



# Migration in the Volta Delta: a review of the literature



Yaw Atiglo and Sam Codjoe  
University of Ghana



**CARIAA**  
*Collaborative Adaptation Research  
Initiative in Africa and Asia*



**IDRC | CRDI**

International Development Research Centre  
Centre de recherches pour le développement international

Canada



Citation:

Yaw Atiglo and Sam Codjoe. 2015. *Migration in the Volta Delta: a review of the literature*. DECCMA Working Paper, Deltas, Vulnerability and Climate Change: Migration and Adaptation, IDRC Project Number 107642. Available online at: [www.deccma.com](http://www.deccma.com), date accessed

### About DECCMA Working Papers

This series is based on the work of the Deltas, Vulnerability and Climate Change: Migration and Adaptation (DECCMA) project, funded by Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) through the **Collaborative Adaptation Research Initiative in Africa and Asia (CARIAA)**. CARIAA aims to build the resilience of vulnerable populations and their livelihoods in three climate change hot spots in Africa and Asia. The program supports collaborative research to inform adaptation policy and practice.

Titles in this series are intended to share initial findings and lessons from research studies commissioned by the program. Papers are intended to foster exchange and dialogue within science and policy circles concerned with climate change adaptation in vulnerability hotspots. As an interim output of the DECCMA project, they have not undergone an external review process. Opinions stated are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the policies or opinions of IDRC, DFID, or partners. Feedback is welcomed as a means to strengthen these works: some may later be revised for peer-reviewed publication.

### Contact

Yaw Atiglo, [yawatiglo@gmail.com](mailto:yawatiglo@gmail.com)

### Creative Commons License

This Working Paper is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. Articles appearing in this publication may be freely quoted and reproduced provided that i) the source is acknowledged, ii) the material is not used for commercial purposes, and iii) any adaptations of the material are distributed under the same license.

## **Migration in Ghana and in the Volta Delta**

Migration is an important distributor of Ghana's population. It has a significant role in the sociocultural and economic development of the population. Migration in Ghana is predominantly internal and much of it, as in other developing countries, is undocumented (Awumbila, Manuh, Quartey, Tagoe, & Bosiakoh, 2008). Individuals migrate to escape constraints their communities face in response to available prospects (Ackah & Medvedev, 2010).

The first section of this working paper will review the dominant migration patterns in Ghana at a national level, and the second section will review existing literature on migration in the Volta Delta.

### **Migration in Ghana**

#### ***History of migration in Ghana***

Ghana has a long history of migration, both internal and international. Ethnic groups in Ghana assert that they emigrated from elsewhere to their present locations (Abu, Codjoe, & Sward, 2013; Anarfi & Kwankye, 2003; Awumbila et al., 2008). The trans-Saharan caravan trade contributed to the growth of such towns as present day Salaga and Bono Manso (Yaro, Codjoe, Agyei-Mensah, Darkwah & Kwankye, 2011). The creation and growth of the Ashanti Empire provided security for large numbers of people (Yaro et al., 2011). For a long time, prior to independence in 1957 and even for some time after, farmers and many agricultural workers have migrated in search of available arable land for food and cash crop cultivation (Abu et al., 2013; Awumbila et al., 2008; Braimoh, 2004). Also during the colonial era mineral extraction, timber and cash crop production were concentrated in southern Ghana, hence the deprivation of resource-poor northern Ghana of much development (Yaro et al., 2011). The introduction of cocoa as a cash crop in the late nineteenth century also drove much migration across Ghana (Awumbila et al., 2008; Hill, Austin, & International African Institute, 1997). Immediately after independence in 1957, Ghana became an attractive destination for migrants from sub-Saharan African countries, especially neighbouring West African countries (Awumbila et al., 2008). In the 1970s and 1980s the rates of emigration increased due to deteriorating social and economic conditions in neighbouring countries.

#### ***International Migration***

International migration has always been a main feature of the demographic redistribution in Africa. Due to the importance of international migration as a livelihood strategy for dealing with socioeconomic challenges and with increasing globalisation, most Ghanaian entities have relied on international migration as an option for improving livelihoods (Manuh, 2001; Awumbila et al., 2008).

Thus, there has been a reversal in international migration trends from net immigration to being a net emigration country post-independence i.e. from the 1960s (Awumbila et al., 2008). The common destination for a lot of the immediate post-independence epoch emigration was the United Kingdom. Colonial ties including a common language with the former colonial masters made emigration to the UK conducive (Anarfi & Kwankye, 2003; Asiedu, 2005). Other English-speaking countries in North America also became attractive destinations for the Ghanaian emigrant (Awumbila et al., 2008). In recent times, destinations for international Ghanaian migrants are

becoming increasingly diverse to countries in Asia and South America. Other African countries have also received Ghanaian migrants (Awumbila et al., 2008).

There is a lot of movement between Ghana and other countries in the West African sub-region particularly with neighbouring Togo, Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso and Nigeria (Awumbila et al., 2008; Codjoe, 2007; Kwankye, Anarfi, Tagoe, & Castaldo, 2007; Quartey, 2009). In most cases, the national borders separate people of the same ethnic group and the porosity of these borders makes it difficult to identify people who cross them as migrants (Anarfi & Kwankye, 2003, Odotei, 2002). In an assessment of international migration on population growth in Ghana, Codjoe (2007) notes that the impact of migration on national population growth is negligible.

### ***Internal Migration***

Migration within borders is a common feature of migration in the sub-Saharan African region. Over eighty percent of Ghana's migration is internal with a higher proportion being within the same regions and towards urban areas (Ackah & Medvedev, 2010). Much of the internal migration in Ghana is undocumented (Awumbila et al., 2008). Estimates of internal migration can however be sourced from censuses or surveys, though with some limitations.

Internal migration in Ghana has been driven by many factors and taken various forms ranging from autonomous planned migration to spontaneous mass movements. People respond to individual opportunities or community constraints by migrating (Ackah & Medvedev, 2010; Anarfi & Kwankye, 2003; Kwankye, Anarfi, Tagoe, & Castaldo, 2009). Primarily, the reason for most internal migration is to look for work or engage in various economic activities. Other reasons include joining a family, education, finding a better environment, marriage and other family-related considerations (Caldwell, 1969; Tutu, 1995; Abu et al., 2013; Ackah & Medvedev, 2010; Van der Geest, 2011).

Among the destinations for internal migrants in Ghana, the Greater Accra Region and Ashanti Region receive more than half and the populations of these regions are substantially comprised of migrants (Ackah & Medvedev, 2010). According to the 2010 Population and Housing Census, Greater Accra, Ashanti, Western and Brong Ahafo Regions recorded positive net migration rates whereas Volta, Eastern, Central and the three northern regions recorded negative net migration. With the exception of the Eastern Region these other regions are among the least developed in the country (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013). It has to be noted that a significant part of the internal migration in Ghana is within regions (Ackah & Medvedev, 2010; Awumbila et al., 2008). The 2010 Population and Housing Census shows however that currently movement within regions is greater than inter-regional movement and whereas interregional migration is dominated by males intraregional migration is dominated by females (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013).

### ***Rural-Urban migration***

The growth in Ghana's urban population was identified by Twumasi-Ankrah (1995) as mainly due to migration from rural areas though there was some natural population growth. Rural-urban migration is defined by mixed social and demographic backgrounds. Due to the unfavourable conditions that make rural dwelling less attractive and affecting all categories of persons alike (irrespective of their age, education or wealth) there is a high tendency for urban living to effectively pull rural dwellers (Twumasi-Ankrah, 1995).

Although most migration is directed towards urban areas less than half the households with migrants have an urban migrant indicating that movement to urban areas usually involves entire households (Ackah & Medvedev, 2010)

### ***Rural-Rural migration***

There is widespread migration between rural areas. This mainly involves people whose livelihoods are based on the natural environment including farmers, fisher folk and others engaged in primary economic activities (Ackah & Medvedev, 2010; Codjoe & Bilsborrow, 2012; Rain, Engstrom, & Ludlow, 2011).

Pull factors to other rural destinations include favourable land tenure systems (Braimoh, 2004). Push factors for rural-rural migration of farmers may include deterioration of soil quality, unfavourable climate and loss of access to land (Abu et al., 2013; Braimoh, 2004; Codjoe & Bilsborrow, 2012).

### ***North-South migration***

Contrary to widespread speculation, only about 10 percent of all internal migrants are from Northern Ghana (Ackah & Medvedev, 2010). The three northern regions, from the 2010 Population and Housing Census recorded the highest proportions of non-migrants. Movement from Northern Ghana to the south has consistently occurred over a long period from the colonial era till date. An array of factors has driven such migration including agriculture, economics and even conflict.

The north-south chain of migration appears to have been modelled according to patterns of economic development in Ghana (Tutu, 2010). The spatial dialectics evident in levels of development in the north and south of Ghana and the related differences in levels of vulnerability and resilience have influenced internal migration patterns in Ghana (Anarfi & Kwankye, 2003; Kwankye et al., 2007; Tutu, 2010).

Research on the north-south migration has, in recent times, been focused on the vulnerable, especially female youth and children who undertake menial jobs in the south. Recently, young females have dominated the migration chain from northern Ghana to the south, mainly to engage in menial jobs (Awumbila et al., 2008). Child migrants have also characterised this seemingly interminable chain of north-south migration (Kwankye et al., 2009; Kwankye et al., 2007).

Prior to the observed recent mass movement of young females and children, migration from the north was mainly seasonal and involved movement of male farm labourers and agricultural workers. This was due to poor soil quality and harsh climatic conditions in the north (Abu et al., 2013; Braimoh, 2004; Dietz, Ruben, & Verhagen, 2004).

The huge disparity between Ghana's southern and northern areas - both in economic and environmental terms - seems to have created a dependency on the underdeveloped north for labour to feed the burgeoning south.

### ***Urban-urban migration***

Much of the migration towards urban centres originates from other urban areas. Majority of migrants in Accra come from other southern urban areas (Van der Geest, Vrieling, & Dietz, 2010).

### ***Seasonal Migration***

Seasonal migration seems to be the main form of labour mobility (Beals & Menezes, 1970) and mainly involves agricultural activity (Boakye-Yiadom, 2005). Irene Odotei documents the migration of fisher folk at the onset of the fishing season and their return when the season is over (2002). This involves migration both within Ghana and across national boundaries.

Due to ecological and seasonal variations between Northern and Southern Ghana, the farming calendars seem to differ (Abu et al., 2013; Boakye-Yiadom, 2008). Climate factor variability and decreasing soil fertility thus bolster temporary movements of farmers for alternative livelihoods (Abu et al., 2013; Braimoh, 2004). Movement is mainly from the northern ecological zone which is substantially dry for most parts of the year to the southern regions which have a relatively wet period all year round (Abu et al., 2013; Dietz et al., 2004).

### ***Chain migration***

Prior experience of migration in a household similarly predicts migration intentions. The existence of networks is also crucial for migration decision in Ghana (Boakye-Yiadom, 2008). Individuals are more likely to migrate if they have relatives in the destination areas than if they do not. Abu et al. (2013) identify from studying environmental stressors and migration intentions that non-migrant households are less likely to intend to migrate than migrant households. Non-migrants tend to have greater attachment to the places of residence than do migrants.

Migrant networks are essential for their cultural affirmation as well as survival and adjustment. Social network groups have also been essential for the rehabilitation and integration of migrants in their destination areas in response to socioeconomic stresses (Awumbila et al., 2008)

### ***Forced migration***

Not all movement in Ghana has been voluntary. There have been spells of forced migration primarily due to internecine conflicts and environmental stressors such as drought and flooding (Ackah & Medvedev, 2010; Awumbila et al., 2008; Kwankye et al., 2009; Twumasi-ankrah, 1995).

### ***Determinants of migration***

Internal migration is influenced by push and pull factors. Individual, household and community-level characteristics seem to influence people's intention and ability to migrate. It is likely however that, household-level variables that are considered after migrants have moved are possible effects of migration. Socio-demographic and economic factors are critical in determining migration decision process and the selection of migrants. Different migration trends have been marked by different socio-demographic characteristics of movers. These include household size, household income, age, sex, marital status, migration status and education of household head (Abu et al., 2013; Anarfi & Kwankye, 2003; Kwankye et al., 2009).

Age is both an individual-level and household-level predictor of migration. At the individual level, the probability of migration increases up to about age 36 after which the probability decreases (Ackah & Medvedev, 2010). Though migration occurs at all ages in Ghana, it occurs more within ages 15-64 (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013). Dependency ratios within the household are critical predictors of migration intentions. Whereas under-15 dependency ratio is negatively correlated with the probability to migrate the over 64 dependency ratio is positively correlated with the probability to migrate. This could be explained by the differences in need for care. Whereas the presence of

parents and significant others may be required for child upbringing, care for the aged requires more financial resources(Ackah & Medvedev, 2010).

Also covered in internal migration research is the phenomenon of independent child migration, especially in the north-south migration stream. Independent child migrants are more likely to be uneducated females from relatively poorer families(Kwankye et al., 2009; Kwankye et al., 2007).

An individual's educational level is linked with the propensity to migrate. More educated individuals from areas with relatively lower educational levels are likely to migrate(Ackah & Medvedev, 2010). Educated individuals are more involved in rural-urban migration (Caldwell, 1968). Gbortsu (1995) found that apart from individuals with university education having the highest probability for migration, generally, individuals with no formal education are more likely to migrate than individual with some formal education. Similarly, the educational level of the household head significantly predicts the probability to migrate from a household.

Migration decisions are critically influenced by economic factors at the individual, household, community and national levels. According to Beals et al. (1967), propensity to migrate is greatly influenced by higher wages in the destination areas. While households with higher economic welfare have the tendency to migrate from areas with unfavourable conditions (Caldwell, 1968; Abu et al., 2013; Ackah & Medvedev, 2010; Awumbila et al., 2008; Boakye-Yiadom, 2008; Quartey, 2009) there is a low tendency for individuals to migrate if economic conditions are favourable (Beals et al. 1967; Ackah & Medvedev, 2010; Awumbila et al., 2008).

### ***Gender and Migration***

Gender selective migration has especially been a dimension of the migration research trajectory. Ackah & Medvedev (2010) assert that though more male than females in absolute terms are likely to be internal migrants this difference is not significantly large. Also, males are more likely than females to be involved in migration over long distances including across borders (Caldwell, 1968). Whereas females dominate rural migration, mainly for marriage purposes, males dominate urban and international migration to search for better livelihoods or economic conditions (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013).

Migration of women has evolved from their roles as accompanying spouses or help to relatives (Boakye-Yiadom & McKay, 2006; Odotei, 2002) in the past into independent movers (Awumbila et al., 2008). Their independent movement is aided by relations and networks of friends. Even as accompanying spouses, mothers and caregivers migrant fisherwomen take up additional roles in the destination areas as business partners/associates, employees, employers/boat owners and service providers (Odotei, 2002).

Changing dynamics and active participation of women in the labour market seems to influence this trend of female migration (Awumbila & Ardayfio-Schandorf, 2008; Awumbila et al., 2008). Awumbila et al. refer to the changing roles of women in independent movement as the "feminisation of migration" (2008).

### ***Environmental migration***

Though the relationship between environmental drivers and population movement is not clear, it is undoubted that changes in environmental factors may result in harsh conditions that drive people

out of their permanent residences. Migration has thus been identified as an important response to environmental vulnerability in rural areas (van der Geest, 2011; S O Kwankye et al., 2009). Though environmental factors are likely contributors to pushing people out they are not the primary reasons for out-migration in the savannah forest transition zone of Ghana (Abu et al., 2013; Dietz et al., 2004).

Rainfall variability and declining soil fertility reinforce movements of agricultural workers in Ghana. Erosion which destabilises coastal activities also pushes people to migrate (Rain et al., 2011; Van der Geest et al., 2010).

The formation of the Volta Lake by the construction of the Akosombo Dam evidently led to massive out-migration from the Lower Volta upstream. The dam led to inundation of farmlands and villages. Consequently, the government had a resettlement plan for populations affected by the dam construction (Tsegai, 2005; Tsikata, 2006).

### ***Governance and Policy***

Although there is not an explicit policy on migration in Ghana, whether internal or international, initiatives that seek to specifically address issues related to migration exist (Ackah & Medvedev, 2010; Awumbila et al., 2008; Quartey, 2009). There are ministries, departments, agencies, institutions and international organisations that are engaged in migration management.

Legislative acts and instruments constitute the legal framework that has guided migration decisions in Ghana. These have either encouraged immigration or resulted in mass repatriation of foreign nationals. Awumbila et al. (2008) document the effect of Nkrumah's foreign policy, given his government's alliance to the pan-Africanist ideology, in the immediate post-independence era on large-scale immigration from other West African countries into Ghana. On the other hand, the 1969 Aliens' Compliance Order led to massive repatriation of immigrants from Ghana (Awumbila et al., 2008; Dzorgbo, 1998). Other laws that have guided migration in Ghana overtime include the Representation of People's Amendment Act 2007 (Act 669), Labour Act 2003 (Act 651), Children's Act 1998 (Act 560), Immigration Regulations 2001 (L.I. 1691), Immigration Act 2000 (Act 573), The 1963 Aliens Act (Act 160), Refugee Law 1992 (PNDCL 30), The Dual Citizenship Regulation Act etc. National policies that have touched on the drivers, effects and regulation of migration include the 1994 Revised National Population Policy and The Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II). International protocols and conventions also guide migration decisions in Ghana (Awumbila et al., 2008; Quartey, 2009).

Economic and structural policies or interventions by governments that have had direct or indirect impacts on the livelihoods of people have contributed to migration patterns in Ghana (Awumbila et al., 2008; Braimoh, 2004; Quartey, 2009). Globalisation, political and economic stability as well as international policies have had significant impacts on international and internal migration dynamics in Ghana since independence (Awumbila et al., 2008). Similarly, political and economic instability can explain the mass emigration in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Anarfi & Kwankye, 2003; Manuh, 2001; Dzorgbo, 1998).



### ***Impacts of migration***

The main impact of migration in Ghana is population redistribution resulting in the growth of the urban population. Urban growth can be attributed mainly to migration from peripheral rural areas though there is some natural population growth (Yaro et al., 2011; Twumasi-Ankrah, 1995).

The impact of migration on welfare in Ghana has received considerable attention in public discourse (Boakye-Yiadom, 2008) but recently, systematic research is being done to assess the subject. Indubitably, the intricate interplay of the myriad of factors associated with migration and its impacts presents enormous challenges for research. That notwithstanding, survey data provide useful information on the impact of migration.

According to Tutu's (1995) study of the perceptions of migrant's family at the origin, the loss of rural labour due to migration was offset by extra effort put into productive activities by the remaining workforce. Also, family life was not disrupted as a result of migration.

Brain drain as a result of emigration of highly trained and skilled persons including academics and medical personnel is widely documented (Ackah & Medvedev, 2010; Anarfi & Kwankye, 2003; Awumbila et al., 2008; Boakye-Yiadom, 2008).

Women's active participation in the migratory process and labour market significantly affects their social reproductive roles and behaviours (Codjoe, 2007; White et al., 2005).

The literature on internal migration suggests that the welfare of sending families and communities in Ghana is generally improved through remittance flows and the instrumental roles of migrants in the development of projects in their localities of origin (Asante, 1995; Litchfield and Waddington, 2003; Tsegai, 2005; Boakye-Yiadom, 2008). Remittances sent by migrants from rural areas have the function of redistributing welfare and narrowing the rural-urban welfare gap (Asante, 1995; Litchfield and Waddington, 2003; Tsegai, 2005). However, other show that migration has modest impact on non-monetary welfare (Litchfield and Waddington, 2003; Ackah & Medvedev, 2010).

Migration's impact on destination communities is mixed. While rural-urban migration might contribute to urban unemployment many rural-urban migrants resort to the informal sector if they are unable to gain employment in the formal sector (Asante, 1995).

In terms of resource exploitation, Codjoe & Bilsborrow (2012) find that there is no significant difference between migrant and non-migrant farmers though they acknowledge that they find evidence of land-intensive practices which degrade land resources over time. Codjoe et al. (2012) find that host communities tend to perceive migrant groups as nuisance responsible increasing social vices, deteriorating facilities and putting pressure on facilities. This exposes migrants to hostilities and conflict with host communities (Yaro et al., 2011).

Evidence on the impact of migration in Ghana is still unfolding. In Ghana, even though the expression of concern about the effects of migration (mainly rural-to-urban) is commonly negative, the impacts on the migrants and on the sending households and communities seems generally net-beneficial, whilst the net effect on destination communities is unclear (Boakye-Yiadom, 2008).

## **Migration from the Volta Delta**

There is a dearth of literature on migration from or into the Volta Delta. Particularly, Tsikata (2006) discusses the massive out-migration from the Lower Volta due to the construction of the Akosombo Dam. The mass out-migration was a response to the destruction of the environment on which the people's livelihoods depended. These were mainly farmers and fisher folk. A common destination for migration was towns around the Volta Lake where they could undertake their fishing activities or farming. Other destinations include Tema, Ashaiman and Accra. Whereas, in some cases migrants continued to send remittances after to support livelihoods some others lost their kinship ties with their origins.

Odotei (2002) also documents international migration of fisherfolk from the coast of the Lower Volta along the coast of West Africa. There were groups of fisher migrants from the western to the eastern coast of the Volta Delta area. Among their reasons for migration included coastal erosion and economic hardships. Migration involved both men and women and sometimes entire household were involved.

Typical of many migration patterns, people in the Volta Delta whose livelihoods are dependent on land resources (farmers and fishermen) and who intend to continue their traditional livelihoods tend to migrate to other rural areas (Tsikata, 2005). Those with some skill or who seek to diversify their livelihoods choose urban areas as their destinations (Tsikata, 2006). Marine fishermen in the delta area, like others fisher folk along the coast of Ghana, travel along the Gulf of Guinea to other West African countries as well as settle along the coast of Ghana (Akyeampong, 2007; Kraan, 2009; Mensah et al., 2006; Odotei, 2002a, 2002b; Owusu, 2009). The direction of flow for migrants from the Tongu area is northwards along the banks of the Volta Lake (Tsikata, 2006).

### ***Temporary and cyclical patterns versus permanent migration***

Coastal fishermen migrate seasonally or permanently in order to ensure year-round productivity (Golo, 2012). Also, there is seasonal migration among fishermen in keeping with seasonal migration of fish species such as the sardinella (Mensah et al., 2006; Odotei, 1992).

Inland fisheries however create opportunities for migrants from the lower Volta to subsequently resettle along the rivers in Northern Ghana, a phenomenon which would be aided by the creation of the Volta Dam (Lawson, 1958).

### ***Internal versus international destinations***

Artisanal fishermen have migrated within Ghana and beyond its shores (Kraan, 2009). Marine fishermen migrated along the West African coast to neighbouring La Cote d'Ivoire (Delaunay, 1991; Haakonsen, 1991; Odotei, 2002b), Togo and Benin (Odotei, 2002a) and as far western as Sierra Leone and far eastern as Cameroon and Gabon (Haakonsen, 1991; Odotei, 1992). Mensah et al. (2006) indicate that they even migrate to Mauritania and Angola.

Freshwater fishing on the Lake Volta led to migration upstream after the creation of the Volta Dam (Tsikata, 2004).

### ***Push and pull factors***

The main motive for migrating is economic in nature. Artisanal fishermen migrate in order to make lump sum savings as well as avoid lean-season poverty (Mensah et al., 2006). Some move in order to

escape family or social obligations such as funerals and festivals (Mensah et al., 2006; Odotei, 2002a, 2002b) while others migrate for recognition associated with enlightenment due to cultural change (Mensah et al., 2006). According to Akyeampong (2007), some Anlo fisher migrants moved in order to conserve fish stock. Sea erosion has also been identified as an ecological factor driving out fisher folk from the Anlo area (Odotei, 2002a).

The ability to engage in economic activities is a factor that stops people from migrating. Tsikata (2006) notes how clam-picking, baking and basketry among other economic activities gave women some economic autonomy in the Lower Volta. Thus they did not have to migrate with their husbands when they moved. The availability of land for farming activities also is also identified as a positive factor for people to stay.

### ***Characteristics of migrants***

Particularly, young men and women migrate. Among migrant fishermen and women in Benin, Odotei (2002a) identified the majority as being between 20 and 49 years though they comprised of children, youth, adults and aged.

Both men and women migrate. Seasonal migration usually involves men but as they settle they are joined by their partners (Odotei, 1992, 2002a; Tsikata, 2006). There are also instances of independent female migrants (Odotei, 1992).

Most young men and women acquired formal education or learnt a trade to prepare for migration. Young males were mainly trained in building, fishing and farming (Tsikata, 2006).

### ***Characteristics of people who stay***

Among those who never migrated were old men and women with a sense of place (Tsikata, 2006). Also, children of migrating parents stay in order to receive education in the sending areas.

Women usually stay behind to take care of their young schooling children and families (Tsikata, 2006). For some women in polygynous relationships, their husbands may decide to migrate with a partner other than them (Tsikata, 2006).

A presumed advantage for not migrating out of the Lower Volta area includes increased access to lineage resources such as farmland due to dwindled opposition from migrant relatives (Tsikata, 2006).

### ***Migrant sending areas and destinations***

Beach seine fishermen from the Anlo area leave to permanently establish communities within and beyond Ghana (Kraan, 2009; Mensah et al., 2006). Similarly, fishers from the Dangme area have been known to migrate elsewhere both permanently and seasonally.

Seasonally, people moved from the Tongu Ewe area to engage in upper fresh water, tidal fresh water and creek fishing upstream the Volta (Lawson, 1958; Tsikata, 2006).

Migrants move to the central and western coasts of Ghana to establish permanent communities (Kraan, 2009). Some migrants from the Tongu area settle northward around the Volta Lake (Lawson, 1958; Tsikata, 2004). Big towns and cities in the Greater Accra Region including Tema, Ashaiman and Accra are also common destinations for migrants (Tsikata, 2004). It appears however that this latter

group comprised mainly of younger persons who sought to diversify their livelihoods rather than continue with traditional occupations.

Fisher migrants also travel to other countries in the West African sub-region along the Gulf of Guinea (Owusu, 2009; Odotei, 2002a, 2003). Odotei documents experiences of migrant fishermen in neighbouring Togo, Benin and La Cote d'Ivoire.

Movements to particular locations are very often, though not always, guided by prospective migrants' having relations there or knowing some people there (Tsikata, 2006).

Among the pull factors for Anlo-Ewe migrants are favourable beaches (Owusu, 2009) and seasonal abundance of fishes in other areas (Kraan, 2009; Mensah et al., 2006; Odotei, 2002a, 2002b). The lack of indigenous skills for marine fishing acts as an attractive pull for skilled fishermen to migrate where their services are in high demand and attract higher returns (Odotei, 2002a, 2002b).

Unfavourable living conditions with host communities which include hostility from hosts resulting in the insecurity and loss of dignity of migrants and is a major factor pushing Tongu Ewe migrants upstream the Volta (Tsikata, 2006).

### ***Gender***

Migration is originally initiated and dominated by males (Tsikata, 2004). Females, mainly wives or partners of migrating fishermen, later join their husbands to help trade the catch and process the fish for storage (Mensah et al., 2006; Odotei, 1992). Whether women move to join their partners is dependent on the length of the migratory period. Women are less likely to accompany their partners on short-term seasonal migration than they are when their partners' move is permanent or long term (Odotei, 1992). Though these women may engage in economic activities including trading and processing their roles as wives supersede their economic roles (ibid).

There exist however independent female migrants whose motives for moving are largely economic. These are mainly single, separated or divorced Ga Dangme women between the ages 20 and 30 (Odotei, 1992).

### ***Migrant networks***

Migrant communities negotiate with host communities and officialdom for spaces for fishing, farming and settlement (Kraan, 2009; Tsikata, 2006). They also tend to associate with their social networks in the destination areas (Odotei, 2002a).

Migrant fisher folks have been known to organise themselves based on ethnic affinity. They contribute to common welfare funds on which they can rely in case of death and other contingencies (Odotei, 2002b; Tsikata, 2006). Social networks are not only based on ethnic ties but also family and friendship bases. These groupings facilitate the formation of local savings and credit unions known as 'susu' groups particularly among women (Odotei, 1992).

### ***Remittances***

Some migrants send remittances home as a way of continuing links with their sending areas (Tsikata, 2006). Migrants contribute to the livelihoods of their relations in the place of origin by sending remittances (Tsikata, 2006). Remittances are sent regularly, occasionally or even in times of distress (Tsikata, 2006).

Remittances take many forms; foodstuffs and money. The support received from migrants however is declining due to changing relationships between migrants and indigenes of the Lower Volta (Tsikata, 2006).

### ***Culture***

Migrants may return to their origins for traditional festivals and major rites of passage such as birth, marriage and funerals (Odotei, 2002a; Owusu, 2009; Tsikata, 2006). At their places of destinations, such rites of passage are conducted according to the customs of their sending areas though variations tend to be produced overtime (Tsikata, 2006).

### ***Return migrant flows***

Temporary returnees include women who have come to have a baby, care for sick or aged parents or close relative and to look after children in school (Tsikata, 2006). Migrants may return to their origins for traditional festivals and social ceremonies such as funerals (Owusu, 2009).

General well-being, health and livelihood crises are some reasons why people return to their origins and stop migrating (Odotei, 2002a; Tsikata, 2006). Retirement also features in older persons' decision to return to sending areas (Tsikata, 2006). Some also returned because they failed to achieve their aims for migration. Some females returned due to marital problems or because their partners had asked them to.

Male children of international fisher migrants are usually sent home to their grandparents in Ghana for education and upbringing (Odotei, 2002b).

### ***Migrant volume and shifts***

Though explicit figures on migration do not exist now there are estimates of about 1000-1500 fishermen who travelled from the Tongu area of the Lower Volta upstream for the fishing season annually in the 1950s.

Migration patterns have changed over time. The damming of the Volta River to create the lake immediately evoked massive out-migration leading to population loss in the Lower Volta during the 1960s. (Tsikata, 2006).

There has been a significant shift from Tongu migrants' rural destination around the Volta Lake to urban areas (Tsikata, 2006).

Tsikata (2006) notes that earlier pre-dam and post-dam Tongu migrants consisted particularly of all male groups who were fishermen and their assistants. Women were particularly concerned with domestic labour and economic activities that did not require them to move such as pottery, mat-weaving and clam-picking. With time they had to move to join their partners to support them with fish processing and marketing.

### **Conclusion**

There is a long tradition of migration in Ghana dating as far as the precolonial era. Migration in Ghana is predominantly internal though there is some international migration. The main forms of internal migration in Ghana are urban-urban, rural-urban, rural-rural and north-south migration. The drivers of each type of migration are distinct though the main reason for move is to seek employment or engage in economic activities. Migration mainly involves young people and is

determined by education, economic background and household experience with migration. Though migration mainly involves males there is an active participation of young unmarried females. This is a transformation from women's traditional migration roles as accompanying spouses or family caregivers. Migration is affected by structural economic and governance policies though Ghana does not have an explicit policy on migration. Migration also impacts population distribution and population welfare.

## References

- Abu, M., Codjoe, S. N. A., & Sward, J. (2013). Climate change and internal migration intentions in the forest-savannah transition zone of Ghana. doi:10.1007/s11111-013-0191-y
- Ackah, C., & Medvedev, D. (2010). *Internal Migration in Ghana Determinants and Welfare Impacts*.
- Anarfi, J., & Kwankye, S. (2003). Migration from and to Ghana : A Background Paper, (December).
- Asiedu, A. (2005). Return Visits to Ghana, 11, 1–11. doi:10.1002/psp.350
- Awumbila, M., & Ardayfio-Schandorf, E. (2008). Gendered poverty, migration and livelihood strategies of female porters in Accra, Ghana. *Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift - Norwegian Journal of Geography*, 62, 171–179. doi:10.1080/00291950802335772
- Awumbila, M., Manuh, T., Quartey, P., Tagoe, C. A., & Bosiakoh, T. A. (2008). Country Paper : 1–60.
- Boakye-Yiadom, L. (2008). *Rural-Urban Linkages and Welfare : The Case of Ghana ' s Migration and Remittance Flows*. University of Bath.
- Braimoh, A. K. (2004). Seasonal Migration and Land-Use Change in Ghana. *Land Degradation & Development*, 15, 37–47.
- Caldwell, J.C. (1968). "Determinants of Rural-Urban Migration in Ghana", *Population Studies: A Journal of Demography*, 22(3), pp. 361-377
- Caldwell, J. C. (1969). *African rural-urban migration: the movement to Ghana's towns*. Canberra: Australian National University Press.
- Codjoe, S. N. A. (2007). Integrating remote sensing, GIS, census, and socioeconomic data in studying the population-land use/cover nexus in Ghana: A literature update. *Africa Development*, 32, 197–212. doi:10.4314/ad.v32i2.57188
- Codjoe, S. N. A., & Bilsborrow, R. E. (2012). Are migrants exceptional resource degraders? A study of agricultural households in Ghana. *GeoJournal*, 77, 681–694. doi:10.1007/s10708-011-9417-7
- Dietz, A. J., Ruben, R., & Verhagen, A. (2004). *The Impact of Climate Change on Drylands - With a Focus on West Africa. Environment and Policy* (Vol. 39, p. 465). doi:10.1007/1-4020-2158-5
- Ghana Statistical Service. (2013). *2010 Population & Housing Census - National Analytical Report*.
- Hill, P., Austin, G., & International African Institute. (1997). *The migrant cocoa-farmers of southern Ghana : a study in rural capitalism. Classics in African anthropology* (pp. xxviii, v–[xvi], 265, [3] , [8] of plates).
- Kwankye, S. O., Anarfi, J. K., Tagoe, C. A., & Castaldo, A. (2007). Coping Strategies of Independent Child Migrants from Northern Ghana to Southern Cities, (November).

- Kwankye, S. O., Anarfi, J. K., Tagoe, C. A., & Castaldo, A. (2009). Independent North-South Child Migration in Ghana : The Decision Making Process, (February).
- Odotei, I. K. (2002). *There is money in the sea: Ghanaian migrant fishermen and women in the Ivory Coast*. Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon.
- Odotei, I. K. (2002). *Sea Power, Money Power: Ghanaian Migrant Fisherman and Women in the Republic of Benin*. Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon.
- Quartey, P. (2009). *Migration in Ghana*. International Organization for Migration.
- Rain, D., Engstrom, R., & Ludlow, C. (2011). Accra Ghana : A City Vulnerable to Flooding and Drought-Induced Migration, (May 2009).
- Tsegai, D. (2005). Impacts of migration and remittances on farm and non-farm self-employment incomes in the Volta Basin of Ghana. In *11th EADI General Conference on Insecurity and Development*,. Bonn.
- Tsikata, D. (2006). *Living in the Shadow of the Large Dams: Long Term Responses of Downstream and Lakeside Communities of Ghana's Volta River Project*. Brill.
- Tutu, R. A. (2010). Determinants of the Estimation of Return Migration Propensities among Young People in the Face of Risk: Accra, Ghana. *Journal of Applied Sciences*, 10(8), 620–627.
- Twumasi-ankrah, K. (1995). Rural-urban migration and socioeconomic development in Ghana: some discussions. *Journal of Social Development in Africa*, 10(2), 13–22. Retrieved from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12291991>
- Van der Geest, K. (2011). North-South Migration in Ghana : What Role for the Environment ? *Internaional Migration*, 49, e67–e94. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2435.2010.00645.x
- Van der Geest, K., Vrieling, A., & Dietz, T. (2010). Migration and environment in Ghana: a cross-district analysis of human mobility and vegetation dynamics. *Environment and Urbanization*. doi:10.1177/0956247809362842