

Embeddedness and Neo-Endogenous Regional Development in the Central Region of Ghana

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Abstract

The study aimed to explore, analyse, assess and reflect on embeddedness of two endogenous regional development institutions, CEDECOM and GHCT, and their impact on the Central Region space economy, against failure of exogenous regional development to deliver. It based on a combination of relevant concepts of embeddedness and related criteria of neo-endogenous institutional development, in a wattle-and-daub fashion, using secondary material derived from literature review and primary data collected through in-depth field interviews, with CEDECOM and GHCT seen as case studies. GHCT demonstrated social embeddedness through various institutional structures, cultural embeddedness in valuing the importance of the Mesomakor Bamboo Orchestra and tourism sector operators, and particularly functional-spatial embeddedness in its external contacts and networks. But it was equally limited in social and political embeddedness in low inclusiveness and participation in the economy and governance of the Kakum National Park. It was also challenged in terms of fairly poor economic activity organisation, limited participation in socio-economic activities, declining tourist visits, less financial performance and low planning capacity. CEDECOM was more socially embedded in local delivery and relational contexts, internal resource mobilisation, socio-economic and business development support, underlying institutional structures and networks, human capacity development. It was far less politically embedded, due its lack of establishment legislation and constrained operation as technical wing to the regional governance body and agency under a sector ministry. Similarly, its functional-spatial embeddedness was limited in its irregular external contacts and visibility in the cities, apart from less technological development and innovations and organisational capacity. Effective regional policy response should include emphases on adequate funding, legitimate legislative backing for CEDECOM, effective CEDECOM-GHCT relations, participation and inclusiveness in socio-economic activities in the Park and regional economies, organisational capacity and streamlining of institutional delivery systems, effective technological

and innovation development, robust and institutional collaboration and promotion of regional sustainability.

Keywords:

Endogenous regional development; neo-endogenous regional development; regional embeddedness; Ghana Heritage Conservation Trust; Central Region Development Commission; Central Regional Co-ordinating Council; Central Region turn-around strategies; endogenous regional sustainability.

Introduction

Regional development and planning have been conceptualised ‘from within’ as endogenous regional development, and ‘from without’ as exogenous regional development (Glasson and Marshall, 2007; Ofori, 2021). However, challenges of both have given rise to another mode, neo-endogenous regional development, particularly characterised by the existence of locally or intra-regionally created institutions, actions and activities, set within the underlying socio-economic and cultural relational contexts and networks. Since the 1940-1970s, endogenous and neo-endogenous regional development have become predominant in the developed and most developing countries. All three modes of regional development may, however, be driven by functional-corporatist, territorial actor-forces or a combination of these (Friedmann and Weaver, 1999; Çiçek, 2013; Ofori, 2021). Functional-corporatist institutions tend to represent both the public and private domains, usually business and commercially orientated companies, typically urban focused and/or based. Territorial regional development institutions tend to belong to the public order and have a more spatially spread-out engagement (Ofori, 2000a), not precluding private micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), Civil Service and Community-Based Organisations (CSOs and CBOs) (Vasquez-Barquero, 2007). A regional development organisation may, however, be characterised by both institutional designs (Ofori, 1995, 2000b) but its sustainability depends on the form and extent of its embeddedness in the spatial-geographical-institutional milieu (Cooke et al., 2005; Vasquez-Barquero, 2007; Kitsos et al., 2018). Embeddedness is vital to the economic functioning and development processes within the region, so it is best achievable under the endogenous mode of regional development. A sustainable regional economy is sensitively connected with its underlying natural, human, financial, relational and infrastructural resources, served by its own social and technological knowledge, abilities and skills (Vasquez-Barquero, 2002, 2007; Antonescu, 2015). Sustainable regional development, therefore, depends on the creation, nurturing and efficient management of these resources, including social and relational networks, giving the region a critical advantage and competitiveness than unreliable exogenous support. Invariably, globally, most regional development effort and initiatives tend to take an exogenous form, usually funded by Government, with or without external assistance, including bilateral and multilateral agency and donor sources. In many cases, especially in the developing countries, the state fails to sustain such exogenous development effort to the detriment of the economic and social well-being of the region. However, endogenous regional interventions may also benefit from exogenous assistance that is not exploitative, unoppressive and respects the local political, cultural and democratic institutions of the region. These underline the strategic importance of endogenous regional development, particularly, its neo-endogenous mode, and

related forms of institutional and activity embeddedness. And embeddedness is vital to sustaining non-competitive territorial regional development, planning and transformation through connection with the underlying material, relational, institutional contexts and networks.

Aims and Objectives

This study aimed to explore and reflect on embeddedness of endogenous, particularly neo-endogenous regional development institutions and related planning processes in the Central Region of Ghana and as case study of such interventions in other developing countries. To date, this intervention in the Central Region remains the only case of endogenous regional development in Ghana. It was based on a study of two endogenous regional development organisations, Central Region Development Commission (CEDECOM) and Ghana Heritage Conservation Trust (GHCT). The main aim was to explore and assess the ways and extent to which both institutions were embedded in the socio-economic activities and development and relational processes in the region. First objective was to identify specific criteria for analysing embeddedness, based on its conceptualisation. Second, to assess the impact of the identified forms of embeddedness on endogenous and neo-endogenous regional development, through the various engagements of CEDECOM and GHCT. Third, to identify related challenges and make recommendations for ameliorating these, towards a more sustainable endogenous regional development. The rest of the paper covers literature review and conceptual framework, methodology, the planning system and organisation of regional development in Ghana, analysis and results and discussion. Finally, conclusions are drawn on lessons learned and implications for regional policy and planning processes, including relevance to other African and developing countries.

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

Exogenous and endogenous regional development

Exogenous regional development reigned, conceptually and practically, in the developed and some developing countries during the 1940-1980 periods (Çiçek, 2013; Antonescu, 2015) but has since been residualised, globally (Stimson et al., 2011). It was mostly state-led or joint state-and-private encouraged, meant to extend urban-metropolitan economic power and corporatism to the highly infrastructure-deficient territorial areas (Long and van der Ploeg, 1994; Vermiere et al., 2008; Taylor and Plummer, 2011; Sharipov, 2016). State mechanisms included financial transfers, relaxed taxes, systematised subsidisation and other incentives to the territorial business and investor community, aimed to promote the extension of infrastructure and services to the rural backwaters. Exogenous regional development was homogeneous, ignoring local differences in natural and environmental resources, material cultural and political values, local initiative, socio-cultural and political leadership and shared participation within the transfer destination regions. It spurned the development of local institutions which would initiate, lead, organise, manage and sustain intra-regional development processes (Ward et al., 2005; Antonescu, 2015). Factor mobility was to converge at specific spatial foci and only in the long-run spread out to other parts of the region, overlooking potential divergent impacts of resource flows. It would not initiate and encourage the development of technology, locally, except in imported form, channelled through the investor community activities (Sharipov, 2016). It held on to the ethic of positivism and positivist knowledge (Ofori, 2000d), disdaining and downgrading territorial forms and inter-

subjective knowing. Exogeny failed largely, territorial areas lagging behind, their deprivation, disadvantage and poverty more attenuated (Long and van der Ploeg, 1994; Ewen, 2003; Vermiere et al., 2008; Antonescu, 2015; Badal, 2016; Sharipov, 2016).

By the 1980s, many European nations were deconcentrating their spatial governance and encouraging wider stakeholder participation in regional development (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2010). They were also introducing deregulated market reforms and encouraging the development of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), including the use of endogenous and indigenous resources (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2010; Blakely, 2011). Firm organisation was also becoming more flexible and spatially integrated, location patterns changing and transforming spatial development, apart from expanding small and intermediate towns and cities, structural economic change and globalisation processes emerging (Vasquez-Barquero, 2007) and impacting emergence of endogenous local and regional development.

Everything wrong with exogenous regional development is, generally, the strength and power of endogeny (Vasquez-Barquero, 2007; Stimson et al., 2011; Antonescu, 2015), a process of growth and structural change that serves the needs and demands of the local communities, improving their standard of living, increasingly generating employment and reducing poverty in territorial rather than predominantly functional society (Vasquez-Barquero, 2007). It was state-initiated in some jurisdictions, civil service and community organisation driven in others (Stimson et al., 2011; Çiçek, 2013) and has since been embraced globally. Endogenous regional development recognises heterogeneity, local difference in natural and environmental resources, social and material culture, respecting local skills, talents, abilities and knowledge forms, the nurturing and development of education, generally (Ward et al., 2005; Çiçek, 2013; Sharipov, 2016). It values the development of appropriate technologies but open to external knowledge, technology and other resources as the intra-regional community values these (Ward et al., 2005; Millar et al., 2008; Stimson et al., 2011; Sharipov, 2016). It enshrines the immediate establishment of political and administrative institutions, generally, governance systems in particular, to initiate and manage the implementation of development interventions and processes. It imbibes the promotion of full spatial and psychological development within the region and, therefore, fundamentally values sustainable development (Stimson et al., 2011; Antonescu, 2015; Badal, 2016). It also values participatory culture with the involvement of the local community, public and private sectors, Civil Service and Non-Governmental actors in all development, planning and decision-making processes (Ward et al., 2005; Hien, 2007; Millar et al., 2008; Badal, 2016). Endogeny captures processes of divergence, actively pursues policies and strategies for creating proactive interventions and development impulses to bring about turn-around from within the region. Its territorial nature encompasses small and medium-sized, large town and cities and urban-metropolitan regions as the hubs of development processes and resource attraction, especially under economic globalisation (Hien, 2007; Lee et al., 2009; Stimson et al., 2011). It encourages processes of knowing and knowledge forms premised upon realism and phenomenology, encouraging communicative and inter-subjective engagement (Fischer and Forester, 1993; Ofori, 2000d, 2021).

However, the weakness of endogeny lies in its limited effectiveness in crafting and establishing viable and more responsive institutions that deliver directly to the interests and needs

of the local community (Ward et al, 2005; Hien, 2007; Badal, 2016), including the tendency to ignore issues of effective control. Its emphasis on self-sufficiency is unrealistic, especially in contemporary global markets (Ward et al., 2005; Hien, 2007; Badal, 2016). It does not, after all, focus sufficiently on the *embeddedness of institutions and actions* in the socio-economic and cultural context of the region. Such limitations gave rise to neo-endogenous regional development, which rejects the polarisation between exogenous and endogenous regional development. Neo-endogeny aims to provide a hybridised approach more genuinely committed to local delivery, managing the ‘interplay between local and external forces’ more effectively (Badal, 2016). Lee et al. (2009: 616) observed that the two major modes have been moving closer but in a dialectical relationship, Vermiere et al. (2008) argued for a symbiotic relationship, if not integration between the exogenous and endogenous approaches, that is best expressed in neo-endogeny. This distinctively emphasises the cardinal and strategic importance of local institutions, aiming to develop ‘local institutional capacity’, capable of both mobilising internal resources and coping with the external forces impinging on the regional development processes within (Badal, 2016). Such *local institutions need to be embedded within* the human and social capital, including informal networks of the endogenous community. Neo-endogenous development recognises the essence of ‘central-local factors’, including ‘a belief in the potential of local areas to shape their future’ (High and Nemes, 2007: 5). And ‘the interplay between local and external forces is the key issue in development processes’, emphasis ‘on developing economic and political institutions’ that can cope with external threats (Vermiere et al., 2008: 3-4). Therefore, ‘The critical point is how to enhance the capacity of local areas to steer’ the ‘wider processes and actions that benefit’ them (Ward et al., 2005: 5), through *local structures, contacts and networks and embeddedness* of these (Vasquez-Barquero, 2007). Generally, the regional development literature in Ghana has not given explicit attention to the embeddedness engagement as this paper aims to do (Ofori, 2021).

Conceptualisation and context of embeddedness

Basically, ‘embeddedness’ means ‘rootedness’ or ‘rooted in’ (quotes mine; Vasquez-Barquero, 2002; 2007; Knutsen, 2003; Cooke et al., 2005; Fløsand and Sjøholt, 2007; Cui and Guitang, 2019; Atta-Owusu and Fitjar, 2022). Materially, it is expressed in terms of the level of rootedness of economic activity, development processes and actors within underlying socio-economic, cultural and political relations, contacts, relational networks and structures (Cooke et al., 2005; Ward et al., 2005: 6; Vasquez-Barquero, 2007; Kitsos et al., 2019). Thus Fløsand and Sjøholt (2007) considered embeddedness as a form of socio-economic networking that transcends individualistic, mechanistic and competitive notions of action, actors and place-attached actioning, depending on the particular economic activity (Atta-Owusu and Fitjar, 2022). So, embeddedness may be both material and immaterial (Fløsand and Sjøholt, 2007) as attached to the evolved place’s character and personality (Atta-Owusu and Fitjar, 2022). Traditional economic development processes, based on pure market mechanism may not always be sustained, especially in times of economic shock (Knutsen, 2003; Cooke et al., 2005; Vasquez-Barquero, 2007; Kitsos *et al.*, 2019), except embedded in personal relations, networks and social capital (Capello, 2016). Social capital is constituted of non-tradeable inter-dependencies such as trust, shared understanding, common culture, social norms of reciprocity, exchange, reputation (Cooke et al., 2005), interactionism, credibility and mutuality (Atta-Owusu and Fitjar, 2022). These generate socio-cultural-personal

relations and valorised networks that sustain the development of value chains, business enterprise and competitiveness (Cooke et al., 2005; Crescenzi and Harman, 2022), knowledge-sharing, information in-flows, fueling up innovations and sustained activity growth (Knutsen, 2003; Fløsand and Sjøholt, 2007; Greenberg et al., 2018). Such factors of economic development have historically generated agglomeration economies, especially localisation and urbanisation modes, producing spatial-material structures, including ‘industrial clusters’ (Marshall, 1920), ‘clusters’ (Potter, 1990) and ‘cultural quarters’ (Montgomery, 2003, 2004), all of which become these institutionally organised. As indicated previously, these trends of development are not apparent, yet, in the Ghanaian regional development literature as the present study aims to do.

However, such developments tend to produce a variety of embeddedness. Studying local-regional economic development in northern Namibia, Knutsen (2003), identified cognitive, social, cultural, political and spatial-functional forms of embeddedness as did other writers (Fløsand and Sjøholt, 2007; Cui and Guitang, 2019). Cognitive embeddedness is the bounded nature of rationality and limited modes of knowing; so multiple ways of knowing deepen it. Social embeddedness is the nature of inter-personal relations and social networks between major economic managerial actors as well as between them and local communities in which they operate, with trust as the gluing factor. Cultural embeddedness is the collective understanding, norms, values and related valorisation, how these affect shared economic engagements and/or limit economic knowledge and enterprise-community relations. Political embeddedness is how power struggles between economic and non-market institutional actors, particularly state and society, shape economic institutions and decisions, effects of government policy and regulatory instruments on market structures. Spatial embeddedness is partly the geographical location of economic activity, containing part of its value chain, situation and sector-based configuration, and partly how the activity is set in the locality. For Fløsand and Sjøholt (2007), this is geographical embeddedness, including economic actor numbers and material activity spread, characterised by activity proximity, proximal relations, patterns of economic growth, firm inter-dependence, immaterial values, which impede opportunistic tendencies, generating benefits of agglomeration and integration with institutional conditions and relations (Fløsand and Sjøholt, 2007; Vasquez-Barquero, 2007).

Eight embeddedness criteria mainly apply specifically to the institutional focus of the neo-endogenous regional development context (Ward et al., 2005; Hugh and Nemes, 2007; Vermiere et al., 2008). First, establishment of locally-focused institutions able to dynamically engage with community and ‘wider political, institutional, trading, and natural environments’, mediating all interactions involved (Ward et al., 2005: 5). Second, development of local institutional capacity with locally-embedded structures that can mobilise internal resources and cope with external and impinging forces, including ability to ‘draw upon non-local networks and resources’ (Cooke et al., 2005; Ward et al., 2005: 6; Kitsos et al., 2019). Third, institutions, economic and business processes embedded in socio-cultural networks and relationships through local participation in internal-external development activities (Ward et al., 2005: 5; Capello, 2016). Fourth, local/regional economic activity enmeshed in equally specifically developed socio-economic relations and networks. Fifth, human capital development, including enacted knowledge, skills, abilities, proficiencies, competences and local experience (tacit knowledge) and the roles and processes by which these accumulate ‘within individuals, businesses and other organisations’

(Ward et al., 2005: 6; Vasquez-Barquero, 2007). Sixth, local technological development and innovations, including inventions, new products, processes and related co-operation with partner institutions in these ventures. Seventh, developing organisational capacity of the neo-endogenous development institutions, including functional structures, capacity to combine internal-external knowledge flows so that they can represent and promote appropriate business interests and relations, responding ‘effectively to external threats’ (Ward et al., 2005: 6). Eighth, developing specific external/international-global contacts, networks and relations to promote and valorise these in the region’s interest. Like the forms of embeddedness indicated, these criteria of neo-endogenous institutional development have been hardly addressed in regional development and planning literature in Ghana, as is the intent in the present study (Ofori, 2021).

Methodology

Approaches to the study consisted mainly of literature review, case study strategy and qualitative methodology. Undertaken in the 2020-2021 periods, it was a follow-up to a previous wider survey in the 2017-2019 periods, designed to specifically analyse, explore and reflect on the embeddedness of GHCT and CEDECOM, as cases in endogenous and neo-endogenous regional development. Selected literature on theoretical-conceptual knowledge on exogenous-endogenous regional development processes and embeddedness were reviewed and related criteria derived. A dual-structured case study strategy was also adopted. First level related to the Central Region as a case of the administrative region in Ghana and unique in experimentation of endogenous regional development. Second level was represented by GHCT, a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) responsible for built and natural resource conservation and management and CEDECOM, both created by an exogenous, unelected regional governing body, Central Regional Co-ordinating Council (CRCC) (Ofori, 2000c, 2021). Graphic information was provided in the form of a political-administrative map of Ghana (Figure 1).

Qualitative methodology involved in-depth face-to-face interviews and interactions with the Executive Directors of GHCT and CEDECOM, head and technical officers of the latter’s Field Operations Department, and Development Planning Officers of CRCC. Analysis and discussion were based on an application of the embeddedness criteria and concepts of neo-endogenous regional development derived from the literature. A combination of the concepts of embeddedness and 8 theoretical criteria of neo-endogenous institutionalisation was used, in a wattle-and-daub fashion, to analyse and assess the embeddedness of CEDECOM and GHCT and their impacts on endogenous regional development in terms of their relevant engagements. However, because of the limited data availability with GHCT than CEDECOM, a multiple set of the neo-endogenous regional development criteria applied to the latter more than the former. Embeddedness of GHCT focused on: institutional structuring, local economic and cultural development activities, valorisation of these, plus its external networks. CEDECOM’s was based on: relationships with local institutional structures and delivery networks, internal resource mobilisation capacity and linked infrastructure, socio-economic-business development interventions, involvement of underlying institutional structures and networks, human capacity development, technological development and innovation, organisational capacity, external contacts and networks. Focus was on the effectiveness, valorisation and sustainability of these and real benefit to the Central Region.

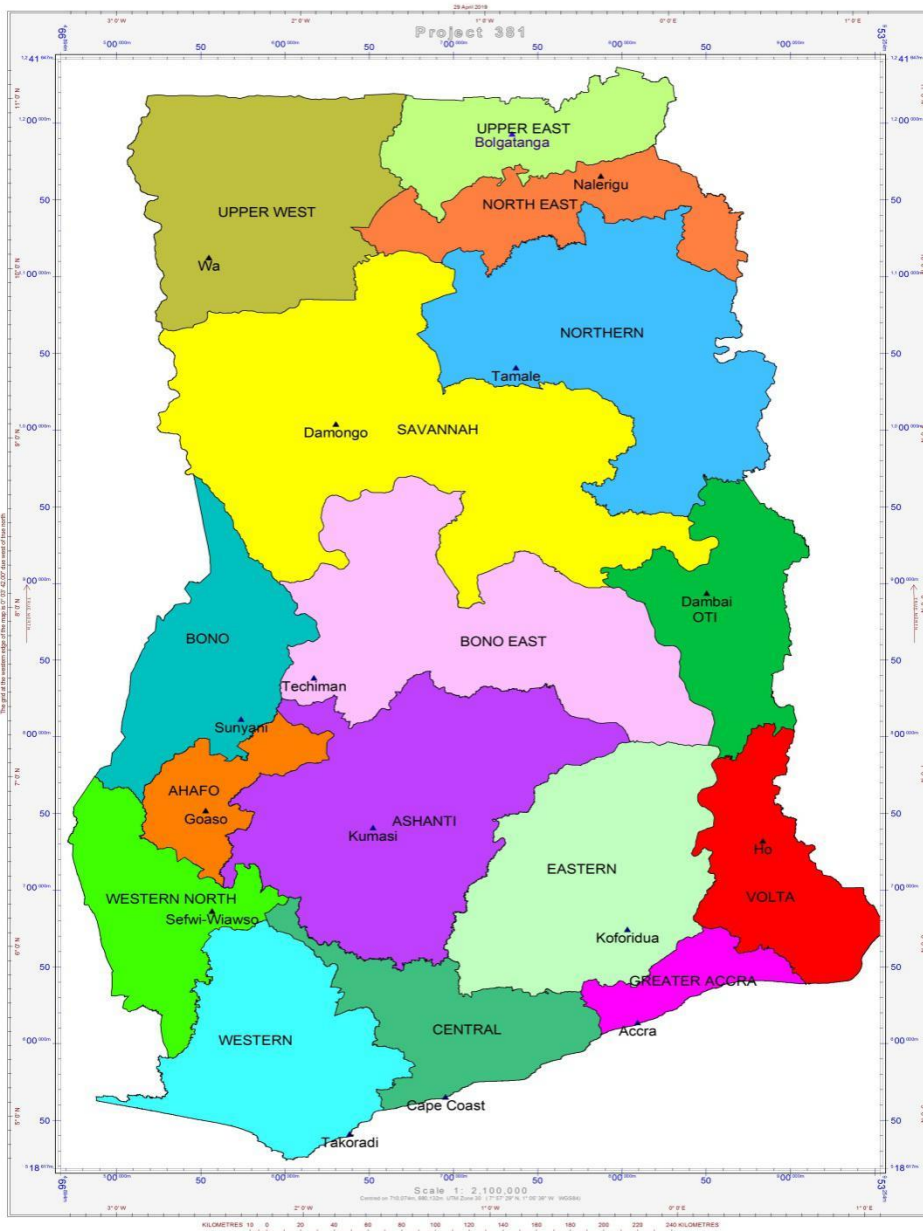


Figure 1 Map of Ghana: regional political-administrative areas

Source: Central Regional Office, Land Use and Spatial Planning Authority, Cape Coast, 2019.

Planning System and Regional Development in Ghana

Ghana is bordered to the east by Togo, West by Cote d'Ivoire and north by Burkina Faso. An established democracy since 1957, it inaugurated its Fourth Republic Constitution in 1992 for

civilian administration, following a period of military rule. It has 16 political-administrative regions (Figure 1) covering, 261 Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs). Richly endowed with mineral, land, agricultural, timber, oil, marine, lacustrine and riverine resources, it is largely a commodity exporter, aiming to promote economic diversification, value-addition strategy and a neo-liberalised economy, significantly improving during the 1983-2020 periods until the pandemic.

Ghana has a hierarchical and decentralised planning system with the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) at its apex, advising the President on development planning policy and strategy (Republic of Ghana, 1994a, 1994b). NPDC co-ordinates the planning activities of all national, regional and local planning authorities. Regional Co-ordinating Councils (RCCs) are responsible for regional-level development planning, with their Regional Planning Co-ordinating Units advising on matters of development planning, sector and spatial policy, co-ordinating, monitoring and evaluating planning activities of the MMDAs and regional sector departments. However, regional development has, historically, been exogenous, amounting to being a function of financial budgetary allocation, hardly adequate for any of the 16 regions. Government sought to temper this situation through the creation of exogenous regional development organisations.

In 1973, Government established Regional Development Corporations in all administrative regions, focused on rural development strategies, to attract investment, generate worthwhile agricultural, commercial and business activities and employment (Republic of Ghana, 1973). However, these corporations faced funding challenges, poor project planning processes and constrained political relations between regional ministers and corporation directors. Ineffective, the corporations were de-established in mid-1997. Next, Government established the Savannah Accelerated Development Authority (SADA) to undertake the development of the formerly three regions of northern Ghana – now five – and the savanna tips of two closest regions in the south (Republic of Ghana, 2010) (Figure 1). However, SADA also failed to deliver, constrained by financial malpractices, weak project planning, ineffective governance and management, the vast size of the programme area, and was rolled out in 2016. Subsequently, three new multi-regional Development Authorities were created in 2017: the Coastal, Middle Belt and Northern Development Authorities (Republic of Ghana, 2017a, 2017b, 2017c), each covering a set of regions with targeted funding meant for electoral constituency-based projects, still cast in exogeneity and equally distanced from their localities and explicitly endogenous contexts.

Central Region: Endogenous and Neo-Endogenous Development and Turn-Around Strategy

Long-suffering exogenous development and national planning system constraints, against its greater deprivation, intense poverty and consistent socio-economic decline, Central Region governance body and people decided in 1988/89 to initiate its process of endogenous development. The Regional Minister set out an informal regional development programme focused on tourism and primary agricultural activities. Leading political elite and economic actors were consulted about the intended intervention but less local communities. CEDECOM was created as a comprehensive endogenous regional development organisation to lead the planning and implementation of the programme and tasked to undertake a regional survey of the development challenges. It determined that the region's comparative and competitive advantages were in the development of heritage buildings, natural and wildlife resources, traditional festivals, apart from

agricultural, fishery and rural development. Funds were sought with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United States Agency for International Aid (USAID) and five American Private Voluntary Organisations (PVOs), involving a visit of the Central Region political leadership to the US. Government of Ghana, recognising these efforts also agreed to provide some counterpart funding.

Consequently, three successive regional development initiatives were introduced during the 1990-2001 periods: the Central Regional Integrated Development Programme (CERIDEP), Tourism Development Strategy of the Central Region (TODSCER) and Natural Resource Conservation and Heritage Preservation Project (NRCHPP). Major achievements included the creation of Kakum National Park, massive growth of the hospitality and catering sectors, voluminous inflow of tourists to the regenerated Cape Coast Castle, St George’s Castle and Fort St Jago in Elmina and the Park, appreciable job-creation, significant MSME growth, expansive skills and business training initiatives and a level of road infrastructure development. Several economic activities emerged in the National Park, apart from other positive externality developments in the artisan and handicrafts production and markets. Total impact was appreciably phenomenal and went far to turn-around the declined regional economy. Programme implementation ending and direct role of CEDECOM closing, it became necessary to establish GHCT to manage the developed assets. This included the establishment of a USAID-provided Endowment Fund of US\$2.0 million meant to support GHCT, invested on its behalf in the US. But how embedded are GHCT and CEDECOM to the benefit of the regional space economy (Vasquez-Barquero, 2002; 2007; Cooke et al., 2005; Kitsos et al., 2018; Greenberg et al., 2018)?

Analysis and Results and Discussion

Embeddedness of Ghana Heritage Conservation Trust

Institutional structures in Kakum National Park

GHCT developed a variety of structures for connecting with the Kakum National Park community (Table 1). Through these, it aimed to promote and sustain interest in wildlife and nature conservation, protect the Park and stop the encroachment and poaching activities. It significantly reduced these occurrences, provided appreciable financial and material support to the schools, sustaining their interest in wildlife. It engaged effectively with the MMDAs, Traditional Authorities as well as the Advisory Park Management Board that it jointly created with other stakeholders but it worked with the Mesomagor Bamboo Orchestra for a limited period only, due to funding challenges. GHCT could also have engaged with the group of private undertakers in the Park and encouraged their corporate contribution to community development. In terms of its achievements, however, GHCT was appreciably socially embedded.

Table 1 GHCT’s institutional structures and networks in Kakum National Park community

<i>Local Institutional Structure</i>	<i>Main Functions and Purposes</i>
Local Association of Schools (GHCT funded or materially supported)	Promoting natural resource conservation awareness among schools; Promoting community awareness and knowledge of the need to protect the Park;

	<p>Sustaining the interest of schools in Park visits and contribution to Park revenue; Promoting leisure and recreation activities for school kids and students in the Park community; Promoting the Trust's awareness of the material needs of schools for its support.</p>
Association of Local Authorities (MMDAs in the Park community)	<p>Liaising with MMDAs about GHCT contribution to socio-economic development in the Park area; Ensuring GHCT's non-duplication of MMDA development activities in the area; Promoting the contributions of the MMDAs to Park community's awareness of conservation issues and initiatives, focused on eliminating poaching and encroachment.</p>
Joint Committee of Traditional Authorities around the Park (Chiefs and Elders)	<p>Feedback on socio-economic development needs of the Park community; Negotiations in land supply and availability; Connecting with socio-cultural and economic contexts of local community; Promoting the contribution of Chiefs to the elimination of poaching on wildlife and encroachment on Park land; Promoting understanding and mediation about animal destruction of farms and crops and farmer compensation.</p>
Advisory Park Management Board, constituted of the Trust and Wildlife Division of Forestry Commission (Park Security)	<p>Monitoring Park protection and security; Dealing with Park repairs and maintenance; Training for tour guides in the Park; Addressing issues of concern brought forward by Park community.</p>
Local Association of Tour Guides (from Trust, Wildlife Division of Forestry Commission and independent operators)	<p>Feedback on Park safety; Monitoring Park visitor reactions and feelings; Improving tour guiding and tour guide quality; Improving conditions of service for tour guides.</p>
Park Community Cultural Performance Group (Mesomagor Bamboo Orchestra)	<p>Promoting cultural performances and folk music in Park community; Valorising folk music and traditional performances as a source of livelihood; Contributing to the promotion of local tourism; Dramatisation of anti-social attitudes and habits and promoting public education on positive youthful lifestyles.</p>

Source: Author's Fieldwork.

Local economic development activities and valorisation in Kakum National Park

Creation of the Park ended all natural resource collection from the former forest reserve by the community residents. Replacing the ‘lost economy’, grass-cutter- and snail-breeding, bee-keeping and honey production activities were introduced to provide alternative livelihood sources for the community (Table 2). So, introduction of these activities aimed to embed the new economy within the traditional resource and culturally valorised context of the community and co-operative groups were formed for the operation of all three projects. However, the co-operatives and activities were not sustained and declined. One reason was the lack of sustained investment. Second, poor organisation of the co-operatives, in terms of roles, benefit sharing, group control and weak project planning. Most co-operative members, therefore, tended to operate rather independently and the groups broke up. Thus the targeted social and cultural embeddedness, with opportunities for valorisation were lost out.

Table 2 Local economic and valorized cultural activities in Kakum National Park

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Medium of Embeddedness</i>
Grass-cutter breeding and meat production	Subsistence farmer groups; Raw and smoked meat trader/vendor groups; Originally, formation of a co-operative but became loose and inactive; independent operators; Traditional area based.
Bee-keeping and honey production	Bee-keeping co-operatives but not strong; Association of individual bee-keepers; Traditional area-based.
Snail-breeding and meat production	Association of individual snail-breeders; Women’s snail-breeder co-operatives; Youth associations.
Training and skills development in catering services and book-keeping	Women’s associations and co-operatives in catering activities and book-keeping.
Handicrafts production and trading activities	Bamboo crafts production centre at Assin Kruwa
Promotion and development of traditional and folk music and dance performances	Kukyekukyeku Bamboo Orchestra of Mesomagor; Other drama troupe based in Cape Coast metropolis.

Source: Authors fieldwork.

Becoming a major tourist attraction, Kakum National Park needed quality catering services and GHCT made efforts to train some local women in the preparation and sale of various cooked foods. The Trust also considered it worthwhile to train the women in book-keeping practices. Many participants were satisfied to gain such new skills and training. However, GHCT’s support for these initiatives declined, due to decreasing tourist arrivals later and its own financial under-performance. Youth groups could also have been organised into a positive force to promote socio-

economic development, quite apart from roles in the Bamboo Orchestra. The youth could also have significantly contributed to Park security and safety, including checks on Park encroachment challenges. But the youth groups did not think that GHCT was making beneficial contribution to Park community life, especially their own. So, it was less socially embedded in its sustained support for these socio-economic groups and activities.

Valorisation of cultural activities in Kakum National Park

Nevertheless, GHCT created a Bamboo Crafts Production Centre at Assin Kruwa rural town in the Park-fringe for mostly bamboo products because of the abundant growth of the material in the area, residents also using it to create household furniture and shelter structures, apart from providing training in craftsmanship. The Centre's activities and products were embedded in the natural-socio-cultural context of the community and it had a contract with an NGO, Beyond Aid Company, to buy out and market its handicraft products. Such popular use of the bamboo material made GHCT decide to create a 'Bamboo Village', entirely built in bamboo wood, a further tourist attraction.

GHCT encouraged and supported folk music and cultural performances in the Park community, notably by Kukyekukyeku Bamboo Orchestra of Mesomakor community. But it could have done better by uniting and organising all performer groups in the area as agents of cultural embeddedness. Mesomakor Orchestra numbered over 20 performers, including its leadership and master performers and GHCT used to organise training sessions and arrange fee-paying performances for them, each performer earning some GH¢500 (US\$125) on all occasions. Using part of its proceeds, the group built a small lodge at Mesomakor for overnight tourists who wanted primary contact with socio-cultural life and traditional cuisine in the community. But tourist visitor numbers were dwindling and GHCT failed to sustain support as performance opportunities were also drying out. However, it used to have the group perform outside the Park before packed city audiences, including Cape Coast but failed to sustain, much due to its own relatively poor financial performance and failed to continue reaping the social and cultural embeddedness benefits.

Ghana Heritage Conservation Trust's external contacts

GHCT was internationally connected with its own endowment fund manager in the United States (Table 3), which had direct oversight of its fund transactions. Since 2014, however, the Trust took over direct decision-making on funding disbursement in collaboration with the fund manager, depending on the yields available. In view of GHCT's status, the fund had successive and sustainable existence and was thus socially and economically embedded. Other GHCT external links were of an occasional fund provision and consultative kind, including advice from Conservation International. During implementation of the Central Region's turn-around programmes, the CRCC and CEDECOM worked directly with Conservation International on day-to-day management basis. In the post-programme area, GHCT maintained a consultative relationship with Conservation International on Park management practices, apart from occasional donor receipts. Similarly, GHCT received consultative advice and occasional funding from the Critical Ecosystem Fund Partnership, including the financing of a Students Fieldwork Camp development at Assin Kruwa. Park ornithological resources also connected GHCT with the

International Bird Foundation, in the listing of birds. So, these contacts, indicated that GHCT was institutionally and internationally significantly socially and politically embedded and valorised.

Table 3 Ghana Heritage Conservation Trust: External links and networks and valorisation

<i>External Contacts</i>	<i>Valorisation of Relationship</i>
International contacts:	
Endowment Fund investment in the United States	Main source of funding support for socio-economic development in the Park-fringe community; Main source of funding for supporting built environment conservation within and outside the Central Region.
Conservation International	Occasional consultative interactions about effective natural resource conservation management.
Critical Ecosystem Fund Partnership	Consultative relations in support of Park management; Contributing to funding activities of the Trust.
International Bird Foundation	Listing of birds in the Park; Attraction of bird-watcher tourists to the Park.
National contacts:	
Ghana Association of National Parks	Consultative and associational/sector collaborative engagement; Promoting relations between the Trust and the Wildlife Division (Forestry Commission).
Tourist Guides Association of Ghana	Trust funding and training support for the association; Feedback on tour guide performance and challenges.
National Federation of Tourism organisations/Tour Operators	Trust's funding support for the Federation's activities; Trust's contribution to promoting tourism generally.
Beyond Aid Non-Governmental organisation	Contract with Beyond Aid to buy out all handicraft production from the Trust's Bamboo Crafts Centre; Market intelligence information flows and sales performance promotion.

Source: Author's Fieldwork.

Nationally, GHCT was institutionally rooted in the activities of four private organisations. Ghana National Association of Parks provided a form of trade union contact with its members and advised on the welfare of the Wildlife Division, responsible for Park security and safety. GHCT also provided training and occasionally funding support for the Tourist Guide Association of Ghana and National Federation of Tour Operators/Tourism organisations. These considered GHCT as an important source of funding, in turn, providing useful feedback on performance of the tourism sector, generally. GHCT's relationship with Beyond Aid NGO has been indicated. Such institutional relationships were, therefore, embedded in socio-cultural valorisation.

Embeddedness of Central Region Development Commission Relationships with local institutional and delivery networks

CEDECOM is the technical arm of the CRCC but also placed under the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MOTI). So, it implemented projects and decisions of both institutions. Sometimes, some of these conflicted with those of the Commission. However, it aimed to bring about the development of the whole region and promote contacts with all public and private organisations that could support its work, and collaborated with the MMDAs, which supported it with human resources, depending on its own needs. CEDECOM was involved with the private sector on the One-District-One-Factory (1D1F) project, a government initiative aimed at developing, at least, one factory or factory-like business in each district of Ghana, in collaboration with private investors (Ofori, 2021) in activities including artisan trades, hospitality, restaurant and tourist businesses, etc. However, each of CEDECOM's own internal departments engaged with the businesses in its area of operation, which meant they were not integrated in their approach to local economic development (Interview, April 2021). CEDECOM also realised that its work did not cover issues like climate change, gender and disability, which needed to be policy-captured. And its programmes were limited by policies of the 'government of the day' (Respondent). Directions from the Regional Minister also influenced CEDECOM's policies and programmes, depending on their preferences (Respondent). Such challenges tended to limit CEDECOM's local political and social embeddedness in its engagement with local institutions and socio-cultural contexts.

In its engagement with other local formal and informal organisations, CEDECOM emphasised that this depended on the needs of the particular organisations. One was the "Planting for Food and Jobs" initiative, a government Keynesian type programme targeted on food production and job-creation, with implementation managed by the MMDAs and some Community-Based Organisations (CBOs). CEDECOM also engaged with the Ghana Enterprise Agency (Republic of Ghana, 2000) in visiting various Churches and mentoring them on SME development and management. Its Field Operations Department was engaging with one NGO about local economic development projects and embarked on community sensitisation. Its Business Centre was also involved with some universities, hospitals and the Chamber of Commerce about business development ventures. Its work with civil service actors 'cuts across all relationships' (Interview, April 2021).

But CEDECOM had a special relationship with Traditional Authorities, as local overlords, which also held the greatest potential for culturally embedding its activities. It engaged them 'as and when their programmes fall in line with CEDECOM's own activities' (Interview, April 2021) Depending on a particular project, the Chiefs, as custodians of the land, provided land. In Ghana, 80 per cent of the land is owned and controlled by them, on behalf of their traditional areas, public sector owning 20 per cent (Dobson, 2011; Amankwah, 2016) and CEDECOM would buy the land in cash or kind (Respondent). Sometimes, Chiefs also provided free lodging for visiting CEDECOM officials and their accompanying guests, including private investors on familiarisation tours during project planning and land negotiation processes. Such negotiations avoided land litigations, strengthened support for private investors and culturally embedded acquisition processes.

CEDECOM also engaged with gender-based associations, advocacy groups, unemployed person associations, women and youth operators in agro-business, Regional and Local Chambers of Commerce and hoteliers associations, 'as long as the particular assistance' was 'litigation-free' (Interview, April 2021). Occasionally, CEDECOM officials visited high schools to promote

environmental education, including practices related to climate change, tree-planting in particular, and with local universities about investment promotion in the region.

However, CEDECOM attracted much public criticism about its limited impact on development of the region but it argued that some of the critics did so because they were ‘not really aware, they start criticising from the outside’ (Interview, April 2021). But such reactions may also be indication that CEDECOM was less visible and not sensitising the community about its activities and programmes enough, which probably tended to limit its institutional embeddedness. Nevertheless, in relation to its income-generation mandate, it organised some of the unemployed youth and trained them in alternative livelihood activities, including the Park community and fisher folk in the coastal areas (Respondent). Because ‘most activities tend to be seasonal’, the training was in ‘fill-in activities so they could be engaged all-year round’, strictly in the aquaculture sector, during the official ‘fishing closure’ season, between June and August (Respondent), apart from training others in the hospitality sector. However, limited visibility of these activities still affected its local institutional and social embeddedness.

Internal resource mobilisation capacity and coping infrastructure

CEDECOM was able to mobilise some resources through its institutional contacts. Sometimes, MMDAs provided it with land resources, ‘transport services and human resources in the identification of investment places’, helping with identifying ‘the associations, industries, business entities based within the district’ and sharing other ‘knowledge ... with CEDECOM’ (Interview, April 2021). But it ‘depends on what the resource is to be used for’, e.g. land (Respondent). Hospitality firms also occasionally provided some resource support, based on ‘needs identification’ or the particular clients needing assistance (Respondent). It also depended on what CEDECOM needed to fund and support (Respondent). So, it was vital sustaining and effectively embedding these forms of resource mobilisation and support, depending ‘on effective monitoring’ by CEDECOM and commitment of resource providers (Respondent).

In terms of any threats to CEDECOM’s institutional support, ‘as it goes along, it ... identifies ‘these’ and ‘what it might do’, some contacts occasionally bearing with it, others not seeing with it – ‘tends to be fifty-fifty; some are helpful, some not’ (Interview, April 2021). Its partners were in ‘effective communication’ with it and it, indeed, did its own ‘threat analysis before embarking on any project’ (Respondent). During its 2020 Investment Conference, it received some funding from some of its partners, some of which obtained a Chinese assistance of potential benefit to CEDECOM. But this support was delayed by the pandemic although ‘prior to the ... Conference, all preparations had been made’ for it (Interview, April 2021). And now, all are waiting; generally, ‘everybody bears with CEDECOM through effective communication’ (Respondent). These experiences indicated the Commission was fairly well socio-culturally embedded in its relational contexts and networks but all stakeholders were circumspect about the judicious and efficient use of resources. However, it was less able to mobilise adequate financial resources, which always affected its economic embeddedness.

Socio-economic and business development within institutional and relational networks

CEDECOM aimed ‘not to compete with clients’, rather help ‘to develop their businesses’ (Interview, April 2021), serving mainly as a learning centre and creating

‘experimental/demonstration models’, e.g., its ‘oil palm farm started on a demonstration basis’ (Respondent) and its piggery ‘project ... will help the Central Region’, depending ‘on (a) what will create jobs for the region and (b) contribute to the protein content of the region’ (Respondent). CEDECOM’s embeddedness in these was, therefore, socio-culturally and economically sustainable, including the training it provided to various farmers and operators to engage in these. Such training encouraged client/participant commitment and promoted the socio-cultural embeddedness of CEDECOM’s economic activities. Indeed, ‘Since CEDECOM came into existence, it has been training people; some of them have been doing very well, ever since, depending on their performance’. Strengthened, some former trainees have sustained their start-ups, including soap-makers, farmers, sugar loaf pineapple producers and salt manufacturers (Respondent). So, CEDECOM believed that ‘Now Central Region is coming up as a rich region. Some of the activities of CEDECOM have helped the Central Region to achieve the status. Central Region has numerous alternative local training that is helping the people and the region to come up’ (Respondent), typical growth and expanding businesses, including salt and oil palm product trade and the hospitality industry.

Relating to any external threats to the sustainability of its socio-cultural and economic embeddedness, CEDECOM was happy that its training support promoted industrial performance, generating regional-international trade in various commodities with neighbouring countries, including Niger and Burkina Faso, apart from other African countries (Interview, April 2021), generating economic and business tourism, from Ghana’s regions and other African jurisdictions. Thus socio-cultural and economic embeddedness of CEDECOM’s training and business promotion activities generated significant local and international trade and tourism.

Development of underlying institutional structures and networks

Once it was involved with an organisation, CEDECOM developed a relationship with it and subsequently, it was invited to lead public sensitisation programmes for the client (Interview, April 2021). Monitoring of the particular activities also brought CEDECOM and its client institutions together including engaging them on ‘day-to-day or operational activity’ basis ‘if it involves them’ (Respondent). For instance, CEDECOM’s Special Development Department visiting individually based, association-led and gender-based activities, aimed at helping any insolvent groups and advising on sources of financial support. So, developing institutional contacts and embeddedness depended ‘on the type of activity and visits, monitoring, being in contact with the leadership and their communities’ (Respondent). Its Investment Conference and Award initiatives provided clear opportunities for promoting its institutional and activity forms of embeddedness, aiming to make it an annual affair but could not sustain these due to the ‘lack of resources’ (Interview, April 2021), limiting its social and institutional embeddedness. It had planned to hold an annual national Investment Conference as way attracting investors to the region and raising funds, with a matching Award Ceremony to reward businesses, individual and groups who had made various contributions to the development of the Central Region.

Regional human capital development

CEDECOM’s human capital development initiatives were also crucial to sustaining its embeddedness, with its specific employment training, skills development, ability and competence

improvement practices. ‘Initially, CEDECOM was doing all these’ but it depended ‘on the engagement of a particular department of the Commission, although most of these were done by’ its ‘Investment Promotions Department’ (Interview, April 2021). Nevertheless, CEDECOM aimed ‘to appreciate those who have contributed to promotion of the Commission’ and ‘to motivate them to do more’ (Respondent). Generally, however, ‘CEDECOM, itself, develops human resources through capacity building’, providing ‘training to the schools, institutions, all other clients’ (Respondent). It ‘ensures having the expertise internally, to be able to sustain its training activities’ and ‘identifying the right training at the right time’ (Respondent). Such commitment to training practices constituted the sources of its human capacity embeddedness. However, it encountered an establishment challenge. Generally, it worked under the CRCC and MOTI and ‘so does not go beyond their mandate’, ‘cannot go beyond it’ (Interview, April 2021). Second, its lack of resources remained a great handicap. But CEDECOM believed that becoming a truly independent endogenous regional development organisation was the way to mediate these problems: ‘CEDECOM would wish to be independent, with the necessary legislation or Legislative Instrument’ (Interview, April 2021) which would also effectively promote and enhance the embeddedness of its activities and relevant institutional relationships. But these challenges indicated that CEDECOM was less politically embedded, even with its advantageous institutional setting, being the technical wind of CRCC and placed under the MOTI.

Regional technological development and innovations

CEDECOM ‘sees to the introduction of new technology in the various activities and trains its clients in these’ (Interview, April 2021). Where the relevant technology and related training were not available, it made efforts to import these into the region. Otherwise, persons and companies needing the technology were referred to other providers (Respondent). Actors and agencies that had any technological development, innovations, skills and ideas could also contact CEDECOM as a conduit for reaching potential clients and end-users. Directly and indirectly, therefore, CEDECOM shared its embeddedness in its involvement in technological, skills and innovation development. But itself recognised that its overall performance in this regard was not strong enough (Respondent). Similarly, it was not directly in co-operation and collaboration with other institutions in these initiatives. However, sometimes, ‘CEDECOM invites other organisations to support it, for example, universities, depending on the particular activity’; it ‘works with all agencies’ (Respondent). And, its lack of adequate funding and less visibility, generally, challenged its support for technological development and embeddedness in local technological skills, knowledge and competences. Indeed, in a previous study, it was revealed that the Central Region was seriously lacking in labour skills, because of which some investors and businesses were turned away from the region (Ofori, 2021). So, available skilled persons tended to stream out to the Western, Greater Accra and Ashanti Regions.

CEDECOM’s organisational capacity

CEDECOM believed that it had the organisational capacity enough to work with all agencies in the region because it had a ‘well-structured system’ and a ‘hard-working team’ ‘to withstand all’ its ‘challenges’. It also prided itself on its uniqueness as an endogenous regional development organisation and previous achievements (Respondent), which added to its strengths. It believed

that it was internally well-organised to deliver because its departments worked ‘hand-in-hand, reaching out to the public, designing the appropriate programmes and activities’, demonstrating ‘support’ for ‘the various engagements’ (Interview, April 2021). It contacted clients directly or they came to it and it helped them and its ‘internal structure’ was ‘capable of benefiting the outside community’ (Respondent). However, its internal structure faced challenges, including limited funding, less human capacity in some areas, delays in meeting project delivery schedules, some ‘skills may not be immediately available’ (Respondent), further constraining its institutional and social embeddedness. But having adequate organisational capacity lay at the heart of CEDECOM’s performance as an endogenous regional development organisation. Admittedly, however, it ‘needs improvement because of change, need to upgrade, new trends’ (Respondent). And it aimed to do so ‘through capacity building, training programmes, etc.’ but these were always limited by the lack of adequate funding (Respondent).

External contacts and networks

CEDECOM, had contacts ‘with some international investors’, most of these being NGOs, developing some of these through central government ministries (Interview, April 2021). Sometimes, ‘support comes in from institutional donors; for example, the United Nations Development Programme’ (UNDP), to fund some programmes (Respondent). The Chinese Government also provided financial grants for its sugarloaf pineapple production project, including technical and training support services. And the Indian Government sponsored capacity training programmes for some of its staff. In addition, a German organisation also provided funding support for its community-based development projects. These contributed to promoting its programme delivery and benefits for sectors, activities and general public in the region (Interview, April 2021). Such support, since the 1990s, contributed to its functional embeddedness, especially in financial terms.

Sustaining external institutional relations and networks through effectively maintaining these was, therefore, equally vital to advancing CEDECOM’s courses (Interview, April 2021). Its 2019-declared plans for an International Investment Conference, apart from targeted national event, was crucial to deepening these contacts, although unable to hold the former, let alone sustain its annual version, due to inadequate funding. However, CEDECOM was positive that ‘If the International Conference comes up’, its own ‘name would go global, more contacts would be attracted to the region and nation’ (Respondent). Furthermore, ‘CEDECOM operated in the districts and local areas, not the cities’ and undertook mostly localised and territorial projects (Interview, April 2021). But it believed that its external relations would help it deepen its activities in the local communities, e.g., through distributing teak tree seedlings to farmers in localities, including Dunkwa, Upper Denkyira East District and Twifo Hemang, Lower Denkyira-Twifo Hemang District in the region, additional to initiatives in borehole drilling, primary healthcare centres, rural electrification and planned housing projects.

GHCT and CEDECOM Relations

A gaping loophole in Central Region’s endogenous development policy and intervention was the lack of effective collaboration between GHCT and CEDECOM. Apparently, this equally parallels the limited co-operation between the internal departments of the latter, itself. The two

organisations used to have conflicts over the control of some land resources linked to the Kakum National Park environment and management of the turn-around programmes. Proposals by GHCT as to how they might share-crop the lands were not supported by CEDECOM, which wanted to be solely in charge of these. Such matters strained relations between the two endogenous regional development organisations, which were created by the CRCC. GHCT saw CEDECOM as being self-centred, rather non-altruistic, unco-operative and not collaborative enough in the endogenous and neo-endogenous regional development process. This situation made them miss out on vital sources of political and social embeddedness. However, CEDECOM admitted that GHCT was better financed, especially because of its external Endowment Fund and proceeds from the Park. This may have been reason which it wanted to take over the Park related ‘trust’ lands and share in management of the Park Interview with CEDECOM Respondent, April 2021). Such turf war did not help their institutional and political embeddedness, nor was CRCC that funded them was to mediate the ‘conflict’.

Conclusions

Embedding endogenous and neo-endogenous regional development organisations and related interventions in the underlying material, non-material, institutional, relational contexts and networks is fundamental to sustainable and transformational regional development, especially in the developing countries as exemplified in the Central Region of Ghana, with its turn-around achievement that exogenous development had failed to deliver. The use of a combination of the concepts of embeddedness and criteria of neo-endogenous institutional development, in a wattle-and-daub approach, was effective in the analysis and assessment of the impacts of CEDECOM and GHCT on the transformation of the Central Region, under the relevant interventions made. Such methodology may be experimental and pioneering or innovative in endogenous regional development but would be useful in the analysis and assessment of future initiatives and sustainability of these, especially in the context of the developing countries. CEDECOM and GHCT variously typified and demonstrated the identified variety of embeddedness to relative depths, more wide-ranging in the former than the latter, much due to data availability variations. But both equally spoke to the context of other African and developing countries. Relevance, value and challenges of local-external connections and networks were also demonstrated in the endogenous and neo-endogenous modes of regional development.

However, GHCT’s financial fortunes much depended on its endowment fund investment performance in the US, under that country’s own economic climate. Less yields from the fund meant less financial support for its various projects. This indicated how certain unavoidable external circumstances and factors tend to affect or threaten the interests of an endogenous regional development organization, although it illustrated a useful local-external collaborative and co-operative venture. The endowment fund proceed is an in-flow resource but its timeliness could be a disbenefit to GHCT and the Central Region economy, which would also tend to limit the institutional, political and social embeddedness of the Trust. However, it had no control on economic events and performance of financial investments in the United States.

GHCT developed effective local structures for embedding itself in the Park community but was limited in its cognitive, political and social embeddedness, generally, in not being more

inclusive to explicitly involve the community and the in-Park private sector as a corporate base in its activities, and not encouraging participation of the youth in the local economy. Equally its social and cultural embeddedness was limited in not sustaining support for the Mesomakor Orchestra group. Its failure to sustain its management of the replacement economy and co-operative groups also limited its geographical and social embeddedness. However, it appears that GHCT's efforts to be socially and spatially embedded was affected by the continued wildlife poaching and Park land encroachment occurrences. But GHCT aimed to sustain efforts in cognitive embeddedness through its local conservation awareness promotion initiatives, using the various structures it created for seeping into the community bases. And, it sustained its cultural embeddedness fairly in the bamboo handicrafts production and trading business, despite failure to sustain support for the Kukyekukyeku Bamboo Orchestra, itself. GHCT's business success also deepened its functional-spatial embeddedness, including benefits of its training initiatives in catering skills and services. Indeed, its successful performance in the handicrafts production business starkly contrasted with its dismal achievement in sustaining the replacement economies based on snail and grass-cutter breeding, bee-keeping and honey production activities. If highly valorised, however, these activities have equally great market potential in both the rural and urban economies across Ghana. Such lack of commitment and concern also added to the limited social and cultural embeddedness of GHCT in the Park community.

Moreover, the Advisory Park Management Board (APMB) was an informal structure by agreement between GHCT and the Wildlife Division of the Forestry Commission, which was responsible for Park security. However, if formalised and consolidated, the APMB could exercise more effective Park governance, policy and decision-making and deepen GHCT's political embeddedness. It was also essential and necessary to increase critical stakeholder numbers, including the local community leaders and other representatives and private sector operators in the Park. Indeed, the potential contribution of the emergent private sector in the Park needs to be emphasised. Their growing numbers and up-scaling activities promised appreciable contribution to the overall development of the Park community. It would appear, however, that GHCT was in a kind of competition than effective collaboration with them. GHCT needed to actively engage with the private sector in the Park, a sure source of social embeddedness, which it failed to capture, apart from the potential political embeddedness. Nevertheless, GHCT held richer functional-spatial embeddedness in its external contacts and networks, including its US-based endowment fund and international donors, providing it with significant financial and material sustainability. GHCT was also socially and culturally embedded, to an extent, in national tourism and tourist guide organisations, creation of some of which it specifically encouraged, all of which further benefited its cognitive embeddedness in tourism matters. Putting the impacts of GHCT together, its challenges in social, cultural and political embeddedness also limited its impact on regional sustainability but it tended to score more on spatial or geographical embeddedness, especially in relation to external contacts and networks.

CEDECOM was fairly well socially embedded in local institutional structures and delivery networks, including MMDAs, private sector, NGOs, CBOs, educational institutions, advocacy associations, agro-based women and youth operators, chambers of commerce and Traditional Authorities, with beneficial relationships both ways. It was also strongly socially embedded through its various training initiatives, especially impacting MSME start-ups and growth.

However, it appears that its training activities were more reactive than proactive. It is good to identify training opportunities but it would be more effective to regulate and programme these. For instance, organising these at particular times during the annual calendar. But CEDECOM was far less politically embedded because it was limited in independent policy making, apart from lacking legislative backing. Further, it was less functionally-spatially embedded in failing to cover other strategic sectors, including climate change, gender, disability, etc. Such failures and weaknesses also limited its sustainability. Moreover, CEDECOM had less visibility, especially in the cities.

CEDECOM was also limited in its internal resource mobilisation capacity, benefiting from occasional international donors and less so from its own Internally Generated Funds because its functional embeddedness was mostly limited to demonstration projects than viable substantive commercial-industrial activities, like GHCT's Bamboo Crafts Centre, despite its own 'effective communication' with its partners. However, it gained functional-spatial embeddedness through its impact on national-international trade in West Africa and beyond. However, unlike GHCT, CEDECOM did not develop any particular structures for connecting with the local levels, except the public, private, NGO and CBO ones indicated previously, despite having a Special Development Department. It would have boosted its social and cultural embeddedness if it had done so. Its human capital development heavily focused on its functional embeddedness in training initiatives and out-house capacity building programmes. And its own human resources were not fully up-to-date, despite having a hard-working team, further limiting its functional embeddedness, apart from funding and legislative context challenges. Despite having a good organisational structure and a hard-working team, CEDECOM's social, cognitive and functional embeddedness were equally challenged by inadequate funding, limited human resource capacity, fewer skills and lack of effective collaborative engagement of its in-house departments.

CEDECOM's strong performance in training initiatives, generally, was less functionally embedded in technological development and innovations, despite its own direct and indirect efforts. Moreover, its limited institutional contacts, in this regard, equally lessened its social embeddedness, still challenged in terms of funding. Again, unlike GHCT, CEDECOM was relatively less embedded in external contacts and networks, apart from occasional funding support from donors, including the UNDP, Chinese, Indian, German and NGO sources. However, these provided much needed funding, contributing to its functional and social embeddedness. Efforts to promote external contacts and networks through the national and international investment conferences were less successful and not sustained, particularly due to inadequate funding, further limiting its political and spatial embeddedness. So, its external contacts were rather narrow, which also limited its local-external relations and networks, apart from its generally poor visibility in the cities.

Upon these achievements and challenges, future endogenous and neo-endogenous regional policy in Ghana, other developing and African countries should include a number of important emphases. First, expanding and deepening training initiatives, providing adequate funding, possibly and significantly derived from institutional engagement in viable economic and business ventures, beyond demonstration projects, with encouraged participation of all stakeholders and partners. For instance, a more active involvement of both organisations, particularly CEDECOM in the 1DIF ventures, would be more worthwhile and rewarding, in this regard, on joint, partnership or other collaborative basis. Second, widened breadth and connections of local economic, cultural

and social institutional structures, apart from improvement in organisational capacity, particularly within CEDECOM. Third, expanding the cultural activity sector through a more active promotion of the leisure and entertainment activities such as choral music festivals and various sports would also promote cultural and geographical embeddedness. Fourth, endogenous and neo-endogenous regional policy and planning should equally focus on cognitive and functional embeddedness, covering all sectors, including climate change, gender and disability issues as well as emphasis on the cultural sector activities and valorisation of these, stakeholders and partners. Fifth, it is essential to strongly policy-capture technological development and innovation initiatives in the endogenous and neo-endogenous development process. Sixth, need to deepen effective political embeddedness in the control over policy making, apart from explicit legitimate legislative backing for CEDECOM. Seventh, future endogenous development policy should also focus on promoting the visibility of GHCT and particularly CEDECOM. Media advertisements, more effective collaboration with educational institutions, NGOs, CBOs and Faith Based Organisations (FBOs), including the expanded cultural development sector, would significantly contribute to achieving social, cultural, cognitive, spatial and political embeddedness. Eighth, overall endogenous regional development must need the collaborative engagement of all institutional structures, particularly the endogenous and local community ones, to deliver effectively for the region, promoting inclusiveness and participation. The apparent strained relations between GHCT and CEDECOM masks everything that endogenous regional development means and involves. Therefore, effective co-operation and collaboration between both organisations is, absolutely, essential to regional policy and sustainable programme performance. Definitely, such social and political forms of embeddedness are highly vital to successful endogenous regional development processes. Central Region's endogenous turn-around indicates the potential for the formalisation of its experience as a regional policy in Ghana and other developing countries. Interventions, like 1D1F and MSMEs need to be linked and embedded within the regions.

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