



## Data, Migration Profiles and How to Evaluate Migration's Impact on Development – the case of Ghana

*7<sup>th</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> May 2012, Millennium UN Plaza Hotel, New York*

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# DATA, MIGRATION PROFILES AND HOW TO EVALUATE MIGRATION'S IMPACT ON DEVELOPMENT

## Introduction

- Ghana is experiencing diverse mobility patterns - increasing internal migration, emigration, transit migration and immigration, involving regular and irregular, voluntary and forced dimensions
- Need for sound statistical data and reliable data collection systems if these trends are to be better understood and inform research, analysis and policy decisions on the migration and development debate.
- Data issues remain a major problem and also the concern with how the impact of migration as a variable affecting development could be measured.
- Ghana has held the view that mainstreaming migration into development would be adequately achieved where there is a policy framework underpinning the process, and therefore has been working towards that objective.
- Ghana is currently in the process of migration policy development.

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## Data

- Data should adhere to the six (6) dimensions of data quality, in terms of accuracy, reliability, completeness, precision, timeliness and integrity.
- Indicators need to be developed to provide the means of both quantitatively and qualitatively measuring progress, and determining whether migration is leading to the achievement of the desired outcomes for development
- Data remains a serious challenge.
  - Reliability and coverage
  - Different sources of data, segmented (MOI, GIS, BoG, UNHCR, GSS etc.)
  - Dearth of data
  - Standard Format/Comparability

# **DATA, MIGRATION PROFILES AND HOW TO EVALUATE MIGRATION'S IMPACT ON DEVELOPMENT**

## **Policy Priority**

- To create a comprehensive migration database

## **Objectives**

- To improve on migration data collection for the update of the Migration Profile, Policy and for planning.
- Disseminate updated Migration Profile to key partner agencies and other stakeholders

## **Data Sources**

- Operational Processes: visa processing at the Embassies, border registers at entry/exit points by the Ghana Immigration Service (G.I.S), refugee status determination by UNHCR, Refugee Board (Govt. of Ghana)
- Administrative records from the Ghana Immigration Service, Labour Department, Embassies, and other data collection agencies – extensions of stay, residence permits/stay; remittances data from Bank of Ghana; money transfer institutions, registration of Ghanaians abroad by our missions, and data from destination countries
- Censuses
- Surveys (Population Survey, labour force Survey, migration Survey)

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- Data collected for arrivals and departures not fully disaggregated
- Non-sharing of information between departments on migration issues
- Weakness in policy formulation - identified in the Migration Profile drafting process
- Bureaucratic bottlenecks in providing data
- Inadequate support for relevant institutions
- The Migration Profile has highlighted as an urgent policy requirement – the need to improve migration data.
- Culminated in the Drafting of a Strategy on *National Migration Database for Ghana*
  - to improve on migration data collection for the update of the Migration Profile and for policy planning,
  - to disseminate updated Migration Profile
  - Improve the accessibility and availability of data
  - Present a cost efficient strategy for enhancing the use of existing data

# Draft strategy on migration database for Ghana:

## Components

**(a) Migration data system resource** (legislative, regulatory and planning framework, personnel, financing, logistics support, ICT, and coordinating mechanism)

**(b) Indicators** (Statistics for planning and managing migration, and measurements for formulation and assessing migration policy)

**(c) Data sources**

- Administrative records/Operational processes
- Censuses
- Sample surveys

**(d) Indicators and data sources** (critical indicators should be linked with one or more suitable data sources, e.g. remittances data from records and sample surveys).

**(e) Identification of migration data producers and users** (the users of the data and the purpose for which they will use the data to be identified).

**(f) Data management** (should cover all aspects of data handling from collection, storage, quality assurance and flow, to processing, compilation and analysis. It should be easily accessible to all stakeholders).

**(g) Strengthening Migration Data System** - it identifies certain principles which could enhance the system; principle of leadership and ownership, principle of responding to needs and demands, addressing institutional and organizational constraints, Principle of building upon existing initiatives, principle of building broad-based consensus and stakeholder involvement

**(h) Finally, the Implementation plan** should consist of a monitoring and evaluation mechanism; and communication plan to disseminate information to all stakeholders involved and to report back on results

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## **Diaspora Engagement Project**

- Objective: to reach out to the diaspora with the support of Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) on how to bring the Ghanaian Diaspora Associations in five (5) countries to dialogue and assist in the developmental Agenda of Ghana. The creation of a database is also one of the outputs.
- Coordinating institution: IOM (Ghana)
- Government Stakeholders – Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ghana Immigration Service, Ministry of Interior - Migration Unit, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, lately Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC).
- Destination countries: USA, UK, Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands
- First phase - identify diaspora associations: IOM offices in these countries working with the Embassies/High commissions to make determination. Selection based on robust criteria of establishment, should be active, non-political, interests, kind of projects and membership.
- Video conference; comprising Project Stakeholders, Government, Ghanaian Diaspora Associations, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) on issues relating to resettlement, investment, dual nationality, remittances, circular migration, among other issues. Diaspora concerns to be solicited
- Second video conference to summarize outcomes
- Subsequently, representatives of each Association to be invited to Ghana for further discussions at a Colloquium (mini-homecoming) to help address some of the fundamental issues raised

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- Ministers of State whose areas are relevant to the concerns of the Diaspora will be in attendance to provide the position of Government in the various sectors.
- Website development almost completed, stakeholders will provide information on their mandates and processes. Relevant issues: obtaining mortgage, driver's license, establishment of SMEs, educational opportunities for children, loans, land titles etc., Webpage to be linked to government website.
- Additionally, Ghanaian missions in the five (5) countries in collaboration with IOM in those countries will gather data through survey, and diasporas can also upload any relevant information through user friendly technologies.
- Diaspora unit soon to be set up, discussions ongoing.

## **Temporal Migration Project**

- Temporal return/circular migration programme also being spearheaded by the IOM-Ghana in the health sector. Since 2008, 175 professionals have returned for periods mostly up to three months and assisted at our hospitals. These are not only health professionals but others whose jobs might impact on the health sector, such as IT Professionals.
- The multiplier effect has impacted on over 22,000 Ghanaians either directly or indirectly (discussions with IOM Ghana).

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## **Migration Profile – Ghana**

- Meaningful data on migration stocks and flows is one key element to the success of preparing and updating Migration Profiles as well as for effective migration management
- MPs were initiated as an essential tool for the development of migration policy
- MPs are a one-stop information package of the migration situation in any country providing organized, reliable and integrated migration information.
- Various indicators have been captured in Ghana's MP, including: Migrant stocks (total, age and sex, origin), Migration flows (origin and destination); Remittance flows, unemployment, youth mobility, Labour market conditions, development indices such as GDP and Human development index

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## **Migration Profile of Ghana**

- It is primarily a data collection and analysis tool to think systematically about the future of migration using current data, and to strengthen the capacity of relevant institutions in migration policy formulation.
- Could be used as an evaluation tool to inform the analysis of the impacts of migration on development.
- The diaspora engagement project for instance was informed by the MP of Ghana
- Migration profile should be seen as an important process for MDAs to jointly and continuously use migration information for policy making, and provide the relevant tools for mainstreaming migration into development plans.
- It is a useful tool as it helps improve long-term policy decisions on migration and development. Its practical application is its usage for the development of a National Migration Policy for Ghana.

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## Migration Policy (Work-in-progress)

- Situational analysis conducted - key gaps, challenges and opportunities for policy action
- Stakeholder consultations
- 2<sup>nd</sup> draft of policy just completed and a peer review to be conducted this month.
- National Migration Policy goals and objectives have been determined, in line with Ghana's medium term national development policy framework (GSGDA: 2010-2013), to contribute to “the creation of an enabling environment for the development of the full potential of a healthy, highly-skilled and knowledgeable population, capable of creating wealth for national transformation and poverty reduction” (Draft Policy 2012:39).
- Activities have been set out for achieving policy objectives, among others; it highlights internal and intra-regional migration, maximising the developmental impact of Migration, promoting the return and reintegration of Ghanaian migrants both skilled and unskilled and establishing networks of knowledge exchange with them, protecting the rights of migrants, integrating gender, and integrating migration into national development planning, while promoting effective migration data gathering and management.
- The Migration Policy of Ghana notes the relevance of monitoring and evaluation as an important tool.
- It acknowledges that timely, reliable and comparable data is relevant, in addition to a coordinating mechanism to facilitate the assessment of policy. A national migration data base reference point is therefore recommended.

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- Need to develop basic indicators and data collection instruments for the rapid assessment of progress at the various stages of implementation of the plan.
- Calls for the incorporation of M & E into the normal reporting system as a feedback mechanism to improve policy implementation.
- Monitoring and evaluation should be seen as a consultative process by key stakeholders in the migration field, and where appropriate an independent body could be outsourced to provide a critical and detached look at the attainment of policy objectives.
- Evaluation could be regarded as the process of determining the worth or significance of an activity, policy, or programme; or a systematic and objective assessment, of a planned, ongoing, or completed intervention.
- At this stage, a peer review could be regarded as an evaluative process to improve upon strategies and actions identified to meet Ghana's needs and also help make informed decisions and clarify options in the policy document.

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## **Evaluation Processes**

- So far as an impact assessment of the policy is concerned, some indicators have been identified which will be a basis for measuring the impact of the policy and attainment of the development objectives.
- The establishment of a National Commission on Migration, number of skilled and unskilled Ghanaian emigrants voluntarily returned and reintegrated, return professionals enjoy smooth re-engagement and re-registration into their professional bodies, Diaspora sensitive policies adopted, comprehensive data base on Ghanaian Diaspora built, Ghanaians in the Diaspora increase their investment in Ghana, bilateral agreements reached with receiving countries on labour migration, the capacity of the State to collect data on remittances improved, a system of data gathering at the borders effectively in place and security maintained, migration policies effectively harmonized with other development policies and programmes, periodic migration surveys become part of the data collection exercises of the GSS and its partners.

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- The context of the policy is important in terms of its relationship with the wider development agenda, as this will also promote a more informed interpretation of evaluation findings.
- Impact evaluation will be critical in determining cause and effect relationships and also whether changes in outcome could be attributed to the policy.
- Ghana was involved in the GDN 'Development on the Move' study, which examined the impacts of migration on development.
- Among others, the study sought to provide evidence using a nationally representative dataset on migration and development in Ghana, and by using econometric methodologies to evaluate a range of economic and social impacts that migration seems to be having on individuals and households in Ghana (Yeboah et al 2010). They considered the migration experience of households and as well as their remittances, for absent migrants and return migrants, as well as for immigrants, and compared how outcomes have changed over time.

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- A key finding is that migration has a number of significant economic impacts on Ghana, and especially that households with migrants spend around US\$84 more per year on education than households without a migrant. Also, households with migrants save just over US\$205 more than households without a migrant. (Yeboah et al 2010:7).
- It is instructive that the three step process which I consider compelling was largely used by this study: defining cause and effect, selecting an assessment procedure and selecting indicators.
- For instance, in economic terms, poverty reduction through remittances, multiplier effects on the domestic economy, labour force participation of household members were some of the dimensions used in measuring and assessing the impacts of migration on Ghana. The social impacts looked at the levels of educational attainment of members of migrant households and gender roles in migrant households. They applied both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to minimise problems and demonstrate migration's causal impacts.
- The aim of this scrutiny is to draw attention to the fact that the migration policy in Ghana could build upon this study to provide equally convincing and perhaps use more robust methodologies to evaluate the impact of migration on development.

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## **Conclusion**

- The difficulty in establishing causality is a major handicap to measuring impact of migration on development.
- For instance, it is critical to determine what the situation of the migrant would have been, had he/she not migrated, and also in relation to others who stayed.
- In Ghana, since the policy process is still ongoing, evaluation of the process is essential, but it may take some time for the impact to be adequately assessed.
- Notwithstanding, reliable data and research on migration feed into policy, and also inform migration's impact on development.
- There is therefore a need to improve administrative data collection, quality and standards, storage and retrieval, and build capacity in data processing and analysis to inform impact evaluation.
- Governments, stakeholders and partners need to be concerned with improving upon migration data management.