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INDIGENOUS APPROACHES TO REGIONAL ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT IN CENTRAL GHANA

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Abstract: Exogenous regional development approaches had failed to deliver turn-around in the declined space-economies of most administrative regions in Ghana. The relatively poor Central Region decided to embark on an endogenous regional development intervention, including the establishment of its own development company, Central Region Development Commission (CEDECOM) to manage the process and successfully implemented three innovative strategic programmes during the 1990/1991 to 2000/2001 periods. Following these, however, CEDECOM ended its original mandate and considered it necessary to reposition and refocus on business and enterprise development and investment promotion. The study aimed to explore, analyse and reflect on how CEDECOM managed this context, based on its repositioning, internal organisational structure, enterprise development and business focus, corporate environment, organisational and competitive performance. Literature review was used to derive concepts of exogenous and endogenous regional development processes, the latter theoretically modelled, based on 9 main factors, focused on business and enterprise development and investment promotion, all involving secondary qualitative material. An in-depth field interview was undertaken with key officers of CEDECOM and the regional governance body about the Commission's general practices and repositioned and reemphasised approaches, producing primary and qualitative data. A StrengthWeakness-Opportunity-Threat model was used to assess the competitive and corporate environment of CEDECOM. CEDECOM's performance based on the identified factors was largely limited and questioned the effectiveness of its repositioned and reemphasised approaches. It became less competitive due to these and its weak financial position, compared with its competitors, hardly succeeding in effectively promoting the regional competitiveness. Concluding, CEDECOM needed to secure explicit legislative backing, streamlined governance, adequate funding, effective co-operative and collaborative engagement, independent decision-making, planning and implementation, expanded demonstration projects to scaled-up commercial investment activities, focusing MSME support on the indigenous resource base, making its competitive scope more practical, and promoting sustainability, relatedly informing future regional policy.

Keywords: Exogenous regional development; endogenous regional development; regional development institutions; business and enterprise development; investment promotion; entrepreneurship; Central Region Development Commission; stakeholder collaboration.

Introduction

Endogenous regional development emanates from the failures of exogenous interventions to deliver effective socio-cultural, economic and physical-environmental development (Stimson et al., 2011; Çiçek, 2013; Antonescu, 2015; Vermiere et al., 2018). Exogenous regional development sources from without a region, endogenous regional development from within it. Endogeneity tends to become imperative in the absence of exogenous processes or upon the ineffectiveness of these to deliver (Ward et al., 2005; Çiçek, 2013; Antonescu, 2015). This is especially so in the developing countries, African in particular, where exogenous regional institutions processes tend to be the predominant mode, established by the state. Limitations of exogenism include unresponsiveness to the development of local business, entrepreneurship, enterprise and investment promotion, although it aims to reproduce these from its metropolitan bases (VasqueszBarquero, 2007; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2010; Stimson et al., 2011; Capello, 2016). However, central governments tend to deliver these through existing or even decentralised formal regional administrative and governance structures or, by fairly common practice, create specialised exogenous and/or endogenous regional institutions to tackle the problem of intra-regional development. Such structures are meant to attract investment, promote enterprise and business development, generate employment and improve the income and poverty situation of local communities in both the functional and territorial regions.

Exogenous regional development strategies were initially introduced in the global North from about 1940s, aimed at generating development in the rural regions through state resource transfers, related incentives, and private enterprise mechanisms. However, by 1980s, exogenous regional policy had failed to bring about the targeted change in the territorial regions (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2010; Sharipov, 2016). Endogenous regional development policy and strategy emerged as a more sustaining mode since (Ward et al., 2005; Hien, 2007; Millar et al., 2008; Badal, 2016), with a boost by the increasing economic globalisation, including its impacts on urbanisation, generally, and urban-metropolitan regions, in particular (Hien, 2007; Lee et al., 2009; Stimson et al., 2011). Critical among the limitations of exogeneity were the lack of attention to institutional, local natural and cultural resource heterogeneity, political leadership, technological development and other technical innovations (Tödtling, 1977; Vasquesz-Barquero, 2007; Vasquez-Barquero and Alfonso-Gil, 2015). Therefore, the attention of endogenous regional development to business and enterprise development and investment promotion is quite critical to sustaining socio-economic development within region, especially when it engages as a non-state intervention or has support of the state.

Aims and Objectives

The study aimed to make a specific and focused assessment of the business and enterprise development and investment promotion initiatives of the only endogenous regional development institution, Central Region Development Commission (CEDECOM), in Ghana, based on its repositioning from traditional regional development functions that it performed during a previous economic turn-around intervention. The study also aimed to use CEDECOM as an exemplar of endogenous regional development and a replicable model of practice. One objective as to analyse and assess CEDECOM's main initiatives in business and enterprise development and investment promotion. Second, to analyse and assess its enterprise development and business focus. Third, to analyse and assess its general corporate environment. Fourth, to analyse and assess its organisational and competitive performance. Fifth, to identify CEDECOM's challenges in these processes and suggest ways of ameliorating these. Rest of the paper covers literature review and conceptual framework; methodology, including methods and materials; regional development institutions and enterprise development and investment promotion in Ghana; actual analysis, results and discussion. Finally, conclusions are drawn, based on the results and discussions, and implications of these for effective endogenous regional policy and relevant recommendations for ameliorating identified challenges are indicated.

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework Conceptual focus and processes of endogenous regional development

Endogenous regional development is "local specific", its outcomes driven from "local resources" (Ward et al., 2005: 5; Blakely, 2011: 73). So, endogenous strategies, programmes and processes have the greatest potential of success, with the explicit local commitment to these (Ofori, 2002, 2021; Capello, 2016). Initiated by central government or other actors, the local community becomes the driver of endogenous development, based on the investment made in developing human capital, innovation and knowledge in the region (Tödtling, 1977; Çiçek, 2013; Svetikas, 2014; Antonescu, 2015: 3; Capello, 2016). And, investment in human capital creates 'spillover and capital accumulation' effects (Vasquez-Barquero, 2002, 2007; Vasquez-Barquero and Alfonso-Gil, 2015; Andronescu, 2015: 2; Capello, 2016). Local socio-cultural contexts are equally crucial to securing effective endogenous change because 'Endogenous development … is based on local peoples' own criteria and valuation of development and considers the material, social and spiritual well-being of peoples', founded 'mainly on local strategies, values, institutions and resources' (Millar et al., 2008: 5; Millar, 2014; Vasquez-Barquero and Alfonso-Gil, 2015). However, one challenge to endogeny is bias from exogenous development processes (Millar et al., 2008; Ewen, 2003; Badal, 2016). So, endogenous development aims 'to empower local communities to take control of their own development process and to decide on 'those external resources that fit the local conditions' (Tödtling, 1977; Millar et al., 2008: 9; Millar, 2014). Despite many externally funded development programmes, poverty prevails in the local and regional communities of the global South, typically African countries, mainly because exogenous interventions did not address the important issues of "sustainability and non-material aspects of development and well-being" (Ewen, 2003; Millar et al., 2008: 13; Badal, 2016). Another trend was the practice of 'exogenous approaches, based on liberalisation and neo-liberalist paradigms', which 'failed to create fair distributive impacts' on 'society' (Ewen, 2003; Millar et al., 2008: 13; Badal, 2016). While endogenous regional development more uniquely aims to develop the local business environment, entrepreneurship and investment promotion, the processes involved are practically important. However, both aspects of the endogenous regional development engagement are less apparent in the available literature in Ghana (Ofori, 2021).

An attempt is made to model an endogenous regional development process, focused on business and enterprise development and investment promotion, derived from the literature (Vasquez-Barquero, 2007; Vasquez-Barquero and Alfonso-Gil, 2015) and related to trends in the global South, particularly African contexts. Endogenous regional development is a territorial rather than a functional process, consciously targeted to improve the local population's standard of living, involving structural change and multiplier effects generated (Knutsen, 2003; Ward et al., 2005; Hien, 2007; Vasquez-Barquero, 2007; Vermiere et al., 2008; Stimson et al., 2011; Edomah, 2019). Basically, it takes off with the conscious development of economic, political, administrative and management institutions in a cultural environment, including public, private, non-governmental, civil service and community-based structures and improvement in the organisational capability of these. Second, it requires good and effective leadership and realistic elites to run these systems, including mediating conflicts within and between them and the local communities (Tödtling, 1977), promoting power relations and advocacy. Third, institutions engage in identifying local and environmental resources as a basis for economic development activities, including practical analysis of regional growth processes and trends, business, commercial and enterprise development (Antonescu, 2015). Fourth, therefore, it becomes absolutely necessary to promote entrepreneurial, labour training and skills development, including technical and entrepreneurial skills, human resource and capacity development. Fifth, these must depend on effective participation of public, private and community interests and actors in decision and policy making, programme design and implementation processes. Sixth, equally important is the development of organisational capacity and internal structuring of institutions, relating to their competitive scope and comparative strengths within and between them and competitor organisations. These processes need be principally focused on the development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), investment and capital accumulation, emphasis on the development of innovations and related diffusion, techniques and technology, products and knowledge and economic activity diversification, focused on enterprise development, growth and productivity improvements (Stimson et al., 2011; Sharipov, 2016).

Seventh, the development of social capital, based on the norms of reciprocity, trust, mutuality and socio-economic relations (Knutsen, 2003; Cooke et al., 2005; Vasquez-Barquero, 2007; Capello, 2016), which promotes business and enterprise competitiveness and competitive regions, still focused on capital accumulation, meeting external threats and capturing positive opportunities. Eighth, investment must also be made in the development of physical, economic and other infrastructures (Antonescu, 2015). Ninth, it must be equally essential to promote the development and growth of territorial small, medium-sized and large towns, linked to all other strategic stages, creating localisation and urbanisation economies with positive externality effects. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement, which became effective in 2019 aims to achieve such endogenous development through promoting value-added production across social sectors in Africa (African Union Commission, 2018; AfCFTA, 2023).

However, Vasquez-Barquero (2007) is emphatic that capital accumulation condition processes and trends depend critically upon entrepreneurial development, growth and *networking* of firms' innovations, knowledge diffusion and territorial urbanisation. Endogenous development processes also distinguish between the rather short-term economic growth and long-term economic development, the latter achieving qualitative transformation of both the local/regional economy and society (Vasquez-Barquero, 2007). But all the noted factors and forces, together, produce synergies, sustained productivity growth, economic and social progress, *reducing poverty* and promoting *sustainable development*. Thus Vasquez-Barquero and Alfonso-Gil (2015: 101) argued that the main mechanisms of the endogenous development process are: 'Networks and Value Chains'; 'Institutions and Social Capital and Governance'; 'Polycentric Development and
Infrastructure'; 'Innovation and Human Resources'; 'Creativity and Entrepreneurship'; 'Environment and Natural Resources'.

Indeed, local entrepreneurship and MSME development are increasingly receiving international support, apart from local, regional and national governments' endeavour in the global South, the African continent in particular (International Labour Organisation, 2007; United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 2017; Republic of Ghana, 2020). And it has been cogently argued that with the massive levels of poverty and looming informality in the developing countries, especially Africa, the problem could be alleviated through focused development of entrepreneurship strategies (Againglo and Gao, 2016; Kuada, 2021), linked to MSME development. An effective way of achieving these is through the establishment of endogenous regional development institutions to lead and manage the process (Çiçek, 2013; Ofori, 2021).

Methodology

Undertaken, in a previous survey in November 2017 with follow-ups in November-December 2020 and May 2021, the study involved a limited set of methods and materials much because of limited data availability. Literature review covered critical concepts of endogenous regional development, business and enterprise development processes and evolvement of regional development institutions, mostly qualitative material. In-depth field interviews held with key leaders of Central Region Development Commission (CEDECOM) and other stakeholders focused on its impacts, effectiveness and change, following its re-positioning strategy also generated significant qualitative data. A set of charts relating to CEDECOM's engagement and organisational structure were used as descriptive and analytical tools to analyse its internal structural organisation and preparation to re-position itself. A Strength-Weakness-OpportunityThreat (SWOT) model, derived from the field interview, was also used to analyse CEDECOM's strategic environment. A SWOT technique is a management tool used to probe and analyse the strategic and competitive environment of a business organization – environmental analysis – and to determine its strategies of engagement (Maidment 1998; Schermerhorn, 1999). The relevant concepts and processes of endogenous development were applied to the analysis and discussion relate to the repositioning and institutional establishment, enterprise development and business focus, general corporate environment, organizational and competitive performance of the Commission in its business and entrepreneurship development and investment promotion initiatives.

Regional Development Institutions: Enterprise Development and Investment Promotion Exogenous regional development institutions

Ghana, bordered by Togo to the east, Cote d'Ivoire, west and Burkina Faso, north, inherited stark regional disparities and inequalities on becoming Independent in 1957 from British colonial rule, especially between the northern and southern part of the country and within these (Adarkwa, 2013; Ofori, 2002, 2021). One of the approaches meant to address these was the creation of exogenous regional development institutions. In 1973, Government established Regional Development Corporations in all the administrative regions to bring about effective regional development, focused on rural development strategies and any activities of business, industrial and agricultural nature (McQuade, 1961: 188; Republic of Ghana, 1973). However, the Corporations failed to deliver because of inadequate funding, poor project planning, limited professional planning knowledge and skills and constraining complex national-regional actor political interference, etc. and were withdrawn in 1997.

After 13 years, Government created another exogenous, and multi-regional development organisation, Savanna Accelerated Development Authority (SADA), to be responsible for multiple development functions in the Northern, Upper West, Upper East, Savannah and North East Regions (Figure 1), covering some 40 per cent of Ghana and including about 30 per cent of its population. SADA's responsibilities included the development of the private sector, including MSMEs and partnerships for poverty reduction projects (Republic of Ghana, 2010). However, SADA, became ineffective due to financial malpractices, administrative incompetence, constrained project planning, implementation and management and was de-established in 2017. In the same year, the equally exogenous Coastal, Middle-Belt and Northern Development Authorities (Republic of Ghana, 2017a, 2017b, 2017c) were created, each covering a set of political- administrative regions. However, these new-style structures aim to develop community infrastructure and services meant to stimulate local economic development, eradicate poverty and deprivation, with active participation of community, public and private actors. Second, to mobilise financial resources, private and public investments, venture capital and other financial assets. Third, to promote job-creation, business development and income generation. Fourth, to serve as Government's agents in public-private partnership ventures, private sector development and enterprise promotion. A comprehensive assessment of their performance is yet to be undertaken. However, due to the failures and ineffectiveness of the exogenous regional development institutions, the Central Region made a unique and innovative effort to create its own development organisation.

Endogenous regional development in the Central Region

In 1877, the British colonial government transferred the capital of then Gold Cost from Cape Coast to Accra. This denied the Central Region of a major potential development (Interview with Nana Kwame Edu VI, a leading local Chief, Oguaa Traditional Council, Cape Coast, January 2019). Subsequently, Central Region, which had been part of the Western Region, was delineated in 1970 but was to lose out on any developments it might have gained from being constituted in the Western Region (Interview with Head, CEDECOM's Field Operations Department, March 2018). And Government was not sustaining significant investment in concurrent existence with the exogenous Central Regional Development Corporation (CEREDEC); the regional economy was

Figure 1 Ghana: regional political-administrative areas, including major towns/cities.
Source: https://ontheworldmap.com, 2021

in steep decline, socio-economic and spatial infrastructure was deteriorating and there was much outmigration, especially of the youth from the region and deepened poverty by the 1980s. Faced with these challenges, the Regional Minister and other socio-political elite created CEDECOM and tasked it with undertaking a socio-economic survey of the region to identify its comparative and competitive advantage and challenges. CEDECOM identified these in the historic Cape Coast and Elmina Castles and a fort in the latter; wildlife at the now Kakum National Park; traditional festivals celebrated in major towns and cities; conditions for MSME developments in fishery, agricultural, industrial and rural development activities.

In early 1989, the Central Regional Minister and the leading politico-economic elite secured funding from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), five American Private and Voluntary Organisations and limited counterpart funding by the Government of Ghana, totally about US$7 million. This enabled CEDECOM and the Central Region to introduce three successive regional development programmes focused on the identified comparative and competitive advantages, covering the 1990/1991-2001 periods. In the 1997-1998 periods, however, when programme implementation was ending, Ghana Heritage Conservation Trust, a not-for-profit organisation was established to contribute to urban and wildlife conservation, socio-economic and environmental development and to manage the raltaed facilities created. CEDECOM's formal programme implementation management ended at this stage and it became necessary to redefine its mandate and reposition itself (Ofori, 2021), re-focusing more on being an endogenous regional development facilitator, training and mentoring organisation in the MSME development and investment promotion sectors.

CEDECOM's governance was also changing much due to its lack of formal establishment legislation, unlike GHCT. In June 2007, it was placed under the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, and moved to the Office of the President in January 2011. Later, it became 'secured' under the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MOTI), under which its mandate is now mostly in investment promotion and enterprise development in the Central Region. But it does not any have any significant and formal relations with the Coastal Development Authority, which now caters to the 4 coastal regions in Ghana. The Central Regional Minister continues to chair the CEDECOM Board and the Commission is still responsible to the MOTI, a situation that often complicates and constrains its activities (Interview with Enterprise Development and Investment Promotion Officer, May 2021) and tends to generate political interference of both Ministers in its decisionmaking and programmes, usually with change in ruling political party and government.

Nevertheless, CEDECOM's placement under MOTI streamlined its core corporate mandate in the enterprise development and investment promotion engagement and repositioning strategy, although its position does not appear to be competitive enough. As USAID (2001: 34) stated, 'The institution has moved beyond its mandate and is currently directly involved in microenterprise development, mobile credit and training activities for which other institutions were set up'. An example of such 'competitor' institutions are the erstwhile National Small Scale Industries

Board (NSSIB) now transformed into the Ghana Enterprises Agency (GEA) (Republic of Ghana, 2020). Objects of the GEA include overseeing and co-ordinating the promotion and development of the MSME sector, strengthening its capacity and competitiveness, maximising its contributions to national social and economic development and encouraging its participation in 'industrial transformation through innovation and technology transfer' (Act 1043, section 2, paragraph (e)). This 'means that the Commission needs to be focused on its core and more manageable responsibilities, even within the context of diversified endogenous regional development strategy' under its repositioned order. (Ofori, 2021: 116). But how does CEDECOM manage these changes and contexts?

Analysis and Results and Discussion Repositioning and Institutional Establishment Reemphasising vision and mission

CEDECOM justified its 'vision' and 'mission' as appropriate contexts for its contemporary engagement and repositioning. So, these were analysed to determine their real alignment with its current corporate mandate. CEDECOM's vision is being a 'Leading Regional Development Partner' (Interview with the Head, Investment Promotion Department, May 2021), which means 'being a leading development organisation; assisting private sector and the Local Authorities to offer sustainable development in the region, i.e. facilitating the evolvement of and promoting and supporting the private sector and Local Authorities' (Respondent). CEDECOM maintained that since its inception, 'There has been no change in the vision' (Respondent), which indicated that it only changed its emphasis with the end of its implementation and management roles under the original turn-around programmes. Previously, however, CEDECOM indicated that it had a challenge with collaborating with the Local Authorities, especially in following the end of the first major turn-around programme when its relationship with them weakened because it failed to collaborate and network effectively and engage with its partners and key stakeholders to avoid duplication of efforts. And it recognised that it needed to strengthen its consultation practices (Central Region Development Commission, 2011). So, despite claiming that there was no change in its vision, it was struggling to effectively collaborate and engage with its partners and other stakeholders in achieving its vision, affecting achievement of its core corporate mandate, losing opportunities for enterprise development and investment promotion with them. Relating to its mission, CEDECOM (2011: 7):

'exists to promote the sustainable development of the Central Region through partnership with the Private Sector and Development Partners, Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) as well as the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) for
Agriculture, Natural Resource and Rural Development, Investment Promotion and
Enterprise Development, Integrated Tourism Development, Communication and
Information Management.'

Again, there was 'no change in the mission' between the programme-on and programme-off periods (Interview with Head, Investment Promotion Department, May 2021). Perhaps, only a change in emphasis as CEDECOM was 'using tourism as a central point to promote Central Region's development; support enterprises and entrepreneurship development; agricultural and natural resource development; and how to use ICT to support tourism and enterprise development, to deliver services and development to the Central Region' (Respondent). However, CEDECOM's coverage of agricultural and rural development had diminished, with greater engagement in business and enterprise development and investment promotion, consistent with its evolvement (Respondent). But it admitted to its relationship with the Ministries, Departments and Agencies and MMDAs (Local Authorities) having grown weak. Thus its mission also contained a constrained institutional relational challenge, to fulfilling its core corporate and enterprise promotion performance, apart from virtually shedding off the agricultural and rural development sectors, which equally would have provided potential opportunities for business and enterprise development and investment promotion in these sectors. (Figure 2). Currently, under

MOTI, CEDECOM aims to integrate its main policy engagements with its key public and private sector stakeholder activities, as it aims to do under its mission (Figure 2).

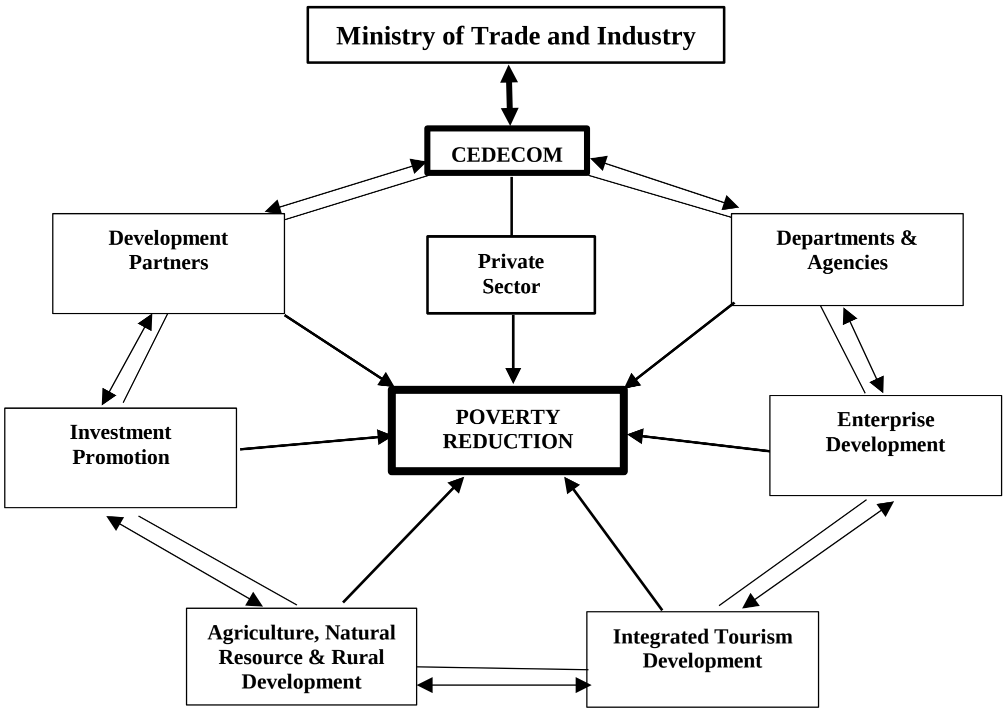

Figure 2 Conceptual Framework of CEDECOM's Engagement

Source: Modified from Central Region Development Commission (2011).

Under its reemphasised vision and mission, however, CEDECOM's reformed and ultimate aim was focused on 'Poverty Reduction' (Figure 2). Developing a corporate profile and remaining committed to promoting enterprise and investment attraction, therefore, it hoped to contribute significantly to poverty reduction in the region, which had been rated one of the poorest regions, previously fourth in rank after the former three northern regions, now five, making the Central Region about the sixth in regional poverty ranking in Ghana (Ofori, 2021). However, excluding rural and agricultural development from its mission or deemphasing these, despite its modelling in Figure 2, was not worthwhile. Nevertheless, Central Region was poorer in the pre-CEDECOM era and the exogenous Central Regional Development Corporation failed to match its achievements. Indeed, the turn-around strategic programmes contributed appreciably to poverty reduction in the region through enterprise development, investment attraction, tourism promotion, salt manufacturing, handicraft production, primary economic activities, including arable, livestock and fishery activities (Ofori, 2021).

Internal organisational structure

Apparently, in line with its stronger emphasis on business development and enterprise promotion, CEDECOM considered it necessary to update its organisational structure as part of its repositioning and in view of its change experience (Figure 3). Therefore, 'some departments have been re-aligned' (Interview with Head, Investment Promotion Department, May 2021). First, an integration of the former two departments, 'Tourism, Agricultural and Forestry' and 'Fisheries' into the new 'Field Operations Department'. Second, the former separate 'Enterprise' and 'Investment Promotion' Departments were merged to create the new 'Investment Promotion and Enterprise Development'. These two structural changes re-positioned and re-focused CEDECOM

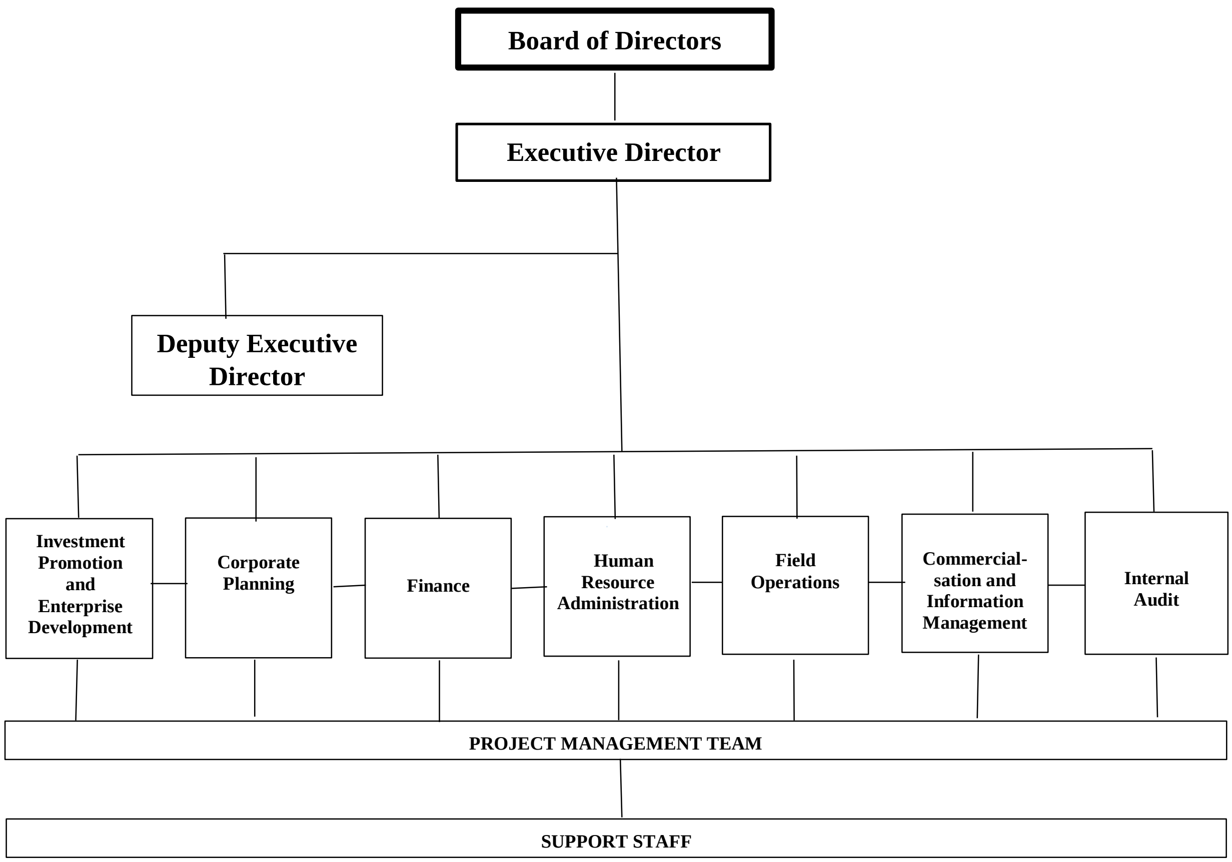

Figure 3 Internal organisational structure of Central Region Development Commission

Source: Author's re-design from CEDECOM (2011), based on field data.

to be more forward-looking towards clients than depending more on the latter, having to approach them up-front (Respondent). Third, the creation of a special desk for 'giving specific attention to Gender and Climate Change; as a new unit, it deals with issues of a topical nature'. But this was not reflected in the organizational structure (Figure 3) (Interview with Head, Investment Promotion, May 2021). Could there have been more of such changes? According to the respondent, 'immediately no, emphasis might change but now looking more, for example, at Community Investment Promotion, Industrialisation and Entrepreneurial Development; now more focused on the three pillars' (Respondent) i.e., "Investment Promotion", "Industrialisation" and "Entrepreneurial Development". These redefined CEDECOM's core corporate and enterprise promotion engagement for which its internal organisational structure was re-aligned and repositioned (Respondent).

Refocusing Enterprise and Business Development

CEDECOM's concentration on these three pillars focused it upon the typical areas that exogenous development institutions tended to overlook. Investment promotion involved the creation of an 'investment framework with key/specific areas of commercial activity and package it and invite the investor community; for example, focusing on vegetable production, using latest technology; for example, greenhouse and particular variety' (Interview with Head, Investment Promotion and Enterprise Development, May 2021).

This pillar was also expected to promote 'specific areas' of tourism and 'developing new attraction sides' (Respondent); investment promotion in fishing, including marine, freshwater and aquaculture, also aimed at 'tackling the stock depletion problem' and involved 'bringing in all stakeholders, domestic, donor and community' (Respondent). Industrialisation pillar aimed at 'bringing in investors, creating appropriate resource and matching it with the suitable enclave' (Respondent). Inclusive, were 'creating small-scale economic/industrial zones; promoting appropriate human resources; identifying key zones and 'assessing the value chain' (Respondent). Entrepreneurship development focused on 'proper training, attitude, use of Information and Computer, having a skills ecosystem, bringing in appropriate skills, e.g. in tiles production' (Respondent). It also aimed to create a 'Business Growth and Innovation Hub, bringing in young people, nurturing the ideas they have, testing skills, teaching, etc. to ensure that trainees will succeed in the market' (Respondent). Such initiatives meant CEDECOM was well strategically repositioned to deliver its core corporate mandate.

According to the Head of Investment Promotion and Enterprise Development (Interview, May 2021), the three pillars had been tested and served well in the adjoining Western and Greater Accra Regions, so he believed that these would equally work best in the Central Region. However, respondent was emphatic that 'If the three pillars are well funded, these can generate growth', for example, by attracting 'groups of entrepreneurs, industrialists, job-creation, local economic development and income, reduction of poverty, peace and security, migration of the youth, all attracting more infrastructure development' (Interview, May 2021). But the respondent indicated that 'all these at the concept stage', under the Commission's declaration of 'A decade of Action for Investment Promotion', subject to the availability of funding and 'the story will not be the same'. Nevertheless, CEDECOM emphatically saw 'investment as a culture, tradition and strategy' (Respondent), subject to funding availability.

CEDECOM learned, from experience to reposition itself under its changing operational environment and in which Local Authorities were not being significantly effective in generating local economic and enterprise development and investment promotion. 'Previously', focus was on 'social intervention', for example, drilling of 'boreholes' and provision of 'health facilities' 'but now focus has changed from the social intervention projects to the business and investment strategy' (Interview with Head, Investment Promotion and Enterprise Development, May 2021). This strategic change was justified on the need for 'refocusing to impact the investment sector' (Respondent). And the Commission was ensuring that it remained committed to its 3-pillar strategy to realising its core corporate mandate. Occasionally, CEDECOM worked on initiatives like 'Back to School Project', during the COVID-19 pandemic, which involved providing informative posters on the hazards and public health sensitisation and distributing sanitisers to communities. Such initiatives were not the regular line of engagement of the Commission but it had to help under the exigency. However, it was firmly certain that it was staying on course and would not find it necessary to refocus its strategy for achieving its core corporate aims, 'no likely change' (Respondent).

Improving General Corporate Environment

A simple Strength-Weakness-Opportunity-Threat (SWOT) analysis was performed to test out the strategic courses that CEDECOM decided to pursue (Maidment, 1998; Schermerhorn, 1999). It was also meant to test the Commission's competitive scope and business environment.

Strength

One of CEDECOM's strengths was its office infrastructure, a three-level multi-room building developed in the 1990s, funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (Interview with Head, Investment Promotion and Enterprise Development, May 2021). It had so much office space that it rented out the surplus to other organisations, include the Minerals Commission, Ghana Enterprises Agency, a private catering firm, and a Non-Governmental Organisation in the fisheries sector. CEDECOM's own offices were well furnished and equipped with quality Information and Computer Technology (ICT) systems. Another strength of the Commission was its core human resources with the appropriate 'skills that function and perform and aware of the choice' available (Respondent). Human resources were sustained and improved through 'occasional training to build capacity' and by 'attending … training provided by other organisations' as well as 'promoting staff training and studies mostly within Ghana' (Respondent). Third, was what the Commission called a 'goodwill factor, to some degree' (Respondent). This was based on the fact that 'so far in Ghana, CEDECOM is the only regional development organisation' … it is quite unique, for now' (Respondent) and as indicated previously. The current Development Authorities are necessarily and explicitly defined regional development organisations, although they straddle the local-regional boundary. Indeed, CEDECOM was the only endogenously focused unitary-regional development organisation until the multi-regional Development Authorities become functionally decentralised, if at all. And CEDECOM remains the most enduring regional development institution in Ghana. Such 'goodwill factor' stands it in a good stead to attract funding, investment and other development opportunities (Respondent).

Weakness

However, CEDECOM indicated that it had 'serious challenges' constituting its weaknesses. First, 'funding is the greatest block to initiatives' (Interview with Head, Investment Promotion and Enterprise Development, May 2021). Basically, the Commission depended on central Government budgetary allocation, which was woefully inadequate. Occasionally, it benefited from international donor support. But all these, additional to its own investment proceeds and Internally Generated Funds (IGFs) were not adequate enough. A second weakness related to 'leadership challenges', explained mostly in terms of the political economy of regional and national governments, etc. (Respondent):

'There has been some political interference. For some time now, we have a Board which takes up the leadership role but management is given limited space. Sometimes, decisions are taken outside the Board. So, the Commission's leaders are not free to operate – sourcing from the regional government, subject to their perception of the Commission, depends on who happens to be in power and the person's orientation.'

According to the respondent, such experiences manifest most during periods of change of national government: 'for example, before change of government, doing a whole lot of development', i.e. before the election of the current government in 2017. Such political interference in urban and regional development processes are not uncommon (Ofori, 2021). Several writers have pointed out such political interferences and other enactments of political actors in urban, metropolitan and regional development and planning processes in various parts of the world. These include Goodfellow (2012) on urban development in Rwanda and Uganda, Türkün (2011) and Ünsel (2015) on urban regeneration and development in Turkey, Deuskar (2019) on slum development in the global South, Young (2009) and van de Walle (2009) on political clientelism in Africa, Ajulor (2006) and Adetoye (2016) on regional political economy in Nigeria, Flyvbjerg (1998, 2003) on urban policy and planning in the global North and South, Drazen (2002) and Adhikari (2021) on the political economy, generally, and Acheampong (2019) on political economy in spatial planning in Ghana. Invariably, these are all about the exercising of power in decisionmaking and implementation, power-relations, clientelism, especially of the political form aimed at securing votes for political actors and other forms of electoral constituency politics, conflicts between rationalism and power, and institutional and governance politics, serving mostly the interest of political actors, investors and the private sector, often to the disbenefit of the local community. In the present context and relating to the process of endogenous regional development indicated, CEDECOM leadership is politically challenged and/or constrained, limiting its effectiveness in its repositioning engagement.

According to CEDECOM, the Opposition Political Party was more in support of its activities than the ruling government, 'though' the Opposition also believed the Commission's activities should rather be undertaken by the Local Authorities (Respondent). Apparently, if the
Opposition had their way, they would have wished CEDECOM's roles into MMDA functions.

This situation seriously questions CEDECOM's view that the Opposition Political Party was more sympathetic to its existence and cause when it would rather have taken an existential action.

CEDECOM bemoaned the attitude of the ruling government and indicated that 'since change of government, the present administration did not see any good about the Commission, four years ago' and that 'the situation is worse off under the present government/regime' (Respondent).

However, this may be neither surprising nor unusual because the current government introduced a new and major reform in the regional development institutionalisation, the Development Authorities, and CEDECOM may be seen as a competitor to this exogenous intervention. On one hand, for the political economy and pure political reasons, all governments are compelled to recognize CEDECOM, at whatever cost. On the other, they tend to give it a rather passive support as it is seen as an additional layer to the regional financial budget, since its original mandate phased out. Generally, such political interference has also been a characteristic feature of the regional development and institutional sector since the early 1970s (Ofori, 2000, 2021). But CEDECOM believed that it could manage such political interference if it was financially independent, 'not relying much on the central government but providing support from the donor community' (Interview, May 2021). In this case, if there was 'political interference' at all, CEDECOM 'would not mind' if this 'can play alongside' any chance for it 'to get' its 'own funding' (Respondent). A third weakness was the Commission's lack of a Legislative Instrument (L.I.) or backing for its establishment, which constitutes a further political constraint on its repositioning strategy. As its Head of Investment Promotion and Enterprise Development indicated (Interview, May 2021): 'The

Commission has no L.I. to back it, so there are some powers that we cannot exercise. All efforts made to have an L.I., falling to rock because of fear that, example, Parliament may respond to one for all regions, rather than one for the Central Region only. Nothing has happened with the Coastal Development Authority between us.'

Indeed, such weakness constrained and frustrated the institutional effectiveness of the Commission, including the delivery of its core corporate mandate.

A fourth weakness was that CEDECOM tended to lack some skills, sometimes needing MMDA support in these. However, this contrasted with its previously stated position that it was quite happy about one of its strengths being its "core human resources" and "skills that function and perform", sustained through various forms of improvement. These skills were, after all, limited and occasionally required Local Authority assistance with.

Opportunity

An opportunity open to CEDECOM at the time of the study was the preparation of 'real project documents to engage with other organisations in partnership and collaboration with those to run projects in the interest of the region', i.e. project proposals (Interview with Head, Investment Promotion and Enterprise Development, May 2021). Fortunately, 'right now, there are funds in the system', available from German and Danish institutions, i.e. at the time of field study (Respondent). The three pillars indicated were also 'topical issues that can leverage in funding and projects; there is an open space, it depends on how to take the advantage that the international community is promoting' (Respondent). It was paramount, therefore, to enhance and sustain these opportunities and CEDECOM believed in the need to 'be ready in terms of capacity to be proactive, be action-oriented', for example, through 'training' (Respondent). However, other opportunities were possible if CEDECOM retained its original mission objectives in agricultural and rural development in a relatively poor region like the Central Region, apart from engaging on an independent or collaborative commercial operation in its existing projects.

Threat The lack of a legislative backing for its establishment always constituted a threat to CEDECOM's operations. For instance, 'there are some projects, enforcement we can do but no legal backing, so it is affecting performance' (Interview with Head, Investment Promotion and Enterprise Development May 2021). And, the situation constituted a 'political factor' as the respondent indicated previously. However, CEDECOM was 'pushing through the Board to secure the L.I.; a draft of the L.I. has been made; the Attorney-General is looking at it to have it approved' (Respondent). The Commission suspected that Parliament would tend to rather support a general legislation that would encourage each region to create its own endogenous development organisation, which would, however, conflict with establishment of the Development Authorities. So, a course needed to be steered that would justify CEDECOM's existence. Moreover, the

Commission was seen as a particular case or exceptional agency under the Ministry of Trade and

Industry (MOTI). Other threat remained CEDECOM's inadequate funding, which also threatened its core corporate interventions and repositioned strategy. Third, CEDECOM, after all, felt significantly threated by competitor organisations, including the Development Authorities and regional sector departments that had institutional markets. Both competitor institutions tended to be better funded that CEDECOM, which also undermined its confidence in its various operational interventions.

Organisational and Competitive Performance

CEDECOM's, overall, effective organisational and competitive performance was addressed in relation to its social intervention projects, resource control practices, competitiveness, including co-operative and collaborative initiatives among its relational networks. For its previous social intervention projects, 'some 90 per cent of these are working well', including over 100 boreholes, Community Health Preventive Service (CHPS, popularly pronounced as "chips") compounds – i.e. equivalent of primary healthcare centres etc., although 'the investment promotion, hoping to continue but funding not available' (Respondent) (Interview with Head, Investment Promotion and Enterprise Development, May 2021). 'So', CEDECOM was 'repackaging to campaign for investment and investors, with the launching of the AfCFTA for the continent; exploring linkages' (Respondent). AfCFTA, the flagship of the African Union based at its Secretariat in Accra, is meant to be the world's largest free trade area, which brings together most African countries, including 8 regional economic communities (AfCFTA, 2023). CEDECOM was assertive that 'If the basic support is available, this would promote effectiveness; to get the necessary documentation for operation and entrepreneurs', basically, the legislative backing and funding (Respondent). But CEDECOM also faces competition in such social interventionism engagements, especially from Civil Service and Non-Governmental Organisations.

In terms of efficient resource control and use, there were 'not enough resources' but CEDECOM was 'stretching the little resources available … working within the constraints so as to make some impact' (Interview with Head of Investment Promotion, May 2021). However, CEDECOM justified efficiency in terms of a previous Information and Computer Technology (ICT) training programme, for which it established a number of centres in the Central Region. For some of the centres, the buildings existed before the initiative and CEDECOM assisted the communities in those areas with the provision and installation of ICT equipment. Examples of these included Asikuma in the Asikuma Odoben Brakwa District. For all other training centres, the 'Commission provided the buildings for the community to stock these' independently (Respondent). These localities included Praprababida in Upper Denkyira East District, other settlements in Upper Denkyira West District, Winneba in the Effutu District, and Swedru in Agona West District. Through its efficient management of the building spaces and equipment, therefore, CEDECOM was able to deliver efficient ICT training services. However, it remained in real need of adequate funding to improve and sustain the initiative. Another case of efficient resource control was CEDECOM's support for the "Back to School Initiative" during the COVID-19 pandemic, to help kids back to school. However, for this and other engagements, the Commission used 'the little resources available, sharing cost with' other operators and business owners (Respondent).

Relating to CEDECOM's competitive performance, in the light of its re-positioned core corporate engagement, it believed that its competitiveness lay in 'entrepreneurship building, welltrained people' and 'businesses' it helped to start-up (Interview with Head, Investment Promotion and Enterprise Development, May 2021). But its competitors still included Community Development Associations, private individuals and their enterprises, Ghana Enterprises Agency (GEA), formerly National Small Scale Industries Board, and the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre, the last two being national agencies, better funded, therefore 'they have more resources' (Respondent). Nevertheless, CEDECOM recognised that there were 'opportunities for collaborating' with them (Respondent). For instance, the location of the GEA offices for the Central Region within the CEDECOM offices block complex was seen as providing such an opportunity. Indeed, GEA and CEDECOM were collaborating in training initiatives for microenterprise units, working 'on the investment side of things, promoting investment' (Respondent).

For CEDECOM, therefore, relations with its competitors were 'not competing but collaborating with competitors, reaching out to them' (Interview with Head, Investment Promotion, May 2021). And such co-operation was also a way for CEDECOM to manage and temper competitor threats to its activities and position. But as to whether this these made CEDECOM a better competitor, the respondent indicated that 'not really'. Then how competitive or volatile was its investment promotion and enterprise development sector or market? For

CEDECOM, however, this was not the issue, rather the attitude of the wider regional community (Interview, May 2021): 'The only thing is that sometimes, the behavior of the Central Region. People are not standing with CEDECOM, left to our fate; not lobbying for resources; when they have need, they approach the Commission but forget them after.' An instance was CEDECOM's experience with Cape Coast Concerned Citizens, a Community-Based Organisation (CBO) (Respondent):

'They wanted to push the development Agenda of Cape Coast but did not talk to CEDECOM; they went to the President and made requests but not content. Now they want to dredge the Foso Lagoon and have approached the Commission, wanted maps of the lagoon. Commission examining the request but the headway is that the beneficiaries never come back to the Commission.'

Apparently, the particular CBO did not find the attitude of CEDECOM helpful. If it was only a matter of a request for areal maps with the Commission, it should have been easy for CEDECOM to make these available to the group. Otherwise, CEDECOM did not have the maps of may have attempted to use the request to leverage other involvement of the CBO, which the latter did not take kindly to. Since CEDECOM was still 'examining' the request, the CBO hardly benefited from its assistance.

Furthermore (Respondent),

'About two weeks ago, the Oguaa Traditional Council organised an award ceremony but CEDECOM was not invited to the event, nor its contributors honoured. The citizens were ignoring the Commission but not supporting it, taking advantage of income-generation activities. Regional Government and Traditional Authorities not showing any concern. Private Business Community not really supporting but always needing from the Commission. Regional Government, itself, tends not to include the Commission, the inclusiveness not there.'

These responses indicated a kind of constrained relationship between CEDECOM and the Central Region community, including the CRCC that established it, Traditional Authorities and the private business sector. Since its original mandate ended and formal donor support for this stopped, the re-positioning of CEDECOM did not really appear appealing to the Region, especially with the considerable challenge with funding and lack of establishment legislation. Apparently, the Commission was not generating any significant material benefit as before. However, this was exactly the scenario that required effective co-operation and collaboration between the endogenous regional community and their enduring regional development organisation. Indeed, the responses and other assessments also reflect a critical attitude of the community towards CEDECOM (Ofori, 2021). But in other interviews with the Region Planning Co-ordinating Unit (RPCU), it indicated that CEDECOM was rather not co-operative and hardly attended regional meetings, including annual durbars organized by the CRCC. This situation and trend constituted a challenge to

CEDECOM's activity and service market that it competed in.

As to whether CEDECOM was really able to sustain its competitive position? Still, it was emphatic that this could happen if more resources were available (Interview with Head, Investment Promotion and Enterprise

Development, May 2021). It would also depend on ‘co-operation and assistance and inclusiveness’ i.e., ‘commitment on the part of the Regional Government and people of the region’ (Respondent), indicating these as some of the factors that would promote

CEDECOM’s sustainability and its competitive and/or collaborative position. Its main need was

‘not relying on government funding, securing own funding’, which also meant that it could adopt a self-help approach and stretch its limited resources to achieve some independence and competitiveness, rather than expect much from other stakeholders (Respondent). Second, ‘there should be a section of people from the Central Region to be searching for resources from the high levels; level-headed people, not selfish people; lobbying and speaking at the highest level in support of the Commission’ (Respondent). As to who these “level-headed people” were or should be, CEDECOM felt that these were the political elite and Traditional Authorities, etc., who were not promoting its interests enough. Third, having ‘people to champion the causes of the Commission, speaking the truth about the development situation tends to make the “speaker” the enemy’ (Respondent). Apparently, the regional community was dissatisfied with CEDECOM’s performance and any reports of any of its successes were seen as biased or incorrect and the reporter(s) shunned. These were indications of contestation about the justification for CEDECOM’s real existence, relevance, validity, and relational constraints, as evident in this study. Fourth,

‘Effective collaboration with people who are like-minded, forming strong partnerships. The underdevelopment of the society reflects the development of entrepreneurship. So this is a reflection on the lacking entrepreneurship aspect of education that integrates between academics and industry; how to sell products.’

For this reason, CEDECOM aspired to a wider perspective on business, education, training and promotion of commercial enterprises (Respondent): ‘Making education more practical, commercially orientated, developing sales people who sell things. Teaching business plans, writing proposals, e.g., women selling are not trained; supporting the market in practical terms’, emphasising the need for practical and popularised enterprise and business education.

CEDECOM believed that if such factors were lined up, it would be able to sustain its committed traineeship initiatives. It prided itself much in this area of operation and celebrated how it had ‘trained entrepreneurs’, under ‘different approaches’, especially in personalised or customised ways in the MSME sector, generally (Interview with Head, Investment Promotion and Enterprise Development, May 2021). These involved a ‘basic model of training’ (Respondent). First, it advised the trainees to assess themselves in terms of their challenges and capabilities and these involved a ‘lot of exercises to be done’ (Respondent). Next, there were ‘follow-ups to have one-and-one interaction and coaching to see how the trainees are working’ (Respondent). Using this modus operandi, CEDECOM trained ‘tailors, garage operators, trades persons, agriculturalists/farmers, fishermen ... women fish-mongers, Ghana Electrical Technician Association, students on the Entrepreneurship Programme, “Start Your Business” and tertiary students in the final year.’

Conclusions

Against the failure of exogenous regional development interventions to turn around Central Region’s declined economy, it initiated its own regional development processes and successfully implemented three major programmes during the 1990/1991 to 2000/2001 periods, including the establishment of its own development organisation, CEDECOM, and attracted significant international and government funding. Failures of exogeny included the lack of effective consideration for and focus on business and enterprise development and investment promotion. This became a core engagement for CEDECOM and the endogenous development process, generally during the period of its original mandate and particularly in the post-programme era. Indeed, following its first decade of existence, CEDECOM considered it necessary to transform itself from a broadly-based endogenous regional development organisation to one focused on business and enterprise development and investment promotion and aimed to reposition itself and reemphasise its engagement. The study aimed to analyse and assess this process of change. In theoretical terms, a process of endogenous regional development focused on enterprise and business development and investment attraction was proposed to tease out and appraise CEDECOM's response and performance experience of repositioning and reemphasised focus that would create a new round of benefits for the Central Region. Such a model would be equally applicable to any case of endogenous regional development, especially in the context of developing countries, typically African.

First, the political-administrative elite of the Central Region had appropriately envisioned the need for an institutional structure, CEDECOM, to lead the endogenous development process.

It managed to drive the process during the first decade of its existence, following which it became necessary to reposition and reorient itself and the endogenous regional development intervention. However, it appears that CEDECOM was not, itself, representative enough and it was, certainly, heavily challenged collaborating and co-operating with stakeholders in the region, including the Central Regional Co-ordinating Council (CRCC) that established it, Traditional Authorities, the private business sector, Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) and the wider territorial citizenry. However, while CEDECOM believed these stakeholders and the regional community were not supportive enough, they also experienced the rather unbeneficial endogenous regional transformation, under the repositioned Commission. So, it is one action creating the economic, management and political-administrative institutions for an endogenous regional development process focused on business and enterprise development and investment promotion, it is quite another ensuring and achieving effectiveness of these.

Second, CEDECOM admitted to having "leadership challenges" in terms of the interference of political actors in its leadership and management activities. CEDECOM is a 'technical wing' of the CRCC, under the Regional Minister and an agency of the MOTI, under the Minister of State and both ministers tended to influence and/or constrain its decision- and policymaking and implementation processes. As a result, CEDECOM's Board and leadership were "given limited space" and was "not free to operate". Such enactment of political actors and the political economy in urban, metropolitan and regional development and planning processes, globally. CEDECOM also believed that the ruling government was less sympathetic to and supportive of its activities than the leading Opposition Political Party. But this appeared to be a contradiction because the Opposition Party rather believed that CEDECOM's roles should have been taken over by the Local Authorities, meaning the Opposition Party would have wished the Commission non-existent. This situation also indicates that CEDECOM is a politically contested institutional structure of endogenous regional development that was constraining its leadership and management responsibilities.

Third, the challenged institutional context and constrained leadership roles also tended to affect CEDECOM's identification of endogenous regional development problems and the local and environmental resources needed to ameliorate the challenges. It aimed to maintain agricultural and rural development as part of its reemphasized mission but did not really take these seriously as part of the amelioration of the region's problems and a potential effective poverty-reduction strategy. Although CEDECOM supported training in aquaculture fishing, apart from development of salt production and oil palm cultivation and livestock breeding, it paid less attention to agricultural and rural development, generally. Moreover, its agricultural development projects were, basically, on experimental than scaled-up basis that would have created regional growth, business and enterprise development. Fourth, CEDECOM was proud of its performance in various training, skills and entrepreneurship initiatives, personal and customized, especially in the MSME sector. It boasted of such training activities being an all-time most competitive performance. Indeed, it had trained restaurateurs, hoteliers, tailors, garage technicians, tradesmen and tradeswomen, farmers, fishers, salt and soap manufacturers, etc. However, it faced significant competition from the Ghana Enterprise Agency (GEA), Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC), Civil Service

Organisations (CSOs) and private training providers. Such competition has been growing since CEDECOM's inception. Moreover, other public training and entrepreneurship development agencies tended to be better financially resourced than CEDECOM; funding has been one of its all-time major challenges. But the Commission aimed to manage the stiff competition through partnerships and other collaborative ventures, e.g., with GEA.

Fifth, CEDECOM was much challenged in encouraging participation in its endogenous regional development processes. It indicated the political interference in its activities and programmes by regional and national political actors that constrained its leadership and management roles. CEDECOM also reported that lack of co-operation and collaboration with its parent establishment organisation and regional governance body, CRCC, Traditional Authorities, even the private business sector and CBOs. Apparently, neither were youth and gender-based groups happy with its performance. On the other hand, the stakeholders were also rather disappointed with CEDECOM's performance. Previously, it also admitted to not sustaining effective relations with the MMDAs – Local Authorities (Ofori, 2021). Yet, it tended to request assistance with human resources, including skills that its staff lacked with the Local Authorities. These also meant that CEDECOM's relationship with its 'Development Partners" and the 'Private Sector" that it critically needed in its repositioned strategy were weak and would tend to undermine its poverty-reduction initiatives (Figure 2). CEDECOM was less effective in maintaining its relational and networking engagement with its partners and stakeholders by poorly consulting with them, which also limited the social capacity to sustain its competitiveness. Equally, it was less effective in sustaining consultation with the local-regional community. Stakeholders and the regional community perceived it as not being co-operative enough in terms of socio-cultural, advocacy and resource support. These further limited its proactive engagement and visibility. Central Region was no longer perceiving CEDECOM as appreciably relevant under its refocused strategy, unlike previously. The local community perceived it as being passive, reactive, less visible and not investment-attracting and job-creating enough and less co-operative and collaborative in formal and informal terms. It was a contradiction in Central Region's endogeneity that CEDECOM and its local-regional community tended to negate each other, constituting a profound existential threat to its survival. Overall, therefore, CEDECOM failed to encourage and sustain participation of public, private and community-based and civil service interests in decision- and policy-making in the endogenous regional development and planning processes.

Sixth, although CEDECOM re-designed its internal organisational structure aimed at improving its institutional capacity, its inclusion of climate change and gender issues were implicit than explicit and would have tended to have less priority in its repositioning. Some of its internal departments operated rather vertically with limited co-operation and collaboration between these, undermining its organisational capacity. Moreover, its 3-pillar focus on investment promotion, industrialisation and entrepreneurial development, as its competitive scope, was also undermined by the lack of funding. This further contributed to its ineffectiveness in promoting technological and innovations development in the region, including its failure in collaborating with potential partners in this pursuit. Apparently, CEDECOM also failed to explore why its 3-pillar strategy was effective in adjoining administrative regions and had potential effective replication in the Central Region. Furthermore, its relational and networking constraints also limited the collaborative and partnership opportunities that it so much needed in the 3-pillar strategy implementation. Nor did it really address the conditions of capital accumulation within its own capacity. Despite viewing its human resources as one of its strengths, CEDECOM still lacked some skills, occasionally needing MMDA assistance with this. Because of its funding challenges, it was not able to consistently improve its human resource quality and skills. And, in spite of priding itself on its self-perceived “goodwill factor” of being the sole endogenous regional organisation in Ghana, it had threatening national competitors like GEA, GIPC, possibly the new Development Authorities, though it intended to collaborate with them. Similarly, CEDECOM had growing competitors like the Civil Service and Non-Governmental Organisations in the social intervention sector from which it had shifted emphasis. Therefore, CEDECOM had limited performance in its MSME focus, investment attraction and capital accumulation, enterprise development and growth and productivity improvement.

CEDECOM was fundamentally challenged in its lack of explicit legislative backing which limited its funding and strategic capacities. These were also linked to its independent decisionmaking and implementation processes, allowing for undue political interference in its operations, much due to its complex placement under both the CRCC and MOTI. Such a mix of factors also tended to limit CEDECOM’s visibility and performance in the region.

Seventh, it is clear from its constrained participatory opportunities and practices that CEDECOM did not strengthen and sustain its social capital development. Virtually, it felt shunned by important stakeholders like the CRCC, Traditional Authorities, the business community and community-based structures, despite valuing these in its repositioned strategy, focused on povertyreduction (Figure 2). Similarly, CEDECOM hardly achieved social capital development in its relationship with firms and collaborative ventures in technological and innovations development. So, CEDECOM was not making friends enough and developing norms of reciprocity, trust, mutuality, socio-economic and inter-firm networking. It became less competitive than it would have been and was not promoting the competitiveness of the Central Region enough. CEDECOM managed donor-recipient relation with some bilateral and multilateral organisations but this was less regular and generally uncertain, while government budgetary allocation was always inadequate.

Eighth, CEDECOM, however, contributed to the development of physical, economic and social infrastructure, especially through its social intervention initiatives. These included the development of borehole and local water supply, healthcare, educational, isolated rural housing, community library, surface drainage/drains and sports facilities. However, the Commission still faced considerable competition, especially from the Civil Service and

Non-Governmental Organisations (CSO an NGO) sector. Some Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs) have also been contributing to the development of the social interventionist infrastructure. Still, some of these competitors tend to become financially resourced than CEDECOM. Indeed, it had virtually suspended intervention in this sector until ‘funding’ became ‘available’.

Ninth, perhaps CEDECOM’s contribution to infrastructural development, generally, MSME and enterprise development, including a variety of training and skills improvement initiatives could be said to contribute to territorial urban development, including the creation of localisation and urbanisation economies. Most of these developments tended to be in the small and medium-sized urban centres than the large towns and cities. Thus CEDECOM’s impact on territorial urbanisation may result from the positive externality or aggregate impact of all the other achievements than outright or proactive urban socio-economic and spatial development projects.

Sustaining its refocused business and enterprise development and investment promotion strategy must vitally depend on securing an explicit establishment legislative backing, including likely redefinition of its functions and assured sources of adequate funding. Second, CEDECOM would need to streamline and intensify its training operations, including viable partnership and other collaborative ventures. Third, it must need to re-organise its MSME support, to include the agricultural, agro-industrial, rural development sectors, innovations and technological development, which may all contribute to redefining its core competitive scope and as much as possible differentiate it from its current competitors. Fourth, it must be proactive, more visible and effective in its relational, co-operative and practical partnership engagements, including effective promotion of participation and consultative practices. CEDECOM must also need to be upfront, direct and practically involved in scaled-up commercial investment activities, including partnership ventures. This could mark a difference between it and the GEA, GIPC and Development Authorities, for example, and bring it closer with the MMDAs. Such approach would also promote significant job-creation impact and visibility before and for the regional community.

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