

National and District Level Planning Priorities in the Volta Delta, Ghana

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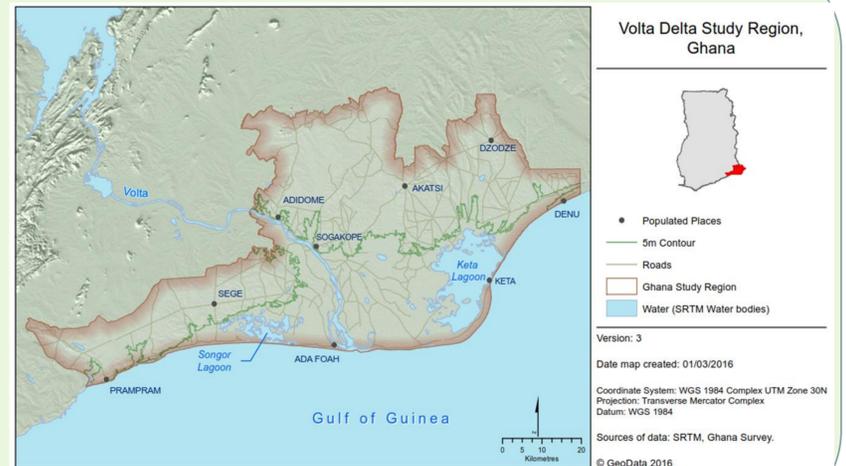
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Introduction

Adaptation to climate change and variability is an integral component of Ghana's climate policy agenda. A decentralized system means that districts are responsible for preparing and implementing adaptation plans into their annual development plans and budgets according to the national framework.

The low-lying Volta delta in Ghana is densely populated and home to predominantly farming and fishing communities, who have had to develop strategies to manage impacts from a combination of both climatic (e.g., floods, drought, coastal erosion from high tides) as well as non-climatic factors (especially from the construction of the upstream Akosombo and Kpong dams).

For ten districts that lie within a 5 meter contour of the deltaic region, the study assesses the prioritized themes in national and district level adaptation plans that may influence or support autonomous responses by communities. These preliminary findings are important for understanding national and district level priorities in defining more effective and long-term strategies for successful adaptation.



Methodology

Systematic Analysis of National Policies

1. Identification of climate adaption relevant policies (40 documents)
2. Creation of database of climate change adaptation relevant policies
3. Content analysis to determine extent of adaptation in the policies (30 documents)
4. Thematic analysis to assess the evidence of adaptation in the policy document



Stakeholder Engagements on District Level Adaptation Plans and Needs
(Local government, traditional rulers, civil service representatives from 10 districts)

Table 1: Prioritized national climate change adaptation themes in Ghana's policies and plans*

Adaptation category	Adaptation Theme	# Polices*
1 Improve quality and access to information	1 Knowledge, information management, surveillance and early warning	16
	2 Institutional capacity, governance and training	15
	3 Research and development	13
2 Increase resilience of built and natural infrastructure	4 Resilient and hard Infrastructure	14
	5 Disaster response and management	9
	6 Marine and coastal management	6
	7 Resilient land use, rural and urban planning	13
	8 Plantation, landscape and green space management	13
	9 Alternative energy	9
3 Improve water supply and quality	10 Improved Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)	14
	11 Water conservation and Irrigation systems	13
4 Promote resilient agricultural systems	12 Resilient cropping and new crop variety	9
	13 Improved access to market	6
	14 Post-harvest loss management	5
	15 Women empowerment	12
5 Social support for vulnerable groups	16 Improved social service delivery	9
	17 Financial support, insurance and incentive schemes	9
	18 Livelihood diversification and risk transfer	7

*Mensah et al., (2016) Review of Adaptation Related Policies in Ghana, DECCMA Working Paper

CURRENT ADAPTATION PLANS AND STRATEGIES

- Medium term plans to partner with VRA and EPA
- VRA Emergency Preparedness Plan
- Medium term plans to partner with VRA and EPA
- Sensitization/educational programmes on adaptation measures
- Enforcement of regulations (e.g., farming close to river banks, sand mining)
- Early warning, including device installation, supply of phones and radios
- Planting of mangroves
- Sea defence walls
- Dredging
- Safe havens or higher ground locations
- Tree planting programmes
- Firebelts
- Upland farming
- Electrification
- Construction of fishing harbour
- Channels for floodwater diversion
- Harvest aquatic weeds by community or Volta River Authority (VRA)
- Construction of footbridge in areas that periodically flood
- Transportation of water
- Irrigation and dry season irrigation
- Outgrower programmes by commercial farms
- Financial support and relief aid
- Rural Enterprise Project
- Economic empowerment of youth
- Migration and resettlement
- Taxes and levies to generate income
- Poverty alleviation programmes (LEAP)
- Improved transport system to access health centres and markets
- Livelihood diversification, e.g., trading, salt mining, mariculture
- Provision of social amenities, e.g. schools and sanitation facilities

CURRENT ADAPTATION NEEDS

- Promotion of early warning systems
- Community resilience through early warning
- Implementation of strategies in all districts
- Inter-district collaboration
- Common radio programmes
- Formation of an organisation as an umbrella body
- Doing away with political differences
- Mandatory budget for activities by EPA
- Sensitization and awareness creation of adaptation strategies
- Dissemination of information to community members
- Advocacy for coastal zone protection policy by government
- Formation of Implementation Committee comprising target districts
- Sharing of ideas and best practices among districts and municipalities
- Collaboration with law enforcement agencies
- Sub-committees to manage the coastal zone within districts and municipalities
- Town Hall meetings to discuss pertinent issues
- Media, information vans before, during and after disasters
- Collaboration with institutions, local and international development partners
- Access routes
- Sea defence wall by central government
- Reforestation of the river banks
- Dredge of Lower Volta
- Remove aquatic weeds
- Provide alternative livelihoods
- Investment opportunities and economic activities should be created

Initial Findings

1. Stakeholders consider ecological and developmental factors as key drivers of the current adaptation processes at the local scale; this means that they are unaware of the implications and/or long term success of these strategies with respect to climate change and variability.
2. National and district level stakeholders prioritize **improved access to information** as well as **improved governance and institutional structures** for achieving successful adaptation, especially for district level planning processes.
3. **Research into Use** approaches, which integrate the roles and needs of various actors while considering their influences in the planning process, are essential components of any programme for promoting successful adaptation; especially the local communities, decision makers, traditional authorities and researchers.

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