

**THE ROLE OF DISTRICT CAPITALS IN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT:  
LINKING SMALL TOWNS, RURAL-URBAN LINKAGES AND  
DECENTRALISATION IN GHANA**

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**PhD.-thesis 2005  
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**ISBN 82 471 7117 1 (print)**

**ISBN 82 471 7116 3 (electronic)**

**Series Nr. 2005: 118**

## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, Afua Bemah, and late father, Joseph Kwabena Owusu

## **ABSTRACT**

There has been a renewed interest in the role of small towns in rural and regional development driven by recent socio-economic and political changes at the national and international levels involving democratisation and local government reforms, structural adjustment and economic reforms, and a general trend favouring participation or 'development from below'. As urban centres closest to rural communities, small towns are perceived as: important and efficient nodal points for linking or connecting rural producers to national and international markets; centres for locating social services within relatively easy reach of rural communities, and centres for the transmission of government policies and modernisation. Within this perspective has also emerged the increasing recognition that rural and urban areas do not exist as 'islands' but are linked by flows of people, goods, services, and information (spatial linkages) and sectoral interactions (employment and occupations, such as rural non-farm employment and urban agriculture). These spatial linkages and sectoral interactions between rural and urban areas are also increasingly recognised as critical survival and accumulation strategies for the poor and the rich respectively in both rural and urban households.

While many studies have emphasised the promotion of small towns, they also note that the ability of small towns to play any meaningful role in regional development and rural-urban interactions depends on functional local government systems with adequate resources and authority. This requires decentralised development approaches that are driven by local needs and priorities with the active participation of all stakeholders. For the past decade and half, Ghana has implemented a decentralisation programme that has required the transfer of financial and infrastructural resources, as well as power and authority to the district level. District capitals, defined in this study as small towns, have become important focal points as stimuli to district development under the programme. It is envisaged that rural-urban linkages between a district capital and its hinterland (district) will have positive impacts on both spatial units, and consequently the overall development of the district.

While various studies have been done on small towns and rural-urban interactions in developing countries not much has been done on small towns within a decentralised political, administrative and economic context. Besides, in the context of Ghana, although in the implementation of decentralisation policies district capitals have been recognised as

important, not enough theoretical work has been done on their role in rural and regional development and to place this within the various models and theories on urban centres within the fields of urban studies and regional development. As a result, adequate evaluation of district capitals and their role in the decentralised development process as a basis to unearth contradictions, inefficiencies and weaknesses of the strategy is yet to be undertaken.

It is against this background that the study seeks to examine and conceptualise the role of district capitals in district development within the context of Ghana's decentralised development process. Using two district capitals and their respective districts – Dunkwa-on-Offin and the Upper Denkyira District, and Twifo Praso and the Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira District in the Central Region as a case study – this thesis examined the extent to which decentralisation has facilitated the growth of district capitals, and the impact of this on rural-urban linkages in the study districts.

The study concludes that the envisaged autonomous decentralised district development process emphasising rural-urban (district capital-district) linkages can only be achieved when the required conditions for this development process are fulfilled at higher levels of decision-making and implementation. In particular, the role of the state (central government), and policies emanating from the national level are of critical importance in facilitating or supporting district capitals' role in district development and rural-urban linkages under Ghana's decentralised development process.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The completion of this thesis would not have been possible without the support and cooperation of many individuals and institutions. I would first like to thank my supervisor, Professor Ragnhild Lund for guiding me through yet another successful research work. The cordial working relationship with her, which started 7 years ago when I was an MPhil in Social Change (Geography) student has grown and flourished over time, culminating in this thesis. She provided the inspiration and the spirit that guided me throughout the whole writing process by responding very promptly to drafts, and suggesting valuable additions and omissions.

Many thanks to Associate Professor Stig Jørgensen for his support and assistance at the beginning of the study, and Catriona Turner for the language work and proofreading. I would also thank the rest of the Department of Geography, NTNU, both academic and non-academic staff for providing me with the environment which enabled me to complete this study. Your expression of love, support and encouragement both in times of sorrow and happiness will always be with me. The broad smiles I received constantly and the prompt response to which administrators like Radmil, Bodil and Sunni met my needs were all that I needed to stay on course. My appreciation and gratitude to Dr Samuel Agyei-Mensah (Department of Geography and Resource Development, University of Ghana, Legon) for reading through the initial draft of the thesis, and providing useful comments and suggestions.

Institution-wise, I would like to thank the Research Council of Norway (NFR) for providing the financial support, and the Faculty of Social Science and Technology Management (SVT), NTNU, for practical arrangements regarding funding. I also extend gratitude and appreciation to the Nordic African Institute (NAI), Uppsala, Sweden, for their study grant which enabled me to use the excellent facilities at the Institute for literature search in June 2002.

During the fieldwork in Ghana, a number of institutions and individuals were very supportive. I would like to thank the Upper Denkyira District Assembly (UDDA) and the Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira District Assembly (THLDDA), especially the District Planning and Budgeting Units of the two Assemblies headed by Mr Paul Ofori and Mr G. M. K. Dzokpo respectively. Many thanks are also extended to Mr Seth Kofi-Nti (Institute of

Education, University of Cape Coast), Mr E. A. Hagan (District Director, Electoral Commission, Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira District), Mr Charles Nuro-Mensah (Assistant Regional Economic Planning Officer, Cape Coast), and Kwame Nsiah and David Mensah for their assistance. Kofi-Nti and Hagan, I will always remember your generosity and the commitment you showed by devoting extra hours besides your tight work schedules to assist in my fieldwork. Finally, a word of appreciation and gratitude to my research informants (household heads, market women, private commercial transport operators, and all others) whose contributions made the fieldwork a happy event.

I would like to acknowledge individuals whose love, tremendous support and cooperation behind the scene enabled me to have the right frame of mind to go through this study successfully. First, to the entire Owusu family, especially my mother, Maame Afua Bemah and my late father, Mr J. K. Owusu – I will always remember your love and encouragement, particularly your promise to me that *you'll sacrifice everything for my education*. Even though Papa could not wait to see the final outcome of his sacrifices, it is gratifying to note that his sacrifices have not been in vain. To my wife, Gifty and son, Kofi, thanks for your support particularly during 2004. The year 2004 has been quite eventful for me. I started the year with the realisation that it was a year of challenges and hard work. First, it was my final year of study, and second, there was the expectation of a baby. Then, there was the unexpected death of my father. Yet in all these, Gifty, you made sure that none of these events slowed my academic work by providing not only love and comfort, but also carrying the burden of baby care. You have truly demonstrated to me the old adage *behind every successful man lays a woman*. I also thank my Ghanaian friends in Trondheim – Amidu Assibi, John K. Osei-Tutu and Paul Opoku-Mensah. Thanks brothers, you provided the motivation for me to continue.

To conclude, I give glory and thanks to the Most High God for guiding and sustaining me all these years through thick and thin. It is only by exercising faith in Your words: 'Let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart' that has enabled me to endure and persevere throughout the course of this study. Glory and thanks be to God, Amen!

**George Owusu**

**TRONDHEIM, NOVEMBER 2004**

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

DA	District Assembly
DAs	District Assemblies
DACF	District Assemblies' Common Fund
DCDM	District Capital-Centred Development Model
GLSS	Ghana Living Standard Survey
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JSS	Junior Secondary School
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MLG&RD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
PHC	Primary Health Care
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programmes
SSS	Senior Secondary School
THLDD	Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira District
THLDDA	Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira District Assembly
TOPP	Twifo Oil Palm Plantations Limited
UDD	Upper Denkyira District
UDDA	Upper Denkyira District Assembly
UNCHS	United Nations Conference on Human Settlements

## 1.0 GENERAL INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

For the past two decades, there has been a resurgence or renewed interest in the role of small towns in rural development, as well as the positive role they can play in achieving an equitable and efficient settlement pattern in many developing countries. This renewed interest has been necessitated by recent political and economic changes in many parts of the developing world, particularly in Africa (Pedersen 2003; Tacoli 2003; Owusu 2005a, 2005b forthcoming). Though the debate on the role of small towns in regional and rural development has been going on for a long time, the emerging view is one of optimism. There are three key reasons accounting for the renewed interest in small towns relating to:

- The theoretical argument about the need for a diffuse and integrated system of settlements to promote economic growth with social equity
- The reactions against the undesirable results of 'top-down' macro-economic approaches to development that failed to consider or simply ignored the lowest levels of the spatial system
- Pragmatic policy concerns about the adverse effects of Third World countries of prevailing trends in urbanisation and rural development.

Besides the above, other reasons can also be cited for the renewed interest in small towns and settlements at the lower levels of the settlement hierarchy. One such reason is the increasing decentralisation of resources, authority and responsibility from central to local levels in many developing countries, thus giving more attention to the needs and potential of each settlement and its region (Tacoli 2002; Pedersen 2003; Satterthwaite and Tacoli 2003; Owusu 2004, 2005a). One argument popularly cited as justifying this strategy is that decentralisation offers a greater degree of responsiveness to local needs, and that local policy-makers, perceived as more familiar with local problems, would be more likely to produce policies attuned to the needs of local populations (Hardoy and Satterthwaite 1988; Crook 1994; Burki et al. 1999; Ayee 2000a, 2000b; Yankson 2000a, 2004; Osmani 2001; Crook 2003).

It is also argued that in recent years more attention has been given to small towns, primarily because since the 1980s they have been growing rapidly in many developing

countries (Aeroe 1992; Pedersen 1992, 1997; Czerny et al. 1997; Satterthwaite and Tacoli 2003). Some recent studies on the process of urbanisation in Africa indicate that there has been a reduction in the growth rate of the large towns and cities, but rather increasing growth of small and medium-sized urban centres (Dinye 1995; Satterthwaite 1996; Briggs and Yeboah 2001; Bryceson 2001; Pedersen 2003). A major reason cited by various writers for this situation is the impact of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank's Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) which have been pursued in many sub-Saharan African countries for the past two decades. The key impact of SAPs has been to shift the terms of trade from industry to agriculture, and hence make rural areas and settlements at the lower levels of the settlement hierarchy more economically attractive. In addition, SAP-inspired export-oriented trade favours agriculture over industry, and investors are therefore more prepared to take decisions to locate outside the core of the Third World metropolis (Gilbert 1993, cited in Briggs and Yeboah 2001, p.19).

Compared to the rest of the world, Africa is a less urbanised continent. Its urban population at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was estimated to be about 41% according to a United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (UNCHS) 1996 Report (Potter and Lloyd-Evans 1998; Potter et al. 1999; Songsore 2003a). Using United Nations population statistics from 1950 to 1990, Satterthwaite (1996) has demonstrated how low a proportion of the world's urban population and population in 'million cities' are in Africa, and how Africa still has only a small proportion of the world's largest cities. This implies that the majority of the urban population of the African continent today still lives in small and medium-sized towns, and the majority of the people in rural areas has a closer contact with these towns than with the large towns and cities (Aeroe 1992; Satterthwaite and Tacoli 2003; Tacoli 2003). This makes small towns important nodal points for development.

Moreover, increasing prevalence of market-based development strategies and their emphasis on export-oriented agricultural production calls for efficient economic linkages between producers and external markets. From this perspective, small towns are increasingly seen as playing a key role in providing and linking their rural hinterlands with both domestic and international markets (Tacoli 1998a, 1998b). Hence, the interest in small towns in the regional development literature as nodes for linking rural agricultural areas to marketing centres.

Also, related to the above is the debate on increasing agricultural production through farmers access to market centres. It is argued that the market is an incentive to farmers to increase their efforts to raise production since it provides farmers the opportunity to sell their surplus production. Therefore strengthening and developing the market function of small towns is one of the measures to increase agricultural production (Wouden 1997, p. 20; Owusu 2004, 2005a; Owusu and Lund 2004). However, it is recognised that for this to be effective other measures such as effective transport links, and access to extension services and credits must also be in place (Wiggins 2000; Pedersen 2003).

Studies have shown the potential of small towns as centres of growth and development, and transformation in the rural development process. It is argued that in the developing world, small towns are increasingly seen as an essential link in the urban-rural continuum. They are perceived as centres for the marketing and processing of farm goods, as potential storage reservoirs to prevent the mass rural-urban migration into the large cities, and as vehicles for the diffusion of modern technology and values into the countryside (Lin and Ma 1994, pp. 93-94; Rondinelli 1984; Gaile 1992; Ssewakiryanga 2001; Hinderink and Titus 2002). This notion of the small town in rural and regional development explains the attention given to its various functions – market centre, service centre, centre for processing activities, and centre for off-farm employment (Wouden 1997). Therefore the conventional wisdom and perception of policy-makers and regional planners is that these small towns, which serve the rural hinterland and its population, have a great potential role to play in promoting a sound and balanced national settlement pattern and a broad-based rural development benefiting the majority of the people (Rondinelli 1984; Titus 1991; Pedersen 1997; Hinderink and Titus 2002; Satterthwaite and Tacoli 2003).

However, Pedersen (2003) argues that while small and intermediate urban centres have become very important, the danger is that the irresistible process of globalisation could lead to the justification of a new concentration of activities in the capital cities. This may make policies on small and intermediate urban centres more difficult to carry out. McGrew (2000) puts this broadly, arguing that the enmeshing of states in a plethora of transnational networks and systems under globalisation makes it more difficult for them to pursue their domestic development policy objectives. A counter-argument to this view is that, globalisation also activates issues of localism. In other words, the erosion of states' capacities to manage national development objectives forces them to decentralise, which

creates opportunity for local and national actions (McMichael 2000). McMichael (2000, p. 288) adds that global relations are inconceivable without local 'faces' (e.g. states, micro-regions, communities), just as the 'local' has no meaning without context (whether it is a community with exchange relations beyond its boundaries or a community resisting the reach of states or markets). Lastly, on this point, globalisation is making states neither less important nor less powerful. On the contrary, the roles and functions of states, and how they pursue these, are changing as they seek coherent strategies and platforms to engage other actors and agencies, both domestic and international (such as private enterprises, international financial institutions, NGOs, social movements, etc.), or create spaces for these agencies and actors within the public sphere (Opoku-Mensah 2004). In short, economic globalisation and the changing role of the state create both opportunities and constraints for small towns' development, and other national development policy objectives. The development objectives of states therefore become the extent to which they are able to adapt their development policies to these challenges and opportunities with the aim of creating the best frameworks and options for both their economies and populations.

## **1.2 Ghana's Spatial Development: A Brief Historical and Geographical Appraisal**

Ghana is located in the West Africa sub-region of Africa, and lies between latitudes 4°45' and 11°11' North of the Equator and longitudes 3°07' West and 1°14' East of the Greenwich Meridian (longitude 0°). It has an area of about 238,537 km<sup>2</sup>, and is bounded on the east, west, and north by the countries of Togo, Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso respectively. To the south is the Atlantic Ocean. Administratively, Ghana is divided into 10 regions. Each region is further sub-divided into districts. Each region and district has its own regional capital and district capital (or administrative centre) respectively (see Fig. 1). In all, there are 10 regions and 110 districts in the country, and hence 10 regional capitals and 110 district capitals respectively. The division of the country into districts and regions is largely based on the need to maintain large cultural groups as homogenous units as well as the need for efficient administration of districts and regions (Dickson 1971, 1975; Bening 1999; Ofori 2002).

In 2000, Ghana's total population was 18.9 million, and estimated to be growing at an annual rate of 2.7%. About 56% of the country's total population lives in rural areas, and the remaining 44% live in settlements defined as urban (i.e. settlements with 5000 or more



inhabitants) (GSS 2002a). The urban population is growing at the rate of about 4.5% per annum which is higher than the natural population increase. The country's urban system is dominated by Accra (national capital), Kumasi, Sekondi-Takoradi, Tema and Tamale. However, in recent years, though large towns and cities have continued to grow, the rate of growth of small and medium-sized towns has also been impressive. Various reasons account for this trend, including the implementation of a decentralisation programme since the late 1980s (Dinye 1995; Owusu 2004).

**Fig. 1. Ghana: Location and Politico-Administrative Regions/Districts**



Source: *Basic Social Studies Atlas for Ghana*, 1997, p.6.

The structure of Ghana's economy has not changed significantly in recent years. It is dominated by agriculture and the primary sector in terms of their contribution to output, employment, revenue, and foreign exchange earnings. Agriculture accounts for about 51% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and employs about 60% of the total active labour force. The main export items of the country are primary commodities, namely cocoa, gold, timber, and bauxite. Cocoa earnings constitute about 45% of total export receipts. Ghana's economy recorded its worst performance during the decade prior to 1984. It has, however, made some recovery, at least at the macro-level with the institution of the World Bank/International Monetary Fund (IMF) Economic Recovery Programme (ERP)/Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) in the mid-1980s. Since 1984, the GDP has grown at an average annual rate of about 5%, compared to decline or marginal growth rates of less than 1% during the 1976-1983 period (GSS 1999, p. 2; Owusu 2001; Songsore 2003a, 2003b).

The poverty profile of the country has been expressed in various ways; however, the rural-urban dichotomy is the most common expression. All major socio-economic indicators show disparities between rural and urban areas. According to the Ghana Living Standard Survey (GLSS) Report 4 (GSS 2000a), per capita annual income is ₵692,000 (about USD 289) in urban areas and ₵469,000 (about USD 196) in rural areas.<sup>1</sup> The Report also indicated that about 80% of households in urban areas have access to pipe-borne water, while it is about 18% in rural areas. With regard to literacy, it is about 75% for urban areas and 53% in rural areas. The available socio-economic indicators also show that the three regions in northern Ghana (Northern, Upper West and Upper East Regions) are ranked lowest in all these indicators. These three regions are also the least urbanised regions in Ghana. Fig. 1 shows that the greater majority of settlements, indeed urban settlements, are concentrated in Southern Ghana.

The present inequalities in spatial development in Ghana (north-south and rural-urban divides) have their origins in the country's colonial legacy. However, these spatial inequalities have been reinforced and accentuated by post-colonial development policies and strategies (Songsore 2003a, 2003b). After achieving total control of the country towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the British colonial power proceeded to divide it into provinces or regions. These were in turn sub-divided into districts. The division of the

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<sup>1</sup> At the exchange rate of about 2394 cedis to the US dollar prevailing in March 1999 (GSS 2000a).

country into regions and districts, as already noted was based on the need to maintain large or major ethnic groups as homogenous and unified entities as far as possible, and for the effective politico-administration of the country (Dickson 1971, 1975; Bening 1999). After achieving complete political and administrative hegemony, the colonial administrators then proceeded to invest more in some regions than others. Their criteria for investing in a region were based on the following: presence of exploitable and exportable resources; the ease with which cultivation could be encouraged of introduced cash or tree crops (mainly cocoa, coffee and rubber); and the ease with which these resources could be transported to the seaports (i.e. proximity to the coast) (Dickson 1971, 1975; Songsore 2003b).

Regions or areas satisfying these criteria were subsequently connected with transportation links, mainly railways and roads, and other infrastructure. Compared to other parts of the country, these areas attracted migrant populations as well as further investments. Areas of southern Ghana with the climate suited to the introduced cash and tree crops of cocoa, coffee and rubber, and the vegetation suitable for timber exploitation, as well as mining sites closer to the coast or ports attracted colonial investments. In addition, these export-oriented activities were also to some extent urban-oriented. As a result of these investments, some existing urban centres in southern Ghana benefited through growth and expansion, while the investments also led to the emergence of new ones. On the other hand, northern Ghana with the climate not suited to the introduced cash crops, and relatively far from the coast and seaports received less of colonial investments. In addition, urban centres and other major settlements in northern Ghana, which had developed as a result of the long-distance trade between states in southern Ghana (and others in West Africa) and the states in the Sahelian and Mediterranean regions stagnated or declined. This was due to the reorientation of trade routes as a result of the European maritime trade, and the general interest of the colonialists in southern Ghana (Songsore 2003b). The important urban centres which emerged or continued to grow in northern Ghana did so for administrative reasons, namely because they were mainly colonial administrative centres.

The criteria for investment in regions developed in the colonial period (which was subsequently acted upon by post-colonial development trends) also had implications for rural and urban development. In short, similar to the regional (north—south) inequalities, socio-economic differences between rural and urban areas can be traced to the colonial

and post-colonial development policies and strategies. In general terms, the investment policies of the colonial administrators were urban-oriented, as already noted. For effective administration and political control, some centres had to be declared as administrative headquarters or centres, which attracted investments and the attention of the colonial administrators. Many of these centres were also the residence of the colonialists. The administrative centres also served as the buying or collecting centres of the introduced cash and tree crops in many instances. In addition, they became the commercial centres for the demand of European or imported foreign goods due to increased income and wealth (Dickson 1971). It is therefore little wonder that these towns were more concentrated in the resource exploitable and exportable areas of southern Ghana. In fact, as already noted, the administrative centres established in northern Ghana, were purely meant for administrative purposes. After independence, administrative centres have continued to receive attention just like the colonial period. Today, in many towns in Ghana, the location of government offices and residential quarters of public officials are quite distinguishable from the surrounding neighbourhoods and settlements.

Another urban-oriented investment programme of the colonial administration was the introduction of modern mineral mining. The beginning of modern mineral mining such as gold, diamond, manganese, and bauxite was responsible for the rapid transformation of many rural settlements into towns in southern Ghana. According to Dickson (1971), some towns in southern Ghana to all intent and purposes are the primary creation of mining activities. Examples of mining towns which emerged during the period and which are still active centres today are Obuasi, Dunkwa, Nsuta, Akwatia, Bibiani, Tarkwa, and Prestea (see Fig. 1). Even though, there were (and still are) mineral deposits in northern Ghana, they have been given less attention in terms of exploitation due to their relative distance from the coast and the relatively higher costs of transporting mined ore to the seaports for exports (Dickson 1975; Songsore and Denkabe 1995; Songsore 2003b).

The established mining, administrative and agricultural collecting or buying centres were further connected with transport and other infrastructure. These centres also began attracting not only migrant population from other parts of the country and beyond but also the best of the migrant population (in terms of skills and other qualities). The general post-colonial development trend in Ghana has been the further consolidation of these centres. Further greater investments in these areas relative to other parts of the country have hindered the growth of other settlements and regions (Songsore 2003a, 2003b).

The post-colonial inward-oriented policies such as import-substitution industrialisation pursued after independence, and the outward-oriented policies carried out under SAPs for the last two decades have been detrimental to rural development. These policies have not aided agricultural development, the mainstay of the rural economy. Even though some policies under SAPs such as the removal of price controls have improved the prices of agriculture produce and farmers' incomes, the full impact of these policies has not been fully felt. This is due to countervailing policies such as the removal of subsidies on agricultural inputs and services, and currency devaluation (Sowa 1993; Pedersen 2003). Furthermore, these policies are yet to address the long identified and entrenched problems in the agricultural sector, namely lack of access to credits, marketing (especially during periods of bumper harvest), inadequate storage facilities, and the lack of improved technology and input in agricultural production.

Again, current policies under SAPs and economic reforms of allowing market forces to determine prices and allocation of resources are more likely to reinforce or strengthen existing socio-economic differences between spatial units. What this implies is that spatial units, which have taken the lead in socio-economic development, are likely to be strengthened to the detriment of relatively weaker areas. Under this situation, the resource areas of southern Ghana and the large urban centres will, to a large extent, continue to attract key investments due to the existing relatively better infrastructure and economies of scale enjoyed by these areas (Songsore 2003a).

### **1.3 Governments' Response to Spatial Inequalities in Development**

Spatial inequalities in socio-economic development in Ghana has long been recognised by various governments. Evidence exists that even before the end of colonial rule, the colonial administrators had recognised this problem, especially the issue of underdevelopment of northern Ghana relative to southern Ghana (Dickson 1975). Subsequent post-colonial governments have also recognised and attempted to address both the regional and the rural-urban differentials through various policies and strategies. The adopted strategies have largely been based on two main approaches in development planning and administration: top-down and bottom-up development planning and administration approaches. Until 1988, policies regarding national development and planning were generally top-down in character. The last 15 years have witnessed the

adoption of bottom-up development policies and strategies, typified by the introduction of decentralisation and local government reforms.

In accordance with the top-down development administration and planning approach, national and sectoral development goals and objectives were formulated and defined from the perspectives of a few 'experts' and the staff of government ministries and other central government agencies without any consultation with, or participation of the beneficiaries of the formulated plans. These top-down development goals were mainly articulated through the drawing of national and sectoral development plans (MLG&RD 1996). Apart from their internal weaknesses and constraints, the top-down (or centrally) formulated development plans also suffered from implementation and political weaknesses. To a large extent, they were mere 'paper tigers' drawn with ambitious rhetoric and agenda that in most cases failed to see the light of day. Rather than provide a guide to central government's policies and programmes, real policies were made through yearly budget statements, which in most cases did not even mention these broad development plans. Writing on the Seven Year Development Plan (1963-1970) described by many as one of the most comprehensive and best-formulated development plans for Ghana, Donkor (1997, p. 48) noted:

The annual budgets of 1963 to 1966 bore very little relevance to either the whole Seven Year Plan or to even the annual plan instalments prepared by the Planning Commission to effect the implementation of the former. For example, the Budget Speech for the 1963-64 financial year made only a single passing reference to the Plan and even then in direct opposite to the plan strategy proposing increased government consumption relative to capital expenditure. The 1965 budget speech did not even make any mention or reference to the Plan.

In addition, none of these top-down development plans were able to achieve full maturity, due to political instability and numerous changes of government, and the lack of adequate or realistic march between plan targets and financial resources. Further, these top-down plans failed to achieve their goals and objectives due to their insensitivity to community or the population's aspirations, and their failure to create opportunities for local level development initiatives (MLG&RD 1996).

The sets of political and economic policies that have been implemented in Ghana (as in other sub-Saharan African countries) since the early 1980s are quite complex. They include the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank's Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) involving the liberalisation and privatisation of Ghana's economy, and political democratisation. From the late 1980s, the basis for the shift to bottom-up development approaches was provided: the limited achievements of the top-down development administration and planning approach; the limitations of SAPs; increasing agitation for participation and empowerment by the populace; and the demand of donor countries and agencies for good governance as a basic requirement for development. Some analysts also see the decentralisation and local government reforms (bottom-up development administration and planning system) introduced in 1988 as the logical extension of the structural adjustment effort (Razin and Obirih-Opareh 2000) – that is, a reaction to the changes in the broader economic and ideological environment at the global level. These factors have led to the enactment of legislations regarding decentralised development planning and administration in Ghana. Within the context of poverty and economic inequalities, decentralisation is seen as bringing development closer to the people, promoting participatory development, and consolidating democracy. It is also seen as a means of producing policies attuned to local situations, and thus enhancing the effective and efficient utilisation of resources (Crook and Manor 1998; Ayee 2000a; Yankson 2000a).

The decentralisation programme has several objectives, but the basic goal is rural development (Crook 1991; Ayee 1996; Crook and Manor 1998; Yankson 2000a, 2004). Local governments, namely District Assemblies (DAs), have been tasked with the overall responsibility of local (district) development and poverty reduction (MLG&RD 1996). In particular, decentralisation is expected to reduce the disparities between rural and urban areas. The implementation of decentralisation policies has involved the transfer of power, resources and responsibilities from central to local levels. This has implied strengthening settlements at the lower levels of the settlement hierarchy, particularly district capitals, to enable these centres to provide the services and other amenities to their residents and hinterland population. In general, it is expected that the growth and development of district capitals will spearhead the overall development of districts (GSS 1995, pp. 12-14; Ayee 1997, p. 38; Owusu 2004, 2005a). The implementation of the decentralisation programme also implies reversing the decades of relatively poor living standards of the majority of the

rural population resulting from top-down development strategies through the promotion of economic development in rural areas (Owusu 1999).

#### **1.4 Balanced Regional and District Development within the Context of Structural Adjustment and Decentralisation: The Small Towns' Role**

Since independence in 1957, central government has played, and continues to play an important role in the social and economic development of Ghana. National policies have been formulated or geared towards spatial deconcentration (or balanced development of regions and districts). The declared aims of these policies are to address regional inequalities and promote rapid national growth. The implementation of economic reforms since the early 1980s has resulted in central government cost-cutting measures, and the 'pushing' of much of the burden of services provision and development onto local governments through the decentralisation programme. In addition to their role as providers of services and infrastructure, local governments (District Assemblies) are also required to provide support and facilitate district economic development and poverty reduction.

Within these changing political and economic contexts has emerged the growing recognition of the importance of exchanges between rural and urban households, enterprises and economies which combine rural and urban resources for the purposes of either wealth and income accumulation or as a survival strategy (Jerve 2001; Kamete et al. 2001; Lerise et al. 2001; Tacoli 2002; Bah et al. 2003; Satterthwaite and Tacoli 2003; Tacoli 2003). According to Satterthwaite and Tacoli (2003, p. 1) these interactions and linkages are generally stronger in and around small towns and intermediate urban centres though there are important local variations in their nature and scale. This therefore underlines the important potential role of these urban centres in local economic development.

From a regional development perspective, small towns can play crucial roles in the economic development of their hinterlands or surrounding regions. These roles include: as market centres which can link local producers to national and international markets, and thus facilitate the improvement of rural production and incomes; distribution of services which can decrease costs and improve access due to the proximity of services for both small towns' residents and the rural hinterland population; and as alternative attractive



zones to potential rural-urban migrants, thereby reducing migration pressure on the large towns and cities. These potential roles of small towns become meaningful when related to the fact that a significant proportion of the population in low-income and middle-income countries (including Ghana) either live in and around small and intermediate urban centres or depend on them for access to goods and services (Hardoy and Satterthwaite 1988; Tacoli 2003; Satterthwaite and Tacoli 2003).

More importantly, in recent years many international development agencies and countries such as Ghana have made a strong commitment to achieve a specified set of goals that are termed *Millennium Development Goals* (MDGs). This set of goals, which forms part of the overall poverty reduction strategy, includes improving service provision by the year 2015, reducing under five-year and maternal mortality rates, reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS and the incidence of malaria and other communicable diseases, increasing access to adequate water and sanitation, and improving and eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education (Thomas 2000, p. 4). The achievement of these and other poverty-related goals will require great improvement in service provision and delivery, most of which will be located in small urban centres (Tacoli 2003, p. 10).

The point made here that in the context of Ghana (and other sub-Saharan African countries) the resultant impact of economic reforms and SAPs, and decentralisation reinforces the potential role small towns could play in the attainment of balanced regional and district development. In other words, market-based development of the economic reforms, decentralisation and poverty reduction strategies such as the MDGs are closely linked – all create space for small towns' development. These policies and strategies require the formulation of policies and programmes on small towns that facilitates rural-urban linkages which will enable the utilisation of rural and urban resources by rural and urban households, enterprises and economies. This, however, requires policies and programmes grounded in the local context. This is because needs and possibilities can vary greatly between districts and regions.

Decentralisation provides the best possibilities in the identification of local needs, opportunities and constraints, and also has the potential to act on them effectively (Osmani 2001). This, however, requires decentralised approaches which are driven by active participation of a wide range of stakeholders in the planning and implementation of

policies. In addition, it requires a genuine decentralisation of revenue and financial resources commensurate with delegated responsibilities and functions, and more transparent and accountable local decentralised institutions. These required conditions are, however, currently rarely the case in many sub-Saharan African countries (including Ghana). The question is therefore whether the positive contributions small towns can make in regional development is realistic, and whether these positive roles are inherent characteristics of these urban centres, or whether these positive roles of small towns in regional development are determined or controlled by wider socio-economic and political factors (including the prevailing governance system at the local level) (Satterwaite and Tacoli 2003).

### **1.5 Statement of the Problem**

Views on the role of small towns in rural and regional development are varied and divergent. These competing views are centred on the question of whether small towns (defined in this study to include district capitals) contribute to the economic growth of their hinterland rural regions (districts), or otherwise. This definition of small towns in this study is further elaborated in Chapter Two. However, for clarity and simplification, and for the purpose of the study, small towns in Ghana are defined as settlements with populations between 5000 and 50,000. This definition is exemplified with district capitals or district administrative headquarters, which are usually surrounded by predominantly rural populations. For the purpose of this study, the terms small town and district capital are therefore used interchangeably, unless otherwise stated.

The dominant view among many development geographers and regional development planners is that small towns among other factors are unable to fulfil their potential role in terms of facilitating the development of their rural hinterland regions due to inadequate financial and infrastructural resources. In addition, they lack power and authority to initiate their own development process (Simon 1992; Pedersen 1997; Satterthwaite and Tacoli 2003). However, for the past decade and half under decentralisation, Ghana has witnessed increasing transfer of financial and infrastructural resources, as well as power and authority to the district level. District capitals have therefore become important focal points for development under the programme. According to GSS (1995), the programme envisaged investment in basic infrastructure of the district capitals, such as provision of electricity, potable water supply, efficient and accessible road network, etc). These

investments are expected to enhance the growth of the district capitals, and strengthen spatial linkages and sectoral interactions with their respective districts in order to stimulate development in quite a uniform manner as a means of reducing migration to the large towns and cities. This is also expected to enhance the attractiveness of these centres such that the unemployed in the large urban centres could find these centres as attractive zones to migrate into (GSS 1995; Owusu 2004, 2005a).

Various studies have been done on small towns and rural-urban interactions in developing countries. However, not much has been done on small towns within a decentralised political, administrative and economic context. Further in the context of Ghana, although district capitals have been recognised as important with the implementation of decentralisation policies, not enough theoretical work has been done on their role or to place this within the various models and theories on urban centres within the fields of urban studies and regional development. As a result, an adequate evaluation of district capitals and their role in the decentralised development process is yet to be undertaken.

It is against this background that the study seeks to examine and conceptualise the role of district capitals in Ghana's decentralised development process, using as a case study two district capitals and their respective districts in the Central Region: Dunkwa-on-Offin (hereafter referred to as Dunkwa) and the Upper Denkyira District, and Twifo Praso and the Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira District. Based on a formulated theoretical model, namely the District Capital-Centred Development Model (DCDM), the district capitals will be examined to determine the extent to which decentralisation has facilitated their growth and the impact this has had on their linkages or interactions with their hinterland regions (district) in terms of delivery of social services, agricultural production and poverty reduction in the case study districts.

Formulated within the context of Ghana's decentralised development planning and administration framework, the DCDM theorises the role of district capitals in district development as a two-way process. This involves rural-urban linkages between district capitals and their respective districts with both spatial units reinforcing the growth and development of each other within a participatory decentralised development process. The basic impetus of the model is income/market driven through agriculture development, leading to the overall development of a district which benefits both district capital (urban)

and district (rural). The DCDM takes account of both the wider socio-economic field and national/international political economy as critical factors in shaping the relationships (positive or negative outcomes) between district capitals and their respective districts. The details of the model, and the conditions necessary for its implementation are explored in Chapters 2 and Section 5.4 (Chapter 5).

### **1.6 Specific Objectives of the Study**

With the general objective of the study stated above, the specific objectives are as follows:

1. To identify the major factors accounting for the growth of small towns in Ghana.
2. To examine the extent to which decentralisation has promoted the socio-economic activities of district capitals and its impact on rural-urban interactions in the case study area.
3. To identify a development model which can enhance or facilitate spatial and sectoral interactions between district capitals and their rural districts within the context of Ghana's decentralised development framework.

### **1.7 Research Questions**

With the above objectives, research questions are identified as follows;

1. What is the role of district capitals in regional and rural development under the decentralisation programme?
2. Do district capitals perform sufficiently important roles to justify continued allocation of national and donor investments in their development under Ghana's decentralised development strategy?
3. How has the present policy of promoting the development of district capitals under the decentralisation programme enhanced rural-urban interactions?
4. What factors make district capitals less able to interact with their rural regions (districts), and what measures can be put in place to enhance these interactions and linkages?

### **1.8 Structure of the Thesis**

This study starts with a general introduction to some of the reasons accounting for the renewed interest in small towns in developing countries. This first chapter also presents a

brief profile of Ghana's current socio-economic status and a brief historical and geographical appraisal of the country's spatial development. It then looks at the question of regional and district development within the context of SAPs, decentralisation and poverty reduction, and the spaces created for small towns' development. The statement of the problem of the study, research objectives, and finally, the research questions underlying the study complete the chapter.

Chapter 2 provides a collated and synthesized definition of the key concepts used in the study regarding their conceptualisation and application. It examines the concepts of 'small towns', 'rural-urban linkages' and 'decentralisation'. The chapter also looks at the interrelationships or links between these concepts, which informed the basis of the theoretical framework of the study, namely the *District Capital-Centred Development Model* (DCDM) which is presented in detail in Section 5.4 (Chapter 5). This is followed by the study's analytical approach, which sets the broad framework by which the study's research questions and concepts are operationalised. Finally, the Chapter provides a synthesised geographical perspective of the study's key concepts.

Chapter 3 focuses on the study's research methodology. In this chapter, the case study research approach and the rationale for adopting this approach is presented. I also reflect on the data collection and analyses processes as a way of establishing the reliability and validity of the data used in the study. In particular, attention is drawn to the researcher's positionality vis-à-vis the research informants and the data generated.

The case study district capitals and their respective districts, Dunkwa and the Upper Denkyira District, and Twifo Praso and the Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira District are presented in Chapter 4. The chapter presents a comparative overview of the socio-economic, cultural and political structure of the two districts and their district capitals as basis of evaluating the level of development of the districts. It also provides information on the possible kinds and level of interactions between the district capitals and their respective districts.

Chapter 5 consists of five articles, which address various aspects of the research objectives and research questions as set out in Chapter 1. The first article is a literature review of the role of small towns within changing development paradigms; the second

article looks at the growth of small towns in Ghana and the rationale for the promotion of these urban centres under the decentralisation programme; the third article is a theoretical formulation and operationalisation of the District Capital-Centred Development Model (DCDM); and the fourth and fifth articles respectively examine rural-urban linkages, and flows of trade and remittance exchanges in the case study districts and their implications for district development.

Chapter 6, the last chapter of the study, contains the summary of the study and concluding discussions. It provides the summary of the thesis, a recapitulation of the District Capital-Centred Development Model, responses to research questions, policy recommendations to strengthen the strategy of using district capitals as stimuli to district development, and suggestions for future research.

## 2.0 CONCEPTS AND THEORIES

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the key concepts that are used in this study, and the interrelationship between the concepts and their analytical application. The discussion of these concepts in this chapter is to provide a collated and synthesized view regarding their conceptualisation and application in this study.

### 2.2 Small Towns

What is a small town, and how are they different from other settlements? Are small towns centres of attraction to their hinterlands? What kinds of interactions or linkages exist between small towns and their hinterlands? More importantly, do small towns generate growth or play positive role in the modernisation of rural areas? These, and other related questions have confronted many development workers on regional development, especially regional planners and geographers, for many decades. The emerging consensus among many of these experts is that there are no clear-cut and universal answers to these questions. Again, an emerging view is that each small town and its hinterland (region) is unique and therefore cannot be subjected to standardised theories and concepts. As such, each small town needs to be examined based on its own regional context and peculiarities (Hardoy and Satterthwaite 1988; Simon 1990, 1992; Evans 1992; Pedersen 1992, 1997; Dewar 1996; Baker 1997; Czerny et al. 1997; Giraut 1997; Wouden 1997; Courtney and Errington 2000; Andersson 2002; Hinderink and Titus 2002; Satterthwaite and Tacoli 2003; Tacoli 2000, 2003; Owusu 2004, 2005a).

Even though the process of urbanisation in sub-Saharan Africa has a long history, our knowledge and understanding of Africa's urban process is still patchy, scanty and full of open spaces (Anderson and Rathbone 2000). The present literature on Africa's urbanisation process is beset with a number of imbalances, including the relatively large concentration of research and literature on the large towns and cities compared to small and medium-sized towns. Pedersen's (1992, 1997) account of this situation can be summed up as follows:

- The group of small and intermediate towns is not a clearly delimited entity, comprising centres ranging in size from large villages with a few thousand

inhabitants to quite large provincial towns with populations of 50,000 or more. Researchers therefore have problems delimiting their boundaries.

- Researchers have tended to sideline small towns because many do not regard them as a homogenous group about which one can easily generalise and develop concepts and models about.
- Statistics and other information on small towns are not recognised as independent statistical units but are presented instead as either part of a larger rural area or large urban centre.

Another reason for the lack of research and data on small urban centres is the apparently long-held view among researchers and planners that small towns are 'bystanders' in the process of urbanisation. As bystanders, small towns are considered neither as negatively nor positively influencing rural and regional development. Researchers and urban planners have therefore not felt the need to analyse the growth, functions and socio-economic activities of small towns. According to Dewar (1996) this lack of adequate attention to small towns may be due to the lack of theoretical clarity regarding their role in regional and rural development. In one light, the role of small towns is perceived as positive phenomenon – centres through which resources, commodities, and information and innovations are transmitted to rural area (Rondinelli 1984). In another, they are seen as centres of exploitation through which resources are drained from rural areas (Friedmann and Weaver 1979; Southall 1979, 1988). Dewar (1996) adds that in Africa, where urban centres in the past were frequently centres of colonial control, this latter view has tended to dominate. As a result, some rural planners almost entirely ignored small towns, which they viewed as centres of the rural bourgeoisie and unproductive middlemen (Pedersen 2003).

Furthermore, in much of the literature both in developed and developing countries, urbanisation means 'cities' and 'large towns'. In other words, urbanisation is synonymous with cities. Many authors and researchers quite often make reference to the urban hierarchy but rarely do they make reference to settlements at the lower levels of the hierarchy or even attempt to prescribe any functions to them. In the view of many researchers and writers on urbanisation, small towns do not count and can safely be ignored. Commenting on a similar problem in Europe, the urban historian, Clark (1995, p. 3) noted that until recent times the number, importance and complexity of European small



towns have been largely ignored. Thus, European small towns have been striking by their absence from the survey literature.

Lastly, various regional, national and cross-cultural or international studies on urbanisation have set as thresholds population and other parameters that largely ignore small towns and other settlements at the lower levels of the settlement hierarchy. Due to this, the literature on urbanisation regarding small towns is relatively inadequate. This is especially the case in sub-Saharan Africa, where urban research has been slow to evolve (Anderson and Rathbone 2000, p. 9-13), and as a field of inquiry is little more than three decades old (Obudho and Obudho 1994).

### ***2.2.1 What is a Small Town?***

Probably, the problem associated with the definition of small towns is as old as the conceptual problem of defining what constitutes 'urban' or 'town'. The problem of definition of small town is even more difficult due to the fact that, while most countries at least have official definitions for urban centres (or towns), no such definitions exist for categories such as 'small', medium, and 'large' urban centres. Definitions used or applied have therefore varied among researchers even for the same country and region. For instance, Andersson (2002) writing on Zimbabwe, notes that while Kamate (1998) defined small towns in Zimbabwe as settlements with populations of 2500 to 9999, Pedersen (1995) suggested 2000 to 50,000 as the advisable definition.

Notwithstanding variations in definitions, it needs to be noted that definitions are certainly relevant and important for any meaningful analyses and discussions. To avoid an endless discussion on definitions and their limitations, Hardoy and Satterthwaite (1988) and Simon (1992) have argued for the adoption of an approach that is functional and relative rather than absolute, embracing centres which are small in the context of their respective national urban and economic systems. In short, the approach calls for the definition of small towns based on the settlement hierarchy in each country. It is this approach regarding what constitutes a small town which is adopted in this study.

In the context of Ghana, urban centres are officially defined as settlements with populations of 5000 or more. No official definition, however, exists for small towns. In the analyses of regional urban growth patterns in Ghana based on the 1960, 1970 and 1984 population censuses, GSS (1995) defined small towns as centres with populations

between 5000 and 19,999. Medium-sized and large urban centres were defined as centres with populations between 20,000 to 99,999 and 100,000 and above respectively. Thoni and Yankson (1985) made a similar classification of Ghana's urban system based on the 1970 Population Census. Andr e's (1981) classification of Ghana's urban system based on the 1960 population census and other characterisations such as administrative status and level of industrial and service establishments, achieved a four-tier urban hierarchy: Accra capital region (Accra-Tema), which is the national politico-administrative and industrial hub with population of over 300,000; Two-cities (Kumasi and Sekondi-Takoradi) with over 50,000 population, and important regional administrative and industrial centres; Regional centres (comprising all other regional administrative capitals except Bolgatanga) with populations of over 10,000; and Towns with populations below 10,000 (mainly district administrative centres). Below the towns, all locations were considered as 'rural'. Andr e (1981) noted that the capital city region and the two-cities typology could be put into the same category. In other words, the first and second typologies could be classified as large towns, the regional centres as medium-sized towns, and the 'towns' as small towns. However, Andr e was aware of the limitations of her classification, noting that the crudeness of her definitions can be justified by the requirements for which the classification was designed, namely the analyses of the production form and spatial structure of industries in Ghana.

Using the approach of delimiting small towns based on Ghana's official definition of urban centres and the 2000 Population Census data on settlements as well as the country's politico-administrative structure, this study adopted a three-tier classification of Ghana's urban system. Adding rural settlements, Ghana's settlement hierarchy could be placed within a four-tier system (see Section 5.3 in Chapter 5 for further comments on this classification). At the top of the hierarchy are the large towns and cities of Accra, Tema Municipality, Kumasi and Sekondi-Takoradi with populations of 250,000 or more. Besides the population criterion, the large towns may also be described as the hub of Ghana's industrial and service establishments, although the Accra-Tema region is exceptional in this respect. Next in the hierarchy are the medium-size urban centres, exemplified by the regional administrative centres with populations between 50,000 and 250,000. Even though the medium-size and large towns are all regional politico-administrative centres (except Tema, a major industrial and sea-port centre), the former are distinguished from the latter by population size, and level of industrial and service establishments. Below the

medium-size towns are small towns, defined as centres with population between 5000 and 50,000 (exemplified by district capitals). Below the small towns are rural settlements. The medium-sized towns are distinguished from the small towns by their role as regional political-administrative and coordinating centres of the district (including district capitals). These regional political and administrative roles of regional capitals (medium-sized towns) are demonstrated well by the decentralisation programme which requires districts and their respective local governments (District Assemblies) to submit their development plans to the regional capitals for harmonisation as regional development plans for onward transmission to the national capital to be further harmonised into national development plans. The regional capitals also monitor the day-to-day operations of the District Assemblies.

This classification and definition of small towns is, however, an oversimplification of Ghana's urban system. This is because with the exception of the administrative status criterion, many centres exhibit a variety of functional and population complexities which make the process of putting them into categories or 'boxes' problematic. A typical example is the gold-mining town of Obuasi in the Ashanti Region, with a population of 115,564 and the district capital of Adansi West District. The presence of gold-mining activities has attracted many industrial and services establishments to the town, which may even be comparable to or exceed those of the medium-size town. According to the above definitions, Obuasi by virtue of its population, administrative status and industrial establishments could be classified as both a small and medium-sized town.

Notwithstanding the limitations of the above classification of Ghana's urban hierarchy, it enables us to present a simplified structure of the hierarchy for analytical examination of where small towns could be located within the hierarchy. It also allows for a definition of small towns, particularly district capitals, which are the urban centres of interest in this study, both within the urban spatial and administrative hierarchies. In Ghana today, the lowest level politico-administrative and planning unit is the local government area (i.e. district). There are 110 districts, each of which is made up of a district capital and a rural area encompassing both sizable politico-administratively defined territory and considerable population. Thus, the definition allows us to conceptually focus on the district capitals whose functions are primarily political and administrative governance and the provision of services for their respective predominant rural hinterlands (districts).

### **2.2.2 Small Towns: Centres of Growth or Exploitation?**

The role of small towns in rural and regional development has been the subject of debate in the regional development literature. Small towns' growth and development have therefore been subjected to different schools of thought. These schools of thought seem to follow the general debates and discourse in development theory in developing countries (Section 5.2 in Chapter 5 provides further discussions on this). Therefore, shifts in development paradigms imply changes in the perception of small towns and their role in rural and regional development in developing countries (Pedersen 1997; Tacoli 1998a, 1998b). Dewar (1996, pp. 2-3) noted that the period from the 1960s to the mid-1980s witnessed a considerable emphasis on small towns in national and regional development, both in terms of theory building and actual policy. The dominant theoretical perspective of the role of small towns was viewed either as positive or negative within diametrically opposed development paradigms, particularly modernisation and dependency paradigms. More recently, there has been a renewed interest in small towns, primarily as focus of local economic development as a result of the economic and political reforms of the last two decades (Owusu 2005 forthcoming).

Broadly speaking, the conflicting notions on urban centres and their role in the development process have led to three dominant views among development geographers and regional development planners: *functional spatial (optimistic) view*, *political economic (pessimistic) view*, and *intermediate view*. The functional spatial view is in favour of the generative notion of urban centres, and has been most influential in both policy and planning practice (Rondinelli 1984; Wouden 1997). It generally assumes a positive or supportive influence of towns on their hinterland regions. Notions derived from the political economic view, on the other hand, stress the negative influence (or, at best, lower level of influence) of towns on their peripheries. It emphasizes the unequal exchange relationship between urban centres and rural areas. According to this view, the urban hierarchy (including small towns) is seen as a chain of exploitative centres, perpetuating and facilitating the exploitation of rural areas (Southall 1979, 1988; Wouden 1997). While both views have been subjected to many criticisms, they have been especially criticised for viewing small town-hinterland relationships as one-sided (involving mainly flows from urban to rural). Further, both ignore rural-urban linkages such as the flow of people, goods, trade, and cash between rural and urban areas, which have significant impact on both spatial units (Tacoli 1998a, 1998b; Brycesson 2001; Okali et al. 2001; Owusu 2002; Pedersen 2003; Satterthwaite and Tacoli 2002, 2003).

In between these two views (functional spatial and political economic views) has emerged the intermediate view. The body of literature on this view does not analyse the role of small towns as simply positive or negative, but stresses the peculiarities and specifics of small towns and their hinterlands. More importantly, this view rejects universal generalisations as inappropriate in analysing the role of small towns in rural development (Dickson 1980; Hardoy and Satterthwaite 1988; Dewar 1996; Tacoli 1998a; Courtney and Errington 2000; Owusu 2004, 2005a).

In terms of ideology of change, theories and models on these views on small towns can be placed within two perspectives – *top-down and bottom-up perspectives*. The top-down perspective's ideology of change assumes that socio-economic change can best take place at the top levels of the settlement hierarchy in concentrated agglomerations, and then trickle-down to the lower echelons of the settlement hierarchy (Potter and Lloyd-Evans 1998). This perspective, which is rooted in neo-classical economic models, presupposes the existence of a 'centre-periphery' relation in which there is a graduated scale of trickling down of development impulses from the large towns and cities to others below (Nelson 1993). In short, growth and innovations are conceptualised as diffusing from the largest urban centres downward through small centres and outward into the rural periphery. Therefore, an integrated settlement hierarchy (including small towns) is essential for achieving rural and regional development. Key models and theories that could be placed under this perspective include Myrdal (1957) and Hirschmann's (1958) cumulative causation models; the Dependency School's regional domination theory of the 1970s; Walter Christaller (1931) and Losch's (1954) central place theory; and Perroux (1955) and Boudeville's (1966) growth centre/pole theory (Potter and Lloyd-Evans 1998).

However, whether applied in the context of large, intermediate and small urban centres, empirical research in many sub-Saharan African countries has revealed that the top-down strategy has largely been inadequate due to a number of underlying factors (Simon 1992, pp. 32-36). Whatever the spatial scale of conception and implementation, the top-down models are conceived and implemented predicated on a supposed outward diffusion of 'development' or innovation from urban 'growth' centres to the periphery, in many instances rural areas. In other words, regional development is seen as a one-sided diffusion of development from urban to rural regions. As such, little or no attention is paid to the views, interests or the specific situation of the supposed targeted region and its

population. In other words, theories formulated under the top-down perspective failed to take into account local situations and concerns requiring specific regional development attention. Related to this, within the national space economies of developing countries, many of these theories either explicitly or implicitly consider urban centres and rural environs as separate entities, which do not interact as complete spatial systems whereby they can exist in a symbiotic relationship (Thomi and Yankson 1985, p. 5; Tacoli 1998a; Jerve 2001; Okali et al. 2001; Owusu 2004, 2005a). Rural-urban interactions have therefore seldom been considered or given little attention in many of these models on regional development.

In contrast to the top-down perspective, the bottom-up perspective places emphasis on local institutions and resources of settlements at the lower scale of the settlement hierarchy (including small towns) as a means of modifying the socio-economic status of these settlements and populations, and this is subsequently transmitted up the settlement hierarchy (Potter and Lloyd-Evans 1998). In short, the perspective envisaged change as the result of grassroots insights gained in situ (i.e. local institutions, experiences and resource-use) which are fed upwards into supportive policy responses (Dewar 1996). Key models and theories which could be placed under this perspective includes agropolitan centre theory (Friedmann and Weaver 1979); small service centre model (Richardson 1981); urban functions in rural development (UFRD) in the 1980s by Dennis Rondinelli/United States Agency for International Development (USAID); and Nordic African Institute's (NAI) urban development in rural context (UDRC) in the 1990s (Baker (ed.) 1990; Baker and Pedersen (eds.) 1992).

A key criticism of the bottom-up models is that they are not all that different from those of the top-down perspective. This is because the diffusion or transmission of development impulses is still seen or perceived as a 'one-way' process from urban to rural areas – they neglect rural-urban linkages. Moreover, like those under the top-down perspective, these models fail to recognise the uniqueness of each urban centre and its hinterland in terms of its mix of development potentials and constraints. As a result, policies formulated and applied to all centres fail to achieve their intended goals and objectives. Notwithstanding these criticisms, a strong underlying assumption of these bottom-up models is that small towns as settlements at the lowest level of the urban hierarchy are the locations where the urban and rural spheres interact. Small towns are therefore the convenient locations for

establishing socio-economic infrastructure and services meant to reach the rural population in order to increase agricultural production and commercialisation through access to markets, improve incomes and welfare, and reduce rural-urban migration to the large towns and cities (Hardoy and Satterthwaite 1988; Gaile 1992; Pedersen 1997; Wouden 1997; Douglass 1998; Owusu 2004, 2005a; Owusu and Lund 2004).

The theoretical model of small towns, *District Capital-Centred Development Model* (DCDM), developed in this study can be put under the intermediate view perspective on the role of small towns in rural and regional development. The model, which is presented in detail in Section 5.4 (Chapter 5), is formulated within the context of Ghana's decentralised planning and administrative, and participatory development framework. The model does not consider district capitals and their hinterlands as a generic category but in a contextually specific manner, emphasising the specific linkages between district capitals and their hinterlands. It stresses that local communities alone cannot undertake the envisaged autonomous decentralised district development but require in addition, exogenous forces (particularly central government and private sector support and investments) and district (local) resources and action. Also, it emphasizes that the dynamism and growth of a district are achieved through a process of rural-urban linkages using resources and creativity in the district capital and rural areas of the district in mutually beneficial ways for both spatial units. Overall, the model stresses the usefulness of using district capitals as local stimuli of rural and district development but notes that the achievement of the desired goal requires a decentralisation policy that truly transfers political power and economic resources to the district (Owusu 2004, 2005a).

### **2.3 Rural-Urban Linkages (Interactions)**

Rural-urban linkages refer to a multitude of spatial linkages (flow of people, goods, services and information) and sectoral interactions (employment and occupations such as rural non-farm employment and urban agriculture), which take place between and/or within places defined as rural and urban. While rural-urban linkages are not recent phenomena, researchers and policy makers have often treated rural and urban areas, and their respective populations as distinct from each other, with unique problems that should be studied and solved separately. This approach overlooks the fact that what happens to the population of one spatial unit affects the other. Again, it neglects the fact that the livelihoods of different groups are not affected by the artificial rural and urban boundaries

(Diyamett et al. 2001; Jerve 2001; Kamete 2001; Okali et al. 2001; Owusu 2002, Satterthwaite and Tacoli 2002, 2003). For many rural households, rural-urban linkages are part of the local reality for household members carrying out diverse tasks of producing income on and off the farm, maintaining a living space in the village, and going to local and even distant towns to shop, market, work, and seek specialised services (Douglass 1998). This is also true of some urban residents who either on a regular or irregular basis seek livelihood opportunities in rural areas or engage in rural (or non-urban) based activities.

The concept of rural-urban linkages has gained increasing recognition and attention in policy and theoretical fields in recent years due to a number of factors. These factors either in combination or individually have questioned the definition and implementation of policies on rural and urban development as separable entities. Some of the factors accounting for the increasing interest in rural-urban linkages are discussed in the next subsection under the heading 'Rural-Urban Continuum'.

#### **2.4 Rural-Urban Continuum**

Any definition that attempts to draw clear-cut lines between rural and urban has to recognise the fuzziness of these lines. This is not only due to the rural-urban flows and interdependencies noted above, but also due to imprecise distinctions (Satterthwaite and Tacoli 2002). As a result, definitions do not hold across countries and can even be problematic within the same country, as demonstrated by the attempt to defined Ghana's urban system in this study. This makes generalisation impracticable except for analytical purposes. Related to this problem is the definition of boundaries between rural and urban. Explaining this point further, Tacoli (1998b) notes that urban residents and enterprises depend on an area significantly larger than the built-up area for basic resources and ecological functions. This view is also true for what are defined as 'rural' residents and the activities they engaged in.

To overcome these conceptual limitations, many analysts advocate the adoption of the concept of rural-urban continuum. The concept of a rural-urban continuum is meaningful and useful given the diversity of urban and rural centres, and their sizes (overlap of statistical, administrative, physical, and functional designs), and the blurring of boundaries and degree of functional overlaps (Simon 1990). More importantly, it also denotes a link between rural and urban places along a continuum, or at least the indication that rural and



urban are inseparable concepts. The definitions of urban and rural therefore become concepts for analytical or descriptive considerations rather than categories which exist in practice (Tacoli 1998a; Tacoli 2003; Satterthwaite and Tacoli 2003; Owusu 2004).

Some of the factors accounting for the renewed interest in the concepts of rural-urban linkages and rural-urban continuum include the following;

#### *Limitations of One-Sided Models*

Douglass (1998) and Tacoli (1998b) have noted that since the 1970s comprehensive rural-urban frameworks have been formulated to explicitly promote rural development, with the implicit aim of reducing migration to the large towns and cities. According to both writers, a key criticism and limitation of these frameworks is the little consideration given to rural-urban linkages. These formulated models and policies polarise rural and urban areas, giving little attention to the interconnectivities and interactions between the spatial units.

Influenced by the dependency theorists and the concept of centre-periphery in the 1970s, Integrated Rural Development Programmes (IRDPs) overemphasised the peasant farmer and rural agriculture, with little if any attention to the role of urban centres in the rural economy (Tacoli 1998a, 1998b; Pedersen 2003). In particular, the idea that urban centres exploit or have negative influence on rural areas meant there was a conscious effort in the implementation of IRDPs to by-pass small towns and other urban centres. However, the by-passing of small towns in the development of rural areas under IRDPs rather had the effect of strengthening and consolidating concentration of marketing and processing of agricultural produce in the larger towns and cities. To some extent, this by-passing of small town also affected the income of farmers, as the expected increase in income to farmers did not materialise due to increased transport costs, and overall cost of processing farm produce (Pedersen 1997, p.13).

On the other hand, models which take urban centres as their starting points – using generally the central place theory as an overall framework and advocating the development of a network of towns with appropriate spacing and functional composition by size and position in the urban hierarchy have had little impact on rural and regional development. This is because among other limitations, overemphasis is placed on the urban functions performed by the towns rather than the appropriateness of these functions to

the hinterlands. In other words, these models generally fail to pay specific attention to rural linkages and their impacts, and rather assume all urban functions to be relevant and beneficial in all circumstances (Douglass 1998; Tacoli 1998a, 1998b).

### *Current Development Processes*

Current development processes in many parts of the developing world, and in particular in sub-Saharan Africa, have further thrown the distinction between 'rural' and 'urban' into a crisis. These processes have manifested themselves as *deagrarianisation* and *depeasantisation*<sup>2</sup> (Rigg 1998; Tacoli 1998a, 1998b; Bryceson 2000, 2001). These forces of economic and social change are reworking 'rural' and 'urban' areas of developing countries, and increasingly blurring the distinction between these supposed dichotomous spatial units.

The current development processes challenging the intellectual or academic distinction of rural and urban areas are, however, not recent phenomena. They probably originate from the start of the Industrial Revolution in Western Europe. However, in sub-Saharan Africa the pace of these processes has accelerated over the last two decades or more under the influence of complex political and economic policies pursued by various countries since the 1980s. The most notable include the World Bank and IMF Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) of neo-liberal economics and free-market policies, political democratisation, and decentralisation and local government reforms. These policies have encouraged some growth and development at the lower levels of the settlement hierarchy in many African countries (Aeroe 1992; Pedersen 2003; Tacoli 2003), thus increasingly blurring what is defined as 'rural and 'urban'.

SAPs in sub-Saharan Africa have impacted on peasant production and population size, especially liberalisation policies relating to the removal of subsidies and cheap agricultural imports from subsidised agriculture in North America and Europe. Peasant agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa has failed to respond adequately to these challenges due to among other factors its subsistence orientation and relatively low yields. This has resulted in the process of deagrarianisation and depeasantisation (Rigg 1998; Bryceson 2000, 2001).

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<sup>2</sup> **Deagrarianisation** refers to long-term occupational adjustment, income-earning reorientation, social identification and spatial re-location of rural dwellers from agrarian mode of livelihood, not necessarily the abandoning of farming. **Depeasantisation**, on the other hand, refers to the shrinking of peasant populations due to the loss of their economic capacity and social coherence (Bryceson 2001, pp. 194-195).

Thus peasant farmers in sub-Saharan Africa responding to economic and market uncertainties, declining soil fertility and rising cash needs under SAPs are increasingly switching to livelihood and occupations described as 'non-agricultural and non-rural' as a survival strategy. This process is facilitated by gradual removal of the barrier of physical distance between 'rural and 'urban' due to removal of foreign exchange restrictions which has allowed the importation of vehicles and spare parts as well as privatisation and expansion of privately owned commercial transport services (Bryceson 2001, p.197-199; Pedersen 2003). In addition, there is the increasing introduction of amenities such as electricity, telephone, potable water, health and educational facilities, long described as 'the bright light of the city' to 'rural' areas through non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and donor-funded projects under SAPs.

Related to SAPs, is the renewed interest in local government reforms and decentralisation in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa, which have focused on improving living standards and reducing poverty in settlements at the lower levels of the settlement hierarchy. There is increasing evidence to suggest that these socio-economic and political policies implemented for the past two decades or more are beginning to have some positive impact on 'rural' development in sub-Saharan Africa. Indeed Crook and Manor (1998, p. 304) in their study of democracy and decentralisation in West Africa and South Asia, conclude that at the local level there is a general enthusiasm by the population of these regions to participate in decentralised institutions as the experiment is regarded as valuable and worth continuing.

The above development processes are thus blurring rural and urban areas in several respects: rural labour is no longer necessarily concentrated in agriculture, the service sector and commodity markets are proliferating in form and function, and the physical remoteness of peasant life is giving way to greater mobility, particularly amongst the youths (Tacoli 1998a). Increasingly, these changes are forcing the reconsideration of the rural-urban divide, and promoting a renewed interest in rural-urban interactions and linkages.

### *Ethical Considerations*

The practice of putting individuals and groups into discreet spatial and social units raises not only conceptual and technical difficulties but also moral and ethical concerns (Owusu

2002). The association of an individual or household with a particular spatial unit leads to the expectation that on the basis of the assigned 'social and spatial address' the individual or household will have a particular livelihood. The assumption is that the individual or household's livelihood will somehow dovetail with the assigned social and spatial 'address' (Rigg 1998). For instance, rural areas are characterised as predominantly agricultural regions and inhabited by farmers, hence agricultural development should be the sole preoccupation of planning and development administration in these areas (Owusu 2002).

This approach has informed much of the basis of development planning, with the intent of rationalising space and lives of individuals, groups, communities, and regions. Accordingly, space therefore becomes a concept which could be given explanatory powers, that is, communities in space need to be understood in terms of the order which space gives to the community rather than the community imprinting its character and structure in space. This therefore becomes the basis for dictating development policies and programmes. Brohman (1996, p. 341) sums up the problems associated with mainstream planning's inappropriate conception of space as follows:

space is unacceptably seen as separable from other aspects of life and development ... Spatial organisation is divorced from underlying social relations, and space is implicitly and incorrectly afforded with causal powers. In addition to the conceptual limitations that it imposes, this type of 'spatial separatism' causes regional planning to conflate the spatial with the socio-economic effects of policies ... The conflation of spatial problems with social problems inadvertently often produces development programmes that are harmful to the very people they are intended to help.

This is an ethical problem. How can development, a normative project connected with conceptions of human good and also inducing good change end up harming the very people it sets out to assist? In many instances, if there is failure, the frequent assumption is that 'underdeveloped' regions are impeded by their own ways of life, and the sooner they 'modernise' the better (Smith 2000, p. 198).

The limitations imposed by spatial separatism and the emerging ethical views on development influenced by the cultural turn and postmodernist perspectives on development argue for a reconceptualisation of the 'rural' and 'urban' place and space

dichotomy. This reconceptualisation regards both urban and rural places as a tapestry of life where movements of households and individuals hold everything together. It therefore calls on scholars to look beyond the divide and rather consider the social processes and structures that underline life in a particular spatial and social setting. According to Chapman (1995, cited in Rigg 1998, p. 501), viewed from this perspective:

the essence of and meaning of a people's mobility becomes far more comprehensible when conceived as an active dialogue between different places, some urban, some rural, some both and some neither, as incorporating a range of times simultaneously ancient and modern, and as the most visible manifestation of a dialectic between people, communities and institutions.

## **2.5 Decentralisation**

Decentralisation of the machinery of central government downwards, with the aim of involving the citizenry and other institutions in the development process, has become one policy that has increasingly been recommended to developing countries by experts. It is considered as an alternative means for promoting popular participation, especially among the poor in the decision-making process. This is seen as very important in the development process. The term *decentralisation* has been used to encompass a variety of alternative institutional and financial arrangements for sharing power and allocating resources (Martinussen 1997; Bossuyt and Gould 2000). Though beset by terminological confusion, it basically involves the transfer of power and authority from a single centre to subordinate levels in a territorial hierarchy to lower level authorities that are largely or wholly independent of central government.

A renewed interest in local government and decentralisation has emerged in recent years among government officials, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and the international donor community. Børhaug (1994) and Ayee (2000a) have provided several reasons accounting for the renewed interest in decentralisation in developing countries. These can be summarised as follows:

- The recognition that popular participation has a potential to improve government legitimacy, and quality of project planning and implementation. Furthermore, it is

contended that popular participation can best be achieved within a system where political and administrative decisions are decentralised.

- The economic crisis in Africa has undermined even further the resource basis of many African governments, and has forced them to adopt a 'rolling back the state' strategy. This tendency has been reinforced by the ideological orientation of many donors in general, and by SAPs in particular. Decentralisation may therefore ease pressure on scarce central government resources by improving efficiency and by mobilising resources and labour locally.
- The disappointing results of centralised government. The central planning and administration systems adopted in many African countries have not performed well, and the response is a renewed interest in local government.
- The increasing interest in public administration in developing countries in general. It has been recognised that unless government institutions function properly, neither donor assistance nor indigenous efforts are likely to produce the desired results. The role and potential of local governments are elements of this larger issue.

Other reasons have also been given accounting for the resurgence of interest in local government and decentralisation in developing countries. One argument is that decentralisation offers a greater degree of responsiveness to local needs. The top-down and centralised development strategies have been criticised by many as unresponsive to local needs due to the fact that policy-makers and implementers are far removed from local environment and lack adequate knowledge of local situations to enable them to adopt realistic policies and programmes. Decentralisation offers a more realistic way of solving local problems. This is because local policy-makers are more familiar with local problems and would be more likely to produce policies attuned to the needs of rural populations and the disadvantaged (Friedmann 1992; Crook 1994; Burki et al. 1999; Thomi 2000).

Another reason is the empowerment debate. It is widely recognised that the alleviation of inequalities and poverty cannot be achieved through centralised development strategies, but rather the empowerment of the poor. The whole idea of empowerment is a departure from situations of externally-determined goals of development to one where the ideas and capacities of local people are enhanced to enable them to take charge of local development. Hence, it has become fashionable to link the notion of empowerment to the concept of participatory development (Corbridge 2001). Corbridge adds that empowerment

must substitute for development in order for the poor to reclaim their sense of honour or self-worth through the promotion of participatory models of development. Decentralisation, which involves the transfer of power, provides a viable means for the empowerment of local people through effective participation. It provides a means through which the voices and interests of local people, especially the poor and the excluded sections of the population can be effectively advocated, defended and acknowledged at the macro-sphere of regional, national, and even international politics (Friedmann 1992).

Lastly, the concept of 'good governance' has also given rise to the need for local government reforms and decentralisation (Ayee 2000a; Yankson 2004). In the last 10 years or more, the concept of good governance (defined by the World Bank as greater accountability, transparency and pluralism) has become very popular in much of the donor literature (George 1995; Opoku-Mensah 2004). It has become one of the conditionalities for obtaining donor assistance and support. Decentralisation is seen as a key element in achieving good governance, and hence donor assistance. According to George (1995, p. 209), to a large extent, 'it has become the criterion for reward and punishment'. Many countries in sub-Saharan Africa and other parts of the developing world have implemented decentralisation policies as a means of fulfilling this donor conditionality in order to obtain donor assistance and support.

### **2.5.1 Forms of Decentralisation**

Various forms of decentralisation can be distinguished. According to Dillinger (1994, p. 7), D. Rondinelli's classic typology distinguishes four different types of decentralisation: *deconcentration*, *delegation*, *devolution* and *privatisation*. All these forms of decentralisation represent transfer of power from central government administration, and distinguish the different typologies on the basis of the organisation to which power is transferred.

*Deconcentration* refers to the transfer of power to local administrative offices of the central government (Dillinger 1994; Osmani 2001). It is also referred to as *administrative decentralisation* (Naustdalslid 1992). These transfers lead to the establishment of a relationship between the central government bodies and their local branches. This normally implies that local units of central government and their staff are given some discretion to adjust national plans to local conditions. Yet, the room for manoeuvre varies greatly from one country to another and from one sector to another. However, decision-

making authority remains with the central government and local staff answer to their upstream superiors (Bossuyt and Gould 2000). In pure deconcentrated systems, local governments do not exist as discrete entities, and there is no mechanism at the local level for mandatory horizontal co-ordination and integration. Involvement of the local population in this case will normally be limited to participation in the implementation of centrally determined policies (Martinussen 1997, pp. 210-211).

*Delegation* is a type of decentralisation where public enterprises and other semi-autonomous government agencies are assigned responsibility for implementing sector investments or for operating public utilities and services. Delegation may or may not entail deconcentration, depending on whether the agencies concerned establish a branch office system for their operation (Martinussen 1997).

*Devolution*, sometimes referred to as political decentralisation (Yankson 2004), is often regarded as the classical form of decentralisation. It is defined as the transfer of power to sub-national institutions, which have their own discretionary authority. In devolution, the overseeing role of central government is very limited, and local governments have democratic control and powers over services provision and tax-raising. In other words, decisions about the use of resources are made locally, and administrative staff tends to be accountable to local political leadership (Bossuyt and Gould 2000; Osmani 2001). In addition, project implementing agencies are often responsible to regional or local governments, rather than to central government and their line ministries (Martinussen 1997).

*Privatisation* refers to the transfer of power and responsibility to private institutions and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). This usually involves the transfer of responsibility to the private sector with regards to the implementation of projects, and the provision of infrastructure and services. Even though central government does not interfere with the plans and budgets of NGOs or private institutions, it enforces *ex post* control over the use of resources (Osmani 2001).

Naustdalslid (1992) also makes a distinction between *territorial decentralisation* and *functional decentralisation*. In the case of territorial decentralisation, delegation is to an institution with overall or very wide powers across sectors within its territorial area of



authority. In the case of functional decentralisation, the responsibility for one function, or a specific type of activity is transferred from a central government's ministry or agency to a more local level.

### **2.5.2 Ghana's Decentralisation Programme**

Against the backdrop of the broad reasons accounting for the renewed interest in decentralisation, many African countries (including Ghana) have adopted decentralisation policies as a way of hastening the pace of socio-economic development. In 1988, Ghana introduced a new local government law that has been described as going relatively far towards decentralising policies from central government to local political and administrative bodies. Commentators have characterised this legislation as one of the boldest examples of decentralisation to be found in developing countries (Allen 1990, cited in Naustdalslid 1992, p. 1).

Prior to the implementation of decentralisation in 1988, Ghana had pursued a top-down development planning and administration strategy par excellence. The results have been disastrous, with skewed distribution of the benefits of development and poor living standards for the majority of the population (GSS 1995; GPRS 2002). It is stated, for example that, there is much rural poverty (GSS 2000a, 2000b), although many resources are concentrated in rural areas. Decentralisation is therefore aimed at reversing this state of affair – with greater emphasis on rural development.

Ghana's decentralisation programme is described as a *mixed or fused system* as it blends together the different forms of decentralisation (Naustdalslid 1992; Crook and Manor 1998). It therefore has the characteristics of political (also often referred to as devolution), administrative (deconcentration), territorial and functional forms of decentralisation. However, since Ghana is a unitary state, local governments are not independent of central government. Decentralisation is therefore a question of degree of autonomy, with variations occurring with the specific political and economic power under consideration. This has given the implementation of the programme in Ghana a complex structure.

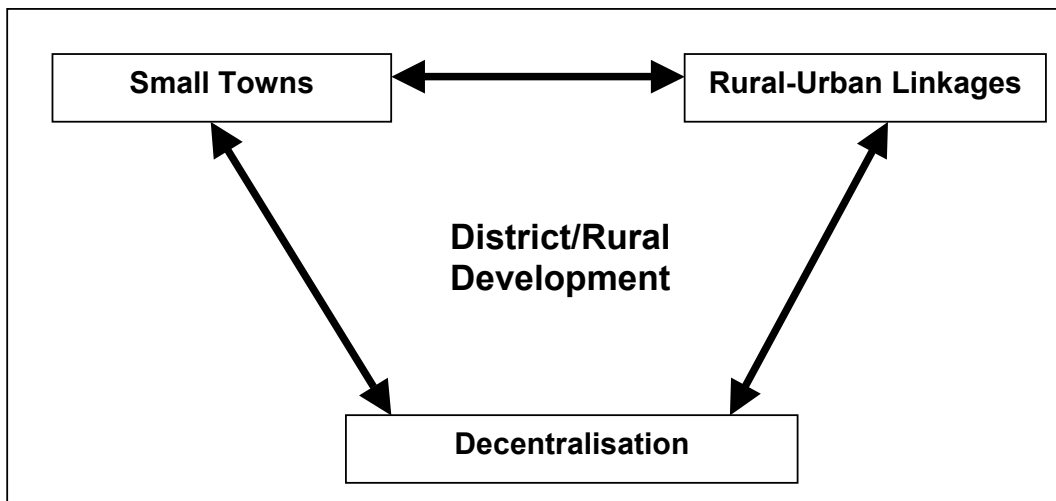
Ghana's decentralisation and local government reforms seek to introduce new elements in the planning, organisation and administration of space. These reforms aim at providing more popular participation in local plan formulation and implementation by decentralising control and decision-making from Accra and vesting such powers in the districts.

Moreover, they seek to provide greater financial control to the districts to enhance a general equitable development process throughout the country based on a process of prioritised and implemented needs of the grassroots (districts). The policy is expected to fulfil a wide range of aims and objectives – rural and urban development, grassroots participation, democratisation of the political system and political renewal (Crook 1991). The introduced decentralised planning and administrative system is designed to serve as a comprehensive national administrative and planning structure with a territorial hierarchy – district, regional and national levels. Further details about Ghana’s decentralised development administration and planning structure are presented in Section 5.4 (Chapter 5).

## 2.6 Concepts of Small Towns, Rural-Urban Linkages and Decentralisation: Their Links and Interrelationships

As already noted, the concepts of small towns, rural-urban linkages and decentralisation as they have been outlined in this chapter are to provide a contextual view of how they are applied in this study. Further, they informed the basis of the study’s theoretical framework, the District Capital-Centred Development Model (DCDM). More importantly, worthy noting are the interrelationships that exist between the concepts with respect to district development in Ghana, as illustrated in Fig. 2.

**Fig. 2. Interrelationship between the Concepts of Small Towns, Rural-Urban Linkages and Decentralisation**



In the context of Ghana, the promotion of decentralisation, small towns and rural-urban linkages has the overall aim of promoting rural and regional (district) development through the improvement of agriculture and income (Owusu 2005a). The transfer of authority and resources under decentralisation to the district level is aimed at enhancing the growth of settlements (including small towns) at the lower echelons of the settlement hierarchy. Further, decentralisation is largely about enhancing power and access to resources (Bossuyt and Gould 2000). As such, the implementation of decentralisation is expected to promote the process of growth in the small town and its hinterland by allowing more resources and authority to be transferred from the national level to the district level. Theoretically, this should have positive impact on the decentralisation process in terms of improved local access to resources and enhanced positive perception of the programme by the populace. This in turn should strengthen the decentralisation programme, setting in motion a continuous spiral of rural and urban growth, which is achieved through enhanced process of rural-urban linkages (Owusu 2004, 2005a).

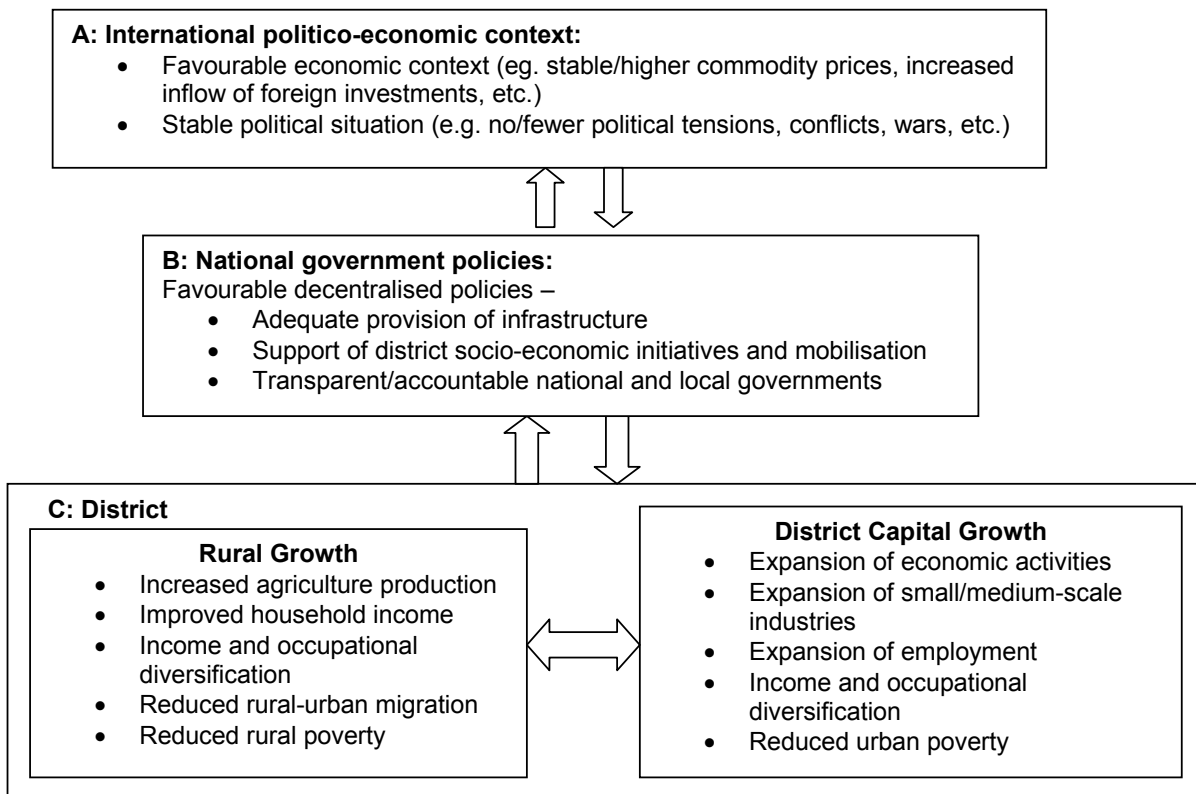
It must, however, be noted that programmes on small towns do not explicitly aim at only small town development but also the strengthening of rural-urban linkages with the intent of promoting socio-economic development of small towns' hinterlands, especially agriculture and the stimulation of non-farm employment opportunities (Evans 1992; Gaile 1992; Giraut 1997; Douglass 1998; Karaska 1999; Owusu 2004; Owusu and Lund 2004). Thus, within this development perspective is the critical element of rural-urban linkages. In the context of Ghana, a key requirement critical to this development approach will be the development of the market and service functions of district capitals under the decentralisation programme with the aim of promoting local agriculture, income and poverty reduction (Owusu and Lund 2004).

In particular, within the context of limited investment in agriculture and industries, local markets provide a viable alternative to the development of district agriculture, employment generation, improved income and poverty reduction. This process should strengthen rural-urban linkages, and set in motion a development process of the district which may have positive impact on rural (district) and urban (district capital). The critical role markets could play in the development of districts is explored in detailed in section 5.5 in chapter 5. Chapter 5 (Section 5.4) also presents the conceptualisation and operationalisation of the theoretical framework of DCDM.

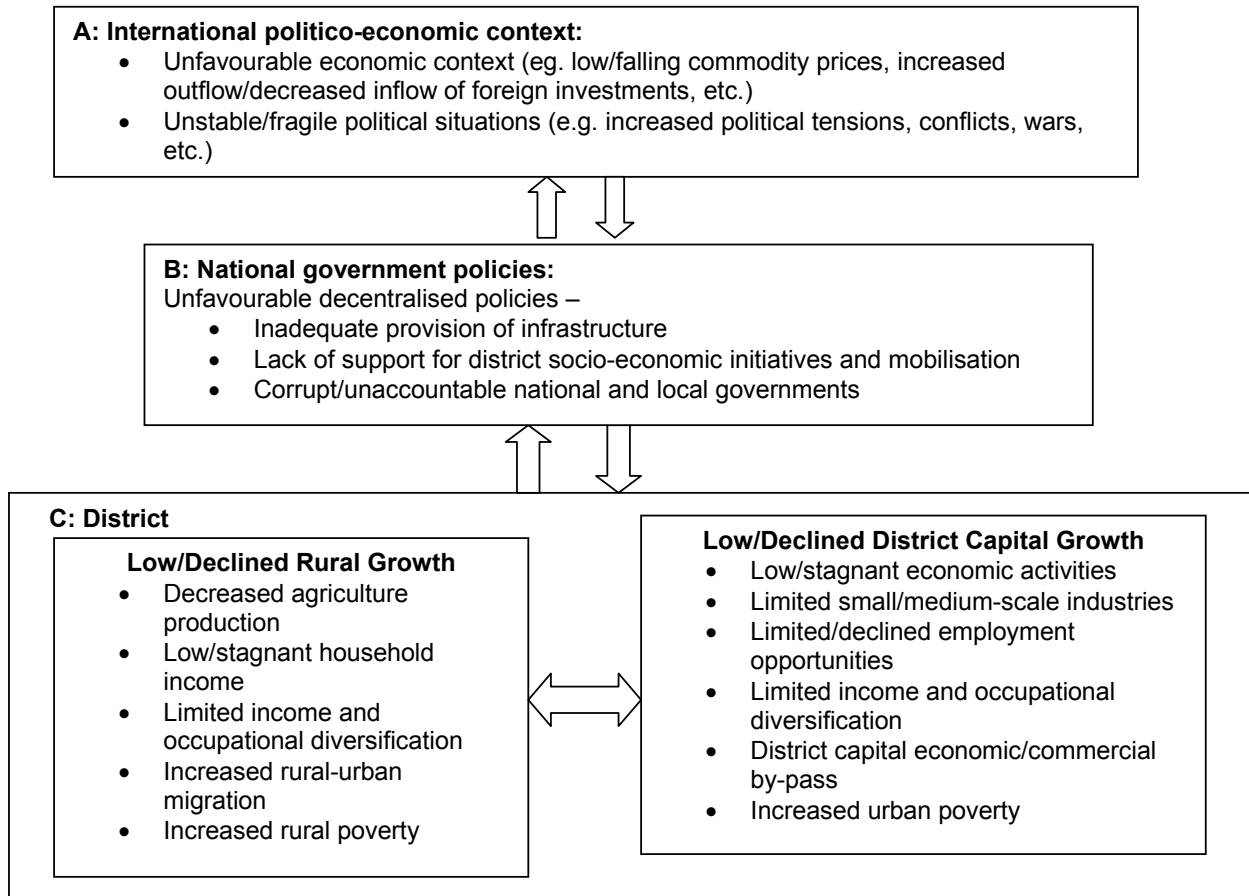
## 2.7 The Study's Analytical Approach

This section explores the analytical approach of the study that seeks to link the theoretical perspective of the study to the study's research methodology (in terms of the selected case study districts). Figs. 3 and 4 suggest three levels of analyses: the district (where socio-economic development through district-district capital linkages must take place), national level, and international/supra national level. However, in any discussion, these levels would have to be linked together due to their direct interrelationships and linkages. Nevertheless, emphasis is put on policies and programmes which emanate from the national level as these provide the basic framework within which local (district) actors and agencies operate. This is because, as Thomi (2000, p. 229) argued, the state in general can be regarded as a regulatory framework for a given territory and its population in order to secure, control, and utilise the natural and human resources of its area of jurisdiction for the sake of the overall national well-being, or for other reasons. In other words, national sector policies whether positive or negative, implicit or explicit have a great impact on the development of the urban hierarchy and consequently on small towns (Pedersen 2003).

**Fig. 3. Positive Outcome: Small Towns' Role in District Development and Rural-Urban Linkages**



**Fig. 4. Negative Outcome: Small Towns' Role in District Development and Rural-Urban Linkages**



The point of departure of this analytical approach is that in examining the role of small towns (or in the context of this study, district capitals) in the development of their surrounding rural districts (region) and rural-urban linkages within districts, the local governance system and its institutional set-up are of crucial importance. Therefore, the need for decentralisation in regional development planning and administration has been well emphasised in the regional development literature (see Southall 1979; Hardoy and Satterthwaite 1988; Simon 1992; Pedersen 1997; Tacoli 2002, 2003; Satterthwaite and Tacoli 2003). The basic argument is that local governance systems and their institutional set-up (formulated under decentralised approaches) play an important role in defining the nature of the relationship between urban centres and their surrounding region, although this needs to be situated within broader national and international contexts (Satterthwaite and Tacoli 2003; Owusu 2004, 2005a).

A key importance of decentralisation in the role of small towns in regional development and rural-urban linkages emphasised in the regional development literature is that it provides opportunities for the grounding of policies in local context. This helps to articulate the uniqueness of each small town and its hinterland. In other words, decentralisation helps to avoid generalisations, which though may be valid but are so broad and unspecific as to say little about the urban centre (or centres) in question and to have little validity as a basis for the formulation of specific policies which promote social and economic development of regions.

Moreover, the fact that possibilities and constraints on development are so specific to each small town and its region implies the need for a considerable degree of local input (decision-making) in the designing of any nation-wide or regionwide programme (Hardoy and Satterthwaite 1988). Local decision-making under decentralised approaches can therefore help explore unique forward and backward linkages that may exist between each district capital and district. It can also help regulate the use of natural resources by rural and urban residents and enterprises, which can otherwise become a major source of conflict. Again, it can make it easier for poor groups, both rural and urban-based to have their needs and priorities taken (Satterthwaite and Tacoli 2003) into consideration in the formulation of policies and programmes.

Also, decentralised governments can provide space for people to participate in local (community/district) development by empowering them to participate in decision-making process (including the setting of priorities on allocation of resources). They can also ensure a more effective mobilisation of local resources through the process of giving people greater control over local statutory structures, which may then motivate them to commit more assets to the common good. The decentralisation strategies of empowerment, local resource mobilisation, delivery of basic services, and incorporation and inclusion may in turn pave the way for the formulation and implementation of more effective poverty reduction strategies at the local level (Bossuyt and Gould 2000).

While decentralisation has great potential in terms of efficiency and accountability with regard to local and national development, the problem is the manifestation or translation of these potentials into practical terms (Owusu 2005a). In the context of Ghana, decentralisation policies and programmes have been implemented for the past decade

and half which, among other factors, have strengthened district capitals. However, little work has been done on the strategy of using district capitals as stimuli to district development due possibly to the apparent notion that ceding power and resources to the district must necessarily be a 'good' development strategy. As a result, the actual role of district capitals and rural-urban linkages have been given little attention.

According to Owusu (2004, 2005a), the basic issue requiring examination is how decentralisation has defined the nature of the relationship between district capitals (small towns) and their surrounding regions (districts). This requires the conceptualisation of the role of district capitals in district development (which is discussed in detailed under Section 5.4). It also requires that the discussions on decentralisation (and for that matter local governance) and its impacts on small towns' role in district development and rural-urban linkages be placed within a wider national and international socio-economic and political context. In particular, the following questions are of special interest:

- *Does the institutional framework of the Ghana's decentralised development planning and administrative system represent a genuine attempt to decentralise?*
- *Are decentralised institutions, especially the District Assemblies adequately resourced in relations to the functions delegated to them?*
- *Has decentralisation facilitated the growth of district capitals and rural-urban interactions, and if so, what is the impact of this on agricultural production and poverty trends?*

The second factor requiring consideration is macro-economic and sectoral policies formulated at the national level, which may enhance or constrain small towns' role in district development and rural-urban interactions. According to Satterthwaite and Tacoli (2003), spatial dimensions of national growth strategies are often ignored, as is the unequal access to natural, social, political and economic resources by the poor. Key national issues, such as economic reforms, SAPs, and land reforms, have profound impact on rural and urban areas, and consequently on rural-urban linkages. However, the fundamentals underpinning these issues cannot be addressed at the local level. So while 'good' local governance is essential for district development and poverty reduction, it is also important that the actions and institutions this implies are supported by macro socio-economic national policies and planning. In other words, macro national policies should

not undermine or create the lack of 'fit' between national development strategies and local development strategies (Satterthwaite and Tacoli 2003; Owusu 2005a).

Thus, linking the first factor (decentralisation) and the second factor (national macro-economic and sectoral policies) buttressed the argument that even though decentralisation may be a popular and conceptually efficient development strategy, it is unlikely to lead to poverty reduction without serious efforts to strengthen and broaden accountability mechanisms at both national and local levels (Crook 2003; Yankson 2004). Crook (2003) adds that the general regime and relations between local and central government are key factors in determining whether decentralisation helps the poor and reduces poverty. However, it is important to note that in many developing countries (including Ghana), the relationships between local and central government are largely shaped and dictated by the central government due to the large power imbalance between the two systems of government. In short, poverty reduction and local development are mostly likely to succeed where there is a strong commitment by central governments eager to pursue and support such policies. In other words, the extent to which decentralisation results in improvements in human development outputs is largely a function of the resources and systems for allocating funding, primarily by central governments (Crook 2003, p. 83).

The last factor to note is the international politico-economic context. While acknowledging that the international situation has an impact on local development, its emphasis is stressed with caution. This is because while individual underdeveloped countries such as Ghana can do very little to predict or dictate the outcomes of broader international politico-economic policies and situations, they can do more to ameliorate the impact of these broader policies on the local economies and local populations. Again, giving much weight to the international context would imply ignoring the internal inefficiencies and contradictions in Ghana's development processes, both at the national and local level. For instance, stable and higher prices for export primary produce do not guarantee that they would impact positively on rural and urban areas unless this is backed by transparent and accountable institutions and agencies at the national and local level (Owusu 2005a).

The manifestation of the process of district development through district capitals depends on effective rural-urban interactions and linkages, which hinges on a better understanding of the constraints limiting these processes. It also requires the understanding of the



policies shaping these processes in the context of the district capitals and their surrounding regions (districts). This helps us to envisage positive and negative outcomes of the impact of national and international contexts and decentralisation on the role of small towns and rural-urban linkages in district development, as illustrated in Figs. 3 and 4.

The impact of decentralisation, macro national policies and the international politico-economic contexts are examined in the two case study district capitals and their respective districts: Dunkwa and the Upper Denkyira District (UDD), and Twifo Praso and the Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira District (THLDD). The selected district capitals and districts provide a case study of an old district capital and district, Dunkwa and UDD (created before the adoption of decentralisation), and Twifo Praso and THLDD, a new district capital and district (created with the adoption of decentralisation). By examining the district capitals and their respective districts as presented in Chapter 4, the level of development, the socio-cultural, economic and political setting, level and kinds of rural-urban linkages and interactions, and the factors hindering rural-urban linkages could be identified. This sets the stage for the presentation of the articles in Chapter 5, which attempts to address the research questions outlined in Chapter 1. Article 1 places the study and the role of small towns in a broader development studies perspective; Article 2 examines the factors accounting for the growth of small towns (including district capitals) in Ghana, and the rationale for their promotion; Article 3 conceptualises the role of district capitals and rural-urban linkages with the formulation and operationalisation of the District Capital-Centred Development Model (DCDM); Article 4 demonstrates how district capitals can promote district development in Ghana through their market functions; and Article 5 illustrates the limited rural-urban linkages in the study districts, and its impact on district development, as exemplified by the flow of remittances. The article also illustrates the need to avoid generalisations with respect to flows to and from rural areas. The general conclusions from Chapters 4 and 5 enable the final conclusions to be drawn (positive or negative outcomes as illustrated in Figs. 3 and 4) in the final chapter, Chapter 6, regarding the role of the district capitals in district development and rural-urban linkages, and the impact of decentralisation in the case study districts.

## **2.8 Small Towns, Rural-Urban Linkages and Decentralisation: A Synthesised Geographical Perspective**

The analysis in this study on small towns, rural-urban linkages and decentralisation reflects the current perspective in urban geography and regional development (or broader development thinking). This perspective generally sees local processes as very important in explaining socio-spatial similarities and contrasts that exist within and between regions. In other words, broader processes resulting from the influence of supra-national institutions and international economic trends do not fully explain what happens in particular places or regions. This is because every locality bears the mark of the past, and this produces distinctive effects on current processes. In addition, the current processes themselves interact in novel ways in particular localities (Pickvance 1990, p. 1).

There is also the increasing recognition that due to local diversity, there is the need for 'place-based' responses to regional problems. As such, generalised or grand theories and models, which both in their conceptualisation and application fail to take into account peculiar historical, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds of regions, fail to achieve their intended goals and objectives. In other words, as Corbridge (2001, p. 87) notes, in the new political economy, general models of political or economic behaviour will not suffice. Nevertheless, 'places' or regions are not isolated or delimited from other spatial systems, networks and flows. This therefore underlies the limitations already identified in this Chapter with the narrow analysis of urban and rural areas as separable entities that require separate policies and programmes.

Viewed from the above perspective, the promotion of small towns and rural-urban linkages articulated in this study takes inspiration from current thinking in urban geography and regional development (especially after the cultural turn and the critiques of postmodernists) on the inadequacies of grand claims of totalising theories and concepts. In particular, the inherent spatial dimensions in the application of the concepts of small towns, rural-urban linkages and decentralisation emphasise a more direct approach to district development based on a district (area) specific development agenda.

Even though the unit of analysis in this study is the district capital and the district (a politically-established entity), this study notes the influence of other spatial systems (national and supranational level). Of critical importance in these spatial assemblages is

the question of power (Johnston et al. 2000). In this instance, the powerful influence of the state (national level) is noted as influencing the dynamism and outcomes (positive or negative) of the role of district capitals, and rural-urban linkages in district development in Ghana.

## **2.9 Conclusion**

This chapter has provided the platform and set the stage for investigating the research questions and objectives outlined in Chapter one. Small towns, and for the purpose of this study district capitals, can play a key role in district development under the decentralisation programme by providing markets, social services, manufactured goods and employment for the rural settlements. By this process, district capitals can provide the impetus for local or district agricultural expansion, and improved incomes and reduced poverty. Theoretically, this will translate to expansion of non-farm employment, and increased demand for manufactured goods and services in the district capital. These processes will reinforce rural-urban linkages within the districts, and consequently the overall development of the districts.

However, the framework for which local institutions and local people could be able to adopt and improve their living conditions would have to be created at a higher level of decision making. In other words, the manifestation of the process of district development through district capitals under the decentralised development process depends on effective rural-urban linkages which hinge on a better understanding of the constraints limiting rural-urban interactions, and the policies shaping these in the context of the district capitals and their surrounding regions. The role of the state (central government), and policies emanating from the national level are of critical importance in facilitating or supporting the district capitals' role in district development and rural-urban linkages under the decentralised development process.

## 3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the case study research strategy and the tools or techniques used in the collection of data for the study. To a large extent, it is an addition to the methodological descriptions in some of the articles presented in Chapter 5. More importantly, the chapter also reviews the context within which data was gathered and some of the factors which have influenced the way I have constructed or produced the research findings. This reflective approach is very important noting that the primary data for this study were obtained through qualitative methods such as interviews, focus group discussions and direct observation, while quantifiable data were from mainly secondary sources. According to Mullings (1999), while ethnography gathering techniques and methods provide insights into the nuances of choices, interrelationships and trade-offs that lie behind quantifiable actions, questions need to be asked of the value judgement and positionality of researchers in this type of research. However, this reflective view is not limited to ethnographic methodological practitioners. Increasingly, quantitative practitioners in the social sciences, including human geography, are also beginning to reflect critically on the socio-cultural and political context as well as the human implications of their work (Flowerdew 1998; Philip 1998; Philo et al. 1998; Dwyer and Limb 2001).

It needs to be stressed that the methodological approach adopted for this study does not regard itself as superior or inferior to other methodological approaches in research. However, it takes the view that the adoption of a methodological approach should emanate not only from fundamental political or philosophical commitments but also from the particular purpose of a research and also the practicalities of the various methods and techniques selected within the context of the overall aims of the research (Hammersley 1992; Philip 1998; Philo et al. 1998; Lund 2002a). Accordingly, the adopted methodological approach for this study, apart from epistemological considerations, took cognisance of the resources and time available for the study. In other words, the choice of methodology took heed of Lund's (2002a, p. 3) recommendation that one's choice of methods should consider the prevailing constraints of time and funding as well as what is practically most efficient.

In taking this position, the study is influenced by the idea that linking methodologies with only epistemological considerations is restrictive, and fails to recognise that methods are

mere tools or instruments designed to identify and analyse the empirical world. This is because methods do not carry any value-laden meanings. As such, their suitability in terms of strength and weakness in relation to a research problem should also be of concern to social researchers rather than the sole consideration of epistemology. Viewed from this perspective, it becomes difficult to attach any particular research method or technique to a particular epistemological position (Hammersley 1992; Gaber 1993; Philip 1998). Therefore the linkage between methodology and epistemology should not be viewed as fixed and stable but one which is flexible and changes with research questions and other research practicalities. Implicitly or explicitly in this is that epistemology thus tends to inform rather than dictate methodological choices.

### **3.2 Case Study Research Approach**

The case study research approach, like other research strategies is a way of investigating an empirical topic by following a set of pre-specified procedures. It involves the collection, recording and analysis of a single case or a number of cases which may be either quantitative or qualitative, or both (Arneson 1993; Gossaye 2001). It is designed to bring out the details of a research from the viewpoints of research informants by using multiple sources of data (Tellis 1997; Yin 1998). As a general guide, Yin (1994, 1998) notes that case study is the preferred strategy when *how* and *why* research questions are posed, when the researcher has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context.

Case study research has been classified in many ways. Yin (1998) makes three different typologies of case studies. Based on theoretical propositions drawn from research designs, three classifications are made: *explanatory case studies* (case studies driven by 'how' and 'why' questions), *descriptive case studies* (based on descriptive questions, though in reality there is selectivity based on study objectives), and *exploratory case studies* (case studies undertaken when available literature or existing knowledge is poor, offering no clues for conceptual frameworks or notable propositions). A second classification according to Yin (1998) is based on the number of units of analysis: *holistic case studies* (case studies with only one main unit of analysis) and *embedded case studies* (case studies with one main unit and sub-units of analyses). The third classification is *single* and *multiple case studies*, which are defined based on the number of case(s) under consideration, i.e. single case and two or more cases respectively. However, Yin

(1998, p. 241) states that both single and multiple case studies may be either holistic or embedded, depending upon the type of phenomenon being studied. Thus, this 2 x 2 combination could even produce four possible types of basic case study designs.

Stake (1994, 2000) identified three types of case study – *intrinsic*, *instrumental* and *collective* – though no distinguishing fine line separate this classification. Intrinsic case study refers to a case study whereby the researcher wants a better understanding of a particular case, and it is undertaken because of an intrinsic interest. Here, the case is not undertaken primarily because it represents other cases or because it illustrates a particular trait or problem but because in all its particularity and ordinariness, the selected case itself is of interest to the researcher. Stake defined instrumental case study as examination of a particular case with the main aim of providing insight into an issue or to draw a generalisation. In this type of case study, even though the case is examined in depth, it is of secondary interest. The case rather plays a supportive role and helps the researcher to pursue the external interest. It may be seen as typical of other cases or not. According to Stake (2000), the methods of instrumental case study draw the researcher toward illustrating how the concerns of researchers and theorists are manifest in the case. Because the critical issues are more likely to be known in advance and following disciplinary expectations, such a design can take advantage of already developed instruments and preconceived coding schemes. Collective case study refers to a group of cases studied jointly in order to inquire into a phenomenon, population or a general condition. The cases under consideration may be similar or dissimilar with each case in the collection having its own voice(s). They are chosen because it is believed that understanding them will lead to better understanding, perhaps better theorizing about a still larger collection of cases.

A critical look at all the above classifications or typologies of case studies and what they entail in methodological practices shows that the lines drawn between them are not clear-cut and distinct but rather they are blurred. Tellis (1997) stated that in all of the above types of case studies, the single-case and multiple-case classification might be the most distinctive classification as all the other typologies have either of these applications.

Case study research is not sampling research, a fact asserted by all the major proponents of the field (Tellis 1997). Cases are therefore selected in such a way so as to maximise

what can be learned within the context of the overall aims of a study, and the available time and resource of the study (Arneson 1993; Stake 1994, 2000). However, multiple cases are of benefit, as they tend to strengthen or broaden generalisations and conclusions reached in a manner similar to the role of multiple experiments compared to single experiments (Yin 1998). Whether studying a single case or multiple cases, the criteria for the selection of content are subjective choices that are ultimately decided by the researcher, notwithstanding the influences of funding agencies, prospective readers, rhetorical convention, and the prospect of publication (Stake 2000).

The issue of generalisation has appeared in the research methodology literature with regularity. It is a frequent criticism of case study research that the results are not generalisable due to the 'smallness' and unrepresentativeness of the sample, as well as the uniqueness and particularity of the selected case(s) (Tellis 1997; Gossaye 2001). Yin (1994, 1998) rejects these criticisms by presenting a well-structured argument of the difference between *statistical generalisation* (generalising from a sample to a universe) and *analytical generalisation* (using single or multiple cases to illustrate, represent, or generalise to a theory). Yin (1998, p. 239) contrasts these two types of generalisations, arguing that surveys and experiments involve statistical generalisation from a sample (or subjects) to a universe as well as analytical generalisation from a single study to theory. On the other hand, case studies involve *only* analytical generalisations. However, greater certainty lies with larger numbers of cases. Stake (1994, 2000) provides a caution on generalisation, noting that damage occurs when the commitment to generalise or create theory runs so strong that the researcher's attention is drawn away from features important for understanding the case itself.

This study may be described as a collective case study or multiple case study, or even explanatory case study in the context of the definitions provided by Yin and Stake. The case study research approach adopted for this study seems very appropriate. It provided opportunity for studying the unit of analysis in depth and detail, and in context and holistically: in this case, a district capital and its district. This is because a town and its hinterlands exist in a symbiotic relationship, and neither can be addressed without the other. However, to accept that using the case study 'everything' can be covered (an obviously impossible undertaking) is to overlook the inevitable selectivity involved in the case study research strategy. Instead the focus of this study (that is, the selectivity

involved) has been on the overall purpose of the study and the research questions (outlined in Chapter 1), and the time and resources available for the study.

The case study approach also provided a rationale for the 'sampling' technique used in this study for the selection of the cases (study district capitals and their respective districts). Since the strategy is not a sampling research method, it provided the rationale for the selection of the 2 cases from a total of 110, though the emphasis here was on maximising what could be learned from these selected cases within the limits of the time and resources available for the study. Also, the absence of the traditional sampling logic, and hence the irrelevance of the typical criteria of sample size allow analytical generalisation on the basis of conclusions reached on the selected district capitals and their respective districts.

The emphasis on multiple sources of data under the case study research strategy has given prominence to the concept of triangulation. Triangulation is to ensure accuracy and provide alternative explanations. It also arises from the ethical need to confirm the validity of the research processes and results (Telli 1997; Stake 1994, 2000). In this study, triangulation was carried out using multiple sources of data (see Table 1). This helped to enhance the conclusions drawn in the study.

Lastly, Robert Yin states three ingredients required to start a case study: capability to deal with a diversity of evidence, ability to articulate research questions and theoretical propositions, and production of a research design. However, in research, processes involved in these three requirements are not static as there are continuous interactions between research design, data collection and analysis (Yin 1998, p. 230). These requirements fit this study very well. First, the issues raised in the study – small towns, rural-urban linkages and decentralisation – are complex and required a diversity of evidence in their examination. Second, the study started with research questions and theoretical propositions on small towns and regional development. Third, the study has a research design indicating research objectives and research questions, theoretical propositions, sources of funding, and a time frame (duration) for the study. It must, however, be noted that all these three have gone through changes and modifications throughout the period of the study.



**Table 1. Methods/Tools: Data/Information and Sources of Data/Information<sup>3</sup>**

Phase	Method/ Tool	Expected Data/Information	Data/Information Source
<b>One</b> (July- Nov. 2002)	<b>Secondary Material</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Growth of District Capital</li> <li>- District population size and structure</li> <li>- District economic or employment structure</li> <li>- District revenue/expenditure</li> <li>- Agricultural production</li> <li>- Poverty trends</li> <li>- Number/location of services (eg. health, education, telecommunications, banks, etc.</li> <li>- Catchment area analysis of services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*District Population Census Reports</li> <li>*District Development Plans</li> <li>*District agricultural statistical records</li> <li>*Internal revenue records</li> <li>*Ghana Living Standard Survey Reports</li> <li>*District service centre maps</li> </ul>
	<b>Interviews</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flow of people/goods, interactions between District capital and District</li> <li>- Kinds and level/frequency of interactions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Market traders, private commercial drivers (Ghana Private Roads and Transport Union, GPRTU), District Planning/Administrative Officers</li> </ul>
	<b>Rural Household Interview/ Focus group discussions (FGDs)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Background information of respondents (age, educational level, occupation)</li> <li>- Perceptions/views on Ghana's decentralisation programme and its basic objectives</li> <li>-Rural-urban interactions (access to District Capital services, flow of people/goods); impact of interactions on households</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Administered in 4 purposively selected rural settlements surrounding each District Capital</li> <li>*Sampling criteria: 'Normal' heads of household plus identified key informants (such as traditional rulers, teachers, health workers, drivers, agricultural extension staff, etc.) of each selected settlement</li> <li>*Sample size: 5 household heads plus 5 key informants in each settlement, totalling 40 for each rural District</li> </ul>
	<b>Key Informant Interview</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Decentralisation and its impact on development District</li> <li>-Changes in District Capital in the last 10 years (population, economic structure, income and poverty)</li> <li>-Factors accounting for changes</li> <li>-Impact of changes in District Capital on District rural-urban interactions/linkages</li> <li>-Role of District Capital in District development plans and programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*District Planning Officers and Assembly members of DA. Sourcing of information from Assembly members conducted as focus group.</li> </ul>
<b>Two</b> (Sept- Nov. 2003)	<b>FGDs/ Interviews/ Participant observation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Verification/assessment of quality of data obtained in Phase 1. Explore in-depth key issues relating to changes in District Capital and its impact on rural-urban linkages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*District Planning Officers/ Assembly members</li> </ul>
	<b>Interviews (Markets)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Origin/destination of food/non-food in District Capital's market</li> <li>- Origin/destination of buyers/sellers</li> <li>- Market organisation/management</li> <li>- Impact/importance of market</li> <li>- Market constraints/problems</li> <li>- Daily flow of people/goods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Market traders (food/non-food traders in District Capital market)</li> <li>*Drivers/transport operators in District Capital</li> <li>*District Planning/Revenue Officers</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> See Appendices 1-4 for interview guides.

### **3.3 Selected Cases**

The unit of analysis (or case) is a critical factor in the case study methodology. The selected case(s) provide(s) both the phenomenon being studied and the context. The boundary between the phenomenon and context is not rigidly delimited, and one more or less dissolves or merges into the other (Yin 1998; Stake 2000). In this study, the case (district capital and its district) serves as the phenomenon as well as the context studied (small towns, rural-urban linkages and decentralisation).

The two selected cases in the Central Region of Ghana are: Dunkwa and the Upper Denkyira District (UDD), and Twifo Praso and the Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira District (THLDD). The main reason for selecting these district capitals is that Dunkwa is an old district capital (created before the implementation of the decentralisation programme), and Twifo Praso is a new district capital (created with the adoption of the decentralisation programme). The words 'new' and 'old' could be misleading. For instance, reference to the new district capital of Twifo Praso and its district (THLDD) does not imply that they only came into existence after the implementation of Ghana's decentralisation programme. This so-called new district capital and its district were part of an existing (old) district, namely the UDD. The new district capital and its district were carved out of this old district. The words 'new' and 'old' are therefore to distinguish the district capitals and the districts based on the time for the attainment or conferment (or official classification) as a district politico-administrative headquarters and district status vis-à-vis the time of the implementation of the current decentralisation programme. The selection process was also influenced by my previous knowledge of the two districts, especially research work in the UDD.

In selecting the two district capitals (old and new) and their respective districts, the choice was not about representativeness. It was rather about selecting cases of some typicality (in this case newly-created and old districts) which offer opportunities to learn about possible theorising of the role of district capitals in district development within the context of Ghana's decentralised development process. This was to enable me to have a 'fair' view of district capitals in terms of their functions, both existing ones and those created as result of the implementation of the decentralisation programme. In addition, the two selected district capitals and their respective districts share a number of commonalities, such as similar cultural make up, environment, socio-economic characteristics and a common boundary allowing a fair degree of comparative analyses.

### 3.4 Data Collection and Analysis

In attempting to answer the objectives of the study, I have been guided by philosophical and practical considerations in the selection of the methodological approach, as noted earlier. I adopted a multiple method approach, defined as the use of complementary methods to address different facets of a research question, or to address the same question from different perspectives (Gaber 1993; Philip 1998). This has involved the use of interviews (including key informant interviews), focus group discussions, direct observation, and more importantly secondary materials or data sources (see Table 1). The use of multiple research methods was perfectly in line with the case study research strategy as advocated by the known proponents of the strategy, especially Yin and Stake. In the administration of these methods on the field, research informants or respondents were selected using the purposive and snow-balling (chain) sampling techniques.

It was assumed that perceptions on the developmental role of the district capitals, and the frequency of interactions with these centres might be influenced by the location of respondents. As a result, the four selected interview sites in each district were selected to cover all parts of the districts (both relatively near and relatively far from the district capitals). The four sites selected in each district were: Buabin, Asma Camp, Asikuma and Diaso (Dunkwa and the UDD), and Jukwa, Twifo Mampong, Tweapease and Gyankobo (Twifo Praso and the THLDD). However, proximity to the district capitals was found to have little influence on both the frequency of interactions and perceptions on the developmental role of the district capitals, due to relatively high movement costs (transportation) and limited rural-urban linkages, respectively.

In the use of qualitative methods such as interviews, focus group discussions and direct observation, I have followed John Lofland's four guiding elements on collecting qualitative data as discussed in Patton (1980). There was the need to get *close enough* to the people and the situation under investigation to understand the depth and obtain the details of what goes on. Secondly, there was the need to capture what actually takes place and what people actually expressed as their *perceived facts*. Thirdly, there was the need to get *pure descriptions* of people, activities and especially interactions, and finally, the need to get *direct quotations* from respondents. The commitment to get close, to be factual, descriptive and quotable is an attempt to represent the research respondents in their own terms, and the establishment of a platform for the expression of their concerns and problems, or their

world view of the subject under consideration (Lofland 1971, cited in Patton 1980, pp. 36-37). This was further strengthened by the use of the case study approach. According to Tellis (1997, p. 2), case studies are multi-perspectival analyses requiring that researchers consider not just the voice and perspective of the actors, but also the relevant groups of actors and the interactions between them. This characteristic of case studies gives voice to all (including the powerless and the voiceless).

Also of interest in the field is what Glesne and Peshkin (1992) described as the *cover story*, which refers to presentation of oneself to research participants. The cover story is intended to tell not only what a study is about but also to make research informants participate more effectively in the interview and data collection exercises. This requires the willingness of researchers to learn and understand, and to be humble in the field (Lund 2002b). The cover story for this study was done in such a way as to reassure research informants, and ease the tension and scepticism which they may have about the researcher and his assistants, especially during our first visit to the field between July and November, 2002. In all cases, there was the need to inform respondents about our background and the purpose of the research. This had a profound impact on our research participants, allowing good rapport to be established, especially during the second visit to the fieldwork between September and November, 2003. This established rapport allowed us to have access to unpublished records from various local government departments in the two study districts, which were initially termed as 'classified and confidential' when request for these documents was initially made.

Again, speaking the same language (often English) in the case of interviews and discussions with government officials, and Twi for all other participants was very helpful. Many writers have noted the problems posed by language and meaning in research as well as working through interpreters in situations whereby a researcher is not conversant with the local language (Mikkelsen 1995, pp. 258-260). As Patton (1980) notes, using the precise language of research participants is an important way to record participants' own understanding of their experiences. It also allows a representation of participants in their own terms, and to reflect accurately the worldview of research participants. The use of interview guides and tape recording of participants' responses (especially key informant interviews), and later transcription of responses allowed the analysis of responses to be carried out without major omissions. The tape recording done with the permission of respondents was particularly useful in maintaining the accuracy of information given and

allowed free flow of information during interviews. It also reduced the extent to which respondents' answers could be misinterpreted in both words and context, and thus allowed effective utilisation of direct quotes from respondents to be used in the analyses and the report writing.

The study also made use of secondary sources of data. In particular, mention could be made of Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) publications (such as the 2000 Population and Housing Census reports, Ghana Living Standard Survey (GLSS) Report 4, Migration Research Study in Ghana: Internal Migration), and the Upper Denkyira and Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira District Assemblies development planning reports. The secondary sources yielded much of the quantifiable data, which were lacking from the primary sources.

### *Data Analysis*

As already noted, this study employed different methods and data sources to analyse small towns, rural-urban linkages and the impact of decentralisation in district development in Ghana. This has involved analysing data from the different data and method-application sources, and collating and synthesizing these. For the most part, this has involved the use of simple analytical techniques. In some cases, materials and evidence collected from documentary sources such as official records, statistical data, maps and other previous publications had to be re-ordered and analysed for the purpose of this study. A typical example is the data on the growth of small towns and urbanisation in Ghana used in much of the analysis in Section 5.2 in Chapter 5. This was derived from Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) census reports, which had to be reanalysed and reclassified to suit the purposes of this study.

The primary data for the study that were collected through interviews (households, key informants and focus group discussions) were analysed with the help of the field interview guides, interview transcripts and recorded audiotapes. The interview transcriptions, despite their time-consuming and tedious nature, were carried out single-handedly by author (researcher). This is because as Lægran (2004) noted, interview transcription allows the researcher to live through once again the interviews he or she has earlier conducted. This, she noted, is helpful in the analyses by allowing the researcher to sort out what is more relevant because it enables the researcher to put comments and quotations in their right context since he or she is able to recall voices and sights of the interview informants, and the interview sites.

With the research questions of the study as a guide and transcribed interviews, the relevant data from the various interview data sources were sorted out and categorised to identify similarities and differences. This process helped identify the missing links and contradictions in the data from the various research informants. These contradictions and missing links were resolved to a large extent by consulting previous publications and secondary data sources. The whole process of the analyses had involved grouping and regrouping of themes with the aim of identifying key factors affecting the outcomes. However, efforts are made through the analyses and reporting processes to understand, interpret and present the right content and context of informants' responses by presenting the direct quotes of informants.

### **3.5 Reflecting on the Fieldwork**

Questions are asked about ethics and methodology in research. In addition, questions have been raised about the role of the researcher in the field, and his or her interpretation of the life experiences of 'Others'. It is argued that in addressing these questions and related questions in research, a philosophical starting point for researchers is to recognise that the production of knowledge is situated, partial and socially-constructed (Knorr-Cetina 1984; Mikkelsen 1995; De Laine 2000; Dwyer and Limb 2001; Mohammad 2001; Lund 2002a).

In the field, I was on countless occasions asked 'why are you here and doing this? This was sometimes followed with the question 'where do you come from and what do you do? In almost all cases, the response from my Research Assistants and I was to tell my research participants about the objectives of the study, followed by information about our home towns and ethnicity, and our occupation as students and researchers. The essence of these questions from our respondents was basically to assess our 'strangeness' or whether we are simply one of their own. This is because in many cases, interviewees responded to our initial replies with comments of their own, relating to shared traits, such as our last (family) names, places of origin, language, and occupation (in many instances citing close relatives or friends in similar occupations to ours).

The above experience in the field relates to the issues of 'insider' and 'outsider' in research. However, as Mohammad (2001) notes, the positionality of researchers along these boundaries vis-à-vis the researched is not fixed and changes with time and place. In

this study, the fact that my assistants and I are Ghanaians, and share similar cultural traits as many of the respondents in the study districts, did not make our acceptance any easier. The positionality 'address' whether as insiders or outsiders has profound impact on the way we were viewed by our research participants, and our access to information. For instance, as noted earlier, access to official documents at various district offices during the first visit in 2002 was relatively difficult compared to the second visit in 2003. This may reflect the perception that we were perceived more as outsiders during the first visit, and insiders during the second visit. Alternatively, it could also mean that, as Ghanaians, we were generally considered as insiders. However, this positioning had the effect of making us appear too close for comfort in some instances, causing people, especially government officials to be wary of sharing information with us. Another point worth noting is that our respondents at times also tended to take our knowledge of the local situation for granted by stressing phrases such as 'As you know' and 'I can't tell you more, you know what I'm talking about'. In other situations, particularly during rural household interviews, our 'outsiders' address allowed us to get more insight into the local situations due to the fact that the respondents found it more comfortable in revealing information pertaining to the local situation to 'strangers'. In short, our outsiders' status emphasised by geographical distance allowed us to relate better to our respondents.

This study may be criticised for the 'small-size' of the sample frame (or cases) used. However, in the game of numbers, depth can be traded for breath (Glesne and Peshkin 1992). This allows for an extended period with few respondents and observation sites, and exploration of in-depth understanding of issues. Again, for case study research methodology, the selection of cases is not about representativeness but the selection of cases that represent other cases and for which there is the potential to learn more. However, if time and resources had allowed, more respondents and sites would have been explored regarding the very issues dealt in the study. This is not to suggest flaws in the conclusions reached but that it would have strengthened these conclusions as greater certainty lies with larger numbers of cases (Yin 1998). Time, in particular, was a critical factor in this study. This is because as Overå (1998) noted, the degree of openness about one's life is decided by the relationship built over time and the kinds of questions asked, rather than by the explanations or objectives of a study. This experience was demonstrated in this study, whereby access to information and research participants in the

field at the latter stages of the fieldwork were far easier and simpler compared to the early stages of the exercise.

On the issue of interpretation of information, the question which arises is who has the right and authority to speak on behalf of whom? According to Overå (1998), this question could be answered arguing from two perspectives. First, the argument can be made that to study other people than ourselves (and others whose everyday life we do not 'share') is not possible because of the incommensurability of different life-worlds. The second view, which is opposite to the first, is the naïve overestimation of our own interpretative capabilities and understanding for the oversimplified fact that we know the language and share similar cultural traits with the Other. In the context of this study, the latter proposition could have been risky – i.e. overestimating my knowledge of the study area and underestimating my level of ignorance.

In addition to knowing the study area in terms of culture and language, I started the study with a vast store of knowledge about the problem, what counts as a solution and an educated guess about where to look and what to ignore (Knorr-Cetina 1981, 1984). In particular, I was influenced by my undergraduate and master's degrees dissertations on the 'growth centre model' and 'impact assessment of Ghana's decentralisation programme on rural development' respectively, which were carried out using the Upper Denkyira District as the case study. It is the knowledge and experience attained in these two studies which resulted in the formulation of this particular study in terms of the objectives, research questions and conceptual framework. In short, the point emphasised here is that my previous knowledge of the study area and my past academic work have influenced the conclusions reached in the study. Therefore, any examination of the study out of these contexts could influence the study's results and the conclusions reached.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

These reflections on the adopted methodological approaches and the fieldwork exercise are to give an account of the reliability and validity of data for this study. I have attempted to give an account of the case study approach used and its rationale, the context in which information was gathered, and some of the factors which have impacted on the way I have constructed and produced the research findings. In all instances, it has involved the putting together of small-scale but in-depth and intensive interviews carried out in the field, and



the use of secondary information to arrive at conclusions within the context of the available time and resources for the study, and knowledge built over time.

Within this context, a process of interpretation was used with the aim of building up a picture or plausible story. While my interpretation is an imposition on others' interpretation, efforts are made throughout the study wherever possible to allow space for the expression of others' worldviews. This is, however, set within the context of what the study aimed to achieve. More importantly, efforts have been made throughout the study to heed Crang's (2001, p. 229) advice that as researchers our closeness and proximity to our data should be neither wholly detached from, nor submerged within the data, as we should be suspicious of anyone claiming wholly either of the two positions. The extent to which this study has managed to walk this fine line is, however, left to the reader to judge.

## 4.0 STUDY DISTRICTS

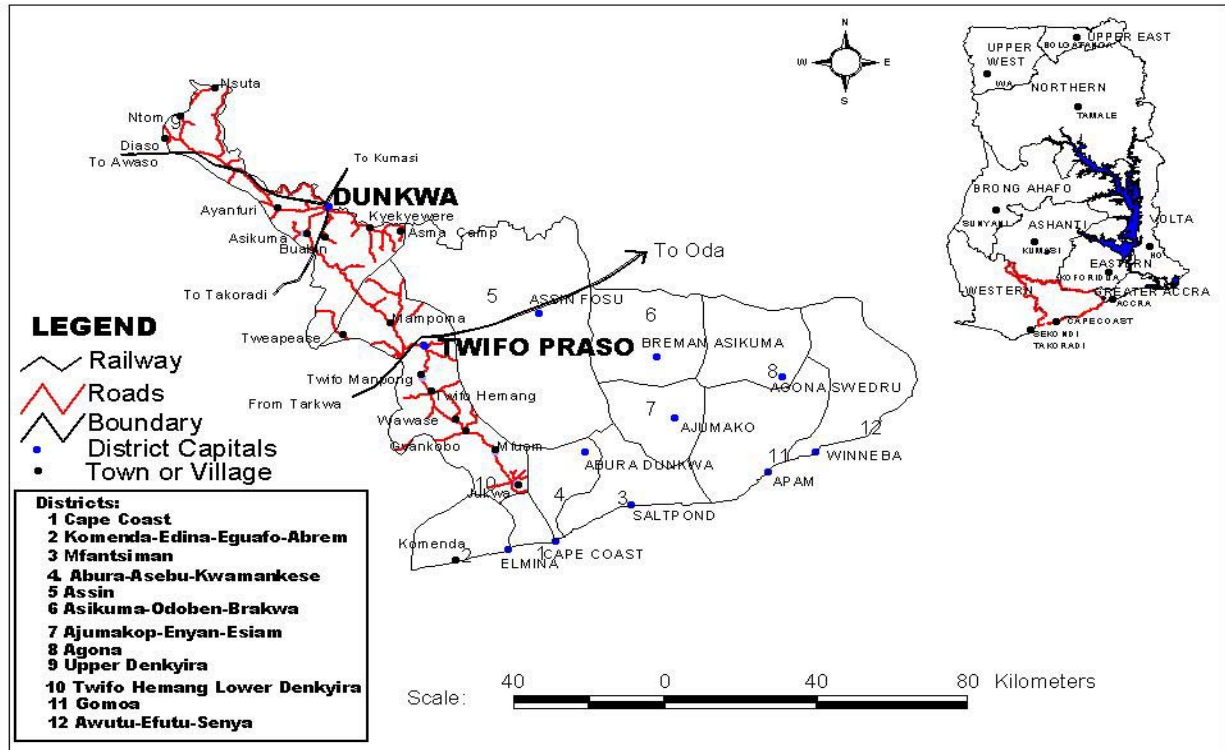
### 4.1 Introduction

This study is based on two small towns, Dunkwa and Twifo-Praso, district capitals (administrative) centres of the Upper Denkyira District (UDD) and Twifo-Hemang Lower Denkyira District (THLDD) respectively. While some aspects of this Chapter may be repeated in some sections of the study, the purpose here is to present a collated overview of the socio-economic, cultural and political setting of these two districts and their district capitals to enable one to evaluate their level of development. It is also to provide information on the possible kinds and level of interactions and linkages between the districts and their capitals. In addition, this overview of the study area provides the context in which the district capitals have emerged or grown in terms of their functions as politico-administrative, marketing, health and educational centres or focal points within their respective districts.

The two districts, UDD and THLDD, were formerly part of the Western Region, but they were incorporated into the Central Region as the Denkyira Twifo-Hemang District in 1963 in order to keep the Denkyira ethnic group (member of the Akan ethnic group) in one region. However, the district was divided into two separate districts, Upper Denkyira and Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira Districts in the late 1980s. Currently, the UDD and THLDD are 2 of the 12 administrative districts of the Central Region (see Fig. 5).

The UDD and THLDD lie within the wet semi-equatorial climatic zone of Ghana, which is marked by double maxima rainfall in June and October. This climate has a mean annual rainfall of between 120cm and 200cm, and a temperature range of between 26°C and 30°C. Relative humidity is very high throughout the year, ranging between 70% and 80%. This climate supports a semi-deciduous forest vegetation. However, in many parts of the two districts, this vegetation has been disturbed by the combined activities of mining (especially in the UDD), logging and farming. There are, however, few protected areas such as the Kakum National Park in the THLDD. The wet semi-equatorial climate also supports rain-fed peasant agriculture activity, which is the dominant economic activity in both districts.

**Fig. 5. Map Of Central Region showing the study Districts**



While the social and technical infrastructure of the UDD may be described as poor and inadequate, comparative analyses with that of its neighbouring district, THLDD, reveals that the latter’s infrastructure is even poorer. This relatively ‘new’ district and its district capital, Twifo Praso, lack many of the facilities which have long existed in Dunkwa, and even where they do exist the quality of these facilities cannot be compared to those of the latter.<sup>4</sup> For instance, the THLDD main health facility located at Twifo Praso is described as a ‘polyclinic’ (below the status of a district hospital);<sup>5</sup> it is not connected to the national telephone network (hampering its communication with the country and the rest of the world); and was only connected to the national electricity grid quite recently (in the year 2000). In fact, the 1996-2010 Development Plan of the Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira District Assembly (THLDDA) described the district as *distressed* or *disadvantaged*, characterised by poor infrastructure, low income and hence low revenue base for the Assembly, and inadequate skilled staff and lack of office and residential accommodation

<sup>4</sup> Yankson (2000a, p. 208) makes a similar observation noting that, the old districts are better resourced than the new districts.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with District Director of Health, Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira District, 10 October, 2002.

for staff (THLDDA 1995, p. i-ii). However, Twifo Praso has grown quite significantly over the last decade, transforming itself from a rural settlement to an urban centre.

With the above as the summary of the state of physical, technical and social infrastructure of the UDD and the THLDD, the presentation below attempts to give a comparative overview of the cultural, socio-economic and political setting of the two districts. Attempts are made throughout the chapter to present the distinguishing characteristics of the relatively newly created district, THLDD and its district capital, Twifo Praso, vis-à-vis its old neighbouring district, UDD and its old capital Dunkwa.

#### **4.2 Physical Accessibility**

Road transport is the dominant means of transport in the UDD and THLDD. Of the total length of road of about 190km within the UDD, less than 20% of this has bitumen surface. The district capital, Dunkwa, is connected by a network of roads with the rest of the district though many of these roads are in a poor state. On the other hand, Dunkwa is well connected with good roads to major centres such as Kumasi, Obuasi (all in the Ashanti Region) and Bogoso, Tarkwa and Takoradi (all in the Western Region). However, the road from Dunkwa to Twifo Praso, which links the district to the Central Region and the regional capital, Cape Coast, is poorly accessible. This has affected the functional and administrative relationship between the district, and its regional capital and the rest of the Central Region (UDDA 2002).

The THLDD has a total road network of about 252 km, comprising 180 km of feeder roads and 72 km of highway (Cape Coast-Twifo Praso). Besides, there are other road networks developed by timber merchants exploiting timber in the district. However, the majority of the feeder roads and most of the timber roads are very poor, and motorable only in the dry season (THLDDA 2002). The limited and poor road networks within the THLDD have influenced the district's settlement pattern. The greater proportion of settlements (including the major centres) in the district is located along the main Cape Coast-Twifo Praso highway, and to some extent the Twifo Praso-Dunkwa trunk road. The poor road network affects socio-economic development in several ways. Farmers are unable to easily transport their produce to market centres, resulting in high post-harvest losses. Also, public and civil servants sometimes refuse postings to the district, citing among other reasons the poor transport network in the district (THLDDA 2002). In another way, the

many settlements lying on the Cape Coast-Twifo Praso highway has affected the growth of many centres like Twifo Praso. This is because they are easily bypassed due to the other settlements' relatively easier access and proximity to higher-order centres, particularly Cape Coast. According to Owusu (2005a), household interviews conducted in the district indicate that apart from politico-administrative functions which link Twifo Praso to the other settlements, a large part of the district (especially the southern half) looks more to Cape Coast for both services and markets. This is partly due to proximity and accessibility, and partly due to the unattractiveness of the district capital, Twifo Praso, especially in terms of the provision of services.

While there are no shortage of roads linking various settlements in the UDD and THLDD, the problem is with the maintenance of these roads to make them motorable throughout the year. The Ministry of Roads and Highways is responsible for all the highways in the country (including that of UDD and THLDD). The District Assemblies (DAs) are to maintain non-highways within the districts, what are commonly referred to as feeder roads. The feeder roads are basically the roads linking rural communities and the district capitals as well as other settlements within the district. While many highways in the country have benefited from central government and donor funding, the poor financial position of DAs has affected the maintenance and motorability of feeder roads (Owusu 2004, 2005a).

Another means of transport in both districts is the railway service. The UDD has a 67km rail line which runs through the district in a north-south direction as part of Ghana's western railway network. Railway services are available from Dunkwa to Kumasi (Ghana's second-largest city), Awaso (a bauxite mining centre in the Western Region), and the seaport of Takoradi. The THLDD is also linked by the country's central railway network (Takoradi-Accra railway line). However, the decline of rail services in terms of reliability and regularity throughout the country in recent years has affected the districts as well, more especially the Central railway network, which saw little of the rehabilitation work in the early 1980s under the Economic Recovery Programme (ERP).

### **4.3 Demographic Characteristics**

The population of the UDD, with an annual average growth rate of about 3%, increased from 34,011 in 1960 to 108,444 in 2000 (GSS 2002a). According to the UDDA (2002), the district's population of 108,444 in 2000 represented about 6.8% of the total regional

population of the Central Region. Dunkwa is the only settlement in the district which can be described as urban, and the only area of population concentration. Its population of 26,215 in 2000 represented about 24% of the total population of the district. The next two major settlements after Dunkwa, Ayanfuri and Diaso all have populations of less than 4000.

The Denkyiras who are part of the Akan ethnic group are the indigenous people of the UDD. Over the years, this Akan ethnic group has co-existed with several other settler ethnic groups, namely Ashanti, Fanti, Akuapem, Ga-Adangbe, and ethnic groups of northern Ghana origin. The ethnic heterogeneity of the district is the result of the gold mining industry and cocoa farming. To these two main factors could be added the presence of government administrative services and institutions, which have attracted people from other ethnic groups to the district as public and civil servants, especially in the district capital. The UDDA (2002) notes that there is a harmonious and socio-economic cooperation among the different ethnic groups due to inter-ethnic marriages and the traditional farming institutional practice of share cropping.

The population of the THLDD has also grown substantially over time – from 53,066 in 1970 to 110,352 in 2000 (GSS 2002a). The district's population growth rate, and its proportion to the total population of the Central Region are just about that of the UDD. The high population growth rate within the district is to a large extent attributed to the establishment of Twifo Oil Palm Plantation (TOPP) at Twifo Praso in the 1970s, and cocoa farming in the district. These have attracted a large 'migrant' population into the district as cocoa farmers or as workers in the oil-palm plantations and factory. The proportion of the urban population made up of only 2 settlements (Twifo Praso and Hemang) out of a total of 1510 settlements is about 14% of the district's total population. Twifo Praso is the largest settlement in the district, with a population of 9011 in 2000 (GSS 2002b, 2002c).

Unlike the UDD which has the Denkyiras as the only indigenous group, the THLDD has besides the Denkyira, three additional Akan ethnic groups, Mokwaa, Hemang and Twifo. The traditional political system in the district is therefore basically organised around these groups. Besides these indigenous ethnic groups, other ethnic groups from all parts of the country are present in the district due to the oil-palm industry and cocoa farming, as

already noted. It is estimated that about 25% of the labour force working in the cocoa and oil palm plantations are migrants (THLDDA 2002, p. 4).

Data on population movements within and out of the two districts are lacking. However, other studies on migration in Ghana, such as GSS (1995, 2000a) provide some insight into the broad factors accounting for migration in the country. In general, GSS (1995) notes that population redistribution in Ghana involves voluntary migration which is economically motivated, mainly in response to the spatial distribution of resources. Among others, it identified cocoa producing areas (especially in the light of government's revitalisation of the cocoa industry) and mineral mining areas as major population destinations. The GSS study also generally identified rural areas with limited amenities and infrastructure as areas of out-migration. A look at the UDD and THLDD reveals the presence of both population 'push' and 'pull' factors in both districts. While the presence of gold mining (in the case of UDD) and fertile soils for cash crop production has attracted migrant populations for decades, the limited social amenities and the general low level of development, especially in rural areas (particularly in the THLDD), also provide opportunities for out-migration especially amongst the youths.

#### **4.4 Micro/District Economy**

As already noted, peasant agriculture is the dominant economic activity in both districts. It contributes about 50% of households' income and employs well over 60% of the districts' active labour force. The main crops grown in the districts are cash crops, mainly cocoa and oil-palm (the latter especially in the THLDD) and food crops such as cassava, plantain, cocoyam, and maize. The farming practice is small-scale and near subsistence as the majority of farmers do not have access to credits and modern technology to enable them to engage in large-scale production. Like much of the country, little of the agriculture produce is processed to obtain value-addition. The only exception is oil palm in the THLDD. The establishment of the Twifo Oil Palm Plantation Limited (TOPP) has enhanced the processing of oil palm in the district. This has also facilitated the establishment of a small-scale soap-making industry in the district.

However, the extent to which this value-addition by TOPP has benefited the district is questionable. This is because apart from contribution to the local economy such as the few jobs generated, the establishment of TOPP has displaced a large number of peasant

farmers and created a large landless peasant population in the district. The company has also created significant environmental problems, such as the pollution of rivers and streams with its processing activities, as well as deforestation. In addition, the operations of the company are influenced more by corporate profit-maximisation rather than the attainment of local development. In other words, driven by corporate profit-maximisation and the desire to satisfy its multi-national and corporate shareholders such as Unilever Ghana Limited and Shell Ghana Limited, the company has made little effort to plough-back or invest in the development of the THLDD that would benefit the resident population of the district in a more meaningful way (Ofori 2002).

In the UDD, gold mining is the second most important economic activity after agriculture. In the past, the district witnessed the operations of many large-scale gold mining and prospecting companies, such as the Dunkwa Goldfields Limited (which for many years dredged the River Offin for gold), Ayanfuri AGC Limited and Cluff Resources Limited. However, these companies have either left or run-down their operations in the district due to depleted ore or operational difficulties. On the ascendancy in the district are the operations of small-scale, and illegal (popularly referred to as *galamsey*) mining activities. Direct employment in the formal (registered) gold mining sector is estimated to be about 1530 whereas more than 3000 people are believed to be engaged in illegal mining activities (UDDA 2002, p. 14). Even though these small-scale and illegal gold mining activities provide employment for the youths, the lack of effective regulatory mechanisms on these mining activities has had severe negative impact on the environment in some parts of the district, especially along the banks of the River Offin. Also, the forest coverage of the district is on the retreat due to the combined effects of mining and agriculture activities.

Commercial activities, mainly petty trading by mostly women, is quite prominent in both districts. A survey by the THLDDA revealed that commerce (mainly petty trading) accounts for about 16% of the district's total active labour force (THLDDA 2002). Women are engaged in this occupation either on full-time or part-time basis. The trading activities are carried out through daily and periodic markets, which can be found in almost all communities in both districts. However, apart from the markets in the district capitals, none of the other markets (which are mainly periodic markets) enjoy any significant level of patronage and volume of trade. Despite the major contributions these markets make



toward the development of the districts (such as sustaining local agriculture production, revenue to DAs, employment, etc.), they are beset with poor infrastructure, thus hampering their contribution to district development (Owusu 2004, 2005a; Owusu and Lund 2004). Yankson (2000a, p. 216) emphasised this point regarding financing the DAs, noting that although market tolls constitute a significant proportion of the revenue generated internally by the DAs, most Assemblies have not adequately exploited this revenue source. (Section 5.5 in Chapter 5 provides a detailed discussion of the potential role of markets and women's trade in the development of the UDD and THLDD. These contributions of the district capitals' markets in the two districts underpin the District Capital-Centred Development Model).

The industrial base of the two districts is weak and underdeveloped (Owusu 2005a). It is characterised by small-scale traditional craft, agro-based and wood-processing industries. The technology used in these industries is traditional, and the production output is also very low as the scale of activity is small. In addition, these small-scale industries carried out as family or household's self-financed production units have very low capital base due to the lack of access to credit (UDDA 2002). Thus, apart from TOPP, no meaningful industrial establishments currently exist in either of the districts. Hence, the 2002-2004 Development Plans of both the UDDA and THLDDA note that for a sustained development, there is the need to improve the districts' industrial sector by establishing small-scale and medium-scale industries to process the numerous agricultural raw materials from both districts.

Like many districts in Ghana, the linkage between industry and the dominant economic activity, agriculture, is nearly absent. The absence of any significant agro-processing industry in the district implies that the majority of agricultural crops produced in the two districts are not processed. The implication of this situation is the resultant low agriculture production, as farmers cannot easily increased production. Therefore in the absence of adequate market access and infrastructure, and agro-processing industries, any significant increase in agriculture production is associated with lowering of prices. This goes a long way to affect income levels of farmers who are the dominant labour force, and consequently other economic activities in the districts. Again, the absence of agro-based industries implies limited off-farm employment and income opportunities. These effects have significant development implications for both districts.

Tourism is a major potential economic activity which could contribute to the local economy, especially the development of the THLDD. The THLDD has one of the major national tourist sites in Ghana, namely the Kakum National Park. However, the lack of a well-formulated district plan to harness this potential resource and the lack of adequate supporting services such as hotels, restaurants and other on-site services means that the district benefits very little from this resource. In addition, most of the current visits to the Park are organised by tourist-operating agencies in Accra and other centres outside the district, thus by-passing the district in terms of income and employment generation.

#### **4.5 Provision of Services**

As already noted, the THLDD and its capital, Twifo Praso, are very handicapped in services provision, both in quality and quantity. Unlike Dunkwa which due to its long held status as a district administrative centre or headquarters has attracted significant service establishments and therefore the focus of the UDD and the surrounding areas – Twifo Praso does not possess such a status. Twifo Praso, the dominant centre in the THLDD, is inadequately equipped to provide the services required by both its resident population and the hinterland. This, to a great extent, accounts for the large section of the district looking to Cape Coast for key service delivery (Owusu 2005a). In physical terms, Twifo Praso has better links with other centres outside the district through various road networks. However, the lack of inter-district linkages between the centre and rural areas hinders the development of the district. The linkages in many cases are either very weak or absent, such that the rural hinterland does not benefit from the relatively few services located in the centre (THLDDA 2002, pp. 15-16).

On the other hand, Dunkwa, the only urban centre in the UDD, is in a unique position in terms of its ability to interact with the surrounding rural hinterlands. Since its foundation, Dunkwa has found itself in a location where it has no competition from any urban centre of similar grade within several kilometres radius (Acheampong 1996). The town presently offers many urban functions and key social services to the hinterland population.<sup>6</sup> However, accessibility to these services has been poor due to poor road network, poor quality of services resulting mainly from inadequacy of personnel, and high level of poverty in the district. These have had adverse effects on health and nutrition, water and

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<sup>6</sup> With the exception of Primary Health Care (PHC) services, basic schools, a senior secondary school at Diaso, and rural banks at Ayanfuri and Diaso, no other services are located in the district apart from Dunkwa.

sanitation, education, employment, and development in general in the district (UDDA 1996, p. 6).

#### **4.5.1 Education**

Like most districts in Ghana, educational establishments in the UDD and THLDD exist up to senior secondary school level. The districts' educational institutions are characterised by poor physical infrastructure and inadequate teaching staff. The problem of inadequate staff is further compounded by the limited social services in the rural parts of both districts, which make these areas unattractive to qualified teachers and other civil servants. Tables 2 and 3 give a summary of the current basic statistics on education in the UDD and the THLDD.

A noted observation from Tables 2 and 3 is that at all levels of education in both districts, the male student/pupil population outnumbered their female counterparts. This reflects the general national trend of the lack of equal opportunities for girls, especially after primary school. While the overall data on education in the THLDD bear semblance to that of the UDD, some significant differences can be drawn. In particular, the proportion of untrained teachers in the THLDD, especially in pre-schools, far exceeds that of the UDD. The major reasons which may be cited for this state of affairs relate to the general unattractiveness of the district, which in turn serve as 'push' rather than 'pull' factors in attracting and retaining teachers. The Tables also show that the requisite qualification of teachers (defined in terms of the proportion of trained and untrained teachers) is relatively better at the JSS and SSS levels than at the lower educational levels, especially in the UDD. This, however, does not augur well for the development of good educational foundation and the production of quality manpower. Interviews carried out in the two districts show that the quality of teaching staff and student/pupil enrolment level are relatively better in the district capitals compared to the rural areas.

The poor quality of teaching staff also affects enrolment levels of educational institutions in the two districts. This is more the case in the THLDD where parents and students prefer to have their education outside the district. For instance, the total Senior Secondary School enrolment of 451 in 2002 in the THLDD was far below the capacity of the two Senior Secondary Schools located in Twifo Praso and Jukwa. Field records obtained indicated that the Twifo Praso Senior Secondary School alone had a student capacity of at least 600. On the other hand, the UDD has three Senior Secondary Schools: two are located in

the district capital, Dunkwa, and the third at Diaso. However, the third Senior Secondary School at Diaso (60 km north of Dunkwa) accounted for less than 7% of the total Senior Secondary School enrolment level in the district as at 2002. This reflects the unattractiveness of the school due to its poor infrastructure and manpower.

**Table 2. UDD: Educational Institutions and Current Basic Statistics**

Schools	No.	Student/Pupil Enrolment			Teachers			Teacher/ Pupil Ratio
		Total	% Male	% Female	Total	% Trained	% Untrained	
Pre-school	107	4849	50.3	49.7	167	25.0	75.0	1:25
Primary	122	17094	53.0	47.0	147	74.0	26.0	1:37
JSS*	73	6271	54.5	44.5	357	83.0	17.0	1:18
SSS**	3	1031	59.6	40.4	69	81.0	19.0	1:20

\*Junior Secondary School (JSS), \*\*Senior Secondary School (SSS).

Source: UDDA Development Plan 2002-2004 (UDDA 2002).

**Table 3. THLDD: Educational Institutions and Current Basic Statistics**

Schools	No.	Student/Pupil Enrolment			Teachers			Teacher/ Pupil Ratio
		Total	% Male	% Female	Total	% Trained	% Untrained	
Pre-school	119	5165	50.6	49.4	192	4.7	95.3	1:27
Primary	135	16271	53.2	46.8	537	68.3	31.7	1:30
JSS*	85	5427	55.9	44.1	389	73.0	27.0	1:14
SSS**	2	451	62.0	38.0	-	-	-	1:18

\*Junior Secondary School (JSS), \*\*Senior Secondary School (SSS).

Source: THLDDA Development Plan 2002-2004 (THLDDA 2002).

While the DAs, with the assistance of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), have over the last few years directed a significant proportion of their development expenditure towards renovating and constructing new school buildings, poor physical infrastructure remains one of the major problems hindering educational development in both districts. For instance, in the UDD, it has been noted that about 40% of the district's basic schools (JSS and primary) are housed in dilapidated structures (UDDA 2002). This situation is largely attributed to the limited financial position of the DA. More importantly, even though the law establishing the DAs mandate the Assemblies to assume the overall responsibility of services provision (including education), this is yet to be fully implemented. Educational institutions and their personnel therefore do not operate on the commands and dictates of the DAs, but are more responsible to their regional and national headquarters (Appiah

2000; Woode 2000). The influence of the DAs on educational establishments and their personnel is therefore very minimal. The problem of the lack of horizontal integration of district branches of central government's departments and agencies into the structure of the DAs are further elaborated in Section 4.6 of this chapter.

#### **4.5.2 Health**

Health delivery system in the two districts consists of the orthodox and traditional systems. The latter system is made of herbalists, fetish priests and spiritualists. Like many parts of the country, the traditional health sub-sector (which has long played a crucial role in health delivery, even prior to the introduction of the orthodox or modern system), is underdeveloped. Furthermore, it has not been integrated into the modern system.

The orthodox health system at the district level under the country's Primary Health Care (PHC) system should exist up to what is described as Level C. This implies the presence of a district hospital offering referral services, with Levels B (health centres) and A (community clinics) sub-existing within its recognised catchment area (district). In the UDD, there are two hospitals in the district (Dunkwa Government and Mines Hospitals), both located in the district capital. The Dunkwa Government Hospital fulfils the role of a district referral hospital. There are three Level B health institutions, located at Kyekyewere, Diaso and Oponso, and five Level C facilities at Mbraim, Nkotumso, Ntom, Subin Hill and Dominase.

The required (or officially recommended) national health delivery structure at the district level does not completely exist in the THLDD. The THLDD has two major facilities, namely Twifo Health Centre located at Twifo Praso and TOPP Clinic (the latter is a private clinic owned by the Twifo Oil Palm Plantation Limited). In addition, 12 rural health centres and clinics exist in 12 rural communities. Although the health facility at Twifo Praso is supposed to serve as a referral health institution for the district, it has severe problems of lack of equipment (such as proper surgical theatres, x-ray, transport, etc.) and inadequate staff. Due to these problems, the only medical doctor in the district (who also acts as the District Director of Health Services) noted in an interview that the Twifo Praso health centre is yet to attain a 'full district hospital' status owing to the lack of equipment, physical infrastructure and staff.

Health facilities in the UDD and THLDD, like many districts in the country, are not well developed in terms of staff, equipment and funding. Spatially, the distribution of health services, especially health centres and clinics, depicts irregularity or poor accessibility in terms of distance. This is exemplified by the fact that under the country's PHC system, health centres are supposed to be situated within a distance of 8 km of communities. However, within the two districts, especially in the THLDD, some communities cover more than 32 km to reach a health centre. Again, the PHC system advocates that a community or a group of communities with a total population of about 200 are required to be provided with a community clinic. Using these national standards as criteria, both districts are deficient in health service provision, especially in the THLDD.

It must be stated that besides the poor state of the two districts' health delivery system, the poor roads and high transportation fares have further impacted negatively on the health delivery in both districts. This situation is putting health facilities out of reach of many rural dwellers. In recent years, the problem has been compounded by the withdrawal of government subsidies, and the introduction of cost recovery practices in the health sector (popularly referred to as *cash and carry*) under Ghana's SAPs. This has resulted in rising costs of medical care for many households, and declining hospital/clinic attendance. Interview responses from household heads showed that due to the increasingly high cost of hospital bills household members only go to the hospital when they are 'critically ill'. Critically ill here refers to a situation where self-medication has failed, or where a patient realizes he or she has no cure for an ailment. In that situation he or she is forced to report to the hospital for cure. The hospital is therefore used as a 'last resort'. The Bio-Statistician at the Dunkwa Government Hospital noted that in recent years, the hospital has been recording higher death rates, not due to the outbreak of epidemics or inefficient staff but rather due to the fact that increasingly patients report to the hospital in critical conditions after many weeks and months of self-medication.

As in much of Ghana, malaria stands out as the most endemic disease in both districts. The very high incidence of the disease is attributed to the high humidity and rainfall as well as the poor drainage and sanitation in many parts of the two districts. Also of significantly high incidence in the two districts are upper respiratory tract infectious diseases (URTI). These diseases are also attributed to the poor sanitary and drainage conditions as well as the high level of pollution (especially in the mining areas of the UDD).

#### **4.5.3 Water and Sanitation**

The main sources of potable water in the UDD and THLDD are boreholes, rivers and streams. With the exception of Dunkwa, Diaso and Nkotumso (in the UDD) and Twifo Praso, Jukwa and Twifo Mampong (in the THLDD), which have pipe-borne water, all other communities rely on boreholes and streams for their domestic water needs. The flow of water is, however, very irregular in many places, especially during the dry season. Other problems confronting water supply in the two districts include the prevalence of water-borne diseases and relatively long distances between population centres and water-drawing points, resulting in the loss of man-hours which could otherwise have been used for other productive activities.

At present, there is no effective waste disposal system in the two districts, resulting in indiscriminate disposal of both liquid and solid waste. Hillocks of refuse dumps are therefore common in both districts, particularly in the district capitals. This poses a great threat to surface and underground water supply. The implications of this for the health of the people, particularly the risk of water-borne diseases, cannot be overemphasized. This situation accounts for the high incidence of malaria in the UDD and THLDD. In addition, run-off from rainfall has caused serious soil erosion in most communities; eroded foundations of buildings and open gullies are common sights in the two districts.

#### **4.5.4 Energy**

The main sources of energy in the UDD and THLDD are woodfuel, kerosene, electricity, and to a lesser extent liquidified petroleum gas (LPG). The use of LPG is increasingly gaining popularity, but its inadequate supply makes it accessible to only a few urban residents. It is estimated that less than 10% of the UDD is served by the national electricity grid. Presently, only nine communities besides Dunkwa have access to electricity from the national grid. While Dunkwa and other settlements, such as Subin Hill, Akwaboso and Buabinso, have long enjoyed electricity due to mining activities, electricity supply to the other settlements has been only recent. Electricity supply in the THLDD is quite recent, and limited to few communities along the Cape Coast-Twifo Praso highway. In fact, the district capital, Twifo Praso was connected to the national electricity grid only in the year 2000.

Due to the lack of electricity, most residents of the two districts rely on woodfuel and kerosene for their energy needs. Besides the negative environmental impact due to the

overdependence on woodfuel, the lack of electricity may also account for the relatively low level of economic activities in the two districts. The positive impact of electricity on economic activities has been recognised in the development plans of both DAs. Even though a programme of cost sharing between government and community, referred to as Self-Help Electrification Project (SHEP), exists in the two districts to connect communities to the national electricity, its implementation is hindered by the inability of communities to provide their required share of inputs (such as cash and electric poles) due to low incomes and poverty. It is envisaged in the development plans of the UDDA and THLDDA that the implementation of SHEP will go a long way to increase the pace of economic activities, and make the rural areas more attractive.

#### **4.5.5 Banking**

Access to banking services contributes to economic development through the mobilisation of savings and credits for investments. Currently, there are seven commercial and rural banks operating in the UDD. With the exception of two rural banks operating as agencies in two rural communities (Ayanfuri and Diaso), all other banking establishments are located at Dunkwa. According to the UDDA (2002), the concentration of almost all the banks in the district capital (Dunkwa) has in a way discouraged majority of the people, especially those in the hinterland, from accessing banking services. This has contributed to the low level of saving and the apparently inadequate knowledge of banking culture and practice among the majority of the people. Therefore, the propensity to hold cash instead of savings with the bank is very high in the district.

While the problem of banking services in the UDD is the uneven spatial distribution of banks, in the THLDD, the problem is the limited number of banks operating within the district (including the district capital, Twifo Praso). There are only three commercial banks and six rural banks in the district. Two of the commercial banks and a rural bank are located at Twifo Praso, and the rest are located in four other settlements (Jukwa, Nyenase, Hemang and Wawase). The small-scale operation of these banks is reflected in the relatively small-size of the buildings housing these establishments and the limited number of staff on duty. The limited number of banks and their relatively small-scale operations may be due to the low productivity and incomes, and the general low level of economic activities in the district.



The banking services in the two districts cater mainly for cocoa farmers and the few civil and public servants through the payment of cocoa-purchasing cheques and salaries respectively. Like many banks in the country, access to credits and loans is hindered by the demand of collateral, which many cannot simply afford. The THLDDA (2002) notes that even though there is a strong desire by farmers and others in the THLDD to access credits from the banks, many are discouraged by the demand for collateral and the lengthy procedures involved in accessing credit.

#### **4.5.6 Telecommunications and Post**

Modern telecommunication services are key to development as they enhance interactions and communication between people and businesses. In the UDD, telecommunications and postal services are available and accessible only in the district capital, Dunkwa. Dunkwa is well connected to the national and the global communication networks through modern telephone links (including mobile phone and pre-paid public phone booth systems) and fax services. The same, however, cannot be said about its telecommunications linkage with its immediate hinterland (district). Even though six postal agencies are located in six rural communities outside the district capital, they are ill-equipped and housed in dilapidated structures. As a result of this, internal delivery of letters and other mail are carried out through the goodwill of private transport operators (drivers) plying routes between the capital and the rural communities. Nevertheless, a 24-hour mail dispatch and delivery service exists between Dunkwa and a central pool at Kumasi (UDDA 2002).

Telecommunications and postal services in THLDD are among the least developed services in the district. While this was the situation in many districts in Ghana in the past, the government's policy in recent years of enhancing the status of district capitals to stimulate development in the districts guarantees the provision of basic infrastructure (including telephone services) at least in the district capitals (GSS 1995, p. 12-14). Notwithstanding this policy, Twifo Praso and the rest of the THLDD do not have access to direct telephone and fax services. The only telecommunication services available in the district capital are a radio message facility restricted to the district administration, police and emergency services, and a privately owned radiophone service. These telecommunication services are, however, very archaic, highly unreliable and inefficient, and break down quite often, leading to complete breaks in communication between the district and the rest of the country.

#### **4.6 District Administration and Governance Systems**

According to the Local Government Act, Act 462, the formal politico-administration, socio-economic planning and development of UDD and THLDD are the responsibility of the UDDA and THLDDA respectively. The district capitals are formally recognised as the seat of administration, planning and economic development. The overall district administration and governance is carried out by the DA. The DA is constituted of a District Chief Executive (DCE), the head of the Assembly (who is nominated by the central government and approved by the Assembly); Assembly members representing communities within the district (two-thirds of whom are elected, and the rest appointed by the central government in consultation with relevant groups within the district); and a team of civil servants (mainly administrators and planning officers).

To involve the grass roots in the mobilisation of resources, and the formulation and implementation of policies at the local level, the district is sub-divided into Area/Urban Councils and Unit Committees. For instance, there are 8 Area/Urban Councils and 119 Unit Committees in the Upper Denkyira District represented by 54 Assembly members at the Assembly. However, like many districts in Ghana, these lower structures (Area Councils and Unit Committees) of the local government (District Assembly) are either non-existent or non-functional (UDDA 2002). The non-functioning of these vital structures or organs of the DAs raises questions about the impact of Ghana's decentralisation programme on the development of the study districts after more than a decade and half of implementation of the programme.

Like many districts in Ghana, two parallel forms of political and administrative systems, traditional and formal local government systems, exist in the UDD and the THLDD. The traditional structure, which pre-dates the emergence of the modern state, involves a paramount chief of the traditional area, assisted by divisional chiefs and their sub-chiefs, town/village or community chief and headmen (Yankson 2000b). While past criteria for the demarcation of district and regional boundaries included the need for ethnic groups to be placed in one district or region (Dickson 1971, 1975; Bening 1999), the small size of some ethnic groups and the fragmentation of others meant they had to coexist with other groups. Each ethnic group, however, maintains its autonomy, traditional structure and area of jurisdiction within the district or traditional area. In other instances, the traditional areas based on ethnocentric boundaries do not coincide with the present politico-administrative boundaries. Either of these instances may fragment a district, especially in cases where

traditional boundaries are contested, resulting in land and chieftancy disputes. This may have the effect of retarding development due to the lack of order and harmony as well as impeding the flow of people, goods and information, and also interactions within the district.

In the UDD, due to past inter-tribal and ethnic wars, and movements of people, the traditional area, namely Denkyira, is not only confined to the UDD, but part can also be located in the THLDD around the town of Jukwa. In fact, while the Denkyiras regard Dunkwa as their commercial or modern capital, they view Jukwa as their traditional capital and the seat of the traditional area, though these two areas are not contiguous entities. In the case of the THLDD, the presence of four indigenous Akan ethnic groups (Twifo, Mokwaa, Hemang, and Denkyira) within the district implies the existence of multiple paramountcies in the district. The competing claims of these paramountcies and land disputes have resulted in numerous chieftancy conflicts in the district. Interviews with some key informants in the THLDDA indicated that the existence of these competing paramountcies have contributed to the underdevelopment of the district through the waste of scarce resources on land litigation and the lack of adequate social harmony in some parts of the district.

The legal and politico-administrative structures of the DA require the representation of all areas and people of a district at the DA. However, the extent to which the traditional politico-administrative structure of a district impacts on rural-urban linkages may require a thorough study, which is not closely explored in this present study. This is because while formal planning may recognise district capitals as the focal point for development, traditional authority could dictate otherwise (Owusu 2005a). This is well illustrated by the recent public outcry in some parts of the country on proposals by central government to create new districts and district capitals. In many instances, the outcry is not against the creation of the new districts, but the selection or choice of a settlement as a district capital. In a recent comment on this situation, Ghana's Vice President, Aliu Mahama, advised communities within newly proposed districts to collectively decide on the selection and choice of district capitals, and to use the due process of law to pursue their proposal where there are differences. He added that the situation where every town and village is demanding to be the district capital is detrimental to socio-economic development and peace (General News, [www.ghanaweb.com](http://www.ghanaweb.com). Accessed on 8 June, 2004).

In addition to the above problems, other problems relating to the implementation of the decentralisation programme can be identified at the district level. Even though some of these problems manifest themselves at both the national and regional levels, they are of particular significance at the district level where the fruits of the programme are most needed (Owusu 1999).

A related problem to the absence of sub-district structures is the lack of an integrated structure of line departments at the district level, contrary to the Local Government Act, 1993 (Act 462). Act 462 requires that all district branches of central government departments and agencies in the district come under the authority of the DA as technical units of the Assembly for the effective running of the district (MLG&RD 1996). This provision is, however, yet to be implemented (see Appendices 5 and 6 for the list of departments and agencies ceasing to exist under Act 462, and their supposed incorporation into the DA's decentralised departments and sub-departments). This is because district branches of central government departments and agencies still look to their regional and national headquarters (as already indicated for the educational sector) for their operations, staffing, budgeting and financing. In other words, at the district level, there still exists vertical coordination of central government's departments and agencies rather than horizontal coordination as envisaged under the decentralisation programme.

The Local Government Act, 1993, (Act 462) requires the integration of decentralised district departments (whose staff should belong to and be paid by the DA) so as to eliminate dual allegiance of these departments and their staff, and thus give true meaning to decentralisation (Zanu 1996). Due to the absence of an integrated structure at the district level, supposedly decentralised line departments perform functions of the Assemblies without the involvement of the DAs (Appiah 2000). However, as Mawuena-Dotse (1990, p. 61-62) noted, it would be unrealistic to request the staff of these district departments and agencies to cut off the link with their present organisations when issues relating to their career progression, salary scales and other forms of remuneration, training and development are yet to be precisely determined. It is these problems as well as the reluctance of bureaucrats at the regional and national level who want to maintain the status quo and their power base which has stalled a fully operationalised decentralised development planning and administrative system in Ghana (Mohan 1996; Appiah 2000; Woode 2000; Crook 2003).

A constitutional difficulty created at the district level is the undefined working relationships between a Member of Parliament (MP) as a non-voting member of the DA, and the District Chief Executive (DCE) as a voting member. Currently, it is not all that clear which of the two (MP and DCE) represents the district as the political head. The MP is elected by universal adult suffrage and represents the district at the national legislative assembly (Parliament) whereas the national President appoints the DCE. The relationship between MP and DCE is mostly critical where the two find themselves on either side of the political divide (ruling party and opposition party). This is the situation the UDD found itself prior to the year 2000 when there was a change of national government. Currently, the THLDD finds itself in similar situation with the MP from the opposition party, the National Democratic Congress (NDC), while the DCE appointed by the President 'owns' allegiance to the ruling political party, the National Patriotic Party (NPP). In both districts, there are stories of non-cooperative attitudes from these two political figures. Currently, there is increasing agitation for the post of DCE to be depoliticised (Woode 2000). This is, however, countered by the argument that there is the need for central government presence in the districts to facilitate the implementation of government policies since the DAs have the legal obligation to operate within that framework.

The last problem to discuss here is the issue of remuneration of Assembly members and other non-civil and public servants working at the district and sub-district levels. At present, the services of Assembly members are considered as sacrificial. They are only paid sitting and travelling allowances, and at the end of their service receive an approved ex-gratia award ranging between ₵250,000 and ₵350,000 (Owusu 1999). Some Assembly members and analysts of Ghana's decentralisation programme have described these provisions as inadequate. They argued that the services provided by Assembly members require full-time employment, involving regular meetings, community work and other administrative duties, which demand substantial time and energy. Further, the lack of adequate remunerations for Assembly members and the other members of the sub-district structures of the DAs is stalling the decentralisation process at the local level due to the apathy, malgining and frustrations on the part of these members of the DAs (Ayee 2000b). In a survey of Assembly members in eight DAs, Thomi (2000) noted that 67% of respondents called for better remunerations for their services. He added that, under conditions of poverty, the poor cannot afford to invest effort and time for common interests. So a solution must be found between the limited financial resources of the local government system, the risk of

'corruptive' compensation tendencies in order to get something out of the system, and the true participation of the people at affordable costs.

Responding to the issues of remuneration to Assembly members, a former Minister of Local Government and Rural Development cited the total costs and burden to the national economy as a counter-argument:

At the end of the day, we are talking about the national economy and we also have in view the number of Assembly members countrywide. At ₵250,000 payment to the 7260 Assembly members countrywide would amount to ₵1815 billion. At ₵350,000 it would amount to ₵2541 billion. At the ₵3 million 'demanded' by another Assembly, it would amount to ₵21,780 billion. And at the 5 million 'demanded' by yet another Assembly, it would amount to ₵36,300 billion. Surely such large quantum of money injected into the system unrelated to productivity cannot but cause major inflation headaches for the economy.<sup>7</sup>

While the burden of the national economy can be cited as a credible argument, the need to remunerate adequately Assembly members and other people working at the district and sub-district levels cannot be overemphasised. Otherwise it is bound to intensify the apathy and maligning on the part of Assembly members. This is likely to have negative impact on attempts to mobilise local people to participate in decision-making, and consequently on the overall development process at the grass roots (Owusu 1999).

Additional problems facing the implementation of the decentralisation which impact negatively on the role of the district capitals in the development of their respective districts, and rural-urban linkages are further discussed in Section 5.4 in Chapter 5.

## **4.7 Growth of District Capitals: Dunkwa and Twifo Praso**

### **4.7.1 Dunkwa**

Situated on the banks of the River Offin, and hence the name *Dunkwa-on-Offin*, Dunkwa is an indigenous settlement of the Denkyiras (the main indigenous Akan ethnic group of the UDD). Though the town existed as early as the 1700s, its growth began in the early

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<sup>7</sup> Kwamena Ahwoi, in a speech entitled 'A Decade of Local Government Reforms' delivered at the 1<sup>st</sup> Ordinary Session of the West Mamprusi District Assembly held at Walewale on 6 April, 1998 (Local Government Information Digest, 11 (3): 1998.

1900s.<sup>8</sup> Three major factors can be cited as contributing to the growth of the town in the early 1900s: attainment of the status of a colonial administrative centre, extension of the railway line to the town, and gold mining. The impact of these factors was to attract commerce, infrastructure (health, education, electricity, telecommunications, water, etc.), industrial establishments, and migrant population (due to increased job and economic opportunities) to the town. These provided the basis for the growth, and subsequent expansion of the town both, in terms of size and population.

According to Grove (1963, p. 14), movement of people to urban centres was characteristic of the colonial era – a period which saw towns as centres of administration and channels of trade. The attainment of independence has reinforced this trend by increasing urban opportunities, particularly in education and administration. For Dunkwa, the close of the 1930s saw the establishment of the Dunkwa Government Hospital, provision of electricity, and the establishment of wholesale shops (such as the United African Company (UAC), and the United Trading Company (UTC)). With infrastructure, such as roads, railways, electricity and telecommunications, present in the town in the early part of the 1900s, Dunkwa then attracted industrial establishments. The most significant of these is the Dunkwa Goldfields limited (DGFL), a large-scale gold mining company which was established in 1959. The town had earlier attracted two large sawmilling firms, Thompson Moir and Galloway (TMG) and International Hardwood Limited (IHL) in 1927 and 1957 respectively. The provision of social services and the establishment of industries in Dunkwa increased the centrality of the town with regards to its hinterlands. This consequently led to the attraction of the hinterland population to the town, which further increased local demand for services. The resultant effects were the creation of job opportunities and a further attraction of population to the town.

The population of Dunkwa has grown quite significantly over time (see p.155 for a table showing the population growth rates of Dunkwa for various intercensal periods). The town's population grew from 3960 in 1931 to 12,689 in 1960. This rose to 15,437 in 1970, 16,905 in 1984, and 26,215 in 2000 (Owusu 1996; GSS 2002b, 2002c). The differential growth rates of the town may largely be in response to the fortunes of the national economy. For instance, between 1970 and 1984 when there was a general decline in

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<sup>8</sup> Oral history by Nana Howard Kwadwo Manu, Abusuapinin (Family Head), Dunkwa royal family, 27 September, 2002.

Ghana's economy, the town's growth rate was about 0.7%, the lowest since formal counting of the population of the town (Owusu 2004, 2005a).

The last two decades have witnessed the collapse of all major industrial establishments in Dunkwa. In addition, major wholesale outlets and some banks (such as the Ghana Standard Chartered and Ghana Co-operative Banks) have either relocated out of the town or collapsed resulting in huge job losses. However, Dunkwa has continued to grow, not on the basis of industrial expansion but for administrative, commercial and services reasons. Like many Ghanaian towns, this growth is typified by the proliferation of petty services such as street vendors, hawkers, clerical staffs, dressmaking, and hair care shops. Nonetheless, it still represents a source of prosperity when contrasted with its surrounding rural areas (Songsore 1977, p. 118). In addition, Dunkwa has been strengthened by the implementation of the decentralisation programme. Though beset by many problems, the decentralisation programme has allowed some level of resource flows to the district level. This has contributed to the growth of district capitals (including Dunkwa) by reinforcing these centres as the seat or focal points for politico-administration, planning and socio-economic development of districts. This therefore accounted for the continuous growth of the town despite the collapse of key firms and job losses.

#### **4.7.2 Twifo Praso**

Situated in the upper middle part of the THLDD, and on the confluence of road networks and a railway line (Takoradi-Accra central railway line), the growth of Twifo Praso (unlike Dunkwa) can be described as recent. According to Acheampong (1996), Twifo Praso's growth is not directly linked to the colonial spatial organisation in Ghana but to immigration to the town and its surrounding hinterland in the post-colonial period. He added that expanded road construction in the 1950s triggered a mass influx of migrant farmers, mainly the Ewe and Krobo communities of Volta and Eastern Regions to Twifo Praso and its environs, in search of new fertile lands for cocoa farming. It is noted that, between 1948

**Table 4. Population Growth of Twifo Praso, 1960-2000**

<b>Year</b>	1960	1970	1984	2000
<b>Population</b>	1348	2303	3613	9011
<b>Growth</b>	1960-1970		1970-1984	1984-2000
<b>Rate (%)</b>	5.4		3.2	5.7

Source: Population Census Reports (GSS 1989, 2002b, 2002c).



and 1960 immigration to the town and other areas west of it was so great that in some communities population increase were as high as 50% to 100% (Dickson and Benneh 1970, cited in Acheampong 1996, p. 88). Table 4 shows the population and growth rate of Twifo Praso for various census years between 1960 and 2000.

While Twifo Praso has long remained an agricultural settlement, its phenomenal growth for the last two decades may be attributed to the creation of the THLDD and the designation of the town as a district capital. This has attracted government attention and the establishment of central and local government departments and agencies. The presence of these establishments has attracted non-governmental organisations (NGOs) engaging in both socio-economic and commercial activities. The implication is that personnel (and their families) from other parts of the country have been sent to the district, and in particular Twifo Praso (the district capital) to man these institutions. Moreover, the status of Twifo Praso as a district capital has allowed the development of some basic infrastructure that has long been denied the town. For instance, the last two decades have witnessed the provision of electricity, potable water supply and accessible road links. In an area where basic infrastructure is lacking or even absent, the presence of these facilities at Twifo Praso makes the town attractive to potential rural-urban migrants in its hinterland.

In addition, the establishment of TOPP has contributed significantly to the development of Twifo Praso. The establishment of the company in the 1970s has attracted a relatively large migrant labour to the district, especially Twifo Praso, either as workers on the company's estates or as private palm-oil outgrowers for the company. The in-migration of workers has contributed to the growth of commercial and service activities of Twifo Praso (Ofori 2002).

#### **4.8 Conclusion**

The economy of the study district capitals, Dunkwa and Twifo Praso, and their respective districts is based on primary activities, mainly food and cash crop agriculture. Incomes and production in both districts are low due to the fact that, like many districts in Ghana, there is low capital investment in the subsistence economy. Technical infrastructure such as roads within the two districts are poor, hindering the movement of people and goods. However, the district capitals are fairly accessible given the relatively good roads connecting them with other centres in the country. With respect to services provision, the

situation in both districts is inadequate. It is, however, poorer in the newly created THLDD and its district capital, Twifo Praso. On the other hand, Dunkwa's long-held status as an old administrative centre, location on the confluence of rail and road networks, past industrial establishments, and the absence of any centre of similar size within several kilometres radius have allowed the town to accumulate significant number of services, and play a key role as a service centre.

Currently, there are no large-scale industries in either the UDD or THLDD except the agro-industrial estate (TOPP Company) at Twifo Praso. The processing of agricultural produce occurs on small-scale capacity. For a sustained development of the districts, the Development Plans of both districts called for measures to promote investments in the industrial sector through the establishment of small-scale and medium-scale industries to either wholly or partially process the numerous agricultural raw materials in the districts in order to create jobs and add value to these products.

The Chapter also examined the district administration and governance systems of the two districts. It highlights the potential conflicts and frictions in both districts due to the lack of integration between the traditional politico-administrative structure centred on the chieftancy system, and the 'formal' local government system. In particular, some of the weaknesses and problems of implementation of the decentralisation programme at the district level, and their adverse impacts on the district capitals' role in the development of the district and rural-urban linkages are also highlighted.

Despite the many socio-economic factors hampering the development of the districts, both district capitals, and more especially Twifo Praso, have grown significantly in the last two decades. It may be stressed that the continuous growth of both district capitals for the last two decades is the result of natural population increases and possibly to some extent rural-urban migration. The rural-urban migration factor may be more the case for Twifo Praso where the population growth rate of the town far exceeds the natural annual population growth rate.

This Chapter has examined the district capitals, Dunkwa and Twifo Praso, and their respective districts, Upper Denkyira District and Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira District. The examination of the towns and their hinterlands (districts) is meaningful given the fact

that what happens in towns affect their hinterlands and vice versa (Douglass 1998; Okali et al. 2001; Owusu 2002, 2004). The Chapter also provides a means of gauging the level of development of the two districts and the impact of the decentralisation programme on the district capitals, and the rest of the districts. The overall perspective indicates weaker and limited district capital-district (rural-urban) interactions and linkages, especially in the newly created district of Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira District, which has weaker and limited infrastructure and services, and a generally lower level of development. In the case of Twifo Praso and THLDD, the weaker and limited rural-urban linkages in the district resulting from the poor infrastructure are further weakened by the relatively easier access and proximity of many settlements in the district to a higher-order centre (Cape Coast), which offers superior services both in terms of quality and quantity (Owusu 2005a).

## 5.0 ARTICLES

### 5.1 Introduction and Summary of Articles

This doctoral thesis incorporates five articles, which address various aspects of the study. All of the articles are related to the study topic: *The Role of District Capitals in Regional Development: Linking Small Towns, Rural-Urban Linkages and Decentralisation in Ghana*. Acharya (2004) and Lægren (2004) note that to base theses on articles is a fragmented and lengthy process, and publishing the articles creates its own challenges. This is because each article constitutes an independent unit of work. As each article aims to address foreign (or appeal to wide) readers (or different kinds of foreign readers), some background information tends to be repeated in order to provide the right background and perspective for these readers.

In addition to the above difficulties, each article must work as a 'good narrative', which may even be independent of the study as a whole. This implies having to leave some interesting aspects out although these may have been illustrative in one way or another (Lægren 2004). An example in this study is Article 3 (Section 5.4), where in operationalising the DCDM, I used only Dunkwa and the UDD, due to the need to limit number of pages and the length of the article for publication. To these difficulties, could also be added the different technical requirements, such as referencing and formatting styles demanded by each journal (or editor). The writing and reporting process of the study therefore had to balance these requirements vis-à-vis the overall aim of the study.

All of the articles are presented as they have been published, or submitted for publication in the respective journals and books.<sup>9</sup> However, for the purposes of easy formatting in this thesis, footnotes have been converted into endnotes. In some cases, I have also provided the correct spelling, or supply words which were either spelt wrongly or omitted in the printed or published editions. Appendix 7 provides a summary of the status report on each of the articles presented in the study.

Each article in this chapter poses a different set of questions and has its own conceptual and descriptive approach but all relate to the study districts, and also addresses a specific

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<sup>9</sup> The references/bibliographies of the articles presented in this Chapter have not been included in the general references on pp. 240-250

aspect of the study topic. Before presenting the articles in full, they are first introduced and summarised as follows:

*1. The Changing Views on the Role of Small Towns in Rural and Regional Development in Sub-Saharan Africa.*

This article is basically a literature review of the changing views on the role of small towns in rural and regional development in sub-Saharan Africa. The main argument underpinning the paper is that views on small towns and their role in development have not remained unchanged, but have continued to shift with changing development paradigms. This changing perspective on small towns to a large extent has centred on the debate whether small towns by their interactions with their peripheral rural hinterlands play a positive or negative role in rural development.

The article emphasizes these changing views in chronological form, dating back from the pre-1950s (pre-colonial and colonial) period to the mid-1980s and the present (a period characterised by SAPs, political democratisation especially decentralisation and local government reforms, and globalisation). The article notes various significant time periods and the prevailing dominant development paradigms, and the impact of these on small towns. This chronological classification is very important, because even though the point has been made in the literature that changing development paradigms result in shifting views on small towns and their role in regional and rural development, these discussions are largely confined to the views on modernisation and dependency development paradigms held in the 1950s and 1970s. In particular, a closer look at the literature on small towns seems largely to neglect the pre-colonial and colonial era due mainly to the erroneous impression that Africa's urbanisation is largely the creation of modernisation and post-colonial development processes. The article argues that this does not allow us to critically analyse and explain the urbanisation process, particularly the changing views on small towns through time. In addition, the spatial footprints of the pre-colonial and colonial periods have important implications for the present spatial distribution of towns and cities in Africa. However, these time periods overlap, and the dominance of one particular view does not imply that both in theory and practice the other views are completely discarded.

The analysis of small towns in this article allows this study to be placed within a broader development theory and practice context. In particular, the current renewed interest in

small towns is not simply the outcome of planning but conditioned by the broader economic and political processes of the last two decades. While SAPs such as export promotion and liberalisation have increasingly sought to incorporate sub-Saharan African countries into the process of globalisation, local political activism has also been invoked as a result of this process. As such, increasing attention is being given to local needs (settlements and populations) through the strategy of decentralisation as a means of incorporation rather than marginalisation from the global system. On a broader scale, this process has benefited small towns and other settlements in the lower echelons of the settlement hierarchy in many developing countries (including many countries in sub-Saharan Africa).

Thus, the renewed interest in small towns and their role in regional development reflect the mixture of economic and political policies and strategies from neo-liberal and alternative development strategies pursued in many sub-Saharan African countries over the last two decades. Added to this is the argument made on the need for a diffuse and integrated system of settlements to promote economic growth with social equity, disappointing results of centralised planning and development approaches that failed to consider or simply ignored the lower levels of the spatial system, renewed interest in decentralisation and local government systems, and export-oriented agricultural production requiring efficient linkage to national and international markets via small towns. The promotion of small towns, especially district capitals, under Ghana's decentralisation programme reflects these broader contexts.

## *2. Small Towns in Ghana: Justifications for their Promotion under Ghana's Decentralisation Programme*

The article analyses the growth of small towns in Ghana for the last three decades (1970-2000) using largely data derived from the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) 2000 population census reports. It notes that, while the overwhelming number of Ghanaian urban centres (about 96%) can be described as small towns, the proportion of the total urban population residing in these centres has remain fairly stable or declined slightly from about 49% in 1970 to about 46% in 2000. The article examines the factors accounting for the proliferation and growth of small towns, and the justification for their promotion under the decentralisation programme.

The article identifies a number of factors as accounting for the growth and proliferation of small towns in Ghana. These include the impact of SAPs, decentralisation, high population growth rates and influence of regional and local factors (such as expansion of peasant commercial agriculture, mining activities and the spillover effects of the large urban centres). While these factors have contributed to the growth and proliferation of small towns, they have not slowed the growth rate of the few large urban centres of Accra, Tema, Kumasi, and Sekondi-Takoradi. As at 2000, these four centres accounted for about 44% of the total urban population even though the article identified as many as 350 urban centres in the country.

The article draws two conclusions with planning implications. First, the significant increase in the number of small towns from 114 in 1970 to 336 in 2000, and a slight decline of the urban population residing in these centres suggest that besides direct movement from rural areas to large urban centres, the population may also be engaged in a step-wise migration process involving small towns. Second, the population growth of small towns may be more a case of natural increase than migration to these centres. The article argues that both conclusions indicate that unless efforts are made to improve small towns and rural areas there is a large pool of potential migrants in these areas ready to swell the populations of the large urban centres and metropolis. On a positive note, the article argues that the large number of small towns spread throughout the country provides opportunities for the development of a fairly balanced spatial distribution of Ghana's population. Both prospects strengthen the case for decentralisation and the continuous investments in small urban centres, particularly the district capitals. The article makes the case for the promotion of district capitals and other small towns by providing specific reasons for the strengthening of these urban centres.

### *3. Small Towns and Decentralised Development in Ghana: Theory and Practice*

The implementation of Ghana's decentralisation programme has resulted in government and non-governmental investments in district capitals with the aim of promoting these centres as the stimuli to districts' development. However, little theoretical work has been done on the strategy as a basis of evaluating its effectiveness or weakness. This article presents a theoretical model, District Capital-Centred Development Model (DCDM), on the role of district capitals and their linkages with their respective districts within the context of

Ghana's decentralisation programme. The article operationalised the model using the Upper Denkyira District in the Central Region as a case study.

The article notes the links which theoretically exist between decentralisation, small towns development programmes and rural-urban linkages – all aimed at achieving regional and rural (or district) development. Placing the model within a wider national and international political and socio-economic context, the article postulates that the driving force to achieve the desired goal will depend on genuine decentralisation policies that truly decentralise authority and commensurate resources to districts. This will also ensure that districts are developed based on their own unique mix of resources, development potentials and constraints. These are required if a process of autonomous district development process involving district capital (urban) and district (rural) is to take place.

The operationalisation of the DCDM identified a mixed of factors as constraining the strategy of using district capitals as stimuli to district development. These constraining factors include the inherent weaknesses of the district capital's production and service functions, effects of macro-economic policies and processes, and the limited achievements of Ghana's decentralisation programme. The first and second constraining factors could be described as fundamental or structural problems affecting small towns, and consequently the development of districts in Ghana. The article notes the third factor (limited impact of the decentralisation on districts' development) as critical and significant, since the policy of decentralisation was formulated with the implicit or explicit intent of addressing the fundamental and structural problems of districts' development. The article concludes that to overcome the constraints will require the active involvement of the state, at least in the short and medium terms irrespective of the decentralisation programme and notions of local autonomy. It adds that it is only in the fulfilment of this condition at higher levels of decision-making and implementation that the desired goal of autonomous district development involving district capitals and their respect districts will be achieved.

#### *4. Markets and Women's Trade: Exploring their Role in District Development in Ghana*

The article explores the role of periodic and daily markets, and women's trade in the development of districts in Ghana, using empirical data from markets in two small towns, Dunkwa and Twifo Praso, district capitals of the Upper Denkyira District (UDD) and Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira District (THLDD) respectively. It notes that, while markets in



Ghana have been examined in many aspects, little work has been done to explore their potential role in district development within the context of the present decentralised development process. In particular, the article demonstrates, both in theoretical and practical terms, the role of the market function of district capitals in the development of districts in Ghana.

The article notes that in districts with weak tax base and few sources for generating local revenues, levies and taxes from market traders constitute a major source of internally-generated revenues to local governments, District Assemblies. Even though markets can be found in virtually all communities in the UDD and THLDD, the district capitals' markets are outstanding in terms of patronage (number of buyers and sellers) and volume of trade. This is due to the centrality of these centres, accessibility, and population concentration relative to other marketing centres within the two districts. As a result, the district capitals' markets generate the overwhelming proportion (between 90% and 98%) of market revenue in both districts. This contribution of the markets to the DAs' local revenue not only strengthens the financial position of the DAs and their independence but it also enhances the level of funding from the central government. This is because the sharing formula of central government's main grant to the DAs, the District Assemblies' Common Fund (DACF), includes the responsive factor, which seeks to reward DAs that are able to mobilise financial resources on their own. In addition, the article notes the contributions of the markets to employment and income generation (especially among women who constitute more than 98% of all market activities), local agriculture, and enhanced rural-urban interactions through the utilisation of urban services in the district capitals.

Notwithstanding these positive contributions of the markets to the economic development of the two respective districts, the markets are underdeveloped – lacking basic facilities such as adequate sheds, warehouses, refuse collection and sanitation system, electricity, etc. Besides the poor state of the markets' infrastructure, access to the markets is also hampered by the poor state of roads within the districts. The poor market infrastructure and access is particularly severe in the relatively new district capital of Twifo Praso, where the overall district infrastructure (including the district capital) is poorer and underdeveloped. Since women dominate the markets, the lack of investments in the markets implies the neglect of women's contribution to the development of the district within the context of the decentralisation process. The article concludes by calling for the

involvement of women traders in the siting and development of markets as a way of giving true meaning to the decentralisation programme and participatory development. It further argues that improvement in market infrastructure and access provides an alternative strategy to district development (much ignored by policy makers at both national and district levels) through improved local revenue to DAs, agriculture development, income and employment generation, and poverty reduction.

*5. 'Are they giving more than before?' Evaluating remittances from 'rural' communities in two Districts in Ghana*

The article looks at the flow of cash and gifts (remittances) from the perspective of rural households in eight communities in the Upper Denkyira District (UDD) and Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira District (THLDD) of the Central Region, and its implications for rural development. Many studies have viewed rural areas as net recipients of remittances (a one-way process, mainly from urban to rural areas) and as an equalising mechanism aimed at reducing economic disparity between rural and urban areas. This article indicates that there are instances where the opposite situation occurs, with remittance outflows from rural areas exceeding the inflows. It cautions against generalisations on both the direction of remittance flows and their impact on rural areas.

Though written on the wider issue of intra-national remittances, the article illustrates the limited rural-urban interactions and linkages within the UDD and THLDD. It notes that household interviews conducted in the eight rural communities in the two districts indicated that the interviewed households' remittance expenditures (outflows) exceeded remittance receipts (inflows). More importantly, these net remittance flows from the interviewed households are not destined to locations within the two districts but beyond, mainly to respondents' home towns.

The identified remittance flow pattern in the interviewed rural households' contrasts with many studies that have found remittance flow to rural households not only higher but also critical for the survival of rural households. The article identifies the reasons for the remittance flow pattern in the interviewed rural households as the result of three interrelated factors. First, there is the economic downturn resulting from SAPs, which has impacted heavily on urban income and employment relative to rural areas. Thus, the net flow from the interviewed rural households is the result of income decline and stagnation in urban areas rather than increasing income in rural areas. The second reason is

quantification of non-cash remitted items, especially food, into monetary terms. While many studies acknowledged food remittances from rural areas as substantial, they failed to factor this into their calculation of remittances to and from rural areas. Third, the identified remittance flow pattern is the result of substantial transfers from the interviewed households to their places of origin (home towns), which are outside the study districts. This substantial outflow is due to the large migrant populations in both districts engaged in cash crop farming.

The article concludes that the net flow of remittances from the rural areas represents a capital flight out of the study districts, a phenomenon much ignored in local development and intra-national flow of remittances. Again, this runs counter to the optimistic and overgeneralised view in the regional development literature that envisages net inflow of remittance to all rural areas as a possible equalising mechanism to reduce economic inequality between rural and urban areas. Put differently, in migrant-attractive zones such as the study districts, there is the likelihood of net loss of income from rural areas through remittances due to the strong ties of migrants to their places of origin. This will therefore require the understanding of local planners that some communities (irrespective of their 'rurality') have structural problems with respect to income and other flows, which require local appropriate measures under the decentralised framework to reduce their negative impact on local development.

## **5.2 The Changing Views on the Role of Small Towns in Rural and Regional Development in sub-Saharan Africa\***

George Owusu (forthcoming 2005), in Green, Adrian and Leech, Roger (eds.): ***Cities in the World, 1500-2000***. Proceedings of the Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology Conference, 2002, London: SPMA/Maney Publications

Is not included due to copyright

### **5.3 Small Towns in Ghana: Justifications for their Promotion under Ghana's Decentralisation Programme**

George Owusu (article under review).

#### **Abstract**

*A key objective of Ghana's decentralisation programme is the promotion of small towns, particularly district capitals, as a means of reducing rural-urban migration and the rapid growth of large towns and cities. While small towns have grown significantly in both number and population over the last three decades, the proportion of the total urban population living in these urban centres has changed very little or has even declined slightly. This contradicts the view that the growth and proliferation of small towns is leading to declining growth rates of the larger urban centres. This conclusion leads to the question of whether there is a justification for the promotion of small towns under Ghana's decentralisation programme. This article examines the reasons accounting for the growth of small towns and concludes that promoting small towns, especially the district capitals under the current decentralisation programme, is a positive response to rural development and the development of dispersed urbanisation in the long term.*

#### **Introduction**

The process of urbanisation in Ghana, like much of Africa is not a recent phenomenon. Its origin predates the arrival of Europeans and colonisation [1]. However, while the scale of urbanisation during this period was quite small, the process assumed a new impetus and dynamism during the European colonisation and the introduction of Western economic enterprise and its market economy which favoured urban concentration [2]. The colonial and post-colonial investment strategies informed by the basic criteria of investing in regions with exploitable and exportable resources, and subsequent provision of basic infrastructure in such areas attracted the population and development relative to other parts of the country.

Areas of southern Ghana with climates suited to the introduced cash crops, timber exploitation and mining sites closer to the coast or ports have benefited from these investments [3]. More significantly, these activities to a large extent enhanced urban concentration as existing and new centres developed as collecting points for exportable locally produced commodities, administrative and communication centres. Northern

Ghana, by virtue of its location received less of these investments. Furthermore, the presence of the Europeans on the coast also led to the reorientation of trade routes, affecting towns in northern Ghana, which have developed as a result of the trans-Saharan trade between West Africa and the Islamised states in the Northern Africa.

While these are the broad forces that intensified the process of urbanisation in Ghana, the process itself, as in much of Africa, has been characterised by the predominance of very few urban centres. It is this trend that has drawn the attention of development planners because of its perceived detrimental impact on the spatial economy of the country. As a result, various planning strategies have been implemented with the aim of reducing this polarisation and producing a more balanced hierarchical settlement pattern. The most notable of these strategies have included the growth pole concept and the integrated rural development programmes (IRDP) designed to stimulate rural development to curtail rural-urban migration [4]. However, these strategies have failed to significantly alter the urbanisation and settlement pattern.

In recent years, attempts at transforming the settlement hierarchy or at least reduce the growth rate of the large towns and cities have centred on decentralisation and the promotion of small towns and rural development. Though the small town development strategy is not new, what *is* new here is the link with decentralisation. The increasing transfer of resources and authority to the district level under Ghana's decentralisation programme is expected to enhance district development and in particular promote district capitals as attractive centres to potential rural-urban migrants [5]. Despite the implementation of the programme over a decade, the pattern and trend of the urbanisation process have changed very little or at least remained the same.

Ghana's population has increased significantly since the 1920s when formal censuses were introduced. Along with the increased population has come the increasing concentration of the population in settlements with 5000 or more people [6]. In 1921, 7.8% of the population lived in urban centres. This had risen to 23.1% by 1960 to 32% in 1984, and to 43.8% in 2000 [7]. However, few centres dominate this concentration, mainly Accra and Kumasi. As at 2000, the two cities accounted for about 34% of the total urban population though there were about 350 urban centres in the country. More importantly,

there has been continuous increase in the number of urban centres (defined in this article as small towns), especially in the last three decades. However, the proportion of the total urban population residing in these centres has changed very little or has even declined slightly.

This article examines the reasons accounting for the growth of small urban centres, and the justification for the promotion of these urban centres under the present decentralisation programme, given the fact that their growth and proliferation have not slowed the growth of the large urban centres. This examination is based on data derived largely from the Ghana Statistics Service (GSS) reports on the 2000 Population and Housing Census and other studies on population and settlements in Ghana as well as fieldwork carried out in two district capitals in Ghana. The article starts with a presentation of Ghana's current urban hierarchy, and definition of small towns. After this, factors accounting for the growth of small towns are explored, and finally, the case for the development of small towns within the context of the decentralisation programme is presented.

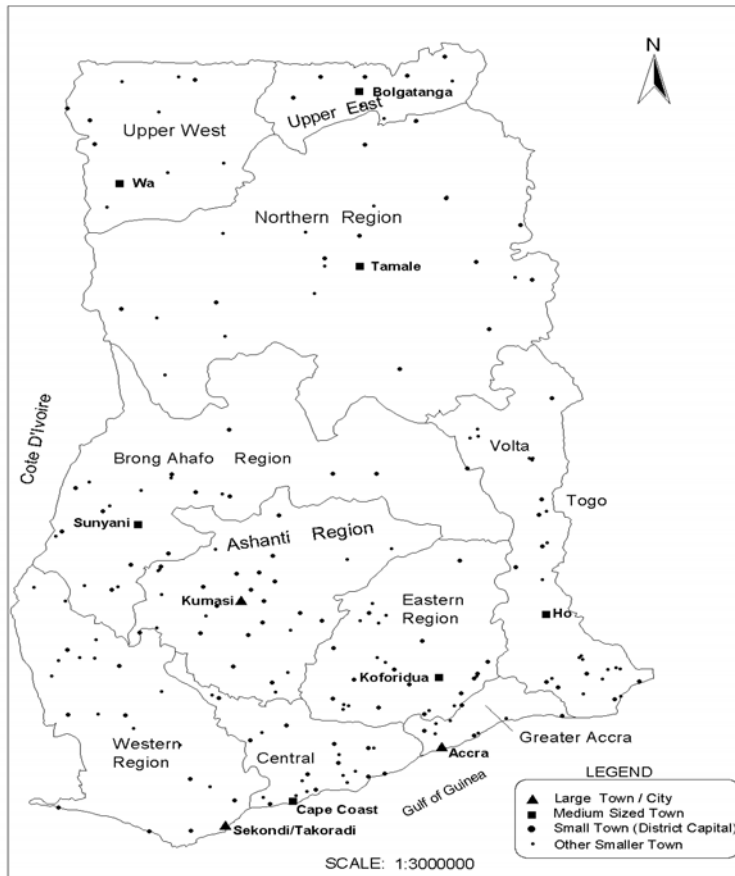
### **Ghana's Urban Hierarchy and Small Towns**

As already noted, urban centres in Ghana are officially defined as settlements with populations of 5000 or more [8]. Besides other limitations, the definitions of these kinds significantly failed to delimit the various urban hierarchies found within each country or region. Some have therefore suggested that the best approach is the adoption of national or official definition of urban centres, and to delimit each country's urban systems based on this [9]. This approach does not remove the problem of the lack of a universally acceptable definition of urban centres but proponents have argued that it has the advantage of removing the problem of over-generalisation, and allows urban centres and systems to be analysed within a specific national or regional context. It is this approach that is adopted here. Using Ghana's official urban definition, three main classifications can be made: small towns, medium-sized/intermediate towns, and large towns/cities. Adding rural settlements, Ghana's settlement hierarchy can be placed within a four-tier system.

At the top Ghana's urban hierarchy are the large towns/cities of Accra, Kumasi, Tema and Sekondi-Takoradi, with populations of 250,000 or more. This is followed by the intermediate (medium-sized) towns with populations of 50,000 to 250,000, typified by the regional capitals. After this are the small towns, exemplified by district

capitals/administrative centres with populations between 5000 and 50,000. Lastly, there are the rural settlements. It should be noted that this classification and the definitions are for the purpose of analyses and discussions in this article since no official definitions exist in Ghana other than the official definition of an urban centre. Furthermore, this classification is an over simplification of Ghana's urban system. Fig. 1 shows the distribution of urban centres in Ghana.

**Fig. 1. Map of Ghana Showing Distribution of Urban Centres**



This is because with the exception of the population factor, the urban centres in each category show marked differences, especially whether they have official administrative status such as regional or district capitals. The administrative status remains a crucial factor in the growth of settlements since this implies the provision of infrastructure, influx of civil servants and other professionals, trading and service activities, which hitherto may have barely existed [10]. Lastly, the classification lacks flexibility. This is because in reality the distinction between the categories is blurred rather than a clear-cut one as the figure above would suggest. The categories must therefore be viewed as a continuum from the



most rural to the most urban. The concept of a rural-urban continuum becomes more meaningful and useful given the diversity of urban centres and their sizes, and the blurring of boundaries and degrees of functional overlap [11].

Tables 1 and 2 indicate that Ghana's urban population has undergone a number of changes in the last 30 years. This observation also reveals regional disparities in the level of urbanisation and proportion of small towns, as shown in Table 1. The Tables reveal the overwhelming dominance of urban centres defined as small towns (centres with populations of between 5000 and 50,000). The number of these centres increased from 114 in 1970 to 336 in 2000 (see Table 2). Despite the massive increase in the number of small towns, the proportion of the total urban population residing in these centres has changed very little or has declined slightly from about 49% in 1970 to about 46% in 2000 [12]. What are the factors accounting for the growth and proliferation of small towns? And what are the planning and policy justifications for the promotion of small towns, especially

**Table 1. Regional Distribution of Urban Centres: Proportion of Small Towns\***

Region	1970		1984		2000	
	No.	Urban Pop.	No.	Urban Pop.	No.	Urban Pop.
Western <i>% of small towns</i>	13 92.3	295,129 (28) 52.2	10 90	289,247 (23) 34.9	33 97	691,404 (36) 46.6
Central <i>% of small towns</i>	21 95.2	248,149 (29) 77.6	25 96	339,949 (29) 80.7	39 97.4	598,405 (38) 86.2
Greater Accra <i>% of small towns</i>	4 75	673,663 (85) 7.4	6 66.7	1,108,695 (83) 4.3	35 91.4	2,564,864 (88) 14.4
Volta <i>% of small towns</i>	12 100	124,451 (16) 100	21 100	224,809 (21) 100	35 97.1	441,084 (27) 86
Eastern <i>% of small towns</i>	25 100	282,455 (25) 100	40 97.5	437,923 (28) 86.6	56 98.2	728,718 (35) 88
Ashanti <i>% of small towns</i>	14 92.9	476,621 (30) 27.3	26 92.3	752,740 (33) 29.6	58 96.6	1,875,882 (51) 31.5
Brong Ahafo <i>% of small towns</i>	18 100	162,442 (22) 100	30 100	318,302 (27) 100	54 96.2	687,706 (37) 82.8
Northern <i>% of small towns</i>	8 87.5	141,594 (21) 40.9	16 93.8	288,736 (25) 52.9	27 96.3	496,803 (27) 59.3
Upper East <i>% of small towns</i>	3 100	50,494 (6) 100	5 100	99,928 (13) 100	7 85.7	144,282 (16) 64.4
Upper West <i>% of small towns</i>	1 100	13,740 (7) 100	3 100	47,547 (11) 100	6 83.3	101,096 (18) 34.1
Total <i>% of small towns</i>	119 95.8	2,468,738 (29) 49.2	182 95.6	3,907,876 (32) 47.8	350 96	8,330,244 (44) 45.7

\*Figures in bracket show percentage of urbanised population (to the nearest whole number).

Source: Derived from GSS reports on the 2000 Population and Housing Census [13].

**Table 2. Distribution of Urban-Sizes in Ghana (1970-2000)**

Category ('000)	1970		1984		2000	
	No.	Population	No.	Population	No.	Population
1000+	0	0	0	0	2	2,829,207
500-1000	1	624,091	1	969,195	0	0
100-500	2	490,318	3	793,783	4	1,147,963
50-100	2	140,254	4	276,981	8	544,163
20-50	13	369,848	19	529,266	38	1,127,988
5-20	101	844,227	155	1,338,651	298	2,680,923
Total Urban	119	2,468,738	182	3,907,876	350	8,330,244

Source: Derived from GSS reports on the 2000 Population and Housing Census [14].

district capitals, and attempts to reduce migration to the large towns and cities? These are very important questions, which need to be explored. In particular, they have relevance for the present decentralised development process, which aims at improving rural areas and the development of a more balanced settlement pattern.

### **Growth of Small Towns: Recent Trends**

Whilst various studies have been done on Ghana's urbanisation, they have mainly focused on the large towns, particularly regarding migration to these centres and its consequences [15]. Not much has been done on the process of urbanisation and urban growth regarding small towns. This situation, however, is not limited only to Ghana. Among the reasons given for this state of affair are the view that small towns are not a clearly delimited independent entity about which one can easily generalise and develop concepts and models, and also the perception that they are indifferent to the development process [16].

Even though the processes and policies shaping small and large towns may be the same, their dynamism within the urban hierarchy may differ. This point becomes more important in the case of Ghana where available data indicates that there is a proliferation of settlements defined as small towns yet the proportion of the urban population in these centres has changed very little or declined slightly. From this perspective, it is imperative for the factors accounting for the growth of these towns to be explored and analysed.

While the historical dimensions have been well-noted by many writers on urban growth and regional development in Ghana such as Dickson, Songsore and Denkabe, and

Beneath, more contemporary factors acting on these historical conditions and shaping the current urbanisation process involve the impact of the economic and political reforms of the last two decades [17]. These are the World Bank/International Monetary Fund (IMF) inspired Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), and the decentralisation and local government reforms introduced at the end of the 1980s. To these two broader socio-economic factors, can be added the effects of the continuing high population growth rate. Besides these broader factors, in the context of small towns there are also the influence of regional or local factors, such as peasant agricultural expansion and commercialisation combined with favourable location factors, including location on main trunk roads, location closer to mining activities, and spillover effects of large urban centres such as Accra, Kumasi and Sekondi-Takoradi metropolis. It must, however, be stressed that these factors have not been the cause of the present urban form but they have acted upon and shaped the existing historical and socio-economic situation.

***Economic Reforms: Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs)***

Ghana in the early 1980s adopted the World Bank/IMF-inspired SAPs in response to persistent dismal socio-economic performance, which began in the 1970s. These reforms involved economic liberalisation and privatisation, and a general restructure of the state's role in the economy. The implementation of these measures has restored some level of economic growth and sanity at the macroeconomic level. However, this has come at a high social cost due to the fact that most vulnerable groups have been adversely affected both directly and indirectly by measures such as the withdrawal of subsidies on social services, retrenchment of labour and the general increases in prices of goods and services [18]. Also, SAPs in Ghana have been criticised as further stimulating economic activities in the traditional resource-rich regions and relatively developed south, especially the cocoa and coffee, mining, and timber regions. This, it is argued, has further widened the gap between the north and south [19].

Notwithstanding the criticisms of SAPs, the argument has been made that the removal of subsidies, which for a long time have largely benefited the urban population, the shrinking of the formal sector which was largely concentrated in the larger urban centres and the high cost of living in these centres have reduced the attractions of the leading metropolis in the country [20]. Also it is noted that SAPs have resulted in some amount of urban to rural migration mainly from the large towns towards settlements on the lower scale of the settlement hierarchy [21].

In a related argument, Briggs and Yeboah note that SAPs lead to reduction in rural-urban migration rates and hence reduction in the growth of major cities, whilst at the same time allowing the growth of both secondary cities and other locations in the national urban system [22]. To explain this, they reiterate three suggested explanations provided by Gilbert: (i) diseconomies of scale associated with major cities alongside general improvements in transportation and other infrastructure, resulting in deconcentration of manufacturing and other economic activities; (ii) shifting terms of trade from industry to agriculture, hence allowing rural areas to be more economically attractive and (iii) SAP-inspired export-oriented trade favouring agriculture over industry, hence investors are more prepared to take decisions to locate outside the core of the Third World metropolis [23].

While the explanations suggested by Gilbert as cited by Briggs and Yeboah may hold for other Third World countries they fall short in the case of Ghana. Available evidence indicates that in Ghana, SAPs have not resulted either in deconcentration of industries and employment or a significant shift in the terms of trade in favour of agriculture. Rather, investments have continued to be concentrated in the core metropolitan areas especially Accra-Tema. According to Grant and Yankson, one of the visible impacts of SAPs in Ghana is the dramatic rise in the number of new firms, particularly foreign companies that have established operations in Accra, which is currently headquarters for 655 foreign companies [24]. In total, the Accra-Tema metropolis accounts for about 70% of Ghana's manufacturing output, (about the same proportion according to Andr e's pre-SAPs study of manufacturing industries in Ghana) [25]. In fact, evidence from the 2000 Population and Housing Census Reports indicate that the four urban centres of Accra, Tema, Kumasi and Sekondi-Takoradi account for about 44% of the total urban population. Accordingly, a GSS report on the Census noted that a balance spatial distribution of the population is not likely to be achieved unless the opportunities for improvement in the lives of the people are more evenly distributed [26].

Alternatively, the fortunes of the various urban systems in the country could be analysed by looking at studies on poverty. A well-recognised study by the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS), 'Poverty Trends in Ghana in the 1990s' noted that even though there was a general decline in the incidence and level of poverty in the country in the 1990s (except in

the urban savannah), the reduction was particularly sharp in Accra [27]. Apart from Accra, which was singled out in the Report, all other urban centres were treated as one category, 'Other urban'. However, there is every reason to believe that just like Accra, the large towns and cities in this category benefited more than the other urban centres.

Notwithstanding the limitations of the impact of SAPs on the growth of small towns, it can be argued that the improvement in the infrastructural base of rural areas and lower urban centres, such as electrification exercises and road rehabilitation under SAPs seems to have opened up these areas and allowed the population in these centres to enjoy amenities which have long been considered the privileged of those living in the medium-sized and large towns. According to Ofori, these general improvements illustrate the national and regional development policy aim of increasing rural accessibility, improving rural-urban linkages, and facilitating the transport of regional products from producing to consuming areas [28]. In addition, inflation, the removal of subsidies, and unemployment resulting from the contraction of the public sector have diminished the attractions of the big towns and cities as they were more affected by these than the small towns which have relatively small public sector services and in many instances are dominated by agriculture [29].

SAP-induced improvement in the transport system in recent years has contributed significantly to the growth of both large and small towns. The past two decades of SAPs and market liberalisation have tended to reduce the barriers of physical distance. The resumption of aid flows and removal of many foreign exchange barriers have facilitated the importation of motor vehicles and spare parts in many African countries [30]. In Ghana, the road sector has been a major recipient of donor funding programmes. In addition, economic liberalisation and privatisation (deregulation of public transport) have led to an increase in both the number of vehicles and private commercial transport operators, the most prominent being the Ghana Private Road Transport Union (GPRTU). While some analysts such as Briggs and Yeboah have attributed the expansion of the major urban centres such as Accra to this, it can also be argued that economic liberalisation and privatisation have improved linkages between settlements, allowing small towns to have access to both higher-order centres (large and medium-sized towns) and lower-order settlements (rural areas) [31]. This, coupled with improved infrastructure, has enabled

some economic activities to be introduced in small towns, especially commerce and services that have contributed to their growth.

### ***Decentralisation and Local Government***

Ghana embarked on its decentralisation of administration and development programme in 1988 to encourage a greater degree of local autonomy and make district administration and development more efficient. To a greater degree, the decentralisation programme is a logical continuation of the broader structural adjustment effort – a reaction to the changes in the broader economic and ideological environment. Under the programme, District Assemblies (local governments) have been established and given more responsibilities and power as the highest political, administrative and development authorities in their respective areas (districts) of jurisdiction. In all, about 87 functions were delegated to the District Assemblies, ranging from environmental conservation to provision of social services. Even though Ghana's decentralisation programme has several objectives, a basic goal is rural development as a means of reducing migration to the large towns and cities and generally redirecting population movement from areas of over-concentration to other areas previously regarded as deprived [32].

The implementation of the decentralisation programme in 1988 led to the promulgation of Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) Law 207, giving legal backing to the creation of District Assemblies and the establishment of 110 districts in the country. This directly replaced the previous 65 administratively run district councils which had been in existence since the mid-1970s [33]. The establishment of additional districts meant that new district capitals had to be found and assigned to the newly established districts. This in itself provided the basis for the growth of hitherto rural settlements into urban centres and increased in the number of small towns. This is because, as already noted, the administrative status tends to attract public infrastructure and influx of population allowing centres to rapidly develop into towns.

In addition, the decentralisation programme has resulted in several initiatives from government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as well as donor agencies as a way of enhancing participatory democratic development and the capacity of local institutions. It has also meant strengthening small towns, particularly district capitals or administrative centres to enable them cope with their increased functions and perform more efficiently their new role. Some of these programmes and projects specifically

targeting district capitals include the following: introduction of the District Assemblies' Common Fund (DACF), a constitutional provision which allocates 5% of the total national revenue to District Assemblies; the World Bank and United Nations Development Programme's Urban V projects, targeting roads and sanitation problems; European Union (EU) micro-project schemes and; the German Agency for Technical Assistance (GTZ)/Ghana Government (Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development) project titled 'Promotion of District Capitals (PRODICAP)'. Since the 1980s, it has also been the policy of central government and the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development to provide each district capital with a specific range of amenities – electricity, telephone, district referral hospital, portable water supply, a model secondary/technical school, and accessible road links [34]. In fact, this policy has also informed much of the drive to extend electricity and other amenities to many parts of the country.

These improvements or increased transfer of resources to the districts have contributed to the growth of district capitals and other settlements within the districts [35]. Key informant interviews carried out in October 2002 with district planners in two districts in the Central Region, Upper Denkyira and Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira Districts confirmed this assertion. Both planners noted the improvement in the flow of resources to the districts. The District Planning Officer of Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira District, a newly created district established in 1988, stated:

The district capital, Twifo Praso has changed quite significantly. When I came here, the capital was basically a rural settlement. However, the declaration of Twifo Praso as a district capital, the extension of electricity to the town, the rehabilitation of the road to Cape Coast and; improvement and accelerated increase in infrastructure from the district's share of the Common Fund and other resources of the District Assembly have greatly opened the whole district and Twifo Praso in particular ... In the case of Twifo Praso, the programme has rapidly turned a rural settlement into a fast expanding and growing urban settlement.

There is a general consensus among analysts of Ghana's decentralisation, both from interviews in the field and from the literature that the programme has led to improvement in the flow of resources and increased access of people living in previously neglected areas to central government resources and institutions [36]. However, these positive results have

also been described as generally marginal when related to the needs of the districts and functions delegated to the District Assemblies. Nonetheless, it is accepted that the programme has to some extent enhanced the infrastructure bases of rural areas and lower-order urban centres, especially the district capitals, hence their population growth (see Table 3), though the large towns and cities of Accra, Tema, Kumasi, and Sekondi-Takoradi continue to register impressive growth (Table 4). Tables 3 and 4 also show the falling growth rates of urban centres (district and regional capitals) in northern Ghana, although these centres continue to add significant numbers of people to their populations.

**Table 3. Regional Distribution of District Capitals: Population and Growth Rate**

Region	No. of District Capital	Population				
		1970	Growth Rate (1970-1984)	1984	Growth Rate (1984-2000)	2000
Western	10	68,841	1.1	80,101	3.2	135,640
Central	11	122,907	1.4	148,524	2.5	221,568
G/Accra	3	9,595	1.3	11,511	2.4	16,906
Volta	11	68,768	1.6	86,182	2.9	137,604
Eastern	14	129,121	1.8	165,042	2.3	239,374
Ashanti	17	122,559	2.9	185,009	3.8	341,576
B/Ahafo	12	89,566	3.4	144,754	3.7	263,353
Northern	12	70,993	4.0	123,738	2.3	179,899
U/East	5	37,973	3.8	64,432	1.7	84,667
U/West	4	11,757	2.6	16,814	2.6	25,494
Total	99	732,080	2.4	1,026,107	3.0	1,646,081

Source: Derived from GSS reports on the 2000 Population and Housing Census [37].

The marginal impact of the decentralisation programme is generally attributed to the limited resources of the District Assemblies and numerous bottlenecks facing the programme. This situation may therefore account for the continuous concentration of the population in very few centres [38]. This is an indication that the programme's policy objective of improving living standards in the districts and facilitating the geographical spreading of development as a means of reducing migration to the large metropoli is yet to be achieved.



**Table 4. Metropolitan/Regional Capitals (Large/Medium-Sized Towns): Population and Growth Rate**

Region	Regional/ Metropolitan Capital	Population				
		1970	Growth Rate (1970- 1984)	1984	Growth Rate (1984- 2000)	2000
Western	Sekondi-Takoradi	143,982	1.9	188,203	4.2	369,166
Central	Cape Coast	56,601	1.1	65,763	1.4	82,291
G/Accra	Accra	624,091	3.1	969,195	3.4	1,658,937
Volta	Ho	24,199	3.2	37,777	3.1	61,658
Eastern	Koforidua	46,235	1.7	58,731	2.5	87,315
Ashanti	Kumasi	346,336	2.6	496,628	5.6	1,170,270
B/Ahafo	Sunyani	23,780	3.5	38,834	2.9	61,992
Northern	Tamale	83,653	3.5	135,952	2.5	202,317
U/East	Bolgatanga	18,896	3.9	32,495	2.6	49,162
U/West	Wa	13,740	6.9	36,067	3.8	66,644
G/Accra	Tema*	36,928	6.5	91,870	10.1	460,916
Total	11	1,418,441	3.0	2,151,515	4.3	4,270,668

\*Municipal centre without regional administrative capital status but major industrial/seaport centre.

Source: Derived from GSS reports on the 2000 Population and Housing Census [39].

Again, in terms of redistribution of national resources and development, studies indicate that local governments in small towns and rural districts have not fared any better. In a detailed study titled 'Spatial Variations in the Fiscal Capacity of Local Government in Ghana, before and after Decentralisation', Razin and Obirih-Yeboah conclude that local governments in the capital city region (Accra-Tema) and in the second largest metropolitan area (Kumasi) as well as those in the other large urban centres, were the most financially sound compared to those in remote regions and predominant rural areas [40]. Even financial allocations from central government, such as the District Assemblies' Common Fund (DACF) were found to favour the large urban centres. Besides, the fiscally-sound large urban centres enjoyed relatively high self-generated revenue per capita as they have a large tax base to mobilise revenue on their own. This allows these Assemblies to implement more development programmes and enjoy a relative level of autonomy rather than relying solely on central government transfers, which come with strict guidelines with little or no reference to peculiar local circumstances. While the problems associated with the inability of District Assemblies to generate revenue on their own and over-dependence on central government transfers are not elaborated on further here, the point made here is that Razin and Obirih-Yeboah's study and other similar studies indicate that even though decentralisation has improved the level of flow of resources from central government to all districts, so far it has failed to redistribute resources and growth from the large towns and cities [41].

Lastly, the marginal impact of decentralisation on rural areas and small towns can be gauged by the limited employment opportunities in these areas and the continuous movement to the large towns/cities. This situation exists because the very forces, which hinder job creation in large towns/cities, also affect these areas. Rural household interviews carried out in eight communities within the hinterlands of two district capitals, Dunkwa-on-Offin and Twifo Praso, all in the Central Region, aimed at exploring the impact of decentralisation on rural-urban linkages revealed that although a substantial proportion of the respondents (61.2%) have no intention of moving, 54.8% of respondents who intend to move indicated Accra-Tema, Kumasi and Sekondi-Takoradi as the urban centres they would prefer to relocate to. Respondents cited the lack of jobs and employment opportunities as the main reason, which makes the district capitals (small towns) unattractive. This view was backed by an unpublished report obtained from the Dunkwa District Branch of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) entitled '1999 Assessment of External Shock and its Impact on the Local Revenue Collection and Development'. In this report, the District Office responsible for income tax collection in the two districts (Upper Denkyira and Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira Districts) noted the impact of broad macroeconomic processes such as falling world commodity prices on key firms such as gold mining companies and Twifo Oil Palm Plantation (TOPP). The Report concluded that these have impacted severely on employment opportunities and consequently on tax contributions in the districts.

### ***High Population Growth***

According to a GSS report, Ghana's population of about 18.9 million in 2000 represented an increase of 53% over the 1984 population of about 12.3 million, and an intercensal growth rate of 2.7%. While this rate is lower than the rate for West Africa as a whole (2.9%), it is higher in comparison to the rate for the world (1.5%) and the average for less developed countries (2%) [42]. This high population growth rate, coupled with a general imbalance in the distribution of economic opportunities between rural and urban areas provides fertile conditions for the continuous concentration of the population in urban locations, including small towns. It is important to note that this concentration of the general population is not only due to migration but also to natural increases. This is because in Ghana there is not a significant difference between urban and rural fertility rates. In addition, although fertility rates may be relatively higher in rural areas than in urban areas, lower death rates in the latter enable the normal rate of natural increase in both areas to remain similar [43].

The growth and increased in the number of small urban centres has also been interpreted as the logical outcome of increasing rural population densities [44]. Available data from the census reports indicate that there have been increased population densities in all the regions, the highest occurring in the Greater Accra Region. From a national average of 36 persons per km<sup>2</sup> in 1970, the figure rose to 51 in 1984 and then to 79 in 2000 [45]. The increasing population densities and the continuing population growth give momentum for the growth of rural centres into small towns. This may account for the growth and increase in the number of small and intermediate towns in northern Ghana rather than the impact of SAPs as suggested by Burrows and Acheampong [46]. This is because of the unfavourable position of northern Ghana with respect to the implementation of SAPs, as already noted, and reflected in the decline in urban growth rates between 1984 and 2000 in all the three northern regions compared to the period 1970-1984 as shown in Tables 3 and 4.

### ***Influence of Regional/Local Factors***

Regional or local factors refer to some geographical factors, which can be described as 'favourable location factors' which may not account significantly for the growth or emergence of large urban centres but are very significant in the case of small centres. The last few decades have witnessed the exploitation of mineral deposits, emergence of large metropoli and generation of road traffic. All of these are geographic elements, which offer opportunities for some human settlements according to their new relative location. While these favourable location factors may provide the basis for the initial growth, further growth may require a second series of factors, which are not dependent upon only local economic factors [47]. It is this situation which may account for the large number of towns within the lower limit of the urban hierarchy. It must also be emphasised that these regional or local factors are not isolated from the influence of the broader factors. However, unlike the broader factors they do not affect the process of growth of all urban centres.

Peasant commercial agriculture, especially expansion of cash crop farming, has been a major influence on the evolution of settlements in the past, and it continues to be the case today. The growth and increase in the number of small towns is the probable outcome of the increased effort to commercialise peasant agriculture, and to link peasant farmers to market centres. Rural centres located in rich agricultural regions and that are also accessible (such as located on a major highway or at the convergence of transport routes) provide excellent opportunities for the development of markets, and consequently the

emergence of towns. In such situations, while the dynamism of the surrounding areas and the development of the market is very important, what is crucially important is the centre's accessibility in terms of its location. These factors account for the phenomenal growth of many rural centres along the busy highways such as the Accra-Kumasi, Cape Coast-Kumasi and Kumasi-Tamale highways.

As already noted, the introduction of modern mining technology in the past has been responsible for the rapid development of many settlements into towns in southern Ghana especially in the Ashanti and Western Regions, and this continues to be the case today. The presence of exploitable mineral deposits closer to a settlement provides strong influence for the settlement's growth. The rate at which these towns grow depended on the scale of the mining operations. Dickson has noted situations where some towns such as Nsuta in the Western Region may not even have existed as recognisable villages, but were to all intent and purposes the sole creations of mining activities [48]. Notable mining centres include Obuasi, Tarkwa, Prestea, Nsuta, Bibiani, and Dunkwa. While mining operations have ceased in such places as Dunkwa due to either exhaustion of mineral deposits or operational difficulties, new centres have emerged as a result of government liberalisation of the sector under SAPs. Even in places where major mining operations have ceased, there has been proliferation of small-scale mining and 'galamsey' (illegal mining) operations, which attract many people and serve to sustain local economies. In fact, besides the national capital city region (Accra-Tema) and Kumasi, all the urban centres specifically identified by the GSS report on the 2000 Population and Housing Census as net receivers of migrants are mining centres (Obuasi, Bibiani, Tarkwa and Prestea) [49]. With the exception of Obuasi, whose population has grown quite significantly for the last two decade from 60,617 in 1984 to 115,564 in 2000, all the other mining centres can be classified as small towns. Therefore the location of settlements closer to mineral deposits provides opportunities for the growth of rural settlements as towns.

A significant factor in the increase of small towns is what can be described as the *spillover effects of the large urban centres*. The massive growth of the large urban centres and the problems of housing and congestion have created a situation facilitated by improvement in transport whereby a substantial proportion of the urban population who work in the cities are prepared to take up residence in the peri-urban areas and other nearby settlements.

This has resulted in several rural settlements closer to the large urban centres developing into small towns. A 2002 GSS report notes that several localities adjoining the Accra Metropolitan Area which were rural in 1984 have now attained urban status, mainly as a result of the spillover of the growth of the Accra Metropolitan Area into localities in the surrounding districts [50]. The spillover has also induced massive growth of small towns in districts in the Central Region closer to the national capital, Accra. Special mention can be made of Kasoa in the Awutu-Efutu Senya District, where the population grew from just 2597 in 1984 to 34,719 in 2000. This is also true of the Kumasi and Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan Areas, and to some extent Tamale, the largest urban centre in northern Ghana. Not surprisingly, therefore, data derived from the Ghana Statistical Service published reports on the 2000 Population and Housing Census indicate dramatic increase in the number of urban centres in these regions between 1984 and 2000, as shown in Table 1.

While small and medium-sized towns have grown and proliferated over the last three decades, they have not slowed the growth rate of the few large metropolitan areas. Finding solutions to this situation remain at the core of the attempt over the last decade and half to address the spatial imbalance of the population through the decentralisation programme. In particular, this is very relevant to the continued pursuance of the decentralisation programme and continuous donor and government assistance in the growth of small towns, especially the district capitals. It is the implications for regional planning in terms of small towns' promotion and rural development that the concluding section considers.

### **Conclusion and Implications for Planning: The Case for Small Towns Promotion**

Ghana is experiencing rapid urbanisation. However, what is worrying and is highlighted in numerous official and research documents is the uneven spatial concentration of the urban population [51]. According to a 2002 GSS report, the level of urbanisation was 43.8% in 2000 [52]. However, it was 87.7% for the Greater Accra region and 51.3% for the Ashanti Region, mainly due to the metropolis of Accra and Kumasi respectively. Indeed, none of the other regions has a level of urbanisation that is above the national average. Overall, these largest metropolises dominate the urban system. This urban system has largely been shaped by colonial and post-colonial development policies of investing more in regions

with exploitable and exportable resources. This development strategy has favoured large urban concentration to the detriment of rural areas and small towns.

In recent years, the policy of decentralisation has been pursued with the basic aim of rural development and facilitating a balanced spatial distribution of the population. The programme seeks to improve rural livelihoods as a means of reducing the rural-urban drift and the growth of the few large centres [53]. The impact of the decentralisation programme, SAPs, continuing high population growth, and the influence of some regional/local factors have all combined to register some level of growth at the lower levels of the settlement hierarchy. Small towns have not only increased in population but their numbers have increased as well. This has, however, not slowed the relative rapid growth rates of the large metropoli despite the large proportion of urban centres, 96% being small towns. This leads to two conclusions with implications for planning.

First, the increase in the number of small towns and a decline of the urban population residing in these urban centres would suggest that besides direct movement from rural areas to large urban centres, the population may also be engaged in a step-wise migration process. According to Burrows, this type of migration is very common, that is, migration from a village to a small town which finally ends in a major urban centre [54]. A 1995 GSS report on internal migration also adds that migration from small towns to large urban centres, particularly to Accra-Tema metropolitan region, has become very significant in recent years [55]. Studies on rural-urban migration in Ghana show that by far the most common reason for this type of migration is economic, especially for employment. The continuous movement to the large urban centres indicates that economic opportunities in the small and medium-sized towns are limited or simply do not exist.

The second conclusion which can be drawn is that population growth of small towns may be more due to natural increases than migration to these centres. The 2002 GSS report notes that the population growth at national level is largely the result of lowering growth rates but still high fertility and fairly low mortality rates [56]. However, the same report attributed the massive growth of Accra, Tema and Kumasi as well as the mining centres of Obuasi (in the Ashanti Region) and Bibiani, Tarkwa and Prestea (all in the Western Region) to the high influx of migrants to these centres. Again, given that it is the capital city and the large urban centres which have experienced the highest growth rates and which

continue to dominate the national urban system, it is not surprising that they continue to be major destinations for migrants [57]. The implication here is that attempts to reduce the growth of the large towns may not hold bright prospects at least in the short and medium terms. This is because the anticipated outcome of decentralisation of enhancing the attractiveness of small towns, especially district capitals, as potential recipients of rural migrants and also as attractive centres for the small towns' population is yet to be achieved.

Both conclusions lead to the argument that unless efforts are made to improve the lot of the small towns and rural areas, there is a large pool of potential migrants in these areas ready to swell the population of the large metropoli. Conversely, it can also be argued that the large number of small towns spread throughout the country presents an opportunity to facilitate the process of a balanced spatial distribution of the population. Both prospects strengthen the case for decentralisation and the promotion of small and medium-sized towns.

Compare to most countries in Southern and North Africa as well as some countries in West Africa such as Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire and Nigeria, Ghana is still a relatively less urbanised country [58]. With an urban population of 43.8% in 2000, and this national average exceeded only by the Ashanti and Greater Accra Regions, there is still a large pool of potential rural-urban migrants that have the potential to swell the proportion of the total urban population. Also, there is the likelihood of more settlements becoming urban through the process of reconversion due to natural population increase, thus altering the proportion of rural and urban. It is significant that, even though the four largest urban centres account for about 44% of the total urban population, a significant proportion of the urban population still lives in small and medium-sized towns, and the greater number of the rural people (representing about 56% of the total population) has a closer contact with these towns than with the large towns and cities. This makes small towns important nodes for development. Therefore, the view taken here is that these small towns that serve the rural hinterland and its population have a great potential role to play in promoting a sound and balanced national settlement pattern and a broad-based rural development benefiting the majority of the people.

Further underpinning this argument is the current increasing prevalence of market-based development strategies under SAPs and their emphasis on export-oriented agricultural production, which calls for efficient economic linkages connecting producers to external markets. From this perspective, small towns are increasingly seen as playing a key role in providing and linking their rural hinterlands with both domestic and international markets [59]. Hence, the interest in small towns as nodes for linking rural agricultural areas to marketing centres. In this respect, small towns in Ghana, especially the district capitals, could be important links in the process of commercialisation of peasant agriculture and efforts to reduce poverty.

It should be noted that programmes on small towns do not explicitly aim at small town development but rather the strengthening of rural-urban linkages, the promotion of agricultural development in small towns' hinterlands, and the stimulation of non-farm employment opportunities in small towns [60]. Arguing from this position, it can therefore be said that Ghana's decentralisation programme shares similar goals and objectives with small towns programmes, with both reinforcing each other – improving living standards in rural areas through improvements in agriculture. Small towns are in a unique position – they are places still rooted in rurality but have adequate contact with the urban networks and their influences. They are therefore potential host centres for development operations targeting the rural areas where greater proportion of the population resides.

From the perspective of rural-urban linkages, strengthening small towns does not only enhance farmers' access to market and services but also the resultant improvement in income should lead to demand for higher order goods and services, resulting in the growth of district capitals and other small towns. Theoretically, this should have positive impact on labour and employment, and consequently on poverty reduction. It is argued that agriculture may be able to absorb a significant but not sufficient percentage of additional labourers as it nears labour capacity. Many of the unemployed labourers can be expected to migrate to the major cities and larger towns already suffering from diseconomies of scale due to their rapidly growing populations [61]. Hence, the policy of decentralisation and small town development programmes when pursued in a developing country should lead to absorption of surplus agricultural labour in the small town and also reduce migration to the cities and large towns. This, however, requires from the state conducive and genuine political as well as economic policies favourable to the provision of adequate



infrastructure and support of decentralisation to enhance and facilitate local participation and resource mobilisation. These must be fulfilled by the state notwithstanding the policy of decentralisation and autonomous development if a process of enhancing rural-urban linkages necessary for the overall development of districts is to be achieved.

Finally, promoting small towns, especially the district capitals, under decentralisation involves a strategy of urban renewal from below by enabling these urban centres to grow to absorb new centres, or simply the development of a process of dispersed urbanisation. This also involves the transformation of the rural economy. The strategy then accepts the inevitability of rural emigration but seeks to redirect flows away from the large urban centres of Kumasi and Accra-Tema. It also recognises that any solution to the urban problem associated with rural-urban migration must take account of the condition of the rural people [62]. Since most rural-urban migrations are undertaken for economic reasons, any policy that transforms the rural economy will affect the scale and pace of urban development.

*Acknowledgement:* The author would like to thank Ragnhild Lund for her initial comments on the draft, and Catriona Turner for the language work. Many thanks also to the Research Council of Norway (NFR) for financial support. The views expressed, however, are solely those of the author.

#### Endnotes

[1] Dickson 1971; Anderson and Rathbone 2000

[2] Little 1974

[3] Dickson 1971, 1975

[4] Thomi and Yankson 1985

[5] GSS 1995

[6] In Ghana, urban centres are officially defined as settlements with populations of 5000 or more. However, no official definitions exist for the various urban categories such as 'small', 'medium' and 'large' towns.

[7] GSS 2002a

[8] The use of this criterion has been well criticised for both conceptual and practical purposes. This is, however, not the subject of particular interest here.

[9] Hardoy and Satterthwaite 1988; Simon 1992; Czerny et al. 1997

- [10] Burrows 1992
- [11] Simon 1990
- [12] However, regionally there has been some increase in the proportion of the urban population living in small towns: higher in the Northern Region, and lower in the Central, Ashanti and Greater Accra Regions.
- [13] GSS (2002a, 2002b, 2002c)
- [14] GSS (2002b; 2002c)
- [15] see Caldwell 1969; Briggs and Yeboah 2001; Konadu-Agyemang 2001
- [16] Clark 1995; Pedersen 1997
- [17] Dickson 1971, 1975; Songsore and Denkabe 1995; Bening 1999
- [18] Adepoju 1993; Sowa 1993; Donkor 1997
- [19] Songsore and Denkabe 1995
- [20] Acheampong 1996: p. 56; see also Aeroe 1992; Burrows 1992
- [21] Canagarajah and Mazumdar 1997: p. 48-49; Sowa 1993; GSS 1995
- [22] Briggs and Yeboah (2001, p. 19)
- [23] Gilbert 1993, cited in Briggs and Yeboah 2001
- [24] Grant and Yankson 2003
- [25] Andr e 1981
- [26] GSS (2002a, p. 3)
- [27] GSS 2000
- [28] Ofori (2002, p. 164)
- [29] Acheampong 1996, p. 56
- [30] Bryceson 2001
- [31] Briggs and Yeboah 2001
- [32] GSS 1995, p. 12-14; Ayee 1997, p. 38
- [33] Crook and Manor 1998
- [34] GSS 1995
- [35] GSS 1995; Acheampong 1996
- [36] Ayee 1997, p. 39; Crook and Manor 1998; Thomi 2000; Yankson 2000
- [37] GSS (2002b, 2002c)
- [38] GSS 2002a, p. 2-3; Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) 2002, p. 16
- [39] GSS (2002b, 2002c)
- [40] Razin and Obirih-Opareh 2000

- [41] see Ayee 1995; Asibuo 2000 for thorough discussion of the problems of revenue mobilisation
- [42] GSS (2002a, p. 1)
- [43] Konadu-Agyemang 2001, p. 54
- [44] Giraut 1997
- [45] GSS 2002a
- [46] Burrows (1992) and Acheampong (1996).
- [47] Giraut 1997
- [48] Dickson (1971, p. 249-250)
- [49] GSS ((2002a, p. 1)
- [50] GSS (2002c, p. iv)
- [51] GSS 1995, p. 2-3; Konadu-Agyemang 2001; GPRS 2002, p. 16-17 for discussion of the problems associated with the high concentration of Ghana's urban population in few large towns and cities.
- [52] GSS 2002a
- [53] Ayee 1997, p. 38
- [54] Burrows (1992, p. 190)
- [55] GSS (1995, p. 235)
- [56] GSS (2002a, p. 1)
- [57] Briggs and Yeboah 2001; Grant and Yankson 2003
- [58] World Bank Development Report 1999/2000
- [59] Tacoli 1998
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## 5.4 Small Towns and Decentralised Development in Ghana: Theory and Practice

George Owusu (2004), in *Afrika Spectrum* 39 (2). pp. 165-195

### **Abstract**

*The implementation of Ghana's decentralisation programme has involved the strengthening of district administrative capitals, defined in this article as small towns, as focal points for the socio-economic development of districts. Government and donor resources have therefore been directed at improving the infrastructure of these centres, in order to enable them to cope with their increased functions and to perform their new role more efficiently. Though district capitals have been recognised as important in the implementation of the decentralisation programme, few studies have been done on the role and the linkages between these centres and their hinterlands (districts) as a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the strategy. This article provides a model for the role of district capitals and their linkages with their respective districts under the decentralisation programme; it also operationalises the model in the form of a case study of a district and its capital. The article stresses the usefulness of using district capitals as stimuli to district development, but notes that the desired goal can probably only be achieved by genuine decentralisation policies backed and powered by local participatory democracy, both in the political and economic field.*

### **Keywords**

*Decentralisation, town, urban development, rural-urban linkages, regional development and planning, local government, theory formation*

### **Introduction**

The literature on urban geography and regional planning has witnessed considerable growth in the study of small towns and their role in regional and rural development over the last three decades, both in terms of theoretical concepts and practical applications. These theories have largely been drawn from the broader field of urban and development studies, and to a large extent have formed the basis of national urban development policies aimed at modifying existing settlement structures in developing countries, particularly in Africa, which were found to be un conducive to national socio-economic development. In a broad sense, the key goals of these applied models and theories do not differ greatly from the broader societal goals of socio-economic development. These broader 'societal goals typically include promoting economic growth and efficiency, improving equity and reducing



poverty, preserving environmental quality and maintaining national security' (Richardson 1981: 270).

Though many studies have been done on small towns and rural-urban interactions in developing countries, few such studies have been undertaken within a decentralised political, administrative and economic context. Since 1988, Ghana has adopted decentralisation policies, which have involved the transfer of resources and power to the district level. This has resulted in several initiatives from government and donor agencies specifically targeting district capitals (small towns) [1], such as the introduction of the District Assemblies' Common Fund (DACF), a constitutional provision allocating 5% of the total national revenue to District Assemblies. Other examples include the World Bank and United Nations Development Programme's Urban V projects targeting roads and sanitation problems; European Union (EU) micro-projects, and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ)/Ghana government (Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development) project in selected districts in the Ashanti and Brong-Ahafo Regions, entitled 'Promotion of District Capitals (PRODICAP)'. It has also been the policy of central government and the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLG&RD) since the late 1980s to provide each district capital with a specific range of amenities such as electricity, telephone connections, district referral hospitals, potable water supplies, a model secondary/technical school, and all-year accessible road links (GSS 1995). This has strengthened the district capitals' role as focal points for the economic and social development of their respective districts.

Notwithstanding these investments, insufficient theoretical work has been done on the role of the district capitals within the present decentralised economic and political system to justify the continued allocation of national and donor investments to their development. As a result, an adequate evaluation of the strategy has yet to be undertaken. This article attempts to conceptualise the role of district capitals and rural-urban linkages through the formulation of a model, the 'District Capital-Centred Development Model', and explores its weaknesses by using a district capital (Dunkwa) and its hinterland (Upper Denkyira District) in the Central Region as a case study. The result could provide a basis for re-evaluating the strategy. It could also provide useful lessons for other countries in sub-Saharan Africa, where similar strategies are being implemented.

This article is divided into two sections. The first section presents Ghana's decentralised planning and administrative system and the district capital-centred decentralised development model (DCDM). The second section looks at the operationalisation of the model. It starts with a brief overview of the physical, socio-economic and cultural setting of Dunkwa and the Upper Denkyira District (UDD), and then looks at factors affecting the operationalisation of the model in the case study district. The article finally concludes by emphasizing the need for a genuine decentralisation policy in Ghana.

### **Structure of Ghana's Decentralised Administration and Planning**

Ghana embarked on decentralised administration and development planning in 1988, in order to encourage greater local autonomy and participation and to achieve greater efficiency. This was given legal backing by PNDC Law 207, subsequently superseded by Chapter 20 of the 1992 National Constitution and later replaced by the Local Government Act, 1993, Act 462. Within this legal framework, the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) was established under Act 479 and Act 480 as the apex organisation in the decentralised development planning system. The framework also determines the relationship between the NDPC and other planning bodies such as government ministries and agencies (NDPC 1996).

Ghana's local government system is described as a *fused or mixed system* combining the prefectural-style rule of traditional district administration, responsible to central government, with the democratic control, service provision and tax-raising powers of devolved local government (Naustdalslid 1992; Crook and Manor 1998; Eriksen et al. 1999). Under the law, District Assemblies (local governments) have overall responsibility for the development of the districts. They have executive, legislative and deliberative powers, as well as administrative and technical support, to articulate the views and aspirations of the people within districts for effective development at local level.

The District Assembly (DA) is headed by a District Chief Executive (DCE), who is nominated and appointed by the national President with the approval of the Assembly. Two-thirds of the membership of the DA is determined by non-partisan local elections, and the other one-third by central government appointment. The central government appointments are carried out in consultation with interest groups and individuals in the district. The members of the District Assembly are presumed to be people who represent

the views and aspirations of local people and communities within the district. The highest working body of the Assembly is the Executive Committee. This body, chaired by the DCE, performs executive functions, establishes other committees of the DA, and delegates functions to them.

In all, 110 District Assemblies (DAs) have been established, consisting of three Metropolitan Assemblies, four Municipal Assemblies, and 103 District Assemblies (MLG&RD 1996: 11-12). District Assemblies in Ghana are either Metropolitan (large towns and cities with populations of over 250,000), Municipal (one-town Assemblies with populations over 95,000) or District (a cluster of small-sized/medium-sized town(s) and villages with populations over 75,000). Below the DA are the sub-district structures (Unit Committees and Area Councils), which are local organs of the DA with no independent powers (see Table 1). They are essentially consultative bodies (partially nominated) with no budgets of their own, and carry out functions as delegated by the Assembly or by Legal Instruments setting up the Assemblies (Naustdalslid 1992). Since the sub-district structures are very close to the people (in terms of level), their basic role of educating, organising and mobilising the people for development projects is very important. They also form the basis for problem identification and for the initiation and implementation of self-help projects at the local level (Laryea-Adjei 1998). The basic aim of these structures is to take decentralisation to the grassroots level by involving local people in all decision-making processes.

**Table 1. Sub-District Structures\***

110 METROPOLITAN, MUNICIPAL AND DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES		
4-Tier Metropolitan Assembly (Population 250,000 and over)	3-Tier Municipal Assembly (Population over 95,000)	3-Tier District Assembly (Population over 75,000)
1. Metropolitan Assemblies (3) 2. Sub-Metropolitan District Councils 3. Town/Area Councils 4. Unit Committees	1. Municipal Assemblies (4) 2. Zonal Councils 3. Unit Committees	1. District Assemblies (103) 2. Urban/Town/Area Councils 3. Unit Committees

\*Unit committees are formed for populations of 500-1000 and 1500 in rural and urban areas respectively. Urban, Area, and Zonal councils are formed for settlements with populations above 15000, 5000-15000 and 3000 respectively.

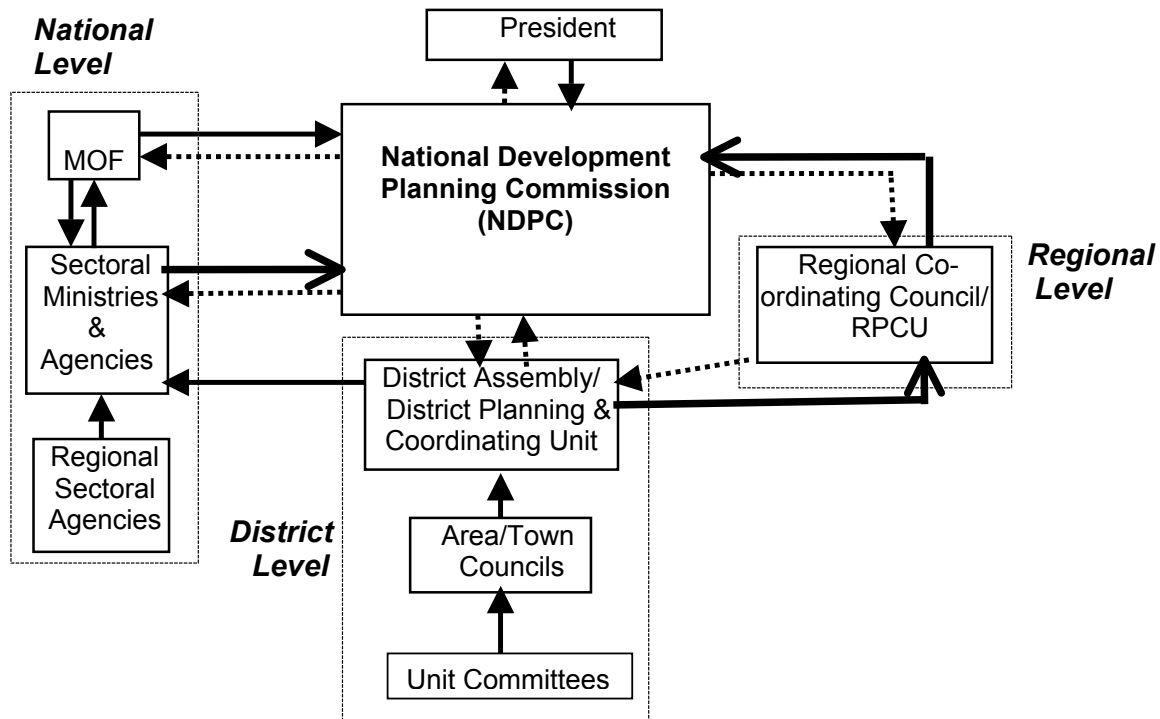
Under the law, DAs have two sources of revenue – internal and external (the latter refers to grants from central governments). The internal revenue-generating source includes: rates (basic rates, property rates from landed property owners, and special rates imposed

by the Assembly for specific areas and projects); fees (market tolls and related activities); licenses (hotels and restaurant operators, self-employed artisans, etc.); and trading services (trading activities undertaken by the DAs from which income can be derived) (MLG&RD 1996: 49–51). However, in many districts these internal revenue-generating sources are either inadequate or poorly developed due to the general poverty level and the underdevelopment of infrastructure and services. Therefore most DAs depend on government (external) revenue, particularly the DACF, for the implementation of their development projects.

To enhance the District Assemblies' administrative and technical capacity, they are supported by the District Planning Co-ordinating Unit (DPCU), which consists of skilled professional staff. The DPCU is also the channel through which data, information, development policy frameworks and planning guidelines are exchanged between the districts and the NDPC through the Regional Co-ordinating Council (RCC) and its technical body, the Regional Planning Co-ordinating Unit (RPCU). These regional bodies serve as intermediate co-ordinating and monitoring bodies between central government and the districts. The overall institutional framework of Ghana's decentralised planning and administrative system is illustrated in Fig. 1.

Under the decentralised planning and administrative system, development starts with the communities and their representatives (Assembly members), who identify their communities' needs. These needs are subsequently harmonised at the district level by the District Assembly (DA), and then forwarded to the regional level for further harmonisation with other district plans. Plans from all the regions and districts, together with sectoral plans from government's ministries and agencies, are harmonised and integrated into a national development plan by the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC), the apex of the development planning system. Under this approach, development planning starts at the community and district level, and finally, ends there by way of implementation.

**Fig. 1. The Institutional Structures of Ghana's Decentralised Planning System**



**Key**

- MOF (Ministry of Finance), RPCU (Regional Planning and Co-ordinating Unit)
- Development Plans
- Plan Inputs (Projects)
- ..... Policy Framework, Data, Information

Source: Adapted from the NDPC (1996).

**District Capital-Centred Development Model (DCDM)**

Under the decentralisation programme, the transfer of resources and power from national headquarters to the district level has several aims. However, the basic goal is to enhance living standards in rural settlements and other centres at the lower level of the settlement hierarchy through the promotion of agriculture, stimulation of non-farm employment, enhanced accessibility to social services, and reduced migration to the cities and larger towns (GSS 1995). In a developing country like Ghana, dominated by agriculture and low incomes, it is difficult to see the fulfilment of the basic objective of decentralisation without simultaneous improvement in income among the rural population. One way of overcoming this is the enhancement of farmers' access to markets and other services through the district capitals. It can be argued that markets provide incentives to farmers to increase their efforts to raise production, since they provide the opportunity for farmers to sell their surplus produce. Thus strengthening and developing the market function of small towns is one of the measures to increase agricultural production (Rondinelli 1984; Wouden 1997;

Karaska 1999). Furthermore, through the enhancement of farmers' access to markets and social services, subsistence farmers can become more productive and also choose to diversify their livelihoods. It is, however, recognised that for this to be effective other measures must also be in place, such as effective transport links, access to extension services and credits.

In theory, strengthening the district capitals' market functions should enable these centres to provide market access and other basic services to the rural agricultural hinterland population. This is expected to improve agricultural production and income, and thus reduce rural poverty. Increased income through increased agricultural production should lead to increased district and national income, generating demand for non-agricultural production and encouraging the development of small-scale industries, and consequently an expansion in employment. This process is expected to set in motion a continuous spiral of growth and development aimed at achieving broader national developmental goals of reducing poverty and improving equity, and promoting economic growth and efficiency. By this development process, district capitals are expected to serve as centres for the delivery of basic services such as health, education, water and environmental sanitation. They are also meant to provide opportunities for the marketing and processing of agricultural produce, and subsequently to reduce rural-urban migration to the large cities, particularly to Accra, Tema, Kumasi and Sekondi-Takoradi. In addition, district capitals are to act as centres of diffusion and dissemination of modern technology and government policies.

It must, however, be noted that programmes on small towns are not exclusively aimed at small-town development, but also at strengthening rural-urban linkages, promoting agricultural development in small towns' hinterlands, and stimulating non-farm employment opportunities (Gaile 1992: 131; see also Baker 1997; Giraut 1997; Pedersen 1997; Douglass 1998; Karaska 1999). Arguing from this position, it can therefore be said that Ghana's decentralisation programme shares goals and objectives with the small-town programme, and that both programmes reinforce each other.

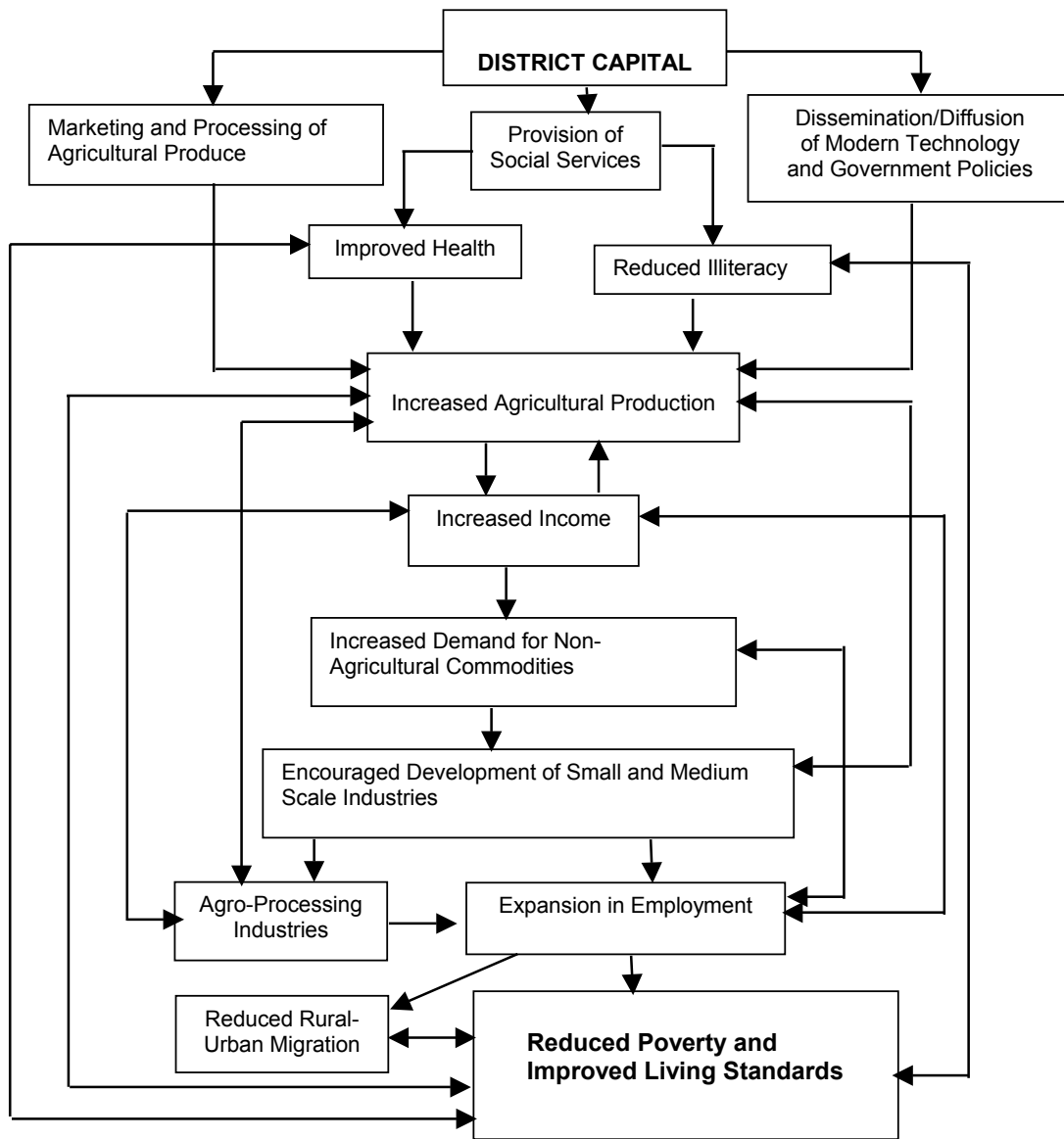
From the perspective of rural-urban linkages, strengthening small towns not only enhances farmers' access to markets and services, but also stimulates the demand for higher-order goods and services through higher income, which in turn results in the growth of district capitals. Theoretically, this should have a positive impact on labour and employment, and

consequently on poverty reduction. It is argued that agriculture may be able to absorb a significant, though not sufficient percentage of additional labourers as it nears labour capacity. Many of the unemployed labourers can be expected to migrate to the major cities and larger towns already suffering from diseconomies of scale due to their rapidly growing population (Gaile 1992). Hence, the policy of decentralisation, when pursued in a developing country, should lead to the absorption of surplus agricultural labour in small towns, and hence reduce migration to the cities and large towns.

Within the framework of the decentralised and local government structure, the district capital and the rest of the district (rural) are to exist within a symbiotic framework – reinforcing each other's growth in achieving the overall development of the district. This approach involves looking at a wider socio-economic field – one that includes people and resources located in both rural and urban areas within the district. What is therefore perceived here is a two-way process of diffusion or transmission of development impulses, whereby the rural (hinterland) crosses the urban (district capital) or vice versa. This is because a development from below recognises the importance of local knowledge and resources from both rural and urban areas. Again, small towns draw on the resources of their hinterlands in order to develop. This view reinforces current thinking in regional development, viz. linkages, both economic and social transactions between urban centres and rural areas play an important role in the processes of rural and urban change. In addition, it supports the concept of *depeasantisation* and *deagrarianisation* [2] (Rigg 1998; Tacoli 1998; Bryceson 2001), which is blurring the dichotomy between what is defined as 'rural' and 'urban' in developing countries, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa.

From the above perspective, it is difficult to talk of urban areas exploiting and extracting surplus from the countryside, when 'rural' people have as much interest in a vital and dynamic industrial or non-agricultural sector as their 'urban' counterparts. Nor is it clear whether personal identities are rooted in specific geographical places and economic sectors (Rigg 1998: 515; Okali et al. 2001). Besides, the interactions between district capitals and their hinterlands are guided by active processes of participation and empowerment of local institutions, local people (residents of the district) and their representatives (Assembly Members), with a common interest in the well-being of the whole district. The above conceptualised development model, which I refer to as 'District Capital-Centred Development Model (DCDM)', is illustrated in Figs. 2a and 2b:

**Fig. 2a. District Capital-Centred Decentralised Model: A Conceptualised Model of the Role of District Capitals (Small Towns) in Rural Development under Ghana's Decentralisation Programme.**

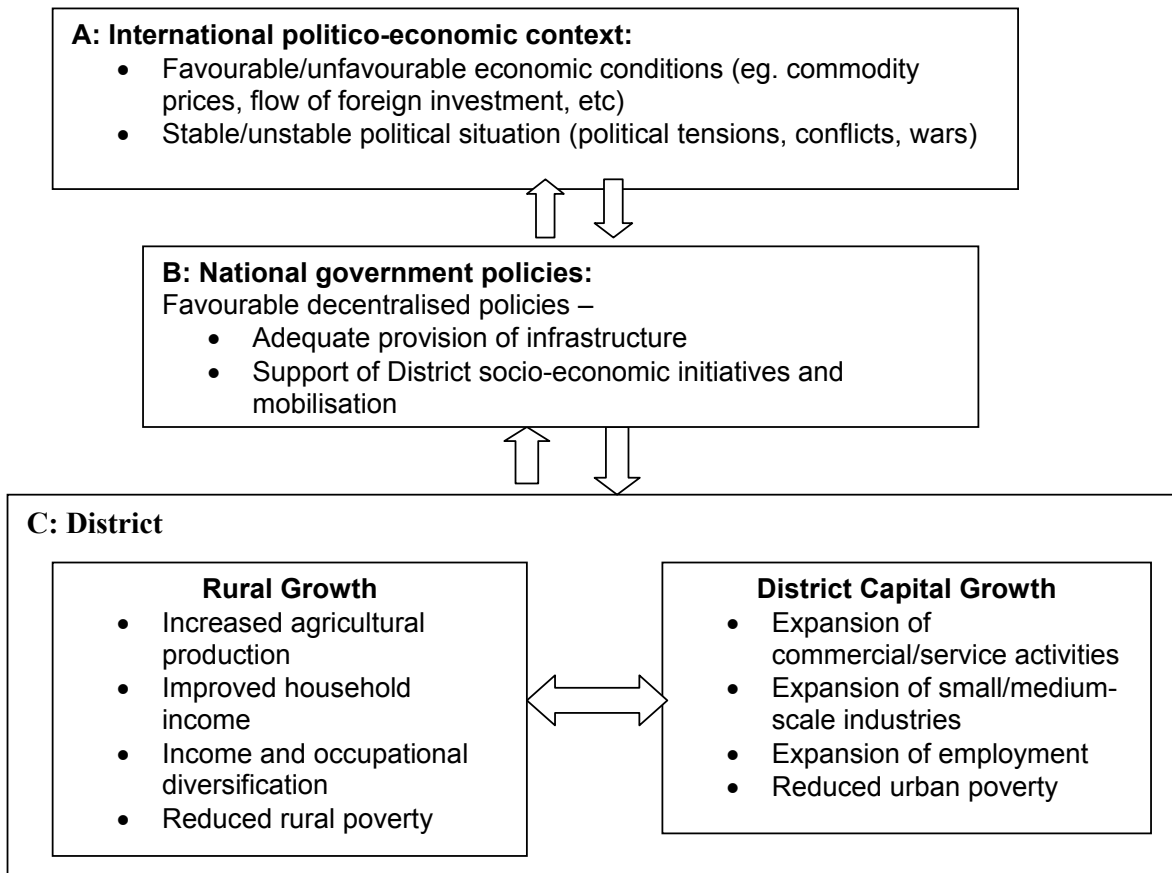


However, this model needs to be placed within a wider national and international socio-economic and political context as illustrated in Fig. 2b. In particular, within the context of a developing country such as Ghana, with a weak political and economic foundation, genuine politico-economic policies favourable to the provision of adequate infrastructure and support of decentralisation are required from the state to facilitate local participation and resource mobilisation. This is very necessary if the enhancement of rural-urban interactions and the creation of a vibrant local economy, stimulating both rural and urban production processes, is to be achieved in the interest of overall development. The active



involvement of the state in local (district) development, notwithstanding the view of local autonomy under decentralisation, is essential to the model.

**Fig. 2b. Conceptualised Model of Rural-Urban Linkages**



To summarise this section, one may question whether this framework adds anything to existing models. The novelty of this model is that it is situated within a decentralised administrative and development planning framework, an approach little explored in the urban and development studies literature to date. This framework is entrenched in laws, which confer extensive powers on local authorities regarding small towns' growth and the development of districts. The approach emphasizes the uniqueness of each district capital and its district in terms of the specific local opportunities for and constraints to development. Decentralisation therefore provides opportunities for development based not only on local needs, but also on the specific strengths and capacities of each district. Again, the area of influence of a district capital is delimited, not on the basis of the magnitude of functions performed, but rather as a politically-established spatial unit. Within this spatial unit, district planners, administrators and assembly members are to reach out to all parts of the district in terms of creating conditions for the effective access to and

utilisation of services and facilities located in the district capital, since only by doing so will they be able to solicit the assistance of the people in the district.

Like with other urban-centred development models, such as growth centre theory, the focus is to induce growth at the district capital by creating a favourable environment for attracting growth-minded entrepreneurs, creating capacity for innovations, and attracting capital from other regions, etc. Implicit in this is the tendency for the concentration of growth and investments in the district capital. However, through the process of active participation and empowerment of residents and their representatives (Assembly members) in the district, there will be an equitable and fair distribution of resources between the urban and rural parts of the district. Again, local policy-makers and implementers are more likely to be aware of and sensitive to this tendency and more likely to formulate policies and strategies attuned to the needs of all residents in the district (Crook and Manor 1998). In addition, economic growth through the trickling-down process is likely to be realised through effective accountability and utilisation of scarce resources by local officials. Burki et al. (1999: 3) present this argument as follows:

... devolving resource allocation decisions to locally elected leaders can improve the match between the mix of services produced by the public sector and the preferences of local population. Because local officials have better knowledge of local conditions and are more accessible to their constituents, they have the means and incentives to be responsive. Decentralisation, according to this argument, may also improve the management of public services since, through sheer proximity, local officials can be held more accountable for their performance (Ostrom, Schroeder and Wynne 1993).

Finally, whereas other models advocate the selection of a few potential growth centres as focal points for rural development, the centres selected under the DCDM cover the whole national area. Development is therefore more likely to spread fairly to all parts of the country, contradicting the notion of concentrated development in a few potential growth points, as advocated especially under the growth pole and central-place theories. Under the approach advocated here, the role of central government will be to assist less-endowed districts to develop their potential resources to the fullest. This will allow relatively resource-rich districts to benefit fairly from their resources, rather than to have these

exploited for the benefit of other districts and regions, especially the national capital. This ties in with a key requirement of the District Assemblies: 'to bring about integration of political, administrative and development support needed to achieve a more equitable allocation of power, wealth and geographically dispersed development in Ghana' (MLG&RD 1996: 12).

### **Operationalisation of the DCDM: The Case of Dunkwa and the Upper Denkyira District**

In this section an attempt is made to operationalise the model by using Dunkwa, the district capital of the Upper Denkyira District, as a case study. Dunkwa is given special focus in this article because as an old administrative centre dating back to the early 1900s, it is assumed to have a relatively well-developed infrastructure and linkages with its periphery, which provides opportunities for analysing its growth and interactions over time. In addition, it was also assumed that the Upper Denkyira District Assembly (UDDA) would have a relatively large economic and commercial base, enabling it to mobilise local resources and revenue to facilitate the development of the district, a process envisaged under Ghana's decentralisation process.

#### ***Dunkwa-on-Offin and the Upper Denkyira District***

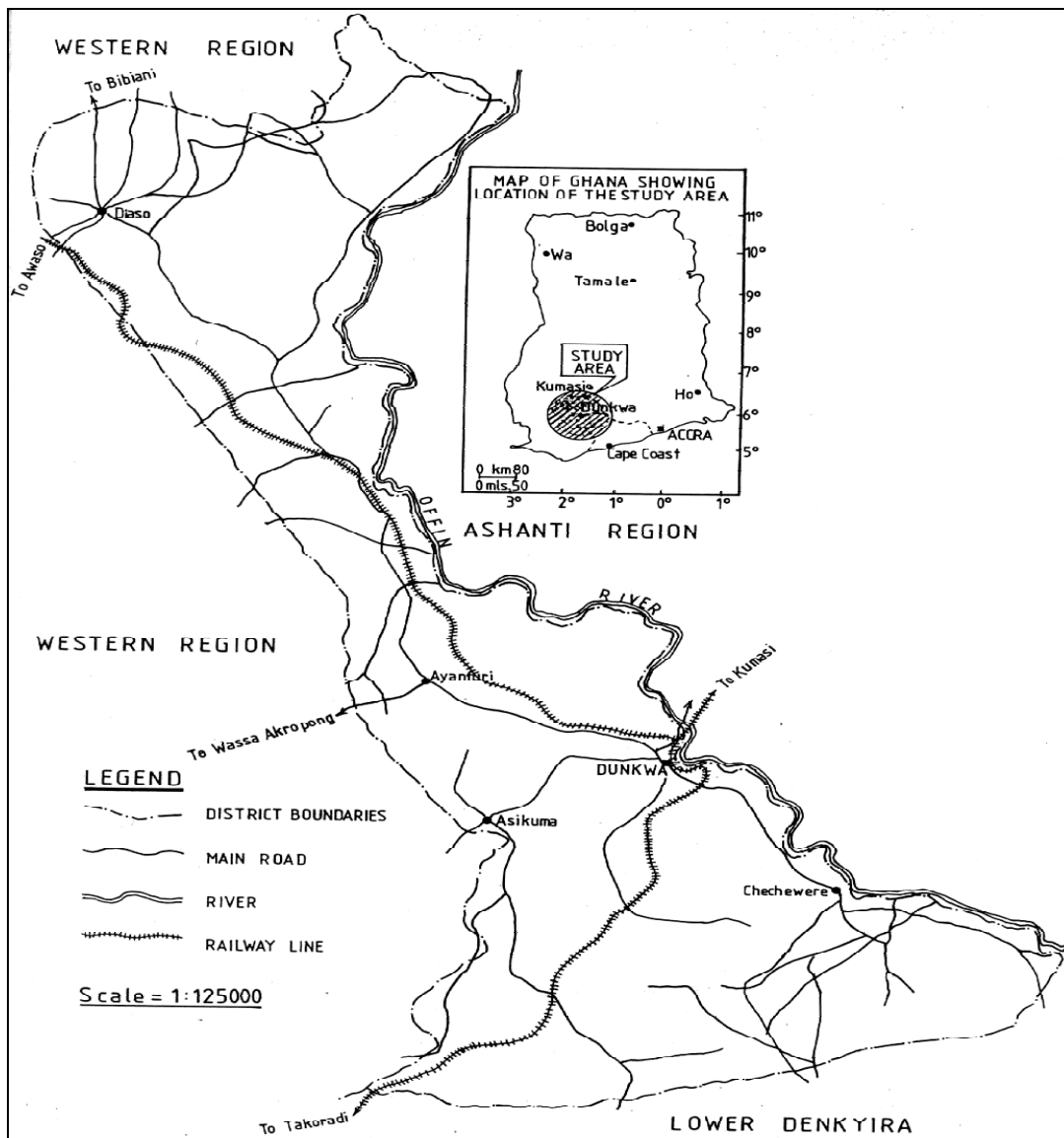
The Upper Denkyira District (UDD) covers an area of about 1700 km<sup>2</sup>. It is described as the 'outstretched arm' of the Central Region, which projects into the Western Region and falls within the wet semi-equatorial climatic zone of Ghana. The district is one of the 12 administrative districts of the Central Region. It borders the Western Region in the north and west, and the Ashanti Region in the east. On its southern border lies Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira District (THLDD) which has Twifo Praso as its district capital (see Fig. 3). The UDD was formerly part of the Western Region, but was incorporated into the Central Region in 1963 in order to keep the Akan ethnic group, Denkyira, in one region. The district then existed as Denkyira Twifo-Hemang District, with Dunkwa as the district capital. However, in 1988 it was divided into two districts, UDD and THLDD, as part of the implementation of the decentralisation programme. Since the division, Dunkwa has continued to serve as the district capital for the UDD.

#### ***Physical Accessibility***

Road transport is the dominant means of transport in the district. Of the total road length of 186 km within the district, less than 20% has a bitumen surface. The UDDA Development

Plan (2002: 2) stresses the need to improve the district's existing road network as well as to construct new ones, in order to reduce travel time and costs. A number of roads link Dunkwa with the rest of the district, but many of these are in a poor condition. On the other hand, Dunkwa has relatively good roadlinks to major centres such as Kumasi, Obuasi (all in the Ashanti Region) and Takoradi (Western Region). However, access to the Central Regional capital, Cape Coast, is poor because of the state of the road between Dunkwa and Twifo Praso. This situation has affected the functional and administrative relationship between the district and its regional capital on the one hand, and the rest of the Central Region on the other.

**Fig. 3. Upper Denkyira District: Location, Key Settlements, and Transport Routes**



While the Ministry of Roads and Highways is responsible for all the highways in the country (including the UDD), the DAs are responsible for the maintenance of non-highways within districts (commonly referred to as 'feeder roads'). The feeder roads are basically the roads linking the various rural communities to the district capital, as well as to other settlements within the district. The central government's access to donor funds has enabled it to maintain highways linking major centres, whilst the poor financial position of the DAs has affected the maintenance and motorability of feeder roads.

### *District Economy*

The dominant economic activity in the district is peasant agriculture. It accounts for 54% of households' income and employs well over 60% of the district's active labour force (UDDA 2002). The main crops grown are cash crops (mainly cocoa) and food crops (cassava, maize, plantain, and cocoyam). Peasant agriculture in the district is affected by several problems, including low productivity (due to the limited use of improved seedlings and technical know-how), marketing, insufficient access to credits for farmers and poor road networks with corresponding high transport and travel expenses.

Gold mining is the second most important economic activity in the district (after agriculture). In the past the district witnessed the operations of many large gold-mining and prospecting companies, such as Dunkwa Goldfields Limited, Ayanfuri AGC Limited, and Cluff Resources Limited. However, these companies have either left or scaled down their operations in the district because of expired mining concessions or operational difficulties. On the ascendancy in the district are small-scale and illegal mining activities (popularly referred to as *galamsey*). While these mining activities provide much needed employment opportunities and other economic benefits, their destructive effects on the environment are also visible in many parts of the district. In some places, indiscriminate illegal surface gold mining activities render fertile agricultural lands unproductive. The UDDA (2002) has noted the failure of the Assembly to enforce mining regulations and to impose appropriate taxes on unregistered gold miners, citing its lack of capacity.

Commercial activities (mainly petty trading involving mostly women) are quite prominent in the district. These trading activities are carried out through daily and periodic markets, which can be found in most communities in the district. However, none of the markets in the district enjoy any significant level of patronage, except those in Dunkwa. These

markets serve as trading outlets for agricultural produce and input, and also as places to access commodities produced elsewhere. Although no reliable data exist in the district on the number of people engaged in petty trading, the contribution of women is well noted, particularly in the purchase and transportation of foodstuffs. Despite the major contribution of women's petty trade to the district's economy, the traders are confronted with poor transportation in terms of the road network and poor market infrastructure (UDDA 1996: 49).

The industrial base of the district is weak and underdeveloped. As in many parts of Ghana, there is hardly any linkage between industry and the dominant economic activity (agriculture). The absence of any significant agro-processing industry in the district implies that the greater part of local produce is not processed. This problem and others, such as the lack of adequate market access, contribute to the low agricultural production prevalent in the district, as farmers are constrained in their attempts to increase production.

The district's industrial sector is characterised by small-scale traditional craft, agro-based, and wood-processing industries. The processing of wood into furniture and other products is widespread and dominates the industrial sector of the district. In the past, two large timber-processing firms – Thompson Moir and Galloway (TMG) and International Hardwood Limited (IHL) supported the district's wood industry, but these companies have collapsed over the past two decades because of operational difficulties. Other notable small-scale activities in the district include cassava processing, palm oil and kernel extraction, soap making, basketry, and bakery. The technology used in these industries is traditional and dominated by women. The production output is very low, as the scale of activity is small and has a very low capital base (UDDA 2002).

### *Population and Services*

The Akan ethnic group, Denkyira, are the indigenous people of the district. However, the presence of forestland for cocoa farming, gold mining, and government administrative services and institutions have attracted other ethnic groups into the district (namely Ashanti, Fanti, Akuapem, Ga-Adangbe, Ewe, and ethnic groups of northern Ghana origin), particularly into the district capital. Population influx and natural population increase account for the continual growth of the district's population, which has increased from 34,011 in 1960 to 108,444 in 2000 (GSS 2002a). In 2000 the district's population of

108,444 represented about 6.8% of the total regional population of the Central Region (UDDA 2002).

Dunkwa is the only urban settlement in the district, and also the only area of population concentration. Its population of 26,215 in 2000 represented about 24% of the total population of the district. The next two larger settlements, Ayanfuri and Diaso, each have populations of less than 4000. Since its foundation, Dunkwa has been without competition from any urban centre of similar magnitude within a radius of several kilometres (Acheampong 1996). It has a relatively well-developed infrastructure such as two secondary schools, two hospitals, a modern electronic telephone system linking it to other centres in Ghana and to the rest of the world, banks, retail and wholesale outlets, and relatively well-connected road and railway networks. In fact, with the exception of primary health care (PHC) services, basic schools, a senior secondary school at Diaso, and rural banks at Ayanfuri and Diaso, no other services are located in the district apart from those in Dunkwa. However, accessibility to these services in the district capital is limited on account of poor road networks, poor quality of services resulting mainly from the inadequacy of personnel, the introduction of user-charges on services, and low incomes in the district. These have had adverse effects on health and nutrition, water and sanitation, education, employment, and development in general in the district (UDDA 1996: 6).

### ***Growth of Dunkwa***

According to oral history Dunkwa was established in the early 1700s at the height of the Denkyira-Ashanti wars as a safe haven for the kings of Denkyira [3]. Its growth was greatly stimulated by the attainment of the status of a colonial administrative centre and by the extension of the railway line to the town in the early 1900s. In particular, both oral and written histories indicate that the arrival of the railway line and the subsequent use of the town as a railway station was most significant. This opened up the Dunkwa area, making it a major commercial centre and entrepôt for goods from both the port of Takoradi (mainly imported European merchandised goods) and from the interior (mainly minerals, timber and cash crops) en route to the port for export (Acheampong 1996). The growth of the town was further enhanced by the establishment of gold mining and sawmill firms in the town in the mid-1900s.

Table 2 shows the population and growth rate of Dunkwa for various census years. The town's growth rates, like those of many other small and medium-size towns, have

generally mirrored the fortunes of the national economy, pointing to the impact of macroeconomic processes and policies on small towns and their hinterlands (see Hinderink and Titus 2002; Ofori 2002). The town recorded its highest growth rate from 1931 to 1960, when the national economy was fairly stable and buoyant. The establishment of key firms such as Dunkwa Goldfields Limited (DGFL) and International Hardwood Limited (IHL) marked this period. This led to the creation of more jobs, and hence, the attraction of large numbers of people. Analysing the migration trends in Ghana based on the 1960 Population Census, Grove (1963) classified Dunkwa as among a small number of towns marked by significant population gains.

The period of lowest growth (1970 to 1984) may have been due to the general decline in Ghana's economy from the 1970s until the early 1980s, when the World Bank/International Monetary Fund (IMF) Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) were launched. The past two decades of SAPs and economic liberalisation have seen the collapse of major industrial establishments in Dunkwa, resulting in huge job losses. This has had a significant impact on job opportunities and other related economic activities. Even though its industrial base has largely been eroded, the town continues to grow on account of natural population growth, the influx of galamsey and small-scale mining operators, the retention of services, and its administrative and commercial status.

**Table 2. Population Growth of Dunkwa**

Year	1931	1948	1960	1970	1984	2000
Population	3960	6827	12,689	15,437	16,905	26,215
Growth Rate (%)	1931-1948	1948-1960	1960-1970	1970-1984	1984-2000	
	3.2	5.2	2.0	0.65	2.7	

Source: Owusu (1996); UDDA (1996, 2002): Development Plan reports.

### **Rural-Urban Linkages: An Overview**

The analyses of the socio-economic, physical and cultural settings of Dunkwa and the UDD, as well as interviews conducted in the district involving 40 households in four rural communities (Buabin, Diaso, Asikuma and Asma camp), including market traders, private commercial transport operators, and key informants (District Planning Officers and Assembly members) - all these data suggest that the level and kinds of rural-urban interactions are limited. The overall responses indicate that movements of people between the district capital and its hinterland are not permanent migrations or relocations, but rather a cyclical flow: people go to the district capital to trade (sell/buy) on market days, and



return to their villages during the latter part of the day. Other movements involve district capital-based traders going to the rural areas to buy foodstuffs at the village market or the farm gate, and returning back to the district capital at the end of day.

Thus, the market (trade) is the key mechanism by which the district capital (urban centre) interacts with the rural parts of the district. Even though there is some form of market in all communities within the district, the district capital's markets are the biggest, both in terms of volume of trade and patronage. The importance of the markets may be attributed to Dunkwa's centrality and its relatively large concentration of population compared to other market centres within the district. In addition, the markets attract buyers and sellers from places beyond the district, especially on Tuesdays. Even though the markets operate daily, Tuesdays tend to attract more buyers and sellers, as it is a non-farming day in most communities within the district and in nearby districts. As a result, farmers are able to leave the land and come to the market to buy and/or sell goods.

A study of Dunkwa and Twifo Praso markets by Owusu and Lund (2004, forthcoming) notes the important contributions the markets make towards the development of their respective districts within the context of the current decentralisation process. These contributions include revenue to the DAs, promotion of local agriculture, and employment and income generation, especially for women. Besides these contributions, the study also notes that the markets enhance the utilisation of urban services by the rural population. This is because services in Dunkwa, such as hospitals, banking, telecommunications, and restaurants are patronised most on market days. There may be an economic motive behind optimising a single visit to the capital by using various services; on the other hand, it may be inferred that market patronage offers many people the opportunity to utilise urban services, which they would not otherwise have accessed. The markets also provide opportunities for social and cultural interaction between the rural population and the residents of Dunkwa. According to Owusu and Lund (see above), this arena for interactions provided by the markets gives meaning to the existence of a unified politically-administrated district, and enhances the co-existence of the different ethnic groups within the district.

Despite these contributions of the markets to the development of the district, they remain underdeveloped. According to Ghana's Local Government Act, 1993, Act 462, the location,

administration and management of markets are the responsibility of the DAs. However, the lack of adequate resources and poor planning by the DAs has resulted in poor market infrastructure. In addition, access to the markets has been restricted by poor roads and high transport fares. As a result, the full potential of the markets has not been realised. This situation raises important questions about the operationalisation of the DCDM, the basic impetus of which is market-driven through the growth of agriculture and income. The inherent development constraints or weaknesses impeding the operationalisation of the model in the case study area, and by extension in other districts in Ghana, especially in the 'newly' created ones with weaker and poorer infrastructure, are discussed below:

### ***Inherent Weaknesses of District Capital's Production and Service Functions***

Like in many Ghanaian towns, economic activity in Dunkwa has been, and continues to be, dominated by commerce and services - activities not adequately adapted to the needs of the rural hinterland population. These activities to a large extent serve the needs of the town itself, especially its minor civil and public servants, and have little relevance to the dominant agricultural production processes in the rural areas (see Dickson 1980). It can therefore be argued that the development of the town and of the hinterland is only remotely connected. This situation is typical of many Ghanaian urban centres, especially the small and medium-sized towns with little or no industrial base linked to their hinterlands.

More importantly, small and medium-scale industries for agro-processing and other produce of the rural population have never existed in Dunkwa. In the past, when the town had a large industrial base (sawmills and gold mines), these were extractive or enclave economic activities, without any meaningful direct link with either the population and production processes in the hinterland, or with the general Ghanaian spatial economy. These industrial activities were outward-directed and export-oriented, and hence contributed very little to the overall district economy, except for the few job opportunities and associated purchasing power they generated for food crops from the rural hinterland. It is therefore no wonder that the collapse of these industries has not significantly affected the growth of the town.

Though the district capital markets provide outlets for food crops produced in the district, it is questionable whether this trade realises its full potential. Apart from the poor market infrastructure and access, the fragmented, unregulated and inefficient nature of the trade

relation causes it to be 'by-passed' by more efficient traders operating from high-order centres such as Kumasi, Obuasi, Cape Coast and Takoradi. This results in competition, and the rural producers' desire for better prices manifests itself in a preference for traders from the higher-order centres, who generally offer better prices for produce, as was confirmed in rural household interviews. This implies that substantial surpluses produced in the hinterland are lost to destinations outside the district. If this situation continues, the growth and diversification of the hinterland economy will depend more on increasing marketing and employment opportunities in other regions than on the district capital (see Hinderink and Titus 2002).

The markets in the district capital and the rural-urban trade relations, however, remain a viable option for enhancing rural-urban linkages and for attempts to improve agriculture and to reduce poverty (see Owusu and Lund 2004, forthcoming). However, this will require concerted efforts by the DA, such as an effective tax system, which will allow the district to derive maximum benefits from this relation. Improvements in market infrastructure and access are also necessary. Being the only urban centre with the largest population concentration within the district, Dunkwa remains the main market centre for foodstuffs produced in the hinterland. It is also the only centre within the UDD with reliable road connections to major centres, allowing the markets to attract buyers and sellers from distant places.

### ***Effects of Macro-Economic Policies and Processes***

This study highlights other research findings, which indicate that development at the rural hinterland or small town level derives impetus and momentum from macro-policies and macroeconomic processes at national and even international level, rather than from local impulses emanating from the towns (Hinderink and Titus 2002). For instance, throughout its history, the growth of Dunkwa has been shaped by exogenous factors such as the extension of the railway line to the town in 1902. As noted earlier the town's growth has always been influenced by the health of the national economy, (Aryeetey 1989 cited in Ofori 2002 makes similar observations concerning small and medium-sized towns in Ghana).

In recent years, the doubled-edged impact of SAPs on small towns has been well-noted. Whilst the SAP-induced programmes of aid flows, infrastructure provision through

multilateral and bilateral loans and grants, and improvements in transport have had positive consequences for small towns and rural areas, their negative effects on social services provision and subsidies reduction have also been well documented. Even though there have been improvements in the transport and road sector, this has been limited to the highways linking major centres, which are under the control of the central government's Ministry of Roads and Highways. All of the highways linking Dunkwa are in a fairly good condition and accessible all year round. However, the same cannot be said of roads connecting the district capital to other communities within the district, since these feeder roads fall under the authority of the DA. These roads are in a poor condition, and many are not passable by motorcar during the rainy season. Private commercial transport operators take advantage of this situation to charge high fares.

SAPs and falling world commodity prices have further exacerbated the already inherent weaknesses of the production and service functions of the district capital. In particular, the collapse of key firms in Dunkwa has affected employment levels, and consequently purchasing power and commercial activities in the town. The unattractiveness of Dunkwa to its hinterland population as a location offering job opportunity is well emphasized in a study by the Dunkwa Office of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), which is responsible for income tax collection in both the UDD and THLDD. Entitled '1999 Assessment of External Shocks and its profound Impact on Local Revenue Collection and Development', the study noted that the Dunkwa Office of the IRS is gradually losing its prominence as a major revenue collector for the region and the state. This must be attributed to declining world market prices for the respective output of its two most important contributors to revenue, viz. gold mining companies and Twifo Oil Palm Plantations Limited (TOPP). Not only were the companies not earning enough from their exports, but the falling world market prices have also resulted in labour cuts, and consequently in falling income tax contributions. Furthermore, the Report noted the ripple effect on local employment and taxes in the form of reduced volumes of contracts executed by local firms and businesses [4]. In addition, the last two decades have witnessed the relocation of banks (Standard Chartered and Cooperative Banks) and wholesale outlets away from the town on account of operational difficulties. The loss of jobs has a direct impact on agriculture and on incomes in both the rural areas and in the centre, Dunkwa.

The social services available in Dunkwa would have had a much greater impact on the rural areas if they were affordable and accessible. (Other limiting factors can for the moment be left out of consideration.) However, the introduction of user charges under the SAPs, and high transport costs of the low-quality feeder roads between the district capital and its hinterland restrict access to these services. This is against the backdrop of low agricultural production and corresponding low incomes. It is therefore no wonder that most interviewees indicated that these services in Dunkwa are of little benefit to a large segment of the district's population.

Another macro-policy of significance is the influence of the cocoa season. Responses from interviews with rural household heads, private commercial transport operators and market traders indicate that interactions between Dunkwa and its hinterland increase during the main cocoa season (October to March). This period, which also coincides with the end of year festivities (Christmas and New Year), brings with it new economic activities due to increases in money supply resulting from the sale of dried cocoa beans. However, the influence of cocoa on the local economy is not dictated by local policies, but is to a large extent shaped by the pricing and purchasing policies of the central government. It is the central government that determines the start and end of the cocoa season, even though farmers may have harvested their produce and may be ready to market it. It is also the central government that sets the price per kilogram/tonne of dried cocoa beans, irrespective of world market prices. Government policies on cocoa therefore contribute significantly to when and how Dunkwa interacts with its hinterland. In the words of a farmer and an ex-teacher at Asma Camp, *'the close of the cocoa season somewhere in April is the period farmers find themselves in a difficult financial situation. When the cocoa-purchasing season is closed [by central government], farmers must keep the little beans they get from their farms'*. This situation affects not only the income and wellbeing of cocoa farmers, but also the wider local economy, and consequently rural-urban interactions.

### ***Limited Achievement of Decentralisation***

While the aforementioned constraints to the operationalisation of the DCDM could be described as fundamental and structural problems affecting district development and rural-urban interactions, the policy of decentralisation was formulated with the implicit or explicit intent to address these constraints. However, decentralisation has had a minimal impact on rural-urban interaction, and consequently on district development. In other words, Ghana's decentralisation illustrates the situation in many countries, where the programme

promises so much but delivers very little in practical terms (see Ayee 2000a). While administrative decentralisation has taken the lead in the transfer of responsibilities to District Assemblies, fiscal decentralisation lags far behind. Not even the introduction of the District Assemblies' Common Fund (DACF), a constitutional provision allocating 5% of the total national revenue to the District Assemblies, has improved their financial resource base. The result is a mismatching of delegated functions and finances, a situation sometimes referred to as 'vertical imbalance' (Ayee 1995). Consequently, the District Assemblies have failed to institute programmes such as improved market infrastructure and access, road rehabilitation, and agricultural development, all of which are necessary for rural-urban linkages and district development.

The decentralisation programme is further hampered by the lack of clarity regarding functional linkages and operational coordination between decentralised institutions. Other problems include inadequate and inefficient staff, especially at the district level where, because of the lack of basic amenities and opportunities for personal upliftment, qualified personnel refuse to be posted. These problems confronting the decentralisation programme are most acute at the district level. Ironically, it is also at the district level that the fruits of the decentralised planning system are most needed (MLG&RD 1996; Ayee 2000b). It should be noted that discussions on decentralisation and participatory development might seem a little removed from the discussion on small towns. However, decentralisation and participatory development are of central importance to the promotion of social and economic development within and around small towns. They are also very important in increasing the attraction of these centres for productive investment through enhanced quality of management and improved administration of resources and services (Hardoy and Satterthwaite 1988: 12-13).

While the institutional structure of Ghana's decentralisation programme has been criticised as not genuinely decentralising power to the district level (see Naustdalslid 1992; Crook and Manor 1998; Eriksen et al. 1999; Ayee 2000b), a more critical problem is the partial or total lack of sub-district structures (Area Councils and Unit Committees) in many districts, even after 15 years of implementation of the decentralisation programme. According to the UDDA (2002: 39), the district has 8 Area Councils and 119 Unit Committees. However, these structures have not been fully established; many exist only in skeletal form and are hardly functioning. The sub-district structures, whose functions include revenue

mobilisation, implementation of policies at the local level and community mobilisation for participation in the decision-making process, are critical to the successful implementation of the decentralisation programme. In particular, the virtual or total absence of these structures raises questions about the extent to which local people are involved in decision-making. This puts a question mark over the whole participatory approach, which is much emphasized under the programme.

With the exception of basic school-related projects (such as the construction of school buildings and the provision of furniture and of teachers' accommodation), few respondents in the Upper Denkyira District could identify any projects undertaken in their communities by the DA. Prior to the introduction of the DACF in 1994, the UDDA's recurrent expenditure averaged 75% of total expenditure, leaving only 25% for capital expenditure. The introduction of the DACF has improved the situation somewhat, but the amount of funds given to the DAs is still very small in relation to their responsibilities.

The poor performance of the DAs has resulted in the increasing reluctance of local people to contribute more through the payment of basic rates and other taxes to the Assembly, which many view as doing very little or virtually nothing for them. For instance, basic rates (popularly referred to as the land poll) are one of the tax revenue sources available to the DAs under existing laws. Records from the UDDA indicate that the number of people in the district paying this tax dropped from 14000 in 1991 to 8376 in 1997. This is against the background of population growth of about 3% per annum, and hence, an increase in the number of potential taxpayers. The reluctance to contribute to the revenue base of the Assembly has been further compounded by the lack of transparency and proper accountability in the disbursement and general management of financial resources. In a focus group discussion, Assembly members blamed the problem of accountability and misuse of funds on weak institutional structures and on the lack of legal mandates to scrutinise and audit the records of finances of the Assembly. As one participant at the focus group discussion put it:

Apart from implementing our decisions they [District Chief Executive, District Finance Officer and other civil servants of the Assembly] aren't obliged under any law to tell us how they spend on projects. Basically we have no right to go into the

accounting books of the Assembly even though we've a Finance Sub-Committee. We therefore take whatever they present to us.

The state has been criticised for not providing enough financial and other resources to the DAs. The response of state representatives has been to cite unfavourable world market prices for primary commodities (mainly cocoa, gold and timber) and World Bank/IMF and donor regulations and restrictions, which prohibit it from determining an independent development policy. In his '2003 State of the Nation Address' to Parliament, the President of Ghana stated these limitations in relation to the road sector; in reality, they apply to all sectors of the economy:

... because we have to rely on donors and other multilateral agencies for almost all the funds for the development of roads, we are obliged to submit to and observe the varied procedures their systems require to ensure that their taxpayers' monies are used efficiently ... This year, a total amount of almost two trillion cedis, the equivalent of about 250 million US dollars will be spent on road construction. Out of this amount, the Ghana government component is about ₵422 billion. In other words, only about 22% will come from our own resources.

([www.ghanaweb.com](http://www.ghanaweb.com), Accessed on 13 February 2003).

The case is made that in a developing country like Ghana, with weak common political structures and a history of political instability, central government controls (including on finance) are required to guarantee national unity and stability. However, a counter argument is that there has been as much mismanagement and instability at central level as there could possibly be at local level (Davies et al. 1994). In Ghana, this latter argument is supported by recent reports by the Accountant-General's Department on corruption and misappropriation of resources in high places.

Lastly, the apparent dereliction of responsibility by the state emanates from the contradictory outcomes of economic reforms and decentralisation. Even though donor agencies and their affiliates encourage decentralisation, this takes the form of fiscal decentralisation, where local provision of services is to be met from local revenue sources. Thus, as Slate (1989, cited in Ayee 2000a: 12) noted, decentralisation becomes a less than overt step on the way to increased privatisation, deregulation, and a roll-back of many



of the economic, and in particular of the social functions of the state. The implementation and imposition of these one-sided programmes on local people contradicts the participatory element of decentralisation (Mohan 1996). Again, the delegation of a large number of responsibilities from the central government to the District Assemblies has caused the latter to suffer from the same problems as the former, namely the absence or inadequate implementation of development programmes. Therefore, as long as the DAs are insufficiently able to raise and manage revenue, they are likely to provide insufficiently for the services needed in the districts (see Ayee 2000a). However, the extent to which external agencies and international socio-economic conditions are responsible for the underachievement of Ghana's decentralisation programme remains questionable, especially in the face of corruption and the lack of transparency in the management of resources at both the local and the national level.

## **Conclusion**

According to the DCDM, the strengthening of the district capitals is not exclusively aimed at the growth of these centres, but also at strengthening rural-urban linkages. Other aims include the promotion of agriculture in the hinterlands and the stimulation of employment opportunities other than farming. It envisages that rural-urban linkages between district capital and rural periphery will have positive consequences for both spatial units, and hence for the overall development of the district. This development process is situated within a decentralised political and socio-economic framework, with active involvement of the people of the district and their representatives, as well as the pooling of resources within the district for the mutual benefit of both rural and urban development. It also emphasizes the uniqueness of each district capital (and district), and hence the need for considerable local input in designing the overall development strategy for the district.

Using a district capital, Dunkwa, and the Upper Denkyira District as a case study, this article found that rural-urban linkages critical to the operationalisation of the DCDM are very limited on account of factors largely outside the purview of local authorities and people. These factors include macroeconomic policies and processes at national level, inherent weaknesses of the small town's production and service functions, and the limited achievements of the decentralisation programme. More importantly, the limited impact of decentralisation is of significance, as it is regarded as a programme for addressing structural teething problems affecting the development of districts. So far its impact has

been limited because of the many problems confronting the programme, especially central government reluctance to cede financial resources to the District Assemblies commensurate with the functions delegated to them.

The conclusion drawn in this article is that the envisaged autonomous district development, centred on the district capitals, will require the active involvement of the state. In other words, in a developing country like Ghana, with its relatively weak infrastructure and poorly developed participatory political structures, the rolling back of the state as a result of the macro-economic policies of the past two decades and the development strategy of decentralisation do not preclude the active involvement of the state in local development, at least in the short to medium term. This involvement should focus on the formulation of favourable national policies regarding the provision of infrastructure and support for socio-economic initiatives and mobilisation at district level. These interventions are required to enhance the level of district capital-rural interactions and overall district development, notwithstanding unpredictable international socio-economic and political circumstances.

While the discussion in this paper has focused on Dunkwa and the Upper Denkyira District, the experiences and responses are believed to mirror those of other districts in Ghana, especially among the newly created ones with weaker infrastructure and revenue bases. The conclusions here contribute to the debate regarding the direction of future development in Ghana. Though decentralisation is regarded as an autonomous development process, the nature of the constraints impeding rural-urban linkages and district development indicate that the state in Ghana has a crucial role to play in overcoming these constraints. A more genuine form of decentralisation is required, one in which the resources transferred to the District Assemblies are commensurate with the functions delegated to them.

Finally, what is obvious from the discussion in this article, is that the envisaged supportive roles of district capitals and their rural hinterlands in the overall development of districts can only take place when the required conditions for this development process are fulfilled at higher levels of decision-making and implementation. It is in establishing these conditions and stimulating these supportive roles that the main justifications are found for a planned effort at rural hinterland and district capital development. In real terms, efforts

should be made towards improving what Hinderink and Titus (2002: 388) described as the supply side of the rural hinterland economy, particularly agriculture, through improvements in market infrastructure and access by DAs. At the same time, the small towns' poorly developed public service functions vis-à-vis the needs of the rural hinterland population need to be upgraded. Central government's commitment to a genuine decentralisation programme is therefore a matter of crucial importance in this regard.

#### Notes

[1] In Ghana, an official definition of a small town does not exist, but only the definition of a town. Small towns are defined here as settlements with populations of between 5000 and 50,000, and this typically include district capitals, usually surrounded by predominantly rural populations. The terms 'small town' and 'district capital' are used interchangeably, unless otherwise stated.

[2] Deagrarianisation refers to long-term occupational adjustment, income-earning reorientation, social identification, and spatial re-location of rural dwellers from strictly agrarian modes of livelihood. On the other hand, de-peasantisation refers to the shrinking of peasant populations due to the loss of their economic capacity and social coherence (Bryceson 2001: 194-195).

[3] Oral history by Nana Howard Kwadwo Manu, Abusuapinin (Family Head), Dunkwa royal family (27 September 2002).

[4] At the time of collecting data in 2002, no major mining company was present in the district.

*Acknowledgement:* The author would like to thank Ragnhild Lund and two anonymous referees for their earlier comments, and Catriona Turner for her proofreading. I would also like to thank the Research Council of Norway (NFR) for financial assistance. The views expressed, however, are solely my own.

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### **Zusammenfassung (summary in German)**

Die Umsetzung der verwaltungsmäßigen Dezentralisierung in Ghana setzt voraus, dass die Kreisstädte (hier als Kleinstädte definiert) zu Brennpunkten der Entwicklung in ihren Kreisen ausgebaut werden. Zuwendungen von Regierungs- und Geberseite sind darum gezielt dazu eingesetzt worden, die Infrastruktur dieser Zentren zu verbessern, damit sie ihre neuen Aufgaben möglichst effizient erfüllen können. Die Bedeutung der Kreisstädte für die Umsetzung der Dezentralisierung ist zwar durchaus erkannt worden, doch gibt es bisher kaum Untersuchungen zu den Verflechtungen und Wechselwirkungen zwischen diesen Zentren und ihrem Umfeld (dem jeweiligen Kreis), die es erlauben, die Wirksamkeit dieser Strategie einzuschätzen. Dieser Artikel entwickelt ein Modell zur Einschätzung der jeweiligen Rollenverteilung und Wechselwirkung zwischen Kreisstädten und ihren Kreisen unter der Dezentralisierung, und dieses Modell wird anschließend am Beispiel einer Kreisstadt und ihres Kreises vorgeführt. Der Artikel betont zwar, dass es sinnvoll ist, die Kreisstädte als Motoren der Entwicklung in ihren Kreisen einzusetzen, weist aber zugleich darauf hin, dass diese Strategie wenig Aussicht auf Erfolg hat, soweit keine echte Dezentralisierung stattfindet, die im Politischen wie im Ökonomischen die aktive Beteiligung der örtlichen Bevölkerung auf demokratischer Grundlage einschließt.

### **Schlüsselwörter (keywords in German)**

Ghana, Dezentralisierung, Distrikt, Stadt, Stadtentwicklung, Stadt-Land-Beziehungen, Regionalentwicklung/Regionalplanung, Kommunale Regierung/Verwaltung, Verwaltungsstruktur, Theoriebildung

### **Résumé (summary in French)**

La mise en place de la décentralisation administrative au Ghana suppose que les villes chefs-lieux de district (définies ici comme petites villes) deviennent le centre du développement de leur district. C'est la raison pour laquelle les aides du gouvernement et autres donateurs ont été utilisées en vue d'améliorer les infrastructures de ces centres afin qu'ils puissent remplir leur rôle aussi efficacement que possible. L'importance de ces villes pour la mise en place de la décentralisation a été reconnue, néanmoins jusqu'à présent, peu d'études ont été menées sur les interactions entre ces centres et leur région. Celles-ci permettraient d'évaluer la pertinence de cette stratégie. Cet article propose un modèle d'évaluation du rôle réciproque et des synergies entre les chefs-lieux et leur district dans le cadre de la décentralisation. Ce modèle est ensuite appliqué à titre d'exemple à une ville et à son district. Si l'article montre qu'il est judicieux d'utiliser les chefs-lieux comme moteurs du développement des districts, il souligne néanmoins que cette stratégie a peu de chances de réussir, sans une véritable décentralisation qui inclue une participation politique et économique active de la population locale sur des bases démocratiques.

### **Mots clés (keywords in French)**

*Décentralisation, ville, développement urbain, relations ville-campagne, développement régional/ aménagement du territoire, administration locale, structure administrative, formation de théorie*

### **5.5 Markets and Women's Trade: Exploring their Role in District Development in Ghana**

George Owusu and Ragnhild Lund (2004), in *Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift – Norwegian Journal of Geography* 58 (3). pp. 113-124.

Is not included due to copyright.



## 5.6 'Are they giving more than before?' Evaluating remittances from 'rural' communities in two Districts in Ghana

George Owusu (article under review).

### **Abstract**

*The flow of remittances to rural areas in developing countries is often regarded as critical, and as an equalizing mechanism that could reduce economic disparity between rural and urban areas. Although many studies have viewed remittances as flowing into rural areas there are also instances where they flow out of rural areas, and even instances where the outflow appears to be greater than the inflow. Based on interviews conducted on households in eight rural communities in two districts (Upper Denkyira and Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira Districts) in the Central Region of Ghana, this article finds that the outflow of remittances from the interviewed rural households exceeds the inflow. The article examines the reasons accounting for this net outflow from the interviewed households, and it concludes by arguing that the net outflow of remittances presents a challenge to rural and district development.*

**Key words:** *Remittances, Rural-Urban Interactions, Rural Development, Local Development*

### **Introduction**

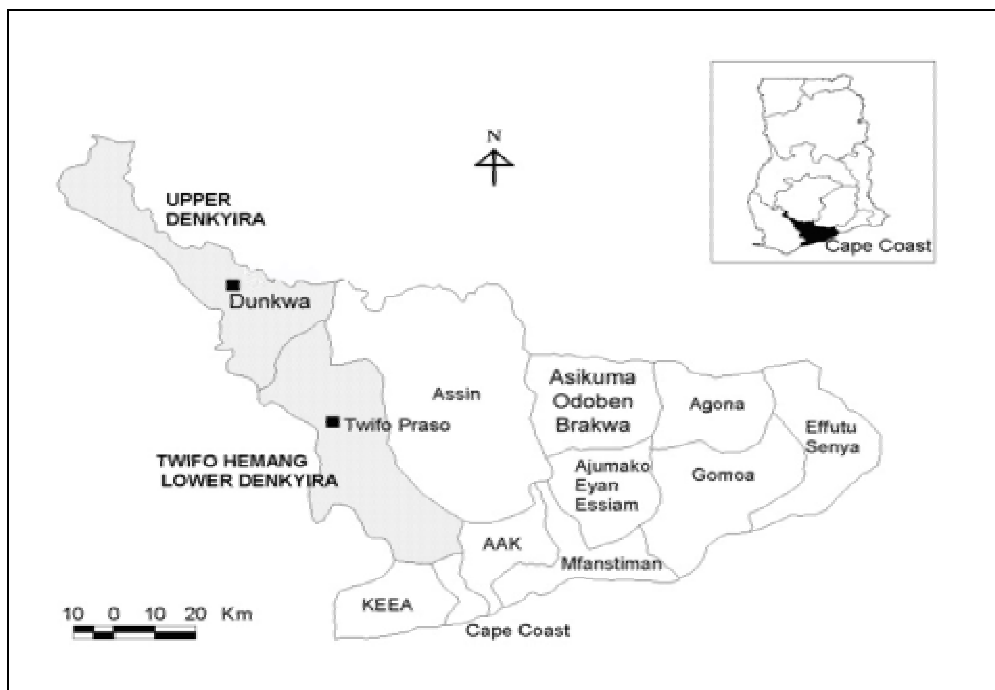
In theory and practice most development work is based on a dichotomy between 'rural' and 'urban' areas. This is reflected in the division of policies along spatial and sectoral lines, with concentration of attention focus on urban centres and their associated 'non-agricultural activities', and in the case of rural areas, on 'villages and agricultural activities' (Rigg 1998; Tacoli 1998a; Tacoli 1998b; Bryceson 2000, 2001; Okali et al. 2001; Bah et al. 2003; Satterthwaite and Tacoli 2003). These analyses of rural and urban pay little or no attention to the many linkages, both spatially and sectorally, which in reality or in everyday life situations occur between these spatial units.

Although in recent times increasing attention has been focused on rural-urban interactions in the regional development literature, many of these interactions are still regarded or viewed as a one-way flow, mainly from the urban to the rural. One such type of interactions is the flow of cash (money) and gifts, referred to as *remittances or transfers*,

between rural and urban. While this perception may hold for some regions, it is certainly not the case for all others. This therefore brings to the fore the need to avoid generalizations, and to allow the analyses of rural-urban interactions to be grounded in the specifics and peculiarities of each region.

This article analyses the flow of cash and gifts from rural areas based on interviews conducted in eight communities in two districts in the Central Region of Ghana, Upper Denkyira District (UDD) and Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira District (THLDD) (see Fig. 1). It examines the flow within the context of the past two decades of political-economic reforms and the associated problems of job losses, labour retrenchment, withdrawal of subsidies, increasing urban costs of living relative to the rural costs, and the increasing trend of urban-rural migration. It begins with an overview of the study area and a discussion of the study methodology. This is followed by a brief look at the development literature and remittances, and the problems associated with measuring remittance flows. The article then turns to remittance flow between the studied households and other parts of Ghana, and the reasons accounting for the identified flow pattern. It concludes by examining the impact of the flows on rural communities and local development.

**Fig. 1. The study districts in the Central Region of Ghana**



## **Study area and methodology**

This paper is based on in-depth household interviews conducted in eight communities in the Upper Denkyira District (UDD) and the Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira District (THLDD), with their respective district capitals of Dunkwa and Twifo Praso respectively. The selected communities were Jukwa, Twifo Mampong, Tweapease and Gyankobo (all in the THLDD) and Asma Camp, Buabin, Asikuma and Diaso (UDD). This field exercise was part of a broader study entitled 'Small Towns, Rural-Urban Linkages and Decentralization: Case Study of Two Small Towns in the Central Region'. Rural communities were selected for this part of the study as they are generally assumed to be the main destinations of remittances (or net remittance inflow areas). They are therefore places where reliable information or data about inflow and outflow remittances could be fairly gathered or assessed.

In this study, a household is defined as a person living alone or any group of persons staying together and sharing the same catering arrangements (GSS 2000a). In all, 80 household heads were interviewed in the eight rural communities (a total of 10 interviews in each community), using the purposive and snowballing sampling techniques. Efforts were made to incorporate as many diverse households as possible in the interviews. Where possible in each rural community, interviews included household heads who were agriculture extension workers, health, education and opinion leaders (the latter were mostly traditional leaders). At all interview sites, effort was made to interview equal numbers of men and women. Of the 80 respondents, 24% respondents had no formal education, the greater proportion of 48% had some basic/primary education, and 28% had secondary/post-secondary education (the latter were mainly agriculture extension, health, education and other professionals working in the communities). The majority of respondents cited farming as their main household occupation. A significant observation noted was that none of the households were engaged in only one occupation. Apart from farming, many of the women were found to be engaged in petty trading. Even teachers, health workers and agriculture extension staff were besides their main formal occupations were also engaged in part-time farming or petty trading.

In addition to the household interviews, key informant interviews were held with the District Planning Officers in each district. These interviews mainly centred on the district capital and decentralized development process, and also on changes in the district capital and

district in terms of population size, economic activities, provision of basic services, district agricultural production, poverty level and rural-urban linkages.

The Upper Denkyira District (UDD) and Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira District (THLDD) can both be described as predominantly rural and agricultural districts. According to the 2000 Population and Housing Census Reports, the proportion of rural population was about 86% and 76% for the THLDD and UDD respectively. In the UDD, the only urban centre is the district capital, Dunkwa, with a population of 26,215 in 2000. In the case of THLDD, the urban settlements are Twifo Praso (district capital) and Hemang, with respective populations of 9,011 and 6,179 (GSS 2002a; 2002b) [1]. In both districts, agriculture and its related activities employ between 55-60% of the active labour force. In addition, data from both districts indicate that crop farming is the most important source of household income: 74% of households' incomes in the THLDD (THLDDA 2002: 10) and 54% in the case of the UDD (UDDA 2002: 5). The lack of formal institutions offering formal employment and the limited job opportunities other than agriculture in rural communities implies that the percentage of rural households deriving their main source of income from agriculture is much higher than the average for each district [2].

The wet semi-equatorial climate and the availability of large tracts of arable land in both districts support peasant agriculture based on cash crops (predominantly cocoa and palm-oil), and food crops (mainly cassava, plantain, cocoyam and to some extent rice). Cash crop farming in particular has attracted a large number of people from various parts of the country, especially Ashantis, Ewes, Ga-Adangbe and Akuapims [3]. A Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) research study (1995: 17-19) on internal migration in Ghana noted that forest areas suitable for cocoa production have attracted populations since the 1960s. This is also evidently the case for the UDD and THLDD. Apart from cocoa, large migrant populations have also been attracted to gold mining activities in the UDD, and oil palm production in the case of THLDD (especially after the establishment of Twifo Oil-Palm Plantation at Twifo Praso in the 1970s).

The industrial sectors of both districts are under-developed, and dominated by a few small-scale industrial enterprises such as oil-palm extraction, soap making and traditional craft (mainly kente weaving, blacksmithing and goldsmithing), which are predominantly located in the district capitals. The only exception to this is the Twifo Oil-Palm Plantation (TOPP),

one of the largest palm-oil estates in the country. Dunkwa, on the other hand, had large industrial establishments in the past, such as the Dunkwa Goldfields Limited and two large sawmills (Thompson Moir and Galloway, TMG and International Hardwood Limited, IHL) though these have all collapsed in the last two decades.

### **The Development Literature and Remittances**

Remittances may be defined as the flow or transmission of cash and gifts from one place to another, and these may be both between and within countries – *International* and *Intra-national remittances* [4]. While international remittances have received much attention in the literature, the same cannot be said of intra-national remittances. To a large extent, this is due to the problems of data and determining the magnitude of flow, since most intra-national remittances are carried out by and large through informally such as hand-carriage, family and friends. They therefore do not easily lend themselves to statistical collation particularly in developing countries where institutions and funds for data collection are already limited. International remittances also suffered from data problems. This is because large parts are carried out largely through informal sources. In some countries this is estimated to be at least double or triple the recorded figure from the formal sources, namely banks, post offices, exchange houses and transfer companies (Puri and Ritzema 1999). However, a significant proportion of international remittances still go through formal channels, which make their capture in terms of data relatively easier.

According to available records for developing countries, international remittances are often regarded as very high due to records availability. In addition, remittance per international migrant is high due to usual high personal income earnings and a stronger currency in the host country relative to migrant's country of origin. Intra-national remittance is also very significant, though the full size and magnitude are unknown due to the lack of data as already highlighted. However, the sum of small amounts from intra-national remittances amounts to considerable remittance flows. In Ghana, for example, estimated remittance received from abroad (international) represents only 40% of all remittances received by households (GSS 2000a).

The development literature on the flow of remittances to and from rural areas in Sub-Saharan Africa reveals that it is closely associated with migration. Accordingly, the conventional assumption has been that it is those migrants who move to the cities and

towns from the rural areas for job opportunities and access to social amenities (what is often described as the 'bright lights of the city') who due to their continuous ties remit to their kins as a way of keeping continuous and closer touch with their roots. Others also see urban-rural migrant remittances, as an essential element of the 'moral economy' – that is, net contribution of remittances *should essentially be from* urban areas to rural areas. This emanates from the perception that structural conditions of life in rural areas are distinctly disadvantageous compared to those in the urban areas (Potts and Mutambirwa 1998). As such the flow of cash and gifts (items) has for long been regarded as a one-way process from the towns and cities to the villages and countryside.

The flow of remittances from rural areas has therefore been given little attention in the regional development literature. Consequently, the reasons for and the impact of these flows from rural areas have not received the desired attention it deserved, particularly within the context of rural development and attempts to reduce rural poverty and migration to the large cities and towns. It may also be argued that this situation has contributed to the view or perception held among potential rural-urban migrants, especially the youth that 'economic success is associated with moving to the city, and not staying in the village'. A Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) 1995 publication on internal migration in Ghana found a significant proportion of return-migrants (47%) did not return with any money, yet the study found that majority of rural non-migrants wanted to move to a city or a large urban town (GSS 1995: 110). Research by Okali et al. (2001: 27-28) in south eastern Nigeria indicates a similar strong desire among rural dwellers to move to large urban centres, even though there were many cases to the contrary of rural migrants who had not been successful in economic terms, and who had returned to their rural places of origin.

Even in situations where rural remittance outflows are acknowledged, they are belittled or not given serious attention. In many studies, efforts are made to calculate or estimate the level of flow from urban to rural without doing the same for the flows in the opposite direction. Writing on rural-urban ties in West Africa, Gugler and Flanagan (1979: 64) state that 'money and goods are taken to the village or sent there through trusted intermediaries; presents are received in return [from rural areas]'. Yet throughout their analyses, estimates of remittances from various urban places in West Africa are presented without any attempt to do likewise for remittances from rural areas, even though these have been acknowledged. Bigsten and Kayizzi-Mugerwa (1995) make similar remarks in

relation to the rural sector's responses to the economic crises in Uganda. Throughout their study, efforts are made to estimate the level and impact of urban-rural remittance reduction due to the economic crises on rural households. Notwithstanding this, they state that some 'rural households *remit substantial* amounts of money ... Food remittances were *not recorded* but seem, on the basis of anecdotal evidence, *to be substantial*' (Bigsten and Kayizzi-Mugerwa 1995: 190, my emphasise).

Not only have the remittance outflows from rural areas been underestimated or given little attention in the literature, but also remittance from the opposite direction (urban to rural) has been highlighted as crucial to the survival of rural households and the continued existence of rural areas. Therefore, the argument made is that, urban-rural transfers are very critical in mitigating or addressing the inequalities between rural and urban areas. In other words, the urban economy benefits a large number of people (including those who do not take residence in the urban centres) through the remittances of urban migrants. On this basis, O'Connor (1986: 291) argued that one set of transactions that force us to reject any suggestions that African cities are totally parasitic upon the rural areas are the cash remittances made by migrants to their rural relatives.

However, this sweeping generalization of the flow of remittances as one-sided (urban to rural), and also as a means of bridging the gap between rural and urban areas in developing countries, especially Sub-Saharan Africa countries, needs to be placed within the context of socio-economic and political changes in the last two decades. The thesis that urban-rural remittances can serve as an equalizing mechanism needs to be accepted with caution, and therefore needs to be placed within the specifics and peculiarities of each country and region, as evidence from this study seems to suggest.

### **Problems with Assessing Remittance Flows**

While the flow of goods to and from rural and urban places in developing countries has been analyzed with relatively less difficulty (problems lies largely with conducting traffic counting and market surveys), the situation is more complex and problematic concerning the flow of money and gifts. The problems associated with the flow of remittances in developing countries, especially Sub-Saharan Africa, are both practical and conceptual.

The first problem relates to the difficulties in delimiting what is 'rural' and 'urban'. While I do intend to examine the problems associated with definitions, the lack of a clear-cut definition (Pedersen 1997; Tacoli 1998a; Tacoli 1998b; Bah et al. 2003; Satterthwaite and Tacoli 2003) implies that determining the origin and destination of the flow of money and gifts may also be problematic. Thus, the lack of universally accepted definitions of what is urban and what is rural means that what may be considered as urban to rural remittances or vice-versa (or rural to rural remittances) in one country or region may be considered different in another.

A further problem to the above is the situation relates to what are described as 'multi-spatial households', that is, households whose members and economic activities criss-cross the rural-urban boundary, and thus fall into both spatial units. In this situation, a clear delineation of the direction of flows becomes not only difficult to determine but also complex. On this point, it is fair to accept O'Connor's (1986: 290) argument that concerning cash remittances made by those living in the towns: while some of these are made to kinsmen who are rural dwellers, others remain within the immediate family and may be used for such purposes as building a house for the remitter's own use later in life. Are we then considering transfers between urban and rural dwellers, or at best between urban and rural areas?

A more fundamental practical problem is the lack of data and the difficulties associated with the process of data collection as already highlighted, particularly in developing countries. The problem largely has to do with the lack of recording keeping by institutions, and also the large subsistence economy, which does not lend itself easily to data collection and analyses, particularly regarding personal income. As such, official data sources on personal income do not usually give a clear picture of the flow of remittance, and surveys are limited and have to be analyzed on the basis of the sampled population.

### **Economic/Political Reforms and the Flow of Remittances**

Two significant policies have been pursued in many African countries since the early 1980s – economic reforms (Structural Adjustment Programmes, SAPs) and political reforms (democratisation, and decentralization and local government reforms). These policies have had significant impact on rural-urban interactions, including the flow of remittances. In the 1980s and 1990s, many Sub-Saharan African countries (including



Ghana) experienced profound economic downturns that drastically impacted on the economic environments in which households made decisions, including decisions on remittances. As a response to the deteriorating balance of payment situation, increasing indebtedness, and general decline in all major sectors of the economy, the World Bank/International Monetary Fund (IMF) introduced the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) to address the situation. In many Sub-Saharan African countries (including Ghana), the severe cuts in government spending (including labour hiring freezes, layoffs, forced retirements, and increases in user charges for social services especially health and education as a result of SAPs) have significantly reduced households' real incomes particularly for urban households. These cuts have also pushed urban unemployment to unprecedented heights (Sowa 1993; GSS 1995; Donkor 1997; Owusu 2001).

While some degree of sanity has been restored at the macro-economic level, with Ghana's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) averaging about 5% for the past two decades, this has come at a cost. The gains at the macro-level have not trickled down to the micro-level. Indeed, some of the implemented policies such as the introduction of user-charges for social service as well as labour cuts have impacted negatively on households' income. Labour retrenchment and lay-offs have affected the urban areas most and have caused hardships in many households. For instance, more than 60,000 personnel were cut from the public sector at the end of 1989 (Sowa 1993). Many more private institutions and companies have collapsed under the impact of trade liberalization and unrestricted importation of subsidized goods from Europe, North America and elsewhere. As a result, the expectations of SAPs to boost the private sector and manufacturing in order to absorb excess labour from the public sector have not materialized. According to the GSS (1995: 107) formal sector employment has declined over the past two decades, fluctuating from a peak of 483,000 in 1976 to 464,000 in 1985, and down to 229,600 in 1990.

As a result of the difficult economic situations, shifts in household earnings have also occurred. While living costs have increased, the nominal wage has remained very low. It is estimated that, the average low-income family in Accra spends the equivalent of more than eight times the minimum wage (Sowa 1993). Against this background, many rural and urban households have responded to these difficult economic situations by supplementing their earnings through multiple sources of economic activities.

The last two decades have also witnessed urban-rural migration – the main destinations being the main cash crop (mainly cocoa) growing areas, especially the Western Region. On a broader level, analysts such as Tacoli (1998a) and Bryceson (2001) have attributed the increasing urban-rural migration to the narrowing or blurring of the gap between urban and rural areas as a result of the processes of depeasantization and deagrarianization occurring in many developing countries (which may include Ghana). However, Songsore and Denkabe (1995), have argued that the reforms have not improved conditions in either rural or urban areas and that the narrowing gap is the results of decreasing opportunities in urban areas, which in essence are reducing the inequalities between the two spatial units.

In Ghana, this reversed trend in migration is the direct result of the incentives provided to the cocoa sector through increases in producer prices since the start of the economic reforms as well as the consequences of public sector retrenchment (Sowa 1993: 16; GSS 1995), and decreasing opportunities in urban areas. Analyses of comments from household interviews conducted in the study area (much of which will be presented later) reflect this trend:

I lost my job in Takoradi and decided to come to my home town [Jukwa] to take proper care of my cocoa farm. So I have now settled down as a full-time farmer, and I have no intention of moving to any other place (ex-administrative clerk/farmer, Jukwa).

I worked as an electrical technician at the Prestea Goldfields Company [Western Region]. I lost my job ten years ago and moved here with the family to develop a farmland, which my wife acquired some years back (ex-technician/farmer, Asikuma).

Following the economic reforms, political reform was introduced in the form of democratization and decentralization. The renewed interest in local government and decentralization in many sub-Saharan African countries (including Ghana) after the start of SAPs has been attributed to several factors centred around the new development orthodoxy and criticisms of early versions of development, especially the failure of

centralized and top-down planning and administrative systems. It is argued that the economic crises in Sub-Saharan Africa and the implementation of SAPs have undermined the resource basis of many African governments even further, forcing them to adopt the 'rolling back of the state' strategy. This tendency has also been reinforced by the ideological orientation of many donor countries and agencies favouring these reforms as a prerequisite for good governance. Also, decentralization and local government reforms are therefore being pursued as a basis for easing pressure on scarce central government resources by seeking to improve efficiency, the local mobilization of resources and bringing development closer to the people through participation in the decision-making process (Børhaug 1994; Crook and Manor 1998, Ayee 2000). Under the conditions of resource constraints, decentralization and local government reforms could also be viewed as pushing some of the burdens of development onto local communities and populations.

Evidence to date indicates that Ghana's decentralization programme has achieved marginal or limited impact, especially on rural development, the basic objective of the programme (Ayee 1996; Crook and Manor 1998; Eriksen et al. 1999; Razin and Obirih-Opareh 2000). The decentralization programme from the national to the district level is beset with a number of problems most prominently of which include poor and inadequate financial resources. As many as 87 functions have been delegated to the District Assemblies (DAs). However, corresponding financial resources have not matched these delegated functions – fiscal decentralization is yet to be fully implemented. Other major problems include inadequate human resources, unclearly defined functional linkages and working relationships among the various institutions under the programme, and comprehensive central government controls and guidelines, which ultimately undermine local control and autonomy. More importantly, even though to a large extent, these problems can be found at all spatial levels of the programme, they are most critical at the district level. Ironically, it is also at the district level that the fruits of the programme are most needed.

The impact of the reforms is not expected to be geographically uniform within Ghana. For instance, the loss of jobs in the formal private and public sectors under SAPs has been felt most acutely in the urban areas. On the other hand, the adjustment policies of crop prices increases have improved farmers' incomes though the full impact has not been felt due to other critical problems facing agriculture such as inadequate storage facilities and

increased costs of inputs. Also, even though the decentralization programme has several aims, its basic objective is rural development as a way of reducing the disparity between rural and urban areas, and consequently a reduction in rural-urban migration. In other words, the benefits will be realized more in rural than urban areas.

Within these economic and political contexts, the argument can be made predicated on the grounds that if remittance inflows to rural from urban areas and other places are encouraged, this could bridge the inequalities between them. These remittance inflows are perceived to originate from 'more developed' areas (usually assumed to be urban areas). This equalization effect of remittances involves diffusion or a trickle-down effect, which results in a spiral of growth in the rural areas (Ma 1999: 783). Put in another way, the basic argument here is that with limited central government support, remittances to rural areas are essential to the development of these areas. This proposition leads to many questions, which require answers. These include – Can this proposition be applicable to all rural households and areas? What is the impact of the reforms on the level and direction of remittance flow to and from rural households? What are the reasons accounting for the direction of remittance flow in the interviewed rural households?

### **Remittance Receipts and Expenditures**

As already noted, one of the key interactions between rural and urban areas (or rural to rural areas) is the flow of cash and gifts, referred to as remittances or transfers. To gauge the level of interactions between the selected communities and their respective district capitals and other localities in Ghana, questions were asked about the flow of cash and gifts to and from the interviewed households. In order to arrive at an estimated average per annum, all respondents were asked to quantify all non-cash remittances to and from their households in monetary terms.

The findings from the household interviews indicated that remitted items received by households were mainly money (cash) and non-local items such as kerosene, clothes and food (particularly imported rice, sugar and salt). They also revealed that a significant proportion of households interviewed do not receive any remittances – 29% households in the UDD and 38% in the case of the THLDD. Overall, average households' remittances received per year (including foreign/international remittance) were estimated at about ₵26 million for the UDD, and ₵13 million for the THLDD. Three households in each district have

foreign (international) sources as their main source of remittance. This constitutes about 48% and 71% of estimated value of remittances received for the interviewed households in the THLDD and UDD respectively.

While not attempting to generalize due to the limited size of the sample, there are two points to be made from the above with specific reference to the interviewed households. The first is that, the above observation contradicts the notion that all rural households depend on remittances for their survival. While not underestimating the significances of urban-rural remittances, the point made here is that the importance of remittances to all households and local development may have been overestimated, or may have changed over time. The second and final point is the significance of foreign remittances in local development in terms of its contribution to some households and the local and national economies. In recent times, foreign remittances have been highlighted as a major source of revenue. According to the Bank of Ghana, total private inward transfers through the banking system and other formal channels in 2002 totalled US\$1.3 billion. This figure showed an increment of over 200% from previous years. Significantly, this amount almost equals the proceeds from cocoa and is slightly above the proceeds from gold [5]. The impact of this on the national economy and on some households and families is very significant. Further, all indications are that this amount will continue to grow or increase at a time when receipts from the primary exports of the country are in decline due to falling world prices. One respondent (petty trader/farmer, Buabin), making a related comment, put it this way: 'Our relatives outside are aware of the increasing high costs of living in Ghana. They have therefore continually increased the amount of money they send to the family'.

It is therefore not surprising that all the six households receiving remittances from abroad confirmed that the level of receipts for the past ten years had been increasing yearly. Foreign remittances aside, the majority view of interviewed households receiving remittances is that the level of remittances from local sources (mainly from the towns and cities) has been decreasing for the past ten years or more. This conclusion is supported by the GSS (1995: 108-109) survey that showed that very few migrants earned significant income to enable them send substantial remittances to their relations, or to make significant investments. According to the survey, only 26% of out-migrants sent money

home. It added that, the majority of out-migrants (38%) also indicated that even if household members urgently needed money they could not provide anything.

The responses from the interviewed household heads revealed that a large proportion of remittances to and from their households are used for upkeep of the households and family, that is, for daily consumption purposes (food, clothing and health care). However, two respondents whose households have international remittance as their main source of remittance indicated that the cash received is used for both family and household upkeep as well as for productive investment such as running petty businesses and building houses. International remittances have thus become very important to households, and to the national economy as noted earlier.

Comparing estimated household remittance receipts and expenditure shows that more households do remit than they do receive remittances. While 34% households indicated that they have been receiving remittances, it was 65% in the case of remittance (outflows) expenditure. In addition, the total remittance receipts (excluding foreign remittance) was less than the estimated average remittance expenditure per year of about ₺36 million. Most of the interviewed households' expenditures on remittances go to the respondents' hometowns, and places of origin, which are outside the district. For instances, at the interview site of Asma Camp in the Upper Denkyira District, none of those respondents interviewed originated from the district. About 50% of the total average estimated transfers per year of the interviewed households in the UDD were attributed to this site. Items sent are mainly cash and locally grown food items (such as plantain, cassava, maize and vegetables) for the upkeep of immediate family members such as parents, brothers and sisters and older children who may be living in the cities and towns. Apart from this, most other transfers occur during festive occasions (Christmas, Easter and traditional festivals) and funerals. This view was echoed in this usual comment: 'My transfers to my hometown go to my mother and other older members of the family. These transfers have been increasing for the past years because of the increasing health needs of my mother and the others' (teacher/farmer, Asma Camp).

The reasons cited for the inability of friends and relatives to remit, and the decreasing levels of urban-rural remittances in some respect were similar to the reasons accounting for increasing levels of transfers from the interviewed households. These reasons can be

summarized as follows: increases in cost of living; increasing needs of dependants and; increased family burdens. According to respondents, to a large extent, these are also the main reasons accounting for urban households' inability to remit or for decreasing levels of remittance receipts.

The above observations (though not attempting to generalize) are quite significant with respect to the interviewed households especially on two points. First, they tend to contradict many studies on the flow of cash and gifts to rural households, which indicate a one-way flow but also that this far exceeds those from all rural households. The reasons cited by respondents as accounting for this situation mainly centred on the expression or sentiment that 'conditions in the cities are even more difficult than what is here'. The conclusion reached here is supported by the Ghana Living Standard Survey (GLSS) Report 4, 2000 on intra-national remittances. According to the GLSS Report 4, while total annual remittances *from* and *to* rural households was estimated at ₵268 billion and ₵285 billion respectively, and from and to urban households was estimated at ₵205 billion and ₵507 billion respectively (GSS 2000a: 108) [6].

Second, foreign remittances aside, the above observation indicates a net loss to the interviewed rural households, a situation largely overlooked due to the little attention given to the flow of remittances from rural households. This situation has implications for rural development, especially on efforts aimed at enhancing capital accumulation in rural areas. More importantly, the flow of transfers from the interviewed households is not due to increased income resulting from increased productivity or improved market of produce but for reasons of family and social considerations to assist relatives and closer relations in urban areas and other places to meet the recent increasing economic hardships. In fact, responses on agricultural production, income and poverty revealed that the past decade's economic and political reforms have had very little impact on living standards in the interviewed households. Thus, households' remittance expenditures are not intended for productive purposes or to guarantee returns on income and productivity.

A significant observation from the interview analyses is that remittance flow between the interviewed households and the district capitals of the two districts (or in general intra-district flows) was very limited. Over 90% of the interviewed households' estimated remittance outflows go to places outside the district particularly to their hometowns (places

of origin). In enumerating the key problems confronting the UDD and THLDD, an Assistant Regional Economic Planning Officer included *capital outflow* as one of the key problems facing the UDD and THLDD. He attributed this to the large number of settler farmers and non-indigenes in the two districts: 'Most of the cocoa farmers and other farmers in the district are settler farmers. They therefore do not spend the greater part of their generated income in the district, but prefer to send it to their places of origin' (Assistant Regional Economic Planning Officer, Central Region). According to the interviews conducted, non-indigenes were 43% and 40% in the Upper Denkyira District and Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira District respectively.

While capital outflow across national borders, especially within the context of globalization and multi-national companies and businesses has been well emphasized in recent times in the development literature, the impact and causes of this within regions and national boundaries has received less attention [7]. Further, whilst movements of cash between countries are relatively easier to control through taxation and other similar measures, the same cannot be said of the situation within national boundaries. This poses a challenge for regional development, and hence a development problem for both districts, as noted by the Regional Economic Planning Officer.

### **Accounting for Identified Remittance Flow Pattern**

The analyses of responses from the interviewed households in the two districts indicate that international remittance aside, rural remittance expenditures exceed remittances receipts. This conclusion drawn may be limited by the small size of the sample used. It may also be subjected to frauds due to the tendency for respondents to remember what their households have given rather than what they have received or it may even be questioned on the grounds of unreliability and selectivity of respondents' memories. It must, however, be noted that with the exception of the sample size, all other surveys of intra-national remittances may also suffer from these limitations. Nevertheless it gives us some insights into changes and processes occurring in some households in some rural areas regarding the flow of remittances. It also gives some insights behind the numbers in recent large surveys such the GLSS Report 4 (GSS 2000a) and GSS (1995) studies.

The overall conclusion from the interviewed households contrasts with many previous studies that found remittances flow to rural households not only higher but also critical for



the survival of these households. While not criticizing earlier studies on intra-national remittances flow in Ghana such as Caldwell (1969: 168) and O'Connor (1986: 291) which concluded that in economic terms rural-urban migration is much more important to the countryside than is the same phenomenon in most developed world due to a larger proportion of rural households' dependence on remittances, the present study suggest there have been some changes in recent times. Accordingly, it is imperative to look for reasons and explanations accounting for the remittance flow pattern in the interviewed households in the eight communities in the UDD and THLDD.

### ***Economic Downturn***

The size and frequency of total intra-national remittance flows are determined by several factors, however, the most crucial factor is the level of economic activity in both the host region and the sending region. The last two decades of SAPs involving government's withdrawal of subsidies on social services and the introduction of user charges; labour lay-offs and retrenchment exercises and; trade liberalization have in general terms impacted differentially on both rural and urban areas. Some have argued that SAPs have shifted the terms of trade from industry to agriculture, and hence making rural areas and settlements at the lower levels of the settlement hierarchy more economically attractive. In addition, SAP-inspired export-oriented trade favours agriculture over industry (Gilbert 1993, cited in Briggs and Yeboah 2001: 19).

It can be argued that, the withdrawal of subsidies (which for a long time has largely benefited the urban population), the shrinking of the formal sector (which was largely urban-based), the documented fall in urban income and a slight improvement in rural income due to removal of price controls on agriculture have all encouraged some growth and development at the lower levels of the settlement hierarchy in many African countries, including Ghana (see Aeroe 1992). In general terms, the decline of the urban economy especially the reduction in formal employment opportunities has affected the capacity and ability of urban households to remit. Compounding this further is the fact that, most rural-urban migrants have low skills and little employment opportunities and earnings that will enable them to have enough disposal income to send part home (GSS 1995). Writing on gender relations and rural livelihoods in Kenya, Francis (1998: 73) makes similarly observations, noting that in recent years only a shrinking number of rural households rely on remittances from urban areas as an alternative source of income.

The two districts in the study area fall within the cash crop (mainly cocoa and palm-oil) growing region of Ghana, areas seen to have fared well under the economic reforms (Sowa 1993; GSS 1995). Most of the households interviewed were engaged in the cocoa industry. The fieldwork results indicate that the most active period of the year in economic terms occurs during the main cocoa harvesting season (October to March), an indication of the importance of commercial cash crop production to the local economy. A respondent (teacher/part-time farmer, Twifo-Mampong) expressed it this way:

During the purchasing and harvesting of cocoa, there is money in everyone's pocket both cocoa farmers and non-cocoa farmers. This is because if you are a trader your wares would be patronized and there are a lot of activities here. For us in education, this is the time parents and guardians come to school to settle their wards bills, to buy new school uniforms for the children and settle all outstanding bills. When the cocoa-purchasing season is closed all activities goes down.

Analyzing poverty trend in Ghana in the 1990s, the GSS (2000b: 12-13) report concludes that poverty reduction has been spatially favourable in the cash crop growing forest regions and sectorally favourable among export farmers. This area has therefore fared better relative to other parts of the country. Nevertheless responses from farmers and indeed from the GSS (2000b) study indicate that more needs to be done particularly towards improving agricultural production in order to reduce poverty and improve living standards.

The analysis here indicates that in the face of the economic crises, the rural sector has fared better than the urban sector. Writing on the rural sector's response to the crises in Uganda, Bigsten and Kayizzi-Mugerwa (1995) argued that since the rural sector could always fall back on subsistence it was spared the worst ravages of the crises compared to the urban sector. It can also be added that the revitalization of the cash crop farming through increases in producer prices and improvement of the infrastructure in regions producing these cash crops has had positive impact on these rural areas, notwithstanding the problems facing the rural sector such as poor access to market, poor roads and high transportation costs, and inadequate storage facilities.

The studied districts are located within the forest and cocoa growing region of Ghana. In sum, the above analysis may therefore partly explain why remittances from urban areas have declined while those of the studied rural households may have continued at least for those living within the forest and cash crop region.

### ***Quantification of Non-Cash Remitted Items***

One explanation for why intra-national remittances expenditure from the interviewed rural households in the studied communities exceeded remittance receipts, is the quantification of non-cash items into monetary terms in the study. This process of calculating remittances has been largely lost in many studies. For instance, the study by Bigsten and Kayizzi-Mugerwa (1995) acknowledged that food remittances were very substantial, yet this was not even recorded in their calculations in terms of the flow of remittances between rural and urban areas.

Thus, the point being made here is that food remittances constitute a loss of income to rural households and therefore need to be considered in any calculation of remittance flow from rural areas. Locally produced food such as cassava, plantain, maize and other crops constitute a very substantial proportion of remittances from the interviewed rural households. In the words of one respondent (petty trader/farmer, Gyankobo): 'Anytime I hear of somebody going to Kumasi [Ghana's second largest city], I do send food items to be given to my brother'. All the indications from the interviewed households were that the number of times this occurs in the year is quite significant, and in monetary terms is quite substantial. In many cases, apart from the loss of income, they (senders) also bear the cost of transporting these food remittances, even though friends and sometimes private commercial drivers may agree to carry these items along on their behalf.

### ***Attachment to Places of Origin***

It is argued that remittances from migrants to their places of origin play an important role in the family-linked migration process in developing countries. This is usually the reason for migration as well as, more importantly, the consequences of the process (Regmi and Tisdell 2002). While the place of origin and family links have been studied in respect to remitting behaviours and motives of migrants, this has been done mainly with regard to rural-urban migrants' remittances. Many of these studies have shown that the family link is very important, particularly in the African context where connection or attachment to hometowns is still very strong (Diyamett et al. 2001; Okali et al. 2001; Bah et al. 2003; Satterthwaite and Tacoli 2003). Ma (1999) illustrates this view with the phrase 'the sense

of belonging', to indicate that many migrants perceive their 'home' as being at their place of origin rather than at their present location.

In Ghana, where the extended family links and connection to 'hometown' (this could be urban or rural places of origin) are still very strong, remittances serve as a continuous means to maintain strong connections or contact with one's 'home' or place of origin. Remittances are therefore seen as a sense of responsibility and obligation to mothers, fathers, aunts, in-laws, and other members of the extended family. According to the GLSS Report 4, (GSS 2000a: 107) the majority of remittances (93%) in Ghana, go to relatives: in particular to parents or children (50%), brothers or sisters (18%), and other relatives (23%). In some cases, the present enterprises or livelihood in which the migrant household is involved may have been set up originally by some of their older relatives. This is very often the case for migrants engaged in farming whereby older relatives may have acquired the present land in question many years ago. This was very true of many cocoa farmers who were interviewed. For instance, according to a respondent (farmer) at Asma Camp in the Upper Denkyira District, the present settlement was established by his uncle years ago. His father and mother later joined the uncle to farm. So the present land that his household is working on was not acquired by himself, but through inheritance. The household therefore has an obligation to remit part of whatever it earns to the living members of the extended family who may be in their hometown or elsewhere.

In addition, within the context of strong extended family ties, remittances can also be viewed as a form of social security whereby family members and households engaged in a process, which could be described as 'scratch my back whilst I scratch yours'. This perception is well rooted in basically all Ghanaian societies, and a common adage in all languages. In times or periods of crisis or difficulties the family serves as a rallying point for keeping members together irrespective of spatial location. The exacerbation of economic difficulties under the SAPs, especially the lost of jobs and other economic livelihoods of family or household members living in urban places, provides the opportunity for other members of the lineage living in rural communities to help their members in the urban places that are under the full impact of SAPs.

Finally, the issue of attachment to places of origin more importantly suggests that in migrant attractive zones such as cocoa growing areas (like the UDD and THLDD), there is

the likelihood of outward net flow of remittances, even in the rural context. However, there is little in the development literature highlighting this outward flows and its impact on rural and regional development. This is very important, more so in the context of Ghana where the implementation of decentralization policies requires local mobilization of funds for local and district development. In this regard, the net outward flow of remittances presents a challenge to development.

### **Conclusion and Policy Implications for Rural Development**

In the regional development literature, remittance flow to rural areas is recognized as one of the means through which economic inequality between rural and urban areas can be reduced. More importantly, at a macro level, remittances serve as a means of income distribution between developed and less developed areas of a country. By fostering rural development, they help to promote balanced economic development, especially in areas where a significant proportion of the remittances is used for productive uses, i.e. activities that have the potential to generate additional income (such as savings and employment generating activities), or to safeguard against future expenses (such as insurance and pension schemes). From a micro perspective, remittances are expected to contribute towards improving the recipients' standard of living (GSS 1995). These processes are seen as part of the trickle-down processes envisaged in many top-down regional development models such as the growth pole theory. This much held view in regional development has been questioned in this study, as the interviewed rural households indicated a different picture other than what is depicted in theory. While this theoretical process of regional development may hold for other regions, it certainly would not hold for all rural areas and households. This, therefore highlights the need for the avoidance of generalization, and allows flows to and from rural areas such as remittances, and their regional analysis to be placed in the specifics of each rural region.

More importantly, in the context of Ghana, the impact of the flow of cash from rural areas under conditions of low productivity and income has direct implications for rural development. In essence, it implies that community/district level efforts to mobilize local resources, especially funds for local development by local people and institutions such as the District Assemblies (DAs), which are already under-resourced, are further hampered through the process of capital outflows. This is even more the case in situations as those demonstrated in this study, where remittance outflows are lost to destinations outside the

district. The effect of capital outflow through remittances and others is an issue that has been given little attention under Ghana's decentralization programme and efforts at promoting local development. In districts where the rural communities are net receivers of remittances and other incomes, it should give a boost to district planners and administrators in their efforts to mobilize funds for local development. However, for others with deficits (net outflows), mobilization of funds presents a real challenge. What is required is the understanding of local planners and administrators that some communities in some districts, such as the Upper Denkyira and Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira Districts, have structural problems in terms of the flow of cash, which therefore require measures to ameliorate their impact on local mobilization of funds for development.

#### Notes

[1] Urban centres in Ghana are officially defined as settlements with populations of 5000 or more.

[2] Basically, all formal institutions and services are located in the district capitals, the main urban centres in the districts.

[3] Main indigenous Akan ethnic group in the UDD is Denkyira, and for THLDD, they are Twifo, Mokwaa and Denkyira.

[4] International remittances refer to money and other items in-kind transmitted *across national borders*. Intra-national remittances on the other hand refer to cash and gifts transmitted *within national borders*.

[5] Harnessing Remittances for Economic Development: A Case for Remittance Policy in Ghana ([www.ghanaweb.com](http://www.ghanaweb.com), Accessed on 12 September 2003).

[6] GLSS 4 Report, 2000 also found remarkable differences in the volume and magnitude of the flow. The rural savannah region comprising mainly the three northern regions (Upper West, Upper East and Northern Regions) remittances receipts appear to be higher than expenditures on remittances across all localities.

[7] Usually what is emphasized is the adverse effects of capital flight, a type of capital outflow from developing countries of investible funds or productive resources due to either short-term or long-term and continuing or changing risks and uncertainties in these countries (Kant 2002).

*Acknowledgements:* The author would like to thank Ragnhild Lund for her initial comments on the draft, and Catriona Turner for the language work. I would also like to express

gratitude and appreciation to the Research Council of Norway (NFR) for their financial support. The views expressed, however, are solely my own.

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## 6.0 CONCLUSION

### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the summary and concluding discussions on small towns, rural-urban linkages and decentralisation in Ghana. District capitals, defined in this study as small towns, have become important focal centres in the development of districts with the implementation of Ghana's decentralisation programme. In addition, the commitment of government to poverty reduction (such as the Millennium Development Goals) has made these centres and other small towns important potential nodes for development. This is because these centres provide convenient locations for the provision of services as well as the development of livelihood opportunities, which are critical for poverty reduction and district development. The potential role of these centres is amplified when it is related to the fact that a significant proportion of the total population has relatively closer contact with these centres than with the larger towns and cities. However, little work has been done on the district capitals with the aim of examining and conceptualising their role in district development as a basis for evaluating the effectiveness or weakness of using these urban centres as stimuli to district development.

The study's analytical approach (set out in Chapter 2) provides three levels of influence (international, national and district) on small towns and rural-urban linkages in district development. However, the policy of decentralisation and macro-policies and programmes from the national level are identified as critical factors influencing small towns and rural-urban linkages. This is because the national level provides the broad framework within which local actors and agencies pursue their developmental goals at the district level. A favourable and supportive role of these national macro-policies impacts positively on district capitals and rural-urban linkages, and the overall district development. The conclusion from this study, using the study district capitals and their respective districts (Dunkwa and the UDD, and Twifo Praso and the THLDD) as a case study, indicates that policies on decentralisation and other macro policies from the national level have been less supportive of district capitals and rural-urban linkages. As a result, the role of the district capitals and rural-urban linkages in the study districts have been limited. This has consequently affected the overall development of the study districts especially the newly established district of THLDD and its district capital, Twifo Praso.

The rest of this concluding chapter of the study addresses the following: (i) A recapitulation of the the District Capital-Centred Development Model, (ii) Responses to research questions advanced in Chapter 1, (iii) Policy recommendations on district capitals and district development, (iv) Suggestions for future research.

## **6.2 District Capital-Centred Development Model: A Novel Model in Regional Development?**

The District Capital-Centred Development Model (DCDM) formulated in this study theorises the role of district capitals as part of a decentralised approach to development in Ghana. A novel contribution of this model is that it is formulated and operationalised within a decentralised development administration and planning framework. Though many writers have articulated the need for this approach, it has received little attention in terms of its conceptualisation and operationalisation in the urban and regional development literature.

By defining district capitals and conceptualising their role in district development, and the linkages and interactions with their districts (hinterlands) under Ghana's decentralised development planning and administration framework, this study has hopefully filled a gap in regional development. This is because, like many decentralisation programmes in many developing countries, Ghana's decentralisation relies on an implicit belief in diffusion such that ceding some authority to local government must necessarily be 'a good thing' for development planning and administration as well as general policy on local development. As a result, the actual role of district capitals and links with their hinterlands has been given little attention or consideration. This study has therefore provided a framework for evaluating district capitals and rural-urban linkages under the decentralised development process.

A tension in this theoretical model is whether the model is applicable only to Ghana or whether it has a more general application. In other words, what is the model's status and replicability? It seems that the model could have a more general application beyond Ghana for three key reasons. First, the problems of uneven development are not unique to Ghana – they can also be found in other African countries and the rest of the developing world. Second, many countries in the developing world have implemented or are undertaking some form of decentralisation which aims at local development or the attainment of equitable spatial development. Third, many developing countries have

adopted the Millennium Development Goals, or are implementing some form of poverty reduction strategies which require improvement in access to social services and livelihood opportunities. A development strategy which emphasizes rural-urban linkages and simultaneous development of rural and urban areas is critical to poverty reduction and overall development. Even though the DCDM could have more general applicability in Ghana and beyond, its application must be undertaken with caution. This is because of the point stressed throughout this study about the uniqueness of each small town and its hinterland as well as the differential governance systems at the local level. The model's replication and application should therefore be viewed more or less as a guide rather than a totalising model claiming to address all development 'disorders'.

### **6.3 Responses to Research Questions**

This section attempts to relate the main research objective and research questions of the study (as formulated in Chapter 1) to the major conclusions reached. This may seem repetitive but it is significant that the research objective and related research questions are highlighted once again to make sure that this study has at least made the modest efforts to address what it sets out to achieve.

The general objective of the study was to examine and conceptualise the role of district capitals in Ghana's decentralised development process. The district capitals were to be examined to determine the extent to which decentralisation has facilitated their growth and the impact this has had on their linkages or interactions with their hinterland regions (districts). It was from this main objective that the following four research questions arose:

The first research question was posed as follows: *What is the role of district capitals in regional and rural development under the decentralisation programme?* Based on Ghana's present settlement hierarchy and the official definition of an urban centre, the study classified and defined district capitals as small towns. As a result, the terms district capital and small town are used interchangeably throughout the study unless stated otherwise. As the main urban centres or focal points at the lower scale of Ghana's urban hierarchy, district capitals are expected to function as centres for politico-administrative governance, marketing, health, education, telecommunications, etc. The study provided a theoretical framework for the role of district capitals in regional development under the decentralisation programme, with the formulation of the District Capital-Centred

Development Model (DCDM). The model, however, conceptualises the role of district capitals as a two-way process involving district capitals and their hinterlands (districts) within a rural-urban linkages framework, with both spatial units reinforcing the growth of each other in the overall development of districts.

The second research question was stated as follows: *Do district capitals perform sufficiently important roles to justify continued allocation of national and donor investments in their development under Ghana's decentralised development strategy?* The study found that while investments in the infrastructure of the district capitals are limited they do provide important services to both their residents and hinterland populations. In particular, continuous investments in these centres are to be encouraged as a way of engaging in dispersed urbanisation and for the creation of a fairly balance distribution of Ghana's population in the longer term. Even though the present policy of investing in the district capital under the decentralisation has not greatly enhanced these centres as attractive zones to potential rural-urban migrants, and hence the continuous growth of the large urban centres, neglecting their development would imply a further exacerbation of the present spatial imbalance of the distribution of the urban population. Thus, in all, the conclusion reached in this study emphasises that continuous investments in the district capitals provide opportunities for the development of a sound and balanced national settlement pattern and a broad-based rural development, benefiting the majority of the people through redistribution of economic opportunities especially jobs and social amenities.

The third research question was stated as: *How has the present policy of promoting the development of district capitals under the decentralisation programme enhanced rural-urban interactions?* The study found that district capitals and other small towns in Ghana have proliferated and grown over the last two decades for a number of reasons. These reasons include broad socio-economic and political factors such as the economic reforms (mainly infrastructural developments resulting from donor and NGOs funds under SAPs), decentralisation and local reforms resulting in increase in resource allocation to the districts, and high population growth rates. Other reasons include the impact of local factors such as improved peasant commercial agriculture, mineral exploration and the population spillover effects of the large urban centres (leading to the rapid growth of villages/cottages surrounding these centres into small towns). In the case of the study

district capitals, their growth may be attributed to the combined impact of the expansion of infrastructure under the decentralisation programme and SAPs, peasant commercial agriculture (especially cash crop farming) and high population growth rates.

The conclusions from the study's articles (as presented in Chapter 5), analyses of the study districts' socio-economic and physical setting, as well as interview responses conducted in the two districts and their capitals, indicate that while decentralisation among other factors have contributed to the growth of the district capitals, rural-urban interactions are still very few and limited. More importantly, the summary of the field results on the flow of people, goods and information indicate that, with the exception of the market (trading), interactions between the district capitals and the rest of their respective districts (rural) are very minimal.

In short, there are four key points to be noted regarding the level and kinds of rural-urban interactions and linkages in the two districts.

- First, on the level of interactions, the results show that there is a seasonal element, with the level relatively higher during the main cocoa season of October to March. This period, which coincides with the end-of-year festivities of Christmas and New Year celebrations, is when money supply increases in both districts due to the sale of dried cocoa beans, thus allowing economic and commercial activities to increase significantly.
- Second, the kinds of rural-urban interaction in both districts are limited, and dominated by trade. They are, however, relatively higher both in terms of the level and kinds in the UDD compared to the THLDD.
- Third, proximity to the district capitals was found to have little influence on both the frequency of interactions and the perceptions on the developmental role of the district capitals due to the relatively high movement costs (transportation), and limited rural-urban linkages respectively. This is because at all interview sites in both districts, market (trading) was cited as the main reason for interacting with the district capitals. This is exemplified by the sudden burst of economic and commercial activities, vehicular movements and influx of population on the market days of Tuesdays and Fridays at both Dunkwa and Twifo Praso. In other words, within the context of limited income and high transport cost, there is a rational

decision by households to use the few visits to the district capitals on market days to engage in multiply activities. In short, proximity to the district capitals does not translate into frequent interactions with the capitals.

- Finally, analyses of the interview responses indicate that the level and kinds of interaction (i.e. patterns and processes) have changed very little or at least have remain the same over the last two decades or more.

The concluding response from the study to the above question, leads to the last question of the study: *What factors make district capitals less able to interact with their rural regions (districts) and what measures can be put in place to enhance these interactions/linkages?* Analyses of the study districts' technical and social infrastructure, and their general level of development as well as the operationalisation of the DCDM in the Upper Denkyira District allows us to identify critical factors which hinder rural-urban linkages in the two districts. These factors include the inherent weaknesses of the study district capitals' production and service functions, the impact of macro-economic policies and processes, and the limited achievements of the decentralisation programme. Even though these factors do affect both study districts, the conclusion reached was that they are more severe in the 'newly-created' district of THLDD and its capital, Twifo Praso, due to its relatively poorer and weaker infrastructure, and lower level of development. This is further compounded by the proximity and relatively easier access of a significant proportion of the THLDD to a higher-order centre (Cape Coast), offering superior services and market both in terms of quality and quantity.

In addition, Owusu (2005a) notes that the relatively weaker rural-urban linkages between Twifo Praso and the rest of the THLDD could be attributed to competition with other centres (mainly the traditional seats of the four paramountcies) within the district. The THLDD therefore illustrates the point that the development of small towns should take account of the regional context regarding proximity and accessibility to other centres within and outside the district. In the context of Ghana's decentralisation and the promotion of district capitals, there may be the need to develop more than a single centre within a district as stimuli to district development, especially in districts with multiply paramountcies and traditional centres. On the other hand, the long-held status of Dunkwa as an 'old' district administrative headquarters, and a former industrial centre has allowed it to attract a relatively higher level of infrastructure and development. Also, the absence of multiple

paramountcies and competing centres of authority within the UDD make Dunkwa a focal point.

Overall, the study found that solutions to the identified critical factors hindering rural-urban linkages and the operationalisation of the DCDM fall largely outside the purview of local authorities and people, and addressing these would depend on the active involvement of the state, and macro-economic and political decision making at higher levels. The conclusion therefore leads to the second part of the last research question: *What measures can be put in place to enhance rural-urban linkages in the study districts?* This question is addressed in the following sub-section.

#### **6.4 Policy Recommendations on District Capitals and District Development**

Small towns, i.e. lower-order centres in the urban hierarchy, and their role in regional and rural development have been the subject of many debates in the regional development literature. Opinions therefore differ as to the possible role of small towns in the modernisation and development of rural areas, their functions as service and market centres, and their role in reducing rural-urban migration and the growth of large towns and cities. The widely accepted view among regional planners and policy makers is that small towns play an essential role in rural and regional development. Therefore, in the opinion of policy makers and regional planners strengthening small towns' service and production as well as their institutional structures are critical to rural and regional development. It is this optimistic view on small towns which implicitly or explicitly lies behind the strengthening of district capitals under Ghana's decentralisation programme.

In the context of Ghana, the development of district (at least as theorised according to DCDM) under the decentralisation programme involves a mutually reinforcing pattern of linkages between a district capital and its district that spurs the growth of both agriculture and non-farm activities. This development process involves the development of local agriculture and improved income through effective and efficient access to markets and services located in the district capital, and formulation of policies in tune with local conditions by district planners and administrators, and local people and their representatives (Assembly members). It is envisaged that the growth of agriculture will lead to improved income that, in turn, will spur the demand for agricultural produce and consumer goods resulting in the creation of jobs and diversification of economic activities



within districts. This is expected to strengthen rural-urban linkages between district capitals and their districts and the development of districts in a continuous spiral of growth which is mutually beneficial to both spatial units (urban and rural areas) within districts.

However, the operationalisation of the DCDM and the identified constraints hindering rural-urban linkages in the case study districts raises questions about the effectiveness of the strategy in achieving the desired results. The overall analysis in this study points to a number of conclusions on the circumstances and conditions under which the model might be expected to perform in accordance with expectations. Therefore, in order to strengthen district capitals, rural-urban linkages and decentralisation, I would like to make the following policy recommendations. However, it needs to be noted that even though these recommendations may have significant implications for the development of all districts, they have to be seen more or less as guidelines rather than across-the-board recommendations. This is due to the need to recognise the uniqueness of each district capital and district in terms of its own mix of development potentials and constraints.

#### *1. Strengthening of District Capitals' markets (trade)*

Agriculture is undoubtedly the driving force behind district development in both the Upper Denkyira District (UDD) and Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira District (THLDD), and a large number of districts in Ghana. The majority of the economically active population is engaged in agriculture and a large proportion of household incomes in the study districts is derived either directly or indirectly from farming. The absence of meaningful agro-processing industries, at least in the short and medium terms implies that the desired goal of increasing agriculture production and improving district income could best be achieved by strengthening markets in the district capitals through improved infrastructure and access. Strengthening of the market functions of the district capitals will enable these centres to serve as suppliers of inputs, markets for outputs and providers of consumer-demanded goods and services.

In particular, there is the need to improve the infrastructure of the marketplace to improve the working environment of the traders (who are mainly women) in terms of their security and health. Also, there must be conscious efforts at improving road networks to allow farmers access to the markets. This will enhance rural-urban interactions in terms of both reduced cost and time by allowing farmers to reach markets and other services located in

the district capitals. It will also enhance the purchasing of farm produce at the farm gate or village market by district capital-based and other urban-based traders. Improvements in transport are most critical since proximity to markets does not guarantee that farmers could be reached by buyers since access could be hindered by poor roads and high movement costs irrespective of distance. While improving market access and infrastructure may expose farmers and the district to external buyers, efforts must be put in place to localise these linkages. This is necessary to avoid bypassing and to retain more surplus within the district through improving the distributive and collecting trade functions of the district capitals, and the introduction of appropriate tax systems.

The special attention to district capital markets is due to the fact that, as the centres with the largest concentration of population, they already provide very sizable markets for agricultural produce and non-agricultural produce alike. Also, these centres are relatively accessible and well connected to other centres facilitating external demand for agriculture produce and other produce within the districts. In addition, the district capitals (compared to other centres within the districts) provide other allied services, such as banking, telecommunications, transport services, etc., which allow the markets to operate or function effectively.

The important role markets play in the development of the study districts within the context of the current decentralisation programme has already been demonstrated in this study. Improving market infrastructure and access will strengthen these contributions and accelerate the development of districts through increased market revenue to the DAs, increased agriculture production, increased employment opportunities and income, and reduced poverty. This, in turn, may have positive impacts on rural-urban linkages, and the overall development of districts. Again, this should strengthen the decentralisation, and set in motion a continuous spiral of urban and rural growth within a district.

## *2. Macro-economic policies and processes*

In both the UDD and THLDD, government policies concerned with macro-economic reforms and liberalisation have impact on rural-urban interactions, and ability of the population to access services. In other words, macro-economic policies and processes initiated at higher levels of decision-making could interfere with rural-urban linkages and consequently, the development of districts. Mention can be made of the purchasing and

pricing of cocoa. While the liberalisation of the purchase of dried cocoa beans has introduced some elements of competition which have benefited farmers in terms of prompt purchase of produce, central government still controls the pricing and the time-scale for closing or opening of the cocoa-purchasing season. Evidence exists in both districts that the opening and closing of the cocoa season affect economic and commercial activities in the districts, and consequently rural-urban interactions. Nevertheless, these macro-policies have been introduced and repeated over the years with little consideration for the impact they have on rural-urban linkages and development at the district level.

Overall, policy reconsideration that allows flexibility in terms of allowing macro-policies to be adjusted to local circumstances will be required to ameliorate the impact of policies and programmes formulated at higher levels of decision-making. This will imply that policy-makers understand that policies formulated at higher levels of decision-making and implementation have differential impact on rural-urban linkages and the development of each district. For instance, in the context of the study districts of UDD and THLDD, a policy reconsideration which allows flexibility in terms of the purchase and pricing of cocoa will go a long way to guarantee continuous income to farmers and also enhance economic and commercial activities in both districts throughout the year. The overall goal of macro-policies would be to achieve a synthesis of nationally supportive measures which binds together national policies and local (or district) aspirations.

### *3. Absorption capacities and capabilities of district capitals of potential rural-urban migrants*

One of the key aims of the district capital-centred district development strategy is to enable these centres to develop and act as attractive zones to potential rural-urban migrants and urban residents who would want to relocate from the large towns and cities. Evidence from this study indicates that economic reasons (especially jobs) remain the single most important factor accounting for rural-urban migration. While the populations of the study district capitals have grown for the last two decades, they have largely achieved this through natural population increase, and to a lesser extent immigration. Also, employment or job creation is not occurring in any significant measure in the district capitals. The employment generation in the two districts seems to occur to a large extent through the expansion of the civil and public services (government sector employment and spending) due to the implementation of the decentralisation programme and the expansion of the

informal sector (mainly petty trading). In other words, meaningful jobs creation from the private sector and industry (just like the wider national economy) is yet to materialise at the district level.

Even though the largest proportion of interviewed rural household heads (53% and 60% for the UDD and THLDD respectively) have no intention of moving from their present location, the overwhelmingly large proportion of those who intend to relocate from their present location cited the large towns and cities (Accra, Tema, Kumasi and Sekondi-Takoradi) as their intended destinations. In other words, the district capital or small town is not perceived as a place where jobs can easily be found. The implication of this is that in the short and medium terms the expected goal of reducing the growth rate of the large towns and cities may not be achieved. This therefore calls for the redoubling of the policy efforts at strengthening the district capitals as counter-magnet centres to the large towns, as well as improving rural conditions to curtail the movement to the cities. It also implies that in the short and medium term periods, additional resources would have to be set aside to meet the challenges of rapid growth of the large towns and cities.

#### *4. Strengthening of the Decentralisation Programme*

It has been stressed many times in this study that a key policy to achieve autonomous district development is to strengthen the decentralisation programme, in terms of genuinely transferring responsibilities and commensurate resources to the districts. The key recommendations for the central government in this respect would be not to generalise about the kinds of activities which should be developed or promoted in the district capitals, but to develop the capacity of the DAs to make their own choices regarding what should be developed, based on local needs, priorities and capacities. The aim of such an approach is the avoidance of mechanical planning models allocating public service facilities according to rules based on centrally-defined goals and objectives but rather the adoption of planning and administrative frameworks better suited to the needs and capacities of both the district capital and its rural hinterland population. In particular, added efforts and resources would be required in the newly created districts (such as the THLDD), due to their relatively poorer and weaker infrastructural base.

As demonstrated in Chapter 2, the promotion of decentralisation has direct and indirect impact on small towns, rural-urban linkages, and consequently, district development. Even

though the decentralisation programme in Ghana is beset with a number of problems, fiscal decentralisation remains the most critical problem. Since the capacity of districts to generate revenue on their own is limited, many DAs (including the UDDA and THLDDA) depend on central government transfers, particularly the DACF as the main source of revenue for funding projects. However, over-dependence on central government transfers implies less self-reliance and fewer local initiatives. This is because central government's transfers such as the DACF are released with strings of guidelines and frameworks, which restrict the freedom of the DAs to distribute resources according to their own sense of priorities and needs. This therefore limits the ability of local planners and administrators to develop programmes suitable or tailored to the unique circumstances of each district capital and district. While recommending for flexibility in the disbursement of central government's grants, there is the need to strengthen the monitoring and auditing of financial records of DAs to reduce corruption and mismanagement. In this respect, the monitoring role of the Auditor-General's Department, MLG&RD and NDPC is of critical importance.

As a further step to strengthen the decentralisation programme, I would like to make the following recommendations:

- First, it is recommended that efforts to establish Local Government Service should be intensified. Such a Service should, however, have the financial resources to retain and attract skilled staff. Also, it should not be managed from the centre such as the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development or any other body located in the centre, if personnel of the Service are to be accountable to specific DAs. This would also go a long way to make the integration of decentralised departments into the political and administrative structure of the Assemblies relatively easier.
- Second, there is the need for Parliament to resolve various constitutional difficulties arising out of the 1992 Constitution. Various constitutional amendments may be required in this respect. In particular, it is suggested that the present non-partisan local government system should be amended to give it a partisan structure in line with the national structure. This would help to engender debate on local government issues at the local level.

- Third, there is the need to reduce the proportion of central government appointees to various decentralised institutions at the district level. This will prevent these institutions from being run or characterised as puppets and support bases of the ruling government. In particular, the District Chief Executive's (DCE) appointment should be amended by depoliticising the position, so that they can attend to the real needs of local people rather than those of politicians located at the centre. In other words, appointment to the Office of the DCE should be based more on competence and qualifications rather than the sole consideration of politics. By this, local institutions and personnel would have genuine autonomy and also be in a position to address local development needs realistically.
- Related to the above recommendation, is the need for clarity on the role of traditional authority in district administration and development. This has become imperative due to the increasing role of some traditional authorities in social services provision, and the general well-being of their subjects. This is also to avoid duplication of development efforts, and create harmony within districts. Similarly, NGO-DA relationships need to be well defined for the avoidance of duplication and improved coordination of various types of development interventions at the district level.
- Lastly, Assembly Members and other personnel whose services have been described as sacrificial need to be motivated in one way or another. This can either be in cash or in kind. This becomes very important when their services are recognised as crucial to the whole process of participation and planning at the local level. Motivation of Assembly Members and others may not involve putting in place a fixed salary or wage structure, but collaboration between government, DAs, and communities in recognising these people as important players in the whole planning and administrative process would go a long way towards boosting their morale and motivation.

Even though Ghana's decentralisation programme has had marginal impact on district development, this does not necessitate the discontinuation of the programme. This is because the alternative to decentralisation, namely centralisation has proved to be a non-viable option. There is therefore the need to strive to overcome hurdles and obstacles which stand in the way of a truly and genuinely decentralised development administration and planning in Ghana. This study therefore accepts Thomi's (2000) position that

decentralisation provides a new arena for the continuing struggle within the society, and therefore needs to be regarded as a continuing social, political and economic process. Again, as Corbridge and Kumar (2002) note, systems of entrenched power are difficult to shift or change without sustained political activity to transfer resources to the poor. This study and its recommendations are therefore part of these continuing discussions to keep Ghana's decentralisation on track within the context of socio-economic development and poverty reduction.

#### *5. Strengthen and Improve Local Government-Generated Information Systems*

To implement specific local policies suitable to each district capital and district requires that there are enough data and information collection and analysis at the district level which are grounded in local realities. Under the Local Government Act, 1993 (Act 462), the Unit Committees of the DAs are required to gather local statistics such as births and deaths, and keep records of taxable people and properties in their units. However, the absence or non-function of these sub-district structures of the DAs implies the unfulfilment of this responsibility. Currently, significant information on districts which are in district development policy frameworks such as the District Assemblies' Development Plans are largely derived from data from national surveys such as the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (GPRSP), Ghana Demographic and Health Survey (GDHS) reports, Ghana Living Standard Survey (GLSS) reports, and the national population and housing census reports. However, these reports and data produced and analysed at the national level lack the specific data and information relating to districts, and in many cases do not reflect the dynamics and peculiarities of districts.

There is therefore the need to strengthen data collecting institutions at the district, such as Births and Deaths Registry, Information Service Department, Statistical Service, and the District Planning and Budgeting Unit of District Assemblies, to enable these organisations provide district-specific data and information. This will require the full integration of central government's district line departments and agencies under the DAs as envisaged under Local Government Act, 1993, Act 462. Under this situation, departments and agencies responsible for data and information collection and dissemination at the district level could tailor their work specifically to the needs and requirements of districts. It will also require resourcing the sub-district structures of the DAs to make them functional and assist in the gathering of local records for district planning purposes.

## **6.5 Suggestions for Future Research**

As this study concentrated on the Upper Denkyira and Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira Districts, both situated within the same ecological and socio-cultural setting, there is the need to study other district capitals and districts in different ecological and socio-economic settings in order to draw firmer conclusions on the success or limitations of the district capital-centred development strategy. In particular, operationalisation or testing of the formulated model of DCDM would be necessary in this respect. It is also very important for future studies to look at the impact of traditional authority and traditional boundaries on the decentralisation programme and rural-urban interactions. This is because in many parts of Ghana, traditional authority and boundaries are not aligned to the 'formal' local politico-administration and formal district boundaries respectively. Moreover, it is suggested that, since district capitals and their respective districts do not exist as 'islands', future research should explore the linkages between these centres and other centres (medium-size and larger urban towns) within Ghana's urban hierarchy in the context of the decentralisation programme. Finally, future research could explore the model's application and utilisation within a cross-cultural or country context. This could provide feedbacks and insights which could strengthen both the conceptualisation and operationalisation of the model.



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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1. INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR RURAL HOUSEHOLD HEADS

**District:** ..... **Settlement** .....

#### **A. Background Information of Respondent**

- \* Age
- \* Sex
- \* Home town
- \* Size of informant's household
- \* Level of Education (e.g. basic, secondary, post secondary/tertiary, other)

#### *Occupation and Income*

- \* Main Occupation of Household
- \* Any other occupation(s) (please specify)
- \* Nature of main occupation (e.g. subsistence, commercial, mixed of subsistence and commercial, etc.)
- \* Most important income source(s) for household (please rank if possible):

#### **B. Views on District Assembly (DA) Concept and Decentralisation**

- \* District Assembly (DA):
  - What are its objectives?
  - Type of programmes undertaken in this locality by the DA
  - Number of activities/programmes carried out by the DA/Assembly member
- \* Do the DA/Assembly member(s) consult your community on all activities?
  - When do they do this? Before, during and after implementation of programmes
- \* Which specific development issues would you like the DA to assist in the development of this locality (kindly rank in order of priority)?

#### **C. Rural-Urban Interactions: District Capital and District**

- \* Commuting to Places:
  - Frequent destinations (kindly rank in order of frequency):
  - Reasons for commuting (e.g. business/trading, market, health, education, other)
- \* Produce/services normally sent to frequent destination(s) for sale/exchange (e.g. farm produce, labour, crafts, etc.)
- \* Occupational support or assistance:
  - Services/functions provided by the District Capital (e.g. access to market, banks, inputs, health, education, telecommunication services, etc.)
  - Impact of these services on your productivity (e.g. improved, indifferent, declined, etc.)

- Reasons accounting for impact

\* Problems with accessing services in the District Capital (e.g. inadequate income, distance, lack of transportation means, poor quality of services offered, etc.)

- Nature of these problems over the last 15 years (e.g. increased, decreased, unchanged, etc.)
- What solution do you offer to these problems?

\* Alternative service centre(s):

- Reasons for preferring these centre(s) other than the District Capital?

#### **D. Remittances/Migration**

\* Origin (places) of remittances (inflows) (kindly rank):

- Items most received (e.g. money, food, clothes, fuel, etc.)
- Average amount of all remittances received quantified in monetary terms per month/year
- Other benefits (e.g. provision of rest stops, taking care of other family members, etc.)
- Level of remittances for the last 15 years (e.g. increasing, decreasing, stagnant, etc.)
- Reasons accounting for level of remittances for the last 15 years

\* Destinations of remittances (outflows) (kindly rank)

- Items most remitted
- Average transfers per month/year in monetary terms (including non-cash items such as food)
- Level of transfers for the last 15 years (e.g. increasing, decreasing, stagnant, etc.)
- Reasons accounting for level of transfers for the last 15 years

\* Migration:

- Length of stay in present location
- Reasons for moving to present location (e.g. job, land, family, etc.)
- Previous migration destinations
- Intended destination(s) if planning to move
- Reasons for wanting to move to intended destination

#### **E. Agricultural Production**

\* Main crops grown in this area? e.g. cash crops (cocoa, coffee, palm-oil); food crops (cassava, plantain, cocoyam); fruits (mango, orange, pear, pineapple, other.)

\* Sale of agricultural products

- Percentage sold (e.g. 1-20%; 21-40%; 41-60%; 61-80%; 81-100%)
- Place of sale of produces (e.g. at farm gate, local market, District Capital market, others)

- Origin of buyers (kindly rank answer, e.g. local, district, regional, national, international)
  - Final destination of products sold (e.g. local, district capital, regional capitals/large towns, national capital/cities, international)
- \* Local Agricultural production:
- Changes for the last 15 years (e.g. increasing, declining, stagnant, etc.)
  - Reasons for changes
- \* How has the District Capital contributed to agricultural productivity in this area (e.g. providing convenient market, source of agricultural input, etc.)?
- \* Main problems facing agricultural production in this area?
- What solutions do you offer to these problems?

**F. Any additional comments, suggestions and clarification?**

*Thank you very much for your time, cooperation and support.*

## APPENDIX 2. INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DISTRICT PLANNERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

### **A. Background Information**

- \* What is your position/rank?
- \* What are your responsibilities?

### **B. Decentralisation and Participatory Development**

- \* What are the key problems/needs facing the District, in order of priority?
  - What were the needs of the District prior to decentralisation?
- \* How are these needs of the District identified and prioritised?
  - Issues of participation relating to needs identification and prioritisation
  - Comment on involvement of the population on needs identification and prioritisation
  - Processes of consultation – when and how?
- \* To what extent do identified needs inform the basis of District development plans and programmes?
- \* Elaborate on the structure of the District's planning and administrative structure
- \* Impact of decentralisation on development of the District

### **C. District Capital and District**

- \* Changes in District Capital for the last 15 years in terms of population size, economic structure, income and poverty level
- \* How has the decentralisation programme contributed to changes in District Capital?
- \* District (rural)'s contribution to these changes in District Capital
- \* Other factors accounting for changes in District Capital?
- \* District Capital's role in the district's development plans and programmes:
  - What role is the District Capital expected to play in the development of the District?
  - How is the rest of the District (rural part) expected to contribute to the growth of the District Capital?
- \* Comment on District Assembly's revenue and expenditure appropriation between District Capital and District?
- \* Impact of the District Capital on the rest of the District for the last 15 years in terms of services provision, agricultural production, employment, poverty reduction, etc.).
- \* Extent to which these impacts (negative or positive) could be attributed to the decentralisation programme?
  - What other factors could be attributed to these impacts?



\* How have these impacts being felt in the district in terms (sector/activity, population group, occupation group, spatially, etc.)?

\* Which other urban centres does the District Capital compete with?

\* Factors hindering interactions between District Capital and district

- Measures to remove/address these limitations

\* Problems affecting the decentralisation programme?

- Are these being addressed in any way?

**D. Any additional issues, comments, suggestions or clarification?**

*Thank you very much for your support and cooperation.*

## APPENDIX 3. INTERVIEW GUIDE ON MARKETS FOR DISTRICT PLANNING OFFICERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

### **A. Background Information**

- \* What is your position/rank?
- \* What are your responsibilities?

### **B. Importance of District Capital Market(s)**

- \* Market's contribution to revenue
  - Revenue to District Assembly and trend.
- \* Market's impact on employment (e.g. traders, revenue collectors, transport operators, other)
- \* Market's contribution to agriculture production
- \* Market's impact on income and poverty
- \* Impact on social interactions/peaceful coexistence of people/communities

### **C. Market and District Development**

- \* District Capital's market(s) role in district's development plans and programmes
  - What role is the market(s) expected to play in the development of the District?
  - Outline DA's priorities for market growth and improvement (e.g. upgrading/expansion of existing markets and foundation/establishment of new markets)
  - Who is involved in the prioritisation and planning, and how is this carried out?
- \* Changes in the District Capital market for the last 15 years or more in terms of size and number of traders (buyers and sellers), volume of trade, and market's physical size
- \* How has the decentralisation programme/District Assembly contributed to these changes?
  - What other factors also account for these changes?
- \* Comments on market access and infrastructure
- \* What are the problems facing the market?
  - How are these problems being addressed?
  - How are the traders involved in addressing these?

### **D. Any additional issues, comments, suggestions or clarification?**

*Thank you very much for your support and cooperation.*

## APPENDIX 4. INTERVIEW GUIDE ON MARKETS FOR MARKET TRADERS

**District:** ..... **Settlement** .....

### **A. Background Information of Informant**

- \* Age
- \* Sex
- \* Place of Residence
- \* Marital Status
  
- \* What is the size of your household?
  
- \* Level of education (e.g. basic, secondary, post-secondary/tertiary, other).
  
- \* Kind(s) of trade activity?
  - Any other occupation(s) (please specify)
  - Occupation(s) of spouse if any
  
- \* Most important income source(s) for your household (please rank if possible)

### **B. Rural-Urban Interactions and District Capital Market(s)**

- \* District Capital market:
  - Frequency of visits to Market
  - Why is the district capital market(s) important?
  - Place of origin of trade item(s)
  - Origin of buyers
  - Final destination of products sold
  
- \* Alternative market(s) apart from the District Capital:
  - Location
  - Reasons for attending these market(s)
  
- \* Trader Associations:
  - Number of trader associations
  - Functions of these associations
  - How are these associations organised/managed?
  - Personal involvement in trader associations
  - Benefits of trader associations

### **C. Tax/Infrastructure**

- \* Market Taxes/Levies:
  - Payment of market taxes/levy and the trend for the last 15 years (e.g. proportion of these to your trading capital – increasing, decreasing, unchanged)
  - Impact of these taxes on your trading activities?
  - Use of market taxes/levies

\* Rank market infrastructure (e.g. refuse/sanitation system, toilet facilities, lorry park, storage/shelter, electricity, water, market wall/pavement, etc.) according to

- Importance to Market
- Dissatisfaction with existing infrastructure

\* Rank market development projects prioritisation according to four choices (e.g. market expansion, provision of day care, security, refuse/sanitation system, toilet facilities, lorry park, storage/shelter, electricity, water, market wall/pavement)

- How would you contribute towards the implementation of any of these projects?

\* District Assembly's contributions to market growth and development?

- Type of activities/programmes undertaken by the DA in the market
- Beneficiaries of these programmes/projects
- How does the DA consult traders on its programmes on the market (e.g. before, during and after implementation of activities/programmes)?

#### **D. Importance of the Market**

\* Length of period associated with market

- Source of capital
- Daily/annual turnover (profit/income)

\* Benefits of market to:

- Own household/family (share of profits within households)
- District (please give specific reasons, e.g. impact on agriculture, income, employment, social harmony, poverty, etc.)

\* Problems facing market (e.g. lack of space, sanitation, transport, etc.)

- Nature of these problems for the last 15 years (e.g. increased, decreased, unchanged, etc.)
- What solution do you offer for these problems?

#### **E. Any additional comments, suggestions and clarification?**

*Thank you very much for your time, cooperation and support.*

APPENDIX 5. CENTRAL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS/AGENCIES CEASING TO EXIST UNDER LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1993, ACT 462

1. Ghana Education Service
2. Ghana Library Board
3. Information Services Department
4. Department of Social Welfare
5. Department of Community Development
6. Department of Town and Country Planning
7. Ghana Highways Authority
8. Public Works Department
9. Department of Parks and Gardens
10. Department of Rural Housing and Cottage Industries
11. Ghana Statistical Service
12. Births and Deaths Registry
13. Department of Forestry
14. Controller and Accountant-General's Department
15. Office of the District Medical Officer of Health
16. Department of Feeder Roads
17. Fire Service Department
18. Department of Animal Health and Production
19. Department of Fisheries
20. Department of Agricultural Extension Services
21. Department of Crops Services
22. Department of Agricultural Engineering

APPENDIX 6. DECENTRALISED DEPARTMENTS AND SUB-DEPARTMENTS UNDER DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES

Departments	Sub-Departments
1. Education, Youth and Sports	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Education</li> <li>2. Youth</li> <li>3. Sports</li> <li>4. Ghana Library Board</li> </ol>
2. Social Welfare and Community Development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Social Welfare</li> <li>2. Community Development</li> </ol>
3. Works	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Public Works Department</li> <li>2. Department of Feeder Roads</li> <li>3. Rural Housing</li> </ol>
4. Physical Planning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Department of Town Planning</li> <li>2. Department of Parks and Gardens</li> </ol>
5. Finance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Controller and Accountant-General</li> </ol>
6. Natural Resource Conservation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Forestry Department</li> <li>2. Games and Wildlife</li> </ol>
7. Central Administration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. General Administration</li> <li>2. District Planning &amp; Budgeting Co-ordinating Unit</li> <li>3. Births and Deaths Registry</li> <li>4. Information Service Department</li> <li>5. Statistical Service</li> </ol>
8. Trade and Industry	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Trade</li> <li>2. Cottage Industry</li> <li>3. Co-operatives</li> </ol>
9. Disaster Prevention	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fire Service Department</li> </ol>
10. Health	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Office of District Medical Officer of Health</li> <li>2. Environment Division of Ministry of Local Government</li> </ol>
11. Department of Agriculture	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Department of Animal Health and Production</li> <li>2. Department of Fisheries</li> <li>3. Department of Agricultural Extension Services</li> <li>4. Department of Crop Services</li> <li>5. Department of Agricultural Engineering</li> </ol>

APPENDIX 7. STATUS REPORT ON ARTICLES

Article Title	Author	Reviewer/Publisher (Journal/Book)	Status
The Changing Views on the Role of Small Towns in Rural and Regional Development in sub-Saharan Africa (Section 5.2)	George Owusu	In: Green Adrian and Leech Roger (eds.): <i>Cities in the World, 1500-2000</i> , London: SPMA/Maney Publications	Forthcoming 2005
Small Towns in Ghana: Justifications for their Promotion under Ghana's Decentralisation Programme (Section 5.3)	George Owusu	—	Under review
Small Towns and Decentralised Development in Ghana: Theory and Practice (Section 5.4)	George Owusu	<i>Afrika Spectrum</i> Vol. 39 (2). pp. 165-195 (ISSN 0002-0397)	Published (2004)
Markets and Women's Trade: Exploring their Role in District Development in Ghana (Section 5.5)	George Owusu/Ragnhild Lund	<i>Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift – Norwegian Journal of Geography</i> Vol. 58 (3). pp. 113-124 (ISSN 0029-1951)	Published (2004)
'Are they Giving More Than Before?' Evaluating Remittances from 'Rural' Communities in Two Districts in Ghana (Section 5.6)	George Owusu	—	Under review