

## There Was No 'Dum-Sor' Under Kwame Nkrumah: The Essentials!

A 2015 Founder's Day Special

By: Prof Lungu

*"....A mere nine (9) years after independence...2 more turbine engines were ready to be installed for a total of 883MW...at Akosombo. Ghana had at that point 512MW, more than enough for industry. To boot, reserve power from diesel generators all over the breath of Ghana gave Ghana sufficient power for institutional and residential uses...In fact, there was even power for export as plans for further urban-rural electrification was proceeding, with "Atomic Energy" and "Solar Energy" in the mix of feasibility studies and plans...It took practically 17 years before any government, military or civilian, would add to Ghana's electricity generation capacity....Kpong...However,...Kpong ...merely added 160MW to Ghana's power generation capacity, a lousy 18% more power when population had actually increased over 31%<sup>1</sup> ..." (Prof Lungu, 19 Sep 15).*

In the business of asset management, the concept of depreciation and its sister metric plant replacement value (PRV), tell us that the longest period one can expect to receive benefits from infrastructure with typical repairs and maintenance, (i.e., "useful life"), is about 50 years. This goes for most major engineering feats.

Commissioned Saturday, 22nd January, 1966, by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Akosombo Dam/Volta River Authority (VRA) project was such a major financial and engineering feat. The multiple element project was a Multi-National Public-Private Venture (MN-PPV), and a great success even today.

Dr. Kwame Nkrumah was overthrown the following month, on 24 February, 1966!

Before 1962, the financial arrangements for the \$324 million project was the most complex project ever attempted by the World Bank and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD). Funding in the form of loans was obtained from the governments of the United States and the United Kingdom. The Kaiser and Reynolds companies, representing "private enterprise", provided funds as well, including advances for purchase of power from the power plant yet to be built. The Government of Ghana provided \$98 million, and guaranteed

every loan. The Italian engineering firm, Impregilo, constructed Akosombo Dam. The record shows that during the peak period, over 5,000 men were working on the project, among them nearly 4,500 Ghanaians.

When the dam was commissioned in 1966, twelve (12) full months ahead of schedule, that singular event alone, in the words of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, provided Ghana:

"...electric power nearly ten times...power production...(at that time)...from all sources...low-cost power for the development of tomorrow's Ghana."

So, a mere nine (9) years after independence and before the overthrow, 2 more more turbine engines were ready to be install for a total of 883 Mega Watts (MW). Ghana had at that point 512MW, more than enough for industry. To boot, reserve power from diesel generators all over the breath of the Ghana gave Ghana sufficient power for institutional and residential uses, too. In fact, there was even power for export as plans for further urban-rural electrification was proceeding, with "Atomic Energy" and "Solar Energy" in the mix of feasibility studies and plans.

**"...I have also recently directed the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission to investigate and expand research on the possibilities of solar energy, which is already going on at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. It is estimated that even one-tenth of the solar energy falling on the earth's surface would be enough to produce an amount of energy several times the amount generated at present. In Africa we have no lack of sunlight, and the development of solar energy should, in fact, be one of our main scientific preoccupations..." (Kwame Nkrumah, 1964).**

Yes, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana was actually talking about solar energy and other scientific and technological initiatives 51 years ago<sup>2</sup>. And yes, nearly 50 years later, Ghanaians continue to benefit, directly, and indirectly, from Akosombo Power, every single day!

Fact is, the comprehensive, integrated Akosombo/VRA/VALCO project was the planned industrial, agricultural, and service industry "take-off" initiative for the fast-track development of Ghana in accordance with the vision of Nkrumah.

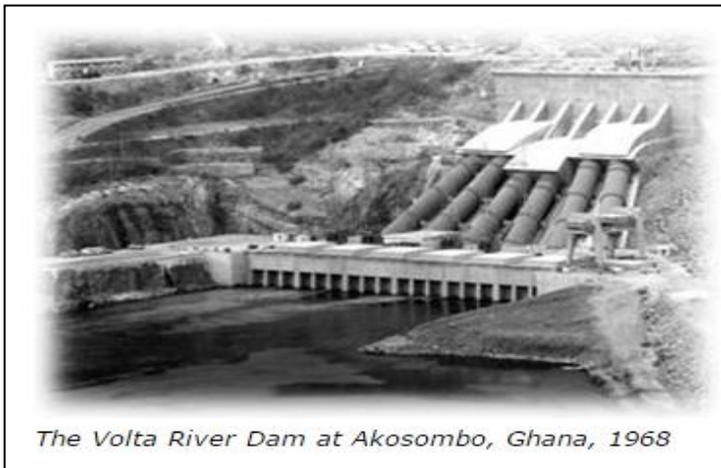
The record is in the data, and in the 7-Year Development Plan<sup>3</sup>!

And Ghana had power!

In six short years, between 1960 and 1966 (when Nkrumah was overthrown), Ghana's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita jumped from \$181.00 to \$267.00, representing a 47% increase (or 7.83% each one of those 6 years). However, thirty (30) long years after the overthrow of Nkrumah, Ghana's GDP per capita was practically stagnant, increasing just 2.7% each one of those 30 years (from a low \$214.00 in 1967 to \$386.00 in 1997).

As planned and approved by Nkrumah, proceeds from sales of Akosombo electricity to industry would pay off all elements of the \$324 million loan project within 30 years, well before the end of the useful life of the anchor asset. And so, as an example, in 1968, Ghana made the first payment on the \$47 million IBRD loan. The final payment on that loan was in 1987, 25 years later.

The fact is, subsequent governments after Nkrumah neglected to add capacity, let alone reserve power generation capacity to the Ghana power grid. As a result, Ghanaians have been cheated out of another key Kwame Nkrumah legacy dividend, (i.e., power and an industrialized Nation-State). In addition, those government neglected to properly and effectively police the agreements between Ghana and the aluminum consortium, (i.e. Kaiser, Reynolds, VALCO). As a result, they failed to ensure Ghana received a fair share of the economic gain and wealth, as landlord and owner of the input resources.



So, coasting on the successes of Kwame Nkrumah and his CPP government, the "Days of Reckoning" for Ghanaians begun to arrive thirty-two (32) years ago, in 1983, under Mr. Jerry "Accountability" Rawlings. During that "Rawlings-Year", industry in Ghana received less than 25% of their actual power requirements from the VRA. The crises would extend to 1996, still under Mr. Rawlings; and beyond, to Mr. Agyekum Kuffour's NPP government. In short, acute, rolling blackouts had become persistent in Ghana. The professionals in

the "power circuit" called it "load-shedding". In homes throughout the breath of Ghana, it was "Dum-Sor" (Dumsor), (Turn Off/Turn On).

The tragedy for Ghanaians is, Dr. Nkrumah was overthrown by "bona fide members of the Ghanaian military...(and)...rascal civilians...including...former prime minister (Busia)..." (Kwame Okoampa-Ahoofe, Jr, 2004).

It took practically 17 years before any government, military or civilian, would add to Ghana's electricity generation capacity. That occurred via a World Bank loan for a second hydro power dam (Kpong). That contract was signed in 1977 by the Acheampong junta. That additional capacity came 5 years later, in 1982. However, the Kpong power project that was proudly commissioned by Mr. Jerry "Accountability" Rawlings merely added 160MW to Ghana's power generation capacity, a lousy 18% more power when population had actually increased over 31%.

We will need to "fast-forward" in military-time another 15 years, to 1997, before "power-hugging" Jerry "Accountability" Rawlings would be able to increase Ghana's power generation capacity another 330MW, via the Aboadze Thermal Plant, in Takoradi.

So, effectively, in nearly 50 years, the combined power-generation output of all governments after Nkrumah succeeded in increasing Ghana's power generation capacity to a reported 2,936MW, top side. However, demand for power in Ghana has more than quadrupled. (The reader should kindly deduct Akosombo's 1,020MW current generating capacity from the total 2,936MW to get your effective net generating capacity during the 50 years after Nkrumah).

Moving forward, as the reader probably knows, 2,936MW national power generating capacity is not exactly equivalent to actual generating capacity, nor does it include industry standard "reserve power generating capacity". This is still the case even if percentage increase in power generation is equal to percentage increase in population (70%). In effect, given today's requirements, these are power generating and distribution conditions far from what existed in Ghana in 1966, the year Nkrumah commissioned Akosombo Dam, before the "overthrow" by the "rascals" that same year.

To the point, there had never been, and there never was, "Dum-Sor" when Dr. Kwame Nkrumah was Leader of Government Business, Prime Minister, or President of Ghana, during 1951-1966.

On the contrary, there was CAPACITY! Lots and lots of CAPACITY just nine (9) years after independence!

To the point, there never would have been "Dum-Sor" in Ghana but for that fateful day, nearly 2 (two) generations ago, when the Danquah-Busia-Dumbo-Confederate rascals, among them Dr. Kofi Busia, acted without regard to the interests of the People of Ghana, and betrayed Ghana, for a song, for "...\$25 (not ten) thousand dollars..."

So it goes, Ghana!

#### NOTES:

1. Population of Ghana in 1966 was estimated to be about 7,891,194. In 1982, the population of Ghana was estimated to be 11,488,683, an increase of approximately 31%. However, by 2014, power generation had nominally increased equal to the increase population, 69.9%. However, it is recognized that demands today are not being met, hence Dum-Sor, as latter day governments have completely ignored Solar Energy as an alternative, and as a modern economy employment multiplier.
2. Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Speech at Kwabenya, 1964, in Francis Kwarteng, "Nkrumah On Solar Energy, Scientific Research, & Science Education", Ghanaweb / ModernGhana, 5 September, 2015.
3. Get a copy of the Inaugural Speech by DR. Kwame Nkrumah. The 7-Year Development Plan, at [www.GhanaHero.com/Visions](http://www.GhanaHero.com/Visions).
4. [www.GhanaHero.com/Visions](http://www.GhanaHero.com/Visions). [Visit](#) for more information. Read Mo'. Listen Mo'. Learn Mo'.



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