

AHANTA WEST DISTRICT HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2007

Vulnerability and the Attainment of the MDGs at the Local Level



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Prepared by
Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER)



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Forward

His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Ghana, in his sessional address to parliament in 2007, spelt out Government's development agenda for accelerated economic growth. The President's vision is to transform Ghana into a middle income country with GDP of at least 1,000 US dollars by 2015. The main pillars for achieving this growth are human resource development, private sector development and good governance. These are critical for attainment of good indicators for Human Development in the country.

Human Development is central to Government's development agenda. The traditional conceptualisation of well-being in Ghana does not focus only on the income of a person, but also on what a person is capable of doing, as well as, on the physical appearance of the person. The concept of human development may be considered as being well-suited to the average Ghanaian's concept of welfare and standard of living. While improving human health is intrinsically desirable, it is broadly recognised that health is a necessary prerequisite for socio-economic development since it improves human capital, productivity and wealth.

Ghana has produced National Human Development Reports in almost every year since 1997 which more often than not are national aggregation of the human development situation of the country. Useful as these indicators and figures may be, they do not present adequate and relevant micro information for district and local planning and decision making processes. Regional and district level indicators of human development are therefore needed to provide critical information for making decisions on how resources are to be judiciously allocated.

District Human Development reports can be useful to assist district administrations in

tracking progress and feedbacks in their development efforts. In 2004, the first set of district human development report were prepared for three district, Atwima, Builsa and Tema Municipality with the support of UNDP.

The theme of this second set of district human development reports, "Vulnerability and the Attainment of Millennium Development Goal (MDGs) at the Local Levels", which is also supported by UNDP is very appropriate in view of the fact that, empowering the vulnerable and the excluded especially women to contribute to and share in the benefits of growth of the economy ensure sustained poverty reduction. Vulnerability of communities, households and the individuals to negative shocks can impact adversely on the attainment of the MDGs and improvement in human development.

I strongly believed that these district human development reports for the districts will critically unveil the interplay of vulnerability that communities, households or individual faces in order to prevent the occurrences of the negative events or to mitigate or to cope with the impact of the shocks.

I wish to acknowledge the contribution and commitment of all stakeholders in the development of these reports and call on all to acquaint themselves of the content and to realign their support for the implementation of the recommendations of the reports. Through such collective support, we shall achieve the objectives of the GPRS II and the MDGs.



HON. KWADWO ADJEI DARKO (MP)
MINISTER, LOCAL GOVERNMENT,
RURAL DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENT

Preface

Since 1997 UNDP Ghana has been working with government to prepare and disseminate national human development reports. The prime objective of the reports is to offer guidance on policies and priorities required at different levels by different actors to keep development actions focused, coordinated and efficacious by presenting systematic account and assessment of social and economic developments in the country from the sustainable Human Development perspective.

In recent times, UNDP Ghana has taken the Human Development Report to the district level to capture more development issues from the grassroots to provide a more in-depth diagnostic analysis on key human development issues; raise awareness about the critical development challenges; inform planning and resource allocation; and strengthen the link between national and district development planning frameworks. To this end, three district human development reports were prepared in 2004 - on the pilot districts of Tema, Atwima and Builsa.

These current sets of the District HDRs cover another three (3) districts of Ahanta West, Offinso, and West Gonja in Western, Ashanti and Northern Regions respectively on the theme "Vulnerability and the Attainment of the MDGs at the Local Level". This year's theme is appropriate as it lends credence to the various shocks and risks communities and individuals are exposed to, and its subsequent contribution to the derailment of their efforts to live a meaningful and productive life. It is therefore hope that the reports would lend support to the district medium-term development plan, to further inform the on-going national development plan preparation, and to forge a closer link between these two documents and the GPRS II.

It is heart soothing to know that progress has been made in achieving most of the MDG indicators in health and education in the three districts. It is hope that efforts would be made to sustain the improvement made so far. Improvement in health and education infrastructure, fighting malaria and HIV/AIDS and reducing any form of vulnerability at all levels in the districts are worth undertaking. Increasing the income base of the districts by setting up more economic ventures would go a long way to mobilize revenue for the MDG activities in the districts. The MDGs can and should be achieved at the local levels for national attainment of the MDGs to be a reality. To that effect, all hands must be on deck for the betterment of humankind.

It is our fervent hope and effort that the report is extended to cover more districts, at least ten (10) at a time. With this, more development issues at the district levels would be brought to the fore for more appropriate actions to be taken.

I encourage all national development orientated entities (civil society, development partners, and the government at large) to continue to share their suggestions to the approach to this report as we continue in our efforts to fill the gaps in the design of programs and projects towards the improvement of lives at the district and community level.



DAOUDA TOURE
UNDP RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE

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The overall project was guided by Professor Ernest Aryeetey, Director of ISSER and coordinated by Ms. Abena D. Oduro of the Department of Economics, University of Ghana. We acknowledge Mr. William Baah-Boateng of the Department of Economics, University of Ghana, for his efforts and contribution as the consultant for the fieldwork and the writing of this report.

We appreciate the enormous contribution from the leadership of the Ahanta West District Assembly, particularly the District Chief Executive (DCE), Mr. Kwesi Binney, the District Coordinating Director (DCD) both present and immediate past, Directors and Heads of Departments of the district who worked in diverse ways to make the conduct of the household survey and the preparation of the report relatively easy. We are also grateful to the District Statistician, Mr. Louis Okine and Francis Nelson, who co-supervised the household survey. The

contribution of chiefs, unit committee members and opinion leaders of various localities visited during the focal group discussions enriched the analysis. Our appreciation also goes to officers of the Ghana Statistical Service who provided useful assistance in extracting information from various datasets that enabled the report to be organised to suit the district-level analysis.

The ICT and Geography staff of the Ghana Statistical Service provided noteworthy assistance in extracting information from various datasets which enabled the report to be organised in a manner that is particularly meaningful for district-level analysis. The contribution of Mr. Nii K. Bentsi-Enchill as technical editor in the production of the report is highly appreciated.

The report was finalised with active participation and in consultation with members of the Economic Policy Unit of the UNDP namely Prof. Amoah Baah-Nuakoh, Messrs. Paul Derigubaa, Kordzo Sedegah, Emmanuel Otoo and Nicholas Amponsah, Ms. Simran Singh, and Ms. Mary Ankrah, particularly the Focal Point for Human Development Reports and Coordinator of the District Human Development Reports, Mr. Kordzo Sedegah. The personal attention given to the entire process by the Resident Representative, Mr. Daouda Toure, is very much appreciated.

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