

Working Paper
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**Migration from and to Ghana:
A Background Paper**

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1. Introduction

In the words of Mansell Prothero, migration movements 'have been a feature of Africa in the past and are one of its most important demographical features at the present day' (Anarfi 1982). International migration within West Africa, and between the region and the rest of the continent, dates back to time immemorial (Arhin 1978). The trans-Saharan caravan routes are among the earliest evidence of major interaction between West and North Africa for trading and exchange of scholars (Boahen 1966). Ibn Batuta, writing in the fifteenth century, and Leo Africanus, writing later in the sixteenth century, both made mention of the peaceful movement of people across ethnic boundaries (Batuta 1929; Africanus 1896). The presence of Europeans on the West Coast from the 1400s onwards disrupted the then existing north-south movement of people and goods. However, the contact with Europeans created new patterns of movement, first through slave trade and later colonisation, within the sub-region and with the rest of the world (Boahen 1966). The new dynamics that emerged continue to the present day.

Virtually all the ethnic groups in present Ghana claim to have emigrated from somewhere other than their present location (Boahen 1975). Moreover, within the current international demarcation of African countries' borders, it is difficult to track international migrants, especially along borders themselves. In most cases, the same ethnic groups are found on the opposite sides of an international boundary and, therefore, interact with other countries. As a result, borders are porous and some people may not consider themselves as international migrants even though they cross international boundaries to visit relations (Anarfi, Awusabo-Asare et al. 2000).

2. Historical Development of Emigration from Ghana

The aim of this section is to examine briefly the history of emigration from Ghana. Based on the available evidence, four distinct phases have been identified in the international history of emigration from Ghana. These are:

- a period of minimal emigration,
- a period of initial emigration,
- a phase of large-scale emigration,
- a period of intensification and diasporisation of Ghanaians.

From pre-colonial times up to the late 1960s, Ghana enjoyed relative economic prosperity and was the destination of many migrants from neighbouring West African countries (Anarfi 1982; see below). During the period under consideration, international movement from Ghana involved a relatively small number of people, most of whom were students and professionals. Most of these movements were to the United Kingdom and other English-speaking countries due to colonial links (Anarfi, Awusabo-Asare et al. 2000). For instance, immigration data indicate that in 1967 there were only about 100 Ghanaian immigrants in Canada (Owusu 2000). Some Ghanaian professionals also served in the public services of Gambia, Botswana and Sierra Leone. Other Ghanaians, mostly from fishing communities, were known to have migrated across international boundaries to Benin and Ivory Coast (Odotei 2000).

The initial emigration of Ghanaians started after 1965. From that period Ghana experienced an economic crisis of an unprecedented magnitude (Anarfi, Awusabo-Asare et al. 2000). This was manifested in a balance of payments deficit, growing unemployment and social malaise. The decline of the economy made Ghana unattractive to both foreigners and citizens. The proportion of foreigners in Ghana declined from 12.3 per cent in 1960 to 6.6 per cent in 1970. This trend was reinforced by the Aliens Compliance Order of 1970, whereby non-Ghanaians without valid documents were expelled from the country. Within that period Côte d'Ivoire emerged as one of the dominant points of destination in the sub-region.

By the end of the decade, many Ghanaians were travelling outside the country in search of jobs. A majority of these emigrants were professionals such as teachers, lawyers, and administrators, some of whom were invited by countries such as Uganda, Botswana, Nigeria and Zambia to assist with their national development after independence (Anarfi, Awusabo-Asare et al. 2000). Others returned to work in the countries where they were trained when the economic conditions in Ghana began to be unfavourable. Moreover there were those who travelled initially for education and/or training but stayed behind after their programme of study. There were also increasing numbers of Ghanaians who were born abroad and either stayed behind when their parents returned to Ghana or went back when they were old enough or could afford to travel on their own.

The phase of the large-scale emigration began in the early 1980s when unskilled and semi-skilled Ghanaians emigrated out of the country in search of jobs in neighbouring West African countries (Anarfi 1982). The number of professionals migrating also increased in response to the demand for their labour abroad and at a time when the economy had collapsed and there were shortages of basic items including detergents and food. Migration then became one of the basic survival strategies adopted by individuals and families to enable them to cope with difficult economic conditions.

In the early 1980s unofficial figures put the average number of Ghanaians who migrated into Nigeria at about 300 per day (Anarfi 1982). As of December 1980 about 150,000 Ghanaians had registered with the Ghana High Commission in Lagos. The nature of the migration was such that the country lost much of its trained personnel. For example in the early 1980s, about 13 per cent of the 163 paid up members of the Ghana Institute of Architects had addresses in Nigeria. It was also estimated that about 50 per cent of the architects from the University of Science and Technology had migrated to Nigeria. Similarly the 1975 census of Côte d'Ivoire recorded over 42,000 Ghanaians in that country. In 1986, the number of Ghanaians in Côte d'Ivoire was estimated to be between 500,000 and 800,000 (Anarfi, Awusabo-Asare et al. 2000). These figures compare with the total population of Ghana of just over 15 million in 1990.

The migration was aggravated by a loss of faith in Ghana's future due to bad governance by both the civilian and military regimes. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) formed in 1975 precipitated further Ghanaian emigration to neighbouring West African countries. One of the objectives of the regional organisation was to facilitate freedom of movement, residence and employment within the community. It is estimated that about two million Ghanaians emigrated between 1974 and 1981, mainly from the south. Another indication of the number of Ghanaians who travelled outside is derived from the estimated number of Ghanaians among people deported from Nigeria in 1983. It is estimated that of the two million people deported from Nigeria in 1983, between 900,000 and 1.2 million were Ghanaians. This figure excludes professionals and their dependants who were not affected by the deportation exercise. Adeku worked out the number of Ghanaian emigrants in major world regions from the 1984 census returns (Adeku 1995). According to this analysis, the number of emigrants at that time was 39,000, and this accounted for 0.3 per cent of the total resident

population. Of that number, 47 per cent were females, contrary to the popular view that women emigrate less. In fact, women dominated short distance emigration to nearby countries, accounting for 64, 57 and 56 per cent respectively of the Ghanaian emigrants in Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso and Togo, whereas a higher proportion of men travelled further afield. In terms of age, female migrants were younger on the whole than male migrants. For instance, at that time, the mean age of the female migrants fell between 15 and 24 years, while for men it was between 25 and 34 years.

The exodus of Ghanaians to neighbouring countries continued through the 1990s to recent times. Nonetheless, this most recent phase of the migration of Ghanaians is more importantly characterised by their diasporisation, which had begun in the middle of the 1980s. Van Hear classifies Ghana as one of the ten countries involved in producing a 'new diaspora' in recent times (Van Hear 1998). Since the 1990s, large numbers of Ghanaians have moved to major cities such as London, Amsterdam, Hamburg and New York (Black, Tiemoko et al. 2003). According to the UK Home Office, Ghana was among the top ten sending countries to the UK in 1996, and in the decade 1990–2001 about 21,485 Ghanaians entered the UK. Meanwhile, North America has become increasingly dominant as a destination for Ghanaians. From 1986 to 2001 49,703 Ghanaians emigrated to the US. By 2001, 104,000 Ghanaians were living in the US, whilst 114,335 were registered in Canada.¹ The Ghanaian diaspora also live in many more countries around the world. Data from the Ghana Immigration Service also indicate that more than 2,000 Ghanaians were deported from 58 countries around the world in 1993 (Van Hear 1998).

A number of reasons explain this continued exodus. Overall, there is a long history of emigration from Ghana to other West African states, as well as Europe and North America, for various reasons including employment, education and training (Nuro 1999). Initially, few of the migrants went as economic migrants. However, the increase in international out-migration in the late 1970s and early 1980s has been attributed to economic decline and political instability (Alderman 1994; Fosu 1992). By the mid-1980s, the economy of Ghana was growing at a negative rate. To arrest the decline, the government introduced a Structural Adjustment Programme, which included staff redeployment and the withdrawal of subsidies on social

¹ Data from SOPEMI

services such as health, transport and education. The unemployment and other hardships that occurred with the withdrawal of subsidies created conditions for further emigration.

Initially, Nigeria became a major point of destination for Ghanaians. But with the expulsions of Ghanaians from Nigeria in 1983 and 1985, the destination countries of migrants became more diverse, particularly for professionals. Furthermore, some professionals took advantage of the then strong value of the Nigerian Naira to travel to Europe, America and other African countries while the semi-skilled workers tried to go wherever they could. It is estimated that between 1975 and 1981, Ghana may have lost about 14,000 qualified teachers, among them 3,000 university graduates (Rado 1986). Both less and well qualified Ghanaians migrated to work in developing and developed countries as economic refugees, the latter group constituting the mass 'brain drain' from Ghana to the North, or what others call 'brain exchange' among developing countries. These highly qualified individuals migrated for a variety of reasons including lack of job satisfaction at place of origin, poor salary structure and prospects, and lack of motivation (Gould 1993; Nuro 1999).

Since the mid-1990s, there has been some evidence of return migration to Ghana. This has been attributed partly to the improvement in the Ghanaian economy vis-à-vis the economies of the neighbouring countries that once attracted Ghanaians (World Bank 1994) as well as restrictions on Ghanaians travelling abroad (for instance, those travelling to EU countries) and repatriation of those without valid documents. Nonetheless, a second generation of Ghanaians living abroad is also growing, often settling there, but maintaining links and identifying with Ghana.

3. Historical Development of Migration Within Ghana and From Its Neighbours

Like emigration, migration movements within Ghana and from the rest of the West African region date back to a period long before colonisation. During this period trading activities stimulated flows of traders from neighbouring territories, who brought ivory, kola nuts, cattle, sheep, hides of wild animals and clothes to Salaga market for sale (Wolfson 1958). Clapperton (1929) also describes the presence in the town of Kaiama of a caravan consisting of 'upward of 1000 men and women, and as many beast of burden on their way back to Hausaland after a long trading trip to Gonja and Ashanti.' According to Sudarkasa (1974-75), migration for the purpose of trade gained momentum in the colonial era. This situation resulted from the relative

peace that prevailed in the region following the end of inter-tribal wars, and the establishment of better lines of communication. Rouch (1959) has noted that some of the migrants to Ghana, including many from Niger, Mali and Nigeria, were self-employed traders rather than wage labourers. Nypan's study of market traders in Accra also documented the presence of a sizeable population of emigrant traders from Nigeria, Niger and Mali working in the city's markets. The activities of commercial migrants continued from the pre-colonial era to the early 1970s when it dwindled as a result of the Aliens Compliance Order, as well as the enactment of Ghana Business Promotion Act number 334 of August 1, 1970, which was also used as a weapon to chase commercial migrants away from the country (Anarfi, Awusabo-Asare et al. 2000).

In addition to traders, the development of gold mines and cocoa farms from the late nineteenth century to the second half of the twentieth century country attracted many migrants. According to Amin (1974): 'Of the regions which benefited from the contribution of the permanent migration, Southern Ghana is outstanding.' He further stated that the migrants were predominantly unmarried young male adults who mainly went into agriculture and mining in the areas of attraction (ibid.). Mabogunje (1972) also identifies a similar pattern and explains it as a natural reaction to the geography of West Africa, which is such that the southern forest is more favourable to economic development than the savannah north. He also recognises Ghana as a major attraction for migrants in West Africa.

Labour migrants came from a variety of neighbouring countries in response to labour shortages in the colony (Ababio 1999). For example, by the middle of 1909, the labour shortage was described by the authorities as 'acute'. The 1910 Annual Report of the West African Chamber of Mines complained that 'all the local supply of native labourers was exhausted and the industry was faced with a shortage'. This problem came about as a result of the fact that the Akan mine labourers resented underground work. They believed that underground mining was associated with unfriendly spirits. In addition, they viewed underground mining as a low status activity associated with slaves and therefore degrading. In addition, the Akan could reasonably subsist on cultivation of traditional food crops (yams, cocoyams, cassava, bananas, plantain and green vegetables) supplemented by hunting and fishing. Consequently there was no pressing need for them to sell their labour to Europeans to be able to earn a living.

The cocoa boom of the 1930s worsened the shortage of labour to work underground, as work in the cocoa industry was more attractive than work in the mines. Workers came from Liberia and Sierra Leone, whilst even larger numbers of unskilled migrant workers were recruited from the French West African colonies of Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso), Togo, Ivory Coast, Mali, Benin and Nigeria. In the 1913 population census it was reported that the number of African foreigners working in the country was 4,142 (Cardinall 1931). Upper Volta (Burkina Faso) was the main source of migrant labour in West Africa during the colonial era. Crozati (1891), who visited Mossi Country (in what is now Burkina Faso) in 1890, declared that the Mossi population 'is surprisingly dense for a Black country. There is here an enormous capital, immediately exploitable'. Albert Londres who also visited French West Africa in the 1920s reported that the Upper Volta was then considered a 'reservoir of manpower: 3 million Negroes. Every one comes here to get them as one would go to wells for water' (Londres 1929).

In practice, entire villages, entire clans of the people of Upper Volta moved to Ghana during the second and third decades of the century due to tribal uprising, military recruitment, forced labour and famine. An official British document puts the number of Upper Volta nationals who entered Ghana during 1927-1928 at 120,000 (Anarfi 1982). The 1931 population census of Ghana estimated that between 1921 and 1931 about 287,000 Upper Volta nationals moved into Ghana. Between 1948 and 1960, the percentage of the population in Ghana who were born abroad had practically doubled. In 1960, 195,000 Upper Volta nationals and 133,000 Upper Volta born persons were living in Ghana. The high influx of migrant labourers from the Northern Territories² and Upper Volta towards the end of 1922 was the result of the outbreak of famine. Reports reaching the Chief Commissioner spoke of a growing threat of famine in north Mamprusi, Builsa and Zuarungu districts where villagers were reported to be eating grass weed. Due to the famine many young men between the ages of fifteen and thirty-five were forced to migrate in search of work in the mines (Ababio 1999). Another reason for this migration was the need to satisfy social obligations such as the payment of dowries and bride wealth.

With the expanded cultivation of cocoa in the year following World War Two, Malians also emigrated to Ghana. Of the 350,000 Malians who were residing outside their country in 1960, as many as 19,367 were living in Ghana (Zacharia and Condé 1978). Migrant labourers from

² The Northern Territories comprise what are now the Northern and Upper regions of Ghana.

the French West African countries migrated to work in the mines in the nineteenth century because of the French colonial government's policy of forced labour, oppressive direct taxation and corporal punishment. In 1916 and 1917 more than 12,000 people left Ivory Coast for Ghana. Large numbers also came from Togo in 1910 with as many as 14,000 migrating from the Misahohe district alone (Ababio 1999). The extent of the historical migration of Togo nationals to Ghana can be indirectly obtained from the 1960 population census (Table 1).

Table 1: Togo Nationals Born and Enumerated in Ghana

YEAR OF BIRTH	NUMBER ENUMERATED IN 1960
1955-60	43,876
1950-55	25,856
1945-50	12,303
1940-45	6,821
1935-40	5,356
1930-35	4,151
1925-30	2,523
1920-25	587
1915-20	851
1910-15	492
1905-10	266
Before 1905	515

Source: Derived from Ghana Census Office, 1960 Population Census, Vol. III, Accra

Whilst movements from Upper Volta, Mali and Ivory Coast date to the early twentieth century, Nigerians were established in Ghana even at the beginning of the nineteenth century; indeed, their connection with the country goes as far back as the period of the caravan trade when Hausas were actively involved in that activity. By the second quarter of the twentieth century Nigerians constituted the largest single group among the subjects of other British West African colonies resident in Ghana and made up a sizeable proportion of all aliens in the country (Tables 2 and 3).

Table 2: Immigrants from Other British West African Colonies in 1931, by Province

Colony Provinces	Gambia	Sierra Leone	Nigeria	Total
Western Province	13	1,630	6,846	8,489
Central Province	5	59	10,518	10,582
Eastern Province	7	807	24,970	25,784
Ashanti	-	299	15,036	15,335
Northern Territory	-	-	6,378	6,378
Togoland	-	13	3,955	3,968
Total	25	2,808	67,703	70,536

Source: (Cardinall 1931)

Table 3: Aliens Recorded by the 1931 Census

Colony of Origin	Population	%
Other British West Africa Colonies	70,536	24.4
French West African Colonies	196,282	67.9
Liberia	6,812	2.3
Unclassified Areas	15,587	5.4
Total	289,217	100.0

Source: (Cardinall 1931)

After independence in 1957, Ghana continued to attract migrants due to its relative affluence. In addition, the foreign policy of the government was geared towards the promotion of pan-Africanism, hence Ghana became a haven for a number of African freedom fighters and pan-Africanists. Thus, in the 1960 census, non-Ghanaians accounted for 12 per cent of the enumerated population. Migrants from other African countries constituted 98 per cent of the foreign population (Anarfi, Awusabo-Asare et al. 2000).

Apart from the labour migration into the country, there are also significant historical movements of people within Ghana itself. First, the movement of cash crop farmers within the country began well into the latter part of the nineteenth century. For example Akwapem farmers were migrating by the middle of the nineteenth century to empty lands where they could grow oil palm and subsistence crops, palm products then ranking as the leading cash crop of the area (Hill 1963). Thus, long before colonisation, migratory movements in Ghana were strongly determined by the distribution of economic opportunities. Political exiles also moved out of the Asante region in 1818, 1824, 1832 and again in 1874-5. After the 1890s, private individuals were also attracted to southern Ghana by the seemingly unlimited economic possibilities held

out in an era of legitimate trade by the vast expanse of fertile, unoccupied agricultural lands of the region.

Second, not only did migrant workers seek out economic opportunities in agricultural work, but they were actively recruited by the colonial authorities. The reduction in the supply of Kru labourers due to the development of rubber plantation in Liberia (Szerezewski 1965) and the unwillingness of the Akans to work underground made the mining companies consider importation of unskilled labourers from the north. The Northern Territories were deemed by the colonial regime to have little direct economic value, hence in the 1920s Governor Guggisberg designated the territories as a labour reserve for the supply of cheap labour for the mines and general labour in the cities in the South (Guggisberg 1920). The period 1919 to 1924 saw the acceleration of labour recruitment in the Northern Territories. When Guggisberg launched his development plan in November 1919 he calculated that a labour force of 27,000 men would be needed and suggested that a special recruitment scheme be organised in the Northern Territories.

During that period the cocoa industry also required intensive labour and provided inducements in the form of high wages (Ababio 1999). The period of inactivity in the Northern Territories corresponds to the time of peak agricultural demand in the cocoa regions of the forest zone, so that labourers from the Northern Territories could migrate to the south to work on a seasonal basis and return home for the single growing season. This form of migration has been occurring in the country since the beginning of the twentieth century. For example in 1945 about 46,000 labourers migrated from the Northern Territories to the south, and by 1954, this kind of seasonal migration involved more than 200,000 labourers from the Northern Territories (Abdulai 1999).

The decline in the cocoa industry in the 1970s and 1980s resulted in a dramatic fall in this kind of seasonal migration. As a result of the fall in demand for seasonal labour on cocoa farms, most of the seasonal migrants from the North found employment either in the informal sectors of the urban centres or plantations in neighbouring countries such as Côte d'Ivoire and Togo (Abdulai 1999).

Permanent migration, on the other hand, mostly involves the movement of rural dwellers to other rural or urban areas for long periods of time. While in 1960 roughly 23 per cent of the population could be classified as urban, the proportion is now over 35 per cent. Migration from rural areas accounted for much of this growth, especially in the 1960s. This was largely due to the growth of industrial activities in the urban centres in the 1960s. Thereafter, high rates of natural increase in the urban population became a significant factor in urbanisation.

While those with skills and an adequate level of education move to the national and regional capitals, the less educated have continued to move instead to the mining and cocoa growing areas. According to the 1960 census, the Northern, Upper and Volta regions recorded net losses of enumerated native born of 157,000 and 95,000 respectively, while Ashanti, Greater Accra and Brong Ahafo imported almost 100,000 people each. The 1984 census report, however, reveals that Northern Region, Greater Accra and Brong Ahafo recorded net increases in their shares of the total population, while the rest of the regions experienced declines. Quite significant is Greater Accra's share of the total population, which increased from 7.3 per cent in 1960 to 10 per cent in 1970 and further to 11.6 per cent in 1984.

4. Main Determinants of Internal and International Migration in Ghana

A range of individual, household, community and national factors influence migration. The high population growth rate in Ghana within the last three decades has generally increased the domestic supply of labour, and in areas like the Upper East Region, put pressure on the available cultivable land, thereby encouraging migration (Abdulai 1999). Another factor that has influenced rural-urban migration in the country is the macro-economic environment. Through urban-biased policies, the terms of trade were turned against agriculture and the rural areas, contributing to wide rural-urban income differentials. Urban bias policies which include over-valued exchange rates, industrial protection and cheap food policies discriminated against agriculture in particular and rural areas in general. These policies suppressed farm prices and rural incomes, encouraging a shift of labour out of agricultural production and a subsequent increase in rural-urban migration. However, macro-economic and sector-specific policy reforms initiated in 1983 contributed to improving the domestic terms of trade in favour of the rural sector, thereby encouraging urban-rural migration. Rural-urban migration in the country has been largely induced by the expectation of higher wages in the destination region and is entirely consistent with the principle of comparative advantage.

Ewusi (1986) found that depressed social conditions at the place of origin are more compelling motivations for rural people to migrate than economic factors. However, once they decide to migrate, individual migrants base their choice of destination primarily on the economic opportunities available at that end. In other words, the social conditions prevailing at their place of origin act as the main push factor while the economic opportunities available in a particular town act as the pull factor attracting migrants to that locality (Johnson 1974). One survey of internal migration and urbanisation in Ghana revealed that over 80 per cent of the respondents gave economic reasons for migrating from their previous locations, suggesting that income differentials contribute significantly to internal migration in the country. The pattern of internal migration in the country has also been influenced by the stark differences in the levels of poverty between north and south, as well as their respective capacities to respond to new economic opportunities.

The pattern of socio-economic development in Ghana has created three distinct geographic identities. These are the coastal zone dominated by Accra-Tema and Sekondi-Takoradi; a middle zone with Kumasi as its centre; and the northern savannah zone. The coastal zone, as the most industrialised and urbanised area in the country, has been the focus of internal migration since the beginning of the last century. With the opening of Takoradi as a deep-sea port in 1927, Sekondi-Takoradi became another point of attraction for migrants in addition to Accra along the coast. In the 1960s, the development of Tema port and township shifted the focus of migration back to the Accra-Tema metropolitan area. The middle zone, with its forest, mining and agricultural potential, was the centre of the old Ashanti Empire. With its natural endowment, the middle belt became an area of rapid socio-economic development in the 1980s. Kumasi, the capital of the Ashanti region, became a dominant centre in the country and became the focus of migration from the savannah belt (Nabila 1986).

Accounting for about half the land area of Ghana, the northern savannah zone has, until quite recently, been a net out migration area. With its seasonal rainfall and absence of any large scale industrial activities, and general neglect, the area has provided labour for the cocoa and the mining industries in the middle zone as well as to the developed coastal zone. The relative affluence of the coastal zone and the middle belt created focal points for migration, first within the country and subsequently outside the country. The rapid expansion of the economy in the

1960s also provided impetus for international migration, initially to pursue further education in most cases (Nabila 1986).

Besides wage differentials, the disproportionate opportunities for development and welfare in towns have made them relatively more attractive. This has included investment in productive enterprises such as factories and investment in infrastructure such as water supplies or medical services. This and many actions by the government to make urban areas more attractive have encouraged rural-urban migration (Ewusi 1986). As in many other African countries, most of the post-independence investment in projects outside agriculture were part of the then government's industrialisation strategy. Most of the public corporations established to create employment were sited in urban areas, and as such attracted labour from the rural areas. For example, the Greater Accra region, which is the most urbanised region in the country, recorded a population growth rate of 5.6 per cent between 1960-70, while the national average was 2.4 per cent. However, a 1960 sample survey showed that the region had the least natural increase, indicating that a large proportion of the growth of the population in 1970 was due to migration from other areas (Abdulai 1999).

Relative to the share of the sector in the entire economy (on average about 51 per cent of GDP between 1980-91), budgetary allocation to the agricultural sector was particularly low. For instance, in spite of the government's pledge to increase support to the sector, budgetary allocation to the agricultural sector declined from 10.4 per cent in 1983, to as low as an average of about 4 per cent per annum in 1986-90. Other direct urban-biased policies such as minimum wage legislation were also implemented to protect the interest of organised urban-employees. These minimum wage rates, which in some cases were put above the market clearing wage rate, further reinforced rural-urban wage differentials, thus encouraging rural-urban migration (Abdulai 1999).

An additional factor that has encouraged increased inter-sectoral labour movement is the decline in the costs of transportation and communication. The extension of the road network into rural areas has significantly decreased the cost of movement of people. In many cases migrants are no longer faced with an unknown destination as a result of the improved communication systems. The easier movement back and forth from rural and urban areas

serves to improve information and as such lowers the risks of movement, thereby increasing the chances of rural residents locating jobs in the urban centres (Abdulai 1999).

Beals and Menezes (1970) have shown how reduced transport costs between the southern and the northern parts of Ghana accelerated the North-South migration in the late 1960s and 1970s. De Graft Johnson (1974) also showed that the number of migrants between Greater Accra and each of the remaining regions in the country is inversely proportional to the distance between them. This suggests that distance between the source and the destination and by implication transport costs have influenced the inflow of migrants from the other regions into Greater Accra. Meanwhile a study of migration from the Upper East region showed that migration in the late 1980s was taking around half of all working age males, and 15 per cent of working age females to southern Ghana for periods of at least a year (Cleveland 1991). The World Bank *Voices of the Poor* report on Ghana argues that urban and rural young people feel they have no choice but to leave home in search of work, since successful generation of remittances is likely to make the difference between food security and a lack of it for their families (Kunfaa 1999).

In addition to the factors discussed above, family oriented issues have also contributed to migration. Women migrate to join their husbands. A nationwide survey conducted by the Ghana Statistical Service in 1995 revealed that as much as 64 per cent of the rural-urban migrants moved to join their families. Similarly, data from the Ghana Living Standards Survey of 1997/98 show 60 per cent of migrants reporting marriage or other family reasons as the cause of their migration, with only 25 per cent reporting work reasons. The results obtained, however, need to be interpreted with caution: for example, the GSS household samples included members who were at least seven years old, whilst the GLSS included all household members over 15. In both cases, this means many dependents of parents who migrated for economic reasons may be classified as having moved for family reasons. The barriers to international migrations have also influenced labour migration and urbanisation in the country. As rural dwellers find it increasingly difficult to migrate beyond the borders of the country, they are compelled to settle in the urban areas, provided the perceived conditions are better than those at the place of origin (Abdulai 1999).

As indicated earlier, policy reforms initiated in 1983 altered the domestic terms of trade in favour of the rural sector. This encouraged reverse migration, as urban dwellers returned to the farm. A survey by the Ghana Statistical Service published with the World Bank on current and prior employment for over 8,000 individuals in Ghana revealed that among individuals who have changed occupations during the period, those moving from non-agricultural jobs into agricultural jobs outnumbered those moving in the opposite direction by a ratio of two-to-one (Abdulai 1999). These survey data suggest a significant reverse migration from urban to rural areas after the reform programme was initiated, although not all agricultural occupations imply rural residence nor do all non-agricultural occupations imply urban residence. A study by Oti Boateng et al. (1990) using 1987-88 household survey data showed that over 65 per cent of the total population that fell below a poverty line of about US\$165 per annum were at that time based in rural areas, while 27 per cent were based in urban areas excluding Accra.

The transition of Ghana from the status of a net immigration country to one of net emigration in the last two decades has been attributed to internal political instability, economic mismanagement and external conditions unfavourable to the Ghanaian economy (Rimmer 1993; Peil 1995). It runs counter to the more usual transition of countries from net emigration to net immigration (Findlay, Jones et al. 1998). However, whilst national mismanagement and associated economic and political problems provided the 'push' for this unusual migration transition, the booming economies of neighbouring African countries and in Europe also constituted a 'pull' for migration (Anarfi, Awusabo-Asare et al. 2000). In addition, one important factor relevant in the Ghanaian context is the sex of the individual involved in the migration phenomenon. Societal norms and traditions of most tribes (if not all) in Ghana are such that there is a bias in favour of men, and discrimination against women. It is possible that this discrimination could be reflected in the migration decision-making process, by making it more difficult for women to move (Treveh 1997), although the evidence suggests that women do migrate as well as men.

5. Characteristics of Migrants

A number of surveys of migrants are available that provide some insight into the demographic and other characteristics of international migrants from Ghana over the last two decades. These include a study of 300 Ghanaians living in Nigeria in the early 1980s (Anarfi 1982); a study of migration to Côte d'Ivoire in the late 1980s by Anarfi (1989); a study for the Ghana

Statistical Service of 2,923 emigrants returning from the West African sub-region, who were interviewed at the point of entry in 1991 (Twum-Baah, Nabila et al. 1995); a further sample of around 300 Ghanaian migrants in Lagos randomly selected from the registration records at the Ghana High Commission in Lagos; and most recently a study coordinated by the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographics Institute (NIDI) and carried out in Ghana by ISSER, which focused on the dynamics of emigration from Ghana to Europe (Anarfi, Awusabo-Asare et al. 2000). The latter study was based on a sample of just over 1,500 migrant and non-migrant households in four main sending regions of Ghana, and a further 500 migrants in Europe, and formed part of a larger study that encompassed migration from Senegal, Egypt, Morocco and Turkey.

With the exception of the flow to Côte d'Ivoire, these studies showed that international migration from Ghana is dominated by men. For example, 65 per cent of returnees to Ghana in 1991 were male, whilst this proportion rose to 82 per cent in Anarfi's Nigerian sample, and 87 per cent in the Ghana High Commission records. In contrast, the 1975 population census of Côte d'Ivoire shows just 35 per cent of Ghanaian migrants registered were men. However, closer analysis of the Ghana Statistical Service survey shows that for those aged under 25, there were more women than men, whereas for those older than 25, men were in a majority, with the proportion increasing with age. Meanwhile, although there were more men than women in the NIDI study, women formed a higher proportion of migrants than in any of the other countries surveyed.

Evidence from the 1995 migration study also reveals that nearly one-quarter of Ghanaian emigrants to the ECOWAS region were born in the Ashanti Region, and a further 20 per cent in the Greater Accra Region. In contrast, less than a tenth of emigrants were born in the Northern and Upper Regions of Ghana. Moreover, some 80 per cent of the emigrants were born in an urban area. However, this finding is different to that of Anarfi (1982), who found just 28 per cent of migrants in Lagos had come from urban areas. One reason for this discrepancy may be the different definitions of an urban area used by the two studies, as the 1991 study included as urban all settlements with population of 5,000 or more, whereas Anarfi excluded those settlements which are neither a regional nor district capital, nor an Urban or Municipal Council centre. In Anarfi's study, the background of migrants reflected the overall urban/rural distribution of the population of Ghana, with estimated urban population at the time of the study

in 1981 being 32 per cent. Nonetheless, the majority (76 per cent) of these migrants had come from an urban centre as their last place of residence, suggesting that step-wise migration from rural to urban areas and then abroad was quite common.

The 1995 study also tells us something about the causes of migration to the ECOWAS region. For example, 23.5 per cent of respondents said they emigrated because of the presence of relatives and friends. However, some migration is related to particular sectors of economic activity. For example, Ghanaian fishermen are found in almost every country along the coast in West Africa. These migrants belong to the three ethnic groups, Akan, Ga-Adangme and Ewe, who are noted for marine fishing in Ghana. Men, women and children migrate. The men usually migrate as a fishing unit and occasionally as individuals. Women accompany or later join their husbands and relatives or migrate on their own (Odotei 2000). Children usually move to stay with parents, relatives, patrons or employers. In recent times there has been an increasing concern with more and more children being sent on fishing expeditions under suspicious arrangements. The majority of these migrants (65 per cent in Côte d'Ivoire and 57 per cent in Benin) however fell into the age group of 20-49 (Odotei 1992).

The 1995 Ghana Migration Study also had a component measuring internal migration and non-migrants. The study shows that compared to the population as a whole, migrants overall are under-represented in the 15-24 age category, but over-represented in age categories between 25 and 64 years (Table 4). Amongst in-migrants, men are more likely to be aged 35-54 than the general population, whereas women are more likely to be aged 25-54. Amongst out-migrants, however, the reverse is true, with men more likely to be aged under 35, and women more likely to be aged under 25. There is little difference between the age and sex composition of return migrants and that of the population as a whole.

Table 4: Age and Sex Composition of Internal Migration and Non-Migrant Population

Age	In-Migrants			Out-Migrants			Return Migrants			Non-Migrants		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
15 – 24	17.6	20.3	19.1	43.7	63.0	52.0	36.4	31.3	33.7	46.6	37.6	41.9
25 – 34	21.0	38.8	25.3	44.0	23.4	34.9	22.7	24.3	23.6	20.9	24.5	22.8
35 – 44	22.6	23.6	23.1	8.0	8.6	8.3	13.9	17.7	16.0	10.8	14.9	12.9
45 – 54	18.1	14.5	16.1	2.5	3.5	3.0	11.1	11.3	11.2	8.5	10.1	9.4
55 – 64	11.4	7.4	9.2	0.9	0	0.5	7.6	6.9	7.2	5.6	6.0	5.8
65+	9.4	5.5	7.3	0.9	1.6	1.2	8.3	8.2	8.4	7.6	6.9	7.2
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
No	1196	1423	2619	325	256	581	1411	1567	2928	2690	2957	5647

Source: (Twum-Baah, Nabila et al. 1995)

The highest proportion of return migrants – about 20 per cent – moved to the Ashanti Region, with the next most popular regions of destination being the Western region and Greater Accra (Table 5). These are the most economically endowed regions in both the modern and traditional sectors, suggesting that even return migration may be economically motivated, although these regions also produce more migrants in the first place, and have higher populations than the northern regions.

Table 5: Distribution of Return Migrants by Region of Destination and Sex (%)

Region of destination	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Western Region	17.9	18.0	18.0
Central Region	10.8	11.0	10.9
Greater Accra Region	17.1	18.4	17.7
Volta Region	10.8	10.2	10.5
Eastern Region	7.1	7.0	7.0
Ashanti Region	20.6	20.0	20.3
Brong Ahafo Region	8.5	8.7	8.6
Northern/Upper Regions	7.3	6.6	6.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
N =	2703	2785	5488

Source: (Twum-Baah, Nabila et al. 1995)

The ethnic origin of migrants is broadly similar to the ethnic composition of the country, although it is worth noting that the Mole-Dagbani are disproportionately involved in out-migration, whilst the Ewes are over-represented amongst in-migrants. These higher rates of migration among the Mole-Dagbani and Ewes may be due to relatively lower economic potentials in their areas of origin. The Ga-Adangbe and Guans tend to be less migratory (Twum-Baah, Nabila et al. 1995).

The more recent NIDI study found that at least one in five households has a household member who migrated abroad within the past ten years. These migrants were predominantly young (aged 20-29), and were found to be better educated than non-migrants, after controlling for age differences between the non-migrants and migrants interviewed. However, they were also more likely than non-migrants to report periods of unemployment, and to say that their income was insufficient in Ghana to meet their household needs. The top four countries of destination were the US, Germany, Italy and Nigeria, although together these accounted for only half of all migrants, demonstrating the high degree of diversification of Ghanaian migration patterns.

The divide between temporary and permanent migration is not easy to establish. While many Ghanaians stay permanently abroad, there is an increasingly substantial number of them returning to Ghana. A study of return migration in 2001 involved interviews with 302 'elite' returnees – highly educated professionals from relatively privileged sections of Ghanaian society – and a further 302 'less skilled' returnees (Ammassari, 2004). These were not representative samples, and so inferences cannot be made about the characteristics of returnees in general. For example, interviewees were drawn almost exclusively from urban areas, and so the study does not include insights on those returning direct to rural areas. Nonetheless, the two samples do allow some comparison of different groups of returnees, as well as some level of comparison with similar samples interviewed in neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire. The study found a number of Ghanaian returnees who had invested in small businesses on their return, whilst many, especially in the elite group, had sought to introduce changes in the workplace, building on their experiences abroad.

Of course, some of those who return maintain a desire to re-emigrate, such that return should also not be regarded as a permanent move. Meanwhile, even those 'permanent' migrants who stay abroad may still maintain links with their home country as they live 'transnational' lives. For example, the State of the Ghana Economy study conducted by ISSER (2003) clearly shows that Ghanaians abroad account for the majority of visitors to Ghana, whilst Asiedu (2003) has found that Ghana benefits appreciably from even short-term return visits of Ghanaians living abroad, although relatively few of these benefits were found to 'trickle down' to poorer regions in the north.

5.1 Internal Migration: The Movement of Children

One important aspect of Ghanaian population dynamics is the mobility of children. Children's migration has three main dimensions in the Ghanaian literature: fostering, street children and trafficking. According to Page (1989) fostering is embedded in social reproduction in West Africa. Social reproduction and parental roles are segmented in West Africa in such a way that different roles could be assumed by different members of the wider kin group. This would explain why child fostering characterises West Africa. Although fostering in Page's view does not refer to residence as such, and hence does not necessarily imply mobility, others have argued that there is substantial migration of children in West Africa, independent from the migration of parents. Indeed, in general, fostering, especially when a child does not live with either of the biological parents, usually does involve the mobility either of the child and/or the biological parents.

Fostering can be seen partly as a consequence of migration. Brydon (1985) found an increase in child fostering in the Volta region in Ghana due to women's labour migration. There may also have been a rise in fostering in Ghana due to urbanisation, as women are drawn into forms of employment that are less compatible with childcare. Results from Ghana Demographic and Health Survey 1998 (GSS and MI 1998) showed that 15.3 per cent of children under 15 years of age were not living with either of their biological parents. However, fostering may also represent a disguised form of labour migration itself, as children migrate to work for relatives or other adults. The proportion of fostered children was higher in urban areas (17.5 per cent) than in rural areas (15.6 per cent). Fostering also increases with age. Over one in five children aged 10-14 years were fostered out in 1998.

There is also concern in Ghana over apparently rising levels of trafficking in child migrants. For example, the IOM found over 1,000 school aged children who had been trafficked and were working in the fishing industry in the Volta region.³ According to Ernest Taylor of IOM Accra, child trafficking in Ghana is partially related to child fostering: 'Traditionally it has been a common practice for poor parents to hand over their children to be looked after by relatives and friends. Traffickers are now exploiting this age-old tradition resulting in parents inadvertently but effectively selling their children⁴.

³ <http://www.iom.int/en/archive/pbn260803.shtml#item2>

⁴ Ghana: Trafficked Children Freed. <http://www.iom.int/en/news/PBN260803.shtml>

Another key element of children's migration is the phenomenon of street children. Although street children refers to the residence (or lack of it) and not to migration per se, many of these children and/or their parents migrated to major cities. Though not necessarily accurate, a head count of street children carried out by Catholic Action for Street Children (CAS) estimated the number of street children at 10,000 in Accra.

6. Importance of Migration for the National Economy

6.1 Remittances

The growing volume of international remittances worldwide has significant potential consequences for developing countries. In the year 2000 the International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimated the global flow of migrant workers' remittances to developing countries to be \$72.3 billion (IMF, 2000). The transfer, in the form of remittances, helps to reduce the economic constraints in the sending area (Anarfi, Awusabo-Asare et al. 2000). Thus, migration is considered to be one of the avenues for improving the socio-economic conditions of individuals and families in poor areas.

Data on remittances provided by the International Monetary Fund in its *Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook* show that between 1983 and 1990, Ghanaian emigrant workers remitted home a total of \$24.6 million, with a substantial increase over this period, possibly as a result of the relaxation of the country's exchange control laws with the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in 1986. More recent IMF figures suggest this sum has grown to \$32.4 million per annum (Black, Tiemoko et al. 2003). However, the Bank of Ghana estimated migrant remittances at a much higher \$400million dollars a year in 2001 representing approximately 20 per cent of Ghana's export earnings and equalling the expected earnings from export of cocoa that year⁵, whilst a more recent press report put the figure at \$1.5 billion for January-September 2003 alone.⁶ Moreover, the \$400 million figure represented a 33 per cent rise on remittances reported for the previous year, when the Managing Director of Ghana's Agricultural Development Bank commented that the money generated played a crucial role in macro-economic stability as well as providing 86 per cent of institutional agricultural financing in the country.⁷ If the Bank of Ghana figures are accepted over the IMF figures, remittances from

⁵ Accra Mail on line, 4:3:2002

⁶ 'Money transfer agencies on the increase', <http://www.myjoyonline.com/frontarts.asp?p=3&a=7340>, posted 02/12/2003

⁷ Accra Mail on Line, 16:8:2001

abroad now rank fourth after cocoa, gold and tourism as sources of foreign exchange (Anarfi, Awusabo-Asare et al. 2000). Nuro (1999) observed that professionals outside Ghana remit between \$1,000 and \$5,000 per annum with a mean of \$2,200. Recognising the role of remittances in the Ghana economy, the government in its population policy of 1994 indicated that:

Government will adopt fiscal and legislative policies or rules which will ensure that the nation as a whole, and more specifically the communities or families from which migrants originate, derive maximum benefit from the financial and other resources transferred periodically by the migrants (Ghana 1994).

However, remittance payments sent by emigrants should not automatically be regarded as a net addition to the national income, since there is usually a corresponding outflow of resources to emigrants abroad. The 1995 survey results show that about 7.7 per cent of returnees received money from family and friends regularly while they were away. In the 12 months prior to their return home 5.3 per cent return migrants received money from home (Ghana 1994).

Remittances, either in cash or kind, are sent to enable family members and communities to improve their ability to survive or acquire property since one of the factors that fuelled emigration from Ghana was the economic hardships of the 1970s and 1980s. In the year 2000 around 44 per cent of the migrant households in the Greater Accra and Brong Ahafo regions reported receiving either goods or money from emigrants. Only 24 per cent of the migrant households in the Eastern region received any form of remittances. About a quarter of the return migrant households in the Ashanti and Brong Ahafo regions also reported receiving remittances, the highest levels of any region (Anarfi, Awusabo-Asare et al. 2000).

The majority of transfers were through formal routes (bank, post office, Western Union etc) with a significant positive relationship between the frequency of remitting and likelihood of using a formal channel. Nonetheless, a significant majority sent cash back with friends or relatives, or brought back sums of money when they visited the country. The survey also suggests that informal channels are not only more commonly used where remittances are less frequent, but they are also more important for elite migrants, who may have more opportunities to bring money with them when they visit Ghana (Black, Tiemoko et al. 2003).

The scale of remittances in recent times gives an indication of the extent of the diasporisation of Ghanaians. Asiedu (2003) has observed that remittances can be grouped broadly into two, namely, to meet recurrent expenditure and for investment. Over 70 per cent of the reported remittances in his study were for recurrent expenditure and mainly for the payment of hospital bills or school fees, to finance marriage, for repayment of debts and repayment of cost for migrating abroad. Less than 30 per cent of the remittances were invested in property to buy land, cattle and fertiliser, build a house, or for saving. Thus the bulk of the remittances were for meeting daily needs in the year 2000 (Asiedu 2003). This is consistent with the findings of Black, Tiemoko et al. (2003). Much of Ghana's housing industry depends on remittances, house building being a focus of many migrants abroad (Eurostat 1999). Most housing estates in Ghana quote their prices in dollars and have accounts overseas to which payment for houses bought can be made.

Some studies have shown the importance of remittances in the form of goods. For instance, among the return migrants interviewed in the 1995 study, about 95 per cent of remittances were in the form of goods including vehicles (private and commercial vehicles), household appliances, equipment and machinery such as corn mills, outboard motors and business machines. Of these, personal and consumer items were more significant, with nearly two-thirds of the returnees bringing durable goods for their personal or family use and a further 18.3 per cent bringing goods for relatives and friends. In contrast, only 4.7 per cent of the returnees interviewed brought goods for commercial purposes (either to set up a business or to sell). The evidence seems to suggest therefore that the remittances sent by the returnees and the durable goods they brought with them were for private consumption as opposed to using them for productive investment purposes, thus devaluing the contribution to capital.

Nonetheless, although the bulk of the remittances were in the form of goods, the reported usage involved activities that demanded the use of money. This seemingly paradoxical situation can be explained by the fact that a number of Ghanaians convert their money into goods for at least two reasons. The first is to avoid any suspicion of carrying money. Secondly, people who travel and stay out for at least one year are allowed to bring a wide range of goods into the country for personal use without paying tax. These include clothing, fridge and other electrical appliances as well as household goods. The migrants then bring in these items, sell them and

use the money obtained. The outcome of this practice has been the availability of a wide range of goods on the Ghanaian market.

A feature of the Ghanaian social system is community identity. Nearly four decades ago, Little (1965) observed that origin-based associations among migrants in major cities have contributed immensely to the development of places of origin. In both Ghana and outside, there are ethnic and town-based associations that remit to their communities. In the 2001 elite returnee study mentioned above, respondents were asked to indicate the contributions that migrants had made to the development of their community (Ammassari 2004). Although the number of migrants that responded to that question was quite low, the results point to the communal spirit among some of the migrants as signified by the range of projects they contribute to. These include the financing of schools, religious buildings (mosques and churches), hospitals and other collective works. In fact in the 1980s and early 1990s, a number of health institutions were kept functioning through donations from foreign-based Ghanaian associations. The majority contributed to collective works of unspecified nature including local festivals and renovation of common places such as community centres (Ammassari 2004).

Relatives expect and do receive remittances. The remittances enable families supplement their income as well as acquire property such as new houses. These situations fuel further migration as they create the impression of abundance and the availability of resources in the countries of destination. The remittances also make it possible to finance new migration from the family or friends. Given the demonstration effect of remittances, emigration is likely to continue to be a feature of the Ghanaian socio-cultural scene.

6.2 Brain Drain and Return

Despite the scale of remittances to Ghana, there remains concern amongst policy makers and in the Ghanaian media about the extent of the 'brain drain' in Ghana. For example, Ghana is estimated to have lost around 14,000 teachers between 1975 and 1981, many of them to Nigeria (Van Hear 1998), and although many returned after the mass expulsion of foreigners from Nigeria in 1983, other sectors continue to be affected by the loss of skilled personnel. In recent years, the proportion of health workers leaving the country seems to have grown (Table 6), with the theme of the brain drain of Ghanaian doctors becoming a recurrent one in newspapers such as the *Ghanaian Chronicle* and the *Accra Daily Mail*.

Table 6: Proportion of Health Workers Leaving Ghana as Percentage of Those Trained That Year

Profession	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	1995-2002
GPs/Medical officers	60.2%	65.4%	70.2%	68.2%	60.2%	59.5%	89.6%	94.4%	69.4%
Dentists	20.0%	23.1%	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	22.2%	28.6%	25.0%	27.3%
Pharmacists	43.3%	41.5%	43.8%	44.2%	40.8%	20.0%	48.3%	64.2%	43.3%
Medical laboratory technologists/technicians	25.8%	24.3%	10.5%	13.3%	19.6%	34.8%	31.1%	0.0%	19.5%
Environmental health specialists	na	na	0.0%	na	na	na	na	na	100.0%
Environmental health technologists/technicians	2.0%	5.4%	5.6%	2.8%	2.2%	0.0%	1.5%	2.1%	2.5%
Nurses/midwives	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	19.8%	20.0%	20.0%	18.2%	19.9%	19.7%
Total	22.9%	23.8%	23.7%	24.0%	23.2%	20.7%	22.8%	24.8%	23.2%

Source: (ISSER 2003)

However, the exodus of professionals and others does not necessarily involve a one-way flow of skills. The 2001 returnee data set provides some evidence that return can involve the transfer of skills back to Ghana and job improvement on the part of return migrants (Sjenitzer and Tiemoko 2003). It can also be a precursor to investment in small businesses. In general, the migrants interviewed in this study were positive about their return, especially those in the elite group. Nearly 80 per cent of this group and nearly 40 per cent of the less-skilled returnees reported that they hoped to apply what they had learned abroad on their return, whilst nearly two-thirds of both groups anticipated that business or job opportunities would await them. Looking specifically at the 150 less-skilled Ghanaian returnees interviewed, employment status improved on return, over and above the deterioration in job level experienced by migrants whilst they were abroad, with many respondents reporting the acquisition of organisational, interpersonal and other work related skills (Black, King et al. 2003). Regression analysis on the data for this group suggests that those who left Ghana at a younger age and who gained organisational skills in particular whilst abroad were more likely to improve their job level on return. In turn, over half had become self-employed on their return, with the vast majority of these individuals registering a new business with the authorities either before or around the time of their return.

Evidence from the 1995 migration survey indicates that 658 of the 2,169 return migrants received some form of formal education abroad, even though 669 return migrants indicated that they had emigrated specifically in order to study. Of the 658 returnees who had received

education abroad, exactly half received a university education in their host country, with a further 27.6 per cent achieving a diploma in vocational or technical education or some other form of post-secondary professional training (Twum-Baah, Nabila et al. 1995). This survey also shows that of the 329 student returnees who received a university education abroad, nearly half had already completed some level of university education in Ghana before leaving the country. The return of such highly trained manpower must therefore be seen as a useful contribution to human capital formation for the country.

The principal means of acquiring skills by non-student returnees was through on-the-job training (work experience), apprenticeships or part-time technical or vocational training. The survey reveals that in terms of acquisition of technical skills, 57.4 per cent of the 658 return migrants who had undertaken some studies had also acquired new skills. Many of those who acquired technical skills in the host country did so through formal training in vocational institutions, but many also acquired these through on-the-job training and experience (Twum-Baah, Nabila et al. 1995).

The same migration study shows that a large proportion of those who acquired technical skills through on-the-job training in the host country were those who had already acquired university education in Ghana before emigration. This probably suggests that Ghanaian emigrants with university education at the time of emigrating are more likely than those with lower educational backgrounds to find a skilled job abroad. On the other hand, returnees with only the basic education level before emigrating were more likely to acquire technical or vocational skills in their countries of residence through apprenticeships rather than through on-the-job training. When non-student returnees who acquired skills abroad were asked whether the skills, training and experience they acquired abroad helped them in their post return job, over two-thirds said it did. This suggests that foreign acquired skills and work-related experiences can be of direct benefit to the Ghanaian international migrant on their return home and can contribute to human capital formation in the country.

6.3 Forced Displacement

An important aspect of Ghanaian international migration is forced migration as a result of political and economic turbulence in Ghana and other West African countries. Ghana has acted as both destination and origin of forced migration. In terms of forced displacement from Ghana,

part of the Ghanaian diaspora in the industrialised world can be considered to be refugees. Forced migration is contingent upon the evolution of a political, economic and social context in the country of origin. According to UNHCR (2002), the 1980s were an important period of forced migration from Ghana. With 97,536 asylum applicants from Ghana in industrialised countries between 1982-1991, Ghana was among the top ten sending countries in the world, and the most important African country in terms of applications outside Europe. However, an improvement in the socio-economic and political context in Ghana, combined with the emergence of new streams of forced migration from other parts of the world, means that from 1992-2001, Ghana ranked just thirtieth in asylum applications in industrialised countries, with just 36,159 applicants. There were also believed to be around 11,000 Ghanaian refugees in the West African region in 2001, mainly in Togo (UNHCR 2002).

Not only has Ghana produced forced migrants, but it has also received them. On the one hand, Ghana is one of several regional countries of asylum for those fleeing civil wars in Liberia (since 1989), Sierra Leone (since the early 1990s) and Côte d'Ivoire (since 2002). Although the refugee population in Ghana had declined to just 11,800 in 2001, at its peak, the country provided refuge to over 150,000 persons in 1993. This change is partially related to concerted efforts by Ghana and other partners such as UNHCR and foreign governments to implement voluntary return programmes. Meanwhile, despite these returns, some refugees do remain in the country in difficult conditions: for example, a refugee camp for Liberians in Buduburam, about 30km from the capital, Accra, has been in existence for over ten years. In addition, Ghanaians themselves have been displaced from foreign countries, as in the case of the 1983 expulsion from Nigeria, when over a million Ghanaians were displaced back to Ghana. Similarly, civil wars in neighbouring countries have not only displaced citizens of those countries, but also a sizeable number of Ghanaian nationals, especially in the case of the recent civil war in Côte d'Ivoire.

7. Policies and Instruments in Relation to Mobility

The revised 1994 National Population Policy of Ghana recognises that by the late 1970s, Ghana had been transformed from a country of immigration to a country of emigration. The exodus was largely a consequence of the deteriorating and harsh economic conditions, which started in that period and reached their peak in the mid-1980s. While recognising that much of the justification for economic migration could be undermined if the upturn in the economic

fortunes of the country continues, the National Population Policy also recognised the possibility that emigration had now become so ingrained in the Ghanaian psyche that it will be difficult to stop the momentum, considering the fact that those already outside continue to act as magnets in the chain of the migration process. The policy therefore seeks, among its objectives, to monitor international migration and to stem the 'brain-drain' of professionals and other skilled people leaving the country.

One sector which has suffered more than many others from the exodus of skilled personnel is the Ministry of Health. A number of measures have been adopted in response. For example, 17 newly-qualified doctors and dentists who failed to do their housemanship and left the country soon after graduation were recently made to re-sit an examination set by the Medical and Dental Council of Ghana. This formed part of a set of measures adopted by the Council to regulate the exodus of medical personnel abroad and also to instil discipline in the profession. The affected doctors and dentists were also required to undergo their housemanship. The exercise was meant to establish a new path in the quest for a new direction for the profession, which had suffered serious setbacks in the public domain in the last few years. The Medical and Dental Council also directed that newly qualified doctors and dentists from the country's institutions who failed to do housemanship within two months after graduation would be made to sit an examination to be set by the council before being allowed to register.

However, more generally, although there is no coordinated policy to capture any benefits of migration, the Ghanaian authorities do seem to be moving in this direction. For example, the Ghana Dual Citizenship Regulation Act was launched in 2002 at a ceremony at the Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) in Accra.⁸ In doing this, the responsible minister, Dr Addo-Kufuor said it has become imperative for the government to quickly put into effect measures to enhance access to the dual citizenship due to the contributions Ghanaians abroad make towards the development of the nation. He also noted that regulations involved in the full implementation of immigration and citizenship laws are rather complex but added that the government would provide lawyers and experts to guide those who may have to deal with these regulations: 'I can now clearly state that the government's policy of making it possible for all Ghanaians living abroad to become citizens of Ghana as well as citizens of other countries, is now a reality,' he emphasised.

⁸ See <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=25354>

The government also organised a 'Homecoming Summit' in 2001; it has collaborated in the IOM-run 'Return of Qualified African Nationals' programme; and more recently it has collaborated in a research programme in the Netherlands on the Ghanaian diaspora's involvement in 'mitigating brain drain in the health sector' (MIDA-Ghana-NL)⁹. A Non-Resident Ghanaians Secretariat (NRGS) was set up in May 2003 to promote further links with Ghanaians abroad and to encourage return.¹⁰

In addition to these policies aimed at international migrants, there is some government, and rather more non-governmental attention to the issue of trafficking within the country. Thus IOM works with trafficked children in the Volta region, whilst there are local NGOs such as Catholic Action for Street Children (CAS) working with street children in general, and 'Street Girl AID' (S. AID) working with girl street children in particular, most of whom are migrants. The two NGOs provide refuge, health and education to street children in major urban areas.

Ghana's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) also makes some reference to migration, viewing it as both positive and negative. For example, in relation to poverty, vulnerability and exclusion in geographically-remote rural areas, the PRSP notes that 'but for the migration of the youth from rural to urban areas as head porters, street hawkers and so forth, poverty levels in some of these areas could have been worse than what the statistics reveal' (p.30), whilst it is noted that out-migration from the north is a 'direct result of poverty' (p.45). Yet, in relation to street children, the PRSP concludes clearly that policies need to address poverty in home districts rather than their situation in urban areas, 'lest the migration will continue' (p.46). The document also highlights the need to address emigration of health sector workers, and the extreme poverty of migrant farm workers (p.131).

8. Key Gaps

Despite a considerable body of material on migration within and from Ghana, some gaps remain in the literature and in public policy. First, it is clear that in terms of recent studies, more attention has been paid to international migration than to movement within the country, even

⁹ For a summary of the project see <http://www.iom.int/iomwebsite/Project/ServletSearchProject?event=detail&id=NL1Z014>

¹⁰ See <http://www.ghanaiian-chronicle.com/230501.page2m.htm>

though the latter remains significant and is almost certainly more in reach of the poorest sections of the population. The same is broadly true of policy towards migration which, as can be seen in the previous section, is overwhelmingly orientated at present towards international migrants. Second, the pattern of diversification of migration movements appears to apply not only to international migration (in terms of new countries of destination) but also to internal migration, where there is some evidence that traditional patterns of rural-urban migration and movement to cocoa and coffee plantation areas are breaking down. One interesting area to explore is the extent to which new forms of production in Ghana are generating new migration flows – as for example with the shift in patterns of export crop production, which may be drawing workers into areas producing pineapples and other export crops. Meanwhile, within internal migration, the movement of children in particular is clearly an important phenomenon, but one that remains relatively poorly understood.

Finally, despite the interest it has already generated, it is clear that the area of professional mobility remains a key issue for policy makers in Ghana, and here, there are a number of ways in which existing studies could be extended. For example, although there has been some work on the movement of health professionals out of the country, and public policy that responds to this movement, there remains scope both to analyse the dynamic effects of professional mobility of doctors and nurses on medical and health training and labour markets within the country. There is also value in exploring the extent of professional mobility in other occupational categories, as well as examining the link between the availability and quality of higher education in Ghana and professional mobility in search of such training.

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