

CHAPTER TWO

THE PROFILE OF AHANTA WEST DISTRICT

Introduction

The Ahanta West District in the Western Region was carved out of the Shama Ahanta Metropolis (formerly, Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan Authority) in 1988. It covers a land area of 591 square kilometres representing about 2.5 percent and 0.26 percent of the surface area of the Western

Region and of Ghana respectively. The district is located at the southernmost point of the country. It shares boundaries with three districts and a metropolis: Nzema East on the west, Wassa West and Mpohor-Wassa East districts in the north and Shama Ahanta East Metropolis on the east. It is bordered on the south by the Gulf of Guinea. The district doubles as a constituency and has six area councils.



Picture 2.1: Main Administrative Block of Ahanta West District Assembly

It is a predominantly rural district and has over 123 settlements, with Agona Nkwanta as the district capital. Other large settlements include Apowa, Dixcove, Abura and Ewusiejo. The district is easily accessible given its closeness to the regional capital and the Trans-African highway which passes through the district.

Physical Features

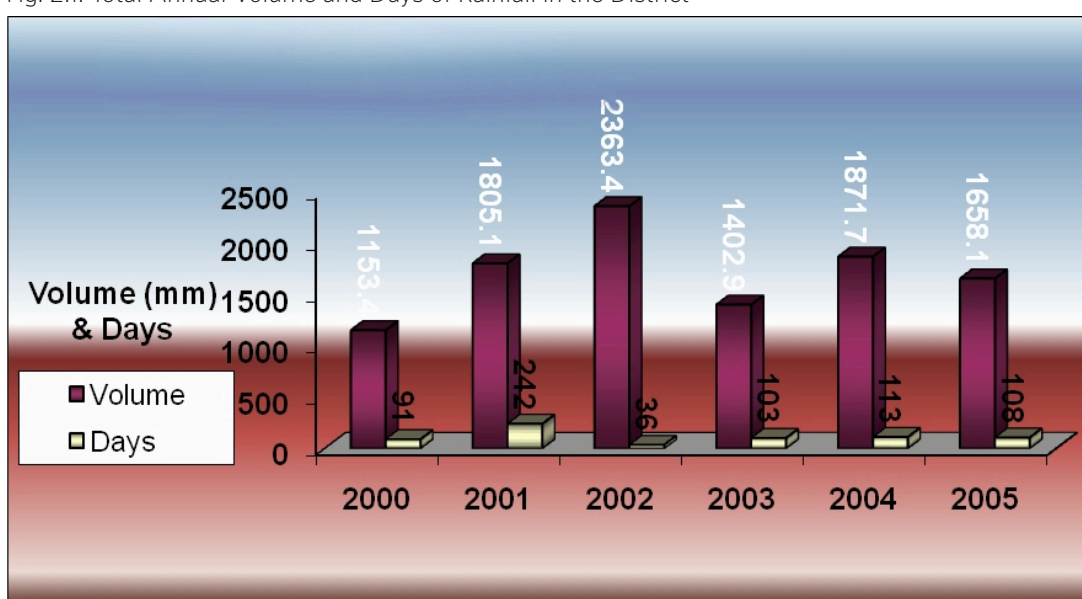
The seventh goal of the MDG focuses on ensuring environmental sustainability and requires that countries integrate the principles of sustainable development into their policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources. Consequently, a considerable proportion of land area covered by forest is critical in assessing the outcome of policies towards the realisation of this goal. In response to the seventh goal of the MDGs, the principle of sustainable development has been

integrated into the GPRS II and the Guidelines for the preparation of the District Medium-Term Development Plan.

Climate and Vegetation

The Ahanta West District is located in the wettest region of Ghana. It lies between latitude 4°45"N and longitude 1°58"W and within the south-western equatorial climatic zone marked by a double-maximum rainfall with a mean annual rainfall of over 1,700mm. The district has not had any significant improvement in the rainfall situation since 2000. The district recorded average annual rainfall of 1,691mm over an average of 132 days a year between 2000 and 2005. Along the coast, however, rainfall was above average. Furthermore, the volume and pattern of rainfall has not been consistent. As shown in Figure 2.1, the volume of rainfall has fluctuated considerably, ranging from a low of 1,153.4mm in 2000 to a high of 2,363.4mm in 2002.

Fig. 2.1: Total Annual Volume and Days of Rainfall in the District



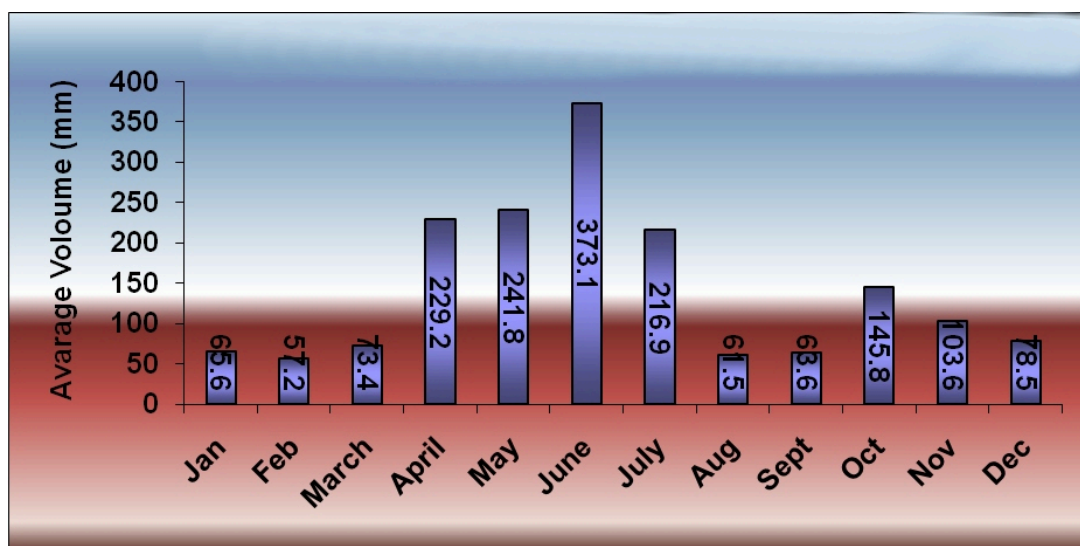
Source: Climatorological Station Princess Town

As in many other parts of the country, the rainfall pattern in the district is seasonal. The rainy season falls between the months of April and September, with the greatest volume recorded between April and July. Consequently, most farming activities are undertaken within this period. For example, between 2000 and 2005, the highest average rainfall was recorded in June and the lowest in February (Figure 2.2).

The deterioration of vegetation cover was confirmed by four out of five communities during community discussions. They attributed the problem to persistent tree felling for charcoal burning and by illegal chainsaw operators, and farming activities.

The soil types in Ahanta West range from loose sand to clay and are suitable for crops such as oil palm, rubber, cocoa, coffee, citrus,

Fig. 2.2: Monthly Pattern of Rainfall in the District(2000-2005)



Source: Climatorological Station Princess Town

The mean temperature of the district ranges from a high of 34°C between March and April, to a low of 20°C, observed in August. Relative humidity is quite high, averaging between 75 percent and 80 percent during the rainy season and 70 percent to 80 percent in the dry season.

The district is largely within the high rain forest vegetation zone. However, extensive human activities (including farming, mining and charcoal burning) have reduced the rain forest vegetation to secondary forest. These activities, including coastal sand-winning, have consequently caused soil erosion and deterioration in soil fertility in the district.

Maize, vegetables, coconut, sugar cane, rice, legumes and other food crops. The pattern of land usage is skewed in favour of large-scale plantations, with about 40 percent of the district's land under cultivation by the National Oil Palm Plantation and the Ghana Rubber Estates Limited (GREL) as well as some plantations owned by individuals. These plantations cover an extensive area in the western part of the district. Small-scale farming accounts for about 30 percent of the district's land, with 20 percent occupied by forest settlements, wasteland, roads and water bodies. The Cape Three Points forest reserve which occupies about 51 square kilometres, or 10 percent of the total land

area of the district, constitutes the only primary vegetation. The declining vegetation cover and soil erosion largely as a result of human activities have the potential to undermine the realisation of MDG 7 in the Ahanta West District.

There are also considerable lagoons such as Ehonle, Mabowodindo, Akpluho, Mfuma and Nana Pete. The district also boasts of prominent hills between 20 and 40 metres high around Banso, Egyambra and Cape Three Points. Some of these hills are the



Picture 2.2: Oil Palm Plantation of Norpalm Ghana Ltd in Ahanta West

Relief and Drainage

The district lies within the coastal belt of the country at an elevation ranging between zero and 121 metres above sea level. The drainage pattern is basically dendritic. There are seasonal flowing rivers including Butre, Apesuro, Whin, Suoni, Nyila, Yani and Nyame which pass through the district.

Sources of some of the rivers in the district. There is also a plateau in the district at Egyambra. The coastline has features such as capes and bays especially at Cape Three Points. As a result of the sandy nature of the coast, it has attracted beach resorts along the coastline.

Geology and Minerals

The district is underlain by Precambrian upper Birimian rock series containing minerals deposits such as gold, diamond and manganese. The commercial viability of these mineral deposits is yet to be ascertained. Substantial clay deposits which could be developed for ceramics can also be found in parts of the district, notably around the Beahu area.

and national population densities of 80.5/km² and 79.3/km² respectively (Table 2.1). This represents a density 56.6 percent greater than the 1984 figure. The high population density of the district indicates population pressure on land and other limited facilities and services within various settlements.

Table 2.1: Basic Demographic Indicators

Indicator	Ahanta West		Western Region		Ghana	
	1984	2000	1984	2000	1984	2000
Population	60,754	95,140	1,157,807	1,924,577	12,296,081	18,912,079
Intercensal growth rate (%)	---	2.8	---	3.2	---	2.7
Population Density (pop/km ²)	90.3	141.4	52.0	80.5	51.6	79.3
% of population aged 0-14 years	---	43.1	---	42.4	45.0	41.4
% of population aged 65+	---	5.1	---	4.5	4.0	5.3
% of urban	---	20.0	22.6	36.3	32.0	43.8
Males to 100 Females	94.6	93.7	102.3	103.4	97.3	97.9

Source: Author's calculation from the 1984 Population and 2000 Population and Housing censuses

Demographic Characteristics

The population of Ahanta West District rose from 84,071 to 95,140 between 1984 and 2000, representing an intercensal growth rate of 2.8 percent, lower than the regional average and marginally above the national average. Based on this intercensal growth rate, the total population of the district is estimated at 115,385 in 2007. The district is characterised by high population density of 141.4/km² in 2000 compared with regional

In 2000, there were 23,090 households in the district yielding an average household size of 4.2. A large proportion (80 percent) of the populace lives in rural settlements making Ahanta West a rural district despite its closeness to the regional capital of Sekondi-Takoradi. The two urban localities, namely Agona Nkwanta and Apowa, accounted for about 20 percent of the population (Table 2.1).

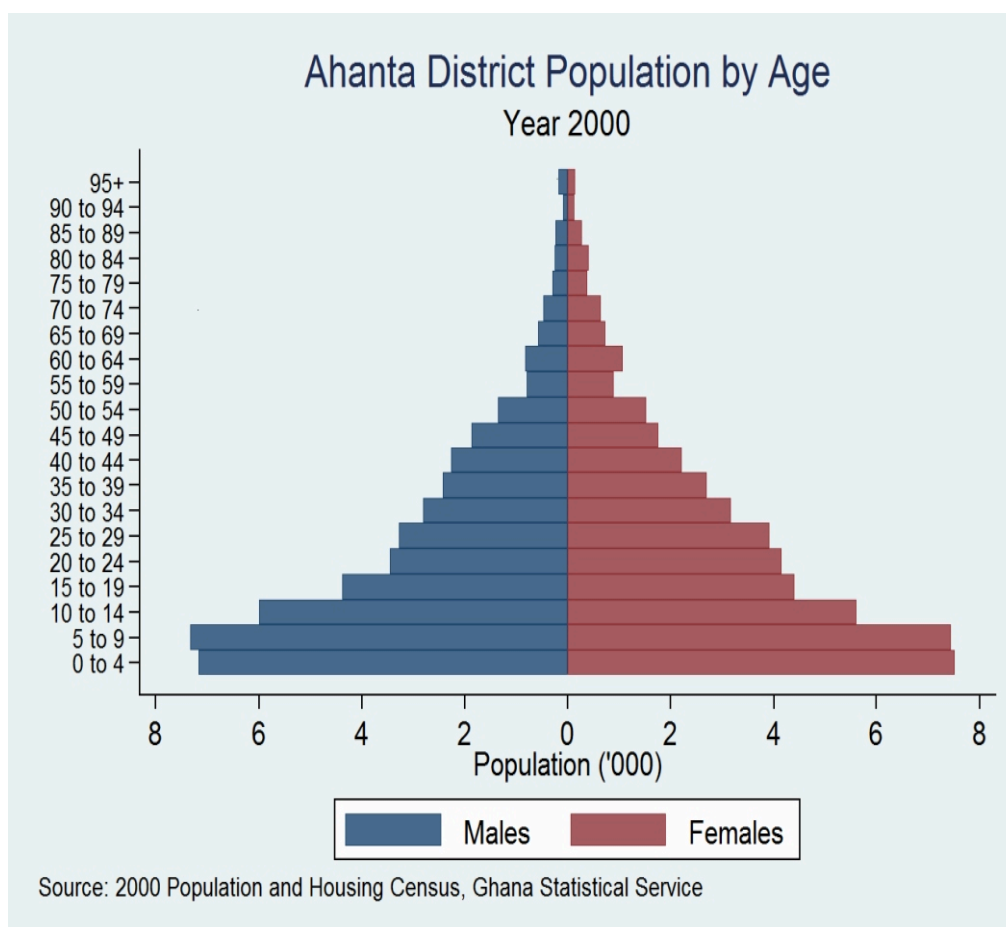
Sex and Age Distribution

The sex distribution of the population of the district puts the number of women above men. The proportion of women increased marginally from 51.4 percent in 1984 to 51.6 percent in 2000, yielding a male to 100 females ratio of 94.6 and 93.7 respectively (Table 2.1). This is in contrast with the regional sex ratio which shows that there are more men than women. The dominance of women in the district cuts across all age groups with the exception of 10-14 years (Figure 2.3).

The age structure of the population of the district is not much different from the

regional and national pattern. It is typical of developing countries which are characterised by a large proportion of the population under 15 years and a small proportion over 64 years. The population of the district is fairly young, with children under 15 years constituting 43.1 percent of the total population. This implies a potentially sizeable labour force that could be tapped in future for the development of the district. At the same time, however, this youthful proportion also puts some pressure on the District Assembly to provide educational, health and other relevant infrastructural facilities in order to build the skills and potential of these children to make them economically useful in future.

Figure 2.3: Distribution of Population of Ahanta West by Age and Sex



The dependency ratio of the district is higher than the regional and the national ratio. The proportion of the elderly at 5.1 percent together with 43.1 percent of the population below 15 years yields a dependent population of 48.2 percent for the district as against 46.9 percent and 46.7 percent for the region and nation respectively. This implies that 52 percent of the population is required to work to cater for the 48 percent that is dependent.

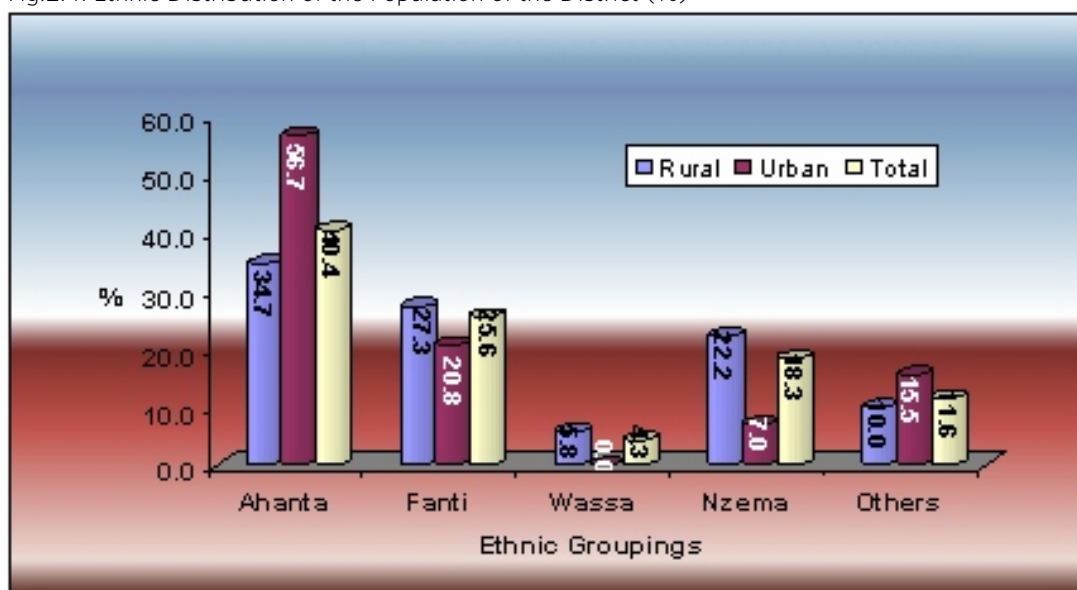
Ethnic and Religious Composition

The district is quite homogenous in terms of broad ethnic classification of the population.

who account for 25.8 percent (Figure 2.4). The Nzema constitute 18.3 percent with the Wassa accounting for 4.3 percent. The other ethnic groupings (Ewe, Hausa, Asante, Akwapim, Other Akan, Grusi-Frafra, Ga and non-Ghanaians) constitute the remaining 11.6 percent.

The rural population is composed of Ahanta (34.7 percent), Fanti (27.3 percent), Nzema (22.2 percent) and other ethnic groupings (10.0 percent). In the urban areas, over half of the sampled population are Ahanta while Fanti and Nzema constitute 20.8 percent and 7.0 percent respectively. The other ethnic groupings account for the remaining 15.5 percent.

Fig.2.4: Ethnic Distribution of the Population of the District (%)



Source: 2007 ISSER Household Survey

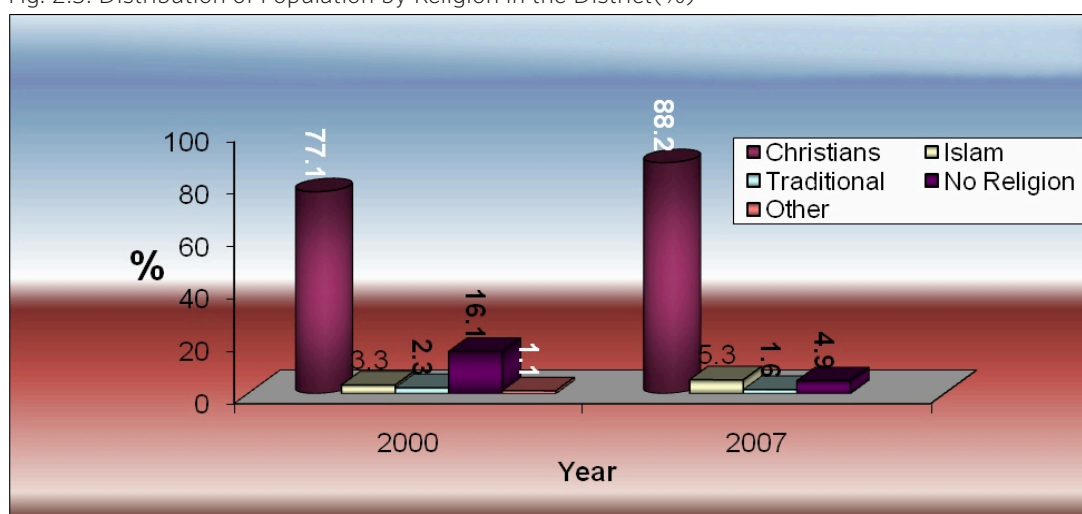
About 93 percent of the population in 2000 was Akan, with Ewe forming 3 percent and other ethnic groups constituting the remaining 4 percent. A further classification of the Akan based on the ISSER survey reveals a more diverse ethnic composition of the district, with the Ahanta as the dominant group constituting 40.4 percent of the sampled population, followed by Fanti

Christianity is the dominant religion in the district, accounting for at least 77 percent of the population in 2000 (Figure 2.5). This is made up of Pentecostals (34 percent), Protestants (20 percent), Catholics (17 percent) and other Christian sects (29 percent). Muslims account for 3.3 percent while 16 percent claim to belong to no religion. About 2.3 percent

worship in the traditional religion, with 1.1 percent belonging to other religions. The results of the ISSER survey put the Christian and Muslim population at 88 percent and 5.3 percent respectively in 2007, indicating a significant increase in their population.

men and 27 percent of women were not born in their current place of residence. Those who were not born in their current place of residence also constitute 19.6 percent and 35.1 percent of the rural and the urban population respectively.

Fig. 2.5: Distribution of Population by Religion in the District(%)



Source: 2000 Population and Housing Census, GSS & 2007 ISSER Household Survey

Migration

Migration refers to the movement of people for various reasons from their birthplace within or outside the district to their current place of residence.

In terms of the distribution of those whose place of birth is different from their current residence by location, about 39 percent are

Table 2.2: Population of Indigenes and Migrants by Sex, Location and Ethnicity (%)

Status	Total	Sex		Location		Ethnic Groupings				
		Male	Female	Rural	Urban	Ahanta	Fanti	Nzema	Wassa	Other
Indigenes	76.3	79.4	73.2	80.4	64.9	88.6	72.3	73.0	78.3	48.9
Migrants	23.7	20.6	26.8	19.6	35.1	11.4	27.7	27.0	21.7	51.2
Sample size	858	425	433	631	227	347	220	157	37	97

Source: ISSER, 2007 Household Survey

At least three-quarters of the inhabitants reside at their place of birth, with about 24 percent living in a locality different from their birthplace (Table 2.2). About 21 percent of

in urban areas as against 61 percent in rural communities. The majority of the major ethnic groups (Ahanta, Fanti, Nzema and Wassa) were born in the district while a little

over 51 percent of other ethnic groups migrated from other areas to their present settlement. A critical analysis of migrants shows that Fanti people constitute a third of the migrant population followed by Nzema and Ahanta people who account for 21 percent and 19 percent respectively. The Ewe form 9 percent, Asante and other Akan, 8 percent, Wassa 4 percent and the remaining 10 percent from other ethnic groupings.

Various reasons account for the migration of about 24 percent of the sampled population. About 34.5 percent claimed to have moved to the present settlement to work/farm while 54.2 percent moved into the area with or to join parents, spouse or relatives. About 3 percent, mostly from New Amanful, claim to have been ejected from Takoradi, while 6 percent moved to attend school, retire or to marry.

Socio-Economic Infrastructure and Housing Characteristics

The availability of household assets and amenities are important determining factors of the general socio-economic status of the population. Socio-economic infrastructure such as electricity, pipe-borne water, roads and telecommunications infrastructure, education and health facilities and financial institutions are critical in facilitating economic activity in households. In addition, access to safe drinking water and safe

sanitation influence the health status of the population.

Road Infrastructure

A good road network is critical in the development process of any community, region or country. The importance of a good road network to the economic lives of the people of Ahanta West district is reflected in the sentiments expressed during a community interview about the poor condition of the road from Anyano to Alabiza.

The total length of roads in the district is about 200 kilometres, comprising an 80-kilometre stretch of trunk roads and 120 kilometres of feeder roads. The trunk road traverses the district in an east-west direction and forms part of the Trans-African Highway. The trunk road which stretches from Apowa to Anyano is completely tarred and is in good condition. The condition of feeder roads in the district is mixed. An assessment by the district Feeder Roads Office grades 25 percent as good, 50 percent as fair and 25 percent as poor. Currently, 24.5 kilometres of feeder roads are completely tarred while 11.4 kilometres are being tarred. This indicates that over half the length of feeder roads in the district are not tarred, some of which become almost impassable during the rainy season, making it difficult for farmers and fishermen to convey their products to market centres.

Other facilities

The proximity of the district to the regional capital enables inhabitants to enjoy essential facilities such as telecommunications and electricity. Most localities are able to access mobile telecommunication services on account of the extended coverage of some of the mobile communication networks beyond Sekondi-Takoradi. The results of the 2003 CWIQ and 2007 ISSER household survey show an increase in the proportion of the population that owns a mobile phone in the district from 0.3 percent in 2003 to 36.3 percent in 2007. The district, however, lacks an adequate number of facilities such as post offices and financial institutions. At present, there are only three post offices in the two urban localities (Agona Nkwanta and Apowa) and one rural community (Dixcove). There is only one rural bank and it has three branches in Agona Nkwanta, Abura and Apowa.

Housing Conditions

The 2000 Population and Housing Census puts the number of houses in Ahanta West District at 13,367 and these were occupied by 23,090 households, yielding an average of 1.73 households per house. The rural areas accounted for 85.6 percent of housing stock and were occupied by 18,476 households. Most of the households (54.3 percent) live in detached houses. About 27.7 percent lived in compound houses and 15.8 lived in semi-detached houses. The dominant form of housing among urban dwellers is compound

houses (48.9 percent) while detached houses account for a greater proportion (55.8 percent) of housing in the rural areas.

The condition of housing in the district is fairly good. Over 50 percent of the structures were built with cement or concrete with a considerable proportion (about 45 percent) made with mud or mud bricks. The roofs of most of the houses (54 percent in 2003 and 44 percent in 2007) were made with metal sheets while the floors of 98.5 percent of houses in 2003 were made with cement or concrete.

Household Amenities

Sustainable access to basic facilities such as safe drinking water and basic sanitation by the majority of citizens as well as the type of energy used are the main concerns of MDG 7 (ensuring environmental sustainability). Table 2.3 shows the main source of lighting, drinking water, energy use and access to sanitation.

Most communities draw electricity from the national grid while the district is supporting 10 communities under the government's Self-Help Electrification Project to be connected to the national grid. Access to electricity for lighting in the district has consistently improved since 2000 in both urban and rural areas. Consequently, about 59 percent of households used electricity as the main source of lighting in 2007 compared with about 41 percent who use kerosene lamps. A greater proportion of

urban households rely on electricity for lighting than rural households. As shown in Table 2.3, over 90 percent of urban dwellers rely on electricity for lighting as against about 51 percent in rural areas.

river/lake/pond/dam category. However, there was a drop in the proportion of households that relied on water from boreholes to 38.6 percent in 2007 while there was an increase in access to pipe-



Picture 2.3: A borehole at Akwaidaa New Town

Boreholes have remained one of the major sources of drinking water for the people of Ahanta West particularly in 2003. In 2000, about 28.6 percent of households obtained their drinking water from boreholes and this increased significantly to 54.3 percent in 2003. This could be attributed largely to the increased number of boreholes constructed in 2003 which caused households to shift from drawing water from wells and the

borne water from 7.5 percent to about 35 percent. The decline in the proportion of households that drew drinking water from boreholes between 2003 and 2007, which occurred mostly in rural areas, was largely on account of the reported breakdown of a number of boreholes and the saltiness of water from the boreholes. This came up during community discussions at New Amanful and Alabiza.

Table 2.3: Household Housing Characteristics (% of Population)

Household Characteristics	2000 Census			CWIQ (2003)			ISSER Household Survey		
	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total
Source of Lighting									
Electricity	38.8	62.5	43.5	55.2	85.0	58.6	56.0	93.9	65.9
Kerosene Lamp	60.2	36.4	55.5	44.3	15.0	41.0	43.5	6.07	33.7
Gas Lamp	0.22	0.24	0.23	---	---	---	0.51	---	0.37
Solar Energy	0.04	---	0.03	---	---	---	---	---	---
Other	0.77	0.65	0.75	0.49	---	0.43	---	---	---
Source of Drinking Water									
Pipe-borne water (inside)	1.49	8.57	2.90	1.46	2.47	1.57	0.75	31.8	8.88
Pipe-borne water (outside)	9.79	33.1	14.4	6.35	2.52	5.92	25.1	25.7	25.8
Purchase from vendor etc	2.43	1.33	2.21	6.07	71.6	13.5	13.5	15.7	14.1
Wells	22.1	54.2	28.5	14.1	15.0	14.1	11.8	---	8.71
Borehole	35.4	1.20	28.6	60.1	8.35	54.3	42.8	26.8	38.6
River/Lake/Pond/Dam	21.8	0.57	17.5	12.0	---	10.7	6.04	---	4.46
Spring/Rain water & other	6.96	1.09	5.79	---	---	---	---	---	---
Fuel for Cooking									
Firewood	74.7	34.7	66.8	69.3	31.5	65.1	59.7	22.9	50.1
Coconut husk	1.40	0.11	1.14	---	---	---	---	---	---
Charcoal	17.3	52.5	24.3	27.5	55.2	30.6	38.6	64.3	45.3
Kerosene	1.08	1.93	1.25	---	1.69	0.19	0.62	---	0.46
Gas	0.78	3.50	1.32	3.18	9.08	3.84	1.06	12.9	4.14
Electricity	0.48	1.02	0.59	---	2.52	0.28	---	---	---
Other	4.23	6.22	4.63	---	---	---	---	---	---
Toilet Facility									
None/beach/bush	48.4	14.2	41.5	38.7	22.5	36.9	19.8	---	14.1
Flush toilet	1.14	6.72	2.25	0.24	9.08	1.24	12.7	38.5	19.4
Pan/Bucket	1.50	2.76	1.75	0.49	---	0.44	1.07	---	0.80
KVIP	6.27	5.22	6.06	48.2	48.6	48.3	42.8	42.5	2.70
Pit Latrine	12.6	18.3	13.8	12.3	19.9	13.2	24.4	18.9	23.0
Public toilet (WC, KVIP, Pan)	25.2	46.6	29.5	---	---	---	---	---	---
Other	4.86	6.20	5.12	---	---	---	---	---	---
Solid Waste									
Collected	1.75	1.30	1.66	---	---	---	---	---	---
Burned by household	4.59	9.80	5.63	2.63	9.86	3.45	8.44	21.1	11.7
Public Dump	62.7	63.9	62.9	70.4	85.2	72.1	55.9	58.6	56.6
Dumped elsewhere	27.2	20.3	25.8	26.1	2.47	23.4	28.9	8.93	23.6
Buried by Household	2.83	3.89	3.04	0.93	2.47	1.10	6.81	11.4	8.02
Other	0.94	0.78	0.91	---	---	---	---	---	---
Liquid waste disposal									
Through sewerage system	0.81	2.93	1.24	---	---	---	1.49	---	1.00
Thrown onto street/outside	40.5	27.9	38.0	---	---	---	37.7	20.7	35.7
Thrown into gutter	10.4	40.4	16.4	---	---	---	26.2	52.2	23.6
Thrown onto compound	46.6	28.3	42.9	---	---	---	31.6	26.0	37.2
Other	1.72	0.48	1.47	---	---	---	3.01	1.10	2.51
Number of Households	18,464	4,600	23,064	360	45	405	158	42	200

Source: 2000 Population and Housing Census, 2003 CWIQ (GSS) and ISSER Household Survey, 2007

The main source of drinking water for urban dwellers in 2000 was covered and uncovered wells, but this has declined consistently in favour of pipe-borne water (which rose from about 42 percent of households in 2000 to about 58 percent) and water supply by vendors (from 1.3 percent to 16 percent in 2007). Generally, availability of and access to good drinking water does not seem to pose a big challenge and this is confirmed by the absence of water-borne diseases in the district. This suggests that the level of risk or vulnerability in terms of access to safe drinking water is quite low.

Energy use among citizens appears to have a high detrimental effect on the environment and could expose the community to environmental risks or vulnerability and thus undermine the realisation of MDG 7. While the proportion of households that use firewood for cooking has been declining since 2000, indicating a positive development for the environment, the use of charcoal for cooking has been increasing. Charcoal is predominantly used by urban households while firewood remains the main source of fuel for rural households. In all, about 93 percent of households in Ahanta West used firewood and charcoal for cooking in 2000 and this increased to about 96 percent in 2003 and fell to 95.4 percent in 2007.

The availability of toilet facilities and the mode of disposal of liquid and solid waste have a direct bearing on the health condition of citizens. The dominant method of disposal of human waste is the KVIP, which is used by about 43 percent of sampled households in 2007 as against 48 percent in 2003. In urban areas, the flush toilet is the second most common means of human waste disposal, amounting to 38.5 percent in the

ISSER 2007 survey. This suggested a major increase in the use of flush toilets since the CWIQ 2003. In rural areas, the pit latrine is a major mode of human waste disposal besides the KVIP. Nonetheless, a significant proportion of households defecate in the bush or at the beach, with adverse environmental consequences. The proportion of households disposing off human waste in the bush or at the beach has declined from 48 percent to 14 percent between 2000 and 2007. Obviously, this decline is an indication of the improved means of human waste disposal and, therefore, a decline in the level of vulnerability to certain health hazards.

Refuse or solid waste in the district is disposed of mainly at public dump sites. The proportion of households using this method of solid waste disposal has declined considerably since 2000, however. As seen in Table 2.3, about 56 percent of households dumped solid wastes at public sites in 2007, a decline from 72 percent in 2003. This method of solid waste disposal is marginally more common among urban households than their rural counterparts. Households that dump their refuse elsewhere account for 23.6 percent in 2007 while 11.7 percent and 8 percent respectively burned or buried their solid waste. Clearly, the increasing dumping of refuse elsewhere or at public dump sites without regard for how it is burned, exposes people to health risks such as air pollution thereby raising the vulnerability level of households in Ahanta West.

The main method of liquid waste disposal by households in the district does not appear to be environmentally friendly over 96 percent of sampled households in 2007 throw liquid waste onto the compound, outside or into the gutter. Only 1.1 percent of households use the sewage system for liquid waste disposal,

a drop from 1.24 percent in 2000. About 3 percent of urban dwellers used the sewerage system in 2000 compared to less than 1 percent in the rural areas. The 2007 ISSER survey reports a lower proportion (1.5 percent) of urban households that use the sewage system to dispose of liquid waste than in 2000 while none of the rural households was reported to be using this means of liquid waste disposal.

While access to improved means of human waste disposal has increased, the methods of disposing of solid and liquid wastes are not environmentally friendly. This, coupled with the continuing use of firewood and charcoal by a significant proportion of households, threatens the realisation of MDG 7 (environmental sustainability) in Ahanta West District.

Human Security

The development of any community or country largely depends on the peaceful atmosphere that prevails among the citizenry and how secure households are in going about their daily social and economic activity. Human security is one basic way of assessing the level of vulnerability of households in every community. Data on crime from the District Police Administration in Agona Nkwanta indicates a surge in the number of reported cases of crime from 141 in 2000 to 168 in 2001 followed by a drop to 117 the following year. The number rose again to 219 in 2004 before declining

consistently to 153 in 2006. In addition, there were only two chieftaincy disputes recorded between 2000 and 2006.

The district has only 18 police personnel scattered among three police stations in Agona Nkwanta, Dixcove and Abura and the number has remained the same since 2000. This puts one policeman in charge of an estimated 6,400 people in the district. According to 92 percent of households, there is inadequate policing or neighbourhood watch systems in many communities in the district (CWIQ, 2003).

The CWIQ 2003 indicates a very positive human security situation in spite of the limited number of police stations and personnel in the district. This is based on the response from 92 percent of households that they feel very safe compared with only 1 percent that feels unsafe. A higher proportion of households claim to be very safe in the urban than the rural areas, probably due to the greater police presence in urban settlements. About 95 percent of households claim that there is no tension and different groups live together peacefully while about 97 percent claim to have never used force or experienced violence.

The low level of crime and violence in the district was corroborated by community leaders during focal group discussion. The only disputes which were reported by the community between 2000 and 2005 were one involving religion, one involving land and three election disputes which were free of violence. Three out of five communities

believe that the level of crime has remained the same over the past five years. Community and opinion leaders of one community claim an increase while those of another, a decrease in crime levels. The low incidence of crime as gathered from the 2003 CWIQ even with the low numbers of police stations and personnel could be explained by the closeness of the district to the regional capital, which implies easy deployment of security personnel in times of need.

Local Governance

The Ahanta West District Assembly is responsible for governance of the district. The Assembly is the highest political, administrative and planning authority in the district. It has deliberative, legislative and executive functions under the Local Government Act of 1993. The Assembly is also responsible for the formulation of development programmes and policies which are normally coordinated by the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC).

There are 26 decentralised departments, 6 area councils, and 95 Unit Committees in the district. The Assembly is composed of 46 people, made up of 30 elected members, 15 appointees by the President including the District Chief Executive (DCE) and the local Member of Parliament who is an ex-officio member. Women constitute 20 percent of Assembly members, an improvement over the 13.3 percent during the 2002 to 2005

period. The Executive Committee, which comprises chairmen of the sub-committees and area councils, is chaired by the DCE. There is also a complaints committee of the Assembly which addresses issues concerning misapplication of community resources, misconduct of Assembly members and poor performance of technocrats. This committee is headed by the Presiding Member of the Assembly.

The DCE is the political and administrative head of the District Assembly and is assisted by the District Coordinating Director (DCD). As a representative of the central government in the district, the DCE is responsible for the execution of the central government's programmes. It also addresses issues of human rights and civic responsibility in collaboration with institutions such as the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice, District Magistrate's Court, Police Service, Department of Social Welfare, and the National Commission on Civic Education.

Composition of Expenditure and Revenue

The revenue trend between 2003 and 2005 has been quite erratic and this has forced expenditure to follow a similar trend. After a 72 percent increase in revenue in 2004, there was a 9 percent decline the following year. This forced the district to cut its expenditure by about 15 percent in 2005 after an increase of about 117 percent in 2004 which resulted in a deficit of over \$225 million during that year.



Picture 2.4: Ahanta West District Assembly Hall and Finance Office

Although the Local Government Act of 1993 empowers District Assemblies to mobilise revenue internally, the Ahanta West District continues to rely on aid and grants as the main source of revenue. As seen in Table 2.4, aid and grants including funds from the central government in the form of the District Assembly Common Fund (DACF) constituted about 93.7 percent of total revenue in 2005, an increase of about 2 percentage points over the 2003 figure. Internally generated funds (IGF) accounted for the remaining 6.3 percent which includes 1.9 percent from fees/fine, 2.2 percent from

rates and licenses, and 1.5 percent from lands and rents. Revenue from investment constitutes only 0.1 percent of total revenue or 0.6 percent of IGF. All sources of IGF except rent and licenses suffered a decline and this largely accounted for the drop in IGF between 2003 and 2005.

Most of Ahanta West District revenue went into capital expenditure and personnel emoluments. Capital expenditure accounted for 82.2 percent of total expenditure in 2003 and this rose to 89.3 percent the following year before dropping marginally to 87.1

⁴ The DACF constitutes a major financial inflow to District Assemblies. Constitutionally, District Assemblies are entitled to 5% of national tax revenue which has recently been raised to 7.5% based on a formula determined By Parliament.

percent in 2005. The share of personnel emoluments declined from 9.6 percent in 2003 to 7.3 percent in 2005. Clearly, the weak internal resource mobilisation effort of the district implies that any shortfall in the resource inflows from aid and grants including DACF would cause development programmes to suffer. Appropriate measures to raise resources internally must be exploited by the district to minimise its dependence on aid and grants to finance its development programmes.

mainly on undertaking programmes and projects that will promote growth, reduce poverty and improve the quality of life.

Various strategies have been outlined to pursue the goals set out in the District Medium- Term Development Plan. In the area of private sector competitiveness, crop and livestock farmers are expected to receive training on the use of improved seeds and planting materials as well as safe handling and proper use of agro-chemicals to help

Table 2.4: Classification of Revenue and Expenditure by Head Item, 2003-2005

	Item	Share of Head Item (%)		
		2003	2004	2005
Revenue Item	Rates	2.7	0.8	1.1
	Lands	1.1	0.8	1.0
	Fees/Fines	2.1	1.1	1.9
	Licences	1.0	1.0	1.1
	Rent	0.2	0.7	0.5
	Grant in Aid (including DACF)	91.6	92.3	93.7
	Investment	0.2	1.0	0.1
	Miscellaneous	1.1	2.3	0.7
Expenditure	Personal Emoluments	9.6	5.4	7.3
	T & T Expenditure	2.3	1.0	1.7
	General Expenditure	2.3	1.4	2.5
	Maintenance Rep Renewals	0.3	0.1	0.1
	Miscellaneous	3.3	2.8	1.3
	Capital Expenditure	82.2	89.3	87.1

Source: Finance Department of the Ahanta West District Assembly

Development Policies and Challenges

Within the context of the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II), the vision of the Ahanta West District is "to create an enabling environment that will lead to improvement in the literacy rate and the reduction in poverty levels of all manner of people in the district, ensuring that they have access to basic services and are empowered to participate in decisions that affect them". The development focus of the district is

increase production in the district. Measures to facilitate the promotion, packaging, and strategic marketing of export commodities will be adopted.

In terms of health care, the focus is on strengthening and building human resource capacity, improving the working environment and collaborating with the Ahantaman Mutual Health Insurance Scheme to promote greater access to health delivery and register more people.

Other measures include reactivation of regular, community-based disease surveillance and the intensification of outreach programmes to improve reproductive and child health care. In education, the plan emphasises provision of access to education, provision of infrastructure and involvement of communities in offering quality education in the district. The plan seeks to promote science, technology and mathematics education by choosing 200 pupils from various levels of education to undergo training in these areas.

To achieve the goal of good governance, the plan aims to strengthen the delivery capacity of the District Assembly and ensure effective participation of all people in the decision-making process. In addition, measures will be taken to strengthen decentralised and effective administration and strengthen the magistrate court to ensure improved administration of justice.

There are obvious challenges that confront the district in the execution of the developmental agenda. These include low internally generated funds and overdependence on external sources of finance, particularly from the central government. There are often delays in the release of such funds and this may constrain project execution. The continuous decline in forest cover due to illegal tree felling, charcoal burning and farming activity has long-term implications for environmental sustainability and vulnerability. Furthermore, the latest discovery of oil deposits at Cape Three Points poses developmental challenges in the district in the form of a potential influx of people and the resulting pressure on the limited facilities in the district.

During community discussions, members catalogued a number of development challenges facing them. These include poor access roads (in Alabiza and New Amanful),

Box 2.1: Ahanta West District Development Goals 2006-2009

<i>Themes</i>	<i>Policy Goals</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private Sector-Led Competitiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Create enabling environment for the private sector to be more vibrant in order to generate more employment opportunities ➤ Adopt modern agricultural techniques to ensure job and wealth creation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Resource Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Improve quality of life of the people in the district by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ensuring a literate population for sustainable development ✓ Improving the performance of the health system ✓ Improving access to safe water and good sanitation ✓ Ensure orderly housing development and reduce conflict in the district
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good Governance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provide efficient and effective services to improve the quality of life of the people

Source: Ahanta West District Medium-Term Development Plan

absence of adequate health facilities, lack of access to credit, sea erosion, poor drainage, lack of farming and fishing inputs, lack of jobs (particularly the white-collar type for youth and women), and lack of library facilities for school children. In Asemkow (one of the fishing communities), opinion leaders were concerned about the apparent domination of fishing grounds by some big Chinese boats which were depriving them of their livelihood.

The Role of NGOs

The Ahanta West District, like many other districts, has benefited from the activities of many non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Six out of ten communities covered by the 2007 ISSER survey reported a number of activities undertaken by NGOs during the previous five years. The presence of these NGOs has been felt in the areas of education, health, water and sanitation. World Vision International has consistently provided assistance to five communities in terms of credit, education, health, technical support in agriculture, water reservoirs, relief services, food aid and toilet facilities for households. The Ahantaman Foundation provided assistance in health services, while ABC Bruecke offered to pay school fees, uniforms and books for children. The Conservation Foundation also provided some households toilet facilities while others have been involved in the preservation of the forest and better sanitation.

Participation and Consultation

Participation and consultation are essential ingredients in ensuring transparency in the political and economic governance of a country or community. The participation and consultation of people in matters of national and local interest is an important dimension of development. Participation refers to the process through which the individual or group contributes to the political, social and economic life of their community or country. Through participation, the public contributes to setting up general goals for society, becomes aware of available opportunities and challenges and takes part in seeking solutions for achieving goals. Indeed, the involvement of the public in the decision-making process at the national and local levels facilitates its access to resources.

The level of consultation of the public on development projects in the district is quite high, with over 60 percent of members of sampled households stating that they had been consulted prior to the execution of projects (Table 2.5). Less than 7 percent of household members in the community were members of the Unit Committee. The level of consultation is reported to be higher in rural areas than urban and marginally higher for women than for men. However, very few people in the sampled communities know how much money was allocated to the district through the District Assembly Common Fund (DACF) in the previous year.

During discussions in five of the communities, it became evident that none of the communities was informed about the revenue generation and expenditure of the District Assembly. However, four of the five communities said they obtained information about decisions taken by the Assembly through the Assemblyman.

Indeed, one major way of involving the general population in political and economic decision making is through local and national elections. Elections provide the public with the opportunity to influence decisions that affect their lives. The level of participation in the district is quite high. About 86 percent of adults took part in the 2004 national polls and about 85 percent in local elections in

2006 (Table 2.5). The proportion of women who voted in the two polls was higher than that of men while a greater proportion of urban adults exercised their franchise in these elections compared to rural adults.

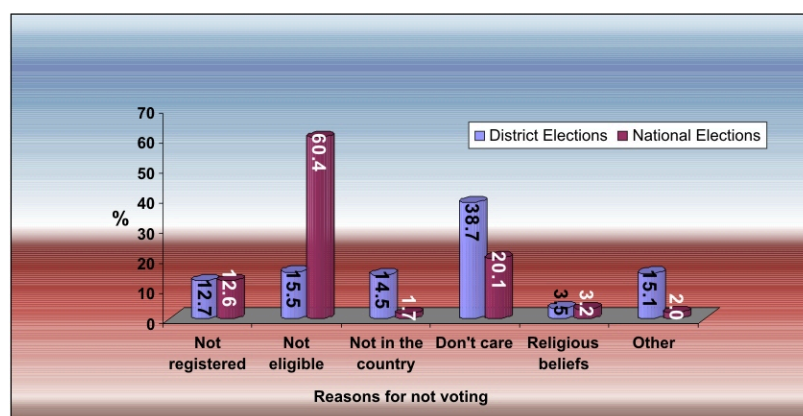
About 15 percent of adults who did not participate in the local and national polls gave reasons ranging from non-eligibility to religious beliefs. Overall, apathy was the main reason given by about 39 percent of those who did not participate in local elections, followed by non-eligibility which was cited by 15.1 percent (figure 2.6). About 18 percent were either out of the country or did not register while 3.5 percent and 15 percent did not vote on religious grounds and other reasons respectively.

Table 2.5: Political Participation and Resource Allocation

	All	Sex		Location	
		Male	Female	Rural	Urban
2006 District Election	84.7	83.2	86.2	83.6	87.6
2004 National Election	85.5	84.8	86.1	84.1	89.3
Consulted on Projects	62.8	62.2	63.4	65.2	55.9
Member of Unit Committee	6.7	7.6	5.9	6.6	7.1
Know about DACF allocation	4.7	3.8	5.6	5.6	2.1

Source: ISSER Household Survey, 2007

Fig. 2.6: Reasons for inability to vote in the District and National Elections (%)



Source: 2007 ISSER Household Survey

For the national elections in 2004, over 60 percent of those who did not vote did not do so because they were not eligible, compared to 15.5 percent in the 2006 local elections. The difference is largely due to the fact that those who were 16 years in 2004 and therefore not eligible to vote had attained 18 years in 2006, making them eligible to vote and thus reduced the number of ineligible people in 2006. Apathy, another reason for non-participation in the 2004 national elections, was cited by about 20 percent of adults while only 3 percent mentioned religious reasons (Figure 2.6). The greater proportion of eligible voters who were apathetic in the district elections relative to the national elections is an indication of the higher premium placed on national elections.

Conclusion

The proximity of the district to the regional capital and the abundant resources including forest, mineral deposits and the recent discovery of oil at Cape Three Points, create development challenges and opportunities in the district. The influx of people into the district will call for an expansion of basic infrastructure such as schools, health facilities, water and sanitation facilities as well as security. Such an influx may also increase the level of economic activity, thereby generating more revenue for development. Whether the population expansion due to the closeness of the district to Takoradi and the latest oil discovery will be a blessing or a curse will depend on how the local authority exploits the economic opportunities to the benefit of the district.

CHAPTER THREE

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND POVERTY

Introduction

The 1990s saw a considerable reduction in the incidence of poverty in Ghana, from 52 percent in 1992 to 40 percent in 1999. The incidence has further declined to about 28 percent in 2005.⁵ However, the trend is not uniform across sex, region and economic activity. Essentially, the incidence of poverty is higher among food crop farmers and in rural areas where most people in Ahanta West live. Indeed, eradication of extreme poverty and hunger by 2015 is one of the MDGs. In the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS I), Ghana pursued the anti-poverty objectives of the MDGs.

The GPRS II, covering the period 2006-

2009, seeks to accelerate the growth of the national economy towards the realization of middle-income status. Within this framework, the focus of the Ahanta West District Assembly is mainly to pursue strategies that will promote growth, reduce poverty and improve the quality of life. The district's Medium-Term Development Plan for agriculture is to adopt modern techniques to ensure job and wealth creation. The plan seeks to ensure food security, reduce post-harvest losses, facilitate an increase in the production of non-traditional exports and promote effective and efficient output processing and marketing systems.

Box 3.1: Human Development and MDGs on Poverty and Hunger

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

- ❖ *Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger*
 - *Reduce by 50 percent of the 1990 level the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day by 2015*
 - *Reduce the proportion of people who suffer from hunger by 50 percent between 1990 and 2015*

Human Development

- ❖ *Ensure a decent standard of living*

⁵ This is based on preliminary findings of the Fifth Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS 5)

Structure of Economic Activity

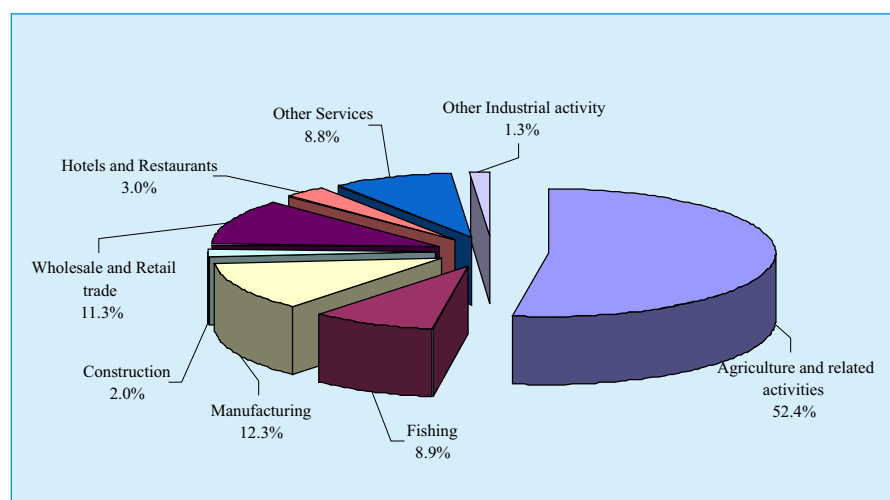
Agriculture and related activities such as forestry and hunting are the main economic occupation in the district, although the share of labour force in agriculture and fishing has dwindled since 2000. Over 50 percent of the economically active population aged 7 years and above is engaged in farming (Figure 3.1) with more women engaged in agriculture than men. According to the 2000 census, agriculture was the main source of livelihood for 12,053 women aged 15 years and above (representing 56.3 percent of the female labour force) as against 9,068 men (or 46.8 percent of the male labour force). However, according to the 2003 CWIQ and 2007 ISSER survey results, the proportion of women in wage or regular employment in non-agricultural sectors increased from 2.2 percent to 6.0 percent, possibly indicating an improvement in terms of women's economic empowerment as contained in MDG 3.

The district witnessed a decline in the

proportion of labour force in agriculture in favour of manufacturing, trade and community services. Between 2000 and 2007, the share of agriculture in total economically active population drooped from 51.8 percent to 35.4 percent compared with the surge in share of manufacturing, trade, construction and community services in total economically active population from 28.5 percent to 56.1 percent (Table 3.2).

The major food crops grown in the area are cassava, plantain, cocoyam, yam, maize, rice, coconut and vegetables, while oil palm remains the main cash crop. Food crop production is generally on subsistence basis while oil palm is mainly large scale. In recent times however, rubber cultivation appears to be gaining ground as a major cash crop in the district. The rubber is mostly grown on a large scale within the rain-belt area close to Axim, to feed the Ghana Rubber Estates Limited. One notable challenge, however, is that the increasing use of land for rubber plantations may deprive food crop farmers of access to land for cultivation.

Figure 3.1: Classification of Economically Active Population 7+ by Industry (%)



Source: 2000 Population and Housing Census, Ghana Statistical Service

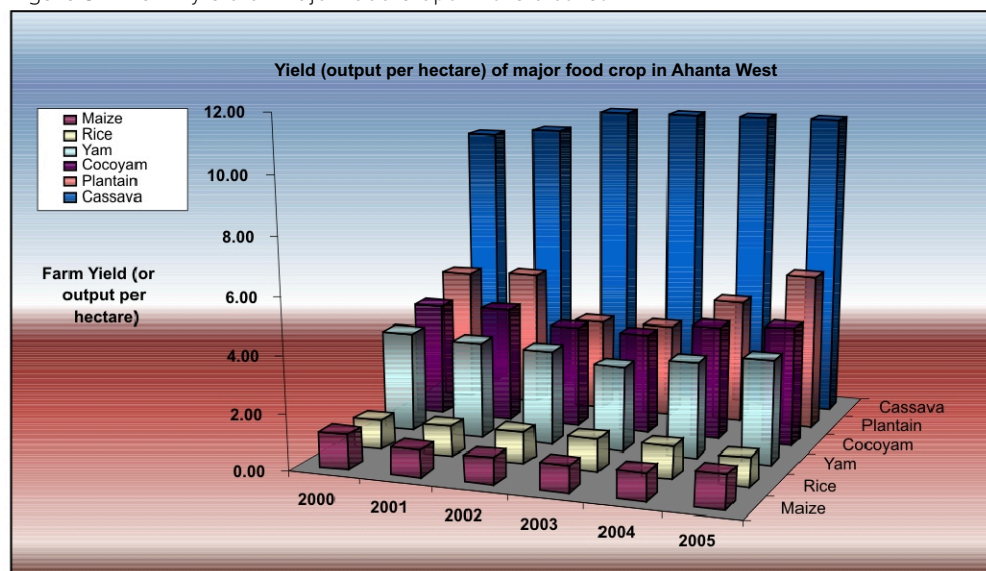


Picture 3.1: Rubber plantation belonging to the Ghana Rubber Estates Limited

Farming practices in the district are generally based on the traditional system of shifting cultivation and/or rotational bush fallow. With no irrigation facility in the area, agriculture is rain-fed and productivity in terms of farm yield (defined as output per hectare) largely depends on the volume and timing of rainfall and the fertility of the soil. As seen in Figure 3.2, the district managed to halt and reverse the continuous decline in yield of plantain, cocoyam, yam and maize in 2004 while cassava yield has consistently improved since 2000. The reduced yield of plantain, cocoyam and yam particularly in 2002 may be attributed to flooding that occurred as a result of heavy rainfall of about 2,300 mm within 32 days (Figure 2.1). In contrast, rice farmers benefited substantially from the heavy rainfall as indicated by the increased yield that year.

Discussions with community leaders revealed that soil fertility has diminished considerably on account of continuous land use for cultivation. Unaffordable prices have constrained the use of fertiliser by many farmers. In addition, the majority of farmers use simple tools such as cutlasses and hoes, as tractor services are beyond the pockets of many poor farmers in most communities. The limited number of agricultural extension officers is also a major constraint to higher production in the district. Available data from Agriculture Extension Service in the district reveal an increase in the number of farmers under the care of one extension officer from 1,183 in 2000 to 1,800 in 2005. The combination of these factors constitutes the major impediments to productivity growth in agriculture in the district.

Figure 3.2: Farm yield of major food crops in the district



Source: Ahanta West District Directorate of Food and Agriculture

Generally, agriculture production in the district has been mixed. While total production of cassava, plantain and cocoyam has been on a consistent increase since 2000, rice and yam production suffered a decline in 2005 and 2004 respectively after experiencing continuous improvement since 2000 (Table 3.1). Maize production has not been consistent over the period. The district managed to recover from a decline in maize production in 2001 to record a continuous rise in production for two consecutive years before dropping again by 291 tonnes in

2004. Production then shot up by 1,081 tonnes the following year.

Fishing largely takes place along the coast and provides employment for about 9 percent of the workforce in the district in 2000. Sea fishing is a male-dominated activity while women are mostly fishmongers. The majority of fishermen use basic tools such as nets and canoes. The few who are able to use outboard motors are normally constrained by the high cost of pre-mix fuel.

Table 3.1: Production of Major Food Crops in Ahanta West (tonnes)

Year	Maize	Rice	Cassava	Plantain	Cocoyam	Yam
2000	1,840	79	35,445	860	436	64
2001	1,524	87	37,572	912	445	65
2002	1,750	140	42,102	985	454	90
2003	1,760	150	42,240	990	460	90
2004	1,469	131	42,703	1,349	489	88
2005	2,550	60	43,780	4,519	489	91

Source: Ahanta West District Directorate of Food and Agriculture

Discussions with two of the fishing communities (New Amanful and Asemkow) indicated that over the past few years, the fish catch has gone down considerably as a result of the presence of big fishing boats operated by some Chinese. According to the communities, the fishing activities of the Chinese along the coast are depriving them of their source of livelihood. This may partly explain the drop in the share of fishing in total economically active population from about 9 percent in 2000 to 4 percent in 2007 (Table 3.2).

Informal sector employment is pervasive in the district, with the proportion of women engaged in the sector higher than that of men. Data from various sources including the ISSER survey suggest that over 80 percent of the entire workforce in the district is engaged in informal activity, with the majority of them in agriculture. About 8 percent of the labour force is employed by the government in 2007 as against 7 percent engaged in the private formal sector (Table 3.2).



Picture 3.2: A group of young men weaving nets at Akwaidaa Old Town

Table 3.2: Distribution of Economically Active Population Aged 15+ by Industry, Status and Type

		2000	2003	2007
Industry	Agriculture	51.8	50.7*	35.4
	Fishing	8.5	---	3.8
	Manufacturing	12.8	6.3	20.3
	Construction	2.1	5.5	2.6
	Wholesale & Retail Trade	11.2	25.4	17.4
	Other Service	10.3	4.1	4.1
	Community Service	2.4	7.3	15.8
	Other Industrial Activity	1.1	0.8	0.5
Status	Self-employment	73.1	74.6	75.1
	Wage Employment	17.7	13.6	18.3
	Family Worker	5.5	1.9	1.7
	Apprentice/Student	2.7	5.0	1.0
	Other	1.0	4.9	3.9
Main Employer	Public	5.1	5.2	11.6
	Private Formal	12.8	6.8	5.0
	Private Informal	80.8	84.1	78.8
	Others	1.3	3.9	4.6

* Includes fishing
Source: Ghana Statistical Service, 2000 & 2003 and DHDR/ISSER Household Survey, 2007

In terms of status of employment, self-employment in the informal sector remains the dominant type, increasing from 73 percent in 2000 to 77 percent in 2007 (Table 3.2). It accounts for at least 77 percent of women and 69 percent of men. Wage employment in the district has consistently declined from 17.7 percent in 2000 to 9.4 percent in 2007. Access to wage employment is higher among men than women while a higher proportion of women

Are engaged in unpaid family jobs than men. Most of the unpaid family workers probably help their parents and husbands on the farm.

A number of challenges were reported to be confronting the working population in Ahanta West. Lack of finance tops the list of problems and was mentioned by about 60 percent of farmers, 85 percent of traders and 81 percent of manufacturers as a major constraint in their activities (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3: Problems faced by working population with regard to work

Industry	Finance	Marketing Problem	Low price of products	High cost of inputs	Shortage of inputs	Erratic Weather	Access to land	Poor Health
Agriculture	60.2	14.4	17.1	---	1.7	8.0	21.7	2.4
Fishing	30.3	17.6	9.5	---	13.2	8.8	4.4	13.2
Manufacturing	80.6	1.2	4.3	6.1	1.9	---	4.4	---
Trade	84.5	17.5	0.9	7.0	3.5	1.3	---	5.4
Comm. service	56.4	3.4	---	---	---	---	3.4	3.9

Source: 2007 ISSER Household Survey

Similarly, about 30 percent of fishermen and 56 percent of workers in community service identified finance as a major problem in their economic activities.

This brings to the fore the urgent need to establish more micro-financing schemes for farmers, fishermen and fishmongers, traders and manufacturers, among others, to enhance economic activity and increase production. Lack of access to land, low output prices and access to markets were the

Unemployment

The incidence of joblessness is one of the critical indicators for assessing the state of economic and social development in any community or country. According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), a person is said to be “unemployed” if he/she is available but does not have a job and is actively looking for work. The rate is measured by the proportion of the economically active population who are unemployed.

Table 3.4 : Estimates of Unemployment Rates (%) for Ahanta West District

	Adult (15+)			Youth (15-24 years)	
	2000	2003	2007	2003	2007
Ghana	10.4	5.5	---	---	---
Men	10.1	---	---	---	---
Women	10.7	---	---	---	---
Ahanta West District					
Men	6.8	10.0	12.7	35.0	30.3
Women	6.7	7.9	15.3	26.7	27.1
All	6.7	8.9	14.1	30.3	28.4
Rural					
Men	6.3	9.5	14.5	33.8	32.6
Women	6.4	6.8	11.0	22.7	14.4
All	6.3	8.0	12.5	27.8	21.6
Urban					
Men	8.8	15.0	9.4	54.9	23.4
Women	8.1	16.7	27.9	53.6	72.1
All	8.4	16.0	17.6	53.9	50.9
Source: 2000 Census & 2003 CWIQ (GSS) and 2007 ISSER Household Survey					

other major problems facing farmers in the district while problems of marketing, shortage of inputs and poor health were identified by fishermen as some of the obstacles they face in their fishing activities.

Different estimates of the unemployment rates for different periods for the Ahanta West District and the entire country (2000 census, 2003 CWIQ, and ISSER 2007 Survey data) are presented in Table 3.4.

Based on the three sources, the unemployment rate has been on the increase in the district since 2000. From being lower than the national average in 2000, the rate rose sharply above the national level in 2003, suggesting that on average, more people were finding it difficult to secure jobs in the district than in the entire country. The rate rose from 9 percent in 2003 to 14 percent in 2007.

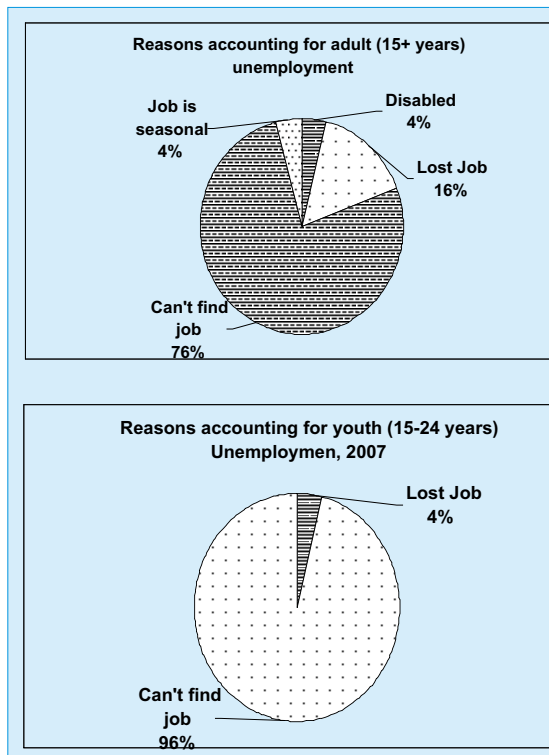
While the jobless rate was higher among men than women in 2000 and 2003, this was reversed in 2007. In 2000, the adult unemployment rate in the entire country was 10.1 percent among men as against 10.7 percent among women while 6.8 percent of men and 6.7 percent of women in the district were found to be unemployed. Similarly, the unemployment rate among men in 2003 was higher than the rate among women by 2.1 percentage points but in 2007, the situation was reversed with the rate becoming higher among women than men by 2.6 percentage points.

The rural-urban dimension of unemployment also confirms the assertion that unemployment is an urban phenomenon. The urban unemployment rate was higher than the rural rate by 2.1 percentage points in 2000 and further widened by 8 percentage points in 2003. The results of the 2007 ISSER survey put the urban-rural unemployment rate gap at 5.1.

Unemployment rates among the youth aged 15-24 years are reported to be higher than other age groups in district. The rate declined marginally in the district between 2003 and 2007 suggesting that more young people who are not in school are working than in 2003. Joblessness increased substantially among urban young women, from 54

percent to 72 percent (Table 3.4) indicating that young women are finding it more difficult to secure jobs in the district.

Figure 3.3: Reasons for being unemployed, 2007



Source: 2007 ISSER Household Survey

A lack of job opportunities has been observed as the main reason for the increasing incidence of unemployment in Ahanta West District. The results of the ISSER survey reveal that about 76 percent of unemployed adults claim that they could not find jobs while 16 percent were unemployed because they lost their jobs (Figure 3.3). Seasonality of jobs and disability rendered 8 percent of adults unemployed. Lack of jobs was the main reason why 96 percent of the youth were unemployed, with the remaining 4 percent attributing their jobless situation to the loss of their previous job.

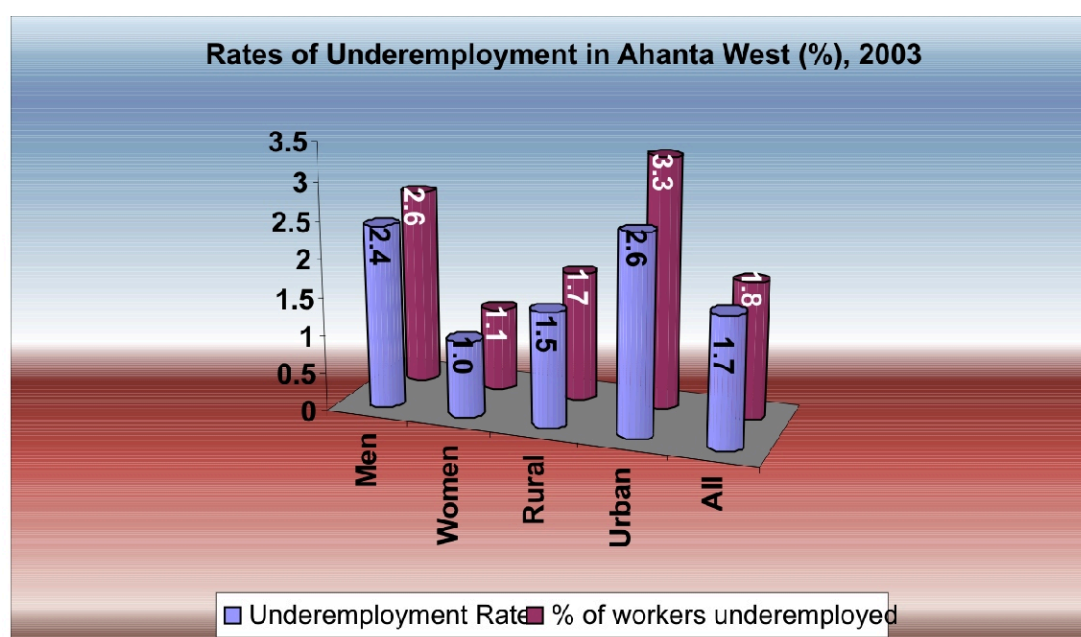
Underemployment

The incidence of underemployment among adults in the district is an indication of the fact that more people are working but are willing to take additional work. The underemployment rate in the district is quite low as represented in Figure 3.3, such that only 12 adults, representing 1.7 percent of the labour force aged 15 years and above, did one type of work or the other in the last 7 days preceding the survey date and were ready to take on additional work. This figure also represents 1.8 percent of the economically active population aged 15 years and above in 2003 who did any type of work in the last

seven days preceding the survey (Figure 3.4).

The rate is evidently higher among the urban workforce than in the rural workforce. This could be attributed partly to the fact that, given the higher cost of living in urban areas compared to the villages more urban workers are likely to want to take up additional jobs for additional income to supplement their main source of income. The rate is also higher among adult males than their female counterparts largely on account of their role as breadwinners in most households in the district.

Figure 3.4: Rates of Underemployment in Ahanta West (%), 2003



Source: 2003 CWIQ (GSS)

Table 3.5: Underemployed Persons by Industry, Employment Status and Economic Sector

Industry		Employment Status		Sector	
Agriculture & Related Activities	60.0	Self-Employed, no employees	61.7	Public	20.0
Manufacturing	7.0	Casual employee	12.0	Private Formal	20.5
Construction	6.0	Regular employee	21.6	Private Informal	59.5
Wholesale & Retail Trade	11.6	Domestic Employee	4.7		
Community/Social Services	14.8				

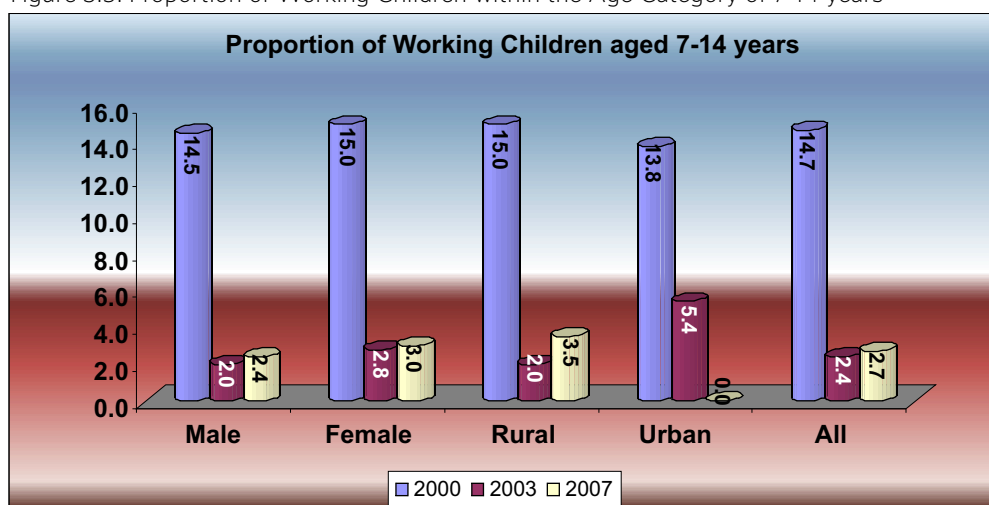
Source: 2003 CWIQ, GSS

Agriculture and related activities account for about 60 percent of the underemployed, followed by community/social services and wholesale and retail trade (Table 3.5). Most of the underemployed operate in the informal sector as self-employed without employees, with about 40 percent working in the formal sector. These developments confirm the popular perception that underemployment is generally high among informal sector operators who are mostly self-employed with no employees, and in the agricultural sector.

Child Labour

Child labour in this report refers to children aged between 7 and 14 who are engaged in paid work. According to the 2000 Population and Housing Census, 3,006 children (1,504 males and 1,502 female) were engaged in various kinds of jobs for pay or profit in Ahanta West District. Most of these working children (about 81.5 percent) were in rural areas and accounted for at least 14.7 percent of children aged between 7 and 14 years.

Figure 3.5: Proportion of Working Children within the Age Category of 7-14 years



Source: 2000 Population & Housing Census, 2003 CWIQ & 2007 ISSER Household Survey

The proportion of working children has declined considerably since 2000, dropping from 15 percent in 2000 to 2.7 percent in 2007 (Figure 3.5). A greater proportion of girls than boys were engaged in economic activity.

crop farmers. Being a predominantly rural district with farming and fishing as the main economic activities, Ahanta West has a direct link with the national poverty situation.

Table 3.6: Distribution of Child Labour by Industry

Industry	2000	2003	2007
Agriculture	61.5	69.5*	44.4
Fishing	13.4	---	41.0
Wholesale & Retail Trade	13.0	30.5	14.6
Others	12.1	---	---

* Include fishing

Source: 2000 Population & Housing Census, 2003 CWIQ & 2007 ISSER Household Survey

No child was reported to be engaged in economic activity in urban areas in 2007. About 62 percent of the children were engaged in agriculture, probably as farm labourers, with fishing and trade accounting for 13.4 percent and 13.0 percent of these working children in 2000 (Table 3.6). In 2007, however, whereas the proportion of working children in agriculture declined to 44 percent, the proportion of children in fishing increased substantially to 41 percent. Working children engaged in commerce also declined dramatically from 31 percent in 2003 to 15 percent in 2007.

Poverty

The first goal of the United Nations' MDGs is the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger (Box 3.1). Poverty in Ghana is observed to be relatively high among food

Objective Poverty

In assessing the situation in Ahanta West, the report uses a number of indicators to capture the incidence of poverty and deprivation. Using the headcount measure of poverty based on 2000 census data and the fourth Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS 4), about 44 percent of the population in Ahanta West were reported to be poor, made up of about 51 percent of the rural population and 15 percent of the urban population areas confirming the assertion that poverty in Ghana is a rural phenomenon.

Another objective measure is the human poverty index (HPI) established by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The HPI is used to measure deprivation in three different dimensions. The first dimension is survival, which is vulnerability to death and is measured by the proportion of the population that will not live to see their 40th birthday.

The second dimension is knowledge and is measured by the adult illiteracy rate to capture the degree of exclusion of the population from the world of reading and communication. The third component of the human poverty index is the ability to have a decent standard of living and is measured by the proportion of the population without access to safe drinking water, health services and the proportion of underweight children below five years.

to have done better relative to the national situation in terms of knowledge, access to health services and the proportion of underweight children. About 48 percent of adults in the district compared to 46.6 percent nationwide are illiterate while 36.8 percent of people in the district are without access to health services as against 42.4 percent nationwide. In addition, compared to the national average, a lower proportion of children in the district are underweight. The

Table 3.7 : Poverty Indicators, 2003

	National	Ahanta West District
<i>Human Poverty Index</i>		
All	41.8	40.6
Rural	---	41.2
Urban	---	37.3
<i>% Adult Illiteracy</i>		
All	46.6	48.0
Male	34.2	32.2
Female	57.7	62.1
<i>% without access to health services</i>		
All	42.4	36.8
Rural	57.7	37.7
Urban	21.5	29.8
<i>% without access to safe water</i>		
All	25.9	26.0
Rural	37.0	20.2
Urban	12.7	71.6
<i>% underweight children</i>		
All	25.8	18.4
Boys	24.4	16.2
Girls	28.4	20.2
Source: 2003 CWIQ (GSS)		

Using CWIQ 2003, the poverty situation in the district is captured by the relevant indicators presented in Table 3.7. The estimated HPI suggests that poverty in Ahanta West is marginally lower than the national level. Overall, the district is observed

proportion of people without access to safe Water in the district is not different from the national rate. Quite clearly, the level of deprivation in the district appears in some respects to be somewhat better than the national average.

The estimated HPI and other poverty indicators provide evidence to suggest that the incidence of poverty and the level of deprivation are higher among rural households than their urban counterparts. About 38 percent of the rural population is without access to health services compared with 30 percent in urban areas, while the rural HPI is higher than the urban index by about 4 percentage points. Surprisingly, however, a higher percentage of people in urban areas are without access to safe water, with most urban dwellers resorting to purchasing water from water tankers. The gender disparity in the poverty indicators is seen in the higher adult illiteracy rate among

judgement on the part of respondents. In 2007, a lower proportion of households considered themselves to be poor or very poor compared to 2003. As reported in Table 3.8, whereas 30 percent of households described themselves as poor or very poor in 2003, the proportion declined to 23 percent in 2007. Similarly, the proportion of households identifying themselves as neither poor nor non-poor declined from 67.5 percent to 52.6 percent over the same period. Indeed, the proportion of households that considered themselves non-poor or somewhat non-poor surged from a low of 2.7 percent to 24.1 percent between 2003 and 2007.

Table 3.8: Household Perception about Poverty by Location and Sex of Household Head (%)

	2003					2007				
	Male	Female	Rural	Urban	All	Male	Female	Rural	Urban	All
Non-Poor	0.3	---	0.2	---	0.2	2.9	3.7	0.6	9.9	3.1
Somewhat non-poor	2.6	2.4	2.6	1.7	2.5	21.3	20.5	17.7	30.0	21.0
Neither poor nor non-poor	70.6	61.8	66.8	73.3	67.5	51.4	55.5	56.3	42.8	52.6
Poor	20.8	17.8	19.4	22.5	19.7	19.0	17.8	20.6	13.6	18.7
Very Poor	5.7	18.0	11.0	2.5	10.0	5.5	2.5	4.9	3.7	4.6

Source: CWIQ 2003 (GSS) and ISSER Household Survey 2007

women. In addition, using the percentage of underweight children as a proxy for child poverty, girls are found to be at a disadvantage compared to boys. In effect, therefore, there is evidence for expressing concern about the higher level of vulnerability among women than among men and in rural areas compared to urban.

Subjective Poverty

Subjective poverty is an alternative means of assessing poverty based on the value

Essentially, a higher proportion of rural households considered themselves poor or very poor compared with urban households. This is not surprising because urban households are more endowed with basic utilities and have better access to socio-economic infrastructure. The worrying aspect is the rural-urban gap which widened from 5.4 percent to 8.2 percent between 2003 and 2007. Thus, about 30.4 percent of rural households claimed to be poor or very poor compared with 25 percent of urban households in 2003 and this dropped to 25.5 percent and 17.3 percent of rural and urban

households respectively in 2007 (table 3.8). A higher proportion of female-headed households reported themselves to be poor or very poor in 2003 compared with male-headed households. This was reversed in 2007 with a lower proportion of female-headed households claiming to be poor or very poor. The decline in poverty among female-headed households was also evident in the surge in the proportion of female-headed households claiming to be non-poor or somewhat non-poor from 2.4 percent in 2003 to 24.2 percent in 2007.

Using the level of happiness of households to

capture their perception of poverty reveals a contrary outcome. Although about 30 percent of households in 2003 considered themselves to be either poor or very poor, poverty did not adversely affect their happiness since over 60 percent claimed to be very or quite happy (Table 3.9) The level of happiness was higher in urban than in rural areas considering the fact that about three-quarters of urban households compared with about three-fifths of rural households felt happier than before. Households headed by men claimed to be happier than female headed households.

Table 3.9: Household Perception of their Economic Situation, 2003 (%)

Variable	Response	Location		Sex of Household Head		
		Rural	Urban	Male	Female	All
Level of happiness	Very happy	14.1	21.5	16.9	11.4	15.0
	Quite happy	46.3	53.4	47.7	46.1	47.1
	Not very happy	28.4	14.2	28.0	24.5	26.8
	Not at all happy	11.1	10.8	7.4	18.0	11.1
Financial situation of Households	Very satisfied	1.9	2.5	2.8	0.6	2.0
	Satisfied	9.4	7.5	12.0	4.0	9.2
	Somewhat satisfied	31.4	45.8	32.4	34.3	33.0
	Somewhat dissatisfied	27.1	32.6	28.1	26.9	27.7
	Very dissatisfied	30.1	11.6	24.7	34.2	28.0
Overall economic situation of household against previous year	Much worse now	49.9	15.9	41.7	54.2	46.1
	A little worse now	25.6	32.4	29.9	19.9	26.4
	Same	17.2	40.2	21.4	16.8	19.8
	A little better now	7.2	11.5	7.0	9.1	7.7
Overall economic situation of community against previous year	Much worse now	36.0	25.7	34.9	34.9	34.9
	A little worse now	20.3	31.6	23.3	18.5	21.6
	Same	36.9	33.4	35.5	38.3	36.5
	A little better now	2.9	1.7	2.0	4.3	2.8
	Much better now	0.6	---	0.4	0.7	0.5
	Don't know	3.3	7.5	4.0	3.3	3.7

Source: CWIQ 2003 (GSS)

The majority of households in the district were quite dissatisfied with their financial situation in 2003 and this was reflected in their assessment of the overall economic situation against the previous year. Specifically, about 56 percent of households claimed to be somewhat or very dissatisfied with their financial situation as against 44 percent who considered their financial situation to be at least somewhat satisfactory (Table 3.9). Similarly, over 72 percent of households in 2003 felt that their overall economic situation was either a little or much worse than the previous year. As expected, compared with urban households, a higher proportion of rural households felt very or somewhat dissatisfied with their financial situation and also saw their overall economic situation as being worse than the previous year. The financial situation of male-headed households was found to be better than households headed by women based on the evidence that about 53 percent of male-headed households were very or somewhat dissatisfied with their financial position compared with 63 percent of households headed by women. Consequently, over 74 percent of female headed households compared with about 62 percent of male-headed households found the overall economic situation much worse or a little worse than in the previous year.

The overall assessment of the economic situation of the community by households suggests that communities were worse off than in the previous year. This is based on the claim by at least 56 percent of households that the economic situation of communities was much or a little worse in 2003 than in the previous year against only 3.3 percent who considered the economic situation to be a little or much better (Table 3.9). Surprisingly, 57.3 percent of urban households rated the economic situation of

the community in 2003 to be much or a little worse than before as against 56.3 percent of rural households.

During community discussions however, four out of five communities indicated that life in the community was better than 10 years before. They gave a number of reasons for the improvement in their life. Several communities had been provided with electricity, water, schools and clinics which were lacking in the past. Increased commercial activities, the capitation grant for schools and free primary education, vocational education for the youth and improvement in literacy rates were other reasons cited for their perception of improved conditions of life in the communities.

Food Insecurity

The eradication of hunger is one of the primary concerns of the MDGs (Box 3.1). In this report, the proportion of households that faced difficulty in meeting food needs is used to capture the progress made in eradicating extreme hunger in the Ahanta West District. Table 3.10 presents a picture of the hunger situation in the district in 2003 and 2007. Generally, food security does not seem to be a major challenge in the district. About 63 percent of households never encountered any difficulty in satisfying food needs in 2007 compared with about 70 percent in 2003, suggesting progress in the effort to eradicate hunger in the district. Similarly, the significant surge by over 18 percentage points in the proportion of households that seldom faced a food crisis and a substantial decline in the proportion that sometimes faced difficulty in meeting food needs from 24.6 percent to

11.5 percent could be interpreted to mean an improvement in the overall food situation in the district.

The food situation appears better among urban households compared with rural counterparts. While the proportion of urban households that never faced a food crisis increased from 67 percent to 80 percent between 2003 and 2007, the proportion declined from 70 percent to 57 percent among rural households (Table 3.10). However, the proportion of households that seldom or sometimes experienced food shortages increased among both rural and urban households. The food situation was marginally better among male-headed than female-headed households the proportion of households that never or sometimes faced difficulty in meeting food needs was higher among households headed by men than those headed by women in 2003 and 2007.

sometimes faced a food crisis and an increase in the proportion that seldom faced food difficulties. However, it is also important to raise a concern over the increased proportion of households that often suffer food difficulties over the period, particularly among rural households.

A number of reasons accounted for the difficulty in meeting food. As reported in Table 3.11, the major reason was high food prices, according to 62 percent and 49 percent of urban and rural households respectively that experienced food difficulties. About 24 percent and 17 percent of rural households blamed poor harvests and problems with storage respectively as the cause of food difficulties, compared with 19 percent among urban households. About 20.4 percent of rural households sold most of their products right after the harvest and did not get good prices, thus exposing

Table 3.10: Difficulty in Satisfying Household Food Needs in the Past 12 Months (%)

	2003					2007				
	Rural	Urban	Men	Women	All	Rural	Urban	Men	Women	All
Never	69.8	66.6	69.6	69.2	69.4	57.0	80.2	65.0	59.8	63.4
Seldom	4.4	3.4	5.1	2.7	4.3	26.9	11.2	21.2	26.0	22.6
Sometimes	24.1	28.4	24.8	24.2	24.6	12.6	8.5	12.1	10.2	11.5
Often	1.3	1.7	---	4.0	1.4	3.4	---	1.8	4.0	2.5
Always	0.4	---	0.5	---	0.3	---	---	---	---	---

Source: CWIQ 2003 (GSS) and ISSER Household Survey 2007

Generally, the food situation does not seem to have deteriorated in the district, considering the fact that no household reported having always suffered difficulties in meeting food needs in 2007 compared with 4 percent in 2003 (Table 3.10). This is against the reported decline in the proportion of households that never or

themselves to a food crisis. Job loss of an income-earning member also caused about 38 percent of urban households to experience food shortage as against 11 percent in rural areas, while death of an income-earning member was the reason why 12.4 percent of rural households encountered food difficulties in 2007.

Table 3.11: Reasons for Food Shortage, by Household

Reason	Rural	Urban	All
Death of income-earning member	12.4	---	10.6
Income-earning member left	8.1	19.0	9.7
Additional member joined household	1.5	---	1.3
Income-earning member lost job	10.7	37.9	14.8
Income-earning member not working due to illness	3.2	---	2.7
Remittances no longer received	10.4	19.0	11.7
Reduction in remittances received	5.0	---	4.3
Poor harvest	24.0	19.0	23.4
Problem with storage	16.8	19.0	17.2
Sold products right after harvest	20.4	---	17.4
High food prices	49.3	62.1	51.2
Reduced access to land	6.7	---	5.7

Source: ISSER Household Survey 2007

The food situation raises issues of vulnerability for at least 36 percent of households that experienced food shortage at least once during the year preceding the ISSER survey for various reasons. This means that a number of households in the district are vulnerable to high food prices, poor harvests, and death or job loss of an income-earning member of households among other factors. This calls for efforts by the District Assembly to implement policies outlined in the District Development Plan to raise agricultural production and minimize the household risk of experiencing some of these shocks.

Conclusion

The concentration of economic activity in farming and fishing exposes the district to a high level of vulnerability since these two activities are among the most risky. The continued use of traditional methods of rain-dependent farming exposes the livelihood of many to the weather. This is in addition to a

number of challenges facing farmers and fishermen including finance, inadequate numbers of extension officers, shortages of inputs, access to land, low prices and lack of markets for farm produce.

The reported decline in the youth unemployment rate is an indication of the progress the district is making in this area. However, the rise in the adult unemployment rate (due largely to increased unemployment among adults above 24 years) coupled with a greater percentage of the unemployed complaining about the difficulty in finding jobs suggests that the lack of adequate employment opportunities still remains a challenge in the district. The increased unemployment rates among women also indicate that women are finding it difficult to break into the job market.

The observed fall in the incidence of child labour since 2000 may suggest that more children are being enrolled in school than before, with positive implications for the adult literacy rate in future.

The poverty situation in the district appears to be better than the national average as measured by the HPI. Clearly, efforts to step up food and fish production by minimising

constraints facing agriculture would help improve the food security and livelihood of the majority of people in the district.