

GLOBAL MIGRATION GROUP

PRACTITIONERS SYMPOSIUM

'OVERCOMING BARRIERS: BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS FOR MIGRATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT'

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GENEVA, SWITZERLAND.

SESSION 1. DATA AND ANALYSIS.

PARTNERING TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS OF MIGRATION.

INPUT PAPER

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Introduction

As the Bio-data submitted or distributed indicates, I am participating in this High Level International Symposium as an Official representative of my Ministry on the basis of my active involvement in on-going work on the theme: 'Migration for Development' in general and Labour Migration Management in particular.

Ghana- Brief Overview

Ghana is located on the west coast of Africa and it is bordered to the north by Burkina Faso, to the East by Togo, La Cote D'ivoire or Ivory Coast to the west and the Gulf of Guinea/ Atlantic Ocean to the South.

Ghana has a population of about 22.9 million. The country has diverse agricultural crops and mineral deposits. These include Gold, Diamond, Bauxite, Iron ore, Clinker, Cocoa, Timber and Horticultural produce.

Migration and Development-Ghana's Migration Profile

Migration has no doubt taken central stage or assumed significant importance in the socio-economic development agenda of both developing and developed countries particularly in the 20th and 21st centuries. In the circumstance and mindful of the dynamics of migration as an old age phenomenon, particularly Labour Migration, it has been realised that management of Migration cannot be limited to the narrow approach of monitoring and control of persons but requires a deep-seated or far-reaching purposeful study, assessment and critical objective analysis towards the formulation of comprehensive policy for effective management with the view to reducing, to the barest minimum, associated risks and harnessing to the fullest, the enormous developmental potential inherent in Migration for the mutual benefit or advantage of all migrants and their families, countries of origin and destination.

It is in this context that I have the profound pleasure to share with you (as per the agenda) Ghana's experience in the production of a Country Migration Profile (MP) and efforts at developing a Migration and Development Policy Document, the usefulness of this tool for the purpose of Policy development among others.

Currently, Ghana does not have a Migration Policy such that issues pertaining to migration are dealt with in an adherent manner. However the overwhelming need for one has been recognised and a National Migration Unit (NMU) has been created to this end.

The NMU, an inter-ministerial team of high ranking government officials from various ministries, whose work involve issues an migration, is under the auspices or supervision of the Ministry of Interior (Internal Affairs).

This Unit, in collaboration with the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) is spearheading its objective of integrating migration into Ghana's development agenda. To facilitate the activities of the NMU, three thematic Working Groups were formed.

The Migration Profile project falls directly under the theme 'Migration and Economic Development, Labour and Irregular Migration and Migration Policy, Information and Research'.

Work on the Migration Profile was supervised by a Technical Working Group (TWG) with a mandate to ensure governmental support for the preparation of the MP to serve, among other things, as a Policy tool for developing a National Migration Policy. The Migration Profile (MP) in Ghana was undertaken as part of a West and Central Africa National Profiles for strategic Development Planning Programme- a research and capacity building programme with the support of the EU and IOM in the context of the EU and Africa's strategies for Migration Management.

The main objective of this project (MP) was to enhance governmental capacities to effectively manage migration by preparing country 'Migration Profile' which is to be used as a policy instrument to promote more comprehensive, holistic and proactive approach to migration management. The programme was to help develop a framework for data collection and analysis in support of strategic policy planning at national and regional levels.

The Ghana Migration Profile is the latest in a series to be released on West African countries.

The MP has addressed a number of Policy options for government. Among these are data challenges, the need to develop a comprehensive migration Policy, how to minimise the brain drain to 'brain gain' and how to engage the Diaspora for national development. All of these, have to a large extent, been addressed in the MP.

Challenges- Data Gaps

In analysing the impacts of migration, the availability of data was a major challenge. One of the main data gaps is the absence of accurate statistics. In preparing the MP, it was observed that existing data from the Ghana statistical Service (GSS) does not permit meaningful analysis due to the non provision of detail characteristics of the immigrants and emigrants. Data is most often not disaggregated by sex, age, occupation, level of education etc.

Limited organization, coordination and timely data sharing among institutions dealing with immigrants and emigrants are a further weakness in policy formation the MP brought to the fore. Due to security concerns foreign missions, do not make information relative to their nationals and Ghanaians in their respective countries easily and readily available.

The MP again revealed that GSS although collects information about the population during census, it does not update the database regularly to provide current trends within census periods (every ten years). Data is most of the time provided two-three years later, when it might be almost outdated.

Added to the above is the challenge of unwillingness or non cooperation on the part of bureaucrats in providing data, poor storage of national data in a user friendly manner, in adequate support for institutions involved in data collection and researched not excluding poor coordination among MDAs, research and teaching centres and DP's to build one existing data and information.

In analyzing the impacts, data availability was a major challenge. Ideally, aggregate time series data on remittances, how much of it went into housing, consumption, education, health etc would have been used to assess the impact of migration. Also, the negative impacts could not be estimated thus the effect cannot be ascertained.

The MP therefore highlights an urgent policy requirement-the need for improved migration data-statistics- build and upgrade the capacities of institutions involved in data collection processing and timely dissemination of information.

Who was/were involved in the production of the MP

The production of the MP involved a broad spectrum of stakeholders comprising a consultant, Centre for Migration Studies-University of Ghana, the IOM country office, IOM Dakar and Geneva, Key stakeholders, the National Migration Bureau steering committee members, diaspora organizations etc. Appointments were made with the following institutions and development partners. Others not listed, below also joined in during the validation workshops.

Ministry of Interior, Ghana Immigration Service, Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare, Ghana Statistical Service, Bank of Ghana, World Bank, UNDP, DFID, EU, Italian Embassy, Spanish Embassy, Netherlands Embassy, French Embassy, AFD, Nigeria High Commission, IOM and UNHCR.

Dr. Peter Quartey of the Centre for Migration Studies, University of Ghana, drafted the report, Rudolf Anich, Jobst Koehler and Timon van lidth, coordinated, reviewed, and edited the Migration Profile reports; Pierpaolo capalbo and Maud Bonnet for research assistance in final stages; IOM focal points and country missions provided additional information; and the government officials provided valuable inputs to the report at different stages.

Partnerships

The MP process has led to the establishment of new partnerships- the NMU has through the process undertaken an institutional Policy Survey Assessment and as a follow-up has initiated the process of preparing a National Migration policy for Ghana. Ghana works closely with regional bodies, international organizations and selected countries on issues pertaining to emigration and immigration. Ghana is implementing the ECOWAS protocol on the Free Movement of Persons with its problems, as well as the Commission's efforts to combat human trafficking following the adoption of the ECOWAS Plan of Action in 2002. In addition, the African Union's protocols on migration both within and out of Africa are taken into consideration in the country's migration decisions (Ghana Migration Profile, 2006).

As a member of the UN and signatory to its conventions, Ghana collaborates with UN agencies dealing with migration, including the UNFPA, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO). Furthermore, the MP process has deepened Ghana's cooperation with a number of multilateral institutions through institutional capacity building, staff training, provision of equipment, the preparation of the Ghana Migration Profile in 2006. Currently, a Ghana Labour Migration Policy is being prepared with support of

the EU, IOM and GoG. Ghana has draft agreements on Labour Migration with some destination countries of Ghanaian emigrants, including Italy, Spain and Libya.

Recommended actions/strategies to improve migration data

In order to improve migration data, GIS requires capacity building to enable it to function effectively. Among other things, there is the need to recruit and train personnel with skills in statistics and information communication technology to enhance data gathering, entry, processing and analysis.

Action: GSS has embarked on institutional strengthening and restructuring for effectiveness.

More specifically, there is a need to redesign the embarkation and disembarkation forms that travellers are asked to complete in order to ensure the collection of relevant data. For instance, travellers are required to state occupation in their passports, which could differ from their current occupation.

Action: The GSS with support from Danida, IOM and UNDP has set up MMB to streamline these and other administrative difficulties.

Efforts should also be made to enable Ghanaians abroad, irrespective of their status to register online with the Ghanaian missions in their destination countries. This could be done by designing a webpage and advertising it thoroughly.

Action: The Ministry of Tourism is actively consulting our diaspora relations to involve Ghanaian diaspora in the country's development efforts.

Also, there should be effective collaboration between MDA and research institutions such as ISSER and the Centre for Migration Studies to harmonise migration data collection or database.

Suggestion on how to update the National Migration Profile for Ghana (refer Migration in Ghana, A Country Profile)

The National Migration Profile should be updated regularly, at least every two years. Subsequent revisions should include data from a national migration survey (internal and international migration) and should constitute a panel. This could be done by interviewing the same households over time to ascertain dynamics. The GLSS 5 has some information on migration and remittances and steps should be taken to improve this dataset. Also, the GIS collects information on arrivals and departures from Ghana and this can be organised into a user-friendly format for updating the profile. Responsibility for seeing through these follow-up actions rest with the NMU, the GSS and the collaborating DP's.

Potential Synergies with New Initiatives

In order to become and remain an effective tool for Policy making MP reports require to be updated regularly, at least every two years. More importantly, a database on migration information should be created. Such a database should incorporate research results from varied sources, internal and external.

Deeping and widening international cooperation/collaboration involving all international agencies should be paramount in this regard to build on data and other useful information available worldwide.

In conclusion, let me emphasise that the current MP as a tool for Policy development, would require future revision in order to improve data collection and analysis on Migration and development. This would significantly assist the nation to formulate a comprehensive migration policy to coordinate the various actors in the migration process.