

Strategic Network on New Development Planning – Inception Stakeholder Workshop
ISSER Conference Centre, The University of Ghana - 1 June 2017

Professor Peter Quartey – Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research, The University of Ghana

Professor Quartey started the presentation by acknowledging that this project was very much in its initial phase and the scope of the project would expand over time before providing a brief history of the development of planning in Ghana

"Over the decades, initial development planning was formalized with a centrally planned top-bottom approach. This approach however changed over time. During the 1980's we had structural adjustments economic recovery programmes, which saw some revision in the way planning was done. Planning became more market oriented rather than the central command type of planning systems which was a big improvement. The 2000's saw a return of something close to the comprehensive policy framework for development. This period saw the implementation of Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme's (PRSP's) in order for Ghana to qualify for HIPC (Highly Indebted Poor Country) status and be able to access HIPC funding.

In recent time there is evidence that development planning has come back into fashion. This project has already analysed the national development plans of 100 countries in the global south, including some of the largest and fastest growing countries. Even during this initial phase it is clear that the new plans differ from the formalistic national development plans of the 1960's and 1970's as many are now built on the national experience of PRSP's, in consultation and ensuring ownership, etc. This has led me to believe that the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) will highlight some of these"

Professor Quartey went on to assert that "in recent times many developing countries seek to guide their own development through promises, policies and practices that are coined as 'New Development Planning' however some crucial questions emerge in respect of whether this new consecutive process is producing and promoting national ownership and bringing better outcomes than before. This is what the multi-disciplinary strategic network on the new national planning seeks to analyse - the processes and practices that underpin the production and use of national development plans for sustainable development in diverse context in the global south".

Professor Quartey went on to explain how the selected countries analysed for the project as diverse and how this is important, understanding how diversity feeds into the planning process and what can be learnt from this.

Professor Quartey explained that the project is organized into three work packages:

Work Package 1 - Analyses of secondary data, Analysing 100 plans from emerging economies by using criteria to test key outputs by basically trying to understand the processes.

Work Package 2 - Detailed case studies of selected national planning committees. The expected outcome of this workshop would be that the project team know the processes involved, the individualities of the Ghanaian situation and whether we are getting better learning outcomes by the way we approach some of these. There will be a preliminary analyses and the goal is to learn from the country-specific development plans and best practices.

Work Package 3 - Focuses on best practices and communicating this information to the network. The project is based at The University of Manchester with collaboration from The University of Ottawa Canada.

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Prof Quartey also provided highlights on the history of planning in Ghana up to 1992 when the NDPC was established. Professor Quartey informed the participants that "development planning in Ghana started in the 1920's with the Guggisberg Plan, where the then Governor Sir Frederick Gordon Guggisberg launched the 10 year development plan. The plan is said to have achieved some success with a spend of GBP 12million however the plan was never finished as the governor was transferred before completion.

The next major attempt at development planning was another 10-year plan for the economic and social development of the Gold Coast, from 1950 to 1960. However in 1951, the new CPP revised the 10-year plan into a 5-year plan running from 1951 to 1956 which saw some substantial achievements. Some of the successes include the Volta Value Scheme and the Aluminium Fort Smelter.

A consolidated plan i.e. a second 5-year plan was also launched in 1959 running through to 1964 with a proposed budget of GBP 350million. Of this, GBP 100million went into hydro electricity production. The second five year plan was terminated in 1961 in favour of a seven year plan of national reconstruction and development. Due to the 1966 coup d'état, the seven year plan was also terminated. Successive years were characterized by short-term plans due to frequent changes in governments. The 1970's however was a notable exception with "*Operation Feed Yourself*" All over the country there were billboard inscriptions to encourage the population to "*grow what you eat, eat what you grow*" This campaign was a success.

The myriad of economic challenges in the late 1970's saw the introduction in 1983 of the Economic Recovery Programme (ERP) and subsequently the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) was introduced. The 1992 Constitution gave birth to the NDPC and in 1995 the President presented the first long-term development plan, **The Vision 2020**. Unfortunately, this could not be implemented fully and once again long term plans were terminated due to frequent changes in government through coup d'état.

As Ghana has moved towards democracy there are still long term plans being transformed into medium-term strategy documents. Every new government comes up their medium term strategy and tries to implement this however we still have a 40-year development plan which has travelled through our shared history. I believe that irrespective of what strategy is implemented Ghana will still hold on to this long-term plan and that long term plans should therefore guide the medium and short term plans"

Professor Quartey ended his session by questioning what the NDPC had done so far and how much they are embracing this concept.