

opportunities

for a fair narrative on migration

In Search of a Balanced View on Migration

Conference of Accra 2024

On February 20, 2024, the Centre for Migration Studies (CMS) at the University of Ghana (UG) hosted a Dialogue event titled "In Search of a Balanced View on Migration" as part of the "Opportunities for a Fair Narrative on Migration" project. This initiative seeks to address the imbalances and biases prevalent in discussions surrounding migration.



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BACKGROUND

On February 20, 2024, the Centre for Migration Studies (CMS) at the University of Ghana (UG) hosted a Dialogue event titled "In Search of a Balanced View on Migration" as part of the "Opportunities for a Fair Narrative on Migration" project. This initiative seeks to address the imbalances and biases prevalent in discussions surrounding migration. The research program OPPORTUNITIES is anchored on the metaphor of the "Level Telling Field," signifying the necessity for equitable representation and consideration of diverse perspectives on migration. This metaphor underscores the importance of ensuring that every voice, regardless of its origin or stance, is

given due attention and respect. In essence, the dialogue endeavors to uphold principles of multi-perspectivity, ethical listening, and equitable access to resources, thereby challenging existing policies to facilitate a more inclusive discourse. The Accra Dialogue aims to establish a platform where the African viewpoint on migration is given prominence, emphasizing the unique needs and challenges faced by African nations. Moreover, it seeks to integrate the research findings and insights of African experts on migration, thereby striving to rectify the prevalent Eurocentric biases in migration discourse. At its core, the objective of the dialogue is to foster a balanced narrative that acknowledges and addresses the perspectives of both prospective migrants and individuals who have already migrated. By doing so, it

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endeavours to create a more holistic understanding of migration dynamics and advocate for policies that cater to the diverse needs and aspirations of migrant populations. The Accra Dialogue serves as a pivotal step towards achieving a more equitable and inclusive dialogue on migration, one that is informed by the voices and experiences of all stakeholders involved.

EVENT DETAILS

The one-day event commenced promptly at 9:30 am at the Institute of Statistical Social and Economic Research at the University of Ghana. Participants were warmly welcomed and guided through the registration process, accompanied by a captivating traditional dance performance by the NOYAM Cultural group. The event brought together a diverse array of participants, including policymakers, representatives from academic institutions, and members of the private sector, all eager to engage in the dialogue. Dr. Sylvia Gyan and Mr. Nii Tetey expertly moderated the proceedings, with Prof. Daniel Ofori serving as the esteemed Chairperson for the event.



A remarkable turnout of over one hundred and forty (140) attendees graced the occasion, representing key stakeholders such as international and local organizations and institutions which includes the Ministry of Education, University of Ghana, Ghana Immigration Service, Ghana Police Service, Social Welfare and Community Development, researchers, Migrant representative associations, CSOs, various Radio and Television stations, the National Commission for Civic Education, Ghana Refugee Board, and the International Organization for Migration,

GIZ, among others. The dialogue aimed to facilitate an exchange of perspectives between African, European, and international stakeholders on migration issues. Throughout the dialogue, Ghanaian experts and representatives of international institutions contributed insightful interventions, enriching a broad-ranging dialogue facilitated through a World Café format led by national and international institutions. The dialogue's deliberations culminated in the formulation of pertinent policy recommendations aimed at addressing the multifaceted challenges and opportunities associated with migration dynamics.

You can find out more about this dialogue and the political recommendations in the policy brief.



NEWS ON TELEVISION:

<https://x.com/JoyNewsOnTV/status/1762087775627530299?t=s61Ywyjcl10t0kCmNnalw&s=08>

<https://gna.org.gh/2024/02/conference-to-address-imbalances-in-global-migration-narratives-held-in-accra/#:~:text=Accra%2C%20Feb.%2026%2C%20GNA,in%20the%20global%20migration%20narrative>

<https://www.facebook.com/100063529345697/posts/939554914838811/?mibextid=rS40aB7S9Ucbxw6v>

<https://www.facebook.com/cmslegon>

In Search of a Balanced View on Migration LEGAL MIGRATION OR HUMAN TRAFFICKING



OPPORTUNITIES wanted to learn about the views on migration of Ghanaian institutions and NGOs.

The second day, we visited first the Ministry of Gender where we were warmly welcomed and got an introduction in how the Ministry tries to help people who migrate to Ghana. Ghana is a source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children subjected to forced labour and sex trafficking. Sex trafficking is prevalent in the Volta region and is also growing in the oil-producing Western Region. Ghanaian girls and young women from the rural Northern regions move to urban centres as far south as Accra to seek work as porters and are at risk of sex trafficking and forced labour.

Ghana made a lot of efforts included increasing trafficking investigations and prosecutions and providing anti-trafficking training to law enforcement, judicial officials, community leaders, and service providers. The government adopted a new 2022-2026 NAP and an accompanying communications strategy. Labor inspectors identified child trafficking victims and referred cases for criminal investigation. But these efforts are not enough. There is a need for an intensified implementation of the national plan.

One lesson we remember: legal migration is for the rich people, human trafficking is for the poor or poorer people. But both want to go abroad to work, learn, live a life that he or she values.

OPPORTUNITIES went then to Engage Now Afrika.

(<https://www.facebook.com/engagenowafriagah>) A major NGO working to prevent slavery and human trafficking. They rescue enslaved people and help them reintegrate into society.

We listened to two survivors. Two stories that showed the horror and at the same time the resilience of people, resilience thanks to the work of NGOs like Engage Now Africa.

Two stories that shocked and were very emotional. OPPORTUNITIES thanked the NGO, the two survivors and expressed hope to work together to stop human trafficking with a reintroduction of the right to be mobile.

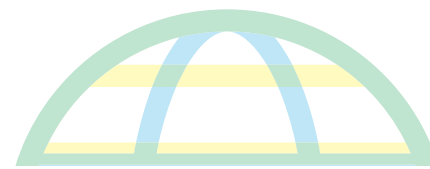
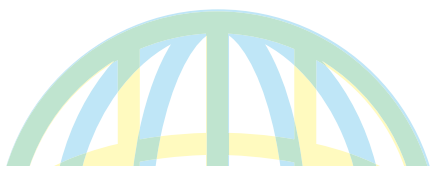


In Search of a Balanced View on Migration AN EXCHANGE BETWEEN EXPERTS ON MIGRATION

The third day of the consortium meeting was an exchange between the experts of the Centre of Migration Studies and of OPPORTUNITIES.

The CMS gave us an interesting insight in the several facets of migration.

"The dynamics of the migration policy architecture in Ghana" Leander Kandilige and Joseph Teye, "Nurturing Migration Aspirations among Young Ghanaians", Mary Setrana, Adolf Bekoe and Thomas Yeboah "Security Perception Study along selected Border communities in Northern Ghana" Joseph Teye, Mary Setrana, Edward Asiedu, Johnson Appiah-Kubi. "Local Integration and Identity of Liberians in Ghana", Sarah Nyarko "Transnational Activities among Nigerian



Migrant beggars in Accra, Ghana”, Maame Owusuaa.

Then the OPPORTUNITIES members presented their findings.

All these presentations are to be found on the website of OPPORTUNITIES.



Cape Coast Castle

And for those who stayed in Ghana, we organized an excursion to the Cape Coast slave castle.



In Search of a Balanced View on Migration HOW TO USE ARTS-BASED FORMATS TO DISCUSS AND TO INTERVIEW PEOPLE WHO WANT TO MIGRATE?

During the last day of the consortium meeting, OPPORTUNITIES was invited to Noyam. Noyam is a cultural center that uses arts-based methods to empower young people.

CMS invited Noyam to help create a theatre piece on migration for in villages and neighborhoods. A small part of this theatre piece was shown during the first day: it showed what people's hopes are, the barriers to getting a visa, the cost of getting a visa and the disappointments.

During this visit, we practiced theatre forms to open a dialogue on migration. A special moment to conclude the particularly fascinating week.

Again, a shocking experience and very emotional. The horror dripped off the walls and the ground. What did we do and what are we still doing? Here the title of our conference came true: we must rebalance our worlds to arrive at a fair, just, and right story where everyone can live the life they desire and value.

