



MIGNEX Background Paper

Migration-relevant policies in Ghana

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MIGNEX

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MIGNEX Background Papers

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List of acronyms

1D1F	One District One Factory initiative
CSO	civil society organisation
DEP	Diaspora Engagement Policy
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
EUTF	European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa
GIMMA	Ghana Integrated Migration Management Approach
GIPC	Ghana Investment Promotion Centre
GIS	Ghana Immigration Service
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
MIEUX	Migration EU Expertise Initiative
MIDA	Migration for Development in Africa
MELR	Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations
MFARI	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration
ROPAA	Representation of the People's (Amendment) Act

MIGNEX Background Paper

Migration-relevant policies in Ghana

Ghana has a comprehensive national framework to govern and maximise the developmental impacts of migration, and to protect the rights of migrants. Yet, in practice, many aspects conflict with ECOWAS protocols and EU priorities, which has resulted in irregular flows of low-skilled, informal workers.

Interest in migration policy has increased since the launch of Ghana's National Migration Policy in 2016. Many programmes and initiatives exist, but there is incoherence across core objectives.

The ECOWAS Free Movement Protocol and a ban on migration to Gulf States have both impacted migration flows, with positive and negative consequences for development.

Viewed as a source of financial and intellectual investment, key initiatives have also been designed to engage the Ghanaian and wider African diaspora to support national development in Ghana.

About the MIGNEX policy reviews

This is one of ten MIGNEX Background Papers devoted to a review of policies in the ten countries of origin and transit covered by the project. The term 'policy' can refer to many different phenomena. MIGNEX adopts a broad perspective and regards policy to include the existence and effectiveness of particular laws, common practices, development initiatives, policy interventions and the broader policy environment or framework. This inclusive definition encompasses the needs of the project's overall research.

Much of the analysis in the review involves policies that relate directly to migration and its link to development. The concept of 'migration-related policies' includes both the migration policy environment and interventions that seek to affect the development impacts of migration. It also includes

policy and projects that might have large effects on migration dynamics, even if not presented under a migration heading.

Methodological note

A systematic desk-based review was undertaken in February 2020 to identify experts – both migration and non-migration ones – to be interviewed. Overall, 15 semi-structured interviews were conducted in Accra between 2 March and 10 March 2020. Of these, 11 interviews were conducted in person, 2 were conducted over the phone and 2 via zoom.

Dr Carlos Vargas-Silva, Dr Joseph Kofi Teye and Dr Leander Kandilige conducted the face-to-face interviews. Dr Vargas-Silva led the questions while Dr Kandilige and Dr Teye probed further based on the responses provided by interviewees and their own local knowledge. All of the interviews were conducted in English. Dr Teye and Dr Kandilige facilitated access to interviewees due to their established network among experts as well as the role of the Centre for Migration Studies (CMS) at the University of Ghana in advising the government on migration issues. Dr Marie Godin conducted two additional interviews via zoom to complement some sections of this paper.

Summary of main results

The focus on managing emigration is relatively new in Ghana and became more coherent as an approach with the launching of the National Migration Policy in 2016 (Ministry of the Interior, 2016). To provide a comprehensive framework for governing labour migration, the Labour Department of Ghana's Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MELR), in collaboration with other state agencies and social partners, formulated the National Labour Migration Policy to guide the management of labour migration into and out of Ghana (MELR, 2020). Three main intervention areas lie at the centre of this new policy, namely: governance of labour migration, systems to protect and empower migrant workers and their families, and mechanisms to maximise the developmental impacts of labour migration.

Three key aspects are driving policy issues regarding immigration and emigration in Ghana. First, Ghana is a founding member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and is also signatory to the 1979 ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Establishment (ECOWAS, 1979). However, many barriers still limit migration across ECOWAS countries, such as the high cost of work permits which require frequent renewal, as well as jobs within public service that are not open to foreigners. In view of these restrictions, a majority of the Ghanaians who migrate to other ECOWAS countries are low-skilled persons who tend to work in the informal sector in the destination countries. The discovery of oil in commercial quantities in Ghana has led to an increased number of skilled workers, especially from Nigeria, migrating into Ghana to work in the formal sector.

The second key aspect driving emigration policy in Ghana is a recent emphasis on protecting the rights and security of Ghanaian nationals working abroad, which has included a ban on emigration of domestic workers to Gulf countries. Both the 2017 ban on the issuance of the specific visa category for domestic work in the Gulf States (Visa 20) and the freeze on new licences for agencies were geared towards safeguarding such rights. The third key aspect driving policy are the multiple recent initiatives to reduce irregular migration of Ghanaians, particularly to Europe.

The Government of Ghana has developed a range of measures to engage its diaspora. One key policy has been to promote symbolic nation-building in order to enhance the diaspora's relationship with their homeland. However, while Ghana drafted a Diaspora Engagement Policy in 2016, the policy has yet to be implemented. This is partly due to a change in government in 2016, which led to additional revisions to the draft policy to reflect policy priorities of the new government. A recent multi-stakeholder dialogue, sponsored by the German Development Agency (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit or GIZ) from 2 to 6 August 2021 served as a final validation exercise prior to the policy being finalised for submission to cabinet for approval.

Emigration

Main policies

Three key aspects are driving policy issues regarding emigration in Ghana: 1) the country's membership of ECOWAS; 2) an emphasis on protecting the rights of Ghanaians working abroad; and 3) recent efforts to reduce irregular migration of Ghanaians, particularly to Europe.

Ghana is a founding member of ECOWAS, an economic grouping established in 1975 to promote economic integration in the region. The country is also a signatory to the 1979 ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Establishment (ECOWAS, 1979), which guarantees visa-free mobility (for up to 90 days) for ECOWAS citizens within the West African sub-region. The Protocol stipulates the right of nationals of one ECOWAS country to enter, reside in and establish economic activities in another member state (ECOWAS, 2019). Implementation is divided into three phases: visa-free entry, right of residency and right of establishment. As explained in detail below, the first two phases of this Protocol have been fully implemented, but the third has not.

As an ECOWAS member, nationals of Ghana enjoy free movement rights with the other 14 ECOWAS countries.¹ However, Ghanaians must still follow several bureaucratic steps regarding work and/or residence permits in order to reside and work in another member state. Article 2 of the Supplementary Protocol (ECOWAS, 1986) specifically requires member states to grant community citizens the right of residence for the purpose of seeking and/or carrying out income-earning employment. This is to be executed through the

¹ Other members include: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte D Ivoire, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

issuance of residence permits or cards. However, this provision is subject to national laws and resident permit procedures of each ECOWAS state. A recent study commissioned by the World Bank and African Centre for Economic Transformation (ACET) in four ECOWAS countries shows that, in principle, work permits are expected to be issued to all foreigners, including ECOWAS citizens, only in situations where there is ‘proof that the skills possessed by the migrant do not exist locally’ (Teye and Asima, 2017). The costs of the permit vary from country to country, but in general the perception is that the cost is beyond the economic means of most ECOWAS citizens, and the permit requires frequent renewal. The practice in many ECOWAS countries is that jobs in certain sectors, including the public service, are not available to foreigners (including nationals of other ECOWAS countries) except under special arrangements. In view of these restrictions, most Ghanaians who migrate to other ECOWAS countries are low-skilled persons who tend to work in the informal sector in their destination country.

The second key aspect driving policy issues regarding emigration in Ghana is a recent emphasis on protecting the rights and security of Ghanaian nationals working abroad, which includes a ban on emigration of domestic workers to Gulf countries. Ghanaian migration to the Middle East started to increase during the 1990s because of the growing number of labour recruitment agencies, both licensed and unlicensed (IOM, 2019). However, a temporary ban was introduced on the recruitment of Ghanaian domestic workers in Gulf countries in response to an increase in reported cases of abuse in the region (see Atong et al., 2018; Kandilige et al., 2019).

This ban was imposed in 2017 and included a freeze on the issuance of new licences for labour recruitment agencies to the Gulf. The Government of Ghana has been working on bilateral agreements with Gulf countries to lift the ban, while at the same time expanding the registration of labour recruitment agencies (IOM, 2019a). Under the Labour Act of 2003 (Act 651) (Republic of Ghana, 2003a), Ghana’s Labour Department can license labour recruitment agencies to embark on labour recruitment both for internal and international placements. The ban on the issuance of the specific visa category for domestic work in the Gulf State (visa-20) and the freeze on new licences were geared towards safeguarding the rights of Ghanaian domestic workers in the Gulf States.

The third key aspect driving emigration policy are the multiple recent initiatives to reduce irregular migration of Ghanaians, particularly to Europe. Such initiatives are often funded by international organisations such as the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and GIZ, and are coordinated by Ghanaian civil society organizations (CSOs) (often led by former migrants) and sometimes the Ghana Immigration Service (GIS). These include information campaigns about the dangers of irregular migration and possible legal channels, as well as vocational training for youth. The European Union (EU) has funded IOM initiatives through the Ghana Integrated Migration Management Approach (€3 million) that sought to enhance the capacity of GIS personnel as well as to establish Migration Information Centres in popular migrant-source communities. One example is the Migration Consultation Centre in Sunyani (located at the GIS Brong Ahafo Regional Command). Other initiatives, such as the GIZ’s Ghanaian-Germany Centre for Jobs, Migration and Reintegration, seek to support job creation for

youth mostly to discourage irregular migration to Europe. The Centre also provides ‘on-site counselling’ for returnees regarding job and vocational training opportunities in Ghana.

More recently, the Government of Ghana has been involved in supporting temporary and circular migration programmes that potentially benefit the country of origin and destination, as well as migrants too – known as a ‘triple win solution’. In 2019, 3,000 Ghanaian nurses were posted in Germany through the National Youth Employment Agency’s (YEA) Working Abroad project, while in 2020 95 nurses were posted to Barbados with a two-year contract. New legal and safe pathways to migration are being developed that, although still scarce, align with the EU’s New Pact on Migration and Asylum (EC, 2020) and the Talent Partnerships proposal to support mobility and migration schemes for labour and training purposes (EC, n.d.). The adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), in particular Objective 18, has also brought attention to the issue (UN, 2019).

Some exploratory studies have been conducted recently between Ghana and the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) to put in place a joint development of skilled workers that takes into consideration the benefit of all sides. This innovative Transnational Mobility Skill Partnerships (TMSP) in the construction sector would include both technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and employment (Rother et al., 2021). Following the ban on the recruitment of Ghanaian workers to the Gulf and the Middle East, new agreements were signed with Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, and an agreement with Saudi Arabia is being negotiated (Le Coz and Hooper, 2021). However, these new labour supply agreements have not been implemented fully because of the current COVID-19 pandemic. In the meantime, Ghana passed its Labour (‘Domestic Workers’) Regulations, 2020 (LI 2408), which accords a comprehensive set of rights to domestic workers (Republic of Ghana, 2020a).

Trends

The focus on managing emigration is relatively new in Ghana and a more coherent approach emerged with the launch of the National Migration Policy in April 2016 (Ministry of the Interior, 2016).

The Labour Department of the MELR and the GIS are responsible for issuing exit permits to labour migrants recruited by registered recruitment agencies for placement in the Gulf States. As noted already, the increase in reported cases of abuse of domestic workers in the Gulf States led to a temporary ban on visas for domestic work. This has also expedited the negotiation of bilateral agreements with Gulf States to streamline labour emigration. The Libya crisis of 2011, in which many Ghanaians were stranded and belatedly evacuated, also played a key role in the creation of government units and bureaux to protect the rights of emigrants (e.g. the Diaspora Support Unit in 2012 and the Diaspora Affairs Bureau in 2014).

To provide a comprehensive framework to govern labour migration, the MELR, in collaboration with other state agencies and social partners, formulated the National Labour Migration Policy (MELR, 2020). The policy outlines strategic actions under three main intervention areas, namely: 1)

governance of labour migration, 2) systems for the protection and empowerment of migrant workers and their families, and 3) mechanisms to maximise the developmental impacts of labour migration. Following a key recommendation of the National Migration Policy (Ministry of the Interior, 2016), the Ghana National Migration Commission (GNMC) is in the process of being established. This Commission will have oversight responsibility for immigration, emigration and return migration-related issues in the country. It is mandated to: ‘coordinate all migration-related interventions in the country, promoting policy coherence at national and local level, humane and orderly migration, and creating the right conditions for migrants to contribute to development’ (IOM, 2019b).

Impacts on emigration

The consensus is that ECOWAS membership has only had a moderate effect on emigration volumes from Ghana. One reason could be that Ghana has one of the highest income levels and political stability among ECOWAS member states (therefore other ECOWAS countries are less attractive destinations for Ghanaians looking for work abroad). While many bureaucratic steps are involved when working in another ECOWAS country, evidence shows that in 2010 a high share of Ghanaian emigrants (49.74%) went to other ECOWAS countries nonetheless, especially to thriving countries such as Nigeria and Côte d’Ivoire (Devillard et al., 2016). The ban on migration to the Gulf has had a great effect on the pattern of emigration, with CSOs, civil servants and academic research (IOM, 2019a) suggesting that it has led to increased *irregular* migration to the Gulf countries (see Atong et al., 2018; Awumbila et al., 2019a; Bisong, 2021).

There is scarce evidence that the information campaigns and vocational training have had an effect in reducing irregular migration. The perception among experts is that information campaigns increase awareness about the risks associated with irregular migration, but they are limited in their ability to actually dissuade potential emigrants. For instance, information campaigns by the GIS using photographs and videos of abuses suffered by domestic workers in Gulf States did little to reduce the number emigrating to such destinations until the temporary ban was imposed in 2017. Similarly, information campaigns by IOM and CSOs do not seem to be able to stem the flow of irregular migrants through the Sahara Desert to Libya, in spite of the risks both en route to Libya and the state of insecurity on arrival in Libya since the 2011 political crisis. A recent study conducted as part of the Migrating Out of Poverty Project indicates that many irregular migrants were aware of the dangers associated with irregular migration through the desert towards Europe but they still took the decision to migrate because of the belief that God would protect them (See Awumbila et al., 2019b).

Impacts on development

Of the three policies discussed above, the 1979 ECOWAS Protocol has had some impact on development in Ghana. The visa-free mobility of Ghanaians, their right of residence and the right of establishment in other ECOWAS countries have all facilitated the participation of Ghanaians in economic activities that have yielded substantial remittances towards national

development. For instance, in 2015, Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo and Burkina Faso were among the top 10 countries from which remittances to Ghana originated (World Bank, 2016). Equally, the participation of ECOWAS citizens in Ghana's economy – such as in the banking, hospitality, services, and oil and gas sectors – has further contributed to Ghana's development. The harmonisation of immigration and emigration processes, the adoption of an ECOWAS passport and efforts to create an ECOWAS common currency all have implications for development in Ghana.

The ban on migration to the Gulf has had important implications for emigration and has likely had developmental impacts on Ghana too. Registered labour recruitment agencies often complain about the loss of business activity to non-registered agencies and economic damage to the country in general. Each recruitment agency that recruits for foreign placement is levied 25,000 Ghana Cedis as collateral, should migrant workers need to be repatriated by the government – and this amount is in addition to annual renewal fees. The government is considering compensating some of these agencies for their lost income during the ban period. In addition, the ban, which was meant to be temporary, has negatively affected the ability of Ghanaian labour migrants to gain employment in Gulf States and to send remittances back to their households. The current attempts at establishing bilateral agreements with the Gulf States are, in part, a result of the Ghanaian government realising the economic implications of officially shutting down the Ghana–Gulf States migration corridor.

Key incoherence across policies

The banning of the visa-20 for domestic work has meant that embassies of Gulf States in Ghana no longer take responsibility for abuses against Ghanaian domestic workers as they argue that no such visas are officially issued. In addition, withdrawing licences from formally registered recruitment agencies has resulted in a stoppage in business activities by those agencies that have the ability to protect rights and in a boom in activities by irregular/illegal recruitment agents. Though not intended, the Free Movement Protocol has allowed Ghanaians to use other ECOWAS countries as a stepping stone to reach Gulf countries without authorisation from the Ghanaian government. Ghanaians looking to migrate to the Gulf as domestic workers instead travel to another ECOWAS member state first and then depart for a Gulf country. While the ban was intended to protect labour migrants, the result has been even less protection for Ghanaian domestic workers in Gulf countries.

The three phases of the ECOWAS Free Movement Protocol (ECOWAS, 1979) are fraught with incoherence in practice. Using Nigeria as a case study, since it is the biggest economy in ECOWAS and the preferred destination of Ghanaian migrants (Awumbila et al., 2014a), we demonstrate the policy incoherence. The first phase of visa-free travel is characterised by restrictions around staying and accessing employment in destination countries. In Nigeria (just as in Ghana), ECOWAS citizens are not allowed to work in the civil service, they cannot join the judiciary or the army, act as auctioneers or even, in some cases, join the teaching profession and scientific research in specific fields (Ba, 2006). The second phase of the Protocol is supposed to allow for a right of residence with access to work

permits, employment and social services, but in practice there are multiple limitations. Nigeria's Immigration Act, for instance, precludes any person other than a Nigerian citizen from accepting employment or establishing a business without the written consent of the Minister of Interior (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2015). The third phase of the Protocol encourages ECOWAS member states to guarantee that community citizens are availed reciprocal and the same rights as nationals in order to establish a business in the host country. However, the Companies and Allied Matters Act (1990) (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1990), which governs the registration of businesses, discriminates in terms of share capital requirements between a Nigerian citizen and a foreigner, including ECOWAS citizens.

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Interaction with development policies

Recently, Ghana has been investing substantially in improving identification documents such as birth certificates and ID cards, including the launch of a new Ghana Card that is required for Ghanaians and foreigners residing in the country (Figure 1). One result of the improvement in documentation has been a decrease in visa refusals, which could, in turn, increase legal migration from the country. However, these investments in better quality documents have also been motivated by concerns regarding document forgery.²

² See <https://nia.gov.gh/>.



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Figure 1. Registration campaign in Tamale Airport

Source: Photograph by Marie Godin, March 2020.

Improvements in the acquisition of valid and traceable documents constitute a significant feature in Ghana's development policymaking processes. Several major national development policies and initiatives, in combination with a mandate on biometric identification documents, are likely to affect emigration pressures in Ghana. In the discussion below, we use some of the main development policies/initiatives to demonstrate possible linkages.

Diaspora

Main policies

In line with Gamlen's (2006) typology of diaspora engagement policies, the policies and programmes designed by the Government of Ghana to engage its diaspora fall under three broad categories. The first category includes programmes that seek to build capacity of institutions responsible for managing diaspora affairs and promote symbolic nation-building through diaspora conferences and cultural programmes. The second group entails programmes that seek to extend rights to the Ghanaian diaspora, while the third category seeks to extract obligations from the diaspora (Teye et al., 2017).

With regard to the first group, the Government of Ghana has organised a number of 'home-coming' events in the country, as well as cultural events in popular destination countries, to enhance the diaspora's relationship with the homeland. As part of these symbolic nation-building programmes, the government also declared 2019 as the Year of Return. This major initiative

was intended to encourage the ‘African diaspora’ to visit Ghana and invest in the country. The concept of ‘African diaspora’ used by the Government within this campaign (see Figure 2) is broad and includes all people with African ancestry, particularly those who are descendants of slaves and African Americans in the United States (US). It highlights the role of Africa, and particularly Ghana, as the homeland for African Americans. The year 2019 had special symbolism as this marked 400 years since the first arrival of enslaved Africans to the US.³

The Government of Ghana is now developing a follow-up campaign named Beyond the Return. It follows the same idea of inviting all people of African origin to visit and invest in Ghana, wherever they may currently be living. It is also part of a 10-year project under the theme ‘A decade of African renaissance 2020–2030’.



Figure 2. Year of Return billboard in Accra

Source: Photograph by Marie Godin and Leander Kandilige, March 2020.

³ See <https://www.yearofreturn.com/>

With regards to the second category of programmes, the major rights extended to people in the diaspora include dual citizenship to naturalised Ghanaians and the right to vote. The passage of the Representation of the People's (Amendment) Act (ROPAA) (Act 699) of 2006 was designed to integrate the Ghanaian diaspora into the political discourse in the country and to enhance their identification with socioeconomic and political debates in Ghana (Republic of Ghana, 2006a). The focus of the Act is on promoting the diaspora's sense of belonging to Ghana. However, although this Act was passed over 10 years ago, implementation has remained limited due to logistical issues. The Electoral Commission of Ghana is discussing ways of overcoming data and logistical challenges to enable it to compile a credible voters' register of the Ghanaian diaspora and to manage the conduct of polls abroad during national elections. The next election in Ghana is scheduled for December 2024 and it is not clear if Ghanaians abroad will be able to vote then. This prospect is further put in doubt by the current global COVID-19 pandemic, which has the potential to frustrate voter registration and election preparation efforts. In addition, the Diaspora Affairs Bureau (DAB) moved from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration (MFARI) to the Office of the Presidency after the 2016 presidential elections. This change is likely a reflection of the increased political salience of diaspora affairs in Ghana, also brought on by the announcement of voting rights for Ghanaians abroad (Adam et al., 2020).

Finally, on the third category of diaspora programmes, a number of initiatives have been adopted to encourage people in the diaspora to send remittances and invest in Ghana. Some state agencies have also implemented programmes aimed at facilitating knowledge transfer from diaspora experts to their Ghanaian counterparts.

As a way of facilitating the implementation of programmes in all three of these areas of diaspora engagement, Ghana has recently drafted a Diaspora Engagement Policy (DEP). This policy should have been implemented, but by 2021 it had yet to be launched. The policy has the main goal of promoting 'constructive engagement between Ghana and its diaspora for the purpose of leveraging mutual benefits from each other while collaborating to find solutions to challenges that may affect the engagement between them' (Republic of Ghana, forthcoming: 5). The core objectives include 'building mutually beneficial and sustainable networks for engagement between Ghana and the diaspora to promote capacity-building, facilitating a process for the enjoyment of rights by the Ghanaian Diaspora and ensuring that the diaspora discharge relevant obligations towards Ghana's development' (ibid: 3). The rationale of the policy is to:

...enhance the capacity of the diaspora to effectively participate in Ghana's development in a structured way through channelling of their remittances to foster entrepreneurship among them and, where possible, through strengthened partnerships with their networks abroad and in the homeland' (ibid: IX).

The policy is also expected to enable the diaspora to support innovations in priority sectors, to fill gaps in knowledge and skills, and to be members and leaders of scientific and technical networks in Ghana. The government, through its missions abroad and in collaboration with local and international institutions and actors, is expected to extend programmes and

initiatives to ensure the extension of rights and social protection to members of the diaspora.

In 2012, the Diaspora Affairs Unit at MFARI was created with the purpose of helping to design and implement the DEP. However, with a change of government in 2017, the responsibility for the DEP was then transferred to the Diaspora Affairs Office within the Office of the President (DAOOP). This indicates how diaspora policies are subject to party politics, which often results in a change of priorities as well as commitment to previous policy engagement. Additionally, the physical location of institutions, which are mandated to serve the interests of migrants/diaspora members, within sensitive security zones has the potential to impede access by the intended beneficiaries.

Several programmes have also been implemented by state organisations as part of efforts to facilitate knowledge transfer from Ghanaian professionals abroad to their counterparts in Ghana. For instance, the Ministry of Health and the IOM have implemented the Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) programme to facilitate knowledge transfer in the health sector. The universities in Ghana have also implemented programmes that seek to promote skills transfer from Ghanaian academics abroad to students and early career researchers in Ghanaian universities. For instance, the University of Ghana has been running a Diaspora Linkage Programme (UG-DLP) since 2011. This programme aims to facilitate the transfer of expertise of Ghanaian professors in the diaspora to promote the University of Ghana's academic teaching and research. The DAOOP, together with the Carnegie Corporation, the Diaspora Unit and the Citizens and Diaspora Directorate (CIDO) of the African Union (AU), have developed a Ghana National Academic Diaspora Programme with the aim of asking the academic diaspora to transfer their acquired knowledge in support of the educational development of Ghana (DAOOP Report, 2020).

Trends

The current initiatives to connect Ghana with the African diaspora are relatively new. However, there have been efforts to connect with Ghanaians abroad over time. For instance, there have been programmes organised on an ad hoc basis, such as Emancipation Day, which has been held in Ghana since 1998, and the Pan African Festival of Arts and Culture (PANAFEST), which seeks to reinforce claims of shared national identity with the diaspora. In addition, there was a Home Coming Summit in 2001 and The Joseph Project, which was organised in 2007 to enhance Ghanaian emigrants' sense of belonging to the transnational Ghanaian community. Within the last decade there has been the Ghana Homecoming Summit in 2017 and the Ghana Diaspora Celebration and Homecoming Summit of 2019.

Efforts to increase the rights of the diaspora have also been taking place with the Right of Abode law granted as part of the Immigration Act 2000 to Ghanaians who have lost their Ghanaian citizenship by reason of acquisition of a foreign nationality (Republic of Ghana, 2000a). This permits persons of African descent to submit an application and be granted the right to stay in Ghana indefinitely. This was followed by the Dual Citizenship Act in 2000 (Act 591) (Republic of Ghana, 2000b). However, major efforts to extend

voting rights to Ghanaians in the diaspora started when the ROPAA was introduced in parliament in June 2005 (Republic of Ghana, 2006a). After several years of debate by parliamentarians and consultations with Ghanaians in the country and abroad, the Act was passed in 2007. However, as mentioned above, the Electoral Commission has been unable to implement the Act.

Several programmes that seek to extract obligations from the diaspora have also been implemented since 2000. In recent years, the Government of Ghana has been organising meetings with diaspora associations in order to encourage them to send more remittances for investment. For example, the government, in collaboration with the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), organised the first workshop on ‘Diaspora capital’ in Accra from 18 to 22 August 2014. This workshop was funded by the EU through its Migration EU Expertise (MIEUX) initiative (Teye et al., 2017). To enhance the participation of diaspora in development projects, the Ghanaian government has also periodically floated diaspora bonds as a means of financing development projects as well as strengthening links between the diaspora and the country. Additionally, the government and IOM Ghana have implemented a number of programmes that seek to leverage remittances for development in the country.

Impacts on development

There is a belief, among the Ghanaian policymakers and academics interviewed as part of this review, that the diaspora engagement programmes have had some positive impacts on socioeconomic development in the country. The symbolic nation-building programmes are considered to have contributed to an increase in visits to Ghana with an associated increase in investments. For instance, the ultimate objective of the Year of Return was to increase tourism and investment in Ghana, and there is a perception that this has occurred to some degree. Initial reports suggest that the Year of Return generated close to US\$2 billion in additional revenue for the country (Asiedu-Addo, 2019), with close to one million visitors who came to Ghana to participate in the activities in 2019. It is too early to tell if the Year of Return will result in longer-term and sustainable investment, however.

One initiative from the government to maximise the long-term impact of this initiative is the recent creation of the African Sankofa Savings Account, an investment and savings account directed at the diaspora (Ministry of Finance, 2020). With this initiative, the government hopes to raise some US\$3 billion from people of African descent living across the globe for development (NewsGhana, 2020). The fund aims to accommodate both the high- and low-income earners who want to invest in their homeland such as in tourism infrastructure, agriculture value addition, real estate, music, culture and retirement homes, etc.

The extension of voting rights has the potential to increase the sense of belonging among diaspora members, which might translate into additional investment into the Ghanaian economy also. Partly as a result of programmes aimed at leveraging remittances for development, international flows through formal channels to Ghana increased from US\$1.5 billion in

2005 to US\$2.1 billion in 2010, and then to US\$4.9 billion in 2015 before declining to US\$2.98 billion in 2016 and then rising again to US\$3.54 billion in 2017 (Addison, 2004; Bank of Ghana, 2016; IOM, 2020). Additionally, the participation of the diaspora through investments, knowledge transfers, establishment of epistemic and business networks etc. all feed into the long-term development planning processes of the country. Notable challenges to the success of this policy objective include the high cost of sending remittances, inadequate competition among remittance-sending agencies, the high cost of labour migration, as well as the low level of education on investment opportunities among both senders and recipients of remittances in Ghana. Strategic and targeted policies need to be formulated to enhance the developmental impacts of migration on socioeconomic development in Ghana.

Key incoherence across policies

While there are no clear examples of incoherence across these policies relating to the diaspora, there potential for it in the future. For instance, in one case, the term ‘African diaspora’ refers to a broad group of those of African descent, who reside outside of Africa (in particular African Americans); in the second case, ‘African diaspora’ refers to Ghanaian nationals abroad. The obligations of Ghana towards both groups are different, while the goal of government initiatives to engage them is the same (i.e. investment, tourism revenues, skills acquisition, etc.).

In addition, possible incoherence could occur due to the fact that Ghana is actively courting the support of the diaspora while at the same time working with CSOs to stem the irregular migration of youth to Europe. These two initiatives are potentially contradictory as one intends to limit the size of the diaspora and the other relies on a sizable diaspora for success. Similarly, the government’s efforts to harness the benefits of emigration of highly skilled professionals through remittances and investments is contradicted by its own efforts to control brain drain, especially in the health sector, which faced emigration of health professionals in the 1980s and 1990s. Clemens and Petterson (2008) estimate that over 56% of physicians and 24% of nurses trained in Ghana were working abroad in 2000.

Interaction with development policies

The current development initiatives in Ghana heavily encourage the participation of the diaspora in national development. Flagship policies such as One District One Factory (1D1F)⁴ are designed to encourage partnerships and investments by both local and foreign investors. The diaspora is a key target group for this policy. Similarly, the Planting for Food and Jobs policy targets multiple stakeholders throughout the value chain in the agriculture sector, including among the Ghanaian diaspora.

⁴ See <http://1d1f.gov.gh/>.

Transit migration

Transit migration is currently not a key issue in Ghana, in terms of policy concern or numbers. Therefore, it is not covered in this report.

Return migration

Main policies

Policy issues regarding return migration in Ghana focus on two main aspects. First, organisations such as IOM, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and GIZ have different programmes to encourage the return of highly skilled Ghanaians from abroad. Second, there are programmes to return Ghanaians who are in vulnerable situations in other countries. International organisations (i.e. development partners) play a leading role in both types of returns, but in collaboration with relevant government ministries, departments and agencies such as the GIS, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and MFARI and the National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO).

The details of the returning experts programme vary. Some involve short-term return for the purpose of skills transfers, while others involve long-term return. The programmes include facilitating skills transfers via organised trainings for locals in Ghana, salary top ups and seed capital for new business ventures. One of the main programmes has been the MIDA Ghana Health project, funded by the Dutch government (from 2002 to 2012). It facilitated the temporary return to Ghana of Ghanaian health professionals residing in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom (UK), Germany and other EU countries. The project also facilitated internships in hospitals and other health educational institutions in EU countries for qualified health workers from Ghana (IOM, 2012). This health project led to immense cross-learning between Ghanaian expert medical professionals resident abroad and local professionals. It also established enduring relationships between health facilities in Ghana and the various countries that expatriate Ghanaian medical professionals practice within.

The return of Ghanaians from abroad was particularly prominent during the Libya crisis in 2011, which affected many Ghanaian nationals who resided in that country. At the peak of the crisis, about 790,000 migrants fled Libya into neighbouring countries, of which 18,455 Ghanaians were officially repatriated by IOM and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); these Ghanaians were flown or bussed from Egypt, Tunisia and Niger to Accra (Kleist, 2017). Initiatives such as the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration in Africa (or 'Joint Initiative') began in May 2017 and provided the option of assisted return to Ghanaians in Libya (and also in transit countries such as Niger) (Samuel Hall, 2018). Overall, more than 1,000 Ghanaians – many of whom were in detention – were involved in the programme, among which 25% returned to Brong Ahafo region, followed by Ashanti (17%), Accra (17%) and Western Region (11%) (IOM, 2019). This crisis also increased awareness among policymakers of the importance of gathering information on the destination of Ghanaian

workers going abroad. In comparison with other West African countries such as Senegal, Ghanaian CSOs have shown less opposition against the forced return of immigrants abroad and instead, through IOM, have supported the reintegration of returned nationals (Adam et al., 2020).

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Trends

While return migration to Ghana has increased in the last decade because of economic growth in the country and events elsewhere in traditional destination countries, the perception is that Ghana has not yet developed a comprehensive framework for managing the return and reintegration of those who return voluntarily and involuntarily. The lack of a comprehensive policy has resulted in an ad hoc government response to the return of Ghanaian nationals, including support to vulnerable returnees who need assistance. This is despite the fact that various institutions and agencies have, for decades, implemented return and reintegration programmes.

The returning experts programmes have existed for some years. These tend to be temporary initiatives developed by different organisations, often as part of a broader programme covering several countries. For instance, in 2018, IOM supported 673 Ghanaian migrants (608 men and 65 women) to return home from various destination countries; while, in 2016, IOM assisted 108 Ghanaian migrants (92 men and 36 women) to complete their reintegration process. Since IOM received its mandate in 2016, it has assisted more than 1,000 Ghanaians stranded on the routes mainly from Libya and Niger (IOM, 2019). This EU-IOM Joint Initiative began in 2017 and continued until 2020. The programmes to return those in vulnerable situations in other countries are more recent and relate to the current instability in Libya and other key destinations of Ghanaians.

Impacts on return migration

The impact of the experts programmes on return migration is small by design, as the programmes were temporary and small-scale initiatives. The intention was not to maximise return numbers, but to have an economic impact in Ghana.

The success of the ‘assisted voluntary return and reintegration’ programmes for Ghanaians (through the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF) has been limited. However, the programmes that focused on migrants in vulnerable conditions abroad had major effects on return. Over 1,000 migrants have returned to Ghana with IOM assistance.

Kandilige and Adiku’s study (2017, 2019) shows that the Ghanaian state and non-governmental and inter-governmental organisations were not well prepared to assist migrants on their involuntary return. In fact, many returnees considered re-migrating to Libya due to the failure of reintegration programmes in Ghana. In addition, as argued by Kleist (2017), involuntary return is often seen as ‘disgraceful and as a sign of undignified masculinity’ with ‘talk and practise of re-migration to Libya as a way of asserting and restoring masculinity’ (ibid: 337).

Impacts on development

The programmes related to the return of experts has a high potential to impact development, although at the moment there is no concrete evidence that such impacts have occurred. Anecdotal evidence provided by some of the interviewees suggests that several returned migrants have contributed positively to the country, however, in particular within the healthcare sector.

The interviewees also highlighted that returning academics have contributed to teaching and research in the universities of Ghana, and that a number of returned migrants have set up businesses, especially in trade and agriculture. The programmes on returning vulnerable individuals are unlikely to affect development.

Key incoherence across policies

There is an inherent incoherence between policies that encourage return to Ghana among highly skilled diaspora members and those that rely on investment in the country from the diaspora. Higher rates of return are likely to decrease the flow of remittances and investment from abroad.

Interaction with development policies

There has been strong interaction between policies that promote investment in the health sector and (mostly temporary) return migration programmes, as these are often led by returning migrants. For instance, Ghana's National Cardiothoracic Centre (NCTC), which is considered one of the best health facilities in Africa, was established by Dr Kwabena Frimpong-Boateng, a Ghanaian cardiothoracic surgeon trained in Hannover who decided to return from Germany (Tettey et al., 2016). Over the years, this doctor has trained several specialists. Additionally, Dr Boachie-Adjei, who emigrated to the US to study, returned to Ghana via the West African Health Foundation (WAHF), which was founded in 2001 by a group of physicians in New York. After several medical missions, Dr Boachie-Adjei founded the FOCOS Orthopaedic Hospital in Accra (2012), which is also a teaching facility for surgeons and caregivers (Frontani, 2015). Setrana and Tonah (2016) also identified Ghanaian return migrants who utilised their transnational links upon return to contribute to development through the establishment of businesses, schools and hospitals, among other activities.

Immigration

Main policies

There are four key policy aspects that drive the discussion regarding immigration in Ghana. First, there is the Immigration Act of 2000, which is the main legislation governing immigration to the country (Republic of Ghana, 2000a). Second, there is the ECOWAS Protocol and the related freedom of movement of workers across member states (ECOWAS, 1979). Third, there are issues related to asylum, which are governed by the Refugee Law of 1992, passed before Ghana was a democracy (Republic of Ghana, 1992). And fourth, a recently formulated National Labour Migration Policy

outlines strategies for governing immigration and protecting labour immigrants (MELR, 2020). The discussion below expands on each of these aspects.

According to the Immigration Act 2000, foreigners who wish to work in Ghana need to obtain a work permit from the GIS or have an immigrant quota assigned by the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC) (for companies of foreign ownership). The GIPC Act (865) (Republic of Ghana, 2013) only allows investment of more than US\$1 million from immigrants, which has led associations of Nigerian traders to make a complaint to the ECOWAS Community Court of Justice (Arhin-Sam, 2021). Those in possession of a work permit or quota must then apply for a residence permit to be authorised to work.

Overall, labour migration to Ghana is cumbersome and requires extensive documentation, which must be renewed frequently. Foreigners are excluded from many types of self-employment, such as petty trade, driving taxis and operating beauty salons. The main reason for this exclusionary policy is the fact that the overwhelming majority (up to 80%) of Ghanaians work in the informal sector. As a way of safeguarding employment opportunities for the bulk of the working-age population, competition from foreigners is outlawed. In other sectors, foreigners can enter formal self-employment, but they are required to have a hefty initial capital sum (This Nation, 2021).

While ECOWAS nationals enjoy free movement, they still have to apply for work and residence permits, as explained above. There are also requirements to apply for an extension of their visa-free status after 90 days and the restrictions on self-employment apply to them too. In reality, barriers to free movement are still present, in particular with regards to residence rights and access to public services of intra-ECOWAS migrants (Devillard et al., 2016).

Asylum seekers cannot work in Ghana but have access to health, education and other social services. Once they are officially recognised as refugees, they can access the labour market (Republic of Ghana, 1992). Meanwhile, the National Labour Migration Policy outlines strategies for the protection and empowerment of migrant workers and their families (both immigrants and emigrants) (MELR, 2020).

Trends

Ghana has a long history of immigration, especially from ECOWAS countries. Many immigrants are migrant workers mainly from neighbouring West African countries who seek economic opportunities in the agricultural and trade sectors primarily. However, in recent years, Ghana has received migrants from a number of Asian countries, especially China and India. This is partly in response to the investment promotion drive by the Government of Ghana and increased flows of investments from Asia. Consequently, while ECOWAS policy has historically been the focus for immigration, Ghana's recent National Labour Migration Policy outlines strategies to manage the activities of migrants from countries outside the ECOWAS region (MELR, 2020). For instance, in response to media reports on rights violations of Ghanaians by some Asian entrepreneurs, the violation of mining and trading

laws by immigrants from China, and clashes between migrant Fulani herdsmen and farmers in some communities, the National Labour Migration Policy outlines strategies to promote peaceful coexistence between immigrants and nationals (ibid: 46). The Policy also outlines strategies to reduce irregular migration into Ghana, although this has not been a problem in the past.

Impacts on immigration

It is difficult to estimate the actual number of immigrants in Ghana but there is enough evidence to suggest that immigration flows have increased since 2000. Evaluating the impacts of specific policies on immigration is also difficult, but the region of origin of the migrants (ECOWAS vs non-ECOWAS) provides some indication.

Nationals of ECOWAS countries constitute the majority of estimated migrants in Ghana (68.3% in 2010, GSS; 75.3% in 2015 UN DESA), with Togo (87,494), Nigeria (67,629) and Burkina Faso (30,359) being the main countries of origin. In 2015, only 1.4% of immigrants in Ghana were non-Africans. The GIS (2014: 6, 2016: 22) issued 130,820 permits of all kinds (residence, work, re-entry, among others) in 2016, which represents an increase of 16.4% over the 2015 figure (112,395) (Teye et al., 2019).

The number of refugees remains small, as does the number of immigrants from non-ECOWAS countries. However, Ghana has several refugee camps with estimated populations of 758 (Krisan), 3,442 (The Ampain), 1,459 (Egyeikrom) and 1,081 (Fetentaa) (Ghana Refugee Board, n.d.). There are also about 6,594 urban refugees living in the Accra metropolitan area and surrounding areas with Ivoirians the biggest population in the urban areas due to the Ivorian influx in 2011.

Impacts on development

Labour immigrants in Ghana are perceived to have contributed significantly to socioeconomic development through investment and employment generation. The experts interviewed for this review suggest that the immigrant communities that have invested most in Ghana include Europeans and North Americans in the manufacturing sector and agricultural sectors; Nigerians in the banking and trade sectors; South Africans in the banking, telecommunications and trade sectors; and Chinese in the mining, construction, trade and hospitality sectors (Sparreboom et al., 2018).

Despite the positive developmental impacts of immigration, however, Chinese immigrants, in particular, have been blamed for illegal mining, which causes environmental degradation. Ghanaian traders have also sometimes blamed immigrants for unfair competition, while violent clashes between migrant Fulani herdsmen and farmers have also affected socioeconomic development in some migrant receiving areas such as Agogo. Finally, the limits on foreign self-employment, particularly for ECOWAS nationals, are likely to affect economic activity in the country and limit the level of economic integration with other ECOWAS countries.

Key incoherence across policies

According to the ECOWAS Protocol, nationals of ECOWAS countries should have free access to the Ghanaian labour market (ECOWAS, 1979). However, as explained above, Ghanaian national laws do not provide this access and, in fact, exclude ECOWAS nationals from certain sectors such as self-employment. This has led to intense debate and confrontation between unions in Ghana and nationals of ECOWAS countries working in self-employment – the unions highlight national law and other ECOWAS nationals point to the international agreement.

The experts interviewed for this review also suggest that these limitations to self-employment have led to foreigners setting up businesses which are fronted by Ghanaian nationals, but that in practice have foreign ownership. This has led to substantial uncertainty about business ownership structure across the country.

The immigration of individuals to work in certain industries, such as petroleum and mining, requires extra permits from the relevant ministries and these tend to take considerable time to obtain. Therefore, it is common for those coming to Ghana to work in these industries to apply under other visa categories as the approval process takes longer than the assignment that they have been employed to undertake. Hence, by requiring separate ministerial approvals across sectors, the individual ministries ends up having less control over people who come to work in their industries.

Overall, while the National Migration Policy is supposed to expand Ghana's migration policy development – including for both emigration and immigration – there has been a strong focus on the former at the expense of the latter (Arhin-Sam, 2021).

Issues of indigeneity and citizenship rights for second-generation pastoralist migrants across the West African States, including Ghana, can also be a source of incoherence across policies (Setrana, 2021). The case of Fulani herders in the Shai-Osu-Doku and Agogo traditional areas of Ghana is particularly telling. Second-generation migrants remain at the margins of Ghanaian society as they are not considered as citizens, excluding them from their local host community and therefore preventing them from contributing to the development of their home country. The National Migration Policy suggests a review of the citizenship laws to accommodate issues of statelessness and citizenship (Ministry of the Interior, 2016).

Interaction with development policies

Ghana has initiatives in place that aim to attract and facilitate foreign investment, led by the GIPC. These initiatives are affected by the limitations on self-employment and entrepreneurship of foreign nationals and the high initial levels of capital required, as explained above. In particular, the initial capital requirement varies from US\$200,000 to \$1,000,000 and, in practice, excludes foreigners from these sectors altogether (This Nation, 2021).

Internal migration

Main policies

Internal migration in Ghana is high, particularly north–south migration. Historically, the southern provinces had most interaction with colonisers and developed more because of greater trade opportunities. There are many development-related initiatives that have as an objective to reduce north–south internal migration; however, this has not typically been the direct target of policy measures.

One exception is the issue of trafficking of children in the region of Lake Volta, Ghana’s largest lake. These children typically come from different communities, occasionally with the consent of their parents, and are recruited to work in the fishing industry. The Government of Ghana, in collaboration with international organisations, has carried out operations to rescue the trafficked children from different communities.⁵

Trends

An interest in human – particularly child – trafficking has existed in Ghana for a long time, with the law criminalising human trafficking passed in 2005 (Republic of Ghana, 2005). However, until recently, internal migration was not given any serious attention in development policy circles.

Ghana has been characterised by disparate development trajectories between the wealthy south and the impoverished north since political independence from the British in 1957 (Peil, 1995). The main trend of internal migration has predominantly been from the north to the south of Ghana in search of both agricultural and non-agricultural jobs, especially during the prolonged dry season in the north of the country. Non-agricultural jobs that are popular with low-skilled and less-educated northern youth have included head portering, domestic work, salvaging of scrap metal, petty trading and low-level security jobs.

As a result of a failure to plan for urbanisation and claims that rural–urban migrants contribute to the emergence of slums (e.g. Agogloshie and Nima), the general policy prescription has been to discourage rural–urban migration. The National Migration Policy, however, recognises the potential for internal migration to contribute to development and therefore makes policy proposals to leverage internal migration for socioeconomic development (Ministry of the Interior, 2016). In practice, the government does not intervene with rural–rural migration but continues to discourage rural–urban migration.

Impacts on internal migration

Initiatives against child trafficking are perceived to have had an impact on trafficking activities, but the numbers involved are low in the first place.

⁵ <https://challengingheights.org/site/img/2021-09-03-121242Ghana-social-protection-report-1.pdf>

Policies to discourage rural–urban migration have had limited success and these flows have continued in large numbers to date.

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Impacts on development

Awumbila et al. (2014b) estimate that 88% of rural–urban migrants send remittances to their families in rural areas. Internal migrants also provide cheap labour for agricultural activities in the forest zone and in the informal sector in urban Ghana. They support local economic development, particularly through market exchanges and revenue generation (Antwi-Agyei et al., 2018). However, because the impact of policies on internal migration is small, the developmental impact of these policies is also likely to be small.

Key incoherence across policies

Despite the largely negative view of rural–urban migration in Ghana, the perception is that urban living has contributed to access to education, health services, lower fertility, improved access to social services and improved livelihoods among internal migrants. However, rural–urban migration governance is not seen as an integral part of urban planning and poverty alleviation programmes in Ghana. Also, interviewees suggested that while the government claims to enhance access to housing, several poor rural–urban migrants living in slums are forcibly evicted from their homes each year to make way for infrastructure projects and private development. There have been very few programmes of urban renewal and slum upgrading in decaying urban centres.

Interaction with development policies

Rural–rural migration is consistent with the government’s policy to expand agricultural production.

Additionally, the Government of Ghana has been developing policies to increase educational achievement among children. One of these policies is the provision of free compulsory universal education to children and the recent addition of Free Senior High School (see further discussion under Main development policies). The degree to which these policies are successful in increasing educational levels among youth might, in turn, result in a decrease in child labour and child trafficking. The pervasive trend of internal youth migration from the north of Ghana to the south to seek employment as head porters could also be curbed if access to education is broadened and attendant local jobs are created.

Externalisation of EU migration policies

Main policies

Most of the policy interventions of the EU in Ghana relate to funding initiatives for migration. The EU officially supports a range of migration-related policies such as regional free movement within ECOWAS, labour

migration and diaspora policies, as highlighted in the European Joint Declaration on Ghana–EU Cooperation on Migration that took place on 16 April 2016 (EU and Republic of Ghana, 2016). However, two issues seem to attract interest and funding: irregular migration and forced returns. One example is the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration, which was funded through the EUTF. During the interviews conducted for this review, policymakers and others working on migration commonly claimed that they had received EU funding in these two areas to implement programmes and refurbish offices, among other activities.

The EU also funds border management and it provides logistical and capacity support to the GIS. Finally, the EU funded the participation of consultants to provide expertise in the development of the National Migration Policy and the DEP.

Trends

For a long time, Ghana was not perceived to be a priority for the EU in comparison with other West African countries; however, this changed from the 2000s (Adam et al., 2020). Until recently, the focus of the EU has been on strengthening border security and reducing irregular migration to Europe. In that respect, the EU launched the Ghana Integrated Migration Management Approach (GIMMA) in 2014 in order to strengthen the operational capacity of the GIS.

The IOM, as the EU implementing agency, has mainly focused on strengthening the effectiveness of the Ghanaian border guard by providing training and equipment, implementing information campaigns, restructuring the Migration Information Bureau, and opening the new Migration Information Centre in the Ghanaian transit town of Sunyani. However, recently there has been increased awareness of the importance of ECOWAS countries as an alternative migrant destination for Ghanaians. This includes an understanding of how strong regional links can benefit the economy and reduce irregular migration. The EU has also been funding some agricultural and rural development programmes aimed at reducing irregular migration.

Impacts on immigration, emigration, return migration and transit migration

The impact of EU funding on actual numbers is likely to be small, but the contribution to the establishment of migration and diaspora policies has been very important. Given that these are relatively recent policies, the effect might be seen in a few years.

Impacts on development

EU interventions have had some level of impact on the general development of Ghana through capacity-building of policymakers, CSOs and technocrats who are responsible for mainstreaming migration into the development planning processes in the country. The MIEUX initiative, for instance, was instrumental during the consultation processes between the Ghanaian team

and Ghanaian diaspora members in Germany and the UK during the drafting of Ghana's DEP.

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Supporting relations between home countries and diaspora communities is one key way that the EU attempts to help harness development capital from the diaspora towards national development, which the EU hopes will reduce irregular migration into Europe. This externalisation strategy forms one strand of the two-pronged approach (control and development aid) adopted by the EU to manage irregular arrivals into Europe. The control dimension of externalisation – which involves 'push backs' to the Mediterranean Sea, deportations and the signing of readmission agreements – has indirectly had the effect of denying origin countries much needed remittances that come from their migrant populations. It is not obvious to what extent Ghana has been affected by EU externalisation control measures, however.

Key incoherence across policies

While the EU is supporting ECOWAS to ensure that free movement is enhanced, the EU's border management partnership agreements with some African countries (especially Niger and Libya), which are geared towards reducing irregular migration from West Africa, are seen by some policymakers as interference in the implementation of the ECOWAS Free Movement Protocol (ECOWAS, 1979). Favouring bilateral relations with member states to counter north-bound irregular migration provides the grounds to delay the full implementation of regional free movement (Arhin-Sam, 2021:19).

Efforts by the EU and the Government of Ghana to promote economic transformation in Ghana and other African countries in an effort to reduce irregular migration to Europe is also seen by some experts as contradictory. This is because economic development in the short run will increase out-migration, as migration itself is part of social transformation.

Lastly, the EU has different funding streams that can potentially lead to inter-ministerial competition. As mentioned earlier, competency for migration issues is shared between different ministries, government departments and agencies. Among all of these institutions, as argued by Mouthaan (2019), it is the Ministry of the Interior that has a longstanding collaboration with the EU and EU member states in managing migration and that has captured the majority of the funds. This can be seen through the continued stream of financing to the GIS (in particular its anti-trafficking unit), the establishment of the Migration Information Bureau within GIS, and several flagship projects in building border management capacity such as the GIMMA (see above). The amount of funding allocated to GIS and its migration management activities indicates the real priorities of the EU in relation to Ghana (ibid.).

Interaction with development policies

The EU also funds some other major initiatives in Ghana, which have the potential to affect migration dynamics. For example, the EU is funding projects on agricultural development, rural infrastructural development and climate change adaptation programmes especially in northern Ghana. All of

these programmes can contribute to improved livelihoods and impact rural-urban and international migration in the end.

Main development policies

The selected policies

There are several development policies in Ghana that have the potential to affect migration patterns, both internally and internationally. These can be divided into three groups: those which relate to youth, those which relate to local development and those which relate to administrative issues such as official documentation.

Some of the policies relating to youth aim to increase educational levels. Free education in Ghana used only to be provided at the primary and junior high school levels. In 2017, the government announced that senior high school (for those broadly aged 16 to 18 years) would also be free (i.e. through the Free Senior High School programme). There is an expectation that the likely increase in educational levels as a result of this policy could also lead to greater aspirations among youth and increased migration.⁶

Other programmes relate to youth entrepreneurship. For example, the Youth Entrepreneurship and Employment Programme provides youth with free entrepreneurship and financial literacy training. This is a relatively new programme, but if successful could have an impact on youth unemployment and their migration patterns.⁷

In terms of local development, the Planting for Food and Jobs policy campaign (Ministry of Food and Agriculture, 2017) aims to ‘contribute to the modernisation of the agricultural sector that will lead to structural transformation of the national economy through food security, employment opportunities and poverty reduction’. This programme aims to increase food production. Again, if this type of programme is successful, it could increase food security and reduce internal migration.

The 1D1F industrial policy was put in place by the current government. It aims to promote rural industrialisation and add value to the natural resource endowment of each district in Ghana.⁸ This policy aims to create jobs across the country by setting up of factories in Ghana’s 254 districts. There is some uncertainty about whether the policy, which started in 2017, will achieve its objectives. However, if the policy is successful, it could decrease migration pressures in certain communities.

Both of these development policies are aimed at job creation and therefore they could contribute indirectly to a reduction in the need for youth to migrate both internally and internationally. In addition, health and education policies tend to interact with emigration policies indirectly. For instance, the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) seeks to guarantee

⁶ See <http://freeshs.gov.gh/>.

⁷ See <http://nbssi.gov.gh/yeep/>.

⁸ See <http://1d1f.gov.gh/>.

subsidised healthcare, while the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) scheme ensures free basic education to all pupils. The Capitation Grant policy provides grants to pupils to cover the extra costs for fees at primary level; the Free Senior High School programme provides for tuition-free education at secondary school level; the School Feeding Programme extends free lunches to deprived schools; and the Livelihood Enhancement Against Poverty (LEAP) project provides welfare support to poor families. These educational and health policies minimise incidents of school drop-outs, slippage into abject poverty and the risk of being lured into trafficking and smuggling situations.

Three Community Mining Schemes were launched on 18 August 2020 by President Akufo-Addo, aimed at creating 2,000 jobs at Egila/Gwira and Akamgo/Duale, with some 10,000 jobs set to be created at Aboso (Republic of Ghana, 2020b). These initiatives are meant to encourage responsible small-scale mining – as opposed to ‘galamsey’ (or illegal small-scale gold mining) – in communities across the country, in line with the Minerals and Mining Law, 2006 (Act 703) and Amendment, 2015 (Act 900) (Republic of Ghana, 2006b; 2015). The aim is to preserve water and land for productive use as well as creating employment for internal migrants.

Another key development policy from the government is the One Village, One Dam programme. This policy aims to give a boost to agricultural activity in the northern regions of the country. The initiative involves construction of small dams in order to provide all-year availability of water for smallholder farmers. One objective is to decrease north-south internal migration, and there is an expectation that the policy will have some effect on these flows. For a long time, poverty reduction strategies as well as urban policies mainly focused on the negative aspects of migration with little support for rural-urban migrants in Ghana (Awumbila et al., 2014). More recently, however, new development policies have been designed that aim to create new economic opportunities for young people at the local level.

In addition to these local development policies Ghana has recently divided the country into more regions, increasing from 10 to 16 administrative regions. The aim is to improve local governance and boost local development, which could, eventually, have an impact on migration flows.

Finally, there has been an improvement in documentation requirements, as mentioned previously in this review. The Ghana Card is required for everyone in the country as well as Ghanaians abroad. This is part of the government’s digitalisation drive, which has several multiplier implications on all aspects of governance, including migration governance.

Interactions with migration-related policies

Experts interviewed as part of this review suggested that the main development policies discussed above have a strong link with the goal of decreasing irregular migration from Ghana, although this is not often expressed explicitly. This is also reflected in the target group for the policies, which are often youth in rural areas.

Designing migration policies that support the development of Ghana is not new. In fact, migration was first addressed within population and

urbanisation policies, before development policies (see the 1994 Revised National Population Policy of Ghana (NPC, 1994), National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) (1996-2000), and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (GPRS) (2003-2005) (Republic of Ghana, 2003b). Ghana's subsequent National Development Plan, the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA, 2010-2013), published in 2010, stressed the need to establish a national migration policy to promote national development while reducing its negative impacts (Republic of Ghana, 2010: 268).

The National Migration Policy (Ministry of the Interior, 2016) is yet to be incorporated into Ghana's development plans, even though concrete steps are being taken to streamline aspects of the national policy that focus on labour migration into the development planning process. This is part of the implementation of the National Labour Migration Policy (MELR, 2020), which was approved by Ghana's Cabinet in 2020. Sectoral workplans have been developed for all member ministries, departments and agencies that are part of the Technical Working Group, which are being coordinated by the MELR. The workplans provide a means through which various stakeholders integrate labour migration issues into their sectoral development planning processes.

Examples of impact on migration

There are several examples of how the main development policies interact with migration policies. For example, the new Ghana Card means that it is now possible to differentiate between Ghanaians and foreigners residing in the country, which could have implications for labour market access and outcomes. This is particularly the case for nationals of ECOWAS countries who are similar physically to Ghanaians (e.g. Nigerians), which makes it difficult for employers to differentiate between those who are eligible to participate in sectors that are exclusively reserved for Ghanaians under the GIPC Act, 2013 (Act 865) (Republic of Ghana, 2013). Hence, this policy interacts with the ECOWAS Free Movement Protocol in the sense that it violates the tenets of the right of establishment embedded in the Protocol (ECOWAS, 1979). This entitles all ECOWAS citizens the right to seek employment opportunities and to set up businesses in other ECOWAS countries without discrimination.

Economic policies such as Planting for Food and Jobs, 1D1F and the Youth Entrepreneurship and Employment Programme all feed into the urbanisation, internal migration and labour migration sections of the National Migration Policy (Ministry of the Interior, 2016). Equally, these policies/programmes interact with the National Labour Migration Policy (MELR, 2020), which has among its main objectives the proper governance of labour migration, the protection of the rights of labour migrants and members of their families and maximisation of the developmental aspects of labour migration for socioeconomic development. Development policies that aim to provide employment and sources of livelihoods to all citizens, especially youth, invariably have an impact on trends of internal rural-urban migration as well as irregular international migration.

Any additional information related to COVID-19

MIGNEX
Background
Paper

At the time of writing, Ghana has not been seriously affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, relative to other countries. The Government of Ghana imposed a temporary closure of the borders as well as restrictions on economic activity. Airports have since been reopened, albeit with some stringent COVID-19 protocols while all land borders are still closed. The policy development and implementation space has been adversely impacted, however, because of restrictions to face-to-face gatherings. Similarly, capacity-building programmes for vital stakeholders have had to be either deferred or conducted mostly virtually. Even though the situation has improved substantially in Ghana, migration policy events are executed under hybrid models, with a blend of a few in-person participants and virtual participants.

Financial constraints introduced during the pandemic have also siphoned resources away from migration policy implementation programmes. The high costs associated with the provision of personal protective equipment and screening of both victims and perpetrators of human trafficking, for instance, has negatively impacted the operational capacity of institutions that are responsible for enforcing the Human Trafficking Act of 2005 (Act 694) (Republic of Ghana, 2005).

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