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DEVELOPING THE UNDERDEVELOPED RURAL AREAS
OF GHANA: A STRATEGY ANALYSIS

by

Godwin A. Boateng, B.A. Hons.
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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate
Studies and Research in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of Master of
Arts in Geography.

Department of Geography
Carleton University
Ottawa, Canada

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The undersigned recommend to the Faculty of Graduate
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"DEVELOPING THE UNDERDEVELOPED RURAL AREAS OF GHANA
A STRATEGY ANALYSIS"

submitted by Godwin A. Boateng, B.A. Hons.

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts.

D.R.F. Taylor

THESIS SUPERVISOR

T.P. Wilkerson

CHAIRMAN, DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY

Carleton University

December 19, 1983

ABSTRACT

This thesis analyses the basis of rural underdevelopment in Ghana and examines the possible solutions to the problem.

The problem is traced to three factors: the structure of the spatial system; the overly top-down nature of strategies adopted so far; and the low level of rural agricultural production.

A design for the development of these areas is suggested which centres around taking action simultaneously on three fronts: restructuring of the spatial system to reduce dominance both at the international and national levels; emphasising more bottom-up strategies to encourage participation of the people in their development; and improving agricultural production among the rural people. Whilst the first two will improve rural conditions in relative terms, the last component of the design, it is argued, will do so in absolute terms.

Finally, attention is drawn to the important role politics will play in the success of such a design.

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23 November, 1983

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.	iv
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.	v
LIST OF TABLES	vi
CHAPTER	
1 Introduction	1
1.1 The Concept of Development.	2
2 Characteristics and Basis of Rural Underdevelopment in Ghana	12
2.1 Characteristics of Rural Underdevelopment	12
2.1.1 Health and Nutrition	12
2.1.2 Housing and Associated Facilities.	16
2.1.3 Education.	18
2.1.4 Transportation	20
2.1.5 Incomes and Employment.	22
2.2 The Basis of Rural Underdevelopment in Ghana.	25
3 Strategies Adopted for Rural Development in Ghana.	45
3.1 An Overview of Rural Development Strategies	45
3.2 The Ghanaian Case	50
3.2.1 Social Amenity/Single Project Approach	51
3.2.2 Sectoral Approach.	53
3.2.3 Increased Agricultural Production Approach	54
3.2.4 Regional Decentralization Approach.	56
3.2.5 Multi-Sector Area Projects Approach.	58
3.3 A Summary	59
4 Redesigning Rural Development in Ghana	63
4.1 The Problem Considered Again.	63
4.2 The Redesign of Rural Development	64
5 Summary and Conclusion's.	78
BIBLIOGRAPHY	83

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1	Ghana in West Africa	1a
Figure 2	Ghana by Regions	1b
Figure 3	A Dynamic Macro-Spatial Model for Africa	8a
Figure 4	Ghana: Per Capital Food Production 1969-81	23a
Figure 5	Ghana: Generalised Centre and Periphery in Early Period	28a
Figure 6	Ghana: Mean Annual Rainfall	38a
Figure 7	Ghana: The Forest and Savannah Regions	72a

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Estimated Crude Death Rates by Region and Residence (1968-1969)	13
Table 2	Estimated Life Expectancy at Birth by Sex, Region and Residence 1968-1969	14
Table 3	Distribution of Health Personnel in Ghana, 1971	14
Table 4	Regional Distribution of Towns in Ghana	14
Table 5	Estimated Population using Pipe-Borne Water by Region and Residence in 1970	17
Table 6	Electricity Supply by Regions: 1970	17
Table 7	Compulsory School-Going Age 6-14, Who have Never Been to School, by Sex and Residence, 1970	19
Table 8	The Extent of Illiteracy and Primary Enrolment in Ghana, 1970	19
Table 9	Statistics on Transport Facilities, 1970	21
Table 10	Rural/Urban Unemployment Rates, 1970	21
Table 11	Distribution of Employment by Occupation on Rural/Urban Basis, 1970	22
Table 12	Gross Domestic Product from the Rural Sector.	24
Table 13a	Distribution of Export by Commodities	24
Table 13b	Percentage Distribution of Export by Commodities.	24
Table 14	Value of Export of Selected Domestic Goods 1951-62.	27
Table 15	Main Exports, 1981.	27
Table 16	Major Imported Commodities and Domestic Production, 1960.	30-31
Table 17	Major Exports of Domestic Produce and Domestic Consumption, 1960	31
Table 18	Average Number of Persons Engaged in Industry by Region, 1968	31
Table 19	Cocoa Export Prices and Producer Prices 1947-8 to 1960-1	34

Table 20	Cocoa Tax Rates Adjusted for Effects of Over Valued Currency (1965/66 and 1970/73)	34
Table 21	World Market Prices for Cocoa (1977 to 1982).	36
Table 22	Public Expenditure on Capital Development in Rural Areas	36

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

A former British colony, Ghana changed its name from Gold Coast after it gained political independence in 1957. The country is centrally located in the West African subregion, extending from longitude 3°15' West to 10°20'E and from latitude 4°44' North to 11°10' North (ref Fig.1). It occupies a total area of 92,100 sq. miles (238,500km²) and is divided up into nine main administrative regions.¹ (ref. Fig. 2) The 1970 population census put the total population at 8.6 million. With an estimation of a population growth of 3% per annum,² the present population (1983) would be about 12.6 million.

Other characteristics of the population, important for the purposes of this thesis are the facts that the 1970 census report (the latest available) estimated that 80% of the country's area had rural characteristics, with 71% of the population living in rural areas and thus only 29% in areas considered urban. Urban settlements were those with 5,000 or more inhabitants. Further it was indicated that a total of 48% of the people lived in villages of less than 1,000 inhabitants.³

This characteristic of the population emphasises the importance of rural development in the country. Considering the fact that a very high percentage of the population is found in the rural areas it might be appropriate to equate national development to rural development -- a successful attempt at the development of the rural areas would essentially mean a success at total development of the country. This need for rural development has been emphasised in many development documents on the country and even sometimes on political platforms. The attitude of the Progress Party, that assumed power in 1969, to rural development for example, is enshrined in the words of its party manifesto: "In the

Figure 1: GHANA IN WEST AFRICA

Figure 2: GHANA BY REGIONS

programme for rural development the neglected parts...will be given the attention they deserve..."⁴ The One Year Development Plan also notes:

The development policy and strategy of the government lays special emphasis on the rural areas...The problem of rural development in Ghana may in some respects be regarded as a problem of underdevelopment in the country.⁵

The need for efforts at rural development in the country has also been seen from another perspective: the rural areas of the country are dominant in terms of their contribution to the gross domestic product and as such need greater attention. In 1971, according to an I.L.O. report, agriculture contributed 41.3% of the gross domestic product, for example, and agricultural products accounted for 74% of total export. In that same year, cocoa alone accounted for 48% of government revenue. Despite this clear predominance in the economy, the report notes, the rural areas are characterised by poverty, ignorance, illiteracy and poor resources in respect to safe and adequate water, transport, communication, electricity and health.⁶ It thus appears only fair that attempts are made to develop the rural areas that contribute so much to the national economy.

Various attempts have been made towards rural development in the country. These will be looked at in a subsequent chapter, but the important point is that these attempts have not been able to make any significant impacts on the rural areas -- the rural areas are still much underdeveloped compared to the few urban areas. This thesis will look at rural underdevelopment and the problems of rural development in the country.

It appears appropriate at this stage, to try to define what is meant by the term rural development. This will, however, be done by first looking at the general concept of development.

1.1 The Concept of Development

The 1950s and 1960s were dominated by the neo-classical economic concept of development. The works of Perroux, Hirschman, Myrdal and the earlier works of Friedmann are illustrative of this concept of development.

Perroux introduced the term 'growth pole' in 1949 and defined it as a field of forces. He described economic space as consisting of centres, poles or foci from which centrifugal forces emanate and to which centripital forces are attracted, each centre being one of attraction and repulsion having its proper field which is set in the field of other centres.⁷ Perroux's interest was with the process of growth as reflected by the appearance and development of new activities and more interested in the growth rates among sectors of the economy and their relationships. He saw innovation as a major factor in the appearance of growth of various sectors or poles of the economy. Thus, development, he argues, appears at points (poles) with variable intensity and then spread, through different economic channels, to other sectors of the economy, the most innovating activities taking place in the large economic units which are able to dominate their environment by virtue of their size, strength and nature of operations. Perroux's growth pole is thus related to an abstract economic rather than to geographic space, the pole corresponding to a leading sector.⁸

Hirschman had similar ideas and argued that development efforts should be concentrated on relatively few sectors rather than spread on widely scattered projects.⁹ He used two hypothetical areas, the north and the south to denote a pole and its area of influence respectively and saw development as 'trickling down' from the north to the south through: purchases from the south by the north thus increasing incomes of the south; through investment from the north in the south and then through the absorption of disguised unemployment of the south by the north, thereby increasing the marginal productivity of labour and per capita consumption levels in the south.¹⁰ He, however, identified the possible negative effect or what he called 'polarization' effect on the south in terms of: the south's manufacturing activities being less efficient and also depressed by competition from the north; the migration of the key people in the south to the north, thereby depressing development in the south rather than creating an avenue for employment. He maintained, however, that for national equity, public investment would tend to be concentrated more on the underdeveloped areas after the growth centres have reached a stage where private investment would be quite high to

sustain the growth point. This would thus tend to reduce regional inequality. Hirschman was thus optimistic that the trickle down effects, after the initial dominance of the polarization effects would overtake the polarization effects later. As he states:

There can be no doubt that an economy, to lift itself to higher income levels, must and will first develop itself one or several regional centres of economic strength. This need for the emergence of growth points or growth poles in the course of the development process means that international and interregional inequality of growth is an inevitable concomitant and condition of growth itself.¹¹

Myrdal also thought on similar lines and referred to 'backwash' and 'spread' effects, being the negative and positive effects respectively of the concentration of development at selected centres.¹² The backwash effects would be found in: first, the selective population migration to the centres from the less developed areas; then the unfavourable terms of trade for the less developed areas; and then capital movement from the hinterland to the centres. The spread effects he maintained, would be found in the form of an increased outlet for products of the hinterland and the tendency for technical advance to diffuse from the growth centres to the hinterland. These spread effects, Myrdal thought, would be stronger the higher the level of economic development. The implication here is that he assumed with the initial growth in economy, spread effects would be increased with time. He also assumed that with time, the attractiveness of the growth centres would be reduced due to higher labour cost, thereby leading to the shifting of some investment to other areas and thus help in the development of these areas.¹³

The ideas of these economists influenced many planners who attempted a transformation of the growth pole concept into a spatial theory of development. The idea was that if poles could exist in geographic space and influence development with the space they influence, then there might be the possibility of inducing poles. Growth centres would then be created in underdeveloped regions to stimulate development, initiate new development in sparsely settled areas and to provide alternative investment and employment opportunities to major metropolitan centres.¹⁴

Friedmann was the first to attempt to formulate a systematic and comprehensive model, introducing his 'core-periphery' analysis, initially used in a study of Venezuelan regional development policy.¹⁵ Friedmann held the view that development is generated from a small number of centres, urban in nature, called the core. Around the core are areas lagging in economic activity and development, called the periphery. The process of development, he saw, involved the economic and social integration of the periphery with the core, the periphery dependent on the core and its development largely determined by institutions in the core.¹⁶ Friedmann later brought in the role of innovation diffusion and argued that development occurs through a discontinuous, although cumulative, process of innovation.¹⁷ The peripheral areas would be modernized by the diffusion of innovation from the core, the rate of the diffusion process being a function of the potential interaction between core and periphery. The intensity of interaction between the core and periphery, Gaile notes, would be dependent upon the distance from the core, size of the core, the growth rate of the core and the existing spatial distribution of development. The development of the core then appears vital for the development of the periphery.¹⁸

The idea of development as conceived by the neo-classical economists and their students which was to dominate development thinking until the late 1960s and which still influences development practice in some areas, is thus basically growth pole and urban oriented with the ultimate objective for each region's development efforts being to reach a high degree of industrialization and urbanization resembling the structure of the most developed countries. But most important, this idea of development defines it in terms of economic growth. Economic growth, especially when it was higher than population growth, indicating increases in per capita income level, is seen as development. Quite obviously, development is defined in terms of what is happening in the trends of aggregate income in any particular area at the macro level with rather no attention given to the trends at the micro level.

The meaning of the concept of development has shifted considerably from mere economic growth. The evidence in many countries points to the

fact that mere economic growth is not enough to improve the living standards of the people. In his 1972 annual address to the Board of Governors of the World Bank, Robert McNamara articulated the problem as follows:

Rapid growth has been accompanied by greater maldistribution of income in many developing countries...the problem is most severe in the country side. There has been an increase in the output of mining, industry and government...and in the incomes of the people dependent on these sectors...but the productivity and income of the small farmer have stagnated.¹⁹

Thus, fairer distribution of, and not mere increases in GNP appear more important. Dudley Seers had earlier noted that:

The direct link between per capita income and the numbers in poverty is income distribution. It is a truism that poverty will be eliminated much more rapidly if any given rate of economic growth is accompanied by a declining concentration of incomes...The questions to ask about a country's development are therefore: what has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality. If all three of these have declined from high levels, then beyond doubt this has been a period of development for the country concerned. If one or two of these central problems have been growing worse, especially if all three have, it would be strange to call the result 'development' even if per capita income doubled.²⁰

But even further, the concept now moves towards emphasising more of the human component, with the realization that there is more to development than mere improvement in economic conditions. As Dudley Seers later wrote, "Human requirements...are not purely economic" and added self reliance to the components of development.²¹ Perhaps an adequate light was thrown on what development means when Goulet wrote:

Authentic development aims at the full realization of human capabilities: men and women become makers of their own histories, personal and societal. They free themselves from every servitude imposed by nature or by oppressive systems, they achieve wisdom in their mastery over nature and over their own wants, they create new webs of solidarity based not on domination but on reciprocity among themselves, they achieve a rich symbiosis between contemplation and transforming action, between efficiency and free expression. This total concept of development can perhaps best be expressed as the 'human ascent' -- the ascent of all men in their integral humanity, including the economic, biological, psychological, social, cultural, ideological, spiritual, mystical and transcendental dimensions.²²

What then is rural development? A simple answer might be the improvement of the economic, political, social and cultural status of people living in areas classified as rural. A lot of definitions have been offered. Lele defines it as

improving living standards of the mass of the low income population residing in rural areas and making the process of their development self sustaining.²³

A definition given by the World Bank suggests that rural development is

a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of people -- the rural poor and involves extending the benefits of development to the poorest among those who seek a livelihood in the rural areas.²⁴

Another writer defines it as

a series of qualitative and quantitative changes occurring among a given rural population and whose converging effects indicate in time a rise in the standard of living and favourable changes in the way of life.²⁵

Perhaps, the salient facts to note from these definitions are that rural development is concerned with the rural people's welfare and not the area per se, that it is not limited to only economic development and that it should be self sustaining. The overriding concern is with the improvement in the working and living conditions of the people in rural areas.

But, it appears, such improvements should be looked at not only in absolute terms but in relative terms too. Thus, in absolute terms, there should be improvements upon the living conditions of the rural people over time, whilst in relative terms, the gap between the level of living conditions among the rural and urban population should be narrowed over time. This is necessary in a developing country like Ghana where the relationship between rural and urban areas is such that the nature of rural underdevelopment cannot be fully understood if the relationship is ignored. The achievement of absolute improvement only would not therefore constitute rural development, whilst an improvement in the relative level of living standards (supposing the level falls in urban areas) would not equally be rural development. Both must occur concurrently. Rural development then, as would be used in this thesis, refers to efforts at improving and

maintaining the living conditions, not only economic, of the people living in rural areas both in absolute and relative terms.

This thesis, as noted already, aims at examining rural underdevelopment in Ghana and the strategies that may be applied for the development of these rural areas. The central argument is that rural development efforts in Ghana have failed to make any significant impact on the rural population because first, the strategies adopted do not tackle the basic structural problem inherent in the spatial system and second because the strategies are overly top-down in approach, a factor that militates against active participation of the rural people in their development. Low agricultural productivity, it is also argued, is part of the rural development problem in the country.

The spatial system refers to the entirety of the economic, political and social systems that occur or operate within physical space and imply also the relationships between these systems in space. The structure of the spatial system refers to the ordered relationships which exist between the components of the spatial system. The spatial system appears very important for the reason that development would have to occur over space. Taylor clearly presents, in a diagramatic form (Fig. 3) the sort of spatial relationships that exist between rural areas and urban areas and between them and the world market system.²⁶ In brief he shows three basic interrelationships: between the rural and urban subsystems in the developing countries (south); between the urban subsystem and the world market system and between the rural subsystem and the world market system and between the rural subsystem and the world market system. The argument then, is that rural underdevelopment in the country is basically due to the structure of these relationships and that the strategies have failed to make any impacts on the rural population because they do not aim at restructuring these relationships to make for the development of the rural areas. The other argument is that the situation is so because of the top-down nature of the strategies something that discourages participation -- widespread involvement in both the planning and execution of the rural people in development programmes. Participation is not an end in itself, but a means by which the rural people would realise their crucial role in their development and thus the full potential of the total space that a group occupies realised. This

Figure 3: A DYNAMIC MACRO-SPATIAL MODEL FOR AFRICA

Source: D.R.F. Taylor: "Conceptualizing Development Space in Africa" Geografiska Annalar, 81 (1981), p. 83.

student would therefore argue for attempts at emphasising more of bottom-up strategies as a second important means of achieving rural development in the country. The two -- restructuring and finding bottom-up strategies -- are, however, not mutually exclusive. Third, attempts should be made to improve the productivity of the rural people.

As has already been stated, this study aims at examining the question of strategy for rural development in Ghana. This first chapter has looked at the idea of rural development and also the basic thesis of the work. The second chapter will examine the characteristics of the rural population and an attempt will be made to establish the basis of rural underdevelopment in the country. The question of strategies will be discussed in the third chapter, the fourth chapter will look at the redesign of rural development, an attempt at suggesting, analytically, what steps to take in developing the rural areas. The final chapter would be one for a summary and conclusions drawn from the study.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER ONE

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⁹ Hirschman, A. (1958): The Strategy of Economic Development (Yale University Press), p. 183-184.

¹⁰ Hirschman: op. cit., p. 190.

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¹² Myrdal, G. (1957): Economic Theory and Underdeveloped Regions (Gerald Duckworth and Co. London), p. 26-27.

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¹⁴ Darkoh, M.B.K.: "A Note on Growth Poles and Growth Centres" in Journal of the Geographical Association of Tanzania, No. 12, June 1979, p. 4.

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¹⁶ See also Friedmann (1968): "The Role of Cities in National Development" in American Behavioral Scientist May/June, pp. 13-21 for the decisive role he assigned to urbanism in development through the stages peripheral areas are expected to go through in the process of development.

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- 23 Uma Lele: The Design of Rural Development (Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, Baltimore and London, 1975) p. 20.
- 24 World Bank: Rural Development Sector Policy Paper. (Washington, 1975), p. 3.
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- 26 Taylor, D.R.F. (1981): "Conceptualizing Development Space in Africa", Geografiska Annalar, B.1, 1981.

CHAPTER TWO

CHARACTERISTICS AND BASIS OF RURAL UNDERDEVELOPMENT IN GHANA

This chapter will fall into two main parts -- a first part that examines the characteristics of rural underdevelopment and a second part that looks at the basis of rural underdevelopment in the country.

2.1 Characteristics of Rural Underdevelopment

Rural underdevelopment in the context used here refers to the poor state in living conditions, both in absolute and relative terms, of the rural people in the country.

It appears quite a difficult task to discuss the characteristics of rural underdevelopment in full. This is because for such a consideration certain aspects of development that are necessary to consider will appear impossible to evaluate due to their intangibility. This refers mainly to some of the socio-cultural components of development. It will be impossible, for example, to assess the psychological dimension of development in rural areas. In attempting an evaluation of the level of underdevelopment in the rural areas then, certain parameters will be used as proxy measurements of development. These parameters hopefully, however, can portray the nature of rural underdevelopment to an appreciable extent. The parameters will include: health and nutrition, housing and associated facilities, education, transport and communication and employment, income and consumption.¹ Ewusi's study, at the micro level, of six villages in 1978 throws ample light on some of the characteristics of rural underdevelopment in Ghana.²

2.1.1 Health and Nutrition

It is realised that all the villages examined by Ewusi had serious health and nutrition problems, evidenced by the unavailability of health clinics, dispensaries or other permanent health facilities as well as the incidence of diseases. A survey of the nutritional status of children between twelve and sixty months (using their upper arm circumference)

also suggested that more than 50% in each of the six villages were mal-nourished. The foregoing data try to give a general picture of health and nutrition conditions in the rural areas. The disparity in health conditions between rural and urban areas has also been noted elsewhere.

A reflection of this disparity is seen in the differential crude death rates and life expectancy in the two areas. Tables 1 and 2 show the estimated crude death rate and life expectancy between rural and urban areas in 1968-69. The crude death rate for the country was estimated to be 19 to 20 per 1,000 population in the period but the urban rate of 14 per 1,000 as shown on Table 1 was only about two-thirds that of the rural death rate of 21.1 per 1,000. It is notable that Accra capital district, the most urbanized, recorded a death rate of 8-10 per 1,000, the lowest of all the regions. The trend, as can be seen from Table 3, was that the rural areas in all the regions had higher death rates than the urban areas. The estimated life expectancy, (Table 2) also shows the urban areas having higher life expectancy than the rural areas.

The estimated crude death rate in 1980 was 17 per 1,000, representing a fall in the general rate of the country from the 1968 estimate.³ The paucity of data will not allow us to update the statistics on rural urban

Table 1

Estimated Crude Death Rates by Region and Residence (1968-1969)

Region	Urban/Rural	Urban	Rural
All Regions	19-20	14.0	21.1
Accra Capital District	8-10	7.4	14.6
Eastern	17-10	17.7	20.2
Central	19-20	15.0	21.3
Western	15-17	12.0	22.3
Volta	18-19	16.5	20.4
Ashanti	18-19	12.5	20.0
Brong-Ahafo	19-20	16.3	22.0
Northern	24-25	15.6	29.4
Upper	26-27	15.1	19.5

Source: S.K. Gaisie, Determinants of Population Growth in Ghana, Ph.D. Thesis, Australia National University, 1973 cited in C.K. Brown: "The Ghanaian Rural Youth: Resource for Social Development" Ghana Social Science Journal, Vol. 5, No. 1, May, 1978, p. 33.

Table 2

Estimated Life Expectancy at Birth by Sex, Region and Residence 1968-1969

Region	Urban/Rural		Urban		Rural	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
All Regions	45.6	48.3	54.1	57.7	40.4	44.7
Accra Capital Dist.	63.4	65.7	-	-	-	-
Eastern	45.2	50.3	-	-	-	-
Central	42.3	45.7	-	-	-	-
Western	42.9	46.3	-	-	-	-
Volta	52.4	56.4	-	-	-	-
Ashanti	50.2	53.9	-	-	-	-
Brong Ahafo	44.6	49.2	-	-	-	-
Northern	35.9	38.7	-	-	-	-
Upper	34.3	38.3	-	-	-	-

Source: S.K. Gaisie, op. cit.

Table 3

Distribution of Health Personnel in Ghana, 1971

	Towns of Accra	Other Over 20,000 pop- ulation	Localities Less Than 20,000 pop- ulation	Total
Physicians	259	205	271	715
Health Centre Supts.	13	30	186	229
Dental Surgeons	19	22	2	43
Midwives	608	552	1,795	2,955
Nurses	1,559	1,547	4,239	7,345
Auxilliary Nurses	150	198	719	1,067
Sanitarians	16	50	154	220
Auxilliary Sanitarians	161	104	-	-
Laboratory Technicians	84	70	31	185
Pharmacists	214	149	60	423

Source: Dr. E.G. Beusoleil "Some Aspects of Population and Health in Ghana". Paper presented at National Population Conference, Accra, 1974.

Table 4

Regional Distribution of Towns in Ghana

Regions	No. of Towns with 5,000-10,000 Persons	No. of Towns with 10,000-20,000 Persons	No. of Towns with over 20,000 Persons	Total No. of Towns	Urbanization Ratio %
Western	9	2	3	14	26.9
Central	14	5	3	22	29.1
Greater Accra	2	2	4	8	85.3
Eastern	20	5	4	29	24.6
Volta	8	6	1	15	16.0
Ashanti	9	5	3	17	27.7
Brong Ahafo	15	3	1	19	22.1
Northern	6	-	2	8	20.4
Upper	-	1	2	3	7.1
All Regions	75	29	23	135	28.9

Source: 1970 Population Census, Vol. II.

basis but the trends are most likely to be the same. Gaisie noted in 1974 on rural-urban mortality differentials:

Mortality is higher in the rural than in the urban areas, the urban life expectancy at birth exceeds that of the rural communities by between 12 and 13 years. The available figures suggest substantial urban-rural differentials within various regions, and though the magnitude of these differences cannot be precisely determined in the light of the unavailable data, they are indicative of the prevailing better health conditions in the cities and towns where most of the medical and health facilities are concentrated.

Kudiabor notes that in 1970, the nine regional capitals of the country had 87 (or 53.6%) out of the 157 hospitals in Ghana, even though they accounted for only 1,320,000 (or 15%) of the total population. The three cities of Accra-Tema, Sekondi-Takoradi and Kumasi with a population of 1,124,928 (12.8%) together had 75 (or 47%) of all hospitals in the country, with Accra-Tema alone having 37 (or 23%) of hospitals.⁵

A similar trend is seen in the distribution of health personnel. Table 3 shows the distribution of health personnel in the country in 1971. This does not give the distribution on a rural/urban basis but some idea may be gained by considering that there were 135 towns which had population of 5,000 or more of which 23 had populations of above 20,000 (ref. Table 4); those 23 towns contained only 18% of the total population. Yet, as shown by the third table, most of the health personnel were located in those larger urban centres. About 65% and 95% respectively of physicians and dental surgeons were located in the towns of over 20,000 population. Ewusi further asserts that the rural health centres are relatively under furnished and that only weekly visits are made to such health centres by doctors assigned to the districts within which the rural health centres are located.⁶ Table 3 again indicates that whilst higher quality medical personnel -- physicians, dental surgeons and laboratory technicians -- were heavily concentrated in the larger urban centres, the localities with population less than 20,000 rather had a concentration of nurses (57%) and auxilliary nurses (67%).

There is a high likelihood that the present situation will not differ from what has been described, although there is no data on a rural urban basis to strongly support this assertion. The general conditions of health in the country has been deteriorating mainly due to worsening

economic conditions. By 1980 for example, the central government expenditure per capita in health had dropped to \$3 from \$6 in 1972 and the population per physician and nursing personnel was 7,630 and 780 respectively (World Development Reports, 1983). Given the present high concentration of hospitals in urban areas, it is not difficult to assume that expenditure on health and the distribution of the health personnel will be highly skewed in favour of the urban areas.

2.1.2 Housing and Associated Facilities

Rural underdevelopment in the country is also portrayed by the nature of housing and associated facilities -- especially of water and electricity supply. Ewusi noted in his study already referred to that most of the houses in the villages were built of swish (sun-dried earth) and had defective roofing. He also recognised water supply as a big problem, noting that they had water partly from collections from roof tops, partly from streams sometimes known to be infested, and partly from wells, some of which tended to dry up in the dry seasons. It is important to note that only one village out of the lot had access to piped water. None had electricity supply from the national system.

There are no figures on the quality of houses in the country on rural-urban basis, but some data do exist for the associated facilities that help to throw some light on the disparities between the rural and urban areas in the provision of such facilities in the country.

Table 5 shows the estimated population using pipe-borne water by region and residence in 1970. As indicated on the table only 2,619,703 (or 30.6%) of the total population of 8.5 million had access to pipe-borne water supply from the public water supply system. Of this number, 2,032,451 or (77.6%) could be found in the urban areas as compared with only 587,252 (or 22.4%) in the rural areas. Darko notes further that of those who had access to potable water in 1970, about 1,474,000 (56.3%) could be found in the nine regional capitals and that the three cities of Accra-Tema, Sekondi-Takoradi and Kumasi together had 1,207,000 (46.1%) of those served with pipe-borne water.⁷ In Greater Accra, the most urbanized region, for example, 89.2% of the population had access to pipe-borne water whereas the upper region, the least urbanized, had only 10.5% of its population enjoying the facility (ref. Tables 4 and 5). The rest

Table 5
Estimated Population using Pipe-Borne Water By
Region and Residence in 1970

Region	The Population who use Pipe-Borne Water		Rural-Urban Distribution of Population who use Pipe-Borne Water	
	No.	As percentage of population in Region	Urban %	Rural %
All Regions	2,619,703	30.6	77.6	22.4
Greater Accra	759,852	89.2	95.0	5.0
Western	254,013	33.0	61.3	38.7
Central	284,511	32.0	68.5	31.5
Eastern	295,095	23.4	70.6	29.4
Volta	161,176	17.0	42.6	57.4
Ashanti	469,287	31.7	80.7	19.3
Brong Ahafo	140,660	18.4	73.4	26.6
Northern	164,220	22.6	85.4	14.6
Upper	90,889	10.5	67.0	33.0

Source: 1970 Population Census Special Report 'D'.

Table 6
Electricity Supply by Regions: 1970

Region	Population Served	
	Number	%
Upper	18,719	1.1
Northern	87,887	5.0
Brong Ahafo	45,666	2.6
Volta	53,004	3.0
Western	119,643	6.8
Eastern	207,103	11.8
Central	157,075	9.0
Ashanti	300,036	17.5
Greater Accra	759,293	43.2
Ghana	1,748,426	100.0

Source: Electricity Corporation of Ghana, cited in G.D.K. Kudiabor "Growth Poles and Growth Centres in Regional Development Planning in Ghana".

of the country's population, mostly rural, used either river water, wells, boreholes or ponds as the main source of water.⁸ The World Bank estimated that in 1975, 35% of the population had access to safe water.⁹ This, however, represents no substantial improvement on the situation in 1970 (when it was 30.6%) and thus nothing to suggest that the rural urban disparity in the provision of that amenity has been altered. Further, there is nothing to suggest that the situation in the present will be any

different, considering that social expenditure by the central government has been on the decline over the last five years.

In the distribution of electricity supply, again a wide disparity is seen between the rural and urban areas. Table 6 shows the distribution of electricity supply in 1970. Only 1,748,426 (21%) of the total population of the country had access to electricity supply, but the bulk of it went to the urban residents. The Greater Accra region, the most urbanized, accounted for 43.2% of the total. The three cities of Accra-Tema, Sekondi-Takoradi and Kumasi, according to Kudiabor, were responsible for 1,100,873 (63%) of the total of 1,748,426 people served with electricity. It is again difficult to update these statistics to portray the nature of the present situation. But we may argue that the generally declining trend in the performance of the economy could not have allowed for any improvements on the situation in 1970. Thus, rural underdevelopment manifests itself also in housing and the associated facilities of water and electricity supply.

2.1.3 Education

A similar picture is seen when education is considered. The problems found about education in Ewusi's research on the six villages related to enrolment, attendance and equipment -- these were all poor. He also noted the need for a better quality of teaching in these areas. It is this student's experience that the quality of teaching in schools in urban centres are generally better, especially in pre-high school education, than what is found in rural areas.

The provisional results of the 1970 population census indicated that 797,917 (37.5%) of those in the compulsory school age group of 6 to 14 years had never been to school (ref. Table 7). As indicated on the table, 81.4% of this group were to be found in the rural areas, with the corresponding figures for males and females being 84.4% and 78.9% respectively. Further, the 1970 population census put the literacy rate of the country at 31.3% with rates of 22.1% and 50.1% for rural and urban areas respectively. Table 8 indicates the extent of literacy in Ghana by region in 1970. Greater Accra, Eastern and Central regions that are more urbanized appear better off both in terms of the population of adults who have attended school and the primary enrolment ratio.

Table 7

Compulsory School-Going Age 6-14 Who have Never Been To School, By Sex and Residence 1970

Residence	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Urban	56,277	15.6	92,175	21.1	148,452	18.6
Rural	305,049	84.4	344,416	78.9	649,465	81.4
Total	361,326	100.0	436,591	100.0	797,917	100.0

Source: Provisional Results, 1970 Population Census

Table 8

The Extent of Illiteracy and Primary Enrolment in Ghana, 1970

Region	Proportion of Adults Who have Attended Schools	Primary Enrolment Ratio
Western	37.9	65.4
Central	33.3	60.1
Greater Accra	50.9	74.0
Eastern	42.8	70.1
Volta	37.5	60.3
Ashanti	27.9	71.6
Brong Ahafo	38.0	55.9
Northern	7.7	17.3
Upper	7.4	19.3

Source: 1970 Population Census, Vol. II.

Brown notes that some of the factors which have contributed to the generally low level of education and the low level of school attendance in rural areas are: the lack of school; lack of trained teachers in most of these schools (most of them unwilling to stay in rural areas); lack of transportation; inability to pay textbook fee; and the utilization of children in agricultural work.¹¹ It appears, from this student's experience, that the first two reasons, coupled with the generally greater attention given to schools in bigger towns in any particular district stand out. very important in explaining the lower level of education in the rural areas.

One cannot expect the present situation to be any better. The statistics on enrolment had not changed significantly by 1980 -- enrolment in primary school as percentage of age group was 69% (World Development Report, 1983) as against 62.5% in 1970. 81.4% of those in this group who had not been to school were to be found in the rural areas and if even we assume that the increase in enrolment occurred only in rural areas, it is still too small to alter significantly the rural urban disparity in the enrolment of the group.

Further, central government expenditure on education per capita dropped from \$20 in 1972 to \$11 in 1980 (World Development Report, 1983); the present figure is likely to be lower. Considering this trend, we may assume that the rural areas could not have had any significant improvement in education since 1970.

Finally, in trying to assess the present situation, we will have to consider the phenomenal movement of Ghanaian teachers to other countries since the mid 1970s due to worsening economic conditions. The point has already been raised that there is a lack of trained teachers in rural areas due to the unwillingness of them to stay in these areas. What we may infer from this is that with the movement of teachers from the country, it is the rural areas that will suffer most, since the remaining teachers would prefer being in urban areas.

Considering all these, we may argue that the situation at present, with regards to rural urban disparity in levels of education cannot be very different from the situation in 1970. This student believes the disparity could even be higher.

2.1.4 Transportation

Following from the colonial policy of transport development, something that will be looked at later in this chapter, transport links between urban areas are generally better than between the rural areas. The problem is not only one of the absence of good road links in the rural areas but also lack of vehicles in these areas. Ewusi noted in his study, for example, that in some of the areas he examined, lack of vehicles compelled the villagers to walk distances over eight kilometers with heavy headloads.

Table 9 gives some statistics on transport facilities in 1970. It becomes clear from the table that the more urbanized regions had a disproportionate share of the number of vehicles -- the Greater Accra alone had more than 50% the number of vehicles and had the greatest distribution of vehicles per person (779/10,000). The Upper region, for example, had only 1.1% of the total number of vehicles and only 15 vehicles per every 10,000 people. The accessibility index (Table 9) has been computed as a ratio of the area in a region that is covered by good

Table 9
Statistics on Transport Facilities, 1970

Regions	Total No. of Vehicles	% of Vehicles in Ghana	Vehicles per 10,000 Persons in Region	Accessibility Index of Region
Greater Accra	66,312	53.4	779	41.2
Ashanti	24,390	19.7	165	17.1
Western	10,547	8.5	137	11.9
Eastern	5,944	4.8	47	22.2
Volta	4,138	3.3	44	17.5
Central	5,448	4.4	61	33.7
Northern	3,050	2.5	42	8.5
Brong Ahafo	2,942	2.4	38	7.2
Upper	1,315	1.1	15	10.5

Source: CBS, Motor Vehicle Statistics, cited in Ewusi, 1978.

Table 10
Rural/Urban Unemployment Rates, 1970

Age Group	Urban			Rural		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
15+	8.6	9.7	7.2	4.9	6.7	2.5
15-19	33.9	37.1	30.7	21.2	21.2	13.9
20-24	16.9	19.9	13.9	16.0	16.8	5.2
25-29	6.3	7.6	4.4	4.6	7.3	1.5
30-34	3.4	4.5	1.8	2.2	3.6	0.6
35-39	2.5	3.5	1.2	1.5	2.4	0.4
40-44	2.2	3.0	1.0	1.0	1.6	0.3
45-49	2.0	2.7	0.9	0.8	1.2	0.2
50-54	1.8	2.6	0.7	0.6	0.9	0.2
55-59	1.8	2.5	0.8	0.6	0.8	0.2
60-64	-	2.3	0.7	0.4	0.6	0.2
65+	1.7	1.8	1.0	0.4	0.4	0.4

Source: Ewusi, K. (1975)

road to the total area of the region. Here again, it is clear that the more urbanized regions were more accessible, the Greater Accra region being the most accessible. An idea of the poor state of the present transportation system in the rural areas may be gathered from an U.S.D.A. report in 1981 which contended that there had been a deteriorating condition in transportation, affecting agricultural production and the transportation of the country's leading crop, cocoa, from rural areas for export.¹²

2.1.5 Incomes and Employment

Rural incomes and employment have been suggested as other parameters by which rural underdevelopment can be partly evaluated. Various attempts have been made to evaluate rural incomes but accurate evaluation has ever been a problem. Ewusi notes in his study the difficulty in the collection of reliable data on wealth and income. But it is undeniable that most incomes in the rural areas come from small scale agriculture and estimates from these are normally lower than the average urban employee. But poverty, Ewusi notes for his micro studies was evident not only in low income but also in the unavailability of real goods and services. This is most probably the reason that many of the rural youth seem to prefer urban poverty to rural poverty and thus continue moving into the urban centres although they are not better employed in the urban areas, in most cases.

Table 10 shows, for example, that the unemployment rate for the age range of 15 to 29 in 1970 was higher in the urban than in the rural areas, the average being 19 and 18.9 respectively. A closer look of the same table also brings out the point that generally, rates of unemployment in the rural areas, although high, appeared rather better when compared with the situation in the urban areas. What needs to be pointed out, however, is that urban employment is more permanent than the more or less seasonal nature of rural employment, mainly in agriculture. This point is illustrated by Table 11 which shows the distribution of employment on a rural urban basis. According to the table, 2,229,255 out of the 3,133,047 (or 71.2%) of the working labour force live in the rural areas;

Table 11

Distribution of Employment by Occupation on Rural Urban Basis, 1970

Occupation	Rural	Urban	Total
Professional and Technical Workers	54,613	65,062	119,675
Administrative and Managerial Workers	2,926	8,397	11,323
Clerical Workers	19,439	66,927	86,366
Sales Workers	189,058	224,452	413,510
Service Workers	24,038	66,126	90,164
Farmers and Fishermen	1,634,002	164,254	1,798,256
Production and Related Workers	305,179	308,574	613,753
Total	2,229,255	903,792	3,133,047

Source: Unpublished Census Figures cited in Ewusi, (1978), p. 109.

it is, however, in farming as an occupation that the rural worker predominate (i.e 1,634,002 or 73% of labour force in the rural areas). The ratio of the number of farmers in the rural areas to those in the urban areas is almost ten to one.

At present, rural incomes are likely to be still very low. For one thing, agricultural production has been declining over the years. It is estimated that the average index of food production per capita for 1979 to 1981 (1969-71 being 100) is 74. Figure 4 shows the general declining trend in food production between 1969 and 1981. The possible effect of this will be declining rural incomes, since agriculture is the main economic activity.

Summarily then, rural underdevelopment in Ghana is marked by the following characteristics: poor health and nutrition; poor housing and the associated facilities of water and electricity; poor education and very low incomes. These characteristics are evident both in absolute and relative terms, that is, when compared to the situation in the urban areas.

Ready statistics on rural urban disparity have been available for only up to 1970. Considering the general economic trends in the country, however, we can argue that the situation at present could not be any better -- rural urban disparity could even be worse than was the case in 1970, considering the economic crisis in which the country finds itself.

The disadvantaged status of the rural areas is, however, brought into sharper focus when it is considered, as already noted in the first chapter, that a greater proportion of the national product is generated in these areas. Table 12 shows the gross domestic product from the rural sector and illustrates this point. In all the years shown, the contribution of the rural areas was substantial. Furthermore, the bulk of the country's exports originate from the rural sector. Tables 13a and 13b show the distribution of export by commodities. Among the exports, only cocoa paste, cocoa butter, sawn timber, aluminum and other exports (mainly manufactures) can be identified as originating from the urban sector. Thus in 1974, according to the tables, the part of export originating from the urban

Figure 4: GHANA: PER CAPITA FOOD PRODUCTION 1969-1981

Source: U.S.D.A.: Sub-Sahara Africa: Review of Agriculture in 1981 and Outlook for 1982, p. 10.

Table 12
Gross Domestic Product from the Rural Sector

	1968	1970	1974
Rural	44.2	44.6	45.0
Urban	35.7	29.0	28.1
Urban and Rural	25.1	26.4	26.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Ewusi, K. 1978, p. 112.

Table 13a
Distribution of Exports by Commodities

Commodity	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974
Cocoa Beans	185,600	218,567	300,399	209,171	289,058	344,833	439,135
Cocoa Paste* (1)	4,490	3,343	3,900	3,491	9,908	8,000	10,646
Cocoa Butter	24,052	24,044	27,252	24,310	29,024	44,215	63,013
Timber (logs)	16,258	24,118	19,875	20,365	42,292	88,551	63,939
Timber (sawn)	12,296	14,963	17,098	12,217	21,173	41,755	39,956
Bauxite	1,493	1,393	1,276	2,290	2,682	2,574	3,465
Manganese	10,545	7,017	7,208	6,641	9,969	7,314	10,519
Diamond	17,430	13,867	14,467	11,752	18,643	13,063	14,570
Gold	28,983	28,219	25,695	28,454	50,436	70,106	94,843
Kola nuts	241	664	213	453	579	1,563	1,056
Aluminum	26,726	43,909	31,906	29,729	56,861	46,138	33,351
Others	9,165	9,113	10,748	14,109	18,807	29,328	39,203
Total	337,279	390,818	460,233	363,053	549,432	697,440	813,696

(1) Including Cocoa Cake

Source: C.B.S.: Economic Survey, 1972-1974

Table 13b
Percentage Distribution of Export by Commodities

Commodity	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974
Cocoa Beans	55.0	55.9	65.3	57.6	52.6	49.4	54.0
Cocoa Paste (1)	1.3	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.8	1.1	1.3
Cocoa Butter	7.2	6.2	5.9	6.7	5.3	6.3	7.7
Timber (Log)	4.8	6.2	4.3	5.7	7.7	12.7	7.9
Timber (Sawn)	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.4	3.9	6.0	4.9
Bauxite	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.4
Manganese	3.1	1.8	1.6	1.8	1.8	1.1	1.3
Diamond	5.2	3.5	3.2	3.2	3.4	1.9	1.8
Gold	8.6	7.6	5.6	7.8	9.2	10.1	11.7
Kola nuts	0.1	0.2	n	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1
Aluminum	7.9	11.2	6.9	8.2	10.3	6.6	4.1
Others	2.7	2.3	2.3	3.9	3.4	4.2	4.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(1) Including Cocoa Cake n = (negligible) less than 0.05%

Source: C.B.S.: Economic Survey, 1972-1974.

sector was only 22.8% of the total. This percentage attributed to the urban sector is even somehow exaggerated since, strictly, we have to consider only the value added by the urban sector. In the case of cocoa paste and cocoa butter, for example, the value of cocoa beans will have to be subtracted from the gross value of cocoa paste in order to know how much export value is generated within the urban sector. In 1980, agriculture alone accounted for 66% of the G.N.P. of the country,¹³ and this reflects the maintained importance of the rural sector.

All these raise the important question of why the rural areas are far less developed despite this importance. The unavailability of data makes it difficult to assess the present situation but it is unlikely to be different considering, especially, that the country is now in a state of economic crisis. It is also possible that at this time of crisis, rural people are better able to provide for their survival than urban dwellers and may thus be relatively better off. But this is also difficult to tell because of the paucity of data. The following section of this chapter attempts to examine the basis of rural underdevelopment in the country.

2.2 The Basis of Rural Underdevelopment in Ghana

A careful look at the nature of rural underdevelopment in the country will reveal its association with the structure of the spatial system. The spatial system has been moulded and maintained by processes initiated before and during the colonial period and retained after independence. Thus rural underdevelopment is seen to be directly and indirectly related to the dependent capitalist nature of the historical process of development in the country.

Before the appearance of the Europeans in the 15th Century, trade was internally oriented, occurring between the forest belts in the south and the sudan belt in the north. An important feature of the trade at this time was that it occurred on the basis of equal partners. However, with the activities of the European traders, there was a round-about turn; the Atlantic Ocean which had always been a barrier now became a starting point. New foci of economic and political change emerged in the coastland and forest regions.¹⁴ With a new centre crystallizing on the coast associated with European activities, there was a restructuring of the space

economy to fit the new order, the coast and the forest areas emerging as the most successful in the adjustment process. But this new trade between the Ghanaians and the Europeans was not to play the same role as that of the preceding period since henceforth it was to take place under mercantile capitalism. The wealth that was generated was highly concentrated mainly to merchants who were involved in the trade between the interior and the coastal forts.¹⁵ By contrast the broad masses of the population, then engaged in primary activities were poorly integrated into the exchange economy. This period was to mark the first phase in the dependent integration of the economy into the international capitalist system.

An urban system emerged within the spatial system from this pattern of activities. Along the coast were the towns associated with European forts. From these a set of penetration lines extended to a system of 'middleman' towns which served as collecting centres or intermediate nodes.

This phase was superceded by the period of direct colonial intervention and at a simple spatial level, a metropolis-satellite decision making structure emerged. It was in the centre nation, Britain, that strategic high level decisions were taken as to the broad guidelines of development policy for the country, the periphery. Britain was to develop Ghana to supply it with food and raw materials and to consume British manufactured goods in return. From the beginning therefore, Europe assumed the power to make decisions within the international trading system and above all, European decision making power was exercised in selecting what the peripheral areas should export in accordance with European needs.¹⁶

The colonial Ghanaian economy came to be characterised by the limit of export production to few primary commodities, notably cocoa and some minerals in exchange for manufactured goods, a feature that was to exist and still exists as a major structural characteristic of the space economy after independence. Table 14 shows the value of export of some selected domestic goods between 1951 and 1962. It is evident from the table that cocoa, timber and minerals dominated the exports of the country during that period. Tables 13a and 13b show similar trend in the composition of export

Table 14

Value of Export of Selected Domestic Goods 1951-62

Selected Goods	Percent of Total Export											
	1951	1952 ¹	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962
1. Cocoa Beans	68	62	63	75	68	59	56	60	61	59	61	60
2. Timber (Logs and Sawn)	5	5	7	6	8	11	11	11	12	14	13	11
3. Manganese	8	10	10	5	5	8	10	8	6	6	5	5
4. Diamonds	6	6	4	4	6	9	10	8	8	9	6	7
5. Gold	9	11	11	9	9	9	11	10	10	10	10	10
Total % of Selected Goods	96	94	95	99	96	96	98	97	97	98	95	93

Source: Economic Surveys

(1) January - November

Table 15

Main Exports, 1981

Commodity	Value \$M	As % of Total
Cocoa	440	57.4
Gold	167	21.8
Wood	22	2.9
Diamonds	9	1.2
Total (Including others)	766	100.

Source: Quarterly Economic Review of Ghana, Sierra Leone, Gambia and Liberia, No. 1, 1983.

up to 1974 and this is maintained to the present. In 1979, for example, the total share of primary commodities in the country's export was 99% (i.e. 16% minerals and 83% other commodities).¹⁷ Table 15 portrays a similar picture for 1981, when 83.3% of the total export was primary commodities, cocoa alone accounting for 57.4%. Thus, an international division of labour and commodity production emerged which was characterised by a process of uneven development both at the national and international levels.

The export activity was one of great interest to the centre nation and was supported by policy. It was not long, for example, before the colonial government began to realise the need for an effective road and rail transport policy to link the coastal ports and capital town with the areas of cocoa and mineral production, all aimed at promoting this export activity. This policy is clearly summed up in a dispatch from the governor of the Gold Coast (now Ghana) to the Secretary of State (Britain) on the subject of a proposed Central Province Railway in 1922:

The object of the proposed railway is to cheapen cost of transport and thereby: (a) to permit of the export of cocoa at present unmarketed at low prices; (b) to increase cocoa production; (c) to save the kola trade; (d) to open up the timber trade; (e) to increase import trade; (f) to facilitate competition in trade; (g) lastly and most important of all, to ensure the future of the cocoa trade.¹⁸

There was, in fact, no attempt at building a network for more effective internal integration. The structure of the transport system rather favoured the integration of the national economy into the international one. Thus all the transportation schemes were designed to complete the structure of an outward-directed satellite economy.

A simple centre-periphery structure emerged over the space economy. In a generalised sense, the centre consisted of areas which produced cocoa and minerals and the coastal port towns which played a crucial role for import-export activities. Sekondi-Takoradi and Accra were emerging as the most important centres of activity (ref. Fig. 5). The former's importance was due to its role as a modern port town and the latter was the administrative and commercial headquarters of the country. These towns monopolised much of the modern social infrastructure of the country. Accra had a concentration of the highest level of decision makers in the national setting and hence could be described as the centre. The generalised periphery consisted of areas outside the forest belt and coastal port towns with neither the potential for cocoa, timber or mineral production nor the ability of functioning as centres for the articulation of the outward directed national economy (Fig. 5). Thus, the colonial trade necessarily gave rise to a polarization of dependent peripheral development.¹⁹

At independence whilst nominally, political decision-making power was vested in the Ghanaian government, the basic organizational and spatial structure that formed the basis of the colonial economic structure remained intact. These were in fact, strengthened by policies pursued by the government after independence. To a great extent, the new elite was to emulate standards of the centre nation.²⁰ And consequently, the nationalist economic policy was not directed at freeing the economy from its dependence on Britain and other countries. They failed to undertake the adjustments

Figure 5. GHANA: GENERALISED CENTRE AND PERIPHERY IN EARLY PERIOD

- Generalised Centre
- Cocoa-Producing Area
- Mining Areas -

necessary for achieving an internally integrated as opposed to outward directed development.

Tables 16 and 17 illustrate this by looking at the situation in 1960. By that year, it was evident that the country depended heavily on imported commodities, mainly manufactures, as most of the demanded commodities were not produced in the country (ref. Table 16). At the same time, most commodities that were produced in the country had to be exported since they were not consumed in the country (ref. Table 17). The implication is that the space economy became very dependent on the external trade since there was a lack of balance between the structure of production and the structure of demand for goods and services. The economy was, and still is, highly dependent on a large flow of goods and services into and out of the country, with much of the export earnings derived from a single product, the world price of which is subject to large fluctuations (ref. Tables 19 and 21).

This form of dependency is still a characteristic of the present economy. As noted earlier on, the World Bank estimated that 99% of exports in 1979 were primary commodities. In that same year 85% of imports were manufactures and fuel (71% and 14% respectively).²¹ This portrays an imbalance between the structure of demand and production in the country such as was recognised for 1960. Further, we also note that the average annual growth rate for industry and manufacturing between 1970 and 1981 respectively were -22% and -1% (World Development Report, 1983), still emphasising the need to import to meet local demand.

The main policy after independence was in the area of modernization, the main thrust being in import-substitution industrialization. This was to lead to a further spatial concentration of activities in very limited enclaves within the generalised growth area. One writer notes that

since the major aim of development policy in Ghana has been to maximise G.D.P. growth and to mobilize savings to finance industrialization and other government expenditures, government policy has tended to have an urban-industrial bias especially in the concentration of public investment and infrastructure in the major urban centres.²²

The location pattern of the industries is characterised by high concentration in Accra-Tema, Sekondi-Takoradi and Kumasi. Table 18 shows

Table 16

Major Imported Commodities and Domestic Production, 1960

Commodity	Whether produced in Ghana in significant quantities
Food, Beverages and Tobacco	
Cattle	Yes
Sheep and lambs	Yes
Goats	Yes
Corned meat	No
Milk and cream (evaporated)	No
Salted and dried fish	Yes (over 100 per cent of value of imports)
Canned fish	No
Rice	Yes (10-20 per cent)
Wheat: meal and flour	No
Preserved vegetables	No
Sugar	No
Beer	Yes (50-60 per cent)
Unmanufactured tobacco	Yes (over 100 per cent)
Crude Materials	
Motor spirit	No
Lamp oil	No
Gas oil	No
Furnace and other fuel oil	No
Lubricating oils	No
Chemicals	
Prepared paints	No
Medicinal and pharmaceutical products	No
Soap and soap powders	Doubtful
Insecticides and fungicides	Yes (about 100 per cent)
Manufactured Goods Classified	
Chiefly by Materials	
Motor tyres	No*
Lorry tyres	No*
Grey, unbleached cotton fabrics	No
White, bleached cotton fabrics	No
Piece-dyed cotton fabrics	No
Cement	No
Iron and steel girders	No
Corrugated sheets (galvanized)	No†
Enamelled household utensils	No
Machinery and Transport Equipment	
Tractors, tracked, exceeding 40 b.h.p.	No
Tractor parts	No
Conveying and hoisting machinery	No
Parts of earth-shifting machines	No
Parts of railway rolling stock	No
Motor cars not exceeding 1,400 c.c.	No
Motor cars 1,400 to 1,700 c.c.	No
Motor cars 1,700 to 2,500 c.c.	No
Motor cars exceeding 2,500 c.c.	No

Table 16 (Cont'd.)

Dual purpose motors	No
Coaches and omnibuses	No
Trucks and lorries (special purpose)	No ‡
Truck and lorry chassis	No
Bodies, chassis, and frames	Yes
Miscellaneous Manufactured Articles	
Handkerchiefs and head-ties	No
Leather footwear	No
Books and pamphlets	Yes (about 10 per cent)

Source: Annual Report on External Trade 1959 and 1960, C.B.S.

Table 17

Major Exports of Domestic Produce and Domestic Consumption, 1960

Commodity	Whether Consumed in Ghana in Significant Quantities
Cocoa Beans	No
Cocoa Paste	No
Timber (Logs and Sawn)	Yes (nearly 100%)
Bauxite	No
Manganese	No
Diamonds	No
Gold	No
Cola nuts	Yes

Source: Annual Report on External Trade, 1959 and 1960, C.B.S.

Table 18

Average Number of Persons Engaged in Industry by Region, 1968

Region	Manufacturing		Mining and Quarrying		Electricity, Gas and Steam	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Upper	447	0.9	-	-	56	1.0
Northern	121	0.3	-	-	212	3.9
Brong Ahafo	1,498	3.2	-	-	118	2.2
Volta	-	-	-	-	107	2.0
Western	12,825	27.3	13,086	52.0	494	9.1
Eastern	1,278	2.7	3,300	13.1	2,215	41.0
Central	630	1.3	1,220	4.8	408	7.6
Ashanti	8,553	18.2	7,354	29.2	498	9.2
Greater Accra	21,648	46.1	227	0.9	1,297	24.0
Ghana	47,000	100.0	25,187	100.0	5,403	100.0

Source: C.B.S. Industrial Statistics 1966-1968 (August, 1970)

that even in 1968, the bulk of employment in manufacturing industry was in the Greater Accra region. Employment in this sector in the region accounted for almost half (46.1%) the total employment in manufacturing in

the country. The three main cities of Accra-Tema, Sekondi-Takoradi (in Western Region) and Kumasi (in Ashanti Region) would appear to have accounted for the bulk of employment in manufacturing industry -- the three regions together accounted for 91.6% of the total. Although there are no figures available for the present, the trend is likely to be the same. In 1980, only 20% of the labour force were engaged in industry;²³ and with the dominance of the few centres, it is not difficult to imagine that this proportion of the labour force will be concentrated in these centres.

The government, it is clear, had this form of concentration as a policy, as seen in the Second Development Plan (1959-64). The government was giving priority to industrial development in the cities of Accra-Tema, Takoradi, Kumasi and Tamale where lands and services needed for industry to function were already available. This, according to the plan, was done "so that industry might be able to enjoy the economies which emerge when a large number of factories are sited together..."²⁴

The structural changes which were to occur in the Ghanaian economy through import-substitution industrialization had their origins in colonial policy. The colonial system had created an urban middle class, also the policy makers, who were accustomed to obtaining manufactured goods virtually identical with those available in the centre nation. These tastes which seemed resistant to change made an adaptation of techniques to traditional industries rather difficult, as this would have meant a considerable adjustment in tastes.²⁵ The industries were also thus highly dependent upon imports.

Ofori-Atta maintains, further to this, that the fiscal and monetary policies adopted by the government to promote industrialization by import substitution have provided easy opportunities for the extraction of rural surplus. Thus with the maintenance of an over valued local currency, it became necessary to impose import and exchange controls. The consequent shortage of goods led to artificially high prices at which rural dwellers obtained their needs and essential inputs. But since the prices of agricultural products were not allowed to rise at an equal rate, the worsening terms of trade of agricultural products was a means for taxing rural consumers and or redistributing income in favour of urban consumers.²⁶

As noted an important result of the basic development process after independence was the further spatial concentration of activity in the main urban areas. This was to initiate a structure of population movement from the less favoured rural areas to the urban areas that had a concentration of activity, depressing further the disadvantaged areas. An idea of this may be inferred from urban population growth in the country. Urban population as percentage of total population rose from 23 in 1960 to 36 in 1980, the average annual growth rate of urban population being 4.6% and 5.1% respectively for the periods 1960-70 and 1970-80. Similarly the percentage of urban population in the largest city rose from 25 in 1960 to 35 in 1980.²⁷ This pattern of mass movement from rural to urban industrial core areas has been seen as another mechanism of extractive dominance, leading to age and sex imbalances inimical to agricultural production in the rural areas. It is estimated for example, that whilst between 10 and 13 per cent of the labour force (mainly the youth) remain unemployed in the urban areas, notably within the core region, the average age of the farmer is around sixty.²⁸

The situation in the rural areas, the agricultural peripheries, was worsened through vertical control of producer price policy in the core region through marketing boards and even directed minimum guaranteed prices from the centre, all much below existing market prices, at the local and world levels. These organizational structures facilitate central control and extraction of surplus, necessary to maintain the centre.

Table 19 shows the producer and exporting prices of cocoa over the period 1947 to 1961. The general trend is a marked difference between the two prices, the producer price always being lower. Even after tripling the producer prices of cocoa in 1981, farmers' real receipts were estimated to be only \$0.20 per pound as against the average of \$0.90 per pound on world market. This is further worsened by the inability of the marketing board to give farmers ready cash.²⁹

Table 20 also gives an indication of the tax on cocoa farmers for some selected years. The tax, after adjustments for the overvalued local currency, was an average of 62.8% for the years shown. Dodoo argues that the rural cocoa farmer is overly taxed through the lower prices offered for his produce.³⁰

Table 19

Cocoa Export Prices and Producer Prices 1947-8 to 1960-1

Crop Year	Producer Price	£G per Ton Average Price of Exported Cocoa
1947-8	75	201
1948-9	121	137
1949-50	84	178
1950-1	131	269
1951-2	149	245
1952-3	131	231
1953-4	134	358
1954-5	134	353
1955-6	149	222
1956-7	149	189
1957-8	134	304
1958-9	134	280
1959-60	112	226
1960-1	112	175

Source: Ghana Cocoa Marketing Board Annual Reports.

Table 20

Cocoa Tax Rates Adjusted for Effects of Over Valued Currency (1965/66 and 1970/73)

	1965/66	1969/70	1970/71	1971/72	1972/73
Export Price (£/ton)	349.7	858.8	657.3	698.7	845.0
Shadow exchange rate (£/\$)	0.95	1.34	1.42	1.79	1.73
Official exchange rate (£/\$)	0.71	1.02	1.02	1.28	1.28
CMB Marketing costs (£/ton)	59.0	68.8	80.0	89.7	101.4
Producer price (£/ton)	125.1	298.6	298.6	298.6	373.4
Tax rate (unadjusted) (%)	53.9	61.0	48.0	51.3	49.1
Tax rate (adjusted) (%)	66.6	66.6	59.2	61.4	60.2
% change in tax rate due to adjustment (%)	+24	+15	+23	+20	+23

Source: C.M.B. Reports and Accounts; Central Bureau of Statistics: Customs and Excise Dept. in S. Dodoo: "The Tax on Cocoa Income in Ghana" Economic Bulletin of Ghana, 3rd. series, Vol. 1, No. 1 and 2, 1975.

Besides, Dickson notes, there is widespread formal and informal control of foodstuff marketing by urban-centred middlemen who build up savings for themselves in a few urban enclaves.³¹ Further, costing and pricing methods by governments are also aimed at keeping prices of agricultural produce low in order to satisfy urban interests.³² As Ofori-Attah also notes, "...rural-urban terms of trade have also been affected by government intervention indirectly by cheap food policies, low producer prices and other agricultural price legislations."³³ Furthermore,

it is pointed out that beneficiaries of improved cultivation methods in crops like rice and maize are not Ghanaian villagers whose lives are rooted in the land, but rather rich absentee farmers based in the urban areas and who ultimately siphon off profits to the urban core region and few regional centres.³⁴ This situation, notes Goody, partly led to the widespread burning of mechanized rice farms in the northern region of the country by local men who did so as a means of protesting against their exploitation by some urban few.³⁵

Certain basic characteristics of the spatial system resulting from the foregoing processes and which can be recognised as important in rural underdevelopment in the country may be reconsidered.

First we recognise a spatial economic system strongly integrated into the world marketing system through its role as raw material producer and importer of manufactured produce and thus strongly outward oriented: production is mainly for export whilst local consumption is mainly imported -- a marked lack of balance between the structure of production and that of the demand for goods and services. This, as noted, developed from the colonial policy of development and from policies pursued after independence. On the international scale then, the country is clearly a periphery of or dependent on Western Europe and other developed countries with the attendant dominance by centre on trade conditions. An idea of such dominance in the trade relations could be inferred from the fluctuations which normally occur in the world market price of the country's main export produce.

Table 21 gives a picture of such fluctuations in price for some selected periods between 1977 and 1982 for cocoa. Prices of most manufactured imports, on the other hand, were relatively stable and higher. The implication is that rural development in the country can be highly affected from outside and thus not fully internally directed. The success of rural development may to a considerable extent depend on world market conditions, considering the structure of the economic system. This is emphasised by the point that rural areas stand to bear the brunt of whatever adverse effects this structure of the economy brings on development, since the needs of the urban areas are generally considered first and are of priority to governments. This situation may be illustrated by

Table 21
World Market Prices for Cocoa (1977 to 1982)

Period	Price (per ton)	Percentage change from previous price
1977	3,740.00	-
February 1978	1,600.00	-57.2%
December 1978	2,093.00	+30.8%
January 1979	1,921.00	- 8.2%
December 1980	930.00	-51.5%
January 1981	900.00	- 3.3%
October 1982	1,000.00	+ 1.1%

Source: 1. Africa Now, p. 64
2. October 1982 price: West Africa, October 1982, p. 2731.

Table 22:
Public Expenditure on Capital Development in Rural Areas

Regions	1967-68	1968-69	1969-70
Greater Accra	-	-	-
Volta	54,000	283,000	303,000
Western	-	52,000	-
Ashanti	40,000	128,000	198,510
Brong Ahafo	40,000	81,000	103,000
Upper	-	554,000	498,000
Northern	-	60,000	40,000
Eastern	-	30,000	108,330
Central	-	566,000	49,780
Total Rural Areas	134,000	1,754,300	1,301,520
Per cent of National	0.21	3.2	1.6

Source: Annual Expenditure Estimates (C.B.S.) 1968/69 - 1970/71.

Table 22 which looks at the public expenditure on capital development in rural areas between 1967 and 1970. It shows a complete neglect for the rural areas that accounted for never up to 5% of such expenditures, despite the rural areas population and contribution. There are no statistics available on the present expenditure pattern. Certain inferences can, however, be made from the general situation. The average annual growth rate of gross domestic investment has been estimated to be -1.4 between 1970 and 1981. It thus becomes difficult to envisage any improvements in investment in rural areas when there has been a general downward trend in investment.

This leads us to another characteristic of the spatial system, that of the dominance of a few urban centres, a feature that also contributes to rural underdevelopment. These centres have a monopoly on development and decision making power, creating a spatial relationship, between the rural

and urban areas, that is never on an equal basis. Generally in this relationship then, the more urban areas are somehow favoured to the disadvantage of the more rural areas, giving a picture of a simple centre periphery relationship, existing between these areas, and thus contributing to and maintaining the underdevelopment of the rural areas.

This situation, it may be argued, is somehow partly counterbalanced by the flow of resources from urban to rural areas through migrants in the urban centres. Caldwell found out in his study on the country that there were considerable flow of remittances from the urban to the rural areas in the form of money and goods and also found out that there was a considerable investment of the migrant in building in the rural areas.³⁶ It was, however, difficult to assess accurately the value of these remittances. But, one thing is clear -- these remittances and investments cannot be enough to considerably improve the living standards in the rural areas, relative to the urban areas. Caldwell, for example, found that such remittances formed just about one-sixth of the income of the rural families he interviewed. Moreover, such remittances are made by only those migrants who have been considerably successful.

A third characteristic of the spatial system, also related to rural underdevelopment is the rural-urban structure of population migration. This form of migration seems to be perpetuated by the dominance of the few urban centres. There is a movement from the rural areas, mainly of the youth, to the urban areas, generally with a view of bettering their lives. The role that rural-urban migration plays in rural underdevelopment is emphasised when one considers that it is the very people (the youth) that migrate that may have helped in the development of the rural areas. Some of the migrants do, however, return to the rural areas but as Caldwell notes "the return flow is quite strong at all ages after about 45 years."³⁷

The final characteristic inherent in the structure of the spatial system and specifically related to urban dominance is the top-down nature of decision making. This will be considered in more detail when strategies for rural development in Ghana are discussed in the next chapter. But the implication is that decisions on development in rural areas are made at the centre and literally imposed on the rural population. The point

has already been raised that such a structure of decision making alienates rather than encourages the rural people to participate in their development.

The foregoing have emphasised the spatial structural effect on rural underdevelopment. Whilst this is obviously an important contributory factor, especially in accounting for the relative poverty of the rural areas, we need to consider another basic factor that accounts more for absolute poverty in these areas -- that of low productivity. It has already been established that the people in the rural areas are mainly agricultural. Low productivity in agriculture is therefore seen as a basic factor contributing to absolute rural poverty.

Certain factors have been identified to be the causes of low productivity in agriculture. Among these are the effects of the physical environment -- especially soil and climate, the nature of the farming systems used by the rural farmer and neglect of the rural small scale farmer by the state in its attempts to improve agricultural production.

The climatic factor that appears most important is precipitation. Rainfall amounts decrease from the south west of the country towards the north (ref Fig. 6) and over certain parts of the country, inadequate precipitation affects adversely agricultural production,³⁸ requiring systematic efforts at reducing the problem. Irrigation schemes have been initiated only at few areas but even in these areas, most of the people who gain from the schemes are urban based rich farmers and not the rural people.

Soil conditions present yet another physical environmental factor that poses a problem to agriculture. The need for soil management practices like fertilization has long been recognised as a means to improving agricultural productivity. But there are other sets of problems that prevent the use of such methods by the rural farmer. The most cited of these are the farmers' incapability in purchasing fertilizers and other inputs due to poverty and their incapability to properly apply fertilizers due to illiteracy. Another problem, however, relates to the inefficiency associated with making such inputs like fertilizers available by agencies concerned to the few farmers in the rural areas who may have the resources

Figure 6. GHANA MEAN ANNUAL RAINFALL

Source: Dickson, K.B. and G. Benneh: A New Geography of Ghana (1970), p. 28.

to enable them to apply them. It is not uncommon for fertilizers, for example, to arrive at an area only at times that they are not needed.

There is no gainsaying that the traditional system of farming will have to be improved if rural farmers' output is to increase. With increasing population, the system has come under pressure, the output per head dropping in certain parts of the country.³⁹ This is evidenced by the many suggestions made towards improving rural agricultural system for increased production, the most common being the introduction of simple mechanization, hybrid varieties of crops and the intensification in the introduction of fertilization.

It is also recognizable that the small scale farmers who form the bulk of the rural population have been neglected in governments' attempts to improve agriculture. This has mainly been because of the notion that the small scale farmer cannot be the instrument by which rapid increases in agricultural production could be effected.

The first government after independence wanted to go socialist⁴⁰ and therefore wanted to transform agriculture through socialist principles. The modernization of agriculture was therefore attempted by creating government agencies that were entrusted with the task. The most important of these were the State Farms Corporation and the Workers Brigade, which were assisted with ample state funds, the extension services and other inputs from the state. There was no attempt at assisting the small scale farmers who formed the majority of the rural population -- they were neglected. This may be explained by the point that the government sought to transform individual production and ownership of the small holders into cooperative ownership, something consistent with socialist principles. Further, as noted by Ofori-Atta, state agriculture was also intended to respond directly to the policy directions of the government, especially in meeting the need for raising and diversifying productivity as quickly as possible; and this was considered to require the introduction and application of scientific technology and systems of inputs thought to be beyond the resources of illiterate small scale farmers.⁴¹

Subsequent governments, though not socialist in principle, have pursued agricultural policies that largely did not favour the small scale farmer. Here again the notion is that drastic changes in agriculture

cannot be expected from peasant production. The general trend has therefore been the encouragement of private individuals and companies to enter large scale farming, a way through which a rapid break through in agriculture is expected to be achieved. Government efforts at improving agricultural production has therefore been biased in favour of the very few large scale farmers.

In 1970, for example, government incentives were given to boost large scale farming. These included a tax free holiday of five years for individual large scale farmers as well as companies; such companies were even permitted to get back initial losses through the extension of the tax exemption after the five year period initially granted. Further government assistance to all large-scale farmers was guaranteed, and in that same period, a special loan fund, to be administered by an agricultural development bank was set up to finance civil servants retiring into agriculture. Such people were eligible for loans five times their retiring annual salary or three times the gratuity due, with a very favourable terms of repayment. The government, further in 1971, invited foreign management and capital into agriculture as means of making more rapid break-throughs in agriculture.⁴²

All these measures, directly or indirectly deepened the neglect for the improvement of the small holders' production. But this student is of the view that over emphasis on large scale farming can at best, only lead to the development of "rural areas" in terms of total increases in output from rural areas and very little development for the rural people who are largely small scale peasant farmers and for whose benefit rural development efforts must be geared.

The low agricultural productivity of the rural people, together with the failure of various governments in the country to assist them in improving their productivity are therefore another set of factors underlying rural poverty.

This chapter sought to look at two things: the characteristics of rural underdevelopment and the basis of rural underdevelopment. An attempt has been made at establishing the absolute and relative poverty of the rural areas of the country. Thus, although the country as a whole

cannot be classified as "developed", the rural areas are relatively poor when all indicators are considered.

The problem has generally been traced to two factors. One is the very low productivity of the rural people in almost the only economic activity in rural Ghana -- agriculture. This throws greater light on the reasons for widespread absolute poverty in the rural areas. The other factor identified, and which explains the widening gap between the urban and rural areas, is the spatial system -- its structure and attendant imbalances relating to international relationships in trade and to rural-urban relationships in the country.

Attempts at developing the rural areas should then basically involve improving the productivity in agriculture among the rural communities as means of reducing absolute poverty. But a restructuring of the spatial system, aimed at adjusting the rural urban relationships as well as the international trade relationship will also seem necessary. Since in rural development it is necessary to improve the rural areas both in absolute and relative terms, it appears necessary that both measures are taken concurrently. A later chapter will attempt to discuss these more fully.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER TWO

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- 23 World Bank: op cit., Table 19: Labour Force, p. 146.
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³⁸See K.B. Dickson and G. Benneh: A New Geography of Ghana (Longman, London, 1970), Ch. 9.

³⁹See Dickson and Benneh: Op cit., pp. 78-80.

⁴⁰"Ghana has chosen the socialist form of development as the objective of her social and economic development. This choice is based on the belief that only a socialist form of society can assure Ghana a rapid rate of economic progress". Ghana: Seven-Year Development Plan 1963/64-67/70. Office of the Planning Commission, 1964, pp. 1 and 2.

⁴¹Ofori-Atta: op cit., p. 8.

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CHAPTER THREE

STRATEGIES ADOPTED FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN GHANA

The previous chapter tried to portray the underdeveloped nature of the rural areas of the country and to make an attempt at establishing the basis of it. There is evidence, as seen in the first chapter, that governments recognize the need for the development of these areas; and government as well as non-government agencies have over the years attempted to improve conditions in the rural areas. This chapter aims at examining critically the strategies so far adopted for rural development in the country. This is necessary since it has been argued earlier that the nature of these strategies constitutes part of the problem.

Moris distinguishes between three applications of the idea of strategies in the field of development: by economists to designate an analytically coherent cluster of policies; by policy makers to distinguish various exemplary models; and by others to indicate broad descriptive patterns which indicate the direction of a country's policies. The use of 'strategies' in this chapter, and indeed in this thesis corresponds to the last application and therefore refers mainly to approaches towards rural development.

As a background to analysing rural development strategies in Ghana, a general overview of existing rural development strategies will be considered. This will allow for a clearer examination of those strategies in the Ghanaian case.

3.1 An Overview of Rural Development Strategies

From the standpoint of regional planners, the following strategies for rural development may be identified: the growth pole strategy, the basic needs approach, the integrated rural development strategy and the agrarian approach. From the ideological perspective, we may distinguish between capitalist and socialist/Marxist strategies. Considering all

these, however, we may group them into two main types: top-down and bottom-up strategies.

The characteristics and origins of the growth pole strategy have been discussed in the first chapter. The salient feature is that development will have to be concentrated at selected points in space from where it will spread to surrounding lagging areas. As a means for rural development then, the growth pole strategy suggests the concentration of resources in few points within rural areas; these points will then stimulate the economies of those areas around them and thereby help in their development. This approach is still given a considerable role in development planning in most developing countries. The increasing questioning of the suitability of this strategy for achieving development in poor areas however stimulated a search, mainly by development agencies, for alternative strategies. Most other strategies have, therefore, been suggested as alternatives to this strategy.

The concept of integrated development became popular in international circles in the mid-1960s, starting as the peculiar and pressing need for various specialised agencies of the United Nations to reduce rivalry and to work better together.² Integrated development therefore implied development in which several U.N. agencies collaborated, or were intended to do so, so that their activities might become mutually reinforcing. This usage of the term has been extended to rural development, resulting in an approach variously referred to as integrated rural development, the fully comprehensive approach and the multi-faceted approach, all of which purport to deal with all aspects of rural life. Integrated rural development aims generally at the achievement of three objectives -- economic, social and educational and cultural development simultaneously.

As Addo notes:

The approach signifies the interdisciplinary integration of the various rural development activities into a comprehensive system which takes into account the inherent interrelationships and complementarities of physical, economic and political factors and has a basic assumption that rural programmes should be planned and implemented within the framework of an overall national development.³

Certain advantages have been identified with the strategy. Such an approach, it is argued, will ensure that various development agencies use resources well and do not duplicate one another or compete for the same resources; the rural population, with such a strategy, is mobilized and made aware of the importance of rural development, encouraging them to participate meaningfully in the development process; again, making rural development part of an overall national development plan makes the allocation of resources for rural development easier and also make effective adjustment of government structures to deal with the requirements of programmes in one area or a few regions of the country less cumbersome.

The strategy is noted to have some drawbacks and costs however. It is pointed out that the approach is liable to mean a simultaneous implementation of many different programmes in the same area but as Chambers argues, if the emphasis is on mass participation, then a sequential approach, involving the establishment of clear priorities and the phasing of activities may be more appropriate.⁴ Further, an attack on many fronts in one area may involve a wasteful and inequitable concentration of resources. This is especially the case in developing countries where the potential target groups are large relative to available resources particularly the trained manpower and institutional capability available for planning and implementing rural development programmes.

Lele notes:

It would seem...that in many cases the objectives of mass participation of low income groups may be better served by a more equitable allocation of resources at the outset to ensure a minimum level of services and institutional development for removal of the most critical constraints before a few regions benefit from substantially greater allocation.⁵

These problems with the strategy may account for why it has not been applied extensively.

Another response to the empirical observation that the growth pole development strategy was incapable of developing rural areas was the introduction of the basic needs strategy, first by the I.L.O. Basic needs were considered to include

first minimum requirements of a family for private consumption: adequate food, shelter and clothing, as well as certain

household equipment and furniture; second, they include essential services provided by and for the community at large, such as safe drinking water, sanitation, public transport and health, educational and cultural facilities.⁶

In terms of project selection, the strategy argues for priority attention to commodities and services which contribute directly to the satisfaction of basic needs. It also argues for greater selectivity and disaggregation in choosing instruments for eradicating poverty, focusing on getting specific goods and services.⁷ Such a policy, Streeten argued, was expected to help in the satisfaction of basic human needs of the whole population of a country at levels of income per head substantially below those that would be required by a less discriminatory policy of all round income growth.⁸

Lee, however, recognizes certain problems, institutional and political, that do not make the adoption of such a strategy easy and straight forward.⁹ A first obstacle relates to the need to alter the structure of production from a luxury orientation towards necessities. There will be political problems involved in altering the composition of output, overcoming the vested interests of producers and importers of those commodities. Secondly, there should be an effective demand to ensure that the poor are able to purchase the needs, where it is even assumed that the goods and services are produced. The political problem of bringing about an appropriate redistribution of incomes emerges too. Thus, although it is recognised that the strategy could go a long way to help in improving the life of poor people in a country, rural development through the approach has not gone far because of these difficulties.

The agropolitan approach to rural development was introduced by Friedmann in 1975. The strategy aims at near autonomous self sustaining rural development. It suggests the creation of agropolitan districts having certain basic features of self-sufficiency and self-reliance in decision making and planning based on popular participation and co-operative action at the local level. The agropolitan districts are also expected to represent a diversification of rural agricultural employment with some form of industrialization and the utilization and evaluation of local resources and technologies.¹⁰ The most important characteristic.

is the consideration of the district as a single unit with effective decision making powers. The strategy also implies regional closures aiming at the internalization of benefits from productive activities, thereby increasing incomes and promoting the satisfaction of basic needs.

The strategy has still not been tried, but certain pertinent obstacles are obvious: the unwillingness of many central governments and the penetration of international and extra-regional competitive forces into the economy of an agropolitan district which may destroy the competitive position of weaker local producers.¹¹

Rural development strategies as noted earlier, may either be classified capitalistic or socialist/Marxist looking at them from the political ideological perspective. The principal difference emanates from the mode of ownership. Whilst capitalistic strategies will allow for individual ownership and improvement within the framework of the rural development strategy, socialist strategies emphasise more on communal or group ownership and work towards rural development.

In the broadest sense however, rural development strategies may be said to be top-down or bottom-up in nature. These pertain to the direction from which rural development efforts proceed. Top-down strategies have development directed to the target areas from government or development agencies. A major weakness is the lack of participation in decision making of the people to be developed. It is thus sometimes seen as an imposition of decisions from the 'top' on to those 'below' at the grass-roots. The growth pole strategy, as well as certain aspects of the integrated strategy and the basic needs approach are top-down in nature. Basic to bottom-up strategies is the decentralization of decision making on development to the people in the area to be developed and thus encouraging more effective participation of the local people in their development. Bottom-up strategies also stress self reliance on local resources with selective spatial closure, as opposed to total openness, as a means to development. The agropolitan approach is clearly a bottom-up strategy. The major drawback of the bottom-up strategy is the lack of ample evidence on its applicability despite its intellectual appeal.

3.2 The Ghanaian Case

Efforts at rural development have been made in the country by private, national and international agencies. Government efforts, through its policies over the years are, however, the outstanding. We shall not from the beginning consider the approaches followed for rural development in the country along the lines of the general strategies discussed above, although it will be possible to identify the general strategy into which each approach used in the country can be classified.

The earliest attempt consciously made by the government to develop rural areas was in 1944 when a department of social welfare and community development was established. This organization was expected to work on social welfare in the country in the wider area of its relations to education, health and agriculture. The approach used during this early period was that of community development, the main concern being to help the local people grow in civic responsibilities and in the use of their potentialities and talents in achieving desirable economic, social and cultural goals.¹² The main objective, it appeared, was to encourage the people to undertake self-help projects to improve their standards of living. The combination of government efforts and those of the rural people in the approach sought to encourage local initiative and voluntary efforts as well as the use of local skills and manual labour; and there were established in each district, local development committees to see to these objectives. This approach was apparently not given much support for long and thus had to give way to other strategies adopted by the government.

Since this early effort for rural development, a look at the historical experience of the country will show that several approaches have been adopted for rural development. The first attempt at synthesizing the strategies for rural development in the country was probably made by Kudiabor in 1977 when, in a paper, he identified three approaches: social amenity, increased agricultural production and annual development budget approaches.¹³ Five approaches may, however, be identified to be the main ones. These have variously been named but shall be referred to as follows in this thesis: the social amenity or single project approach; the sectoral approach; the increased agricultural production

approach; the regional decentralization approach; and the multi-sector area approach.¹⁴ The Ghanaian experience shows however that these strategies are not mutually exclusive and within one period two or more approaches may be identified. These strategies will be discussed in turn and appraised. Rural development, as noted in the previous chapters, must seek to improve the living standards of the rural people both in absolute and relative terms and must also be self sustaining. Strategies must be capable of achieving all of these and not merely part if they are to lead to the development of the rural areas. In appraising these strategies then, we will mainly look at the extent to which they can achieve these objectives for complete development.

3.2.1 Social Amenity/Single Project Approach

This strategy of rural development in Ghana lays emphasis on the provision of social services and amenities for rural communities. The argument is that through the distribution of social services and amenities, the gap in living standards between urban and rural residents will be bridged, whilst at the same time rural-urban migration will be minimized with a possible attraction of people from the urban to the rural areas. It is also sometimes argued that the provision of social amenities can, in the long run, lead to increased productivity and also serve as a first step towards the achievement of balanced urban-rural development. The Two-Year Development Plan states: "The increased emphasis on rural infrastructure and amenities will help in directing a fair share of the country's income growth to the rural area."¹⁵ The plan also emphasised the urgent need to improve per capita income in the rural areas and to slow down migration to the urban sectors.¹⁶ Similarly, it is realised that the strategy was part of the general approach towards rural development in the One-Year Development Plan when we consider that a basic aim of the plan was to extend certain basic modern amenities through an expanded programme for feeder road construction and maintenance, an enlarged programme for rural water supply, emphasis on preventive medicine and rural health care and a scheme for rural electrification.¹⁷ It is obvious, however, that this approach was adopted by the government only after 1968. The Seven-Year Development Plan for example had the objective of raising standards of living in the rural areas; but, as the plan put it,

"this cannot be done by pouring money into the villages to construct social amenities as the money for such village improvements can come from nowhere except the villages themselves."¹⁸

As a strategy for rural development, the social amenity approach has certain drawbacks. It is found to be expensive, considering the limited government funding available, and cost constraint alone has restricted the speed with which central government funds can be spent on the provision of basic needs. Kudiabor points out, for example, that in 1970, the cost of constructing a mile of feeder road in the country was ₦10,000 and to drill a mechanized bore hole to supply water to a village cost ₦12,000.¹⁹ Lele expresses a similar view (for the whole of Africa though) when she pointed out that in many rural areas, the demand for a wide range of social services is substantial, whereas the financial, manpower and organizational resources for effective delivery of social services are often extremely limited.²⁰ An implication is that rural communities will have to accept the principles of self-help and self-financing since social amenities per se are unlikely to prove viable and self sustaining. Another criticism is that in most cases the government never consulted and ascertained the preferences of the rural people before amenities were provided. It is the work of a central agency to determine what are to be provided in the rural areas, thus in most cases ignoring the micro differences that may occur in particular rural areas. It is also argued that such a strategy cannot possibly lead to a sustained rural development because it is not an integral part of a comprehensive rural development plan and thus likely to have facilities introduced in wrong sequence. Yet another shortcoming of the approach is that it makes no direct attempt at improving rural incomes, something that appears important if rural communities are to help themselves and work towards sustained development.

It has already been noted that the social amenity approach to rural development cannot be self-sustaining for reasons such as its over dependence on government funding and its inability to directly improve rural incomes. Another important reason, however, pertains to the top-down nature of the approach. Top-down planning and implementation does

not allow for the active participation of the people in the development process and to cultivate that attitude for self-help which appears very vital for a sustained development considering the economic weakness of the country. There is a general impression that development is government-given and thus the sole responsibility of governments to provide each community with the basic social amenities. This attitude has been a strong factor inhibiting the rural people from helping themselves.

Further to these, it is discernible that urban dominance will make it difficult for this strategy to bridge the gap between rural and urban areas in standards of living although the provision of such amenities in rural communities will lead to an absolute improvement in living conditions in the rural areas and thus may not be capable of minimizing rural urban migration as envisaged. This is because considering the nature of rural urban relationship, urban communities, although far fewer, will still have a greater share of whatever resources are available and thus will generally at all times be provided for more than rural areas. There is, therefore, the possibility of widening gaps even in the face of increasing provisions for the rural areas. It is undisputable that some of the projects introduced under this approach are necessary and needed by the rural community, but the strategy can hardly make any far reaching impacts on the development of the rural areas because of its inability to initiate a process of sustained development in rural areas and to help in the relative improvements in living standards of the rural poor.

3.2.2 Sectoral Approach

The sectoral approach to rural development, implicit in the strategy for national planning in the first and second Five-Year Development plans, has specialised government departments carrying out programmes without any coordination. Programmes on health, adult literacy, family planning, water supply, agricultural extension etc. are implemented at both the national and rural levels by different government ministries.

This approach does not appear to be very different from the single project approach discussed above. First, it is also top-down in nature -- various government ministries decide at their head offices in the centre on what to provide and how to implement their programmes without any local

participation. Secondly, the approach is also highly dependent on the limited government funding. In addition, it is realised that efforts by various ministries are normally unsupportive of each other and it is argued that such an uncoordinated approach is unlikely to have a considerable impact on the rural communities.

For the overly top-down nature of the sectoral approach, it is difficult to envision how it can encourage local participation and thus self help which are noted to be vital for rural development. These, together with the heavy dependence of the approach on government funding and the unsupportive nature of the efforts of various government ministries at rural development are probably enough to indicate that the approach cannot initiate a self sustaining process of rural development in the country.

As noted for the single project approach, this student is again of the view that the dominance of the urban areas will not make it possible for this strategy to improve the rural living conditions in relative terms, although there is no doubt that in absolute terms, some improvements may be made. The various ministries provide services for the rural as well as the urban areas and it is unlikely at any point to find a proportionate allocation of resources made for rural areas. The tendency has been for the urban areas to be allocated disproportionately large portions of resources available.

3.2.3 Increased Agricultural Production Approach

This strategy assumes increased agricultural production in the rural areas will lead to an increase in rural incomes to an extent that will enable the rural people to provide for themselves the basic services and thus lead to a higher standard of living in those areas. The approach usually includes such elements as improved agricultural extension services, an improved feeder road network, better organized cooperative movement, experimental or demonstration farms, seed distribution and the availability of credit on easy terms to the farmer. Increased agricultural production as a means to rural development is evidenced in all the development plans drawn up for the country. In the One-Year Development Plan for example, this strategy was adopted as follows:

In order to promote increased agricultural production in the rural areas, government during the 1970-71 financial year will concentrate on the development of few critical commodities, accelerate the feeder road construction programme throughout the country, expand extension services in the use of fertilizers to farmers in the rural areas; improve quality of mechanization services to the farmer, increase agricultural credit facilities by expanding the work of the Agricultural Development Bank and consolidate and strengthen existing agricultural cooperative organizations serving the rural areas.²¹

The S.M.C. government also adopted the approach in 1972 when it introduced the Operation Feed Yourself Programme which, among other things, aimed at self-sufficiency in agricultural production.

As a strategy for rural development, it appears very important since the bulk of the rural people are engaged in agriculture and increased production the best way of improving rural incomes. It is therefore one approach that makes direct efforts to improve rural incomes and is more likely to initiate a self-sustaining development in rural areas.

There are, however, certain shortcomings noticeable with the approach. First, the ability of the government to provide the necessary inputs to help in improving agricultural production is very limited; yet by the design of the approach, its success will depend largely on such government inputs in the provision of fertilizers, credit etc. There is no attempt made within the framework of the strategy to forge ahead in making the rural people self dependent in the improvement of their production in agriculture. Worse still, beneficiaries of the limited government assistance are not, in most cases, rural residents, but rather urban based farmers who ultimately transfer incomes to the urban areas. Urban dominance is thus still operative in this strategy. Finally, the approach is top-down in nature: decisions on production methods and especially the types of crops to be grown are made by government agencies without any local participation. The result is normally suspicion and disinterest on the part of the rural communities.

There is no doubt, however, that a successful attempt at improving the level of agricultural production in rural areas can go a long way in

improving the living condition of the people. The extent to which agricultural improvement can improve rural life will, however, be dependent, to some extent, on the nature of rural urban interrelationship. In the present situation where there is so much dominance by the urban areas, the likelihood is for the transfer of gains in agricultural production in rural areas to urban areas and thus make the rural areas have much less improvement than may appear possible. Perhaps looking at agricultural improvements without considering the necessary steps to take in making a greater percentage of the gain remain in the rural areas may not prove very effective for rural development.

3.2.4 Regional Decentralization Approach

This strategy for rural development in Ghana involves the implementation of joint programmes at the regional level under a regional planning committee. The basic assumption underlying this approach is that since substantial amounts of resources are invested each year through a development budget for the improvement of rural areas, the existence of an effective machinery at the regional and district levels for the prompt and effective implementation of various projects and programmes outlined in the annual budget is desirable.²² The main essence of the strategy is to attempt to decentralise decision making process. The approach was initiated in 1968, through the establishment of regional planning committees, the justification for the strategy by the government being that the responsibility of implementation of projects and programmes would be better done by lower level public bodies that were closer to the problems involved than the central administration. Thus the Two-Year Development Plan stated:

For the implementation of projects in the public investment programme, the government is convinced that it must decentralize responsibility. The lower level public bodies...are closer to the problem involved than the central administration and hence they are the ones who should be responsible for the implementation of projects and programmes. It is, however, necessary that they should report back to the coordinating agencies. The feedback of data on project implementation is not only required in order to keep a check on progress in implementation and the flow of expenditure but also to provide a guide for the formulation of new projects.²³

The Committees were therefore to serve as the framework within which

the execution of development projects could be planned and effectively monitored.

It is observed, however, that the regional planning committees failed to achieve these aims mainly because they lacked sufficient authority and enough budget allocations to deal with local development issues which transcended sectoral decisions. Opoku-Afriyie notes on the committees: "their mandate was weak and blurred...they lacked purposeful direction from the central planning agency."²⁴

The government planned further to emphasise decentralization in the Five-Year Development Plan (1975-80). The administrative machinery for effecting changes needed in the regions and in the rural areas was to be made up of: (a) Regional Councils (b) District Councils (c) Local Councils and (d) Town and Village Development Committees.²⁵ Steps were also to be taken to establish planning committees for each of these administrative organs and also to strengthen the staffing at the national, regional and local planning secretariats.

A notable characteristic of the approach, similar to the ones already considered is its dependence on fund allocations from the central planning body for its operation. It appears then, that the regional committees merely represent bodies through which government funds are channelled and virtually only seek to implement decisions taken at the centre. The decision making process in the approach is therefore much of the top-down nature despite seeming decentralization. Ewusi has noted that "even with the existence of the regional planning committees, the sectoral approach is being used at the regional level and in some regions the regional planning officers have had but a small impact on the decision making at the regional committees."²⁶ Decentralization in this approach, it appears, does not seek to involve the rural people in the decision making process and is thus unlikely to encourage local participation, an important objective in decentralization for development. It is, further, discernible that whilst this strategy can help in improving the standard of living of the rural people in absolute terms, relative improvement is unlikely to be achieved. The explanation is as given for other strategies: in a situation of urban dominance budgetary allocations for urban development will, always be proportionately higher than provisions for rural

development. This represents an unequal distribution of gains in productivity.

3.2.5 Multi-Sector Area Projects Approach

This is sometimes referred to as the regional planning approach and involves the implementation of programmes involving more than one government agency but confined to a particular site. It may take two forms: model villages which are expected to provide the necessary demonstration effect to the outlying villages or the development of growth poles.

The former has not been a strategy planned for or adopted by the government. It was rather started on an experimental basis by the Ghana Rural Reconstruction Movement in 1974 in the Mampong Valley²⁷ and the movement hoped to extend it to other parts of the country in future. It, however, still remains confined to the original area.

The government was to adopt some aspects of the growth pole approach in 1975-1980 Five-Year Development Plan period. In the guidelines to the plan it is stated: "the strategy for regional and rural transformation is through the creation of growth foci. These are growth poles, or growth centres or growth points, which consciously planned with the necessary service inputs, are capable of stimulating the economies immediately around them."²⁸ A four tier hierarchy of growth foci was thus planned for the country viz: growth poles (at national level), growth centres (at the regional level), growth points (at district level) and development service centres (at the local and village level). These growth foci are expected to help in stimulating the economies of their areas of influence and thereby help in their development. This remains, however, only a written plan and there is no evidence in the country of the implementation of this proposal.

The attempt by the Ghana Rural Reconstruction Movement in the Mampong Valley appear to be the most integrated approach to rural development in the country. The movement seeks to improve all aspects of the rural life simultaneously -- economic through the introduction of simple techniques for agricultural improvement, health through the introduction of simple techniques of disease prevention etc. But more important is the manner in which the movement seeks to bring about these improvements.

It works within the established rural authority system and tries to involve the traditional heads in all decisions made about the communities. It is thus the most 'bottom-up' of all the approaches and shows practical signs of local participation in the development process. Despite the movement's problems of staffing and funding, its approach promises, so far, to be a viable means of promoting self sustaining development in the area.

Although, as noted, the growth pole approach has not been implemented, it is not difficult to envisage some possible problems. A major constraint to this strategy will be financial, as regards provisions for the growth foci. But even given that these can be easily provided, the question as to whether the economies of the areas around the foci can be appreciably stimulated is also open to argument. Although service centres can prove very useful to rural people there is also the tendency that the approach will lead to further dominance by a few points in the spatial system.

3.3 A Summary

Despite these various attempts to develop the rural areas, it is an empirical observation that conditions in the rural areas have not been improved and rather continue to deteriorate in certain areas. The basis of rural underdevelopment has been extended further in this chapter. Whilst the previous chapter looked at the problem in terms of low productivity and the structure of the spatial system, another dimension -- the ineffectiveness of the strategies adopted -- has been made clear in this chapter.

It is realised that there has not been any consistent rural development strategy in the country, apparently for the reason that governments have evolved no satisfactory conceptual framework within which to organize a comprehensive rural development policy. This may partly be due to political instability in the country since independence that has probably not allowed any government enough time to formulate a concrete policy on rural development.

Second, government strategies for rural development have been largely top-down in nature. The results of this are three related problems: heavy dependence on the highly limited government funds for

the success of rural development, difficulty in encouraging the rural people to participate in the development process and the creation of the notion among rural people that development should come from the central government, something that militates against active participation.

Third, the inefficiency of the strategies also lie in the point that they make no attempt, within their framework, to reduce urban dominance. The result is that whilst they will generally be capable of improving the rural areas in absolute terms, they appear inadequate for relative improvements, something that may only be possible within a comprehensive programme by the government.

A major implication of all these is that the still poor state of the rural areas should also be accounted for partly in terms of the unsuitability of strategies adopted by the government; and therefore, in trying to find solutions to the problem of rural underdevelopment in the country this aspect will also have to be considered in addition to others already identified. In the main, it may require more bottom-up approaches with a more coordinated effort within a national development plan.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER THREE

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³N.O. Addo: "The Structural Basis of Integrated Rural Development" in J.R. Schott (ed.): An Experiment in Integrated Rural Development: The Mampong Valley Social Laboratory in Ghana (IIRR, New York, 1978) p. 24.

⁴R. Chambers, op. cit., p. 25.

⁵Uma Lele: The Design of Rural Development: Lessons from Africa (Washington, 1978), p. 186.

⁶Definition of Basic Needs adopted by the World Development Conference, quoted from "Employment, Growth and Basic Needs: A On-World Problem" (Geneva, I.L.O., 1976), p. 32.

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- ¹⁵Ghana Government: Two-Year Development Plan 1968-1970, p. 18.
- ¹⁶Ibid., p. 24.
- ¹⁷Ghana Government: One Year Development Plan Feb. 1970 to June 1971, (Accra Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1970).
- ¹⁸Republic of Ghana: Seven-Year Development Plan 1963/64 - 1969/70 (Office of the Planning Commission, Accra, 1964), p. 62.
- ¹⁹Kudiabor: op. cit., p. 35.
- ²⁰Uma Lele: op. cit., p. 122.
- ²¹Ghana Government: One-Year Development Plan, op. cit.
- ²²Kudiabor op. cit.
- ²³Republic of Ghana: Two-Year Development Plan: From Stabilization to Development (Accra, 1968), p. 20.
- ²⁴Y. Opoku-Afriyie: "Regional Development Authority and Rural Development" Greenhill Journal of Administration Vol. 1, No. 1, 1974, p.31.
- ²⁵Ghana: Guidelines for the Five-Year Development Plan 1975-80 (Ghana Publishing Corporation, Accra, 1975), p. 47.
- ²⁶K. Ewusi: op. cit., p. 99.
- ²⁷The Ghana Rural Reconstruction Movement is a voluntary organization affiliated to the International Institute for Rural Reconstruction. The Mampong Valley is located in the southern part of the country.
- ²⁸Ghana: Guidelines for the Five-Year Development Plan, p. 47.

CHAPTER FOUR

REDESIGNING RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN GHANA

It is empirically evident that despite the overt concerns of governments about rural development, manifested in the many attempts at it, absolute as well as relative poverty are most marked features in the rural areas of the country. The two previous chapters offered some explanations of this state of affairs and traced the problem to certain sets of factors. Considering the nature of the causes of rural underdevelopment as described in the second chapter, it becomes apparent that approaches adopted for the solution of the problem have some lacunae which make them incomplete as effective means of doing so. It follows from this that it will be very necessary that henceforth rural development efforts are organized in a fashion that will seek to fill in the gaps identified in the various approaches and thus make them efficacious in solving the problem. This chapter will look at the redesigning of rural development in the country. What we shall be doing is to examine the alternatives open to those concerned with rural development in the country considering the realities of the situation.

4.1 The Problem Considered Again

Perhaps, a short summary of the identified causes of rural underdevelopment at this stage will facilitate an easier discussion of the redesign of rural development in the country.

The problem, as presented in the previous chapters may be ascribed to the following: (i) dominance of the country as a whole by her partners in the international economic system; the relationship is thus one of dependency fashioned through the role of the country as raw material producer (mainly cocoa) the world prices of which are relatively low and highly unstable. The main effect is that long term planning for development becomes difficult and unrealistic -- development in the country is to some extent, externally controlled; (ii) Dominance of the few urban centres

within the country over the rural areas that contain the majority of the people. Urban dominance has created the opportunity for the biased allocation of resources (a greater percentage of which are created in rural areas) in favour of the urban areas. This is made possible mainly through the concentration of decision making in the centre; (iii) the third factor relates to the approaches adopted by the governments over the years towards rural development: these are overly top-down in nature, least encouraging participation and thus highly dependent on government funding, a situation not conducive to rural development due to the limited nature of government funding. Further the approaches make no attempt at reducing relative poverty through altering the rural urban relationship. These three factors so far put up may be said to be spatial structural in nature; (iv) low productivity of the rural small holder farmers, emanating from a combination of constraints from the physical and social environment and from policies of agricultural improvement pursued by the governments of the country, is the other component of the problem of rural underdevelopment.

4.2 The Redesign of Rural Development

From the preceding paragraph, we can gather that redesigning rural development should involve redirections within the situation described to bring about sustained development in rural areas. Thus, as a first general step towards internal rural development, it would appear imperative that steps are taken to limit the dependence of the country's economy on the world system, resulting from the incorporation of the former into the latter as raw material producer and importer of manufactured consumer items.

This issue will, however, not be one of the country simply refusing to be a producer of raw materials -- that is not practicable. Reform will require a careful study of the dynamics of dependency and hence the alternatives open to the country. The major factor that sustains the dependency relationship is the over dependence of the country on a monocultural economy -- cocoa still remains the mainstay of the economy, with the generally lower and fluctuating world market prices of the crop having sometimes debilitating effects on the development of the country. As one writer puts it, "in Ghana freedom is escape from dependence on cocoa."¹ The problem, as is discernible, is further compounded by

the structure of internal demand which deepens dependency on the world system by its attachment to externally produced goods as opposed to internally produced ones.

For the reduction of structural dependence -- achieving a more internally oriented economic structure, and thus a more autonomous development then, the diversification of production suggests itself as an important step. Diversifying agricultural production for lessening dependence should involve not only export crops, but also producing more crops that are needed in the country -- foodcrops -- and thereby make production more consistent with the internal needs rather than external demand.

Simultaneously with such a diversification, however, should be efforts at directing internal demand towards the natural resource availability in the country. This, admittedly, will not be straight forward and easy and may involve political decisions on reducing the importation of foreign goods. But this can be quite a formidable problem, requiring a really committed government for its initiation and implementation. The reason is that there is a high likelihood of opposition to such a policy mainly from the urban population since it will involve adjustments in tastes and habits cultivated over time. Darko's contention that dependency relationship with monopoly capitalism has resulted in the formation and entrenchment of privileged groups able to bias production towards luxury commodities, financed by export proceeds² is an indication of the possibility of opposition towards such a move from certain groups.

The necessity to diversify production and direct demand towards internal production was at least recognised by the S.M.C. government whose Operation Feed Yourself Programme launched in 1972 emphasised the increased production of foodcrops and the diversification of produce for export.³ This programme, however, overemphasised large scale production and to a large extent neglected the small scale rural farmers.

As a complement to the redirection of demand towards internal production as a means of reducing dependence, the establishment of small food processing plants, whose output will be geared towards local and national needs has been suggested.⁴ This will help to provide alternative sources of employment in the rural areas and emphasise a self reliant

development through the forging of links between production and the needs of the people as a whole.

It is important to note the fundamental difference between processing under import substitution industrialization and the type of processing being suggested here: whilst the former often relies quite heavily on imported raw materials and thus articulates the outward oriented nature of the economy and satisfies a few of the population, the latter will depend largely on available raw materials in the country and help towards self-reliance whilst at the same time satisfying the needs of a greater majority of the people. Thus, consumption patterns will have to have an internal orientation and based on the locally available resources as well as the capacity for the transformation of these resources for human use.

This student is not arguing for a complete disengagement with external interactions in trade, however. The realities of the situation dictates that this is inappropriate and even a near impossibility -- there is definitely the need for some external elements in the country's development. The point is rather that there should be the maximum possible level of selective regional closure, such a policy being the means by which interactions inimical to self reliant development can be sifted from those beneficial to it. Perhaps Mabogunje summarises best this idea when he wrote, on the concept of selective regional closure that it:

Implies a greater deliberateness as to what type of external relations a country should maintain during the process of development and what sorts of external influence it should allow to penetrate its society...What it emphasises more than anything else is that in all fields of endeavour a country first and foremost taps and draws upon its own internal and traditional resources and it is only to the extent that these can be further improved, developed or complemented from external sources should external relations be encouraged and sustained...The concept of selective closure thus implies a conscious redefinition of the external relations which deepen dependency and weaken self-reliance. It also involves establishing new and more discriminating relations; especially those calculated to enhance the capability of a country to develop its resources in a self-centred manner.⁵

It is equally if not more imperative, considering the nature of rural underdevelopment that there are attempts made to restructure the rural-urban relationships, with a view of reducing urban dominance, thus making rural areas gain more from the productive activities that occur

there. This will entail initiating policies aimed at equalizing the biased relationship between the two areas.

Urban dominance, as noted in a previous chapter, manifests itself in a number of ways, the major dynamic of which is the concentration of power of decision making in the centre. Thus, issues of unfavourable prices for rural products, urban bias in the allocation of public investment in services such as health, education, transportation and water supply as well as other policies that systematically weaken the rural-urban terms of trade need to be critically considered.

Pricing policies for cash crops, as exemplified by the operations of the Cocoa Marketing Board, have consistently followed one pattern -- producer prices far lower than the prevailing world market prices. This was considered in the second chapter where we tried to establish that it constituted a sort of a high indirect taxation on the rural cocoa farmer, the proceeds of which are disproportionately invested in the urban areas. The evidence of this is the disparity in the provision of social services between rural and urban areas. And equally biased against the rural producer are price policies on foodcrops, aimed at providing cheaper food for the urban population as noted in an earlier chapter. All such pricing policies for agricultural products, as argued, constitute a form of indirect taxation on the rural farmers and indirectly weaken the rural urban terms of trade, thus being a means by which resources are reallocated in favour of the urban population.

It follows from these arguments that it is very necessary for the government to pursue pricing policies that will at least allow the rural producers to get a greater share of the ultimate value of their produce. By this the income levels in the rural areas can be increased, although it is undeniable that the level of production will ultimately have to be improved in order to more appreciably increase rural income levels. Policies have only emphasised agricultural improvements without looking at this question of prices. Under the O.F.Y. programme already mentioned, for example, there was no attempts to make price adjustments to help increase rural incomes.

The other area that apparently needs adjustments for the benefit of rural development is the allocation of resources for public investment.

It has already been established that there is wide disparity in the levels of provision of public facilities, emanating from the bias in the allocation of resources towards this end. What may be suggested here is the need for some adjustments in the structure of resource allocation, consciously fashioned to allow for, at least, a near proportionate share of resources being allocated to the rural areas.

The answer to the problems of urban dominance in rural development in the country, from the foregoing, will seem to lie in: first the drawing up of price policies for agricultural produce that will assure that a greater percentage of the value of the farmers' production is retained by them.

In this light, the Cocoa Marketing Board, for example, will have to pay more to cocoa farmers than has hitherto been offered. In the case of foodcrop price policies, their formulation should be guided more by the need to improve farmers welfare rather than the present desire to satisfy the urban population. In this particular case, farmers could perhaps be helped to organize into cooperative marketing groups, as an effective means of marketing their produce and thus have more gains particularly through the elimination of the urban centred middlemen who form another means of resource transfer from rural to urban areas.

Secondly, resource allocation for public expenditure should henceforth be biased towards rural areas rather than the hitherto relative overconcentration in urban areas. This, as noted elsewhere is difficult to directly prove because of the paucity of data, but we can always defend this assertion by looking at the marked disparity between the rural and urban areas in the distribution of social services. Resource allocation biased towards rural areas is obviously justified, considering the distribution of the country's population, and also by the fact that the bulk of the national income is created in rural areas.

The problem of urban dominance, critically considered, however, proves to be more difficult than may appear, for political reasons. The tendency of various governments in the country has been towards the satisfaction of the needs of the urban population because of the realities of the political atmosphere: the urban population is more politicized and

hence a potential source of depopularization of any government. In a sense then, the satisfaction of urban demands, notwithstanding its detrimental effect on rural development, is necessary to maintain the security of any government. We may posit, therefore, that the extent to which the restructuring of the spatial system towards rural-urban equity can be carried out will also be dependent on the willingness of any government to risk the possibility of being unpopular for making radical changes in favour of rural areas. This apparently requires a government genuinely committed to rural development; it unveils the subtle role of politics in the whole question of rural development. The big question then is whether any government will be prepared to restructure to the desired extent for rural development in a country where politics is predominantly an urban activity.

What happened this year (1983) about wage levels in the country indirectly points to this last point. The government had taken harsh economic measures which drastically affected the real income levels of wage earners, mainly found in the urban areas. This prompted protests from workers in the capital city and other urban centres for higher wages. After the government had resisted for some time on what it considered too high a demand, it finally succumbed to the same demands of the urban workers.⁶ It is obvious that the government had done so to maintain support from that group of Ghanaians that form the basis of its power. We need to note here that such wage increases was not accompanied by adjustments in the prices of agricultural produce to improve the incomes of the rural people -- they in fact, do not constitute a threat to the stability of the government, this student would argue.

Another element in the spatial system which will have to be restructured for rural development (and which is related to urban dominance) is the structure of decision making. It has already been recognised through the study of the various strategies used in the country for rural development that decision making was top-down in nature, the link between this and urban dominance being that the latter is facilitated by the former. But as already noted top-down decision making has the direct effect of not encouraging active mass participation in rural development and the indirect

or related effects of dependence on government funding for development and the lack of the cultivation of self reliant attitudes towards development.

We may submit then, that it is important, considering the problem, that the government initiate more bottom-up approaches to rural development in the country. This should involve, as the basis, decentralization and in fact, a devolution of the power of decision making to the rural people concerned with issues of their development, and also to direct policies towards helping the rural people to realise their potential in the utilization of available resources. The basis of this submission is that if the rural people are given a greater degree of power in decision making, there will be a greater tendency for them to actively participate in the development process and hence help towards having a more self reliant and sustaining development.

Some empirical basis for such a strategy may be cited. Mabo:unje notes that there are gradually emerging studies that point to the efficiency of the strategy for rural development. He refers to a comparative study of sixteen countries by the Rural Development Committee of Cornell University's Centre for International Studies which revealed that successful rural development, as measured by established indicators of agricultural productivity and social welfare, was closely associated with vigorous locally accountable institutions.⁷

The important point is that a bottom-up strategy will have to aim at mobilizing the elements of traditional or local life and resources towards development. Such a strategy will have to make use of the established traditional system which can form a basis for a structure.⁸ As Wunch noted in his study of two towns in Ghana, the traditional institutions had popular linkages with sufficient legitimacy, support and power to perform a lot of functions.⁹ Rural people are normally closer to and more conversant with the traditional institutions and insofar as there can be no conception of bottom-up decision making without defining the institutional or organizational framework, these traditional organizations remain the most appropriate means to this end.

In sum, the bottom-up strategy being suggested here is the greater involvement of the traditional institutional structure in decision making so as to make decisions emanate from the grassroots level and thus ensure a greater degree of self determination and participation in the development process; this will make greater room for attempts to make effective use of resources in any particular locality and hence promote a more self-reliant and self-sustaining development.

It is important for us to try to define the role of the central government in such a bottom-up approach. It would be wrong to argue for a complete elimination of central government involvement in decision making in the process. It is obviously impossible to totally preclude government involvement considering the realities in a country where top-down decision making has been the order for so long. And, there is also no doubt that the greatest obstacle to the approach will be a political one -- that is, the willingness of central governments to devolve power to the rural population. To this student, however, government involvement in decision making should be minimal, reduced to mainly one of coordination in areas that the rural people might need help in their efforts to be self reliant.

Certain areas may be identified in which government involvement can be directed in a manner to help foster a bottom-up strategy. These appear to be in the area of education, transportation, agricultural improvement and processing.

In the case of education, a national policy can be made that structures the educational system to make it more relevant to the rural population. Daddieh contends for example, that by the very content of formal education in the country, it has become a factor in inducing rural-urban migration.¹⁰ The system of formal education, established during the colonial period was, and still is, geared towards preparing people to help in administration rather than towards training the people to help themselves in development. It is this aspect of the educational system that needs restructuring, through the efforts of the central government, with the view of making it more relevant to the needs of the people involved through aiding them to appreciate more effectively their potentials for

development. It will be necessary to reduce the present focus of the educational system on foreign values and place greater emphasis on local values towards this end.

In the area of agricultural improvement, government participation will be appropriate especially in the provision of simple technical expertise to the rural folk, although this should be subject to the particular needs of any rural locality. Perhaps government efforts in this field should be towards training young people from particular localities who would return to adapt the acquired knowledge to environments they are already aware of. These should be in the areas of the use of fertilizers, the use of simple tools and the application of research findings that are thought to be necessary for the rural areas.

The foregoing have dealt with problems associated with the structure of the spatial system and its restructuring for rural development. As emphasised earlier, however, restructuring has the main effect of improving rural conditions in relative terms; and for a more complete development, there is no doubt that total productivity will have to be improved. Agricultural development constitutes the other area which will help in improving the absolute conditions of the rural population. The reason for this has already been noted: it is the main economic activity in the rural areas and therefore the main source of rural incomes. This will fundamentally involve finding means of overcoming the constraints posed by the physical environment in agricultural production so as to improve the production and hence the income levels of the rural population.

We may distinguish between two broad ecological regions, the Savanna and the forest, in the country (Fig. 7) with each one having different physical environmental problems for agriculture. The implication is that agricultural improvements should consider closely the differences in the physical conditions of the areas so as to prescribe more appropriate means of improvement to particular areas of the country. The most apparent physical limitations to agriculture are those associated with precipitation and soil fertility. This suggests that irrigation and the application of fertilizers can go a long way in improving agricultural productivity in most parts of the country. There are large areas of the country where

Figure 7: THE FOREST AND SAVANNAH REGIONS OF GHANA

farming is impossible during the greater part of the year because of lack of water. This is especially the case in the Savanna Region where rainfall is quite scanty and it is realised that the acreage under cultivation could be very much increased and the land kept under cultivation for the greater part of the year if water was made available through irrigation.¹¹ Fertilization of soils is also needed to improve crop yield in most parts of the country, more especially where higher population growth is making it impossible for rural farmers to keep to the shifting cultivation system and thus have to use fields permanently or only after short periods of fallow. Dickson and Benneh contend that experiments conducted in different parts of the country by extension workers have shown that spectacular increases in yields can be achieved by the use of fertilizers.¹² Further to these, it appears that the introduction of higher yielding varieties of crops into the rural agricultural system can also help in the direction of improving productivity. This will call for more attention to research on foodcrops rather than the present emphasis on cash crops, with the view to developing better varieties of crops more needed in the country. We may reason further that an improvement of the farming system towards higher production can be achieved through the encouragement of the farmers to adopt simple technologies appropriate to the conditions under which they work. This should involve the use of simple techniques quite easy in operation and within the ability of the farmers to purchase.

It is noteworthy, however, that the introduction of these suggested measures for higher productivity in rural agriculture will not be as simple and easy as it may appear. Illiteracy and poverty of the rural farmers, as noted by Dickson and Benneh, precludes the effective adoption of these means to overcome the physical environment. It is clear then that the problem is not simply one of supplying these facilities but one of helping the rural farmers acquire them and effectively use them. It is perceivable that with fertilization, the problem can even be made more difficult by its need for a more extensive soil surveys to bring out clearly the differences in the nature of the soils.¹³

It has been noted in an earlier chapter of this thesis that attempts to improve agricultural production have been invariably centred on large

scale farming, to the neglect of the small holder producers. The nub of the discussion then, is that there should be greater efforts of reaching the small scale rural farmers with those techniques in order to help them increase their production, although these techniques should not be imposed on them -- they should be allowed to pick whichever ones will suit them.

In this light it appears that the problem of credit availability to rural farmers will have to be critically considered. Without credit, it appears impossible for the greater proportion of rural farmers to successfully improve their level of production, the provision of credit to rural people will also not be an easy task, however. Among the problems will be the lack of funds which may limit the extent of lending. Owusu and Tetteh have also shown in their work on credit extension to small scale farmers that there are some associated problems, especially as regards the repayment of such credits.¹⁴ These notwithstanding, however, it is still important that credit facilities are not limited to large scale farmers, as has been the case, but that efforts are made to extend it to the small scale farmers who form the bulk of the rural population. Perhaps rural farmers will have to be organized into cooperative groups in order to form larger units to which credit can more easily be given for farming by the banks. This way too, the risks involved in loaning out to the small scale farmers as individuals will be minimized.

In summary, the point about improvement of agricultural production as a component of rural development is that it is important to increase the income levels of the people and thus improve their living standards. But also important to note is the point that it can be an important means of ensuring regular employment in the rural areas and thus prevent the mass outmigration to the urban areas. Buxton and Dunham argue, for example, that the migration to the urban areas reflects not so much a detestation of rural wage rate and of rural environment as the fact that there are no prospects of getting regular employment or receiving regular earnings in the rural areas.¹⁵

From the discussion so far, we may draw together what the salient elements should be in a redesign for rural development in the country.

This student will argue that central to the design should be the improvement of agricultural production, agriculture being the main rural economic activity. This will work towards solving the basic problem of absolute poverty in rural areas. But also prominent in the design should be a restructuring of the spatial system, first to reduce the dependency relationship between the country and the world economic system, second to reduce urban dominance of rural areas, and third to allow for more bottom-up strategies. Restructuring the spatial system will require direct government policy initiatives in the area of pricing and decision making and on production.

Although not readily recognizeable, however, we may reason that the success of the redesign or prescriptions will have quite a formidable test with some related political issues: will governments be willing to force, through policy, changes in consumption patterns so as to reduce dependence?; will governments be willing to reduce urban dominance which will imply a cut on urban spending considering the realities of the political characteristics?; will the government be willing to shift funds to rural farmers whilst the available funds are being demanded by some urban centred farmers who are stronger politically?; will the government be prepared to considerably devolve the power of decision making so as to allow for more bottom-up strategies? All these are questions that portray the role of politics in any design of rural development in the country. And if governments are really committed to rural development, then all these questions must be answered in the affirmative. Rural development then becomes essentially a political act.

Finally, we have to bring home the point that such a redesign will have to be seen within an overall national development plan with definite directions. This will make the economic and other policies of the government consistent with rural development objectives and thus help in making realistic strides towards rural development.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER FOUR

¹Henry L. Bretten: Power and Politics in Africa (Aldine Publishing Company, Chicago, 1973), p. 39.

²M.B.K. Darko: "An Outline of Post 1966 Regional Planning and Rural Development in Ghana", Pan African Journal, Vol. IX, No. 2, 1976.

³See Ghana Information Services: Ghana Today (10): Operation Feed Yourself, (G.P.O., Accra, 1974).

⁴Cyril Daddieh: "Restructuring Africa's Spatial System: The Case of Ghana". Paper presented to the 10th Annual Conference of the Canadian Association of African Studies Meeting, 1980.

⁵Akin L. Mabogunje: The Development Process: A Spatial Perspective. (Hutchinson and Co., London, 1980), pp. 322-326.

⁶See Ghana News, Vol. 12, No. 9, Sept. 1983 (Ghana Embassy, Washington).

⁷A.L. Mabogunje: "Spaces in Regions: A critique of the Concept of Popular Participation" in Misra, R.P. (ed.): Humanizing Development (Maruzen, Hong Kong, 1981).

⁸Obeng Manu: "Rural Development and Our Chiefs", Legon Observer, 15-28 January, 1971, Vol. VI, No. 2, p. 16.

⁹J.S. Wunsch: "Political Development and Planning in Ghana: A Comparative Study of Two Medium Cities", R.A. Obudho and Salah El-Shakhs: Development of Urban Systems in Africa (Praeger, New York, 1979), pp. 137-156.

¹⁰Daddieh, op. cit.

¹¹See Dickson, K.B. and Benneh, G.: A New Geography of Ghana (Longman, 1970), Chp. 9.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Soil surveys in the country have only gone to the extent of identifying the taxonomic classes. Studies have shown however that tropical soils in general are so diversified it becomes inappropriate to base prescriptions for soil improvement on the broad taxonomic classes. See: (a) Diversity of Soils in the Tropics (A.A.A. Special Publication, no. 34.); (b) Soils of the Humid Tropics (National Academy of Sciences), 1972; (c) Sanchez, P.: Properties and Management of Soils in the Tropics (Wiley and Sons, New York, 1976).

¹⁴Owusu, K.O. and Tolteh, W.: "An Experiment in Agricultural Credit in the Small Farmer Group Lending Programme in Ghana (1969-1980). Savings and Development, 1982, 6 (1), 67-84.

¹⁵T.K. Buxton and D.M. Dunham: "Some Aspects of Regional Planning and Rural Development Policy in Ghana". Development and Change, Vol. 2, No. 3 1970-71.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The latest population census revealed a distribution marked by the predominance of rural settlements -- about 71% of the population lived in rural areas. The vast majority of the country's population, therefore, are found in areas classified as rural.

This situation emphasizes the need for the country to place enormous attention on rural development. The argument is that if such a high proportion of the people are rural, then any development effort without the development of these rural areas as a central goal will be woefully inappropriate. Rural development in the case of this country then must be synonymous with national development -- a successful attempt at improving the conditions in rural areas will imply a success in the total development of the country. Governments have recognized this point and have in many instances expressed their interest in the development of the rural areas. But the necessity of this becomes even more imperative, we realise, if we consider that the bulk of the national income is generated in the rural areas.

This thesis sought to analyse the problem of rural underdevelopment and to suggest, on that basis, the possible means of achieving development among rural inhabitants. Rural underdevelopment, we noted, manifested itself in a number of ways: poorer social services and lower and irregular incomes. This is a country that cannot be classified as "developed" -- it is a "developing" one. An important point is that rural underdevelopment was considered in relative terms -- that is, compared with the urban areas -- and does not suggest that the urban areas are well developed.

The analysis of the basis of rural underdevelopment gives an insight into the possible means of solving the problem. Three broad factors were identified as the causes of rural underdevelopment: those related to the

structure of the spatial system, the inefficiency of strategies adopted for rural development and low productivity in agriculture. The first two are, however, related. The present structure of the spatial system, we noted, was put in place by processes initiated during the colonial period and maintained by some post-colonial policies. The two main structural characteristics of the spatial system are the dependency relationship between the country's economy and the world system and secondly the urban dominance of rural areas. The former ties in the whole efforts at rural development in the country to external control; the latter results in both the disproportionately low allocation of resources to rural development and the transfer of resources from the rural to urban areas through mainly price policies made in the centre. With regard to the problem associated with the adopted strategies for rural development, we realised that they are overly top-down in nature and fail to address the structural problem. The undesirable thing about top-down approaches is their inability to encourage participation of the people in their development. In the case of Ghana we recognize that the top-down nature of the strategies is partly responsible for the overdependence on government funding for rural development, something obviously not encouraging considering the limited nature of government funding. The low level of agricultural productivity was recognised to be another complementary factor to rural underdevelopment. The reasons for low productivity were identified to be both physical and human. We thus find the basis of rural underdevelopment generally lying in the structure of the spatial system, the nature of the strategies adopted and the low level of agricultural production.

For the development of the rural areas then, it became obvious that the spatial system needs restructuring to allow for a more self reliant development, that is, reducing dependence on the world system and to reduce urban dominance. Weakening the dependency relationship between the country and the world system calls for a diversification of production to reduce the dependence on a few crops as well as attempts at using available resources in the country rather than the dependence so much on imports. It was also suggested that some form of processing, mainly of available resources directed to local needs could help towards this end.

The present Secretary for Finance and Economic Planning in the country is quoted as saying:

The basic problem with our economy is that the country is too dependent on imports. Therefore, one of the permanent solutions to the problem is that we must develop our local raw material base so as to produce the basic things we want instead of always importing them.

In general the country will have to embark on some form of selective regional closure.

The solution to urban dominance, we find, lies in the government initiating policies on pricing and resource allocation that will rather favour the betterment of the conditions in rural areas. It is plain however, that restructuring for rural development in general requires many more political decisions that may be perceived only subtly.

Following from the nature of the strategies adopted for rural development, it became clear that henceforth efforts should be made to pursue more bottom-up approaches to rural development. The major advantages in this will be the encouragement of participation of the people in their development and the fuller use of the resources in each environment. The traditional institutions, it is suggested, will form the framework within which bottom-up strategies can operate, the major problem, however, apparently lying in the possible unwillingness of governments to give away power to the rural folk in decision making.

The final component of the suggested design for rural development in the country is the improvement of agricultural production. Given that the rural people are mainly in agriculture, it is argued that the more fundamental means of improving rural income levels is to improve agricultural productivity. Such improvements in agriculture in the country, it was noted, requires overcoming constraints posed by the physical environment as well as economic, social and political constraints.

In trying to define rural development, we noted that it essentially involves the improvement in the living conditions of the rural people both in absolute and relative terms, and also needs to be self sustaining. The appropriateness of these suggested means to rural development then, must be considered in terms of whether they will be capable of achieving these.

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Looking closely at the design for rural development, we may find that the restructuring of the spatial system and the adoption of bottom-up strategies will help mainly in improving rural conditions in relative terms. Agricultural improvements will, on the other hand, help more in improving rural conditions in absolute terms. An important inference from these is that for a total development of the rural areas the various components of the redesign must be brought into play simultaneously if we are to find rural development as defined in this thesis.

Thus the strategy for rural development in the country should involve simultaneously, a restructuring of the spatial system, a shift towards more bottom-up approaches and an attempt at agricultural improvement among the rural people. Such a strategy will ensure relative as well as absolute improvements in the rural areas and can also be self sustaining.

But perhaps we need to sound a final note on the role politics is likely to play in any attempts at rural development. The decisions to restructure the spatial system, to devolve power in order to encourage bottom-up approaches and the decision to help the small scale farmer all have political underpinnings and therefore become political ones. Rural development then, becomes essentially a political act, involving taking decisions which may be more difficult than they seem, for political reasons. But then, if governments are genuinely committed to developing the rural areas, they must take such measures. Perhaps from this point, we can add a final requirement for rural development in the country that has not been directly mentioned: a strong-willed government, genuinely committed to rural development.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER FIVE

¹See West Africa, No. 3444, 15 August, 1983, pp. 1912-1913.

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