

# An Assessment of Endogenous Regional Cultural Policy and the Planning Process in the Central Region of Ghana

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## Abstract

Inertia of colonial development and lack of consistent investment in the post-colonial era in the Central Region of Ghana contributed heavily to the decline of its economy. Exogenous regional development efforts meant to stem this trend failed to deliver. Central Region, therefore, took up its own to initiate an endogenous development process in the late 1980s/early 1990s, based on its cultural, historic and natural heritage assets and establishment of a separate regional development organisation. But the cultural dimension of this initiative was to receive less attention. Using the procedural planning process and primary qualitative data, the study interrogated and assessed the region's cultural development policy and programmes, identified challenges related to participation, funding, constrained planning, ineffective internal institutional co-ordination, limited programme focus and made recommendations for ameliorating these.

**Keywords:** Endogenous regional development, endogenous regional policy, regional planning process, cultural development projects, Central Region Development Commission, cultural and historic and natural heritage

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## 1. Introduction

In the early 1980s, planning theory and policy were criticised for lack of attention to cultural issues, apart from those of power (Cooke, 1983). Indeed, cultural issues were subsumed under the social sector and several writers still do so in the contemporary era (Klimanov and Kasanova, 2022). By the end of the 1980s decade, the Brundtland Commission or World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED, 1987) came out with what has remained the most sustainable concept and definition of sustainable development. Although the WCED project emphasised economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, it recognised the need to respect the social and material cultures of various societies and any constraints these might exert on the environment. Thus the cultural aspect was given some recognition, like the first three “pillars” of sustainable development. Moving on from the WCED project, however, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), consisting of 8 main goals, were introduced at the United Nations General Assembly in 2001, still holding on to the 3-pillar structure of sustainable development, generally, but with specific emphasis on environmental sustainability, under goal 7 (Ofori, 2021). The MDGs held over the 2001-2015 periods and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were ushered in for the 2016-2030 periods. Although the SDGs consist of 17 Goals and many targets, the same 3-pillar structure of sustainable development is maintained, generally. However, the SDGs include cultural issues in the sustainable development of cities and other human settlements, under Goal 11.4: “Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage” (UN, 2015). Cultural heritage must include both tangible and non-tangible heritage, an element that would be addressed later.

During the 1980s-2000s periods, however, the regeneration and renewal of declined and degenerated built environment were a rapidly growing currency in urban policy and planning, globally, but much more in the global North (Shaw and Porter, 2009; Leary and McCarthy, 2013; De Leon et al., 2020; Ahokpe and Sedoroglu Sag, 2021) and growing emphasis made on regeneration of urban cultural heritage, including the historic built environments, most of which happen to be in the inner-city areas (United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), 2003; Jodidio, 2011). Although the focus of this study is not on urban cultural regeneration, per se, the regeneration of cultural heritage and renewal of historic town/city centres have regional implications, in terms of the spread of impacts on urban communities within regional spaces and emerging product-markets. With the increasing arguments on and growing importance of cultural heritage and associated historic built environments in urban regeneration interventions came the emphasis on the cultural factor as the “fourth pillar” of sustainable development (Jodidio, 2011; Van Der Tas, 2011; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), 2013, 2015; The World Bank Group, 2018; Elseragy et al., 2018; Amado and Rodrigues, 2019; Ahopke and Sedoroglu Sag, 2021). This makes sustainable development more integrated and holistic, including the conservation and preservation of cultural heritage and the historic town and city centre (UNEP, 2003; UNESCO, 2013, 2015). For the knowledge economy in both the global North and some developing countries, where relatively less attention had been given to urban cultural heritage, it has since been recognised as the motor/engine of urban regeneration and growth (Leary and McCarthy, 2013; Elseragy et al.,

2018; Amado and Rodrigues, 2019; De Leon et al., 2020; Ahopke and Serdoroglu Sag, 2021).

For instance, cultural assets and other resources have been strongly associated with tourism, generally and the sustainable form, in particular (Smith, 2007; Uysal and Ozden, 2011; The World Bank Group, 2018; Lak et al., 2019; Wise and Jimura, 2020). Equally, attracting tourists and visitors to regenerated spaces of urban cultural heritage and historic built environments, which also generates and promotes various social and economic developments (Jodidio, 2011; Van Der Tas, 2011; Rashti, 2011a, 2011b; Leslie and Siravo, 2011; Ghilardi, 2015; Elseragy et al., 2018; Amado and Rodrigues, 2019). Of course, cultural heritage covers both “brown” and “green” spaces, the latter referring to the natural/non-built environments within and/or around towns and cities. All these are aimed at emphasising the importance of cultural heritage and natural assets in the regeneration and development of towns, cities and their regions (Ofori, 2000; UNESCO, 2013, 2015) and the sustainability of these.

The aim of this study is to assess and reflect on the cultural policy and engagement of an endogenous regional development organisation in the Central Region of Ghana, the Central Region Development Commission (CEDECOM), which came into existence because the cultural, historic and natural assets of the region were targeted under major turn-around regional development programmes. Although the initiatives included a more spread-out strategies, focus of the study is mainly on the cultural policy and development mandate of CEDECOM, since its inception in 1989/1990. This is informed by the need to interrogate its cultural engagement because it has, apparently, achieved much in the economic, environmental, and to an extent the social sectors but far less in the cultural area, over the periods. Other objective is to suggest and make recommendations for improving the cultural policy interventions of CEDECOM and other future endogenous regional development interventions.

Undertaken in the 2016-2017 and 2020-2021 periods, the study used both secondary and primary methods. Secondary method consisted of literature review on urban and regional development and regeneration, focused on cultural heritage and natural assets and related policies. It also related to the general concepts and processes of endogenous and exogenous regional development as well as the procedural planning process as the principal knowledge realm, aimed at exploring and reflecting on the temporalities and interventionist history of the regional cultural transformation actions. Primary methods included face-to-face and in-depth interviews with leading sector officials of CEDECOM and the Ghana Heritage Conservation Trust (GHCT), which was also created as part of the endogenous regional development interventions. Other primary method was personal observation of some of the cultural activities involved, e.g., traditional festivals in Cape Coast. First, the exogenous and endogenous regional development contexts are explained. Second, the cultural, historic and natural heritage assets are defined and identified. Third, the procedural planning process is set out. Fourth, the evolution of regional development institutional and related cultural policy dimension is traced out. Fifth, the endogenous cultural development process is assessed in procedural terms. Finally, conclusions are drawn and some recommendations made for ameliorating identified challenges.

## 2. Exogenous and Endogenous Regional Development

Exogenous regional development means intervention from without and external to the region; endogenous regional development means intervention from within and internal to the region but realistically open to external inflows of beneficial and non-exploitative resource and genuine support (Ward, 2005; High and Nemes, 2007; Mansell, 2011; Blakely, 2011; Badal, 2016; Capello, 2016). Unlike exogenous regional development, endogenous regional development focuses on the environmental resource endowment, difference, pluralism, heterogeneous cultural values, diversity and social-cultural embeddedness of material activity. Exogenous regional development policy and strategy took off in the 1940s to the 1970/1980 periods in the global North, generally, but failed to produce effective regional development. It was based on the passive action of supporting private business and enterprise through various forms of state transfers and incentives and urban-metropolitan functional systems, in expectation that effective territorial regional development would happen but hardly occurred (Stimson et al., 2011; Antonescu, 2015). By the latter period, the endogenous regional development approach became prevalent, even in the global North (Organisation for Economic Development and Co-operation, 2010) and widely embraced in many developing countries.

Endogenous regional development includes a polycentric urban development strategy; the development of local/internal technologies and economic development, based on the region’s resource potential, social culture, including attention to human capacity development, education, skills, knowledge systems and training initiatives; it is collectivist, participatory and collaborative, driven by the local people and communities. Its relational context includes networks of personal relationships, kinship ties, association-led and co-operative unions, explicit local institutions, personal and cultural values, communal and business relationships. It is built upon enlightened local leadership and institutional structure. Leadership formation includes advocacy, political decision-making and democratised power-relations. Contemporary endogeneity increasingly involves Civil Service, Community-Based, Faith Based and Non-Governmental Organisations and Traditional Authorities. Endogenous

regional development, therefore, has greater potential for achieving sustainability, focused on social-economic, cultural, eco-environmental, spatial difference and inclusive expression and related intervention actors and activities.

### **3. Cultural and Historic and Natural Heritage**

Generally, heritage consists of the social and material values of any society (Hwang, 2014). Heritage is property, broadly, that passed on to an heir; it is an asset or something that is transmitted by or acquired from a predecessor/ancestor; an inheritance. Heritage is recognised into social and material cultures, immaterial and material or tangible and intangible forms. Social culture, immaterial and intangible heritage refer to “soft” asset forms like traditions, knowledge, religious practices, celebrations and festivities, music, drumming and dancing, drama and theatre. Others are sense of history, including memories, imagery of place, perceptions, concepts, narratives and related enactments, oral traditions, language, names, sporting activities, arts and media, scenery, aesthetics and beautification, cultural education, preservation and conservation. Material culture, tangible or material heritage refer to built structures, e.g., castles, forts, museums, bridges, monuments, industrial premises, architectural tradition, cultural products/artefacts, tools and implements, sculptural works, carvings, pottery and ceramics, films and documentaries, paintings and pictures, scripted works, commercial/industrial photography, fashion, cuisine and eateries, traditional medicine and herbal preparations. Still others are natural assets, including sacred mountains, lakes, trees, rocks and other geological formations. In whichever form, cultural policy is the stated or undeclared statutory or institutional expression of action and development activity focused on the particular cultural heritage, asset or resource, including the management and sustainability of these. Both tangible and intangible cultural heritage are, therefore, endogenous and internal to any society or community, usually excluded under the exogenous development approaches. It takes conscious planning to bring about cultural development policy and programme delivery.

### **4. Procedural Planning Process**

Procedural planning process was used to explore, assess and reflect on the cultural policy and intervention activities of CEDECOM for a number of reasons. First, this is due to the historical context of the cultural policy and development in the establishment and initiatives of CEDECOM. Second, relating to its challenges in driving an effective cultural development strategy. Third, to demonstrate how CEDECOM may contribute to reversing its decline in cultural development policy and strategy implementation processes. Focus and concerns of endogenous regional development also emphasise a necessary context of the procedural planning processes (Blakely, 1989; Leigh and Blakely, 2013). The procedural planning process aims at guiding development interventions (Glasson and Marshall, 2007; Ofori, 2021). Several models of it have been proposed since the 1960s, including a systems approach (McLoughlin, 1969; Chadwick, 1978) an administrative-based approach (Lichfield et al., 1975) and a cyclical approach (Conyers and Hill, 1984), most of these presented in Hall (2002). It is not the intent or considered necessary to review these, individually, but they all tend to be isomorphic in terms of the following: starting with preparation to undertake a planning activity, identification of problems, statement of objectives, related data and information management, strategy identification and generation, policy formulation, plan and project design, implementation, monitoring and review, and evaluation (Ofori, 2021: 51-62; Table 1). This was applied to an assessment of the endogenous regional cultural development process in context.

## **5. Evolvement of Regional Development Institutions and Cultural Policy**

### **5.1 Experiments in exogenous regional development and institutions**

Main focus of this study was on the experience of CEDECOM as an endogenous regional development organisation but this was set within the overall national context of regional development institutions. Historically, various exogenous regional development institutions have been established in Ghana. First, was the establishment of Regional Development Corporations (RDCs) in the early 1970s in all 10 administrative regions of Ghana at the time (Republic of Ghana, 1973), which were given powers to undertake any agricultural, industrial and commercial activities, generally and rural development, in particular, in the regions, with no explicit interest in cultural activities. However, the exogenous RDCs failed to deliver and were rolled out in 1997. Challenges of the RDCs included severe lack of funding, weak and constrained project planning processes, heavy political interference, among others. Next was the equally exogenous Savannah Accelerated Development Authority (SADA), created in 2010, which covered the contemporary 5 regions in northern Ghana - formerly 3 regions - as well as the savannah tips of the nearest two regions in southern Ghana (Figure 1). This was based on the greater relative disadvantage, deprivation and abject poverty of the area (Republic of Ghana, 2010). However, SADA's design and establishment legislation were virtually read into or combed through the previous legislation of the erstwhile RDCs. But its mandate included the development of business enterprises, infrastructural development, spatial and land use functions. SADA had the opportunity to tap into the social-

cultural contexts and indigenous resource base and develop a highly varied cultural heritage in the area but hardly exploited this advantage. By the 2016-2017 periods, SADA was characterised by mass corruption, poor planning and constrained programme management and had very little, if any, to report about and was rolled out in 2017.

A set of neo-exogenous regional development institutions, Development Authorities, was created in 2017. These are the Northern, Middle Belt and Coastal Development Authorities (Republic of Ghana, 2017a, 2017b, 2017c), each catering to a set of administrative regions. Apart from constituting multi-regional development agencies, the new Development Authorities were also lifted or drafted into the erstwhile SADA Act, itself a carbon copy of the former RDC legislation (Republic of Ghana, 1973). Like the RDCs and SADA, the new Development Authorities have the opportunity to effectively include cultural activities and social-culturally embedded engagements in their strategic programmes and the valorisation of these. An assessment of their performance is yet to be made (Ofori, 2021). Endogenous regional development emerged in the throes of the demise of the erstwhile RDCs (Ofori, 2021).

### **5.2 Endogenism and Central Region Development Commission**

Because of the ineffectiveness and failure of the erstwhile RDCs, the Central Regional Co-ordinating Council, regional governance body, uniquely decided to create its own regional development organisation, Central Region Development Commission (CEDECOM) in 1989/1990. The economy of the Central Region had consistently declined since 1887 when the British colonial administration moved its seat from Cape Coast to Accra (Figure 1). In 1970, the Central Region was created out of the former Western Province, later the Western Region but was not being able to fund its infrastructural and wider economic development due to limited government and private investment. And the region became a centre of high unemployment, with hardly any skills training, associated with out-migration, mostly of the youth. The regional administrative and political leadership of the region, Central Regional Co-ordinating Council (CRCC) and other political actors and economic elite, initiated a turn-around intervention by tasking CEDECOM with an initial survey of the regional development problems and trends, including the region's areas of comparative and competitive advantages.

CEDECOM's maiden survey concluded that these advantages were in tourism, including the historic heritage structures, mainly 2 colonial castles and a fort; a forest reserve and wildlife; agriculture, agroforestry, fishery and rural development; small and medium enterprises; and traditional festivals celebrated mainly in the principal urban centres of the region. The results provided the data and information input for the initial regional development intervention, titled Central Regional Integrated Development Programme (CERIDEP) I and II, covering the 1990/1991-1997 periods (Table 2). Funding was provided by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), several American Private Voluntary Organisations (PVOs), with some counterpart funding provided by the Government of Ghana. However, in the 1997/1998-2001 periods, all stakeholders and partners agreed to introduce the Natural Resource Conservation and Heritage Preservation (NRCHP) project I and II, specifically focused on the historic built heritage and wildlife assets (Table 2). This included the creation of a trust, Ghana Heritage Conservation Trust (GHCT) to manage the facilities and natural assets and to support heritage conservation and preservation initiatives, generally, in the post-programme era. While the CRCC directly established CEDECOM and contributed to the creation of GHCT, the latter became autonomous, the former remained the technical wing of the CRCC. However, the actual institutional responsibility for CEDECOM became a challenge. For a while, it was placed under the Office of the President, subsequently under the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MOTI), where it has remained since. Therefore, CEDECOM owes allegiance to the MOTI while it stills serves the CRCC. And its mandate under MOTI has, somewhat, altered its original mandate as an endogenous regional development organisation. Under MOTI, it is required to serve as an investment promotion agency and support training in the Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) sector, generally.

### **5.3 Endogenous Conservation and Preservation and Development of Cultural and Natural Heritage**

Various significant achievements were made under the CERIDEP 1 and 2, relating to agriculture, fisheries, agroforestry, wildlife, and historic heritage development and preservation drives and phenomenal impacts achieved on the hospitality sector and tourists visits to the heritage sites in Cape Coast, Elmina and Kakum National Park, generally (Ofori, 2021). Some of these were consolidated under the NRCHP 2. Between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, the various European colonial groups constructed 43 fortifications along the coast of Ghana, 15 of these lie along the coast of the Central Region (Anquandah, 1999). However, the focus of this study is on the cultural and historic heritage conservation, preservation and development as specific cultural policy foci (Table 2), under the CERIDEP and NRCHP initiatives. An objective of the NRCHP was to continue focus on the conservation of "the natural, historic and cultural assets of the Region" (USAID, 2001: 9). Another objective was to demonstrate the linkages between the resource conservation and heritage tourism, between these and economic development (Elseragy et al., 2019; Ofori, 2021). Works on the two castles and fort included the

stabilisation of walls, replacement of missing parts, some minimal demolition in the case of Cape Coast Castle, replastering and lime-washing, rehabilitation of floorscapes, replacement of slabs and brickwork in spaces, refinishing of floor open surfaces, reconstruction of roofs and installation of electrical and water systems. Similarly, 15 targeted historic family and stately properties in Cape Coast were regenerated through rehabilitation, refurbishment and restoration, as extended family residences. Several more families would have wished to have participated but could not accept the project conditions for participation, otherwise they could, independently, afford to regenerate their homes (Ofori, 2021). Works, on these, included interior and exterior wall maintenance, replacement of windows, doors, mending of stairs and roofs, other fixtures and repainting. Many more relatives were attracted into the family properties, causing overcrowding in cases but some of the homes also managed to rent out some of their rooms.

Adaptive reuse of all regenerated public properties - 2 castles, a fort and stately structures - included offices, shopping, museums, bookshops, library, and meeting room uses. Shops included traditional clothing and product trading, creating employment and local economic development. Further uses included restaurants and other eateries. One restaurant at Elmina Castle was closed at the time of the field study due to poor sales and a shop had been burnt down at Cape Coast Castle. However, both castles generated huge scales of educational, research, cultural, social, economic/shopping and religious forms of tourism (Ofori 2021). Developments at Kakum National Park included hospitality units, restaurant and catering, photography and tour-guiding businesses, apart from the generation of related employment.

Furthermore, CEDECOM made a concrete cultural intervention, being the establishment of the Abrafo Handicrafts Production and Training Centre (Table 3). One objective of the Centre was to serve as an incubator for unskilled potential crafts people in the Kakum National Park community. Second, to serve as a major tourist attraction. Third, to provide basic training in handicraft-related trade and micro-businesses. At the time of field study, CEDECOM was requesting a grant of between US\$500,000 and US\$600,000 with the World Bank to implement its planned developments.

In addition, CEDECOM also aimed to promote traditional festivals, entertainment and performance arts, generally, traditional cuisine, and to an extent, supporting sporting activities as well as the regeneration and conservation of heritage buildings and historic built environments. It must be noted that one of the initially targeted areas of intervention and regional complementarity and competitiveness in the 1989/1990 regional survey report was the promotion and development of festivals and related celebrations in the major urban areas of the Central Region. The major festivals in 8, out of 22 districts in the region, are listed in Table 3, according to scale and level of festivity. According to CEDECOM, its strategic intent was to develop and promote all the festivals in the Central Region to the status and level of the Fetu Afahye Festival celebrated in the Cape Coast traditional area (Interview with a Field Operations Officer, CEDECOM, December 2020). However, CEDECOM tended to attach greater importance to the production of handicrafts. Apparently, apart from its popularity, it is also more economically attractive in terms of job-creation, income and revenue, enterprise development and investment. And it appears that the Commission has been neglectful in respect of the cultural policy areas, despite its declared and demonstrated commitment. It is, therefore, important to investigate and assess CEDECOM's processes of planning in order to identify its real challenges of cultural policy and development programme.

## **6. Endogenous Regional Cultural Planning and Development Processes**

### **6.1 Preparation to undertake cultural planning activities**

CEDECOM came into existence through the endogenous initiatives of the CRCC to turn around the regional economy, by initially proposing the CERIDEP. This brought a significant amount of funding to cover the construction of a palatial office block with more space than CEDECOM could use. So, it rented out part of this to a Non-Governmental Organisation in the fisheries sector, the Central Regional Offices of the Minerals Commission, and a private restaurant. It was also well-resourced in terms of office equipment and dedicated staff at junior, middle-level and senior levels, some of who have worked with the Commission since its inception in 1989/1990. But it admitted that some of its staff needed further training in their respective areas of work. CEDECOM was also less well-resourced in terms of its transport facilities, e.g., for project site visits and making contacts with stakeholders. However, it identified the appropriate stakeholders in its interventions, generally, cultural and natural heritage development, in particular, including Non-Governmental, Civil Service and Community Based Organisations, Local Authorities, academic and research institutions, Traditional Authorities, donor agencies, etc.

CEDECOM, however, also admitted that it was not engaging effectively enough with the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) - Local Authorities - due to its own lapsed actions. Similarly, CEDECOM developed a rather constrained relationship with the GHCT that was created to manage the NRCHP project from the 1997-1998 periods and to be responsible for the conservation and preservation of historic built and natural heritage in the post-project era. Somehow, CEDECOM was unhappy to have lost the bid to play the

GHCT's role as determined by all stakeholders (Interview with former Executive Director, GHCT, 2016). CEDECOM also made some conflicting claims to what has been described as "Trust Lands", which about Kakum National Park and meant to be under its control (Interview with respondent). The Commission also agreed that GHCT was much more resourced, especially with the US\$2.0 million endowment fund invested on its behalf by its fund manager in the United States (Interview with CEDECOM's Head of Field Operations, March 2016). Indeed, one of the critical limitations of CEDECOM was under-funding, especially relating to its cultural policy and development delivery. Partly, therefore, CEDECOM had the preparation to make cultural and heritage development interventions but was limited by its challenged efficiency.

## 6.2 Identification of cultural and historic heritage development problems

What problems of initiating and promoting cultural development and heritage preservation did CEDECOM experience? An initial challenge was getting involved with the Traditional Authorities in the region (Interview with Field Operations Officer, CEDECOM, December 2020). Usually, the Traditional Authorities 'get involved and lead the process' (Respondent). However, the lack of effective co-operation on the part of the Traditional Leaders was due to their not being strongly convinced about the benefits of CEDECOM's initiatives. At the bottom of such lack of co-operation, however, was the challenge of very limited funding, required to actively get the Chiefs involved in cultural development interventions. As the respondent put it, 'budgetary control quite limiting, therefore, Commission's participation is low'. Indeed, all the collaborative interactions and actions centred on the problem of funding. Where any private actors would be involved, they were, of course, interested in how much benefit they would derive from any ventures. Apparently, these were not promising enough, despite CEDECOM's claims that it held 'several collaborative meetings with key stakeholders', including the 'Regional Co-ordinating Council Annual Meetings' about its development programmes (Respondent). But consultations, after all, were not effective enough. Indeed, 'normally, the CEDECOM's head and some key managers' were the actors who identified the problems and 'their views' were meant to 'represent those of local communities, when the formal actors participate' in 'the Regional House of Chiefs meetings, for example' (Interview with Field Operations Officer, CEDECOM, December 2020). Indeed, the indications were that consultations with the Chiefs, generally, and with the local community, in particular, were limited and not far-reaching enough. It also indicated the need to properly clarify project aims and objectives.

## 6.3 Cultural development aims and objectives

What were CEDECOM's real aims in relation to its cultural development policy? The respondent Field Operations Officer indicated that 'In summary, the policy is developing lesser-known festivals and bring them to international status because it will go a long way' to achieving development (Interview, December 2020) (Table 3). Festivals draw a lot of audience and crowd and create business promotion occasions, generally (Opoku, 1970; Clarke-Ekong, 1997). So, developing the lesser-known ones would expand the multiplier and externality effects of all the festivals. Another aim was empowering individuals and groups in the traditional areas to improve their livelihoods. But in what way? According to the respondent,

'Normally, it brings together people from other traditional areas; prior to that, they put together several initiatives, e.g., sanitation; micro-businesses also get more sales, improve their incomes for their households; also able to cater for healthcare. Indigents who are far from home also tend to turn to associations to undertake various projects in the community' (Interview, December 2020).

These responses indicated some of the beneficial impacts of festivals. However, CEDECOM's inability to consult and encourage the community effectively limited the realisation of such objectives. But the respondent insisted that determining such aims remained with 'the management of CEDECOM' (Interview). However, 'in any way or other, it is about tourism and CEDECOM dialogues with Ghana Tourism Authority, etc' (Respondent). So, there may be a kind of political problem really touching base with the community but business and economic opportunities are seen in relationships with sector organisations like the Ghana Tourism Authority.

What was the timeline for achieving CEDECOM's cultural development aims and objectives? In the short-term, it aimed to focus on the 'identification of issues', medium-term would be the 'planning phase' and in the long-term, it was looking to 'promoting the festivals to international status' (Interview with Field Operations Officer, CEDECOM, December 2020). Strategic intent was to attract massive international visitors who would happen to be already in Ghana and from neighbouring countries on the occasion of the traditional festival celebrations. But lack of effective consultations and funding challenges were constraining.

## 6.4 Cultural development data and information

CEDECOM's experience in the cultural development process indicated its lack of relevant data and information on the sector, mostly related to primary data resources on local community consultation and preferences. According to the Commission, it reviewed available literature during its project planning processes and accessed 'documented data on cultural issues' (Interview with Field Operations Officer, December 2020). Sometimes, it

collected primary data, especially relating to historical material, depending on the members of the community able to provide it. An instance was when Cape Coast and Elmina Castles were being regenerated in the 1991-1997 periods and when some of the more aged inhabitants of both communities were consulted. Other examples related to community elders, including traditional leaders well-versed and experienced in issues of ethnic norms, mores and lore relevant to cultural development interventions.

However, actual data and information collection involved 'CEDECOM project officers', 'local representatives and resource persons', and 'key partners' within the MMDAs (Respondent Field Operations Officer, CEDECOM, December 2020). Sometimes, some of the data were collected from Ghana Tourism Authority, 'such data' having 'been vetted' (Respondent). And the data were analysed by the use of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) (Respondent). While this package is elegant, however, the depth of data collection and coverage were still limited in reaching the more local community levels. Otherwise, any such consultation or interactions tended to be after-thought and rather too late in capturing these in CEDECOM's cultural development engagement. Generally, such performance tended to affect the identification and generation of alternative cultural development strategies.

### **6.5 Alternative cultural development strategies**

CEDECOM adopted a set of different strategies to promote its regional cultural development programmes. One 'strategy ... in use' was 'to have closer collaboration with the Traditional Councils' (Interview with Field Operations Officer, CEDECOM, December 2020), which exist in every district ethnic-cultural area in the administrative regions, through involvement in their meetings, durbars and other activities. Partly related to this, and as a substantive trajectory was for CEDECOM 'every year to provide some funding, though minimal', as their contribution to activities of the Traditional Councils (Respondent). Third, promoting inclusiveness 'of various activities' in the 'organisation of the festivals' (Respondent). Fourth, organising 'mini trade fairs for the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to display and promote their products' (Respondent). Agents of alternative strategy identification were mainly the 'management' and 'key project officers in the Commission' (Respondent). In terms of timelines for pursuing the strategies, CEDECOM saw closer participation in Traditional Council activities and festivals as a 'short-term' approach (Respondent). In the medium-term, 'funding support, mostly funds from Central Government' was deemed appropriate (Respondent). The promotion of inclusiveness and organisation of mini-trade fairs were seen as long-term engagements, but both dependent on the availability of adequate funding.

### **6.6 Cultural development policy formulation**

According to CEDECOM, it had 'not documented any policies' 'but the main policy is to support Central Region's culture', meaning its overall cultural development (Interview with Field Operations Officer, CEDECOM, December 2020). This was akin to its position in 2016 that it did not have any formal regional policies but it was discovered that its concern for rural development, social-economic disparities in regional development, and integrated regional development amounted to regional policies just as regional cultural development did (Ofori, 2021). However, CEDECOM was unable to maintain and sustain a comprehensive cultural development policy and agenda. And limiting the cultural policy formulation to 'basically, the management and District Project Officers', also contributed to weakening regional cultural development policy formulation process. District Project Officers are the formal contact persons in the MMDAs who act as liaison for CEDECOM's activities in localities. Worst, CEDECOM saw its general/operational policy as being 'implementable in the medium-term' (Respondent). Apparently, it aimed to support cultural development initiatives and promote the development of a self-sustaining institutional framework. On the other hand, there was need to maintain lifelong commitment and sustain the cultural development process and targeted programmes.

### **6.7 Cultural development plans and programmes**

What specific and explicit cultural development plans and programmes did CEDECOM have? Its Field Operations Officer indicated that its 'programmes differ year after year' in terms of 'participation in the cultural activities' (Interview, December 2020). Generally, programmes tended to focus on 'promoting SME, private sector', 'capacity building for key stakeholders' and 'training artisans, Small and Medium Enterprise operators' (Respondent). But these tended to have a general spread than specifically focused on the cultural sector. However, 'the programmes are designed yearly with management and project officers' of the Commission, including 'some' that are 'drawn from the Commission's medium-term' activities (Interview).

'Overall goal' of the programmes was enhancing 'the development of culture in the region', which reflected CEDECOM's regional policy aims (Interview with Field Operations Officer, December 2020). One of its specific objectives was 'to improve and develop the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises' (MSMEs). Once again, the MSME promotion strategy and programme tended to be general rather than more connected with

cultural development activities. Nevertheless, the cultural development programme was fairly spatially spread out, focused on Cape Coast, Elmina, Twifo-Hemang, including the Kakum area, Asikuma-Odoben-Braka District and Agona Swedru in the Agona West municipality (Figure 2 and Table 3). CEDECOM also made efforts to work with the Effutu traditional area, with Winneba as its capital but this area refused co-operation with the Commission. Apart from funding issues, the traditional area did not find the institutional support of CEDECOM realistic and beneficial enough. Indeed, it admitted that ‘efforts of the Commission’ were ‘limited’, and ‘with 22 administrative districts and budgetary constraints’, it was ‘unable to cover all’ (Respondent).

### **6.8 Implementation of cultural development plans and programmes**

CEDECOM implemented formal cultural plans and programmes during the 1990-2020 periods. However, focus of these consistently narrowed onto festivals and handicraft production, with greater general attention to the latter, because it was an income and revenue generation activity for the Commission. Participants in implementation included Ghana Tourism Authority, Regional Chamber of Commerce, Regional Offices of Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Traditional Councils. However, other structures like Community Based, Civil Service and Non-Governmental Organisations were excluded, yet these tended to be in closer and practical link with the local levels. Nonetheless, the named participant organisations made various financial contributions to funding CEDECOM’s programmes. However, such contributions tended to be rather minimal. Other implementation resources like ‘land was not readily available but the Commission had to secure it in collaboration with the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies’ (Interview with the Field Operations Officer, CEDECOM, December 2020). Implementation co-ordination reflected the rather narrow focus on festivals. For co-ordination, ‘normally, key officials are designated to the traditional areas where the events are taking place and report on it, with an evaluation report’ (Respondent). So, co-ordination tended to be an administrative exercise, which was not effectively inclusive as reflected by the implementation actors. On the other hand, communication among the limited stakeholders was ‘satisfactory, receiving feedback’ (Respondent), apparently, depending on those who were involved or included at the time. Such communication between CEDECOM and GHCT was hardly ever improved, almost developing into a state of conflict over claims to land and management roles. Similar limitations surfaced in the programme monitoring process.

### **6.9 Monitoring of cultural programme implementation**

Programme monitoring was equally limited to festivals, especially following the annual cycles of these. Some festivals are celebrated seasonally, others annually (Clark-Ekong, 1997; Ofori, 2021). How was monitoring undertaken? According to CEDECOM’s Field Operations Department, ‘during the course of implementation, we have some key indicators that we want to see. So, officers go round and report’; ‘generally, with involvement of the collaborators’ and ‘participation of key participants’ (Respondent). However, the Commission valued the ‘general public and the programme impact on them’ (Respondent). Ironically, however, the general public was not effectively involved in the endogenous cultural policy and planning processes as demonstrated previously. Moreover, actual programme monitoring was still limited to the project officers, with participation of ‘some key management officers’ and ‘key collaborators also participated’ (Respondent). However, although such monitoring ‘was good’ and ‘the feedbacks were very useful’, it still ‘excluded participation of the local community’ (Respondent).

### **6.10 Evaluation of cultural development plans and programmes**

Although CEDECOM aimed to assess its cultural programme implementation and related planning processes, ‘no evaluation, overall, has been done’ (Interview with Field Operations Officer, CEDECOM, December 2020). However, ‘overall outcome was satisfactory but not much achieved but we were able to draw people from the surrounding regions because of CEDECOM’s “add-ons” to the traditional festivals’ (Respondent). That is, it introduced some innovative aspects to the festivals, which included ‘promoting Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises to show case their products and services’, apart from organising mini-trade fairs (Respondent). This also encouraged participation of the private sector and business community. Such ‘“add-ons” added some colour’ (Respondent). Apart from private institutions, however, CEDECOM was also ‘networking with any ... public agencies’ (Respondent).

But limitations indicated, so far, impacted on the effectiveness of the endogenous cultural development process. Effectiveness was ‘not 100 per cent, need to improve on practices, especially because that is not the only thing the CEDECOM does’ (Interview with Field Operations Officer, CEDECOM, December 2020). Since cultural development policy and programmes were part of CEDECOM’s mandate, however, there was need to accord the sector all the importance as its other engagements. Inability to be reflected in the limited stakeholder inclusiveness, as the Commission admitted that they ‘should be able to bring together key stakeholders on one platform; at the moment, everybody targets somethings and attempts to achieve it’ (Respondent). This meant that CEDECOM’s departments were not co-ordinated in action and initiatives. Some of ‘the key stakeholders’



included ‘Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA), Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB) and Ghana Heritage Conservation Trust (GHCT)’ (Respondent), all being critical partners. But the local community still remained hardly included in the programme evaluation activities.

### **6.11 Other cultural development challenges**

Cultural policy and development remained the challenge of CEDECOM, not only because of its operational difficulties but influencing institutional context, being placed under the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MOTI). Thus the respondent indicated that:

‘Challenges on the ground for now are the support for culture; institutional. The Ministry of Trade and Industry operates in trade and industrial areas. There tends to be a conflict between the present status of CEDECOM and its cultural development action.’

So, we get new knowledge of CEDECOM’s current institutional context, under MOTI, constraining its cultural policy and agenda because these are not really part of the priority of its parent ministry. This institutional constraint is even more complicated as CEDECOM has no legal backing and is fighting for the status to provide a Legislative Instrument (L. I.) to back its establishment. However, within the ambit of MOTI, it is likely that such legislative backing may not be explicit about the original cultural development mandate of CEDECOM. Under MOTI, however, CEDECOM’s role is more of training and skills development in the SME sector but this is now explicitly consolidated under the Ghana Enterprise Agency (Act 1048) (Republic of Ghana, 2020). Anyway, due to its institutional context, CEDECOM was unable to fully deliver on its cultural mandate at the moment.

CEDECOM intends to manage this challenge in various ways. One is ‘getting the support of the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture’ (Interview with Field Operations Officer, CEDECOM, December 2020). Obviously, this Ministry has responsibility for cultural development and CEDECOM considered this vital to delivering its mandate. In order to configure this relationship into its current institutional context, a specific initiative was that ‘in the short-term, we could mitigate the challenge by initiating cultural development activities that have a trade framework’ (Respondent). A commercialisation of cultural activities would be more attractive to the interests and engagement of the MOTI. Third, ‘in the long-term, we need to create a pool that will help us get some funds, e.g., attracting indigents from far and near, i.e. fund-raising from among the region’s citizenry to support endogenous cultural development’ (Respondent). Fourth, ‘other development partners are also willing to support cultural development, e.g., MTN, Friends of the Nation Non-Governmental Organisation’ (Respondent). Like the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture these have explicit interest in cultural development. However, within the framework of its operations under MOTI, CEDECOM could expand its trading and marketing activities in the handcrafts sector that have a promising ‘trade framework’ and so enhance the economic valorisation of the artistic and crafts production business, equally creating jobs and generating more income and revenue.

## **7. Conclusions**

Initially, there was lack of the “fourth pillar” or cultural dimension of sustainable development at the global, national and sub-national levels, especially in the era before 1987, mostly in developing countries, particularly in Africa. And professional planning had been criticised for not seriously addressing cultural issues. However, some change came with the WCED project but no significant addition under the MDGs, until the SDGs provided appreciable ‘cultural bone and flesh’ to sustainable development. There was also the rise of urban regeneration and historic built environment development policies, especially in the 1980s to early 1990s, globally. In the late 1980s to early 1990s, the Central Region of Ghana, disappointed with national exogenous efforts to bring about effective regional development in its declined and deprived economy, initiated its own and endogenous regional development initiatives in terms of the CERIDEP and NRCHP project, including the establishment of CEDECOM, later GHCT.

In its maiden regional survey, CEDECOM strongly identified cultural development as one of the major comparative and competitive advantages, related to traditional festivals, handicrafts production and related trading and marketing activities, regeneration of colonial built heritage, connection between these and tourism and the overall economic valorisation. However, the endogenous regional development programme tended to focus more on economic, social and physical aspects than the cultural dimension of development, especially, traditional festivals. One of the challenges to this situation was the institutional status of CEDECOM as the main driver of regional change. Unlike GHCT, it has lacked a legislative backing, experienced a frustrated institutional placement under the Office of the President for a while, and currently under the MOTI. Such difficulties have also impacted the original cultural development focus of CEDECOM. It would also appear that its endogenous status has been or is being exogenised, and this would mean reduced or lack of attention to its original policy focus, especially on cultural development. Although it is meant to be the technical wing of the CRCC, it would tend to respond more to its responsibility of SME development and investment promotion under the MOTI, diminishing its original focus. But the new Ghana Enterprise Agency is also explicitly mandated to

develop and promote the SME sector, making CEDECOM's current roles somewhat duplicitous or unnecessarily complementary. Although it had aimed to take on the development and promotion of festivals and other cultural activities, it only managed to create a small handicrafts centre at Abrafo in the Kakum National Park fringes. So, this justifies the need to provide formal legislative backing for CEDECOM's establishment, which would also specify its functions and clear areas of operation and responsibility.

An all-time challenge to CEDECOM's cultural development initiatives was the lack of funding. It depended almost entirely on government's budgetary allocation. But this was also related to its lack of formal legislative backing which would entitle it to significant budgetary resources. CEDECOM could also, however, encourage and generate more private sector funding, e.g., through such activities as the Mini Trade fairs, not only during festivals but on a substantive basis. It could also effectively collaborate with local businesses to enter into more viable joint ventures in the wider cultural development sector to generate funding. For donor funding, the Commission has been fortunate to attract significant amounts of it. But it would be worthwhile also to expand its Internally Generated Funds (IGF) activities in such areas as the Abrafo Handicrafts Production Centre. Although CEDECOM provided some training in aquaculture activities, itself had no farms of its own; it is worth venturing into this on a more practical and commercial basis. Fishing, generally, provides a sustainable link with cultural life of the people, especially along the coastal communities.

Third, weak participation in CEDECOM's cultural development activities clearly stood out, especially relating to the local community, across virtually all stages of the procedural planning process as well as general public involvement in its activities. This also affected effective consultation, co-operation and communication with the local community; witness that Winneba and the Effutu area refused co-operation with the Commission in its cultural development activities because the former did not see any benefits and positive development opportunities for them. But Winneba is a major hub of traditional festivals and cultural activities, generally, which was originally targeted under CERIDEP. Such limited inclusiveness and participation also affected project identification, strategy generation, policy formulation and programme design. Certainly, the local community also tended to be excluded from programme monitoring, implementation and evaluation practices. Since CEDECOM recognised the importance of getting involved with the Traditional Councils and Regional House of Chiefs, and with the potential interest of the Civil Service, Community Based and Non-Governmental Organisations, it was absolutely essential for it to engage effectively with these structures and in order to actually reach to the local community levels.

Fourth, CEDECOM, itself, imbibed ineffective co-ordination and collaboration of its own internal departments, e.g., between its Field Operation Department and Investment Promotion and Enterprise Development Department. Virtually, its departments tended to operate independently than collaboratively. Indeed, effective collaboration and co-ordination were as lacking within CEDECOM as these were between it and its wider stakeholders. Therefore, this challenge required the need for effective co-ordinated and integrated programming and joined action in its cultural development activities, apart from wider engagements. By the second decade of the 2000s, CEDECOM had re-organised its internal structure but, apparently, this was not reflected in its strategic programmes.

Identified challenges, so far, also raise the issue of a more clearly defined programme focus. First, this must go beyond the narrow focus on the development and promotion of traditional festivals, onto other cultural activities. But there is potential for deepening the handicrafts production sector by, e.g., establishing other production centres across the region, especially in the master craftsmen communities or neighbourhoods. For instance, Elmina established a crafts production centre under its 2015 Strategy - urban regeneration initiative - but could not sustain it and it declined and closed down. A sustained expansion of the sector would establish a viable handicrafts export market for the region. CEDECOM could also collaborate with existing private production centres on co-operative basis, creating a network of these. And the Commission could capitalise on its position under the MOTI to promote and expand domestic and export trade in the handicrafts sector.

CEDECOM could also develop and promote other cultural activities in the Central Region, which hold greater potential to advertise and popularise its existence and development activities. Music and the performing arts constitute a promising sector. For instance, CEDECOM could develop and promote the large annual brass band music competition that takes place at London Bridge in Cape Coast; indeed, the Central Region abounds in brass bands. It could also collaborate with the regional branch of the musicians association of Ghana in the production, recording and marketing of brass band and other music. Similarly, it could get involved with community or private drama and performing arts troupes to promote their activities. For instance, GHCT used to support and promote performances of the Kukyekyuku Bamboo Orchestra of Mesomakor in the Kakum National Park community; other such groups exist in the region. So also, CEDECOM could promote choral music festivals. Similar to brass bands, Central Region is equally popularly known for its choral music tradition. Choral music festivals could also generate an arts market and export economy. Furthermore, CEDECOM could initiate a tradition of sports festivals, depending on particular determined activities, including basketball, netball, volleyball and the beach versions of these, all on economically valorised basis.

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Table 1. The procedural endogenous regional cultural planning process

<i>Stage of Planning Process</i>	<i>Specific Planning Activities</i>
Preparation to undertake planning activity	Material preparation, including physical resources, funding and skills; Identification of stakeholders and participating groups; Identifying and arranging meeting places and venues; Securing relevant soft/hard literature and audio-visual systems; Informing all participants about the scheduled activities, etc.
Identification of problems	Identification of concrete cultural development problems; Expression of stakeholder and participant perspectives, values, interests and views;
Statement of objectives	Stating specific objectives of the cultural development process; Stakeholder contributions to achievement of objectives; Indication of broad timelines for achieving stated objectives.
Collection of data and information on identified problems	Actual types of data and information required; Participants/actors in data and information collection; Quality of data and information collected; Data and information analysis.
Identification of specific feasible strategies	Identification and generation of alternative strategies or courses of action; Participant/actor contributions to strategy identification; Feasibility of alternative strategies generated; Choice of most feasible strategies.
Policy formulation	Formulation of cultural development policies; Participant/actor contribution to policy formulation; Timelines and implementability of policies.
Plan, programme and project design	Designing alternative plans, programmes and projects; Appraisal of alternative plans, programmes and projects; Choice of most feasible and viable plan, programme, projects; Participant/actor involvement in plan, programme, project design.
Plan, programme and project implementation	Securing implementation inputs, including funding, labour, land, skills, relevant knowledge, etc.; Allocating cultural activities to sites; Participant/actor roles; Executing constructional/building works; Resource and activity control; Activity and relational co-ordination; Communicative processes.
Monitoring and review	Monitoring and review timelines; Quality of monitoring; Participant/actor roles.
Evaluation	Plan/programme/project outcomes; Participant/actor roles in evaluation; Plan/programme/project effectiveness; Plan/programme/project efficiency; Plan/programme/project challenges.

Source: Author's tabulation.

Table 2. Cultural development initiatives under the CERIDEP and NRCHP

<i>Endogenous Regional Development Programme</i>	<i>Specific Cultural and Historic Heritage Projects</i>
Central Region Integrated Regional Development Programme (CERIDEP) 1 (1990-1993) & 2 (1994-1997)	Initial regeneration and rehabilitation, conservation and preservation of Cape Coast Castle; Initial regeneration, rehabilitation, conservation and preservation of St Georges Castle and Fort St Jago, both in Elmina; Creation of within-fortification museums in both castles; Designation of all three fortification as World Heritage Sites by the World Heritage Organisation, under UNESCO; Creation of Kakum National Park (wildlife) from the former Kakum Forest Reserve as a conservation base for both flora and fauna.
Natural Resource Conservation and Heritage Preservation 1 (1991-1997) & 2 (1998-2001)	Initiation of Urban Conservation Programme to develop and conserve the historic districts of Cape Coast and Elmina; Survey and listing of historic properties, sites and structures targeted for regeneration, including residential and commercial properties, shrines, other monuments, chapels, cathedrals and open spaces, including gardens and parks; Creation of Urban Conservation Area within the historic district of Cape Coast; Public sensitisation meetings and workshops and awareness promotion on historic preservation; Scripting of various drama, theatre and dance activities, some performed by private cultural troupes; Follow-up restoration and rehabilitation works on Cape Coast and Elmina Castles and Fort St Jago; Regeneration of 15 historic family residential properties in Cape Coast, under the Home Owner Small Grants Programme (cluster 1); Regeneration of 2 individual and stately buildings in Cape Coast (cluster 2); Further development of public and private structures and spaces in Kakum National Park.

Source: Author's tabulation.

Table 3. Abrafo Handicrafts Production and Training Centre

<i>Main Focus</i>	<i>Specific Aspects</i>
Facilities	Housing for the craftsmen; Show-room for handicraft products; Handicrafts training sections/workshop; Separate pavilions for each area of handicraft production.
Trainers and trainees (apprentices)	Employment of 10 full-time master craftsmen; Between 30 and 40 handicrafts trainees at any time.
Handicrafts production and training areas	Kente weaving; basketry; batik, tie-and-dye manufacturing; wood carving and sculpture; bamboo and rattan products; ceramic and pottery products.
Planned developments	Construction of a 40-seater lecture room; a 40-seater restaurant; a 25-person residential facility; showrooms; a small theatre; washrooms; wall-gate; parking space; and landscaping.

Source: Author's tabulation.

Table 4. Major traditional festivals celebrated in the Central Region

<i>District</i>	<i>District Capital</i>	<i>Festival</i>
Cape Coast Metropolitan	Cape Coast	Fetu Afahye
Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abrem	Elmina	Bakatue; Edina Bronya.
Effutu	Winneba	Aboakyer; Akumase; Fancy Dress.
Abura-Asebu Kwamankese	Abura Dunkwa	Odumkwaa; Amoakyer/Aboakyer Kae Kro; Okyir; Apagyam.
Agona West	Swedru	Akwanbo
Agona East	Nsaba	Akwanbo; Addae.
Ekumfi	Essakyir	Aboakyer
Asikuma Odoben Brakwa	Asikuma	Odwira

Source: Author's tabulation (after Ofori, 2021).

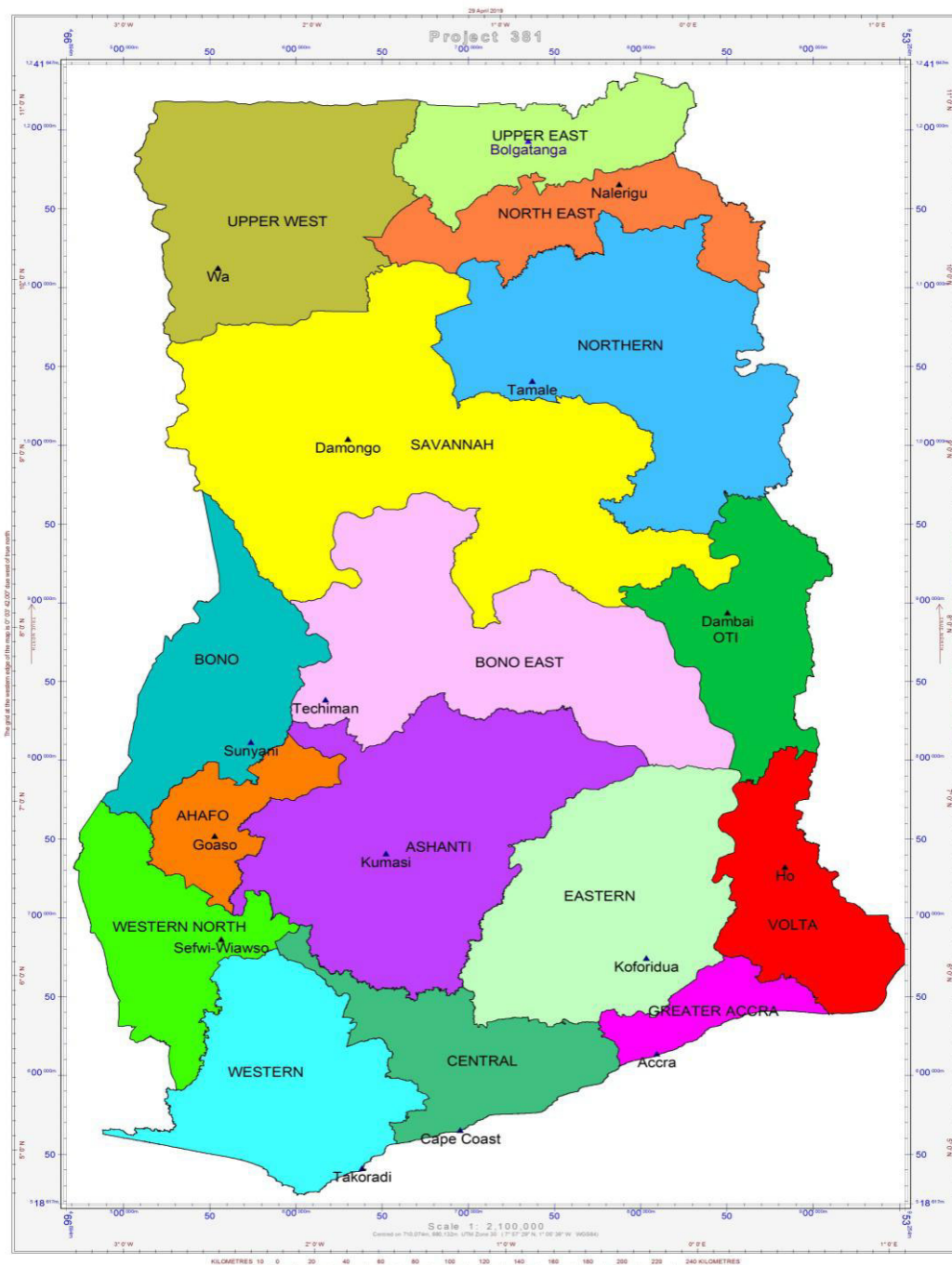


Figure 1. Political-administrative map of Ghana  
 Source: Central Regional Office of the Land Use and Spatial Planning Authority (LUSPA), 2019.

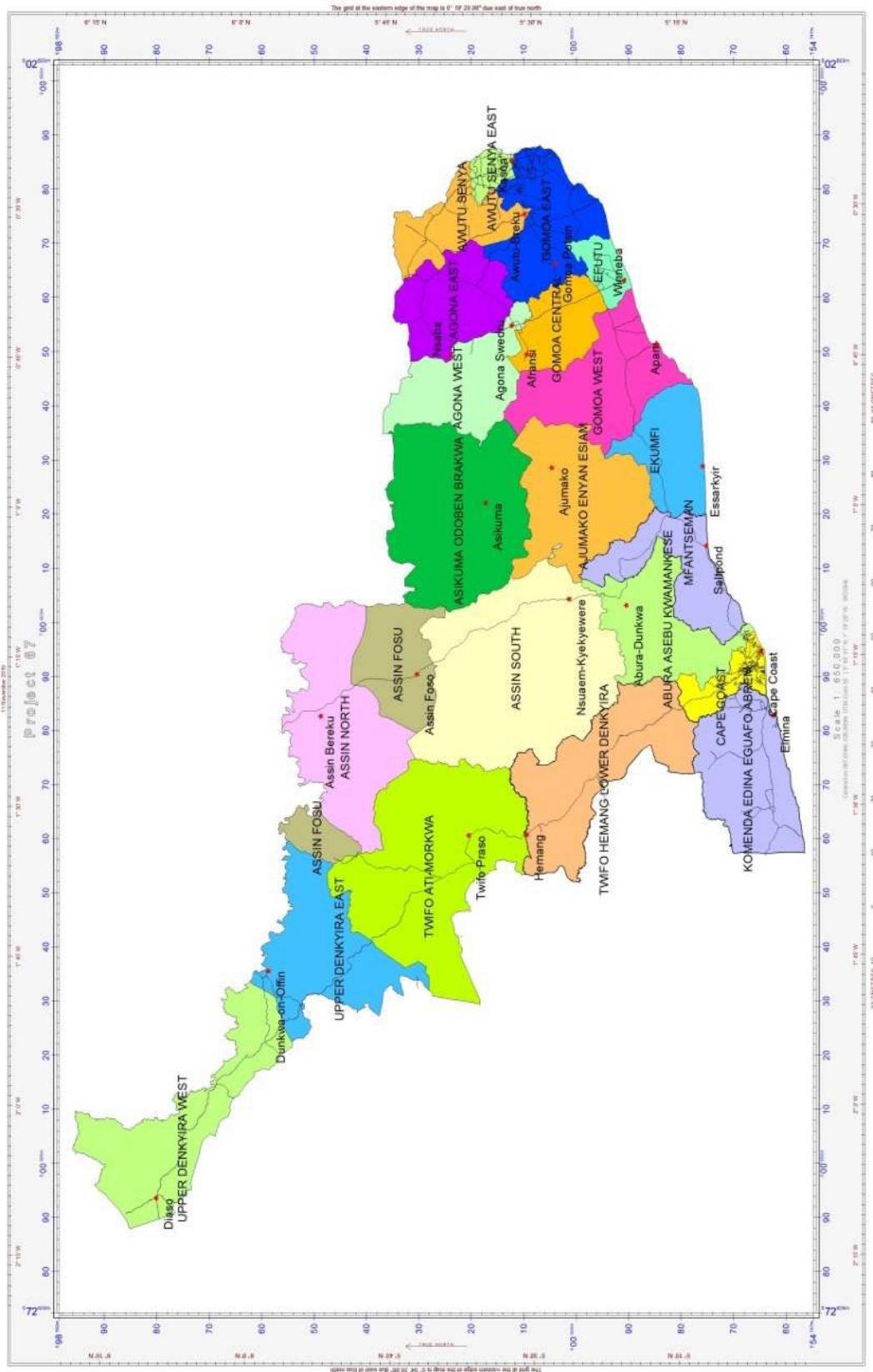


Figure 2. Map of the Central Region showing its 22 Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assembly Areas.  
 Source: Central Regional Office, Land Use and Spatial Planning Authority, Cape Coast, 2019.