



Savannah Accelerated Development Authority

SADA

(A Sustainable Development Initiative for the Northern Savannah)

Strategy and Work plan
(2010 – 2030)

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NORTHERN SAVANNAH DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

There is an increasing development gap between the Northern Savannah Ecological belt and the rest of the country. By all indications the North lags behind the South and the gap seems to be increasing. This gap is a critique of the status quo. At the same time, as a result of agricultural practices, the fragility of the soils and in increasing deforestation there is a tendency for weather changes to cause droughts and floods. With global warming, these events can be expected to occur more frequently. The political leadership and development analyst in Ghana agree that bridging this gap is as critical national issue.

The Northern Savannah Development Initiative (now referred to as SADA) defines the parameters of a major paradigm shift in stimulating economic growth and sustainable development in the belt. It provides a comprehensive regional strategy for accelerated development in the belt.

Bridging the gap requires a paradigm shift in several ways:

- (a) The orientation of economic activities;
- (b) The approach to policy and intervention in poor societies;
- (c) Change from sector-wide planning to Ecological zones; and
- (d) Adaptability to the environment.

The SADA Initiative addresses three main issues:

(a) Bridge North-South Gap

The main issue addressed is to provide a development strategy to bridge the development gap between the Northern Savannah Ecological Belt and the rest of the country. That there is a big gap between the Northern Savannah (N. S.) and the rest of the Ghana is not in doubt. Whether one looks at the levels of poverty, education, health, infrastructure etc., there is a wide gap. This gap is the result of past policy failures and therefore redressing the issue is a national affair. The rest of Ghana must be interested in investing in this belt to redress the inequality for several reasons.

The Northern Savannah Ecological belt can contribute to the overall growth and the achievement of the MDGs in Ghana. If the guinea Savannah had grown at the same rate as the rest of Ghana, per capita incomes would have been significantly higher and Ghana would have been closer to the MDGs. Addressing the development gap between the Northern Savannah and the rest of the country is necessary to ensure political, social and economic stability. Experience shows that stack regional inequalities tend to breed political and economic stability.

The need to close the development gap is even more urgent with the possibility that Ghana may start producing oil in commercial quantities from the end of 2010. This may accentuate regional disparities and create massive migratory movements as Ghana experiences Dutch Disease problems.

(b) Long-Term Adaptation to Climate Changes

A second issue addressed is providing the strategy by which Northern Savannah can adapt in the long term to changes in the climate. As is reported here, most of the risks and vulnerabilities in the Northern Savannah are climate-change related, especially induced by floods or droughts or both. With worsening climate change it is expected that the frequency of these events may increase.

Policy measures for long term adaptation are aimed at reducing the frequency of these events or minimizes their effects when they occur. More immediate strategies are directed at flood mitigation and the harvesting of flood waters for long-term productive uses in agriculture, fisheries, energy and water

transport. Also, a strategy is in place to empower the population to respond to the adverse effects of these events with minimum external assistance.

(c) Short Term and Developments and Security

Some parts of the Northern Savannah are endemic food shortage areas. It is also important to recognise that whatever the policy framework there will always be some members of society who will be excluded from the new economy and vulnerable. There is a need for short term food and livelihoods security measures. This issue is also addressed in the SADA through proposals for short-term adaptation involving minimising the effects of floods and droughts and accommodating those adversely affected. The strategy also addresses livelihood and social protection issues.

OBJECTIVES AND BASIS OF THE STRATEGY

The main objective of SADA is to develop a diversified and resilient economic zone in the north. The goal is to double per capita incomes of Northern Savannah and reduce the incidence of poverty to 20% of the population within 20 – 25 years.

The Strategy is based on five principles:

(1) *Growth is the most effective means of addressing poverty and regional inequality.*

The underlying framework is based on the premise that economic growth is the most effective means of addressing socio-economic inequality and poverty, and sustainable adaptation to changes in rainfall patterns. It is also based on the fact that the North has untapped growth potential. Northern Ghana has growth potential in several areas, including agriculture, mining, and tourism. However, the broadest growth with wider implications may occur in agriculture, even though mining and tourism also have high levels of growth potentials.

This means that the long-term solution to the twin problems of economic backwardness and droughts and floods cannot be based on transfers by the state or individual or non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Our approach to addressing both economic backwardness and droughts and floods is based on growth. The challenge is to realize this growth potential and reduce poverty on a sustainable basis. Realizing this growth potential involves identifying an appropriate growth strategy involving a series of interrelated investments and interventions by both the private and public sectors, as well as Ghana's development partners (the donor community) to relieve certain constraints.

(2) *Paradigm Shift.*

The current framework for addressing regional inequalities and development is based on a combination of macroeconomic and sector-wide policies undertaken at the national level. The underlying economic rationale is based on the efficiency of the price mechanism and the ability of economic agents to respond. These policies are expected to create incentives and an enabling environment. Economic agents are expected to respond to these incentives.

Regional differences are dealt with as implementation issues to be addressed by the regional offices of the different sectors. In the immediate past paradigm of projectised aid, specific donors constructed projects to address regional inequalities; in extreme cases transfers were used to compensate for such disparities, sometimes supplemented by District Assembly common fund allocations.¹ The widening development gap between the North and the South of Ghana is a critique of the status quo.

While the overall national economic policy framework is important for regional development, it must recognize important variations. Differences in historical development and geography imply that the binding constraints to development may differ widely across regions or ecological belts.

The availability of infrastructure and human capital vary markedly. The ability to recognize and respond to nationally created incentives varies widely. Uncertainty and the risks associated with economic activities and therefore the risk-adjusted returns may vary across regions or ecological belts.

¹ Using a Canadian Grant mechanism, the GoG recently constructed the District-wide Assistance Project (DWAP) and the Community Initiated Food Security (CIFS) to make financial transfers to districts in Northern Ghana, through the District Assembly Common Fund mechanism (DACF).

For societies with very high levels of poverty, this approach cannot cause the necessary economic transformation. Indeed, this could result in increasing regional inequality as market forces are known to work in favour of growth poles.

(3) *Long and Sustained Periods of Intervention Required.*

Given the poverty trap that very poor societies descend and the type of survival algorithm they follow, transforming such societies will require long periods of intervention. Programmes and projects must be sustained for a considerable period of time in order to induce the necessary changes in perception, technology and culture. Several programmes and projects have been launched to address the stagnation in the North. Reviews suggest that these programmes failed because their duration was short and they were also specific sector.

(4) *Strategy has to be public-sector led but private sector based.*

The wide infrastructural gaps between the Northern Savannah and the rest of the country in roads, water, energy etc suggest a need for considerable public investment. There is an equally yearning gap in human capital. Inadequacies of public support and business support services imply a need for public sector intervention to create a conducive business and investment environment in order to induce private sector response. In our strategy these public sector interventions are to create a conducive business environment and induce and empower the private sector to respond.

(5) *Human Dignity*

The strategy for the transformation of any region or belt must respect the human dignity of the participants. It must be based on empowering people to do for themselves what is required. It must be based on respect for the dignity of the individual. This empowerment may involve changes in economic activities taking into consideration the most abundant factors as well as preserving the environment and minimizing the effects of variation in weather. There may be a need for handouts as a transitional phase, but the main adaptation must be through economic activities and growth.

The Strategy

The strategy itself attempts to create a competitive Northern Economic Zone pivoted around the modernization of agriculture that is linked to manufacturing and other industries. It consists of community driven development actions that will stimulate the modernization of agriculture development and competitiveness of small holders, notably women, through improved technology, promoting efficiency for the domestic and export market. By combining economic trees with cereals, legumes, vegetables and fruits, the northern farmer will double their incomes, create more jobs, protect the environment and end prolonged droughts and sudden floods.

The strategy is based on the concept of a “Forested North” where agricultural production is modernized and oriented towards a larger market embracing the Sahelian countries, including northern Cote d’Ivoire and Togo.

Agricultural modernization is based on the concept of a “Forested North” and “greening” the North to be driven by a marketing based out grower system.

PART I: STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN GHANA

MODERNIZATION OF AGRICULTURE

A modernised agriculture seeks to transform the subsistence oriented smallholder farmer and processor into one that is producing and selling more to the market without compromising household food security.

(a) Strategic direction for Modernising

The purpose of agricultural modernisation in the National Development Plan “is to make agriculture more competitive both on the domestic and global markets through the use of innovative and appropriate modern technologies.”² The Northern Savannah Development Initiative adds two significant dimensions by introducing a market-induced system of incentives for the innovations required to make producers competitive in order to acquire sustained incomes; and operating within a long-term vision of a ‘forested north’, which infuses environmental sustainability into a market-driven productivity enhancement.

(b) Entry points of the Strategy

The agricultural modernisation strategy provides six entry points to allow for inclusive growth and poverty reduction as follows:

- 1) A marketing-based out-grower system that defines the shape of existing and expanded markets. This will propel the emergence of a growing private sector capable of engaging producers in a manner that responds to client and market demand.
- 2) Tree crop production as a source of steady flow of incomes to empower the poor to build their assets and enhance their capacity to invest in farm and non-farm production activities. Farmers will have the option of intercropping the tree crops with groundnut, cowpea, or soybean in the first three to five years of tree crop establishment as part of the transitional food and livelihood security strategy and for intensifying the use of land. The output of groundnut and soybean will feed vegetable oil mills.
- 3) Selected staple crop production systems for productivity improvement to increase northern Ghana’s competitiveness as a supply source for the sub-regional market. This recognises that not all smallholders will have the capacity to go into tree crops and will continue to rely on staple crops for sustenance and means of income. Crops will be selected on the basis of importance in household food consumption basket, current demand outside the household, including the potential to generate agro-industrial activity.
- 4) Horticulture production to diversify into export agriculture which has been a source of growth and significant poverty reduction among farmers in southern Ghana. This will be a good avenue for targeting women and the youth.
- 5) Semi-intensive production of small ruminants, pigs and guinea fowl also to diversify farm income sources and provide income opportunities for land scarce parts of the north.
- 6) Agro-processing as a reliable source of demand for agricultural raw materials to drive value chains and agro-industrial development. Again, agro-processing will be an avenue to target women because processing is an activity women are normally engaged in.

² National Development Planning Commission (2008), Draft of the Long-Term Development Plan (Seven-Year Development Plan 2008–2015), Volume 1: Towards a Development Policy Framework, page 88

Main driver of the strategy is horticulture focusing on tree crop production for a 'forested' north in the long-term, but including short-season vegetables and fruits produced all year round under irrigation for a 'green north' in the short to medium term.

The strategy recognises that for tree crops and other horticulture crops, as well as production systems that require development of land (i.e. for surface water management) scale matters because of intensive investment equipment and infrastructure. Therefore nucleus farmers will be attracted to lead the value chains in such circumstances. The challenge will be to overcome the land tenure constraints.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES FOR AGRICULTURAL MODERNIZATION

Objective 1: Build assets of the poor

Modernisation of agriculture requires commercial orientation, adoption of productivity enhancing technologies and associated inputs, and effective coordination of supply chains. The poor lack capacity to participate in modernisation. Due to their vulnerability, they are highly risk-averse especially in getting into new production ventures. The objective of building their assets is to support the poor to engage in more lucrative production that provides a steady source of income. Stable and regular incomes will enable the poor to build their assets, and in the long-term empower them to invest in agricultural modernisation.

Strategies

The strategies for this objective are two-fold:

- (1) The first adopts a social protection angle whereby the extreme poor will be targeted with grants for food and inputs for minimum production of food. The food grants are necessary in parts of the Upper East region where, because of degraded lands, people suffer from chronic food insecurity.
- (2) The second strategy is to support smallholders to plant at least one acre of a tree crop e.g. mango. They will be supported with seedlings and some part of establishment costs. Partnership will be forged with private agribusinesses of the type of the Integrated Tamale Fruit Company (ITFC) to link farmers to technical assistance, and input and output markets. Following the example of ITFC, farmers will also be supported with seed to intercrop legumes with the tree crops. The legumes will fix nitrogen and provide income before the trees begin to bear fruit. This strategy is consistent with farmers' own strategy of growing legumes as cash crops.

Objective 2: Increase productivity of all stakeholders along the value chain

Strategy 1: Increase the application of science and technology in production systems.

The national policy and strategy for improving production technology includes the development and promotion of improved crop varieties and livestock breeds, and targeting technology development to priority commodities, through competitive research grant scheme. Agriculture in northern Ghana will benefit from the national initiatives, but in addition, the research system (SARI and Universities) will be re-oriented to be partners in production clusters and lead in the development of innovation systems. This will be a shift from the linear research-extension-farmer linkage of technology transfer to an endogenous responsive system that is driven by the needs of the market.

Strategy 2: Enhance management skills of agricultural producers

Agricultural producers are defined to include farmers and processors and all others along the value chain. Their training is envisaged to be provided within the context of an integrated cluster system. Incentives in the form of mentoring grants will be provided to interested farm agribusinesses to mentor interested youth and smallholder farmers.

Farmer based organisations (FBOs) will be developed as a strategy for improving access of smallholders to technology, financial services, and product and input markets. FBO training will encompass both group dynamics and empowering them to seek information, services, as well as opportunities for their members.

Strategy 3: Effective land and water management

Soils of the region are fragile. Even the land surplus areas of the Northern region have soils that are deficient in organic matter and nitrogen. Rivers are drying up due to inappropriate farming practices especially along river beds. The poor condition of soils has been due to a combination of extensive use of land with little application of soil nutrients leading to soil mining. Intensification of production with sustainable environmental management is needed for the attainment of the vision of a 'forested north'. Agricultural modernisation will therefore encompass intensive production and sustainable use and management of the land and water resources.

A national strategy for sustainable land management (SLM) has been developed and it deals with issues of policy, knowledge generation, promotion of adoption of SLM practices (e.g. terracing, mulching, ploughing across contours, ridging, and application of combination organic and inorganic fertilisers), incentives and coordination of institutions involved in the SLM. The present strategy will focus on providing information and appropriate incentives to increase adoption of SLM practices, and coordinating the activities of organisations involved in promotion of SLM at the local level. Presently, SADA is the coordinating agency for developing a comprehensive spatial plan, under a World Bank-supported SLM project in the North of Ghana, starting January 2011.

Incentives to support SLM adoption will include:

- Grant elements in the purchase of SLM inputs, including assistance to develop structures such as terraces, ridges and bunds.
- Supply of tree seedlings to protect watersheds and as border crops.
- Removal of barriers to adoption of SLM practices.

Strategy 4: Increase access to inputs and capital

The cluster production approach will provide the scale to stimulate private sector interest in delivering inputs to farmers. The present limitation on farmers' access to inputs has both supply and demand side aspects.

It is expected that both demand and supply of inputs will improve in the context of production enclaves and value chain clusters. Production enclaves concentrate farmers in space and therefore create the critical mass of demand that makes input supply cost effective. Participation in value chains that are well monitored to ensure the application of production protocols needed to meet market requirements implies that there will be demand for the required inputs.

Strategy 5: Improve access to irrigation and water management technologies for all year round production

Horticulture production (fruit trees and vegetables) for exports and domestic agro-industry is a key entry point in the agriculture strategy of the SADA and requires management of water for year round production. Semi-intensive livestock management likewise requires availability of water on regular basis. The strategy will focus on strengthening the informal irrigation and water management system and will promote the integration of fish culture into irrigation and water management schemes.

The strategy proposed for the SADA aims to harness capacity of existing facilities and lowland water management capacity, and expand capacity with new facilities in a logical sequence. Financing plans, with possible grants for poor smallholders, recognises that the high initial poverty level of producers is a limitation to access to irrigation and water management facilities.

Objective 3: Competitiveness in Access to Markets

Strategy 1: Improve access to market information and market services

The scope of markets being accessed extends beyond the local village markets to southern Ghana and the West Africa sub-region. This scope of market expansion is necessary if prices are not to collapse from the expected increase in productivity and production.

The challenge in this area is creating the critical mass of users of the information for the viability of service providers. What is needed is a broker that sensitises smallholders on the benefits of the services. Presently, such brokerages are civil society organisations (e.g. SEND); SADA can provide incentives for the involvement of more of such organisations in market information and service delivery. FBOs will also be oriented to access market information and conduct market intelligence for their members.

Strategy 2: Link smallholders up with lead firms

The strategy is to identify successful lead firms with access to relevant markets (export and domestic agro-industry) and grow new ones to pull commodity value chains. Support provided to farmers in ongoing initiatives by Trade and Investment for Competitive Export Economy (TIPCEE) for the production of new crops includes technical and financial assistance, and accessing quality seed. SADA will model its support along similar lines to scale up TIPCEE's interventions. The aim is to empower farmers with needed skills and technology to diversify production especially during the dry season.

The strategy will require specific incentives to attract private sector actors (agribusiness) into northern Ghana. A key aspect of present initiatives is the developmental role that lead firms play in training, seeking and disseminating market information, and absorbing marketing risk. Therefore absorption of the related costs and risk by the state will be one of the incentives to attract lead firms. For example, certification costs will be borne by the state until producers have developed their financial and technical capacity to do so.

Strategy 3: Improve infrastructure for post-production management

Post-harvest handling includes storage and processing. Agro-processing is the avenue for agro-industrial development. The facilities for these activities need to be upgraded and expanded to match the expected increase in production. The horticulture development component of the strategy requires infrastructure for primary processing of fresh produce (washing, packing, cold storage). Therefore SADA will facilitate the provision of pack houses within 3 hours of production areas. Furthermore, in areas with poor transport infrastructure, SADA will facilitate the establishment of processing plants to break bulk and improve shelf-life. Such activity will create employment for the youth especially young girls. The West Africa sub-region will be the target market for processed products such as fruit products, flours (e.g. maize, cowpea) and vegetable oils.

Objective 4: Promoting Commodities of Competitive Advantages

The choice of priority commodities is based on the overall national development strategy, as well as needs of the north. The priority commodities for food security in the Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy are maize, rice, cassava, yam and cowpea. These are complemented with income diversification commodities which every region will select according to its comparative advantage.

In the SADA strategy, the priority commodities, based on the five entry points are horticulture crops, including tree crops (e.g. mango, value added shea nut, and traditional and export vegetables), rice, legumes (groundnut, cowpea and soybean), and small livestock (sheep, goats, pigs) and, guinea fowl.

About 308,000 very poor households will be targeted for assistance to produce a cereal (maize, sorghum, millet) and a legume (cowpea, groundnut, soyabean) of their choice. It is expected that other farmers will benefit from the blanket support to crop producers.

The strategy also proposes a semi-intensive system of livestock rearing involving some housing, systematic feeding, watering and health care. This will allow the collection of manure for field crops and the feeding of crop residue to livestock.

Mechanisms: Instruments for Delivering Agriculture Modernisation Strategies Relations with Public Sector

The strategies will be delivered within the framework of existing organisations and institutions. The organisations of interest are the research and training institutions and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. The strategy requires special skills e.g. tree crop research and management, pack-house and storage and agro-processing plant management. The training will be promoted under special funding from the SADA.

Agricultural extension agents are staff of the decentralised Local Government Service which is expected to be operational shortly. A comprehensive training programme will be developed in collaboration with the district authorities, to build the skills and competence of the staff according to the needs of the north. The agricultural extension agents have under-performed because they are often not adequately resourced and motivated to carry out their tasks. The SADA modernisation strategy will ensure a reversal of this situation with a carrot and stick approach. Extension agents will be trained and resourced to deliver services but will also be required to sign performance contracts to ensure value for money. A similar strategy will be applied in providing funding to research institutions and individual researchers.

Legal and regulatory framework for agriculture modernisation strategy

The following are minimal legal requirements to back the implementation of the strategy for the modernisation of agriculture.

The seed law has to be passed to regulate operations of private sector seed nurseries. In the case of imports of seed from international research centers and seed markets, the passage of a common ECOWAS seed law will greatly facilitate the importation of material by both researchers and private sector.

NON-FARM INVESTMENT AND BUSINESS (PRIVATE SECTOR) DEVELOPMENT COMPONENT OF THE SADA STRATEGY

Strategic Objectives

The private sector development component of the SADA is aimed at achieving three strategic objectives:

- i. Repositioning the three northern regions together as a competitive economic zone in the Savannah/Sahel region³ of West Africa. This is to enable the regions gain market size that is large enough (in terms of population and total effective demand or purchasing power) to support industry and enable them compete and grow their economies beyond their natural geographical confines and constraints by exploiting and taking advantage of bigger input and output market opportunities.
- ii. Expanding the scope and numbers of private sector firms and entrepreneurs investing in value-addition in the north. This will be achieved by actively soliciting a balanced mix of investments through targeted and purposeful investment attraction into identified industry sectors for which the Northern Savannah Ecological Belt has comparative advantages that can be converted into sustainable sources of competitive advantage.
- iii. Empowering people in the Northern Savannah to participate effectively in the “new economy” through human resource and business skills development; indigenous micro and small enterprise (MSE) development and financial, fiscal and regulatory incentives.

The three strategic objectives are set in the context of the current situation of private sector activity in the three northern regions which is characterised by:

- i. The “unattractiveness” of the northern economy and general business enabling environment, including in particular the fragmented nature and apparent small size of both input and output markets;
- ii. A low level of private enterprise activity and investments in the three northern regions and a challenge of attracting investments due to the risks (perceived and real) and costs associated with doing business in these regions;
- iii. An underdeveloped labour market, e.g. the lack and/or difficulty of attracting certain critical human resources and types of skilled labour to the three regions as well as a generally low level of entrepreneurial development.

Strategic Objective 1: Repositioning Northern Ghana as Common Economic Zone in Savannah/Sahel

Some proposed strategies for promoting and positioning the three northern regions together as a common and competitive economic zone in the Savannah/Sahel region of West Africa are discussed below.

Strategies

(1) The Meta level strategies focus on cross border initiatives, interventions, policies, etc., aimed at helping to promote the development of the Savannah/Sahel region into a target market for the Northern economic zone. It is expected that strengthening and/or developing bilateral state-to-state protocols on trade and resource sharing will be coordinated by SADA.

Promotion of cross border inter-regional discussion platforms, establishment of city to city trade and business development protocols, the organization of common fairs and exhibitions (e.g. Savannah/Sahel

³ Defined to include Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, northern Cote D’Ivoire, Northern Togo, Northern Benin, and beyond.

Agriculture/Agribusiness Fair), and the development of cross border relations between Ghanaian business associations (particularly those based in the North) and counterpart associations in the other countries, can all be leveraged for the development of the larger Savannah/Sahel market in support of positioning the North as a competitive economic zone.

Macro Level Strategies

In addition to promoting and facilitating a planned integration of the three northern regions, the policy thrust at the macro level should include improving the investment climate and making markets work, especially for the poor, in the three regions. Some policy and other initiatives/ interventions for improving the investment climate in support of promoting and positioning the three northern regions together as a competitive economic zone include the following:

- i. Improving and developing industry specific infrastructure from the simple and basic such as water, energy and telecommunications to more strategic investments in facilities such as the cold chain (i.e. investments in a series of controlled temperature fresh produce facilities from farm to fork), upgrading the Tamale airport to support the development of tourism, agribusiness (e.g. fresh produce exports), hub and spokes logistics management, etc.
- ii. Creating and improving a business friendly environment by, e.g. facilitating swift registration of business start ups and investment processing. This can be achieved by fast-tracking the decentralization, strengthening and clustering of the services of state agencies such as the Registrar General's Department, Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC), Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Customs, Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS), National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI), Ghana Export Promotion Council (GEPC), Export Development and Investment Fund (EDIF), etc., that facilitate business start ups, development and operations. In addition, particularly in the context of the Northern Savannah, it would be important to re-orient the mandate of the agencies and mind-set of their staff away from regulation and control to business facilitation.
- iii. Improving the availability of land and tenure of security and other property rights for diverse business purposes including agriculture, commercial property development and industrial use. This can be achieved by extending, fast-tracking and mainstreaming the implementation of the Land Administration Project (LAP) in the so-called Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) districts in the Northern Region. This will have to be coordinated with the managers of the Millennium Development Authority (MiDA) who have responsibility for piloting the LAP in the Northern Region.
- iv. Making markets work and especially for the poor by addressing the constraints that prevent the poor in particular from participating in economic activity, whether as producers (farmers, entrepreneurs), as employees or indeed as consumers. Some of examples of the constraints include unemployment or lack of access to key assets such as human, physical and financial capital and infrastructure constraints that block access to key input and output markets for the poor.

Meso Level Strategies

The Meso level strategies involve business associations, and community level initiatives for promoting the northern economy as a competitive economic zone in the Savannah/Sahel region. The specific strategies include developing certain areas, such the so-called "Overseas Areas" with proven huge untapped agriculture potential and resources, into multi-facility business development enclaves. This will involve the development of a range of industry specific infrastructure to facilitate the exploitation of identified resources. In the case of agriculture this will involve building a good feeder road network, appropriate irrigation systems, produce consolidation and processing centres, etc. For industry and other

private enterprise activity it may require more ambitious and complex undertakings such as the establishment of complete industrial parks.

Promoting, organizing, and strengthening business associations and chambers of commerce is another strategy at the meso level that can be pursued in order to promote and position the North as a competitive economic zone in the Savannah/Sahel. Business associations and chambers of commerce will have to be encouraged to play a more active role in business networking and development in general across the three regions. Other meso level strategies include community enterprise development and the promotion of research and development (R&D) as a public good.

Micro Level Strategies

The micro (i.e. firm and enterprise) level strategies focus on promoting the establishment and operation of vibrant and efficient business firms and enterprises capable of competing effectively in the Savannah/Sahel region. The specific strategies include soliciting a balanced mix of investments through targeted and purposeful investment attraction into identified industry sectors and human resource and business skills development; indigenous micro and small enterprise (MSE) development and financial, fiscal and regulatory incentives.

Strategic Objective II: Expanding the Scope and Numbers of Private Firms/Investments in the North

Targeted investment attraction will be the principal strategy that will be pursued in order to achieve the strategic objective of expanding the scope and numbers of private firms and investments in the Northern Savannah. This will involve attracting investments and fostering private enterprise activity in selected industry sectors in which northern Ghana currently has comparative advantage and the potential to develop sustainable sources of competitive advantage. The targeted sectors will also be expected, as much as possible, to offer greater economic growth dividends, e.g. creation of decent and sustainable jobs, technology transfer and learning, leveraging catalytic development of “growth poles” that would become the spines around which wider investment and business development in the three northern regions can take place.

The targeted investment attraction strategy will be coupled with and underpinned by cluster development and the value chain approach. Clusters can be conceptualized as self-reinforcing networks of not just firms but a range of other organizations — including research institutes, universities, financial bodies, and public sector agencies — all of which are characterized by high levels of competition and collaboration. The development of clusters is thus expected to enable the concentration of resources in the selected industry sectors thereby fostering and/or enhancing the creation and operations of vibrant, competitive and sustainable enterprises.

The value chain approach coupled with other targeted enterprise development approaches such as Making Markets Work for the Poor (MMW4P) are intended to foster inclusive private sector development. This will involve exploring opportunities for involving, e.g. smallholder farmers and other asset poor sections of the northern community in enterprise activity by raising their levels of efficiency especially in economic activity in which they tend to have a natural comparative advantage over large scale enterprises.

Seven industry sectors (High value fresh produce (fruits and vegetables), Canned products, Rice milling, Textiles, and Oil seed products) are profiled with the intentions of highlighting the prospects of developing competitive clusters and value chains in the Northern Savannah and the value, therefore, of targeted investment attraction:

Tourism is one of the main targets for investment attraction. The location of the North and its cultural and natural heritage make it attractive for both domestic and international tourism. Some critical areas include agri-tourism, Eco-tourism, culture tourism and Adventure tourism.

Strategic Objective III: Empowering the People to participate in the “New” Economy

Broadly, the proposed strategies and initiatives aimed at achieving the strategic objective of empowering people in the three northern regions to participate effectively in the “new” economy seek to address the challenges related to an underdeveloped labour market and a low level of entrepreneurial development in the belt.

Strategy 1: Human Resource and Business Skills Development

Specific initiatives that can be pursued as part of human resource and business skills development include:

- (i) The establishment of a Northern Skills Development Programme. The programme will be run as a virtual school to be hosted by the University for Development Studies or any other reputable organization including the private sector and civil society organizations.
- (ii) Allocation of a percentage of the proceeds of the GETFund to support the work of the Virtual Skills Training School and other recognized programmes that deliver competent and appropriate skills development programmes.
- (iii) A northern Ghana tax deductible training allowance to encourage businesses and enterprises in the belt to provide continuous skills upgrading and training programmes for their staff and to provide internship programmes for students reading relevant courses.

Strategic Objective IV: Indigenous MSE Development

Indigenous MSE development is critical not only for empowering people in northern Ghana to participate in the new economy but more broadly also as a core part of the strategy for attracting investments to the North. Viable and competitive indigenous MSEs will be expected to serve as the anchor for attracting inward investments, e.g. through partnerships and joint ventures but also through participation in other strategic business arrangements such as outsourcing and subcontracting.

The following are some of the specific initiatives that can be pursued to support the development of indigenous MSEs.

Strategy 1

- i. The establishment of community enterprise development centres (CEC). The CEC will provide a range of services aimed at fostering and facilitating the growth of indigenous MSEs. The services to be provided the CEC will include:
 - ✓ Business ideas screening and opportunity prospecting/validation
 - ✓ Business plan development support, market testing, legal structuring and corporate governance services.
 - ✓ Assist in raising capital for projects (especially livelihood and micro projects) and provide the MSEs access to local and regional investors.
 - ✓ Support to local companies in building expertise, innovating growing, creating new partnerships and reaching customers.

- ✓ Conduct regional research and analysis of macro and micro economic data on all aspects of business, legal, financial and demographic information in the North to assist with investment and expansion decisions.
- ✓ Assist the MSEs to build capacity by facilitating access a range of lucrative, sizeable, quality, strategically significant projects across all sectors.

A strategic re-think of existing national incentives and schemes including the broad range of tax incentives intended to promote investment and business activities in underserved areas such as Northern Ghana. The strategic rethink should also involve “decentralizing” the availability of funds such as the Export Development and Investment Fund (EDIF) and the Venture Capital Fund (VCF) by opening up branches in the North to enable them deal with any particular and peculiar needs and requirements.

Strategy 2

The establishment of competitive grants (or challenge funds) to support the development of innovative business ideas/projects for MSE development, particularly ideas/projects with potentially important “demonstrator” effects, e.g., demonstrating the viability of a market opportunity. The ideas can be developed by existing MSEs, MSE start ups or other organizations (e.g. private consultancies, NGO, researchers, etc) that support MSE development.

The following proposed initiatives and interventions are aimed at enhancing the benefits and impact of financial, fiscal and regulatory incentives available to the business community and people in general in the three northern regions.

The creation of a special Northern Ghana Risk Finance Instrument to help address the critical shortage of risk capital that has been reported by many as one of the major causes of low enterprise development in the three regions. The risk finance instrument will help to provide finance for investments that are perceived to be risky because of the peculiar circumstances of underdevelopment in the North. The key role of the risk finance instrument will be to give a kick-start to such investments to enable them look for and mobilize other required investment funds and resources.

Strategy 3

Concerted awareness creation and information sharing programmes on the availability of financial, fiscal and regulatory incentives and how people can benefit from or take personal advantage of the incentives for business development and other endeavours.

BUILDING CAPACITIES FOR RESILIENCE AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION IN A FORESTED NORTH

The disaster response and risk reduction initiatives of SADA seeks to accomplish the following objectives:

1. Minimize the effects of disasters of all kinds, including droughts and floods, in affected communities through the institutionalization of effective Disaster Preparedness and Response strategies.
2. Institutionalize Disaster Risk Reduction strategies through the promotion of initiatives that reduce the occurrences and/or impact of disasters.
3. Building community resilience and response capacities to disasters through the promotion of enhanced livelihood adaptations mechanisms.

Building community resilience and response capacities to disasters through the promotion of enhanced livelihood adaptations mechanisms.

Objective 1: Providing a Framework for Disaster Preparedness and Response

Effective preparation for and rapid response to disasters is essential to reducing the vulnerability and cost of disasters to the populations, when they occur. In furtherance of this, the following strategies are recommended as part of a robust disaster preparedness and response mechanism for the north.

Improving Early Warning and Disaster Risk Recognition

As a first step to disaster risk reduction, communities in northern Ghana need to be better prepared and equipped to anticipate and respond to disasters.

Institutionalizing More Effective Disaster Relief Response Mechanisms

It is essential that the Northern Strategy Development Fund makes strategic investments in building local and regional capacities for disaster preparedness, prevention, response, and/or impact mitigation. As a first step, SADA will promote greater coordination among disaster preparedness and response organisations operating in the north in order to develop more rapid and coordinated response mechanisms. The 2007 drought and flood disasters revealed considerable hesitance, inertia and inaction in the disaster response mechanism of Ghana.

Building of strategic funding mechanism for disaster response

Despite the fact that the north has frequently experienced one form of disaster or the other, the state and other actors have no strategic reserves of food and non-food items to provide immediate response to people in need.

To ensure that people afflicted by disasters get the minimum help they need as soon as possible, there is a need to establish a disaster response fund. Proceeds from the fund should be used to provide first line response to people in need in times of disaster while efforts are made to raise whatever extra funding is required. The criteria for accessing these funds will be drawn up and managed transparently to ensure equity and accountability in the management of the fund.

The use of voucher systems for providing assistance to people in need will be encouraged as a means of putting the decision making power on what victims of disasters want to do in their own hands.

Improving Disaster Risk Reduction and Response Capacities

SADA will initiate and support the development of transformative interventions that not only reduce the risk exposures and vulnerabilities of households in the north to disasters in the future; the interventions will also provide the launching pad for stimulating economic growth, wealth creation, and the attainment of peace as the vehicles for realising the vision of a forested north.

To ensure that regular development planning and management initiatives of state and non-state institutions all mainstream disaster risk reduction, SADA will work with all stakeholders to first map out disaster risk zones in the north. SADA will then work with the stakeholders living and/or operating in the identified zones to establish common protocols for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction initiatives in all development planning and management processes. Strategic interventions will include, but not limited to the following:

Promote Agricultural Sector Risk Reduction

To safeguard against risk of food insecurity due to droughts, the SADA will work with the Agricultural research stations to develop and propagate drought resistant varieties of local food and cash crops to mitigate the impact of droughts. Farmers cultivating in flood plains will also be supported with water management interventions, to enable them control and manage flood waters to enhance production and productivity.

Promoting Appropriate Housing and Infrastructure Development

Improving housing and shelter construction is central to averting and/or mitigating the impact of disasters such as floods. Hence, under SADA's short, medium, and long term housing and shelter development strategy, SADA and partners will launch an Improved Rural Housing Development Initiative which will aim to promote the development of a structured and robust housing scheme that harnesses local human and material resources to provide structurally improved, culturally appropriate, and financially affordable housing in the north. Building on indigenous knowledge systems and architectural preferences, the strategy will seek to improve the quality of construction materials and techniques by making such improved knowledge and skills available and accessible to community members.

Support Local Capacity Development in construction and Disaster Risk Reduction

Building local capacity for improved housing is a key entry point to promoting disaster risk reduction, as well as, enabling households that lost all or part of their housing infrastructure during the 2007 floods to rebuild more flood-resistant houses. In addition support may provide for:

- Block-fabrication and foundation construction,
- Provision of material support to needy household for rehabilitation of houses, and
- Technical support for post disaster housing construction

Improving Water Resource Management for Sustainable Development

Development and use of Wetlands

Develop and use of wetlands for agricultural and ecotourism purposes, as the opportunities arise. Such initiatives will be community-managed to ensure shared ownership and stakes in the preservation of the wetlands.

Reduce the impact of future floods through the promotion of watershed protection and management initiatives using the planting of trees and/or the protection of vegetative cover along the banks of main drainage systems in the north.

Promote the development and management of flood control systems through the construction of flood water diversion ducts and catchment reservoirs along flood plains to control surface run-offs and over spillage. This will entail sponsorship of studies that identify appropriate points where water diversion and containment should occur with minimal damage to existing livelihoods while providing opportunities for the re-use of the water for productive purposes.

FOOD, LIVELIHOOD SECURITY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Protecting Vulnerable Populations

This set of interventions are designed to ensure that population groups most at risk of being marginalized from the development process due to their current socio-economic circumstances are protected and given the opportunity to rebuild their individual and community assets for sustainable livelihoods. This must be done in ways that recognize and uphold the dignity of people through protection of the most vulnerable while creating the conditions for them to take control of their own livelihoods.

i). Direct Food & Nutrition Assistance to Most Vulnerable Population:

Presently, a sizeable proportion of the Districts in Northern Ghana are recipients of food aid at critical periods of the year. The joint assistance group that conducted a survey in 2007 after the droughts and sudden floods identified some of the most vulnerable districts and the extremely serious at-risk populations to reside in the flood plains, which are also susceptible to droughts. The set of initiatives under this programming area are designed to protect most vulnerable populations from want of basic needs in normal times and in times of emergencies. As a first step to achieving this, the NDI will support initiatives that improve the entitlements of poor and most vulnerable households to food and good nutrition. This will involve food distribution to most vulnerable indigent population groups (widows, orphans, sick, especially people living with HIV, etc) either directly or through a voucher system. The aim is to increase the availability of food to the poor.

ii). Quick Launch Community Resilience and Livelihoods Rebuilding Initiatives

This will seek to address the loss of seeds, inputs, financial assets, and access to productive resources resulting from the floods of 2007 and the aftermath of other disasters such as droughts, floods, or conflicts. The initiative will aim at stimulating the rebuilding of livelihoods and economic growth as the most viable ways to increasing community resilience, poverty reduction and wealth creation in the north.

iii). Increasing the Availability of and Access to Food and Water

Increasing the availability of and access to food and water in the north will be achieved through interventions that support increased food production, processing, and marketing within the north and the promotion of initiatives that put money in the hands of families so that they can meet their food needs from the market, when their own production is insufficient. Increasing the availability of and access to food will, however, also involve promoting the development and institutionalization of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that support good nutritional practices in the utilization of food as well as healthy lifestyles.

iv). Strengthen Institutional Collaboration for Safety Net Programs:

To ensure adequate and sustained coverage of hard to reach areas in the provision of relief and/or welfare support to vulnerable population groups, the SADA would leverage existing social safety net programs of Civil Society organizations to reach out to the poor. This is in recognition that though they may not have the resources to operate, several NGOs, have accumulated experience and credible networks for reaching out to very vulnerable population groups in hard to reach areas efficiently and effectively.

Building The Foundations For Economic Growth Through Food Security For All

Increasing access to food

- Promote market-oriented all season gardening initiatives, among other initiatives. Under this, the SADA will work with communities to harness existing and potential water sources – hand-dug wells, dugouts, dams, rivers, marsh lands, etc for the promotion of selected crops for commercial production as local value chain analysis permit.

- Promote Strategic Food Reserves Initiatives: to further enhance financial capacity of poor households to access food throughout the year, SADA will support the development and effective management of strategic food reserves in selected production zones across the north.

Improving food utilization and healthy lifestyles

- i). Intensify education of the population on healthy eating lifestyles, especially those that can be based on the consumption of local foods and diets.
- ii). Research, validation, and promotion of healthy local diets: this is essential in supporting the healthy lifestyle education initiatives above.

Transitioning the Poor into mainstream productive economy

Supporting Risk minimization strategies

- i). Institutionalizing of Early Warning Systems:

SADA will work with the Ghana Meteorological Services and other research stations to build their capacity for predicting climate-related disasters such as droughts and floods. A mechanism for disseminating the information through radio, TV, cell phones and other forms of communication would be established to ensure that communities take precautionary measures to avert the impact of the disasters.

Similarly, SADA will coordinate with the Ghana office of the West Africa Network for Peace Building (GHANEP) and other government and NGO agencies working in the areas of peace and security to strengthen existing early warning systems for conflicts in the north so that pre-emptive action can be taken to avert the outbreak of violence or minimise their effects, if they occur.

- ii). The establishment of a rapid disaster response fund.
- iii). Leveraging existing social safety net programs of faith-based organizations to reach out to the poor.
- iv). Strengthening community resilience:
This will focus on the protection of vulnerable groups in the north through the development and institutionalization of the appropriate response mechanisms.
- v). Stimulating economic growth for the poor requires the adoption of innovative approaches and technologies to increase efficiency and cost-effectiveness in production.

Asset accumulation, diversification and improved management

Effective participation in a growth-oriented economic process requires a strong asset base for households and communities. This is a necessary precondition for bringing them into the economic processes. To achieve this, the NDB will focus on two related initiatives at the individual and communal levels, as described below:

i. Community Asset Protection and Development Initiatives

Interventions under this module will focus on the development of community capacities for improved management of communal resources for protective and productive purposes. Emphasis will be placed on interventions as follows:

- Community Resource Protection initiatives will include providing technical and material support to communities for developing and protecting watersheds and other communal water resources through increasing tree cover on the banks of water bodies such as rivers, dams, streams). These initiatives will enable communities help check siltation of water sources through soil erosion along the banks of the water sources and reduced water loss through evapo-transpiration. In the long run, improved vegetative cover along water course ways will contribute the creation of microclimates that would favour the production of different kinds of crops.

- Enhancing Productive Capacities of community Resources:

NDB and partners will support initiatives that promote improved use of existing water resources for multiple productive uses.

ii. Promotion of household/personal asset accumulation initiatives.

Most communities in northern Ghana, especially those beyond regional and district capitals have very limited access to financial resources for their social and productive purposes. Unless something is done to change this situation, the participation of people in such areas in the economic growth processes will remain a mirage.

To address this challenge, the NDB will aggressively pursue programs that increase access to financial services in the rural north. In particular, personal and household asset accumulation and development initiatives will be designed around the promotion of savings culture, especially in rural areas through:

- Enhancing the role of Rural and Community Banks in savings mobilization and in the provision of customized financial services that meet the needs and conditions of the poor.
- Promoting alternate savings mobilization initiatives for the unbankable majority, especially women — the SILC methodology.
- Promotion of Information, Education and Communication initiatives that help the poor to realign their investment prioritisation in ways that enable them to move away from social consumption investments to economic investments.

For any programme of economic and social transformation to succeed, there must be coordinated investment to eliminate infrastructural constraints, improve the human capital base, and create the economic conditions necessary to attract, retain, and increase the profitability of investments as well as increase the equitable realization of benefits among all socio-economic categories. Such investments in infrastructural development must be strategic and purposeful and must anticipate the transformation programme in order to facilitate it.

For this reason, this section examines the pre-conditions for sustainable development and inclusive socio-economic growth by outlining:

- A focus on strategic infrastructure – roads, improved water resources, energy.
- Alignment of basic social infrastructure in education and health with the human resource implication of the sustainable development and growth focus.
- Priority in establishing peace-building and conflict mitigation strategies to create the enabling environment for investments.

PART II: ENHANCING THE PRE-CONDITIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NORTHERN GHANA

STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Transport Infrastructure

The objectives of road infrastructural development include:

- a) positioning the North as a competitive economic zone to trade with the Sahelian countries;
- b) reduce transaction costs;
- c) connect various settlements to major markets within the North to facilitate economic activities;
- d) facilitate trade between the North and the South; and
- e) promote intra-regional trade in the North.

Objective 1: Positioning the north as a competitive Economic Zone

The strategy is to prioritize the road network in Northern Ghana with priority given to what we refer to as the competitive zone.

(1) Develop the circular road network as first priority

This network consists of the trunk roads and highways connecting Tamale through Ffulso to Wa, from Wa through Tumu to Navrongo, Bolgatanga, and back to Tamale. The North cannot develop as a competitive economic zone unless the circular road networks involved are done. This circular road facilitates intra-regional trade within the North, easing the movement of goods and persons from one region to the other.

(2) Develop Intra-ECOWAS Road Network

This circular road network is to be complemented by the trunk roads/highways connecting Northern Ghana to Southern Ghana and the Sahelian countries.

They consist of the western corridor, from Hamile through Wa-Bole and Techiman. This road links Ghana to the commercial centres of Burkina Faso, Bobo Dilasso. The central corridor runs from Paga, Tamale, to Techiman. This connects to Ouagadougou which is the national capital of Burkina Faso. Finally, there is the eastern corridor running from Bawku East, Gushiegu, Yendi, and Bimbilla to Nkwanta.

To have maximum economic benefits it must be multi-model transportation systems. This implies that in addition to roads certain activity nodes such as pack houses, markets, car services, etc. must be provided.

Objective 2: Opening Up and Facilitating Economic Activities

Poor road networks can render otherwise viable economic projects unviable. They hamper the realization of comparative advantage through their effects on transaction costs:

Strategy

The key strategy is to develop a feeder road network that connects settlements to major market centres.

Doing this may require effective decentralization.

Objective 3: Facilitating Trade between the North and South

The highway/trunk road network described earlier can facilitate trade between the North and the South. In addition to the road network, alternative transportation systems can be developed:

a) Water Transport

Water transportation provides a much cheaper means of transportation compared with roads. Water transportation between the North and the South has been used before.

There is the need to revive these abandoned water transportation systems as an alternative means of transport. To be competitive, in terms of costs, some competition must be introduced instead of allowing the system to be dominated by state monopolies.

b) Railway Transport

The proposed National Railway Network covers most of the critical components of the economic zone discussed earlier. Here, one can only call for the prioritization of the development of the system.

c) Air Transport

The Tamale Airport needs to be operationalised as an international airport. This will facilitate horticultural exports as well as tourism.

Special Production Zones

In addition to the road network opening up and reducing the potential of rural inaccessible areas, it may also be used to stimulate and help in the realization of the potential of two special production zones in the North. These two special areas are the Fumbisi and Katanga valleys.

As in the case of the Fumbisi Valley, there is a need for a study and analysis of the infrastructural requirements for converting the comparative advantage of the area into a competitive advantage.

Energy Production and Use in the North

Strategic Objective 1

To enhance the efficient and equitable supply of energy to support and sustain the fragile economy and ecology of the North.

Policy may be guided by the following principles:

- i. Least cost principle to provide economic and reliable energy supplies that are dependable;
- ii. Diversification of our primary sources of energy recognizing the drought-like nature of the North;
- iii. Assuring energy security through the development of local and indigenous resources;
- iv. Energy efficiency and conservation awareness creation; and
- v. Promotion and development of renewal energy technologies such as biomass, solar and wind.

Strategic Objective 2

To position of the North as a source of alternative energy to the national grid.

The North has the longest period of sunshine in Ghana. The topology is flat. These two factors create a comparative advantage for the North in terms of solar production. There is a need to provide incentives through the national energy framework to invest in solar energy production for the national grid in the North.

Private and public sector partnership may be necessary to deal with the huge initial investment costs involved.

EDUCATION AND HEALTH FOR HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

Education and health, apart from being basic needs, are important elements in creating a conducive environment for increased production, investment and wealth creation:

- 1) The pace of technological change is rapid. Together with rapid changes in information and communication technologies (ICT), the creation of knowledge and the ability to adopt and adapt to these changes will become the basis for realizing the competitive advantage of areas and countries. Education provides the knowledge and skills for industrial activities and technological adaptation.
- 2) A good educational and health system creates the social environment for entrepreneurs outside the region who may be concerned about the education and health of their families.
- 3) Improvements in education could provide the basis for trade in services in the form of consumption abroad (mode 2) from the Sahelian countries.
- 4) Can increase transfers from migrants which is an important source of poverty alleviation and wealth creation. Education provides migrants with skills that should increase their earning power.

In addition to creating a conducive business environment, changes in the composition of education, emphasizing engineering and science-related subjects provide the human capital for increased productivity, adoption of technology and overall development.

Education and Health Strategies

Our approach in addressing the issues of education and health, so that they play a critical role in the transformation of the North is based on:

- 1) Development of education and health infrastructure facilities;
- 2) Training, attracting and retaining the relevant personnel; and
- 3) Changes in the composition of the educational mix as between arts, science and engineering subjects.

Promoting High Quality Human Resource Development

- The state should provide incentives to increase the role of the private sector and faith-based organizations in the provision of education and health services in the north. This can be done through syndication of affordable loan schemes to support private sector schools, i.e., schools owned and/or managed by organizations other than the Ghana Education Service (GES).
- The state and other development partners need to consider providing grants to support the development of educational infrastructure managed by faith-based organizations or the private sector, especially those operating in rural areas. This is essential for promoting the quality of schools in the North as a means not only for providing quality education to children in this part of the country, but also as bait to attracting investors who want to find acceptable standards of education for their wards. With appropriate amendments to existing legislation, such grants could be funded from the Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETFUND).
- Provide incentive schemes for teachers that accept posting to rural schools. This could include:
 - Fast-tracking of the promotion of teachers who accept postings to rural areas, i.e., places outside regional and district capitals. This can be further graded to allow for shorter waiting times for teachers in remote areas.
 - Provision of appropriate housing for teachers using models of improved and affordable housing schemes; and
 - Provision of special cash allowances for teachers in very remote areas.

Changing the Composition of Education

The subject of composition, especially at the polytechnics must change. The emphasis has to change to science and engineering course and technical and vocational education and training (TVET). This will increase the skills base of the educated in the North and make them useful for industrial and economic development of the North. Policy measures may include:

- Re-equipping the polytechnics;
- Introduction of scholarship schemes and awards for students who excel in Science and Engineering and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET);
- Emphasize programmes that will encourage industrial attachments for polytechnic and TVET students; and
- Introduction of non-classroom structured apprenticeship training programmes to raise public awareness and interest on the importance of TVET.

Improving Health and Well-being of Northerners

Improving the quality of health care delivery is key to promoting health and well-being of people resident in the North, as well as providing important bait for attracting investors and their capital into the North.

The SADA will therefore:

- Support the development of the School of medicine and Health Sciences of the University for Development Studies (UDS) as an instrument for attracting and retaining specialized medical services to the north of the country.
- The proposed programme of the UDS to allow District Assemblies (DAs) to sponsor some medical students every three years must be embraced.
- Support the intensification of preventive health care service delivery. This will be done through support for the training, recruitment, and retention of the products of the School of Hygiene, the Community Health Nurses Training Colleges, and allied institution to ensure that rural areas have access to qualified preventive healthcare providers and hygiene education services.
- Support the identification and promotion of traditional healthy eating habits, well-being, and lifestyles. Particular attention will be paid to the identification and promotion of traditional diets that are known to be healthy.
- Provide incentive schemes for medical personnel who accept posting to rural health facilities, particularly in the North, through:
 - Fast-tracking of the promotion of medical personnel who accept postings to rural areas, i.e., places outside regional and district capitals. This can be further graded to allow for shorter waiting times for health and medical personnel in remote areas.
 - Provision of appropriate housing for health and medical personnel using models of improved and affordable housing schemes; and
 - Provision of special cash allowances for health personnel and paramedics in very remote areas.

Private sector participation in the development and provision of health facilities can enhance access to quality health care.

PEACE AND SECURITY

The persistent conflicts and lack of peace diverts attention away from economic and productive issues:

- Instability and perceptions of instability scare investors, increase the risks of doing business in the North, and reduces the risk-adjusted profitability of economic activities in the area; and
- The lack of peace locks up resources which could have been used for infrastructural development in peacekeeping operations.
- Peace initiatives that combine conflict mediation with institutional support for traditional authorities and governmental institutions to work cooperatively towards sustained peace. The Northern Peace Initiative currently coordinated by the three RCCs provides a useful framework and is being implemented progressively. In the NDI, two approaches are adopted to tackle conflict mitigation and peace-building:
 - The first is build capacities and deepen the collective efforts by organized CSOs and government in increasing awareness and building consensus among key stakeholders. This will include transforming the institutional mix for addressing conflict from a “security” approach to “peace-building” efforts.
- The second is a more sustained long-term effort to bring about human security through rapid social and economic development, thereby reducing poverty and minimizing the tensions that are associated with deepening poverty, marginalization and exclusion of the most vulnerable in the major decisions that affect their livelihoods

MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN THE NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

There are therefore three broad objectives of the Northern Development Initiative (NDI) with respect to gender:

1. To improve technology and create value-addition in current economic activities undertaken by women;
2. Increase women's participation in and benefits from the process of economic development; and
3. Identify potential new areas of economic activities in which women could be empowered.

Improve Technology and create value-addition in Women's Activities

This is important to reduce the drudgery and work burden on women as a result of both the traditional value system and production process. It should also lead to value-addition in activities undertaken by women, create wealth and improve women welfare. This objective can be achieved through a number of strategies:

- a) Identify the current main areas of women's participation in the economy. In current relations, women in the North engage to a large extent in some limited agricultural activities — largely, horticultural and small ruminants, pigs and other livestock.

In addition, most agro-processing is undertaken by women. However, the markets for these are usually local, and value-addition is also very low. Women have strengths in the production of vegetables, oil seeds (groundnuts, shea and soybean) and processing of the latter. Therefore, the value chains of these commodities will be prioritized as entry points for targeting them.

- b) SADA will facilitate the introduction of improved technologies into these activities;
- c) NDI will collaborate with existing private marketing companies to provide improved quality standards and marketing channels.

Increase Women's participation in and benefits from the process of economic development

The specific gender-related interventions will include the following:

- a) The strategy to empower FBOs and CBOs to demand services and to participate in local level programming, planning and monitoring will be enhanced by targeting women to empower them and ensure that their needs are met.
- b) Women micro and small-scale enterprises will be supported to grow under the indigenous micro- and small-scale enterprise (MSE) development strategy.
- c) Stakeholder consultations on further development of the strategy and future programming will factor in the different needs of men and women.
- d) Social protection interventions will be designed to target the different needs of men and women.

Identify potential new areas of economic activities for women

SADA will coordinate and facilitate regional gender stakeholder workshops in the three regions to help identify some new potential areas for women's entry into the new economy.

Empowering Women

- a) Indicators of change process should show gender differentials,

- b) Gender parity will be sought in the facilitation of access to services by farmer-based and community-based organizations.
- c) Establish a technical committee on gender mainstreaming to audit programmes, plans and monitoring tools and results.

PART III: STRATEGIC RESULTS FRAMEWORK, INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, MONITORING EVALUATION

MANAGING FOR DEVELOPMENT RESULTS

The SADA proposes six main results, and these are further defined as components of the strategy:

1. **Community-Driven Development** actions that will stimulate the modernization of agriculture development and competitiveness of small holders, notably women, through improved technology, promoting efficiency for the domestic and export market. By combining economic trees with cereals, legumes, vegetables and fruits, the northern farmer will double their incomes, create more jobs, protect the environment and end prolonged droughts and sudden floods. This CDD effort will further empower men and women to transform their production.
2. **Private Sector Development** initiatives that would stimulate investment and business development in northern Ghana in a manner that would change the mind-set and stimulate the creation of high value jobs and increased incomes.
3. **Investments in strategically-targeted economic and social infrastructure** that will relieve critical development constraints and create the pre-conditions for accelerated development and open up production zones for increased production and transit into the expanded markets in Sahel states north of northern Ghana.
4. **Food, Livelihood Security and Peace Initiative** focusing on improved access to food, sustainable livelihoods, as well as safety-nets investments, targeted initially at the most vulnerable areas and those severely affected by the floods of 2007 and 2008. Concurrently, a peace initiative which is already underway in the three regions will be enhanced.
5. **Flood Mitigation and Environmental Renewal** focusing on improved water resources management and disaster preparedness, in order to mitigate the perennial floods and droughts in the north.
6. **Institutional Capacity Building** to enhance strategic planning, funding and development management. A Savannah Accelerated Development Authority (SADA) is proposed as a mechanism for undertaking cross-regional planning and development management.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Accountability

The M&E strategy accompanying the SADA proposes:

1. Results-oriented M&E Capacity-building among key stakeholders associated with the SADA. Through their engagement in the determination of the strategic results framework for the SADA and the establishment of a credible baseline prior to the start-up of the initiative.
2. Systematic monitoring of output-level results in a manner that links resources.
3. Stakeholders are empowered and engaged in the processes of monitoring and evaluation, through the use of both formal, rigorous tools for M&E, as well as participatory monitoring and evaluation approaches.
4. Both upward and down accountability systems enhanced to enable citizens of the north and representative leaders to demand accountability and those managing SADA to render accountability in a transparent and timely manner.