have upgraded and expanded their curriculum to meet these needs.

**Status: Poverty:** Despite these achievements, a number of shortcomings still constrain the socio-

economic well-being of the people. These are the general macro-economic instability of the country, gender inequalities and high population growth and fertility rates. For the periods, 1991/92 and 1998/99, poverty was substantially higher in rural areas than urban areas, thus showing that poverty in Ghana is disproportionately a rural phenomenon. At the national level the incidence of extreme poverty fell from under 36% in 1991/92 to 29% in 1998/99. But the incidence of extreme poverty remained very high in 1998-99, where nearly one third of the Ghanaian population were deemed unable to meet their basic nutritional needs, even if they devoted their entire family budgets to food.

In relating poverty in the country to economic activity, it was found that in 1998-99, poverty was highest among food crop farmers. At the national level almost 58% of those identified as poor were from households whose main activity was food crop cultivation.

*Human settlements:* Ghana's population increased by nearly 50% between 1984 and 2000, with the rural urban ratio also increasing in line with the global trend of rapid urbanization. The urban population structure is still skewed with Accra, the capital city accounting for about 17% of the total population. The potential of our towns and cities to play a leading role in the national economic transformation is yet to be realized mainly because they continue to be plagued with major development challenges such as that as high as 30% of the urban population still live below the poverty line, over 50% do not have access to potable water, and vast majority live in deplorable housing conditions or worse still some have no access to shelter. There are even more crucial challenges with the level of environmental degradation and insanitary conditions, which have reflected in increasing health hazards.

Some progress has been made in the endeavor to promote sustainable human settlements albeit very insignificantly. Several policies have been put in place in almost all the requisite areas, and the emergence of the private sector in medium scale shelter delivery has been modest. A few Districts and sector agencies have experienced improvements in their human resource development and equipment capacities have increased. Despite these marginal improvements, the challenges or constraints are still overwhelming. There are gross imbalances in the distribution of population across the national territory, rural development has still not taken off as desired, and the construction industry remains virtually independent and inefficient to the point where the concept of a low-cost building still remains illusory. There are still flaws in the current institutional arrangements and weaknesses in the enforcement machinery have rendered virtually all legislation ineffective, and there is as yet no settlement that has come to terms with waste management

*Land-use:* The land is generally 600 meters above sea level. Physiographic regions include the coastal plains, the forest dissected plateau, and high hill tops which are important ecological subsystems in a generally undulating terrain. At the southern and northern margins of the Volta Basin, there are two prominent areas of highland – the Kwahu Plateau, and the Gambaga Escarpment. On the eastern margins of the Volta Basin is a relatively narrow zone of high mountains running in a south-west to north-east direction with the Akwapim, Buem, Togo Ranges registering the highest point (Mt. Afadjato) in the country.

In 1988, it was estimated that the cost of environmental degradation from agriculture, forestry, industry and mining was 41.7 billion cedis (US\$128.3 million). The percentage of this cost attributed to agriculture alone was 69.0% and to forestry 25.8%. The agricultural sector is the dominant sector of the Ghanaian economy in terms of its share contribution to the GDP, employment creation and foreign exchange earnings. In 1997, the sector employed about 70% of the labour force, contributed about 47% to GDP and accounted for over 57% of foreign exchange earnings.

Cross-sectoral factors have been underlying cause of deforestation and forest land degradation perpetuated by poverty, population growth, pollution, discriminatory trade practices, and unsustainable

policies related to sectors such as Agriculture (slash and burn), energy (harvesting of fuel wood), and Mining in forested lands.

Ghana has a total land area of 238,537 square kilometers of which about 30-40% is subject to desertification.

*Energy:* Specific information is not available on current levels of efficiency for the use of energy from water and other natural phenomenon. However, the general trend that has been observed is the greater efficiency in the use of these resources by various consumers.

*Transportation:* Despite several efforts at improving transportation, the concept of safe, reliable and affordable mass transportation system, the effect has remained an illusion. The private sector still dominates the sector with an ever-increasing fleet of low-quality vehicles which require the most fundamental government input of an effective regulatory framework. The informal sector is particularly noticeable in the urban economy. However, its productivity is questionable given the fact that the formal economy itself has still not been re-structured with the economy still dominated by the agriculture and services sectors. As the structure of the economy gradually shifts to industry and manufacturing the productivity or significance of the informal economy may be felt.

*Atmosphere:* National ambient air quality monitoring results indicate that air quality of Ghana's urban centers is generally good, as most monitoring stations do not capture any disturbing levels of gaseous emissions.

**Capacity-building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising:** Ghana adopted and implemented the UNDP Capacity 21 Programme (1998-2002) which strengthened the capacity of national institutions involved in environmental management and offered development planning support to district, regional and national planning authorities in sustainable manner while strengthening the role of science and technology for sound environmental and natural resource management. The institutionalization of the celebrations of UN special days such as World Habitat Day , World Environment Day, World Disaster Day and the World D to combat Desertification and Drought have been measures adopted to create awareness.

**Research and Technologies:** Information technology in support of human settlements development has seen considerable progress. Notable achievements include updated base maps through aerial surveys covering over 35 major urban centers, completion of the 2000 national population and housing census to name a few.

The path to a sustainable future has been charted in the establishment and development of a computerized planning geo-information system under the Land Administration Project (LAP) for which all land sector agencies will be networked. Modest attempts have been undertaken by individual land agencies to address these needs.

Much research has been carried out in the promotion of use and development of local building materials, low-cost housing technologies, secondary-timber species, yet, there still remains a big gap between research studies and actual practice.

Research on aspects of construction, comprising buildings and roads, including road safety, has also progressed steadily. Durable building materials have been developed using local raw materials including the use of bauxite waste and clay for the manufacture of pozzolana cement. Research on cost-saving building techniques has also enabled the development of building elements that substantially save construction cost.

**Financing:** Financing mechanisms have still largely remained conventional, with its bulk coming from central government revenue or donor support. Over the past decade, private sector financing has started trickling into the housing supply system through the private real estate developers (GREDA) – but this is still far too limited.

In the area of building materials and construction technologies, not much has been achieved. The country is still heavily dependent on imported finished goods. The few examples of local production worth mentioning are the manufacture of clay bricks and concrete roofing tiles, both of which are dominated by inappropriate production technologies.

*Energy:* The pricing of utilities such as water and electricity is determined by the level of consumption and higher rates tend to be paid for a higher rate of consumption. This pricing arrangement is meant to be a punitive measure for high consumption of these utilities and therefore discourage unsustainable consumption practices.

**Cooperation:** International cooperation in support of human settlements development has in recent times been dominated by multilateral support specifically from the UNDP, the World Bank and the Africa Development Bank (ADB) with supplementary bilateral programmes namely from Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), the Department for International Development (DFID), the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), from the Spanish Government, the French Agency for International Cooperation and lately the Dutch Government. There are a number of international non-governmental organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, which have made some notable contributions as well.

*Atmosphere:* A significant move in this area is the West African Gas Pipeline Project, which has enjoyed the support of our government. This project aims, environmentally, to reduce flaring of volatile fractions (methane) in Nigeria.

*Constraints and Obstacles:* Some major constraints and obstacles facing human settlement development generally are:

- High population growth rate (2.7% per annum) with due consequences for both human and socio-economic development,

Insufficient access to education, illiteracy and low levels of education inhibiting development, including low level of environmental awareness and poor understanding of the importance and relevance of scientific and technological concepts, difficult in getting people to adapt to and/or adapt informed technologies to rise productivity, reduction of the people access to information, thus preventing them from actively participating in community level policy formulation and implementation,

- Large number of settlements lacking threshold population required for the effective and economical provision of services and facilities,
- Spatial (rural/urban, north/south) imbalances and inadequate economic and social infrastructure provision which varies considerable between urban and rural areas-in the more remote areas, such infrastructure is virtually non-existent, but even in the main urban centers, many facilities are sub-standard and unreliable,
- Slow pace of decentralized administration engendering a top-down approach to development and

its planning and thus staling efforts at accelerated growth,

- Poor financial resources make it difficult to mobilize resources for long term investment, including financial resources to carry out basic ground demarcation of town plans updating maps for plan making the resolution of conflicts in rapidly expending towns space etc.

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