

**HARNESSING THE POTENTIALS OF THE  
GHANAIAN DIASPORA: AN ANALYSIS OF  
GHANA'S ENGAGEMENT WITH ITS DIASPORA**

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**DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of an original research conducted by me under the supervision of Dr. Amanda Coffie. All sources referred to in the study have been acknowledged and that no part of has been submitted anywhere else for any other purpose.

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**DEDICATION**

*I dedicate this dissertation to my wife and all my siblings.*

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AU	-	African Union
CMS	-	Centre for Migration Studies
CMS	-	Centre for Migration Studies
CRC	-	Constitutional Review Commission
DAB	-	Diaspora Affairs Bureau
DEP	-	Diaspora Engagement Policy
EU	-	European Union
FDI	-	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product
GIPC	-	Ghana Investment Promotion Centre
GIT	-	German Technical Cooperation
GLA	-	Ghanaians Living Abroad
IMF	-	International Monetary Fund
INGOs	-	International Non-Governmental Organisations
IOM	-	International Organization for Migration
MFARI	-	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration
MIDA	-	Migration for Development in Africa
NACD	-	North Americans and Caribbean Diasporas
NDC	-	National Democratic Congress
NDPC	-	National Development Planning Commission
NPP	-	National Patriotic Party
PAMSACAD	-	Program of Action to Mitigate the Social Cost of Adjustment
PANAFEST	-	Pan-African Historical Theatre Festival

PNDC	-	Provisional National Defence Council
ROPPA	-	Representation of People's Act
UN	-	United Nations
UNECA	-	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNESCO	-	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
US	-	United States

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>DECLARATION.....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>DEDICATION.....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS .....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>ABSTRACT.....</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background to the study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem .....	4
1.3 Research questions.....	6
1.4 Research objectives.....	6
1.5. Hypothesis .....	7
1.6 Scope of the Study .....	7
1.7 Rationale of the Study.....	7
1.8 Conceptual Framework .....	8
1.9 Literature Review .....	15
1.9.1 Conceptualizing the African diaspora .....	17
1.9.2 State-Diaspora Relations: Diaspora Engagement Policy in Perspective .....	19
1.10 Research Methodology.....	21
1.11 Sources of Data.....	21
1.12 Organization of the Study.....	22
Endnotes .....	23
<b>CHAPTER TWO.....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>AN OVERVIEW OF ENGAGING THE DIASPORA .....</b>	<b>26</b>
2.1 Introduction .....	26
2.2 The Linkage Between the African Diaspora and Their Countries of Origin.....	28
2.3 Benefits and Challenges of Diaspora to the Countries of Origin.....	29
2.3 The Exodus of the Ghanaian Diaspora: from intra-Continental to Global diaspora.....	30
2.4 Ghanaians Beyond Africa .....	35
2.5 Modes of Engagements (Ghana and its Diaspora).....	39

2.6	Conclusion.....	46
	Endnotes .....	47
	<b>CHAPTER THREE.....</b>	<b>51</b>
	<b>A CRITIQUE OF GHANA’S DIASPORA REGIME AND A DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT POLICY FOR GHANA.....</b>	<b>51</b>
3.0	Introduction .....	51
3.1	Engagement of the Diaspora Since the Nkrumah Years .....	51
3.2	Contributions by Civil Societies Organisations Abroad and in Ghana .....	58
3.3	An Alternative Diaspora Engagement Policy (DEP) .....	59
3.4	Some Challenges Associated with the Implementation of Diaspora Engagement Policies .....	71
3.6	Conclusion.....	74
	Endnotes .....	75
	<b>CHAPTER FOUR.....</b>	<b>78</b>
	<b>SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>78</b>
4.0	Introduction .....	78
4.1	Summary of Findings.....	78
4.2	Conclusions .....	84
4.3	Recommendations.....	87
	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>89</b>

## ABSTRACT

The study examined how Ghana could harness its the potentials of is Diaspora to complement its development efforts. One of the biggest diasporas in recent times is that of the African diaspora or more specifically the Sub-Saharan diaspora. It used both primary and secondary sources to review, since independence, how successive governments have exploited the potentials of Ghana's rich Diaspora in their development agenda. It uncovered that the diaspora constitutes one of the most reliable sources of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), entrepreneurs, specialised human resources, ethics and concepts of best practices, philanthropists, foreign currency remittances and agents of technology transfer. Ghana's engagement of the Diaspora to complement its development was intensified in the 1980s and 1990s when Ghana's economic fortunes declined, and ERP and SAP were instituted. The advent of multi-party politics from the 1990s upped Ghana's Diaspora engagement through policy instruments such as reinvention Pan-Africanism, dual-citizenship, Diaspora Home-Coming festivals, Non-Resident Ghanaian Secretariat for Investment, the Joseph Project, creation of Tourism and Diaspora Relations Ministry, the Diaspora Support Unit, and the Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) for Diaspora Engagement. These Diaspora engagement policies were, however, largely ad hoc strategies that lost their significance with change of governments. The study emphasized the need for a more coherent and comprehensive Diaspora engagement national policy that involves all sectors of the Ghanaian society. It recommended that future Diaspora policies formulations must involve the Diaspora, creation of a robust Diaspora database, and a proactive redressal of the Diaspora's needs and challenges abroad for a better harnessing of the Diaspora's development potentials to Ghana.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the study

Human migration has been going on for a long time. Lee raises a myriad of reasons for the occurrence of migration, principal among them is the push and pull.<sup>1</sup> The push and pull factor categorizes the reasons for migration into things that are unfavorable or unattractive for staying (push) and things which attract people to another area (pull). Some examples of pull factors according to Lee are job opportunity, improved living conditions, better medical care and family reasons. Among the push factors are lack of jobs, famine, wars or military conflicts, forced labour and slave trade.<sup>2</sup> Migration results in the creation of the diaspora, which although maybe be closely linked with forced migration, can also be voluntary.

One of the biggest Diasporas in recent times is that of the African diaspora or more specifically the Sub-Saharan diaspora.<sup>3</sup> This can be traced back chiefly to the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade which is estimated to have resulted in the transportations of millions of Africans to the Americas among whom 9.4-12 million are estimated to have survived.<sup>4</sup> These groups and their descendants impacted heavily on the culture and economies of the New World colonies. Preceding the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade was the Arab-controlled slave trade, which also resulted in the dispersal of millions of Africans to the Asian continent.<sup>5</sup> In recent times, Africans have migrated out of the continent mainly for economic and conflict reasons.<sup>6</sup> The main preferred destinations have been Europe and America. According to the Migration Policy Institute, approximately 7 to 8 million irregular migrants from Africa reside within the European Union (EU).<sup>7</sup>

The neoliberal bearings that supports the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, Western donor countries and agencies had produced stringent and austerity economic models which resulted in a plethora of cumbersome outcomes for the governments and peoples of Africa.<sup>8</sup> These experiences have not gone unnoticed by African leaders who are very familiar with the economic packages and policies from these Western neoliberal institutions. It has become apparent that any form of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) that would benefit Africa without such excessive demands would be appreciably welcomed.<sup>9</sup> This understanding provided a clear framework by which the African Diaspora could be engaged for the development of the African continent.

The Diaspora has become a new fad in development since the early 2000s, though they have existed for decades. As one writer puts it, “there are countless scholarly arguments in favor of the African diaspora as the next panacea, or ‘magic bullet’ for solving the development quagmire”.<sup>10</sup> For example, the 2017 Migration and Remittances Data revealed total remittances from the African diaspora to Africa exceeded 33 billion dollars (World Bank, 2017).<sup>11</sup> It was, therefore, not surprising that a year after this report was released, the African Union (AU) amended article 3(q) of its Constitutive Act and essentially identified the African Diaspora as its Sixth Region.<sup>12</sup> In this development, the AU defines the African diaspora as “consisting of people of African origin living outside the continent, irrespective of their citizenship and nationality, and who are willing to contribute to the development of the continent and the building of the African Union.”<sup>13</sup>

African countries, including those in North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa, have over 30 million international migrants.<sup>14</sup> The size of the African diaspora, including unrecorded migrants and second- and third-generation migrants, is significantly larger. The World Bank revealed that

migrant remittances to Africa surged by 3.4% to \$35.2 billion, in 2015.<sup>15</sup> Over the past four years, transfers by African migrants to their homes reached \$134.4 billion.<sup>16</sup> The potential contribution of the diaspora to the continent's development goes much beyond personal remittances. Those contributions range from collective remittances that assist in philanthropic activities to knowledge exchange, increased trade links, and better access to foreign capital markets. It is estimated that the African Diasporas save US\$53 billion annually, most of which is currently invested outside Africa and which could potentially be mobilized for Africa via instruments such as diaspora bonds.<sup>17</sup>

The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) have estimated that since 1990 at least 20 000 professionals had left the continent annually.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, five million African entrepreneurs and professionals are living in the diaspora and 40 percent of African professionals and higher-level managers are residing outside the continent.<sup>19</sup> For example, countries like Nigeria have more than half of their academic personnel working abroad. Records show that upon completion of their studies, more than three-quarters of all doctors leave within a few years in Ghana and Zimbabwe. The World Bank estimates that more Ethiopian doctors are practicing in the city of Chicago in the United States (US) than in Ethiopia itself (World Bank-2, 2007).<sup>20</sup> These statistics and research prove that indeed the contributions of the African diaspora is crucial for the development agenda of the African continent.

Ghana has been a favorable destination for those whose past are connected to the African roots. The latter includes the two categories of African diaspora; the African diaspora created through

forced migration, and contemporary migration, which includes the African diaspora that emerged during colonial rule, anti-colonial struggles and the era of structural adjustment packages.<sup>21</sup> The other group is the Ghanaian diaspora whose period of migration could be traced from the 1960s, 1980s and in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century in what has been referred to as Contemporary diaspora by Zeleza.<sup>22</sup> Another identifiable group are those returning Pan Africanists who are descendants of slaves and are attempting to retrace their roots.<sup>23</sup> A popular figure among this group is Rita Marley who sometimes resides in Ghana.

Ghana's engagement initiatives with the African diaspora are worth mentioning. Quartey maintained that remittance flows more than doubled from 7 million dollars to 16 million dollars after the 4<sup>th</sup> Republic was ushered.<sup>24</sup> Ten years after the ushering of the 4<sup>th</sup> Republic there was a dramatic increase in Ghanaian total remittances from 46 million dollars to 136 million dollars by 2001. By the close of the 2015 fiscal year, migrant remittances to Ghana were at a total of 2 billion dollars.<sup>25</sup> It is also estimated that 200 health professionals participated in the Migration for Development Project, which facilitated the return of over 250 health professionals to work temporarily in Ghana.<sup>26</sup> In view of this, this study examines Ghana's engagement with its Diaspora in harnessing the development potentials of the Diasporas.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

It is a fact that migration issues continue to engage the attention of the world. For example, McAuliffe and Ruhs state, "the prominence of migration as a public policy issue and newsworthy topic has perhaps never been more pronounced".<sup>27</sup> Migration is increasingly seen as a high-priority policy issue by many governments and politicians throughout the world. Its importance to

economic prosperity, human development, and safety and security ensures that it will remain a top priority for the near future. Migration does not only remain a key governance issue for its positives but also for the negative features it is associated with. The Wilson Centre argues that criminal diasporas have gained prominence primarily due to the strong governmental response to the drug trade in advanced countries. These criminals migrate to countries with less stringent responses to their activities due to a myriad of factors including corruption. The criminal diasporas then bring the associated vices to the drug trade such as human trafficking, kidnappings and murder to these less developed countries.<sup>28</sup> Migration is therefore as much of a developmental issue as it is a security issue. Ghana, like many other African countries, has recognized the need to develop and strengthen networks and means of engagement essential for deepening communication and building partnerships with its diaspora and to handle the unwanted effects of this migration.

According to Giles, this recognition and its associated efforts have been largely incoherent, patchy and uncoordinated.<sup>29</sup> Literature on the diaspora also tends to focus more on the benefits that countries of origin for the African diaspora stand to gain rather than a multi-pronged strategy that can help governments derive maximum benefits from their large and successful diaspora communities.<sup>30</sup>

In the case of Ghana, while the awareness of the development potential the Diaspora can contribute to Ghana's development is obvious and appreciated, the question remains as to what are the strategies towards engaging the diaspora? Are the policies comprehensive? Are they geared

towards longtime engagement? Or are they largely individual initiatives of respective governments, and presidents without continuity?<sup>1</sup>

### **1.3 Research questions**

In undertaking this study, the following questions are answered.

- How does Ghana define or conceptualize the diaspora?
- What are Ghana's policies in engaging the diaspora?
- What are the challenges and prospects in engaging the diaspora?
- Are there concepts of best practices in engaging the diaspora being adopted by Ghana? If not, how does it improve its policies and maximize its benefits or gains in engaging the diaspora?

### **1.4 Research objectives**

The study generally examines Ghana's engagement with its African Diaspora in harnessing the potential of the Diasporas. In this regard the specific objectives are to:

- examine how Ghana conceptualizes or defines its diaspora
- assess the policies Ghana has designed in engaging its diaspora
- examine the efficiency of the policies; and the prospects and challenges faced during implementation
- Based upon the findings, make suggestions as solutions to the challenges faced.

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<sup>1</sup> See Coffie Amanda. National Diaspora Engagement Policy. Policy Brief. LECIAD. University of Ghana: ISSN: 2468-7303. 2017.

### **1.5. Hypothesis**

Ghana's diaspora policies are not coordinated well enough to maximize gains from the development potential of the diaspora.

### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The timeframe for this work straddles 2000 and 2017. The choice of the year 2000 as the starting date for this study is to allow the researcher to access the various packages adopted by the Ghanaian government in engaging the African diaspora. It is also at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century that the African Union, to which Ghana is a member, introduced Article 3 (q) popularly known as the Diaspora Clause to engage the African diaspora in general.<sup>31</sup> The year 2017 also marks the turn of change in Ghana's domestic politics as the New Patriotic Party came to power and also launched the Ghana-Diaspora Homecoming Summit in July 2017.<sup>32</sup> Therefore not only did significant events relevant for a study such as this happen in 2017, but the choice of 2017 as the terminal date for this study allows the researcher to make more detailed comparative analysis of the various activities of engaging Ghana's diaspora from 2000 to 2017. This study explores strategies Ghana has employed over the years to take care and make use of its diasporas. It examines frameworks that guide the relationship between Ghana and its diaspora and the extent to which these strategies and frameworks have been implemented over the years.

### **1.7 Rationale of the Study**

The rationale could be viewed from two perspectives. In terms of research, the findings of the study will provide an empirical standpoint on strategies and frameworks that guide the relationship between Ghana and its diasporas. The findings of the study will also serve as a good academic

resource on which future researchers could make reference in subsequent studies. With regards to policy formulation, the study will contribute immensely to policy by coming out with appropriate strategies in the form of recommendations to the government of Ghana and its ministry or agency in charge of diasporas on how they can build, strengthen communication networks and partnerships with the African diaspora.

## **1.8 Conceptual Framework**

The study is conducted within the framework of transnationalism. The concept explains the existence of a Ghanaian diaspora and the ties that such a diaspora may maintain with the homeland (in this case Ghana). Transnationalism is a term often used to describe the social phenomenon of the delicate interconnectivity among humans and the ever-declining social and economic importance of borders between nation states.<sup>33</sup> One of the earliest proponents of transnationalism was the 20<sup>th</sup> Century writer, Randolph Bourne, who used the term to demonstrate a new way of perceiving relationships among differing cultures.<sup>34</sup> The term transnationalism was first used in international relations (IR) to explain the activities and the influence of transnational actors such as multi-nationals corporations and International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs).<sup>35</sup> Scholars in IR adopted the term *transnationalism* in the 1970s to represent the growth of non-state institutions and governance regimes acting across national boundaries.<sup>36</sup> In the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, transnationalism as a concept has been seen as an approach that brought migrants 'back in' as important social agents in contrast to large organizations such as multinational companies and political parties that had been the object of earlier research of a transnational vein.<sup>37</sup> Put another way, the traditional understanding of transnationalism, which involved the activities

of multinational corporations, was adopted by diaspora and migration studies to also highlight the activities of individuals as migrants and not only the transnational companies.

The principal driver of transnationalism has been the advancement of technology, which has eased the mode of transportation and communication and has, by so doing, redefined, to a dramatic effect, the relationship between people and places. Another key driver of transnationalism has been the integration of international migration to the demographic future of most emerging states. This has provided an avenue to fill the low-wage worker deficit, as well as the slowing population emerging in developed countries in recent times.

Over the past decades, transnationalism and diaspora have provided crucial research lenses through which the aftermath of international migration and the shifting of state borders across population have been viewed.<sup>38</sup> It should be mentioned here that whilst diaspora and transnationalism are sometimes used interchangeably, the two terms reflect different intellectual genealogies.<sup>39</sup> Transnationalism and its various forms (such as transnational social spaces, fields and formations) have been used to represent everyday practices of migrants engaged in various activities.<sup>40</sup> A few of these activities include reciprocity and solidarity within kinship networks, political participation not only in the country of emigration but also of immigration, small-scale entrepreneurship of migrants across borders and the transfer and re-transfer of cultural customs and practices.<sup>41</sup> Though not used as widely as diaspora, nor as politicized, the concept is hardly devoid of political connotations. Under this circumstance, some scholars like Portes have noted that there are at least three perspectives to transnationalism. They include economic, political and cultural aspects. The economic is the transnational ties maintained through remittances sent home from abroad, any

entrepreneurial endeavor between the home and host states. Voting of these transnational migrants or the assumption of political duties from both, the home and the host country constitute the political perspective of transnationalism. Portes maintained that the political and economic activities then turn to enforce and build the cultural affinity that the transnational migrant has with both transnational spaces through for instance language, dressing and other capabilities.

In recent times, transnationalism has assumed different theoretical orientation in varied academic disciplines and academics have sought to define and trace the development of transnational communities and practices, and examine the ramifications for identity and citizenship in an increasingly globalized world.<sup>42</sup> According to Kivisto, although transnationalism is employed as a term by different academic disciplines, among which, include anthropologists, sociologists, political scientists, and geographers, three main versions of the concept can be deduced.<sup>43</sup> In his opinion, therefore transnationalism has three original foundational orientations.<sup>44</sup>

The earliest articulation of the term according to him was adopted by cultural anthropologists Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch, and Christina Szanton Blanc.<sup>45</sup> The second broad orientation which was a refinement of the cultural anthropological perspective of the term was given by sociologist, Alejandro Portes and its deployment by him and numerous colleagues in research on the second generation and beyond.<sup>46</sup> Kivisto continues that the third and by far the most rigorously systematic theoretical articulation of the term is by political scientist, Thomas Faist.<sup>47</sup> According to Kivisto, Faist builds on already existing theories of migration while offering his own corrections and expansions. Faist develops the outlines for a methodical theory of transnationalism grounded in the idea of the structure of border-crossing social spaces, which he defines as “combinations of

social and symbolic ties, positions in networks and organizations, and networks of organizations that can be found in at least two geographically and internationally distinct places.’’<sup>48</sup>

When the term was borrowed and assimilated into migration and diaspora studies in the 1990s, its utility was to highlight the dynamics and maintenance of regular migration linkages between sending and receiving countries and the back and forth movement across borders of these transnationals.<sup>49</sup> The works of Anthropologists, Nina Schiller, Szanton-Blanc and Basch who, as have been aforementioned, were among the pioneers of the concept of transnationalism provides a conceptual clarification of transnationalism in relation to migration.<sup>50</sup> Transnationalism is a conceptual approach that explains the double or hybrid identities and cross border activities of people. These scholars maintained transnational migration as the cross-border processes of migrant groups whose social relations and practices form a connection between two or more states.<sup>51</sup>

In another breadth, Basch *et al*, capture the transnational idea much better when they noted that transnationalism is “a process by which trans migrants, through their daily activities, forge and sustain multi-stranded social, economic, and political relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement, and through which they create transnational social fields that cross-national borders”.<sup>52</sup> To this end, life in the transnational space has been described as double existence.<sup>53</sup>

It is these transnational ties with the homeland that creates the possibility to claim a Ghanaian diaspora in the first place to even initiate the other conversation of such a diaspora contribution to the development of Ghana or a diaspora engagement policy. Therefore, the transnational ties the Ghanaian diaspora maintains with the home country could be explored by the Ghanaian government through the formulation of a long-term diaspora engagement policy.

The use of transnationalism as the conceptual framework within which the research is conducted is because of its suitability to the study. In the first instance, drawing from the definitions of transnationalism and its features, it is apparent that a study that seeks to tap into the potentials of Ghana's diaspora would be situated within the conceptual underpinnings of transnationalism. This also against the political and economic background that the increasing interconnectedness and inter-dependence of people and countries are very necessary for a country such as Ghana which belong to the periphery world according to the Globalist, a strand within the International Relations theory of Globalism.<sup>54</sup> This point did not go unnoticed when citing Castles and Miller (1993) Kivisto writing on transnationalism argued that the term has “emerged and evolved at a time characterized by high levels of labour migration from economically less developed nations to the most developed and from similarly high levels of political refugees fleeing conflicts and instability in former communist and Third World nations.”<sup>55</sup>

Castles also maintained that “migration is the result of the integration of local communities and national economies into global relationships”.<sup>56</sup> Put differently, the features of globalization have deepened, facilitated and reinforce transnational ties between African diasporans and their various countries of origins and these transnational relations are also manifested through remittances, return of skilled labour and diaspora investment in Africa. In another dimension, globalization also perpetuates the global north and global south dichotomy that renders the latter a labour pool or reserve attracted to the economic opportunities of the former.

In this current study, the notion of transnationalism in the opinion of Kelly, Herbert and Ley is a component of globalization.<sup>57</sup> Transnationalism as part of globalization examines the modern patterns of movements where migrants who may or refuse to return to their country of origin or parents' birthplace but may still maintain various forms of linkages with the latter.<sup>58</sup> This has the potential of eventually facilitating the return of these migrants to settle permanently whilst still maintaining ties with the host country or vice versa; the latter which fit accurately into this study. It also these transnational ties that makes it possible for the Ghanaian diaspora for example to identify with the Ghanaian homeland for which reason the Ghanaian diaspora has this sense of obligation to contribute their quota to country's development.

As a concept, transnationalism has received its fair share of backlash, as is common with other frameworks, a few of which would be considered in this section. Vertovec has argued that there has been numerous publications, thesis, seminars and conferences in which the term transnationalism and the debates concerning the transnational lens on migrant communities has received a recurrent set of criticisms.<sup>59</sup> He cited the work of Nagel whose critique of the term is that its applicability has come to mean so many things to such an extent that term loses its original content.<sup>60</sup> Nagel's view is that there is a conceptual conflation and overuse of the term so that transnationalism is often used interchangeably with 'international', 'multinational', 'global' and 'diasporic'.<sup>61</sup> There is also the problem of suggesting that all migrants engage in transnationalism. It should be noted that not all migrants are transnational and even within specific groups or local communities; there is great variation in migrants' border-crossing practices.<sup>62</sup> Whichever way one examines the meaning and application of the term in diaspora and migration studies, Portes *et al* are of the opinion that for any group of migrants or diaspora to be called transnational, that group

must involve a significant number of people engaging in ‘sustained social contacts over time’, across national borders.<sup>63</sup>

Following from this argument Lucassen remarked that any use of the term transnationalism should be done so with proper distinction and demarcation. In that regard distinction is made among global, international, and transnational. To avoid the problems of the term transnationalism terms like “translocalism,” “bi-localism,” “bi-nationalism” and “trans-state activity” were proposed.<sup>64</sup>

Transnational theories have often placed emphasis on the economic and political interconnectivity maintained by migrants with their countries of origin.<sup>65</sup> This has often been seen in Europe and America where Polish and Russian immigrants retain associations with their relatives back home; sending money, investing in business, paying visits to relatives and maintaining interests in the political activities in their home countries.<sup>66</sup> This is also the case in Africa, where financial remittance is a significant part of national economies.<sup>67</sup>

Migrants often find it difficult to integrate with their host societies. In cases where integration is achieved, Carstens argues that a form of cultural transnationalism becomes apparent. He argues that the construction of cultural products and outlooks can create transnational imageries, which are able to produce and promulgate new forms of “transnational publics.”<sup>68</sup> This results in the cases where visual culture emerges as an alternative form of identification with the homeland. This form of transnationalism places importance on kinship and emotional relations grounded in the shared associations and identifications,<sup>69</sup> which is the case with the Ghanaian diaspora.

## 1.9 Literature Review

The concepts of diaspora and transnationalism is imperative in both political and policy debates and academic research – diaspora even more so than Transnationalism cannot be overemphasized. Whilst diaspora remains a very old concept, not so is transnationalism, which is relatively new. In public debates and in academic analysis, the terms have fuzzy boundaries and often overlap.<sup>70</sup> Writing in the nascent years of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Brubakar observed that there has been a burgeoning interest in the term and diaspora and its cognates have proliferated dissertations in an unprecedented manner.<sup>71</sup> As part of the review of literature, this section conceptualizes both the diaspora in general and the African diaspora in particular.

As an old concept whose uses and meanings have recently undergone dramatic change, diaspora originally referred only to the historic experience of particular groups, specifically Jews and Armenians. Later, it was extended to religious minorities in Europe. Since the late 1970s, ‘diaspora’ has experienced a veritable inflation of applications and interpretations. Brubakar argued that the earlier discussions of diaspora were firmly rooted in a conceptual homeland of a sort with a paradigmatic case or a small number of core issues.<sup>72</sup> In this regard, the paradigmatic case undoubtedly, the Jewish diaspora, to the extent that until recently, some dictionary definition of diaspora did not simply illustrate, but described the word with strict reference to the Jewish case. Much later even when diaspora witnessed a veritable explosion and other areas and people were also considered a diaspora; such understanding accorded such people as a diaspora was also likened at least initially to the conceptual homeland of the Jewish and other the classical Armenians and Greeks. The Jewish diaspora in the opinion of Safran is the ideal type of a diaspora. The point is that it is nearly impossible to find any literature that seeks to do a rigorous theoretical or

conceptual analysis of diaspora without mentioning the Jewish diaspora either as a critique or as a yardstick; either way an appreciation of the term is conspicuous.

According to Safran, such a diaspora should possess the following features: 1) they, or their ancestors, have been dispersed from a specific original 'center' to two or more 'peripheral', or foreign, regions; (2) they retain a collective memory, vision, or myth about their original homeland-its physical location, history, and achievements; (3) they believe they are not and perhaps cannot be fully accepted by their host society and therefore feel partly alienated and insulated from it (4) they regard their ancestral homeland as their true ideal home and as the place to which they or their descendants would (or should) eventually return when conditions are appropriate (5) they believe that they should, collectively, be committed to the maintenance or restoration of their original homeland and its safety and prosperity and (6) they continue to relate, personally or vicariously, to that homeland in one way or another, and their ethno communal consciousness and solidarity are importantly defined by the existence of such a relationship.<sup>73</sup>

Safran's assertion attracted immediate criticisms.

Among them is the criticism that his ideal construct of a Jewish diaspora has exclusionary tendency, and for its exclusively Zionist understanding of the Jewish diaspora.<sup>74</sup> For example, Cohen argued that while it is widely recognized that the Jewish definition of the term is the pulse of all diasporic definition, such description has transcended with time because the term diaspora is now used in a variety of new, but interesting and suggestive contexts other than the Jewish traditional notion.<sup>75</sup> Furthermore, Akyeampong remarked that, although the Jewish underpinning

of diaspora remains useful, the Jewish dispersion was a unique historical event and should not be the only standard yardstick against which all other existing diasporas should be measured.<sup>76</sup>

### **1.9.1 Conceptualizing the African diaspora**

The term “African Diaspora” is associated with George Shepperson. The Jewish diaspora effect was very much in his conviction when he first used the term, so that when he first used the term in 1965, he did so according to Brubakar by expressly engaging the Jewish experience. Shepperson argued that African American and Caribbean intellectuals themselves had for a long time recognized and articulated connections between their own people in exile and that of the Jews and so clearly, when Shepperson first joined the word African to Diaspora in 1965 he did so because of the parallels he realized existed between the Jewish diaspora and the dispersal of Africans abroad because of slavery.<sup>77</sup>

In Alpers opinion, the successes of Shepperson lies in his ability to draw some similarity between the “great movement” of Jews and Africans based on the fundamental impetuses of slavery and imperialism. Such description of the African diaspora in the opinion of the author of this study, evokes a reductionist approach to understanding the whole phenomenon of African diaspora.<sup>78</sup> Shepperson address many paradoxes of the term, in order to avoid identification of loopholes. He mentioned that caution should not be thrown to the wind in the description of African diaspora to only European capitalist coercive modes, since there was an African diaspora that preceded the European slavery on the African continent.<sup>79</sup>

It is important to mention that not all dispersals or migrations automatically create a diaspora or every movement out of one's community, country, or continent qualifies to be called diasporic.<sup>80</sup>

This is some attempts at characterizing the necessary conditions to the acquisition of a diasporic status, which is relevant for a study. Zeleza'a maintains that it is apparent those who traveled to the United States during the post Second World War period often travel back to their homeland after seeking greener pastures constitute temporary migrants and such status does not qualify as African diaspora. Zeleza is strongly of the conviction that a definitive characteristic to becoming a diaspora is prolong settlement followed by permanent settlement.<sup>81</sup>

There is a sense in which an understanding of the African diaspora is conceptualized to include trans-ethnic diaspora, trans-national diaspora and the widely known one, trans-continental diaspora (the first two occur within the African continent (therefore is intra-African diaspora). In fact, in Zeleza's own words:

*"... it is the offspring of such migrants who complete the transition from migration to diasporization for their families and communities. Thus, the diasporization process is a cumulative one beginning with migration, followed by resettlement, and is reproduced through the offspring of the migrants. Using this schema, I would distinguish between African migrants, diasporized Africans, and African diasporas. In this context, long-term African-born residents of the diaspora hostlands would be considered diasporized Africans, while their offspring tum into African diasporas, more fully socialized into the experiences and identities of the historic diaspora. In other words, the process of diasporization has spatial and temporal dimensions: African diasporas refer to Africans and their offspring resettled outside the continent"*<sup>82</sup>

As would be seen in the next chapter the Ghanaian diaspora forms part of what is largely referred to as the contemporary diaspora. As is the conviction of Zeleza, the new or contemporary African diasporas, as they are sometimes called, can be divided into three main stages.<sup>83</sup> They include the diasporas of colonization, decolonization, and of structural adjustment, disruptions of colonial

conquest, the struggles for independence and consequently the adjustment programmes imposed on African countries by the international institutions from the late 1970s.<sup>84</sup> Zeleza for instance is of the opinion that as far as trans-continental diaspora is concerned, there are three broad categories of global African Diasporas and they include the Trans-Indian Ocean Diasporas, Trans-Mediterranean diasporas, and Trans-Atlantic diasporas.

### **1.9.2 State-Diaspora Relations: Diaspora Engagement Policy in Perspective**

The African diaspora has become an essential element in the development agenda of states. The imperativeness of the African diaspora among other kinds of diaspora to the home country is to such an extent that some scholars are of the opinion that the idea of diaspora engagement policies are the confinement of global south.<sup>85</sup> By turning this argument on its head in the end, Gamlen nevertheless reveals the work of some scholars in that regard when he argued that “there is the assumption that states using diaspora engagement policies cluster in geopolitical ‘peripheries’, such as Southeastern Europe (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003a), Africa (Van Hear, et al. 2004), Asia and Asia-Pacific (Hugo 2003; Yeoh and Willis 2004; Ong 1999), and Latin America and the Caribbean (Basch, et al. 1994)”.<sup>86</sup> Besides diaspora engagement policies have also been engineered by the so called countries of the global north to also harness the potential human resources of these immigrants and so to argue that such policies are reserves of poor countries is without merit as was proven by Gamlen.

It is important to mention here that two main development in the opinion of the researcher is responsible for the upsurge in the demand for diaspora engagement policies and they must be mentioned even before a definition or a description of sort is done. The conventional wisdom about migration and development that until recently was predominantly pessimistic witnessed a

remarkable turnaround in the early 21<sup>st</sup> Century when migration was seen to bring about economic and social development in the countries of origin.<sup>87</sup> This coincided with the already popularity of the one of the theoretical lenses of studying international migrants and the diaspora at large in what became known as transnationalism in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.<sup>88</sup>

The effect of these two developments was the importance attached to non-adhoc means of engaging the diaspora, but rather through a more robust and meaningful mechanism. It has now come to be widely accepted that the double existence of transnationals is important for development both of the home and host countries.<sup>89</sup> In the particular case of Africa the relevance of the African diaspora could not have been overemphasized.<sup>90</sup> On the side of Ghana, the idea of Ghana's emigration experience as janus face was not lost to scholars when Awumbila et al noted that even though the brain drain incidence undercut the country's undercut the nation's aspirations for a durable socioeconomic development a compensation to that is the transnational context within which these Ghanaian leave.<sup>91</sup> These transnational migrants (a term used by Manuh and Asante)<sup>92</sup> continue to nurture their roots back home.<sup>93</sup> Under this current studies though diaspora engagement policies are used in relation to the home countries and not the host country.

A definition of the term diaspora engagement policies under this pretext is now in order. In the words of Alan Gamlen one of the pioneers on diaspora engagement policies, the latter refers to "state institutions and practices that apply to members of that state's society who reside outside its borders" (p.3).<sup>94</sup> Put differently, diaspora engagement policies "constitute the state side of the state-diaspora relationship, and have the overall purpose of facilitating and encouraging the involvement of emigrants in the homeland" (p.3).<sup>95</sup> It is in the context of this definition that this

study is situated. A deeper analysis of the current theme under discussion is done in the third chapter.

### **1.10 Research Methodology**

The study used the qualitative method for its investigations. Qualitative design is a kind of research approach that tends to explore the meanings, attitudes, values and beliefs people associate with a phenomenon in order to establish an understanding.<sup>96</sup> The choice of qualitative design was informed by the need to conduct a more descriptive yet analytical study into the chosen topic. The approach is human sensitive, it is interested in the subjective meaning of people's behavior and not measurement, and evaluation to predict an outcome as is the focus of Quantitative approach to research.<sup>97</sup> A study such as this with the aim of investigating and assessing Ghana's engagement with its African diaspora would be much appreciated within the hermeneutic seat, hence qualitative approach.

### **1.11 Sources of Data**

In undertaking this study, Primary and Secondary data was used. Firsthand information from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration (MFARI), Centre for Migration Studies at the University of Ghana and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) was collected. In that regard, the researcher intends to interview some key informants from the Diaspora Affairs Bureau of MFARI. An estimated number of five people would be interviewed. This number constitutes mostly officials in the above-mentioned places. As a means of collecting data from the intended interviewees, the semi-structured interview guide would be adopted. To corroborate the data provided by the primary

data, the study would also make use of secondary data, which include both published books and articles.

### **1.12 Organization of the Study**

The study is organized into four chapters. These are as follows;

- Chapter one constitutes the research design
- Chapter Two provides an overview of engaging the diaspora
- Chapter three examines the possibilities of strategies, policies and national framework that successive Ghanaian governments can implement as diaspora engagement policies. It also examines some of the challenges that hinder the adoption and implementations of such policies.
- Chapter Four provides a summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

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## CHAPTER TWO

### AN OVERVIEW OF ENGAGING THE DIASPORA

#### 2.1 Introduction

The Chapter is organized into five segments. It opens with geographical trends in migration. It examines the linkages between the African diaspora and their countries of origin. Engaging the diaspora essentially constrains and enables stability, in the sense that engaging the diaspora comes with both benefits and challenges to the countries of origin (and destination). It traces the exodus of Ghanaians Diaspora from the inter-continental to Global diaspora, and beyond Africa. It concludes with the modes of engagement between Ghana and its Diaspora.

Anthony Giddens has provided us with a sense of how the intensification of global interconnectedness has shrunk distance and space by eliminating the bottlenecks that hindered such development (a process he describes as globalization).<sup>1</sup> The effect is how large diaspora communities have been established beyond their home countries or place of origins and yet, whilst located in the host countries are able to still maintain transnational ties with their home countries. Throughout the world, diaspora communities are not difficult to trace. These diaspora communities have been created beyond the homes or place of origins of such diaspora communities and the main channel of establishment is through international migration.

The United Nations Population Division provided the most comprehensive recent figures on international migration, some of which have culminated into the creation of diaspora communities. In 2013, the estimated number of international migrants in the world increased from 154 million

in 1990 to 232 million and was expected to rise further in the foreseeable future (UN 2013). The migrant stock has more than doubled in countries located in more developed regions (by 53 million) than those countries in less developed regions (by 24 million) between 1990 and 2013.<sup>2</sup> By 2015 the number of 232 million in 2013 had reached 244 million in just two years. This signified an increase of 71 million or 41%, compared to the year 2000. In this analysis, the migrant stock born in the global South and residing in the global North has doubled from 40 million to 82 million.<sup>3</sup>

It is important to mention that nearly two thirds of all these international migrants live in Europe which accounts for 76 million. <sup>4</sup>Asia follows up as accommodating 75 million international migrants; whilst North America host the third largest number of international migrants with 54 million. Africa, Latin America and Caribbean and Oceania hosts 21 million, 9 million and 8 million international migrants respectively.<sup>5</sup>

Europe might have been the largest destination for international migrants, but this status has been challenged over time, between 2000 and 2015, Asia received more international migrants than any other major continent of the world. It accommodated 26 million international migrants during this period, or 1.7 million additional migrants per annum. Europe therefore moved to the second position and added the second largest number of international migrants between the year 2000 and 2015 (20 million, or 1.3 million per year). This was followed by Northern America (14 million, or 0.9 million per year) and Africa (6 million, or 0.4 million per year). Both Latin America and the Caribbean and Oceania added comparatively smaller numbers of migrants during this period (3 million, or 0.2 million per year each).

The trend must not be considered in a way to suggest that the pattern of international migration and diaspora communities are only made to reflect an inflow of the global South to the global North. Despite a more rapid rise in the number of international migrants living in the North within the past two decades, “South-South migration was as common as South-North migration. In 2013, more than one third (36 per cent or 82.3 million) of the global migrant stock originated in the South and was living in the South.”<sup>6</sup>

## **2.2 The Linkage Between the African Diaspora and Their Countries of Origin**

Africans are culturally and psychologically different from their host countries when they migrate. Because of this most of the times Africans stay in the same quarters. They then develop their own subculture within the host countries. Africans are known to develop their own cuisines, entertainment, mode of dressing as well festivals. They mostly never actually integrate although some go on to attain full citizenships and hold political office in the host countries. They often feel they are temporally sojourning in the host countries. Due to this, most put up buildings and set up businesses back in their countries of origin. They maintain close linkage with their families back at home and take active part, including financially, in terms of funerals, festivals and politics. Some go on to invest back home due to finding it difficult to adjust to living outside. They find it hard to adjust to routines such as time keeping, taxation and other technicalities and therefore find life stressful in the host communities.<sup>7</sup> This pushes them to hold the aim of gathering enough money to return home and set up business back home with the view to returning to their countries of origin permanently.

### **2.3 Benefits and Challenges of Diaspora to the Countries of Origin**

The leitmotif running through this study is that the diaspora, for that matter, the African and Ghanaian diaspora has positive development potential which when well harnessed will help mitigate the development challenges of African and Ghana, respectively. Remittances sent back home to relatives, communities, and institutions in the countries of origin are used for development purposes and reduction of poverty. In Africa, the diaspora constitutes one of the most reliable sources of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) as migrants return home to establish businesses across the length of Africa. These investments provide goods and services for African communities and serve as source of employment. Diaspora also often boost the country of origin's human resources, technical expertise, concepts of best practices, and transfer of technology. Some prominent members of the diaspora serve as 'ambassadors' of their countries of origin by promoting the cultures of their countries of origin, and actually prompt their destination countries to fund development projects in their countries of origin. In fact, the socio-economic and political benefits of the diaspora to their countries of origin are limitless.<sup>8</sup>

On the other hand, since the terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre in New York on 9/11, 2001, migration and the diaspora has been increasingly conceptualized as posing transnational security threats to their destinations and countries of origin. The diaspora has been associated with drug and human trafficking, human smuggling, money laundering, cyber-fraud and other organized crimes. The nexus between migrant (diaspora) and transnational precipitates from the fact that perceptions and expectation of greener pastures in the destination countries are often a mirage. As such migrants are often faced with the grim reality to survive doing odd jobs, which renders them gullible to the whims and caprices of criminal gangs that often introduce them to criminal gangs

and crime. Besides, diaspora afford criminal gang secrecy, peculiar media, and trust that are often otherwise unavailable.<sup>9</sup>

It is also a well-established fact that certain conflicts are often fueled by the diaspora in the countries of origin. A common example is the Sri-Lankan conflict, where the Tamil Tiger rebels got a significant portion of their funding from the diaspora in Canada.<sup>10</sup> In Ghana, the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict was purported to have been funded by the diaspora. Similar claims have been made about the conflicts in Dagbon and Bawku. In terms of the internal diaspora, some of the minor conflicts and skirmishes often seen in areas between people with a background from areas with ongoing conflicts, are mainly replicas of long-standing conflicts like the Dagbon and Bawku conflicts.<sup>11</sup> As a result of the ambivalent outcomes of diaspora relations care is often taken in their engagement.

### **2.3 The Exodus of the Ghanaian Diaspora: from intra-Continental to Global diaspora**

This development of international migration is not very different from the process and the creation of Ghanaian diaspora through international migration. An investigation into the trajectories of the Ghanaian diaspora begins with patterns of Ghanaian emigrants; a process which was completed by the diasporarization of these Ghanaian migrants' communities.<sup>12</sup> It is important at this stage to make reference to Zeleza who makes a distinction between migrant communities and diaspora. The scholar noted that a definitive characteristic to becoming a diaspora is prolong settlement followed by permanent settlement.<sup>13</sup> To him therefore, those for instance, who traveled to the United States during the post Second World War period often travel back to their homeland after

seeking greener pastures constitute temporary migrants and such status does not qualify as African diaspora. In his words, Zeleza is of the conviction that:

*“... it is the offspring of such migrants who complete the transition from migration to diasporization for their families and communities. Thus, the diasporization process is a cumulative one beginning with migration, followed by resettlement, and is reproduced through the offspring of the migrants. Using this schema, I would distinguish between African migrants, diasporized Africans, and African diasporas. In this context, long-term African-born residents of the diaspora hostlands would be considered diasporized Africans, while their offspring turn into African diasporas, more fully socialized into the experiences and identities of the historic diaspora. In other words, the process of diasporization has spatial and temporal dimensions: African diasporas refer to Africans and their offspring resettled outside the continent”<sup>14</sup>*

In Zeleza's exposition though, one thing is clear and also important to this study and this is the fact that every diaspora is preceded by a certain pattern of international migration from a homeland into a host land. Migration movements have been a feature of Africa and it is one of the continent's most important demographical features in contemporary times.<sup>15</sup> There is evidence to support major trade interactions between North and West Africa through migration but necessitated by the trans-Saharan trade. This goes back to the trans-Saharan trade and its caravan routes which provides earliest evidence of major interaction between West and North Africa.<sup>16</sup>

There was also European contacts with Africa, which created new patterns of movement, first through slave trade and later colonization, within the sub-region and with the rest of the world.<sup>17</sup> Even though the Ghanaian diaspora could also be situated in this kind of diaspora, as the former is part of the larger African diaspora or global African family, this study chooses to situate the Ghanaian diaspora as an amalgam one. Comprising what Zeleza calls historic and contemporary diaspora. This is because Ghana has accepted and court the historic diaspora by offering them dual citizenship and many such historic diaspora have and continue to contribute to Ghana's socio-

cultural, political and economic development. (The term which refers to the “old diasporas formed before the construction of colonial states, which have profoundly altered the territorial identifications of Africans on the continent since the late nineteenth)”.<sup>18</sup>

If the understanding that every diaspora community is preceded by a certain international migration pattern, then an overview of a Ghanaian diaspora is now contextualized. Adepoju makes an analysis to that effect, when he argued that in the particular case of Ghana and other West African countries movement out of such countries could be traced from the pre-colonial era, to the colonial era, through to the independence and the post-independence era.<sup>19</sup> It must however, be noted that according to Adepoju, much of what was to be the Ghanaian diaspora around any of these respective period of political development was largely intra-West African migration.<sup>20</sup> For instance, during the colonial period a new framework for large scale migration which was triggered by labour requirements for plantations, mines and public administration beyond local supplies were paramount.<sup>21</sup> The systematic orientation of Africa’s economy and its integration into the western capitalist orbit through export production created a huge demand for labour which the indigenous people were unable or unwilling to satisfy.<sup>22</sup>

The circumstance necessitated the adoption of a series of economic measures intended to supply the needed number of labour and the place.<sup>23</sup> Force labour laws were adopted by the colonial regime, for instance, in Francophone West Africa that sparked large scale internal and cross-border movement of both skilled and unskilled labour required infrastructural constructions most in the north and plantation agriculture in the coastal regions of Africa.<sup>24</sup> In this development, it must be mentioned that Ghana had it fair share of these immigrants in Ghana in search of jobs in the large

cocoa producing areas of Ghana.<sup>25</sup> Indeed, during the 1950s and the decades immediately after independence (1957-1967), many Ghanaians living outside the country returned home whilst a large number of migrants from the West African sub region migrated to Ghana.<sup>26</sup>

Anarfi makes it known that for a while the Ghanaian economy was relatively strong and therefore quite a significant number of citizens from neighboring countries. Migrant labourers from the neighboring West African countries came to Ghana in large numbers to work in the mines, cocoa plantations and as workers in the expanding civil service and the urban economy. However, whilst people moved into Ghana, Ghanaian migrants were also to be on the move to other parts of the West African region because changes in the political landscape and economic circumstance on the continent.<sup>27</sup>

It was the independence and post-independence era that facilitated the already existing process of Ghanaian international migration, and as such the Ghanaian diaspora. The post-independence period created a different political climate whose sequel took a toll on the creation a Ghanaian diaspora within Africa. Since the 1960s Cote d'Ivoire became a principal recipient of immigrants in sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>28</sup> The other country to have spearheaded the influx of immigrants especially from the 1970s was Nigeria. The oil boom in the 1970s and the oil-led expansion of infrastructural development which manifested in the construction of roads and buildings as well as the allied sectors attracted workers both skilled and unskilled and unskilled labour from various West African countries.<sup>29</sup> Notable among these West African countries were Ghana, Togo and Benin. This was also against the background that during the 1970s, Ghana experienced a period of economic decline and political instability.<sup>30</sup> The deteriorating economic situation and the falling

standard of living compelled many Ghanaians to seek greener pastures abroad.<sup>31</sup> It was under this circumstance that the vast majority of Ghanaians migrated to the neighboring West African countries, in particular, Nigeria and Cote d'Ivoire.<sup>32</sup>

The movement of Ghanaians and other West Africans into other part of the West African sub-region was facilitated by the establishment and ECOWAS and the adoption of ECOWAS and the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons. According to Adepaju, Article 27 of the ECOWAS treaty affirmed the long term objective intended to establish a community citizenship in the West African sub-region acquired automatically by all nationals of member states.<sup>33</sup> The point is that in the end this protocol reinforced the preamble that outlined the key objective of removing obstacles to the free movement of goods, capital and people in the sub-region.<sup>34</sup> In the end all these culminated into making Nigeria for instance in words of Adepaju the Eldorado for migrants in West Africa and for that matter a major source of Ghanaian diaspora in Africa.<sup>35</sup>

The demonstrative effect of the initial stream of Ghanaian immigrants who brought exaggerated news of Nigeria's affluence home to Ghana even aggravated the outflow of Ghanaians to Nigeria. Under the circumstance, in 1983 Ghanaians alone constituted 81 percent of ECOWAS nationals legally resident in Nigeria followed by Niger, Togo and Benin.<sup>36</sup> This evidence is corroborated by a study by Peter Quartey for the International Organization for Migration, in which it was revealed that 71% of Ghanaian international migrants are found in West Africa.<sup>37</sup> It should also be mentioned that within Africa quite a substantial Ghanaian presence is found in the Southern African region in the countries of South Africa, Namibia, Lesotho and Botswana, counties which began to recruit Ghanaian professionals particularly in the 1990s when these Southern African

won their independence and witnessed the resurgence of multiparty rule or democracy.<sup>38</sup> As Adepaju noted this was soon after the collapse of Nigeria's oil led economy. They were soon followed by large numbers of Ghanaian migrants in search of greener pastures.

#### **2.4 Ghanaians Beyond Africa**

It is estimated that there are thirty three countries around the world in which Ghanaian presence is conspicuous and beyond West African countries which hold the majority of such Ghanaian presence, the other most important destinations are the United States which has 7.3% of the Ghanaians abroad, and the United Kingdom which accommodates 5.9%.<sup>39</sup> The rest are distributed in areas like the France, Germany, the Netherlands, Canada, Australia and until recently China. In this distribution, about 1.5.million to 3 million representing about 7-13% of the total population of Ghanaians are found in the global North.<sup>40</sup> Scholars contend that whilst the decades before the 1990s witnessed the genesis and intensification of the Ghana's international migration patterns it was the 1990s and beyond that witnessed the beginning, transformation and consolidation of Ghanaian international migrants to Ghanaian diaspora.<sup>41</sup>

It suffices to mention here that by the Ghanaian diaspora, this study makes reference to the country's diaspora of contemporary and not historic in order not to stretch the Ghanaian diaspora beyond any meaningful definition and analytical recognition as well as utility. Contemporary diaspora in this sense according to Zeleza was created within three period of political development. These were during the period of colonization, decolonization, and the era of structural adjustment.<sup>42</sup> All these separate "political era emerged out of the disruptions and dispositions of colonial conquest, the struggles for independence, and structural adjustment programmes (SAPs),

respectively”. The diaspora of colonization would include the students who went to study abroad and stayed, seamen who became settlers, and many others who could migrate and become citizens according to the prevailing immigration regimes of the host countries. It is recalled that at independence and the post-Cold War era Ghana was one of the highly literate countries of the sub region and so Ghanaian migrants were relatively literate and therefore skilled and qualified to take on jobs from other neighboring African countries.<sup>43</sup> Some Ghanaians travelled abroad to the United Kingdom and the US for education. There were Western government-sponsored or scholarship schemes for Ghanaian students. They were with time integrated into the Western systems and culture which they highly regarded. This group of Ghanaian students and scholars who left the country for advanced training abroad during the 1950s and 60s can be regarded as the first generation of migrants abroad.<sup>44</sup> They were commonly referred to in Ghana as the “been to”.<sup>45</sup>

They were part of the ‘fortunate few’ who received their training abroad and some also returned home to take up leadership positions in private enterprises, industry, politics, the civil service and institutions of higher education in the country.<sup>46</sup> Others also diasporized by marrying abroad, further opening the way for their increased integration into Western societies. They failed to return home at the end of their training hoping for better enumerated jobs. Some of such people (the educated and business elite abroad) had weak links to Ghana.<sup>47</sup> Amongst them were many who considered themselves to be ‘civilized’ and did not appreciate their African roots, culture and tradition. At least, that was the impression that they created.<sup>48</sup>

Then there is the Ghanaian diaspora largely created during the Structural Adjustment era of the 1980s to the late 1990s during resurgence of multi-party rule on the continent as a whole. It is in

this period that discussions on the formation of Ghanaian diaspora is centralized and the Ghanaian diaspora consolidated. In the words of Anarfi and Kwankye:

*“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 characterized by their diasporisation, which had begun in the middle of the 1980s”.*<sup>49</sup>

The economic down turn of African countries in the 1980s which in itself was a factor to Ghana’s emigration patterns was exacerbated by the introduction into Ghana and other West African countries the Structural Adjustment programmes.<sup>50</sup> Ghana’s economic situation in the 1980s was in the doldrums and the political situation in the country was chaotic. 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 services such as health, transport and education.<sup>51</sup> The unemployment and other hardships that occurred with the withdrawal of subsidies created conditions for further emigration. The unbearable economic hardship of the day necessitated the introduction by the Rawlings’s regime of Program of Action to Mitigate the Social Cost of Adjustment (PAMSACAD).<sup>52</sup> Not even this program could arrest the economic hardship of the day.

The economic hardship was aggravated by a politically repressive and iron-handed regime, increasing poverty and unemployment, shortages of basic commodities and the increasing impoverishment of large sections of the population meant that anybody who could leave the country decided to do so.<sup>53</sup> Ghanaians migrated in large numbers to Western Europe and North America. The traditional destinations of West African countries were also experiencing their own

economic down turn. Whilst Nigeria's oil boom came to an abrupt end, the devaluation of the CFA Franc affected the Ivorian economy.<sup>54</sup> The sequel is that both countries expelled large numbers of Ghanaian migrants from their countries in the 1980s.<sup>55</sup>

This development served as catalyst for huge Ghanaian emigration to the global North in search of better living conditions. During this period Ghanaians who could mobilize some little resources and could afford the high cost of travelling and settling abroad began to do so in their large numbers. Whilst most of them went to the traditional English-speaking countries to which the first generations had had always migrated (that is, the USA and the UK), a few others migrated to new destinations such as Canada, Germany, Netherlands, Italy, France, Spain and Portugal.<sup>56</sup> "This group of largely young migrants who emigrated abroad during the 1970s were commonly referred to as 'burgers', a German term that was used for all migrants irrespective of the country to which they migrated.<sup>57</sup> This was probably because of the conspicuous and ostentatious dressing and lifestyle of Ghanaian migrants who had returned home or were just visiting from Germany.<sup>58</sup>

Van Hear for instance has maintained that Ghana remains one of the ten countries involved in producing a 'new diaspora' in recent time.<sup>59</sup> Indeed, as noted by Tonah, it is now a common saying that in Ghana "every family has one member living outside the country". In the end, it could be said that if one examines the creation and the existence of Ghanaian diaspora which manifested through international migration then the push factors were, according to Anarfi, Awusabo-Asare et al, issues of national management and its associated economic and political problems. The pull factors to the establishment of the Ghanaian diaspora include the economic prosperity and the prospect of achieving higher social mobility through the pursuit of education and labor force

participation of the global North.<sup>60</sup> In reference to the conceptual framework of this study, some scholars argue that the whole development is part of a globalized labor market of the newest phase of capitalist expansion in which capitalism or globalization has not only created a deliberate expansion historically and in contemporary times, but also has looked to peripheral geographic regions like Sub-Saharan Africa for sources of labor.<sup>61</sup> In this development the Ghanaian diaspora is not insulated.

## **2.5 Modes of Engagements (Ghana and its Diaspora)**

As argued in the first chapter the neoliberal foundations and orientation has produce an effect of stringent and austerity measures which have stifled Africa's economy and brought hardship to its people. This has manifested through such neoliberal institutions like IMF and the World Bank. The neoliberal foundations that underpins the International Monetary Fund, World Bank.<sup>62</sup> It has become apparent that any form of Foreign Direct Investment that would benefit Africa without such excessive demands would be appreciably welcomed.<sup>63</sup> This understanding provided a clear framework by which the African Diaspora could be engage for the development on the African continent.

The Diaspora has become a new fad in development since the turn of the millennium, though they have existed for decades. As one writer puts it, "there are countless scholarly arguments in favor of the African diaspora as the next panacea, or 'magic bullet' for solving the development quagmire".<sup>64</sup> For example, the 2002 World Bank report revealed that remittances from relatively poor migrant workers in rich countries (the Diaspora) were much higher than the combined total of government aid, private bank lending and International Monetary Fund (IMF)/World Bank aid

and assistance.<sup>65</sup> This has generated a lot of interest in diaspora and development and there is a burgeoning scholarly interest in the diaspora development nexus by state's institutions, international organizations, and private researchers among others. This followed the "new surge of interest" in migration and development.<sup>66</sup>

Many academic "studies now show how migration can have positive results for countries of origin. A series of reports and policy statements has shown that international agencies and the governments of both migrant-sending and receiving countries believe that migration can make an important contribution to the development of poorer countries."<sup>67</sup> Against this development no less an international organization than the AU has recognized and the possible contribution of the African diaspora to the development of the continent by designating the African diaspora as its Sixth Region (an attempt to involve the African diaspora in the affairs of Africa in the name of Pan-Africanism.<sup>68</sup>

In that same vein, the large number of Ghanaians leaving the country and the emergence of a diaspora abroad have given the country a different orientation of its diaspora. It has changed the country's perception not only in the way "Ghanaians themselves view their kith and kin who have gone abroad but also in government policy and attitude towards the emigration of Ghanaians".<sup>69</sup> In the past decade, successive Ghanaian governments have moved away from primarily lamenting about the brain drain of Ghanaian professionals to a policy of regarding the migrant as a national resource and attempting to make the best out of Ghanaians outside the country.<sup>70</sup> It is the imperativeness of the Ghanaian diaspora to the development agenda of the Ghanaian government

just along the lines of AU's Sixth region concept, one scholar also suggested that the Ghanaian diaspora is the eleventh region of Ghana.<sup>71</sup>

Socio-culturally, the Ghanaian's identity from birth to the grave is associated with being 'a child of the soil.' Despite the social changes or modernization that Ghana and Ghanaians have gone through, their identity, sense of belonging, spirituality, 'rules of life,' development and success are largely influenced and guided by the spatio-cultural setting into which they are born. This bond with their places of origin is often maintained by cultural practices, festivals, initiation and other puberty rights, child birth ceremonies, and burial ceremonies, among others. These primordial sense of identity and belonging are built on kith, kin, ancestors, ethnic and community ties that have survived modernization. As such, migration whether analyzed from short-term or long-term perspective, has always been done with the mind-set of gaining skills or pecuniary wealth and return to one's place of origin. Even in times of death, the preferred honour is to have migrants buried in their 'hometowns.'<sup>72</sup> It is upon these primordial traits that transnationalism involving the migrants, countries of origin and destination countries are built.

Ghana's relationship with the African diaspora in general and the Ghanaian diaspora, in particular, is worthy of an intellectual attention. The 1960s was an opportune moment for the African diaspora to begin a consolidation of their relationship with Africa and in this development; Ghana bore the torch and became the beacon of hope for the global Black struggles of the day.<sup>73</sup> Nkrumah's assumption of Pan-African leadership on the continent made Ghana a preferable destination, especially, for African Americans who repatriated to Africa. It would be recalled that many of the Civil Rights Movements in the US for instance in the 1960s reached out to African leaders and

identify more with Africa's liberation struggles also in the 1960s.<sup>74</sup> Gaines makes us aware of the numerous African Americans who either visited or settled in Ghana. They include Martin Luther King Jr., George Padmore, W.E.B. Dubois, Malcom X, Maya Angelou, John Henrik Clark, Richard Wright, Pauli Murray, C.L.R. James, Muhammed Ali (and the list continues).<sup>75</sup> The decline of the Nkrumah regime and his overthrow saw a reversal in Ghana's Pan-African role, Ghana's –African diaspora bond was only reinstated during the second coming of the Rawlings' regime. It must be mentioned at the onset that in the 1980s Rawlings' initiatives of relating with the African diaspora was more in line with his development agenda than in the conspicuous spirit of Pan-Africanism.

It would be recalled that in the late 1980s austerity measures from IMF and World Bank worsened the economic situation in Ghana, which triggered what became known as PAMSCAD.<sup>76</sup> The diaspora and their possible contribution to ameliorate the difficult economic moments of Ghana was therefore very appreciable. This was also the background that 1998 tourism had become the third foreign exchange earner (after minerals and cocoa) for Ghana.<sup>77</sup> In 1998, for instance, tourism contributed US\$285 million to Ghana's export receipts. Its contribution, which was approximately 5% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), rose to US\$650 million with about 600,000 tourists in 2004.<sup>78</sup> However, as Pierre makes us know, this development agenda was expressed through cultural nationalism and Pan-Africanism.<sup>79</sup>

It must also be added that Ghana has not developed a coherent national policy of diaspora engagement and that any of such diaspora engagement activities have largely been left in the hands of the incumbent government of the day.<sup>80</sup> Therefore, under the circumstance, the first step of a

Ghana's diaspora campaign took a cultural turn when the PNDC regime of Chairman Rawlings created the W. E. B. Du Bois Memorial Centre for Pan-African Culture (1986) and the Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Park (1992).<sup>81</sup>

The Ghana-Africa diaspora relationship was further given a boost when the country first became a democracy in 1992, and the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) regime which by now had metamorphosed to the National Democratic Congress (NDC) institutionalized the celebration of the Pan-African Historical Theatre Festival (PANAFEST) and Emancipation Day. The biennial celebration was envisioned to create a common platform for people of African descent showcasing African culture, arts, and music, and conducting lectures on contemporary problems of Africa. In this development the Cape Coast and Elmina Castle became important as a tour site generating huge sums of revenue for the country.<sup>82</sup> It was organized by the Ministry of Tourism for the day to promote tourism and Ghana's engagement with the African diaspora in general and the Ghanaian diaspora in particular. As already mentioned, these programmes were also to redress the contribution of African diaspora towards the socio-economic development of Ghana.<sup>83</sup>

Whilst these isolated incidences of diaspora programmes existed in the 1990s, it was the Kufour administration at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century that witnessed a more coherent attempt of consolidating the relationship between Ghana and its diaspora and tapping from the resources of the latter to the development of the former.<sup>84</sup> In this regard the Kufour led NPP administration introduced the Right of Abode Law and the Homecoming Summit.<sup>85</sup>

Ghana in 2002 also introduced Dual Citizenship Act in order to give Ghanaians the possibility to acquire the citizenship of the receiving country without losing their Ghanaian identity.<sup>86</sup> It is estimated that within seven years after its existence, about 5,903 Ghanaian emigrants had signed on to this Act and in the 2010 census, the statistics revealed that 2.9 percent of Ghana's population possess dual citizenship.<sup>87</sup> An interesting aspect of the Dual Citizenship Act was the Right of Abode Law which permitted a person of African descent to apply and be granted the right to stay in the country indefinitely.

In the Home Coming Summit organized once again under the auspices of the Kufour administration in Accra in 2001 under the theme "Harnessing the Global Ghanaian Resource Potential for Accelerated National Development" amplified the significance of the Ghanaian diaspora to the country's development agenda. A number of issues like state-diaspora collaboration, mobilization of resources and the creation of a diaspora data base mobilizing resources from Ghanaians Living abroad (GLA) and simplifying the process of land acquisition for the Ghanaian diaspora were discussed.<sup>88</sup> It suffices to say that in the end the government of Ghana demonstrated its commitment to implementing the suggestions of the summit by establishing the Non-Resident Ghanaian Secretariat in 2003 to supervise the recommendations of the Home Coming Summit.<sup>89</sup> It should also be mentioned that the Non-Resident Ghanaian Secretariat was instituted under the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC) to promote homeland investments from the diaspora.<sup>90</sup>

There is also the ever ubiquitous and controversial policy of engaging and mobilizing the Ghanaian diaspora to vote during the country's general elections. This became known as the Representation

of People's Act (Act 699).<sup>91</sup> It was first introduced into parliament in 2005, but on the basis of a favorable report from a Constitutional Committee, the bill which recognized the legitimate right of the Ghanaian diaspora to vote was passed in 2007.

Another program rolled out as an initiative to engage the Ghanaian diaspora in 2005 was the Joseph Projects of 2007. The Joseph Project was a follow-up to the Home Coming Summit, but its introduction in 2007 was part of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of Ghana's independence. This was in the words of one scholar "to invoke a religion inspired emotion among the African diaspora as well as an attempt to present Ghana as a true gateway to the Homeland for Africans in the diaspora".<sup>92</sup>

In order to put words to action the Kufour led NPP administration elevated the diaspora issues to a ministerial level by creating Tourism and Diaspora Relations Ministry. This was then followed by the opening of Diaspora Issues Desks in many capitals of the world.

Under the auspices of the Mills led NDC administration, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (Ghana), the German Technical Cooperation (GIT) and the Centre for Migration Studies (CMS) at the University of Ghana created the Diaspora Support Unit.<sup>93</sup> In that same year, the MFARI and IOM (Ghana) organized a colloquium on the theme "Linking the Ghanaian Diaspora to the Development of Ghana". This was part of the activities to launch the Diaspora Support Unit. It should be mentioned that, the Diaspora Support Unit was later upgraded to the Diaspora Affairs Bureau (DAB). DAB was given the mandate to operate as a national avenue for the effective engagement

with the Ghanaian diaspora. It was the government of the day in 2012 that also established the Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) with a mandate to reach out to the diaspora as an engagement strategy.<sup>94</sup> The main idea behind this strategy was to tap into the rich pool of unique political, economic, social insights and experience from the diaspora. It was an attempt to incorporate diasporic views in national issues and to create a sense of belongingness among the Ghanaian diaspora.

In 2017, under the auspices of the office of the president in collaboration with the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre and the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration a Homecoming Diaspora Summit was held in Ghana.<sup>95</sup> The summit, which forms part of government's strategy to reach out to the Diaspora community, took place in Accra from July 5th to July 8, 2017. The summit was one of the numerous attempts to harness the resource potential of the Ghanaian diaspora to inure to the development of Ghana. It is for the crucial role of the Ghanaian diaspora to the development of Ghana that the incumbent president of the country has created in the office of the presidency, a portfolio of Business Development and Diaspora Relations.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

The mechanisms and policies that guided successive governments of Ghana in their engagement of the diaspora, while commendable, have been largely ad hoc and depended on the charisma and drive of the (particular) Ghanaian leadership. A larger political will, comprehensive and continuity was missing.

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## CHAPTER THREE

### A CRITIQUE OF GHANA'S DIASPORA REGIME AND A DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT POLICY FOR GHANA

#### 3.0 Introduction

This Chapter examines Ghana's policies and practices of harnessing its diaspora for development by reviewing the diaspora policies of the past governments. The second segment of the chapter provides an alternative diaspora engagement policy for Ghana based on the concept of best practices. This section draws extensively on the diaspora engagement typologies proffered by Alan Gamlen and Mohan.

#### 3.1 Engagement of the Diaspora Since the Nkrumah Years

Interaction between Ghanaian society and the diaspora goes centuries back. There is evidence of the Tabon people, a group of African slaves from Brazil who fled to Ghana after a slave rebellion, living in Accra and fully assimilating into the Ghanaian culture between the 1820s and the 1830s.<sup>1</sup> As stated earlier, colonial Africa, African-Americans, and other peoples of Africa descent or coloured people had conceptualized their living in the North America and Europe had perceived their struggles to free themselves from subjugation as a common struggle for emancipation aimed at chartering the Blackman own destiny. As such whether it is African student movement, black liberation struggle in the US, anti-Apartheid struggle in southern Africa or anti-colonial struggle in Africa, it was conceptualised as a common struggle and against domination. Part of the liberation movement envisaged and called on all Africans to return to Africa, where they were forcibly and inhumanely uprooted, someday. For these ends, venerable black liberation leaders

such as Maya Angelou and Guy Angelou, Sylvia Boone, Julian Mayfield, W. E. B. Du Bois and George Padmore returned to Africa, even if for a while.<sup>2</sup> It was a time the *dependencia* school of thought flourished and many pan-Africanist and socialist believed that the only people of colour be ever free is to delink from the West and capitalism.

Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of Ghana, played a veritable role in galvanizing the Pan-African movement and vision of a united Africa. Nkrumah had such a profound impact on prominent civil rights leaders in the United States that during Ghana's independence in 1957, such African-American luminaries such as Martin Luther, Coretta Scott King, Ralph Bunche and Mordecai Johnson attended. Nkrumah aggressively pushed the idea of the diaspora returning to help develop Africa. Although he was not the first to hold or pursue such ideas, his marshalling role cannot be over emphasized.<sup>3</sup> The idea of a United States of Africa has been propounded in the past by diaspora figures such as Henry Sylvester Williams, Marcus Garvey and George Padmore. Similarly, African leaders, such as Peter Abrahams, Jomo Kenyatta, Sekou Toure, Julius Nyerere and Kwame Nkrumah of South Africa, Kenya, Guinea, Tanzania and Ghana respectively, have pushed the agenda for African unity.<sup>4</sup>

Nkrumah made Pan Africanism a cornerstone of his push for independence such that Nkrumah became identified with the liberation struggle in Africa. Although writers such as Asante have argued that Nkrumah's idea of engagement with the diaspora was more political,<sup>5</sup> Ken Ahorsu argued that Nkrumah's engagement with the diaspora was holistic and universal. The demise of Nkrumah brought a thaw in Ghana's diaspora engagement as many believe neo-colonial forces took over the reins of power in Ghana.

The emergence of Rawlings' on the Ghanaian political scene witnessed a reinvigorated diaspora engagement. Before Rawlings engagement, Ghana had not gotten a coherent national policy of diaspora engagement. Diaspora engagement activities were largely left in the hands of the incumbent government of the day and interest groups.<sup>6</sup> Under Rawlings, Ghana's diaspora campaign took a cultural, spiritual, historical, pan-Africanist and development turn when the PNDC regime of Chairman Rawlings created the W. E. B. Du Bois Memorial Centre for Pan-African Culture (1986) and the Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Park (1992).<sup>7</sup>

The Ghana-Africa diaspora relationship was further given a boost when the country became a democracy in 1992. The PNDC regime, now NDC, institutionalized the biannual celebration of the Pan-African Historical Theatre Festival (PANAFEST) and Emancipation Day. The biennial celebration as envisioned created a common platform for people of African descent showcasing African history and culture, arts, and music, and conducting lectures on contemporary problems of Africa. In this development, the Cape Coast and Elmina Castle, and other slave routes and edifices became important tour site generating huge sums of revenue for the country.<sup>8</sup> It was organized by the Ministries of Culture and Tourism for the day to promote tourism, and Ghana's engagement with the African diaspora in general and the Ghanaian diaspora in particular. As already mentioned, these programmes were also to redress the contribution of African diaspora towards the socio-economic development of Ghana.<sup>9</sup>

Schemes such as the PANAFEST and Emancipation Day became a very important day in Black history and have been held since 1992. It raised the importance of such towns as Cape Coast,

Elmina Dixcove. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) became particularly interested in the festivals and the lessons for the world to the extent the three Castles (Cape Coast, Elmina and Fort St. Jago) in Ghana were elevated to the status of world heritage sites.<sup>10</sup> Rawlings singular efforts dramatically whipped up the zest in Africa diasporas to visit Ghana in such huge numbers that jumpstarted the hospitality industry in Cape Coast and its environs that would have otherwise not been possible. Rawlings diaspora initiatives saw such eminent persons like Rita Marley adopting Ghana as her home country. Over the years Ghana has engaged the diaspora in terms of tourism and some form of cultural awakening.<sup>11</sup> These visitors normally patronize the over 80 slave trade associated monument in Ghana and are exposed in some form to that past and Ghana's cultural heritage. The contribution of the diaspora to Ghana's income by way of tourism is significant.<sup>12</sup>

Whilst the diaspora programmes gathered momentum in the 1990s, it was initially disrupted with the change of government as the main directors and drivers of the diaspora policy and programmes were changed. In the end, however, the Kufour administration at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century that witnessed a more coherent attempt of consolidating the relationship between Ghana and its diaspora and tapping from the resources of the latter to the development of the former.<sup>13</sup> The Kufour led National Patriotic Party (NPP) administration deemphasize PANAFEST and the Emancipation celebrations but introduced the Right of Abode Law and the Homecoming Summit. granted indefinite residency to people with African ancestry who wished to stay in Ghana<sup>14</sup>

Ghana, in 2002, also introduced Dual Citizenship Act in order to offer peoples of African descent the opportunity to adopt Ghana as their first or second country without necessarily giving up the

American, Canadian or British nationality and privileges, for example. It also gives Ghanaians the possibility to acquire the citizenship of the receiving country without losing their Ghanaian identity.<sup>15</sup> It is estimated that within seven years of coming into existence, about 5,903 Ghanaian emigrants had signed on to this Act and the in the 2010 census, the statistics revealed that 2.9 percent of Ghana's population possess dual citizenship.<sup>16</sup> An interesting aspect of the Dual Citizenship Act was, the Right of Abode Law, which permitted a person of African descent to apply and be granted the right to stay in the country indefinitely.

The Home Coming Summit organized under the auspices of the Kufour administration in Accra in 2001 under the theme "Harnessing the Global Ghanaian Resource Potential for Accelerated National Development" amplified the significance of the Ghanaian diaspora to the country's development agenda. A number of issues like state-diaspora collaboration, mobilization of resources and the creation of a diaspora database, mobilizing resources from Ghanaians Living abroad (GLA) and simplifying the process of land acquisition for the Ghanaian diaspora were discussed.<sup>17</sup> It suffices to say that in the end, the government of Ghana demonstrated its commitment to implementing the suggestions of the summit by establishing the Non-Resident Ghanaian Secretariat in 2003 to supervise the recommendations of the Home Coming Summit.<sup>18</sup> It should also be mentioned that the Non-Resident Ghanaian Secretariat was instituted under the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC) to promote homeland investments from the diaspora.<sup>19</sup>

There is also the ever ubiquitous and controversial policy of engaging and mobilizing the Ghanaian diaspora to vote during the country's general elections. This became known as the Representation

of People's Act (Act 699).<sup>20</sup> It was first introduced into parliament in 2005, but on the basis of a favorable report from a Constitutional Committee, the bill, which recognized the legitimate right of the Ghanaian diaspora to vote was passed in 2007.

Another program rolled out as an initiative to engage the Ghanaian diaspora in 2005 was the Joseph Projects of 2007. The Joseph Project was a follow-up to the Home Coming Summit, but its introduction in 2007 was part of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of Ghana's independence. This was, in the words of one scholar, "to invoke a religion inspired emotion among the African diaspora as well as an attempt to present Ghana as a true gateway to the Homeland for Africans in the diaspora".<sup>21</sup> In order to put words to action, the Kufour led NPP administration elevated the diaspora issues to a ministerial level by creating Tourism and Diaspora Relations Ministry. This was then followed by the opening of Diaspora Issues Desks in many capitals of the world. Under the auspices of the Mills led NDC administration, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, in collaboration with the International organization for Migration (Ghana), the German Technical Cooperation (GIT) and the Centre for Migration Studies (CMS) at the University of Ghana, created the Diaspora Support Unit.<sup>22</sup> In that same year, the MFARI and IOM (Ghana) organized a colloquium on the theme "Linking the Ghanaian Diaspora to the Development of Ghana". This was part of the activities to launch the Diaspora Support Unit. It should be mentioned that the Diaspora Support Unit was later upgraded to the Diaspora Affairs Bureau (DAB). DAB was given the mandate to operate as a national avenue for the effective engagement with the Ghanaian diaspora. It was the government of the day in 2012 that also established the Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) with a mandate to reach out to the diaspora as an engagement strategy.<sup>23</sup> The main idea behind this strategy was to tap into the rich pool of unique

political, economic, social insights and experience from the diaspora. It was an attempt to incorporate diasporic views in national issues and to create a sense of belongingness among the Ghanaian diaspora.

The immediate past president of Ghana, John Mahama, also organized a naturalization ceremony for some 34 people who were returning from the diaspora in 2016 and provided them with naturalization certificates. President Obama and his family visited Ghana under the tenure of John Mahama. They visited the slave routes and castles that were associated with the slave trade. This theme has continued with the current government, where the President (Nana Akufo Addo) has declared 2019 “The Year of Return.”

In 2017, under the auspices of the office of the president, in collaboration with the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre and the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, a Homecoming Diaspora Summit was held in Ghana.<sup>24</sup> The summit, which formed part of government’s strategy to reach out to the Diaspora community, took place in Accra from July 5th to July 8, 2017. The summit was one of the numerous attempts to harness the resource potential of the Ghanaian diaspora to inure to the development of Ghana. It is for the crucial role of the Ghanaian diaspora to the development of Ghana that the incumbent president of the country has created in the office of the presidency, a portfolio of Business Development and Diaspora Relations.

The mechanisms and policies that guided successive governments of Ghana in their engagement of the diaspora, while commendable, have been largely ad hoc and depended on the charisma and

drive of the (particular) Ghanaian leadership. A larger political will, comprehensive and continuity was missing.

### **3.2 Contributions by Civil Societies Organisations Abroad and in Ghana**

Members of civil society organisations in Europe, North America, and the Caribbean, and Ghanaians, Churches and relocated North Americans and Caribbean Diasporas (NACD) in have also contributed significantly to the diaspora harnessing efforts. These include businesses, associations, academia, churches and individuals, who are organizing tours for pilgrimages to Ghana. Again, African diaspora-related television and radio stations, media, and churches in some North American and Caribbean cities are publicizing information on fruitful NACD visits to Ghana and engendering more awareness among the diaspora.<sup>25</sup> Ghanaians living abroad also organize tours for their friends and NACD businesspersons to discover commercial openings in the Ghana. Ghanaians living in Ghana and abroad have launched media outlets such as the Ghana Cyber Group, and Ghanaweb that are affording up-to-date information on Ghana.

Moreover, many Ghanaian associations abroad organise festivals and other social programmes to sponsor Ghana, business opportunities and its culture in the destination communities. For illustration, one Ghanaian self-help association in Italy have been producing video documentaries about Ghana to promote tourism.<sup>26</sup> Traditional rulers and communities have donated lands free of charge to diasporans who want to settle in Ghana. Chieftaincy titles are also being conferred upon diasporans in order to entice them to settle and contribute to the development of such communities. NACD self-help groups in Ghana are nurturing new arrivals to adapt to Ghanaian lifestyles and the business opportunities and culture. The new settlers are also engaged in television films, radio

talk shows, and advertising in the local media to educate Ghanaians on the African-American experience and cultural values.

The success or otherwise of the diaspora policies however depends on the international environment. How Africa and for that matter Ghana is faring or portrayed internationally affects the fortunes of Ghana in harnessing the diaspora for development. The economic environment, in terms of the robustness of its economy and the speed with which business initiative are carried out is very important. Ghanaian hospitality has proverbially been touted by how visitors are received at the entry points are very important since first perception are hard to wipe away. Weak internal transport systems and exorbitant airfares also serve as disincentives for promoting diaspora ties. The social environment and security issues often create friction between Ghanaian s and their diaspora counterparts. From a more nuanced perspective, however, despite the commendable gains Ghana has chalked since its engagement with its diaspora since the Rawlings era, the engagement of the diaspora has been largely ad hoc. This has not been helped by the change of personnel, and emphasis if not discontinuity anytime there is a change of government. These shortcomings make it very difficult for Ghana to integrate its diaspora policies with those of the diaspora towards Ghana in the drive for a comprehensive diaspora policy. There is, therefore, the need for a comprehensive diaspora engagement policy that can be sustained even in times of change of government.

### **3.3 An Alternative Diaspora Engagement Policy (DEP)**

There is a current in-depth intellectual discussion on the mechanism of migration management in the world over and in this discourse much attention has rather been paid to immigration

management which is perceived to be the penultimate migration management tool. It suffices to mention that this is only one sided as it is just an aspect of a coherent migration management scheme. The management of emigration which is a reality for many states especially in the developing world is a fact of daily life that should also be evaluated and it is in this regard that the diaspora engagement policy is discussed. It must be mentioned from the beginning of this chapter that there is no one size fits all policy of diaspora engagement. Every state and for that matter its corresponding diaspora has their own kind of unique set of needs and capabilities based on its historical experience and the present realities of its countries of origin and destination and therefore government approaches must reflect these complexities. However, there are some fundamental elements that will necessarily inform or constitute strategies for diaspora engagement.

Alan Gamlen has defined DEP as state institutions and practices that apply to members of that State's society who reside outside its borders.<sup>27</sup> Put differently, diaspora policies constitute the state side of the state-diaspora relationship, and have the overall purpose of facilitating and encouraging the involvement of emigrants in the homeland.<sup>28</sup> There is a sense in which the practical literature on diaspora policies today are in abundance, yet they differ in the choice of terms. Levitt and de la Dehesa identify this kind of cross-border interaction as 'global nation policies' or simply as put by Chander 'bonding strategies'.<sup>29</sup>

Gamlen proposes a coherent diaspora engagement typology that draws from the Foucauldian tradition of transnationalization of governmentality which includes the relations of power, relationships of communication and finalized activities.<sup>30</sup> He however, repositions or rearranges

these factors in such a way that they become a viable means and strategy by which a state seeking to meaningfully engage their diaspora might follow to achieve such set objectives.

Accordingly, Gramlen is of the opinion that for a state to meaningfully engage its diaspora the country should first of all aim to establish a relationship of communication at the transnational scale and this kind of relationship should be oriented around the idea of a nation. In other words, the home state should cultivate a sense or systems of signs and symbols within which that state can tap into to exercise some amount of influence over its diaspora.<sup>31</sup> The second factor that Gramlen makes mention of as part of his diaspora engagement policy is for states to create objective capacities for the realization of power relations by building diaspora institutions. Having been able to execute the above, the two then culminate to provide the home state with what he calls ‘transnational exercise of home state power’ which in turn creates transnationalized citizenship for its diaspora. The point is that when states have executed the above plans it gives them opportunity to exercise leverage over its diaspora by putting the latter in the reach of the home state while at the same time following from the same effect, the diaspora would have attained ‘transnationalized citizenship.’<sup>32</sup> If the home state is able to do all this then according to Gramlen it would have warranted extension of rights and the extraction of obligation to the state diaspora herein conceived also as transnationalized citizenship.

Based on this argument Gramlen provides three higher-level types of diaspora engagement policy.

- They include capacity-building policies, aimed at discursively producing a state-centric transnational national society and developing a set of corresponding state institutions.
- Extending rights to the diaspora, thus playing a role that befits a legitimate sovereign and

- Extracting obligations from the diaspora, based on the premise that emigrants owe loyalty to this legitimate sovereign.<sup>33</sup>

In an attempt to explain and provide an insight to Ghana's diaspora engagement policy, Gamlen's typology is of utmost importance as it lays the foundation and provides the necessary mechanisms for any state seeking to engage its diaspora to follow.

As far as capacity building is concerned, the ability of a state like Ghana to successfully carry out a diaspora engagement policy is significantly dependent on two things. These are in Gamlen's opinion, the "imagined or discursive existence of a cohesive transnational community established around a common state-centric national identity towards which policies could be directed."<sup>34</sup> This is a crucial point to the extent that the home state is able to identify its transnational community and this is what constitutes the symbolic nation building aspect of Gamlen's capacity building. Secondly, the existence of a corresponding governmental apparatuses within the home-state is also very crucial.

The second factor is what satisfies the institutional dimension of the engagement policy. It is a combination and a complementarity of these two factors that then allows the state to begin that task of transnationalizing governmentality by attempting to satisfy these two basic conditions. In other words, it is by doing this that the home-state that seeks to draw a coherent strategy of engaging its diaspora begins to establish governance over its diaspora (transnationalize governmentality).<sup>35</sup>

With respect to the above, a number of practical steps and initiative could be taken to actualize the symbolic of national building aspect of capacity building. These initiatives are essentially to arouse the sense of belongingness of emigrants to their mother country. Under the circumstance, high-level rhetoric of celebrating emigrants as national heroes could be one of the ways. In some instances, some home states go the extent of establishing programmes of teaching its language and history nationally. Such states have keen interest in observing and helping organize national celebrations in its diaspora communities and in this particular instance, Ghana could rely on its embassies abroad to introduce such initiatives.<sup>36</sup>

Expatriate media, communication and public relations are some of the crucial areas home-states could target in order to send specific messages of mobilizing emigrants to return home, stress on remittance issues or for them to serve as agents for pursuing their country's national interest. In the case of Ghana most of the well-established and popular radio stations have affiliates and sister stations abroad that furnish the country's diaspora with national news.<sup>37</sup> The government of Ghana can liaise with such radio stations to trying to reach out to its diaspora. In fact, J.K. Teye et al have averred that already the Ghanaian Mission's abroad sometimes rely on host country and websites to communicate with its diaspora.<sup>38</sup>

The other complementing factor of capacity enhancement is the building of institutions. This factor is very crucial as it deals with the technological dimension of diaspora engagement policies of a state. Here Gamlen provides a prognosis that the foreign service of the immigration service of the home country need to have robust database of its diaspora. The state must have statistics for the purpose of strategic orientations towards emigrants. This process is often not merely a way of

collecting inert data, but a way of selecting actors whom it would be profitable to deal with and forming long-term relationships with these actors.<sup>39</sup>

In the case of Ghana, the country has yet to develop a proper database of its diaspora. Estimates of the number of Ghanaians in various countries vary due to paucity of data. Figures usually quoted as the country's diaspora grossly underestimate the number of Ghanaians outside the country because data on emigrants are usually obtained from household members left behind.<sup>40</sup> As expected in some cases, respondents do not provide accurate information. The Diaspora Affairs Bureau, in this regard, is a step in the right direction. The Director of Diaspora Bureau at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphasized the inadequate data Ghana has on its diaspora when he stated that

Most Ghanaians abroad fail to register at the Missions but only go the Embassies when they require some form of consular assistance. Some of the Ghanaians also harbours the erroneous impression that the Missions cannot assist them when they are been deported as illegal immigrants as a result they do not register at the Missions. This makes the estimated number of Ghanaians living especially in Europe and the Americas largely based on inaccurate data.<sup>41</sup>

It is generally accepted as well as logical that in order to attain maximum benefit from the diaspora home-states may necessarily extend certain rights to the emigrants engender goodwill relationship, which in the end will help to elicit steady flows of remittances and investments. Gamlen maintains that the measures that a state adopts as part of extending right to its diaspora include political participation, provision of civil and social services as well as protecting rights of emigrants. The government of Ghana has been instrumental in the political engagement of its diaspora to the exclusion of the other two areas.

As far as political participation is concerned one can immediately point to the Representation of People's Act (Act 699).<sup>42</sup> An Act which has been in existence for over a decade, but yet to be implemented, the current Chair of the Electoral Commission of Ghana has announced that a ROPAA working group, which would be made up of representatives of registered political parties and civil society organizations will soon to be rolled out to see to the implementation of the act. The Dual citizenship Act of 2002 could also be examined as a means of rights extension to naturalized Ghanaians living abroad. This, in a nutshell, allows Ghanaians to become citizens of host countries without losing their citizenship.

The rights of extension include political, civil and social rights. From the foregoing Ghana seems to be doing well from the political perspective with ROPAA and the Dual Citizenship Act. The inadequacies however, arises when the civil and social rights comes under consideration. To achieve transnational governmentality is, to some extent, dependent on the ability of the home country to extend rights to its diaspora. It is a necessary part of executing the role of a transnational sovereign. In this regard, the government of Ghana has very little to show for its efforts. Countries like the Philippines have chalked successes in how that state manages the recruitment and protection of its diaspora labour.<sup>43</sup> The government of Ghana for instance has not provided any special service centres for emigrants coming back home for holidays. In relation to this, the portability of social security and pension benefits are very crucial for Ghanaian emigrants who wish to come back home to Ghana, yet the government of Ghana has not made any practical efforts in discussing such issues with host countries.

The last typology provided by Alan Gamlen as the fulfilment of a diaspora engagement policy is the extraction of obligation. The strength of states' claims to legitimately extract benefits from 'their' Diasporas arguably flows from their reciprocal provision of benefits. The United States and the Switzerland have institutionalized a form of mandatory payment systems, which levies taxes on its emigrants. The services that the Philippines provide its diaspora also allow that country to extract mandatory payments while albeit through less former channels, such as the collection of fees from emigrant workers recruited through state recruitment agencies.<sup>44</sup> In the particular case of Ghana, the government has such robust mechanisms in place to levy taxes on its emigrants.

It has developed, however, a number of programmes aimed at extracting obligations from its diaspora. One of such mechanism is the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC) and how it promoted the agenda of persuading Ghana's diaspora to invest in the country's economy as a bulwark against the escalating rate of unemployment in the country. GIPC has organized a number of programmes to educate the Ghanaian diaspora on a number of the available investment opportunities. Presidential visits to host countries have been opportune moments to engage with the diaspora. It was under such efforts that the MFARI in collaboration with the International Centre for Migration Policy Development organized the first ever workshop on Diaspora Capital in Accra in 2014.<sup>45</sup>

One of the crucial angles to enhancing the diaspora engagement policy since 2001 is to provide an enabling environment and framework to enhance the transfer of money from the diaspora. Remittance from the diaspora are indispensable to the poverty eradication agenda of the Ghanaian government and a tool that enhances economic growth and development. As has been highlighted

in the previous chapter investment from the diaspora in Africa far exceeded that provided transfer of funds from the global financial institutions and from the global North in general. This pattern is not any different from Ghana as the diaspora's contribution in terms of financial transfers far exceeds FDI. In this regard, the government of Ghana has implemented policies that allow Ghanaian migrants to operate foreign accounts in Ghanaian banks. Quite apart from that these migrants are as well able to obtain loans from Ghanaian banks to purchase their houses. Foreign-currency- denominated bonds to emigrants have been issued by the government of Ghana.<sup>46</sup>

There is also the growing programmes of the transfer of knowledge from the diaspora experts to their Ghanaian counterparts. In collaboration with the Ministry of Health and the IOM, the Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) has been organized. This has rolled out projects that facilitates short-term working visits to Ghana by Ghanaian medical doctors and other health workers abroad.<sup>47</sup> Under such programmes the health professionals have provided services including surgery, dentistry and urology among many other services in hospitals across the country. It has also provided the avenues for Ghanaian health professionals to travel to European and American health institutions for short-term internships.<sup>48</sup>

In this regard, mention should be made of the University of Ghana and the Carnegie Next Generation Next Generation of Academics in Africa Project, which for close to a decade has been running a diaspora linkage programme (UG-DLP). It is aimed at collaborating with universities abroad through the transfer of expertise of Ghanaian professors abroad to promote academic teachings, research and learning.

Agunias and Newland on their part have maintained that a strategy for diaspora engagement would always include some fundamental elements. They provided a four-step fundamental process that is somewhat different but at the same time has some semblance of a sort with Gamlen's typology.<sup>49</sup> The first point of consideration for any government in devising a strategy is to identify its own goals in undertaking this pursuit and to define the internal tools and mechanisms (administrative, financial, etc.) required for the task.<sup>50</sup> It is the identification of goals that would then determine what resources ought to be invested in achieving such goals. Governments will then ascertain the extent to which their own capacities will go toward reaching their goals, which capacities reside within the targeted diaspora and which must be created or sought from other actors.

The point is that if for instance a government's goal is to reduce poverty or support the national balance of payment deficit, its diaspora is likely to focus on remittances, business, investment and capital markets. Whereas if the goals of the government is to improve the country's competitiveness in economic terms, its diaspora policy is more likely to emphasize the knowledge and skills that members of the diaspora can channel to their countries of origin. The Philippine for instance, which is more interested in labour exportation of its diaspora pursues a strategy of large-scale contract labour deployment overseas to reduce unemployment and maintain a stream of remittance income. They argue that for this reason the goals of any diaspora engagement policy cannot be set in a vacuum. They should be seen as an integral part of development not as a sideline or an add-on.<sup>51</sup>

Agunias and Newland also mentions that government of the home country must know their diaspora which it hopes to engage. This is only made possible through "comprehensive data

collection, mapping the location of the diaspora compiling inventories of diaspora skills and experience; and engaging a wide range of diaspora members in listening exercises to understand what the diaspora has to offer, what it is willing to offer, and what it expects from the government in turn. It is crucial to acknowledge the diversity of diaspora agendas, interests, and strategies. Through the establishment of a continuous dialogue with diasporas, government policies should try to reconcile — or at least understand — differing and often diverging views.”<sup>52</sup>

In this exercise, not only the country of origin, but that of destination could be very useful in helping to gather accurate data on the diaspora. Information about diaspora population can be gathered through cooperation with diaspora organizations such as professional associations, hometown clubs and alumni associations. This fundamental requirement is synonymous with Gamlen’s typology of capacity building. The next step Agunias and Newland proposes as a means of creating a diaspora engagement policy is to build trust. A long-term project of engaging the diaspora is premised upon mutual trust.<sup>53</sup> They argue that partnership is a two-way street.

Too often, diasporas have felt that country-of-origin governments see them simply as cash cows, while some country-of destination governments see diaspora groups demanding support based on weak capabilities to deliver on mutual objectives. All parties must feel that they are deriving value from the relationship. Such efforts should include steps to improve the domestic business climate, such as greater transparency in regulations and licensing requirements as well as a more consistent application of property law.

In their opinion, it is only when these things are done; that in words of Gamlen such governments would have attained transnationalization of governmentality. The home state would now have the moral grounds to mobilize the diaspora for development, which is the last stage in the diaspora engagement policy. This may take on different forms most of which have been aforementioned in Gamlen's typology.

As has been argued out in the second chapter, Ghana has not gotten a coherent national policy of diaspora engagement and that any of such diaspora engagement activities have largely been left in the hands of the incumbent government of the day.<sup>54</sup> Some of the requirements within the typologies are not uncommon to the practices of the Ghanaian government in dealing with the country's diaspora. However, Ghana cannot boast of a national policy of engagement even though previous government since 2012 have had plans to creating one. In an interview with the Director of the Diaspora Bureau, it was revealed that:

the draft agenda Diaspora policy is been revised to improve the content of the policy to ensure effective engagement by the government with the Diaspora. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Office of Diaspora Relations at the Presidency, Jubilee House has commenced extensive consultations with the diaspora through the various Embassies to incorporate their views to enhance effectiveness of the policy. The Draft Agenda Diaspora Policy did not solicit comprehensive views from the diaspora before the policy was drafted. Since the policy seeks to enhance government engagement with the Diaspora, inputs from the Diaspora in the formulation of the policy is critical in the drafting of a Diaspora policy and implementation to promote effective engagement with the Diaspora by government to effectively tap their enormous potential for national development.<sup>55</sup>

In his opinion, the supposed draft policy was not even new for the reason that some contents of the policy was already been implemented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in their engagement with the Diaspora as a result engaging with the Diaspora has not come to a halt without a policy. Although the draft policy is been revised, some aspects is currently been implemented. For

example, the Foreign Ministry has directed Missions to develop a Diaspora website for the Diaspora (Ghanaians residence abroad and people of Ghanaian descent or heritage) to encourage them to register to enable the Missions mobilise the Ghanaians in the Diaspora, create a data base to ascertain their technical expertise and knowledge, their geographical location, areas of interest and professional qualifications to institute specific strategies to engage them for national development to accelerate economic growth of the country.<sup>56</sup>

The Director remarked in the interview that it is also important for the country to support the national diaspora policy with legislation by parliament to give legal backing to the Diaspora policy to ensure its effective implementation. In addition, he maintained that there must be structures that ensure the participation of Diaspora in national development including providing areas of productive economic ventures and improving the business climate.

### **3.4 Some Challenges Associated with the Implementation of Diaspora Engagement Policies**

In the utmost instance, even before one comes to the issue of the challenges impeding the implementation of an available diaspora engagement policy it is also important to stress the difficulties in having to engage with the diaspora without a national diaspora policy. There is the need for a consistent policy to drive government engagement agenda with the Diaspora in a coherent and sustainable manner to benefit from their expertise and professional knowledge in the long term national development agenda of the government. Even when such policies are available there is a problematic conceptualization of who constitutes the Diaspora. Currently the Diaspora includes Ghanaians with residence abroad, Ghanaians with dual nationality or foreigners who have naturalized as Ghanaians.

On that note how to actively engage or involve second generation diaspora becomes cumbersome. In most cases diaspora projects have targeted first generation diaspora without due consideration to the second generation who are increasingly assuming the mantle of importance in the social milieu of the African diaspora. Young Ghanaian migrants in the diaspora are seldom given any platform to suggest ways in which these engagement policies could also work for them.

There are some people of Ghanaian descent/heritage or people who traced their origins to Ghana or considers Ghana as their homeland and have expressed interest to visit and invest in the country but unfortunately, they have no documents to prove their nationality. Currently, such people cannot be accorded the privileges of being a Ghanaian by the Missions. Such cases are referred by the Missions to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration for the Honorable Minister to use her discretion to determine which category of people should be granted gratis visas to enable them visit Ghana. Unfortunately the determination of these cases takes time and could be a disincentive for such people to visit Ghana.<sup>57</sup>

Also Ghanaian medical doctors with dual nationality faced serious challenges when they want to practice medicine in Ghana and they have often called for a change in the law to allow them to practice as Ghanaian Doctors and also guarantee property rights for Diasporas who may hold foreign citizenship. A well-defined policy may address some of these of challenges. A policy of who is classified or qualifies as a diaspora will also enable the various Missions to generate accurate data of the Diaspora as currently the data available at the Missions encompass all Ghanaians who register at the embassies including Ghanaians who are for a short visit, vacation or for other purposes.<sup>58</sup>

There are also practical legislative hindrances that affect the positive implementation of governments' diaspora engagement mechanisms. The government of Ghana in its intent to benefit from the expertise and resources of the diaspora, introduced the dual citizenship legislation. The government has only failed to recognize that the dual-citizenship Act is at variance with the constitution of Ghana and this has created problems for the expatriate Ghanaian members of Parliament.<sup>59</sup> Take for instance the Citizenship Act of 2000, specifically Act 59, Section 16(1), confers on dual citizens all the privileges accorded to Ghanaian citizens, Chapter 10, Article 194, Clause 2(a) of the Constitution which stipulates that "a person shall not be qualified to be a Member of Parliament if he owes allegiance to a country other than Ghana".<sup>60</sup> Accordingly, the legality of elected expatriate members of Parliament is being challenged in the courts ("Disqualified MP," 2009).<sup>61</sup>

Related to the above is the fact that there is some wrong assumption or notion by some Ghanaian migrants who are simultaneously citizens to some other countries that once they are from Ghana and invest in the country, they have automatic dual citizenship. This may not be true in some instances in the sense that not all countries accept dual citizenship and so diaspora investment does not automatically grant any person dual citizenship.

The inconsistencies in government policies towards the diaspora anytime there is a change of government impedes government engagement with its diaspora. This is most evident anytime there is a change in government and the leaders jettison the policies and projects of their predecessors. An example is the NDC government of 2009 that immediately dropped the term

Diaspora Relations from the Ministry of Tourism's title without any proper reason for doing so.<sup>62</sup>

At a glance though, this action might communicate an idea that the NDC government of the time was probably not committed to diaspora strategy of its predecessor, which was the NPP government.

Finally, it is worth noting that there are multiple agencies responsible for the implementation of diaspora engagement policies. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration together with the agencies responsible for tourism, security and investments are working together on the diaspora engagement policy. The difficulty that arises here is that spreading the functions and responsibilities of such policies over many agencies most of which have different legislative arrangement and schedules for executing their duties does not auger well for the cohesiveness of the programme. There is also the obstacle of having to implement some of such policies in the host states of the migrants. Since such territories are out of Ghana's jurisdiction it becomes cumbersome to implement such diaspora engagement policies.<sup>63</sup>

### **3.6 Conclusion**

The contributions of diasporans to the Ghanaian economy cannot be overstated. The gains, therein, are largely due the outcome of the government, people of Ghana, and diaspora policies. However, most of the policies remain ad hoc; and there is the need to provide a more comprehensive diaspora engagement policies to maximize the benefits to be derived from the diaspora engagement approach. For Ghana to continue to attract and sustain diaspora interest, the country has to take concrete steps to address these challenges. The work proffered an alternative diaspora engagement policy that holds a better outlook based upon the concept of best practices.

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## CHAPTER FOUR

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 4.0 Introduction

This study is concerned with the considerable important position of the diaspora to the development agenda of Ghana and how successive Ghanaian governments have tried to harness potential of the diaspora in such an agenda. It sought to examine the adoption of a national diaspora engagement policy of Ghana. Ghanaians in the diaspora continue to maintain ties with their mother country even as they continue to negotiate identities in various host nations. The work therefore adopted transnationalism as the analytical framework within which the study was conducted. Transnationalism is a conceptual approach that explains the double or hybrid identities and cross border activities of people. Transnational migration for instance is the cross-border processes of migrant groups whose social relations and practices form a connection between two or more states. The study however, proceeded on the hypothesis that a well-planned and coordinated government strategy would enable Ghana to effectively engage and mobilize the diaspora to harness their potential for national development. This chapter provides the summary of findings of the study, the conclusion and recommendations.

#### 4.1 Summary of Findings

The data collected was envisaged to either disprove or validate the set hypothesis of the study. In this regard, the main objective of the study was situated within the broader literature that provides an overview of Ghana's diaspora and the various means national governments have sought to engage the Ghanaian diaspora.

Even though diaspora has existed for decades, it has in recent times become the new fad in development. The World Bank report of 2017 on Migration and Remittances Data revealed total remittances from the African diaspora to Africa exceeded 33 billion dollars (World Bank, 2017). Ghana in this regard, has engaged its diaspora to tap into such huge economic potentials. Engagement between Ghana, formerly Gold Coast, and the diaspora predates the country's independence. This is clearly demonstrable with the series of Pan African congresses, which was first held in 1900, organized by W.E.B Du Bois among others. The study further showed that the beginning of modern-day Ghanaian diaspora could be traced from the colonial period when the adoption of a series of economic measures intended to supply the needed number of labour to promote economic development. Force labour laws were adopted by the colonial regime for instance in Francophone West Africa countries that sparked large scale internal and cross-border movement of both skilled and unskilled labour.

The study also revealed that the diaspora, for that matter, the African and Ghanaian diaspora has positive development potential when well harnessed will help mitigate the development challenges of African and Ghana, respectively. Remittances sent back home to relatives, communities, and institutions in the countries of origin are used for development purposes and reduction of poverty. In Africa, the diaspora constitutes one of the most reliable sources of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) as migrants return home to establish businesses across the length of Africa. Diaspora also often boost the country of origin's human resources, technical expertise, concepts of best practices, and transfer of technology.

On the other hand, since the terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre in New York on 9/11, 2001, migration and the diaspora has been increasingly conceptualized as posing transnational security threats to their destinations and countries of origin. The diaspora has been associated with drug and human trafficking, human smuggling, money laundering, cyber-fraud and other organized crimes. As such migrants are often faced with the grim reality to survive doing odd jobs, which renders them gullible to the whims and caprices of criminal gangs that often introduce them to criminal gangs and crime. Besides, diaspora afford criminal gang secrecy, peculiar media, and trust that are often otherwise unavailable.

It is also a well-established fact that certain conflicts are often fueled by the diaspora in the countries of origin. Example of these include the Sri-Lankan conflict, where the Tamil Tiger as well as the Nkonya-Alavanyo, Dagbon and Bawku conflicts in Ghana. In terms of the internal diaspora, some of the minor conflicts and skirmishes often seen in areas between people with a background from areas with ongoing conflicts, are mainly replicas of long-standing conflicts like the Dagbon and Bawku conflicts. As a result of the ambivalent outcomes of diaspora relations care is often taken in their engagement.

The study found that it was the independence and post-independence era that facilitated the already and began the process of Ghanaian international migration, and as such the Ghanaian diaspora. The post-independence period created a different political climate whose sequel took a toll on the creation a Ghanaian diaspora within Africa. Since the 1960s Cote d'Ivoire became a principal recipient of immigrants in sub-Saharan Africa. The economic downturn, the political instability and the falling standard of living were a combination of push factors that compelled many

Ghanaians to seek greener pastures abroad. It was under this circumstance that the vast majority of Ghanaians migrated to the neighboring West African countries, in particular, Nigeria and Cote d'Ivoire. The establishment of ECOWAS and the protocol of free movement of people and services also facilitated the movement of Ghanaians and other West Africans to other countries in the sub-region. The exaggerated news of wealth brought by Ghanaians living in neighbouring countries also encourage Ghanaians to further migrate to Nigeria. Peter Quartery working for the International Organization for Migration corroborated that 71% of Ghanaian international migrants are found in West Africa. The Southern African region of South Africa, Namibia, Lesotho and Botswana are also host a number of Ghanaian migrants.

It was also found that the disruptions and the dispositions of the colonial conquest, the struggle for independence and the structural adjustment were instrumental in creating a Ghanaian diaspora beyond Africa. This diaspora include students who went to study abroad and stayed, Seamen who became settlers and many others who could migrate and become citizens according to the prevailing immigration regimes of the host countries. Ghanaians were with time integrated into the Western systems and culture which they highly regarded. This group of Ghanaian students and scholars who left the country for advanced training abroad during the 1950s and 60s can be regarded as the first generation of migrants abroad. They were commonly referred to in Ghana as the "been to". The study found there is the Ghanaian diaspora largely created during the Structural Adjustment era of the 1980s to the late 1990s during resurgence of multi-party rule on the continent as a whole. It is in this period that discussions on the formation of Ghanaian diaspora is centralized and the Ghanaian diaspora consolidated. The economic hardship that was associated with this period was aggravated by a politically repressive and iron-handed regime. Ghanaians migrated in

large numbers to Western Europe and North America as the traditional destination of West African countries were also experiencing their own economic down turn.

The study revealed that successive Ghanaian governments have moved away from primarily lamenting about the brain drain of Ghanaian professionals to a policy of regarding the migrant as a national resource and attempting to engage Ghanaians outside the country to promote national development. To this end, they have implemented numerous means of engaging with the diaspora. As far as Ghana is concerned the Pan-African ideals of Nkrumah and the political circumstance of Africa was a magnetic source of attraction for African Americans who were also going through the civil rights era. Martin Luther King Jr., George Padmore, W.E.B. Dubois, Malcom X, Maya Angelou, John Henrik Clark, Richard Wright, Pauli Murray, C.L.R. James, Muhammed Ali (and the list continues) either visited or settled in Ghana. While the decline of the Nkrumah regime saw a reversal in Ghana's Pan-African role, it was the second coming of Rawling's regime that facilitated the Ghana-African diaspora bond. This engagement by the Rawling's regime was in his development agenda than in the ideals of Pan-Africanism.

The study revealed that the PNDC regime constituted a number of diaspora campaign initiative.

They are as follows:

- W. E. B. Du Bois Memorial Centre for Pan-African Culture (1986) and the Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Park (1992)
- The Pan-African Historical Theatre Festival (PANAFEST) and Emancipation Day of the biennial celebration was envisioned to create a common platform for people of African descent showcasing African culture, arts, and music, and conducting lectures on

contemporary problems of Africa. In this development, the Cape Coast and Elmina Castle became important as a tourism site generating huge sums of revenue for the country.

It was found in the study that it was the Kuffour's administration at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century that witnessed a more coherent attempt of consolidating the relationship between Ghana and its diaspora and tapping from the resources of the latter to the development of the country. In this regard, the Kuffour led NPP administration introduced the Right of Abode Law and the Homecoming Summit. Further, the Dual Citizenship Act of 2002 was introduced to give Ghanaians the possibility to acquire the citizenship of the receiving country without losing their Ghanaian identity. This was a wide reaching initiative in which about 5,903 Ghanaian emigrants signed on to it. The study found that the Ghanaian Electoral Commission in 2018 has hinted that it is making preparation to activate the Act. The Right of Abode Law also permitted a person of African descent to apply and be granted the right to stay in the country indefinitely. The Home Coming Summit in 2001 amplified the significance of the Ghanaian diaspora to the country's development agenda.

A number of issues such as state-diaspora collaboration, mobilization of resources and the creation of a diaspora data base from Ghanaians Living abroad (GLA) and simplifying the process of land acquisition for the Ghanaian diaspora were discussed. The Kuffour administration also introduced the Non-Resident Ghanaian Secretariat which was instituted under the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC) to promote homeland investments from the diaspora. There was also the Joseph Project which was a follow-up to the Home Coming Summit, introduced in 2007 as part of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of Ghana's independence. It was engineered to invoke a religious

inspired emotion among the Ghanaian diaspora and to present Ghana as the gateway to Africa. It was also during this administration that diaspora issues were elevated to the ministerial level by the creation of a Tourism and Diaspora Relations Ministry.

Significant efforts under the Mills led administration culminated in the creation of the Diaspora Support Unit. It was this unit that was later transformed into the Diaspora Affairs Bureau. The NDC administration in 2012 also established the Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) with a mandate to reach out to the diaspora as an engagement strategy.

The study also found that in 2017, the office of the president in collaboration with the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration organized a Homecoming Diaspora Summit. This was part of government's strategy to reach out to the Diaspora community. The study found that the various means adopted by successive governments of Ghana in engaging the diaspora constitute nothing more than adhoc strategies depending on who is in power in engaging the Ghanaian diaspora. Ghana has therefore not instituted a coherent national policy of diaspora engagement and that any of such diaspora engagement activities have largely been left in the hands of the incumbent government of the day.

## **4.2 Conclusions**

The underlying hypothesis of the study in chapter one is that a well-planned and coordinated government strategy would enable Ghana to effectively engage and mobilize the diaspora to harness their potential for national development. The study therefore using Gamlen's diaspora engagement typology proposed the adoption of a diaspora engagement policy that could inform

Ghana's national diaspora policy. Gamlen's typology is premised upon three higher-level requirements that a country ought to undertake to have a national diaspora engagement policy. The steps which were examined at length could be summarized into three phases. They include capacity building policies, aimed at discursively producing a state-centric transnational national society and developing a set of corresponding state institutions, extending rights to the diaspora, thus playing a role that befits a legitimate sovereign and extracting obligations from the diaspora, based on the premise that emigrants owe loyalty to this legitimate sovereign.

While some of the requirements are steps already taken by successive Ghanaian governments they happen to be fragmented and are not dutifully and consistently executed by successive governments. Ghana has not done very well in the extension of some basic rights to its citizens abroad as is done by some other countries like the Philippines who export labour to other countries. This according to Gamlen is what affords state what he calls transnationalization of governmentality. This then would elicit the moral obligation on the part of the diaspora to contribute to the development of the mother country as well as provide the state the same moral rights to elicit obligation from its diaspora.

Another considerable requirement espoused by Agunias and Newland in the creation of a diaspora engagement policy are a four step fundamental process that is somewhat different but at the same time has some semblance of a sort with Gamlen's typology. They mention that the first thing a state seeking to engage its diaspora could do is to identify its own goals and to define the internal tool and mechanisms needed for the task. They maintained that the government of the home country must know the diaspora that it seeks to engage (a requirement that seem synonymous with

Gamlen's typology of capacity building). The next thing for the home country to do is to put in mechanism to build trust with its diaspora with the intention that partnership is a two way-way affair. To them it is only the aftermath of these factors that the home country could constitute what is referred to as diaspora engagement policy.

Ghana is in the process of preparing a diaspora engagement policy and as was revealed in an interview with the Director of Diaspora Bureau, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Office of Diaspora Relations at the Presidency as well as Jubilee House have commenced broad consultations with the diaspora through the various Embassies to incorporate their views to enhance effectiveness of the policy.

The study also identified some challenges associated with the implementation of the diaspora policies. The absence of national diaspora engagement policy has made it cumbersome for the Ghanaian government in engaging with its diaspora. The absence of definitive criteria of conceptualizing who constitutes the diaspora is even problematic. In such a circumstance actively engaging the second-generation Ghanaian diaspora become cumbersome as mostly diaspora programmes of engagement have targeted first generation diaspora without due consideration to the second generation who are increasingly assuming the mantle of importance in the social milieu of the African diaspora.

There is also the practical problems surrounding the dual-citizenship Act that put it at variance with the constitution of Ghana. This has made it practically impossible for expatriate Ghanaians who wish to become members of the country's parliament impossible. The inconsistencies in

government policies towards the diaspora anytime there is a change of government impedes government engagement with it diaspora. This is most evident anytime there is there is a change in government and the leaders jettison the policies and projects of their predecessors.

The multiplicity of agencies responsible for the implementation of diaspora engagement policies slows down the effective implementation of diaspora engagement policies. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration together with the agencies responsible for tourism, security and investments are working together on the diaspora engagement policy. The difficulty that arises here is that spreading the functions and responsibilities of such policies over many agencies most of which have different legislative arrangement and schedules for executing their duties does not auger well for the cohesiveness of the programme.

#### **4.3 Recommendations**

This thesis sought to examine how Ghana could create and implement a national diaspora engagement policy in order to properly and in a more coherent manner harness the potential of the Ghanaian diaspora for the country's development. Accordingly, the following are some recommendations made after a thorough engagement with the topic under study.

- Any plan on the part of government in creating a national diaspora engagement policy must necessarily feature or involve the Ghanaian diaspora. The point is that by bringing in the Ghanaian diaspora in the adoption of such a policy, the government of Ghana demonstrates that it is ready to make the diaspora a significant part of the country national development. This is an effective way of building confidence and trust with the diaspora.

- The adoption of a national diaspora engagement has orientations and original plan of having a national outlook for all intent and purpose. For this reason, there should be the urgency to treat the policy as such. One of the problems identified is how governments always jettison plans of their predecessors in favour of their own regardless of how good such plans assist in promoting national development. This has not been any different in strategies in dealing with the Ghanaian diaspora. The availability of a diaspora engagement policy would mean that regardless of the government in power there would be mandated to implement such national diaspora policy.
- Closely related to the above is the fact that for the various political regimes to give practical meaning to such a policy the Ghanaian Parliament must provide the policy with legal backing so as make it mandatory for all governments. It is in the interest of the country to make the national diaspora engagement policy a legislative instrument.
- It is also very crucial for the government of Ghana to have a robust database of its Ghanaian diaspora to be able to engage with it properly. There are plans underway as demonstrated in the preceding chapters of this study, but such plans have largely remained inadequate. In this regard, the Ghanaian government can call for the assistance of the host countries of its diaspora to facilitate the collection of data on its diaspora.

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