

IOM COUNTRY STRATEGY FOR GHANA 2022 - 2025



PUBLISHER

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IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As an intergovernmental organization, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to: assist in meeting the operational challenges of migration; advance understanding of migration issues; encourage social and economic development through migration; and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

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ACRONYMS

AU	African Union
AVRR	Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration
BMA	Border Management Agency
CSO	Civil Society Organization
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
GCM	Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIS	Ghana Immigration Service
GoG	Government of Ghana
GPS	Ghana Police Service
IBM	Immigration and Border Management
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPC	Infection Protection and Control
MDA	Ministry, Department and Agency
MELR	Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations
MINTER	Ministry of the Interior
MoFARI	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration
MPA	Migrant Protection and Assistance
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PoE	Point of Entry
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SoM	Smuggling of Migrants
SoP	Standard Operating Procedure
TiP	Trafficking in Persons
TiPIS	Trafficking in Persons Information System
VoT	Victim of Trafficking
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNNM	United Nations Network on Migration
WCA	West and Central Africa

FOREWORD



The past decade has been one of tremendous growth for the International Organization for Migration (IOM). In 2016, the Organization officially joined the United Nations (UN) family and with the launch of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) in 2018, it became the coordinator of the UN Network on Migration. These developments demonstrate that IOM is increasingly seen to be a thought-leader in the area of migration, and the Organization has launched various policy documents in recent years to leverage this position. These include the IOM Strategic Vision (2019-2023), IOM Regional Strategy for West and Central Africa (2020-2024) and IOM Continental Strategy for Africa (2020-2024).

IOM's Country Office in Ghana was first established in 1987, and ever since it has worked to support the Government of Ghana (GoG) manage migration in a safe, orderly and regular manner. As a country of origin, transit and destination, in a region of hyper migration, Ghana's migration dynamics are complex. While many are attracted to the country for its relative stability, others leave for lack of economic opportunities. Climate change continues to contribute towards migration trends, particularly the rise of movement from rural to urban areas. In response to this context, the GoG has developed a robust policy framework on migration governance. Main policies include the National Migration Policy (2016) and National Labour Migration Policy (2019), with several others currently under development. It has also volunteered to be a champion country for GCM implementation – just another example of the country's commitment to migration management.

The IOM Ghana Country Strategy 2022-2025 offers an opportunity to plan our interventions in the coming years under six Strategic Priorities which, taken together, will support the GoG and migrants in collaboration with development partners, civil society, academia and the private sector. It also presents an opportunity to take stock of strengths as well as emerging challenges in migration, key among them those occasioned by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

I am excited to launch this Country Strategy, which was developed in consultation with the GoG. Its implementation will amplify the benefits of migration while address its challenges. In doing so, together with our partners, we will contribute towards the achievement of safe, orderly and regular migration in Ghana, as well as the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Abibatou Wane-Fall
IOM Ghana Chief of Mission

About IOM

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is the United Nations (UN) Migration Agency and the leading inter-governmental organization in the field of migration, working closely with its key stakeholders – migrants, Member States and civil society actors, including the private sector - to promote humane, safe, and orderly migration. It does so by supporting governments and migrants in developing effective holistic responses and by serving as a key source of advice on migration policy and practice. The Organization works in both emergency and non-emergency situations, developing resilient and sustainable solutions for migrants and communities. IOM was established in 1951 and as of March 2019 it has 173 Member States and offices in over 100 countries. In the West and Central Africa (WCA) region, IOM operates through 20 Country Offices located across the region, including Ghana.

As recognized in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, human mobility is part and parcel of the global objective towards development. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – and the commitment to leave no one behind and to reach the furthest behind – will not be achieved without due consideration of migration. Additionally, the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) is grounded in the 2030 Agenda and promotes the principles of having a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to address this intrinsic link. In the same vein, the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063 and the AU Migration Policy Framework for Africa (2018-2030) recognize continental integration based on freedom of movement as one of the foundations for inclusive and sustainable development on the continent.



Following the presentation of the IOM Strategic Vision 2019-2023 to Member States in November 2019, IOM launched its Continental Strategy for Africa 2020-2024 in November 2020 and subsequently its WCA Regional Strategy 2020-2024 in December 2020. These documents reflect the Organization's determination and vision on developing long term solutions, in order to effectively address complex challenges and seize the many opportunities migration offers to both migrants and society. It responds to new and emerging responsibilities – including membership in the UN and coordination of the UN Network on Migration – as we enter the Decade of Action to achieve the SDGs.

This Country Strategy will support the GoG to leverage the potential of migration through a whole-of-government approach to achieve sustainable development outcomes for all. It is a direct contribution to the Decade of Action to fast-track progress for reaching the SDGs. It brings greater coherence and development impact to IOM's activities and allows for a joined-up approach to the way the Organization designs and delivers its operations, as called for in IOM's Strategic Vision 2019-2023. Furthermore, this Country Strategy is aligned with the IOM Strategic Vision 2019-2023, the IOM Continental Strategy for Africa 2020-2024, the IOM Regional Strategy for WCA 2020-2024, and the IOM Strategic Results Framework (SRF), which are anchored in the overall framework of the 2030 Agenda, the GCM, and the AU Migration Policy Framework.

IOM in Ghana

The IOM office in Accra was established in 1987 and currently has 82 staff members, supporting and strengthening its presence through a wide range of migration-related activities. IOM Ghana is structured along the global programmatic divisions of Migration Management and Operations and Emergencies. Migration Management programmes in Ghana include a focus on Migrant Protection and Assistance (MPA), including direct assistance to vulnerable migrants, counter human trafficking, assisted voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR), migrant health, migration policy development, migration data management, immigration and border management (IBM), labour migration and human development and overall capacity building on Migration Management. Operations and Emergencies programmes include managing the movements and logistics for the resettlement of refugees and supporting the GoG in preparedness and response to humanitarian emergencies.

Some highlights of IOM's recent MPA interventions include: the refurbishment of shelters for victims of trafficking (VoTs); the development of Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) on identifying, screening, and referral of suspected cases of human trafficking; and the development of a Trafficking in Persons Information System (TiPIS) for regional and national policy makers to collect data on human trafficking trends.

The United States Department of State Trafficking in Persons (TiP) report rates Ghana as a Tier 2 country, highlighting that although the government is making significant efforts it still does not meet the minimum requirement for the elimination of internal and international human trafficking. IOM Ghana has managed AVRR programmes for over 15 years, supporting the successful return and reintegration of over 2,000 migrants in the last three years, including the voluntary return of 1,847 stranded or arbitrarily detained migrants from Niger and Libya. Reintegration support includes psychosocial counseling and assistance to set up a micro enterprise. The mission is also supporting the government to establish SoPs and a referral mechanism to support reintegration so that assistance given to return migrants is standardized and that reintegration is sustainable.

The mission has extensive partnership experience working with IBM institutions at the local, provincial and national level. Its recent achievements include the institutionalization of integrated border management in the country through developing coordination mechanisms amongst border agencies and strengthening their capacities by improving equipment, infrastructure and human resource capacities; establishing migrant information centres to promote safe and regular migration; and strengthening the institutional mechanism for



IOM main office in Accra ©IOM/Ghana



IOM Ghana staff ©IOM/Ghana

collecting and processing migration data generated at the borders. IOM also supported the development of a national action plan and capacity building tools on the smuggling of migrants (SoM), and the establishment of information sharing SoPs between Ghana, Benin and Togo on the same topic. In line with the 'AU Strategy for a Better Integrated Border Governance', the mission has also successfully advocated for border community engagement and has positively and substantively engaged communities and local stakeholders in developing stronger communication channels with local and border authorities to enhance border governance.

With dedicated medical staff, nurses and lab technicians, IOM has over the years provided essential medical assistance to refugees, potential and returning Ghanaian migrants, and mobile populations. It supported the development of public health emergency response plans at nine borders in Ghana in response to the Ebola crisis and also the training of Port Health personnel and Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) officers on infection prevention and control (IPC) in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. IOM is currently participating in several committees that address surveillance, points of entry (PoEs), laboratory and risk communication to provide technical support to the government in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

The mission has also worked alongside government to build the framework for national migration governance, including through support in the development of the National Migration Policy (2016), National Migration Data Management Strategy (2017), National Labour Migration Policy (2019), and the realization of a migration governance assessment in 2019. Ghana also recently conducted national consultations on the GCM, with support from the United Nations Network on Migration (UNNM). Within the framework of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT), IOM serves as, amongst other things, the coordinator of the UNNM,

supporting not only the process of GCM implementation but also the integration of the migration agenda into broad development planning. IOM Ghana has also supported strengthening the evidence base for migration policy development through, amongst other means, reinforcing the capacity of the Ghana Statistical Service on migration data analysis and supporting the development of a migration module in the national census questionnaire.

Additionally, IOM Ghana works with different arms of the government on programmes and activities supporting better migration management and governance, including in the engagement of diaspora; strengthening the usage of remittances; and capacity building on several areas of migration management, such as protection of children on the move, investigation of TIP and SoM, detection of fraudulent documents, and preparedness and response to mobility induced crisis.



MHAC office in Accra ©IOM/Ghana



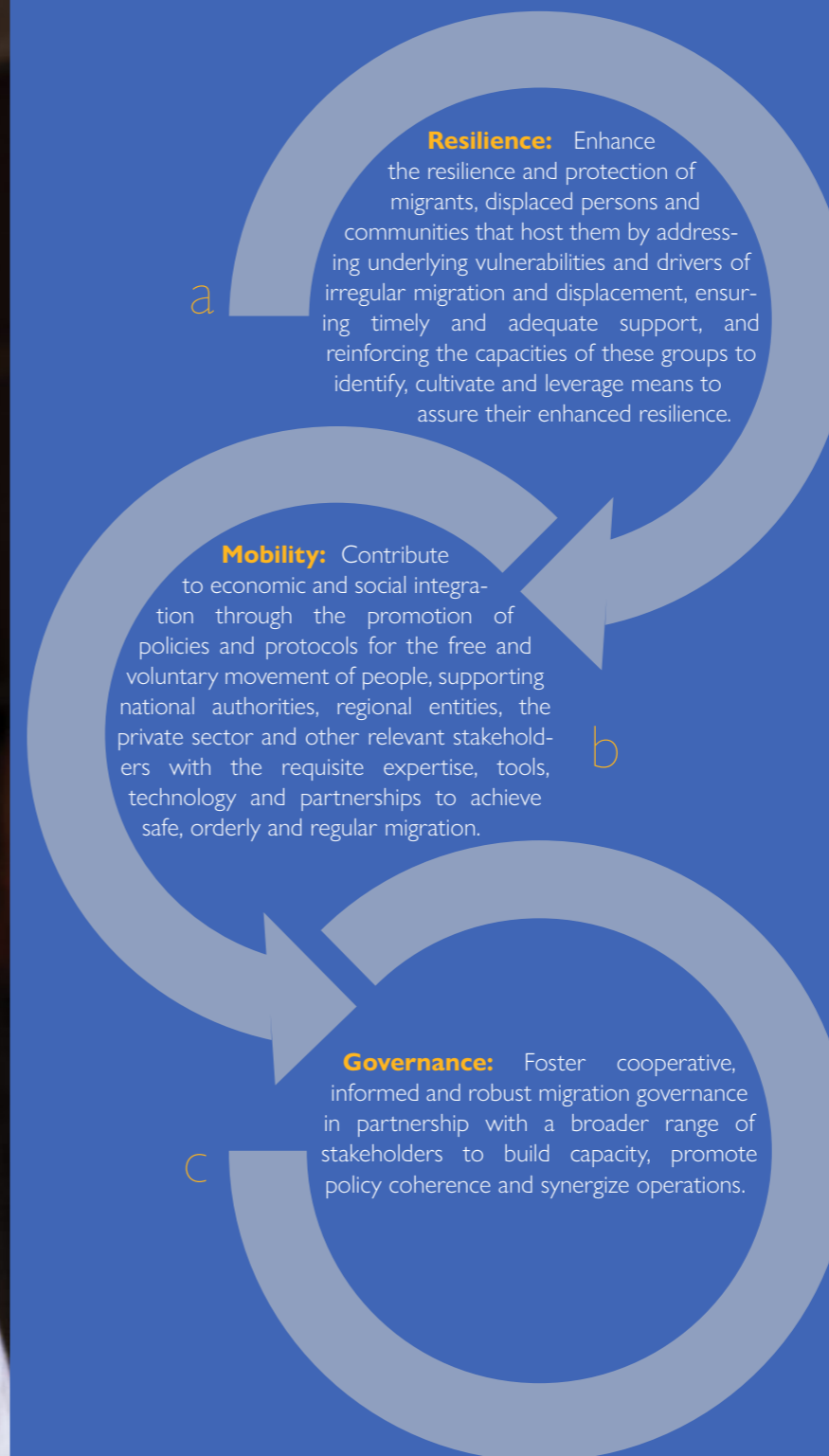
IOM beneficiary, Jamilatu, at her second-hand clothing business in Walewale ©IOM/Ghana



IOM beneficiary, Fuseini,
at his business in Pig Farm, Accra ©IOM/Ghana

Vision Statement

Based on the IOM Strategic Vision 2019-2023, IOM Continental Strategy for Africa 2020-2024, IOM Regional Strategy for WCA 2020-2024, the objectives articulated in this Country Strategy are founded on the three pillars of resilience, mobility and governance.



IOM Ghana, as articulated in this Strategy (2022-2025), aims as a priority focus to reinforce the positive impacts of human mobility to social development in Ghana by improving access to safe, orderly and regular migration founded on evidence-based policies and rights-based practices whilst addressing the various adverse drivers of irregular and forced migration. In line with the above-mentioned three pillars, this goal will be realised through strategic engagements aimed at building the resilience of migrants and their communities of origin; strengthening existing migration management systems so that they are more protection sensitive to mobility induced vulnerabilities; and reinforcing the policy and legal framework for migration governance, through supporting the effective implementation of the National Migration Policy and related sectoral policies, while also improving the evidence-base for policy making through strengthening systems for migration data management and research.

The focus of IOM Ghana on harnessing the developmental benefits inherent in migration are in line with the socio-economic development agenda of the government and peoples of Ghana as espoused in the Ghana Beyond Aid Agenda and the corresponding Medium-Term National Development Policy Framework (2022-2025) in which the GoG recognizes improved migration management as an integral factor in boosting social-economic development.

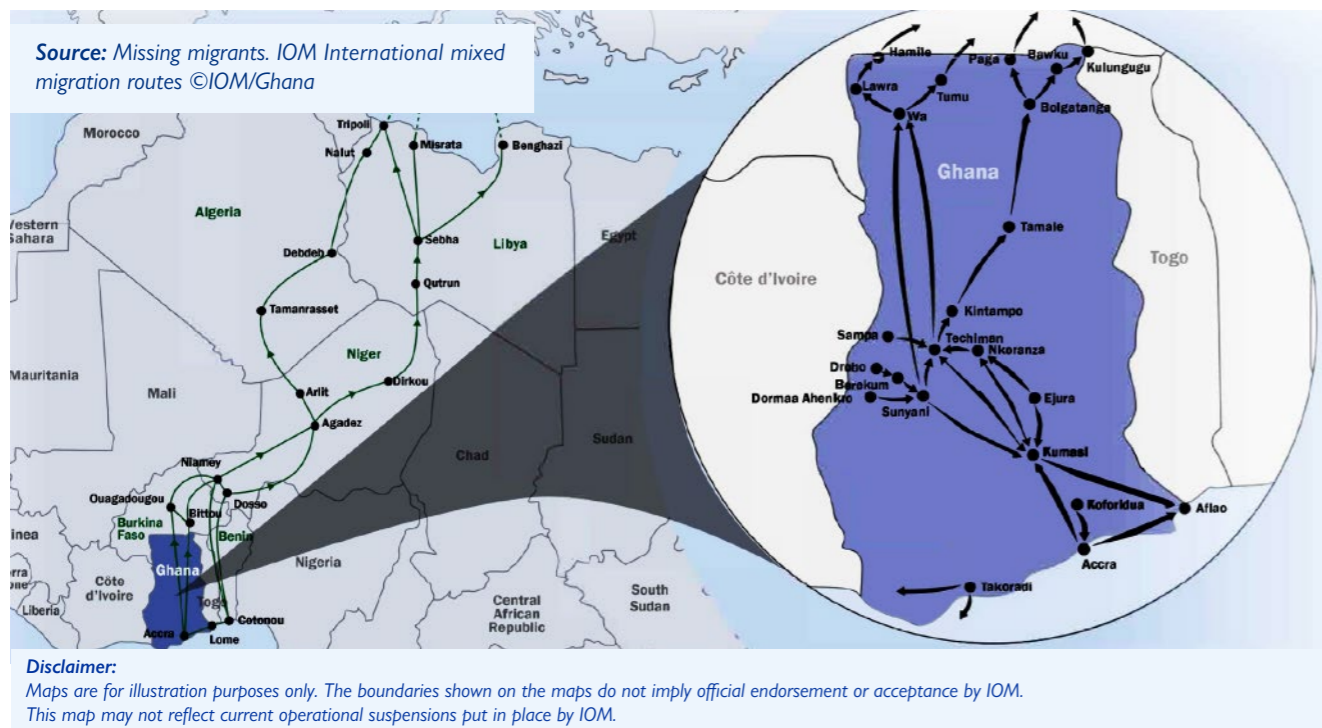
Context of Migration in Ghana

a. Introduction

Ghana is an important origin, transit and destination country for migrants in the West Africa region. Migration dynamics are influenced by various historical factors and evolving contemporary ones. For instance, in the precolonial and the immediate postcolonial eras, labour migrants from countries in the region, including Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Nigeria, were drawn to economic opportunities in the gold mines and cocoa plantations of Ghana.

occurring within the free movement space. This trend is underlined by the fact that of the estimated 476,400 immigrants (UN DESA, 2020) residing in Ghana, 83.6 percent of them originate from other ECOWAS countries. Further, a prolonged period of relative democratic stability has seen Ghana increasingly become an interesting destination for labour migrants from the continent and beyond, as well as foreign direct investment.

Source: Missing migrants. IOM International mixed migration routes ©IOM/Ghana



Equally, intercommunal ties between ethnic groups in Ghana and those in the neighboring countries of Togo and Côte d'Ivoire, such as the Ewe and Akan respectively, have historically meant that, despite the national boundaries delineated during the colonial era, the border regions of Ghana have remained areas of intense transnational economic and social exchange, with students, seasonal migrants, traders and cross-border workers traversing the land borders as part of their daily routine. The scope and nature of this regional migration flow has intensified in part due to Ghana's accession to the 1975 Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the related 1979 ECOWAS Free Movement Protocols, which created a visa-free zone between 15 West African countries, including Ghana. An estimated 350 million people (UN DESA, 2018) live in the free movement zone and it has been described as a region of hyper migration, with an estimated 84 percent of

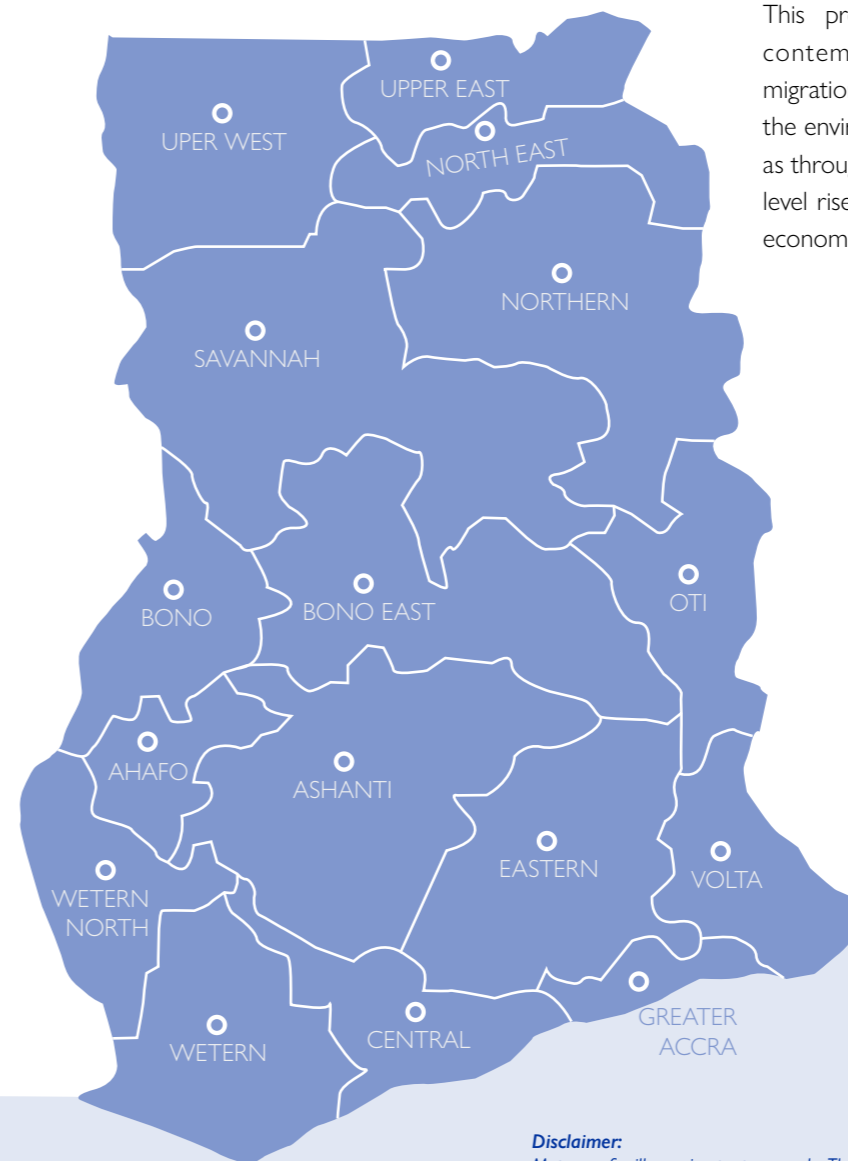
Ghanaian emigrants total an estimated 1,004,324 people (UN DESA, 2020), with around 48 percent of them residing within the ECOWAS region. Europe (29 percent) and North America (20 percent) also constitute important migration destinations for Ghanaian migrants. Emigration in Ghana has largely been conditioned by economic pressures and evolving international social networks. Periods of economic decline in the late 1960s, mid-1980s and 1990s saw waves of emigration to other West African countries, North America, Europe, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon and China, which have led to the establishment of diaspora networks in these countries. Contemporary emigration flows continue to these destinations precipitated by pressure on the national labour market and the existence of diaspora networks. With a gross domestic product (GDP) per capita of USD 1,305 in 2010, the country attained middle-income status and has witnessed relative economic and political stability in recent years.

Ghana is also the second largest recipient of remittances in West Africa, with USD 3.521 billion in 2019, equating to 5.2 percent of GDP, underlining the importance of its diaphora to its national economy. However, the country has also experienced simultaneous rapid population growth, with the national population growing from 18,912,079 in 2000 to an estimated 31,100,000 in 2020, and a projection of 52,000,000 by 2050 (UN DESA, 2020). Rapid population growth has been accompanied by a youth bulge, making it difficult for labour markets to keep pace with the teeming labour force. The World Bank highlights that Ghana has a youth unemployment rate of 12 percent and a youth under-employment rate of 50 percent.



Shia border post in the Volta Region ©IOM/Ghana

This pressure on the labour markets has catalyzed contemporary migration flows, including rural-urban migration and emigration from Ghana. Climate change and the environment have also contributed to these trends, such as through increasing rainfall unpredictability in the north, sea level rise in coastal and deltaic areas, or the proliferation of economic opportunities in the mining sector.



Disclaimer: Maps are for illustration purposes only. The boundaries shown on the maps do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM. This map may not reflect current operational suspensions put in place by IOM.



b. Mobility Challenges and Gaps

Ghanaian migrants still face many challenges, notably in regards to protection along the migration cycle. Unrelenting youth unemployment has increasingly seen many young people regard migration as the only avenue to escape poverty causing some of them who cannot migrate regularly to turn to the services of smugglers to facilitate their irregular entry into destination countries. This has led numerous Ghanaian youth seeking employment abroad to fall victim to human trafficking and other forms of exploitation. Many young people continue to try to make the perilous journey through the Central Mediterranean Route (traversing Niger and Libya) despite the associated risks, such as arbitrary detention, kidnapping, and torture, with the aspiration of eventually crossing the Mediterranean to reach Europe and better living standards. IOM figures highlight that there are currently around 25,205 Ghanaian migrants in Libya.

Internal migrants also face protection challenges. Like most of the littoral states in the region, the economy of Ghana is largely dominated by the informal sector and urbanization is geographically biased to the coastal south due to the availability of more economic opportunities in major southern cities, such as Accra and Tema. This is also influenced by the coastal south experiencing more favourable environmental conditions, with the north increasingly characterized by unpredictable rainfall and increased desertification due to climate change. Consequently, many young people from the centre and north are drawn to the south, seeking employment in the largely unregulated informal sector, where they are sometimes subject to unscrupulous or exploitative recruitment. Immigrants from the ECOWAS region are also faced with similar circumstances. Although the Free Movement Protocols give them the right to enter Ghana and seek employment,



Counter-Trafficking rescue mission ©IOM/Ghana

the protection mechanisms for workers in most ECOWAS Member States are underdeveloped, especially in the informal sector. Ghana's National Labour Migration Policy notes that of the 200 recruitment agencies operating in Ghana only 43 are registered with the Labour Department (as stipulated by law), creating a large protection gap as the majority of recruitment agencies are unregulated. Adverse drivers of migration, such as regional development disparities and protection deficits mean that migrants who are oftentimes the breadwinners of their families are not able to fulfill their migration aspirations, not only adversely affecting them and their families' living standards but also their potential contribution to national development, through remittances or taxes, for instance. Migrants, their communities of origin and the communities that host them need to be better integrated into national development planning, with tailor-made strategies that include protection mechanisms to ensure that they are able to contribute to development positively. Such an initiative should also include border communities, which play an important role in migration management in West Africa.

Considering the integration aims of ECOWAS Member States, border management in Ghana and West Africa in general is central to not only the facilitation of goods and trade but also the protection of persons moving between countries. As noted earlier, border regions have historically been areas of vibrant socio-economic activity, with communities of similar cultural heritage inhabiting both sides of most borders. However, this has also engendered a phenomenon of numerous irregular crossing points between cross-border communities. The GIS indicates that there are currently 45 approved terrestrial PoEs and 67 unapproved ones. These unapproved routes are increasingly exploited by smugglers and human traffickers, and border management agencies (BMAs) face several challenges in effectively responding to these threats, including lack of resources, infrastructure, equipment, data and mistrust created between BMAs and border communities. This situation has sharpened concerns in Ghana regarding border security, particularly in light of the increasing activities of violent extremist organizations (VEOs) in the Sahel region, especially in Burkina Faso which borders Ghana to the north. Security in Burkina Faso has deteriorated rapidly since 2015 with violent attacks perpetrated by VEOs, including targeted assassinations, roadside bombings and kidnappings. This has caused the government to declare a "state of emergency" in 14 of the country's 45 provinces since December 2018. There is also a concerning possibility

of a humanitarian cross-border crisis between the two countries as an estimated 1,400,000 people are currently internally displaced in Burkina Faso. Further, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has also highlighted the importance that PoEs play in the public health system in Ghana and the need to not only reinforce the security infrastructure at borders but also to reinforce emergency response mechanisms, including the capacity to respond to humanitarian and public health emergencies.

The government has developed policy responses to the highlighted challenges. The National Migration Policy (2016) seeks to give overall policy coherence to actions in all aspects of migration management. A policy on labour migration

(2019), seeking to protect migrant workers and standardise recruitment practices, has been developed and another on diaspora engagement is currently in the pipeline. The government is in the process of finalizing a border management strategy and has adopted a National Framework for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Terrorism (2019). Strategic direction on the management of migration data is addressed in the National Migration Data Management Strategy (2017) and the government has an active plan of action to combat TIP. A national COVID-19 response plan, which includes capacity building for BMAs on disease surveillance and IPC, is also currently being implemented.



Victims of trafficking returning to their country of origin ©IOM/Ghana

Strategic Objectives, Priorities and Key Actions

a. Strategic Objectives

In line with the IOM Strategic Vision 2019-2023, IOM Ghana's strategic objectives are founded on the three pillars of the IOM Strategic Vision (resilience, mobility, and governance) and are in line with national and global development frameworks and related sectoral policies, including but not limited to the SDGs; the National Security Strategy 2021; GoG's Agenda for Jobs: Creating prosperity and equal opportunity for all

2018-2021; and the National Labour Migration Policy, amongst others. The overall priority goal of IOM in Ghana is to support the government and people of Ghana in leveraging the positive contributions of migrants and migration to social and economic development while limiting the impact of adverse drivers and other elements that lead to unfavourable migration outcomes.

Table 1: Strategic Objectives of IOM Ghana Country Strategy 2022-2025

To contribute to Ghana's development, the following objectives have been identified:

Strategic Objective 1

Build the resilience of migrants and their communities of origin

Adverse drivers, like conflict, deficit of good governance, discrimination, stigma linked to return and reintegration and entrenched poverty trigger forced, unplanned, irregular, and desperate migration, oftentimes resulting in untoward consequences for the migrant. Supporting migrants and their communities to resist shocks, unforeseen events, or adverse drivers would empower them to control decisions around their migration journey and improve migration outcomes. Through increased engagement with government, IOM envisions developing the capacities of social protection and social cohesion mechanisms to support migrants and communities where they reside (including border communities). This will enable them to prepare for and respond to social shocks in order to reduce forced and irregular migration, including countering the activities of human smuggling and trafficking networks, which will support the migrants and communities to contribute to the development of Ghana.

Strategic Objective 2

Strengthen existing migration management systems so that they are more protection sensitive to mobility-induced vulnerabilities

Ensuring that migrants' rights are respected would improve the chances of success in their migration outcomes, thereby allowing them to contribute more to national development.

IOM Ghana's interventions under this strategic objective seeks to ensure that the protection and respect for migrants' rights are mainstreamed throughout the migration cycle - from making the decision to migrate to residing in the host country to returning home and reintegrating. The National Migration Policy, National Labour Migration Policy and other related sectoral policies present an opportunity to develop human rights-based standardised operations and interventions across the migration cycle in Ghana. IOM Ghana's engagement aims to build on this to support the government and other stakeholders through capacity development and the establishment of standardized practices to increasingly improve the management of human mobility in all its aspects to ensure that migration is not only safe but that it is also contributes to the protection of migrants' rights.

Strategic Objective 3

Reinforce the policy and legal framework for migration governance

Continuing the laudable work ongoing in Ghana to expand and strengthen the normative base for migration management in order to ensure that interventions are legal, based on promoting human rights and are founded on clear research and verifiable data, is essential to establish migration management practices that promote safe, orderly and regular movement which contributes to national development. The interventions under this strategic objective aim to also support platforms and institutions that promote whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches to migration governance, especially bringing voices to the table that are often neglected, for example, female migrants and women in border communities. IOM Ghana also seeks to support the GoG in improving data and information management systems to improve knowledge around migration-related socio-demographic trends which is a basis for good migration governance.

b. Strategic Priorities

Based on the three strategic objectives and in concordance with national, regional and global frameworks, the strategic priorities outline six intertwined areas of engagement with the GoG in order to support safe, orderly and regular migration which contributes to socio-economic development.



Table 2. Linkages between Strategic Priorities and Key National and Global Frameworks

Strategic Priority	GCM	Strategic Vision	MIGOF Objs	SDGs	National Framework
SP1	1, 2, 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 23	1, 2	2, 3	10.7, 11, 16, 17	1. National Border Management Strategy 2. National Framework for the Prevention of Violent Extremism 3. National Migration Policy 4. National Security Strategy
SP2	1, 7, 10, 12, 16, 23	2, 3	3	5.2, 8.7, 10.7, 16, 17	1. Anti TiP law 2. National PoA for preventing TiP 3. National Migration Policy
SP3	1, 2, 3, 7, 15, 16, 18, 21, 23	1, 2	1,3	1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 17	1. GoG's Agenda for Jobs: Creating prosperity and equal opportunity for all 2018-2021
SP4	5, 6, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23	2, 3	1,3	1, 8, 9, 10, 12, 16, 17	1. National Migration Policy 2. National Labour Migration Policy
SP5	7, 11, 15, 16, 23	2	3	3.8, 3.d, 5.6, 10.7, 17	1. National COVID-19 Response Strategy
SP6	2,7,8,	1, 2	2	10.7, 13, 17	1. National Disaster Management Plan 2. National Climate Change Policy

National Medium-Term Development Policy Framework





IBM PPE Donation in Paga ©IOM/Ghana

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

ENHANCE THE CAPACITY OF BMAS AND REINFORCE THE RESILIENCE OF BORDER COMMUNITIES IN GHANA TO RESPOND TO EMERGING CHALLENGES TO BORDER SECURITY AND ENHANCE BORDER GOVERNANCE

Reinforcing the national capacity of the existing network of border posts to effectively carry out their mandated functions of facilitation and control of entry and exit into Ghana is crucial for the development in Ghana. Good border management facilitates trade leading to economic growth while simultaneously combating cross-border and immigration-related criminal activities, such as human smuggling which are inimical to development. In addition, border posts and border regions are significant actors for development when it comes to managing emerging regional dynamics that could threaten sustained economic growth such as public health emergencies of an international concern, violent extremism and cross-border humanitarian crises. IOM will provide support to improve the effectiveness of the existing network of border posts in order to ensure that border posts can carry out their mandated functions effectively, including: trade facilitation; protection of travellers' human rights; and responding to emerging challenges to border security. This would also include reinforcing the resilience of border communities in order to strengthen the continuum between security, humanitarian assistance and long-term stability in border communities in Ghana.



IBM PPE Donation in Aflao ©IOM/Ghana

KEY ACTIONS





Pre-assessment for rescue on Volta Lake ©IOM/Ghana

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

STRENGTHEN THE NATIONAL INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS ON PREVENTION OF TIP AND PROTECTION OF VOTS

Human trafficking remains a scourge that adversely impacts national development through the abuse of fair labour practices. In addition, it leaves indelible psychosocial trauma on victims making it difficult for them to reintegrate into normal social life. The activities of trafficking networks and certain cultural practices akin to slavery continue to negatively impact the migration aspirations of many young people in Ghana, negatively affecting the ability of Ghanaians to reap the development dividend inherent in migration. Capacity development to strengthen the policy and operational response to human trafficking is key to ensure that human mobility is well-managed and can contribute to development. IOM will support the GoG to consolidate prevention, protection and prosecution mechanisms to: improve access to services for VoTs; enhance coordination, data exchange and information exchange between key stakeholders; ensure the institutionalization of capacity development tools and mechanisms for law enforcement and social workers; and develop standardized processes for determining the best interests of child VoTs and managing emerging case trends, such as male VoTs.



Pre-assessment for rescue on Volta Lake ©IOM/Ghana



Reintegration assistance to returnees on arrival at Kotoka International Airport ©IOM/Ghana

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

ADDRESS CHALLENGES RELATED TO THE SUSTAINABLE REINTEGRATION OF RETURN MIGRANTS

The ability to voluntarily return and reintegrate back into societies of origin is an important aspect of the migration cycle that needs to be properly managed. Successfully reintegrated migrants can contribute to the development of their communities and their countries. They oftentimes also come back with technical skills gained abroad which could be a valuable community resource. The provision of reintegration assistance, including socio-economic support, to migrants in their countries of origin is essential to ensuring the sustainability of return while also contributing to community development. IOM will contribute to efforts in strengthening the capacity of the government and other national stakeholders in sustainable return and reintegration policies and programmes, with a focus on: respecting the human rights of returnees; enhancing their livelihoods, including through the promotion of green jobs; improving access to essential services; and ensuring the well-being of returnees and their communities, especially in regions with significant out-migration and re-migration.



IOM staff on the field following up with a returnee on their reintegration ©IOM/Ghana

KEY ACTIONS





Women from Jamera community processing casava into gari (a community-based reintegration project)
©IOM/Ghana

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

REINFORCE THE NEXUS BETWEEN MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT BY ENSURING THAT MIGRANTS HAVE ACCESS TO DIGNIFIED LABOUR AND FAIR RECRUITMENT PRACTICES WHILE THE DIASPORA CAN EFFECTIVELY CONTRIBUTE TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Although Ghana is the second largest recipient of remittances in Sub-Saharan Africa, there is general consensus that more could be done to strengthen remittance flows and increase their impact on national development. In addition, many migrants, notably those in the informal sector, continue to suffer from exploitative labour practices making it difficult for them to attain their migration aspirations and participate in national development. Policy coherence needs to be strengthened to ensure that migration is mainstreamed into development-related policy and interventions to not only improve remittance flows and diaspora engagement but also to ensure that migrants working in Ghana are empowered through fair and just labour practices. As recommended in the National Migration Policy, IOM will support the GoG in the establishment of an overarching mechanism to improve policy cohesiveness in the migration/development space, while also supporting efforts to: enhance diaspora engagement; leverage remittances for development; and strengthen labour migration governance by ensuring development of safe, ethical and beneficial labour migration policies.



IOM staff interacting with a cattle rearer who is an IOM beneficiary at Mpuasu
©IOM/Ghana

KEY ACTIONS





An IOM health physician about to assess a migrant
©IOM/Ghana



IOM radiologist taking an X-Ray of a patient
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STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5

CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS IMPROVED MIGRATION HEALTH BY SUPPORTING THE GOVERNMENT IN THEIR EFFORTS OF REINFORCING THE MITIGATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND OTHER HEALTH CONCERNS

As witnessed during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the link between human mobility and public health is increasing dynamic and complex. Not only is the health of migrants affected by the circumstances of their migration process along the mobility continuum – at origin, transit, destination and return locations – but movements also impact public health as people on the move and the communities hosting them interact within and across borders. Developing response mechanisms that support the management of health concerns along the mobility continuum is key to ensuring that persons on the move are healthy and able to achieve their migration aspirations to fully realize their development potential. IOM will support government actions to respond to global public health emergencies and the implementation of the International Health Regulations (IHR) (2005). Furthermore, in line with the Universal Health Coverage, IOM will strongly work and assist national counterparts in establishing policies and programming that addresses migration health concerns and mainstreams migration health.

KEY ACTIONS





IOM Psychosocial Assistant facilitating a training on MHPSS for NADMO officers ©IOM/Ghana

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 6

STRENGTHEN GOVERNMENT AND OTHER NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS' CAPACITY IN EMERGENCY, PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE AND STABILIZATION, AS WELL AS CLIMATE ADAPTATION, ESPECIALLY IN THE AREAS WHICH ARE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRAGILE, BY PROVIDING BOTH HUMANITARIAN AND DURABLE SOLUTIONS SUPPORT

Mobility-induced emergencies, including those arising from the ecological impact of climate change, can trigger the mass movement of populations within or across national borders. Such movement, when unmanaged, could not only destabilize social cohesion in societies but also leave such populations vulnerable to the activities of human smuggling and trafficking or other organized criminal networks which is detrimental to development of the society. To strengthen mechanisms for managing mobility-induced crisis, IOM will support the government and national actors in enhancing disaster risk management systems for preventing, preparing, mitigating and responding to displacement caused by natural and human-induced disasters at national level.



IOM Psychosocial Assistant taking a returnee and his family through group counselling ©IOM/Ghana

KEY ACTIONS





Tree planting at IOM Ghana
©IOM/Ghana



Inauguration of basketball court in Jamestown ©IOM/Ghana



Inauguration of basketball court in Jamestown ©IOM/Ghana



Inauguration of basketball court in Jamestown ©IOM/Ghana

c. CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

■ **Environment and Climate Change:** the impact of environmental and climatic factors on human mobility, in both its forced and voluntary forms, is widely recognized. In Ghana, climatic and environmental factors, such as: land degradation in the north and central regions; land erosion in the coastal regions; and economic practices that adversely affect biodiversity, pollute air and water sources and cause deforestation, are increasing drivers of rural-urban migration. In the implementation of this Country Strategy, factors related to the sustainable management of environmental resources would be integrated into all interventions. Measures would include ensuring that: policy, research and data activities include an environment and climate change focus; capacity building interventions include sensitization on environmental impact and sustainability; and migrants and migrant communities are supported to adopt environmentally friendly practices and sustainable business ventures.

■ **Gender Dynamics:** In Ghana, gender disparities are reinforced through, amongst other things, social, economic and cultural norms, as well as the lack of adequate policies to guarantee the protection of women's rights. This results in relatively high disparity in social achievement between genders, such as in education and/or access to economic resources, for instance. Due to these factors, women tend to be unrepresented or under-represented in development planning. The COVID-19 pandemic has also adversely impacted women, with an increased incidence of gender-based violence and inimical consequences in economic sectors dominated by women. Ensuring that this Country Strategy positively impacts gender dynamics is a key aim across all strategic objectives. Measures to achieve this would involve ensuring that gender-related outcomes are integrated into all interventions. Respect for women's rights is mainstreamed throughout implementation, including through constant consultation with women and organizations that represent their interests. Initiatives would also support the government in implementing national gender equality strategies to achieve SDG five - achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

■ **Migration Data:** In line with GCM objective one, developing evidence-based policies, strategies and operations to harness the development potential inherent in migration and minimize its adverse effects is central to the achievement of this strategy. The GoG already has developed a National Migration Data Management Strategy (2017) which would

form the basis for reinforcing data collection and information management systems in all the targeted thematic areas of intervention. IOM will also reinforce the government's and other stakeholders' capacity in coordinating migration data management. All measures undertaken would be based on ensuring that data is collected in line with global ethical standards, including the respect of the right to privacy and the protection of vulnerable persons.

■ **Rights-based Approach to Programming:** IOM is mandated to contribute towards the protection of migrants. This is done by emphasizing the promotion of the dignity of migrants, their well-being and respect for their rights. IOM acknowledges that the primary duty to protect migrants and their rights lies with States and recognizes their sovereign right to determine admission and residence of non-nationals on their territory. In line with its responsibility to promote and contribute to the protection of migrants, IOM supports States and partners in their respective protection responsibilities. IOM's policies, strategies, projects and activities are rights-based, and are developed and conducted based on the principles of international law, which includes relevant rights and protections contained in international human rights law.

■ **Youth:** Well-managed migration can offer young people opportunities to gain new skills and experiences. This strategy aims to support the UN Youth Strategy and is committed to developing activities targeting youth to address their needs and vulnerabilities. The strategic priorities outlined will support initiatives contributing towards access to basic services for all youth, as well as building youth capacity through access to education and employment, as outlined in the Youth Strategy.



IOM Staff in Memodzi-Sikor in the Volta Region taking a community through counter-trafficking techniques ©IOM/Ghana

d. PARTNERSHIP AND COORDINATION

IOM and Governmental Counterparts: The implementation of this Country Strategy will require the reinforcement of existing partnerships and improving coordination with various government ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs); civil society organizations (CSOs); local authorities; international development partners; multilateral agencies; and the UNCT.

Responding to emerging challenges to border security, countering TIP, protecting migrant workers and reducing irregular migration involve whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches that span across MDAs such as the: Ministry of the Interior (MINTER); GIS; Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration (MoFARI); Ghana Police Service (GPS); Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MELR); and the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, to mention a few. Increased overall collaboration with the MINTER, the national coordinating ministry on migration management issues, is envisioned, notably in supporting the attainment of global, regional and national migration-related policies such as the GCM and the National Migration Policy. Similarly, enhanced partnership in terms of technical and financial support is envisaged with others MDAs, such as MELR on the protection of migrant workers; the Anti Human Trafficking Units of the GPS on the countering human trafficking and the protecting migrant children; MoFARI and the Diaspora Affairs Office at the Office of the President on

harnessing the contributions of the diaspora to national development; as well as the National Disaster Management Office and the Ministry of Health on increasing resilience and preparedness to respond to mobility-induced crisis and health-related vulnerabilities along the migration cycle, respectively. In addition, stronger synergies will also be sought with local authorities and civil society in migrant hosting communities, communities of origin of migrants and border communities.

IOM and the UN: On 19 September 2016, IOM joined the UN as a related organization. The inclusion of IOM in the UN reflects a growing recognition of the importance of migration and human mobility in international cooperation. IOM looks forward to continuing and deepening its work with Member States, specifically with regards to the implementation of the SDGs and the GCM.

In line with the UN reform agenda to better respond to contemporary humanitarian and development challenges, IOM will seek to further strengthen its collaboration with other UN agencies and reinforce its partnership with, for example, the UN Development Programme, notably in utilizing already existing conflict resolution mechanisms to ensure social cohesion and stability in border regions. Ongoing work with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and UN Children's Fund on capacity building to strengthen



Validation meeting of IOM country strategy ©IOM/Ghana



IOM staff and Ghana security service personnel interacting with a returnee at the Kotoka Int. Airport ©IOM/Ghana

response to the protection needs of vulnerable persons on move will be strengthened, while collaboration and coordination with the World Health Organization on responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and other public health emergencies of international concern at PoEs would be augmented. IOM will also seek to strengthen its partnership within the UNCT based on its role as the Coordinator of the UNNM. Ensuring that the realization of this Country Strategy advances the realization of global processes, including the GCM and the 2030 Agenda. IOM will also contribute towards the achievement of the outcomes under the UN Sustainable Development Partnership (2018-2022) and subsequent cooperation frameworks between the UN in Ghana and the GoG.

IOM, ECOWAS and the AU: At the regional level, this Country Strategy will seek to strengthen existing partnership and coordination with ECOWAS and the AU in supporting the implementation of regional strategic priorities, such as but not limited to, the ECOWAS free movement and regional integration agendas, the AU Policy Framework on Migration, and the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement, including supporting the establishment of the Secretariat in Accra.

IOM and Local/International Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs): IOM works in coordination with several NGOs/CSOs in Ghana on, amongst other things, outreach efforts, delivery of direct assistance to vulnerable migrants, capacity building of government officials, advocacy on migrants' rights and awareness raising/sensitization on migration management issues. The Country Office will look

to further cooperate with these organizations, leveraging their experience particularly in remote communities, whilst also serving to empower these organizations in providing quality assistance to vulnerable groups.

IOM and the Private Sector: IOM envisions strengthening its relationship with private sector actors in order to: share best practice in areas of common interest; leverage the competitiveness of the private sector to improve standards of service delivery; and reinforce partnerships to increase the scalability and sustainability of impactful interventions, amongst others. Achieving this would involve action such as the establishment of regular and systematic forums for private sector engagement and coordination with the private sector in the development, implementation and monitoring of interventions.

IOM and Donor Relations: IOM Ghana takes this opportunity to mention and recognize the support received the Government of the United States of America, European Union Delegation, Government of Canada, Government of the United Kingdom, Government of Japan, and Government of Germany who continue to fund migration management interventions in Ghana. IOM will aim to improve multilateral coordination with the diplomatic community, international development partners and multilateral agencies through, amongst other means, developing (where there is none) and strengthening existing platforms for systematic engagement, including information sharing, improved coordination on development and implementation of interventions and joint advocacy.



Launch of Ghana Migration Profile at the Ministry of the Interior in December 2020 ©IOM/Ghana

iv. Institutional Development

To achieve the objectives outlined in this Country Strategy, IOM will seek to strengthen investment and leverage non-material resources to improve internal capacities in the following areas:

- **Policy Capacity and Knowledge Management:** To support policy development processes, IOM will seek to leverage its 35 years of operational experience in Ghana to create an evidence-base of knowledge founded on operational expertise, information on policy trends and developments and lessons learned from project implementation. IOM will allocate more human and financial resources to managing internally generated data and information to not only support organizational learning but also to build the robustness of the national evidence-base to support policy development in Ghana.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation, Accountability and Learning:** Strengthening internal capacity to measure results and understand the impact of interventions is key to providing IOM, the government, donors and other stakeholders the means to inform decision-making, meet accountability obligations, draw lessons, inform evidence-based advocacy, and strategic communications. IOM Ghana will ensure that staff have technical knowledge and guidance in implementing results-based monitoring and evaluation systems, based on existing internal guidance, including the IOM Evaluation Policy and Monitoring guidelines and the Accountability to Affected Populations Framework.
- **Communications and Visibility:** IOM Ghana's ability to strategically communicate the challenges, opportunities and broad benefits associated with efficient migration management is key to the realization of this Country Strategy. This will require improving communications across various types of media, especially social media platforms, and strengthening its institutional reputation. Utilizing quality information and data, IOM will ensure the production and dissemination of clear, consistent and policy-oriented key messages.
- **Staff Development:** Apart from the staff development required to attain the institutional development priorities identified above, IOM recognizes that continuing to strengthen the diversity and inclusiveness of its staff directly impacts its ability to efficiently respond to the needs of the government and the migrant populations it supports. Consequently, diversity and inclusivity, especially as regards gender equality, will be prioritized in staff recruitment. Further, IOM will continue to enhance the capacity and professional development for all staff through relevant training, cross-departmental learning and investment in critical skills.



IOM staff retreat 2021 ©IOM/Ghana



IOM beneficiary, Abubakar, at his maize farm ©IOM/Ghana



IOM beneficiary, Leticia, joins the National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI) to become a licensed Forklift Operator ©IOM/Ghana



IOM staff at the airport after welcoming returnees back home ©IOM/Ghana

v. The Way Forward

Achieving the objective of developing a coherent approach to IOM's interventions in Ghana in order to reinforce the contributions of migration to the development agenda will take a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach based on innovative and mutually reinforcing partnerships between government, the private sector and civil society. Addressing the various drivers of irregular migration, for instance, would not only involve government support in adopting tailor-made development policies targeting communities of out-migration, but will also include partnership with community-level actors in civil society and the private sector to reinforce community economic structures. Reinforcing the capacity of migrants to claim their human rights through redress mechanisms that address violations and through continuous consultation with them throughout strategy development and implementation,

is equally important to strengthen existing migration management systems so that they are more protection-sensitive to mobility induced vulnerabilities. Supporting government capacity to also explore new data sources and embrace technologically enhanced information management systems is also crucial to improving the evidence base for migration governance. Finally, the successful implementation of the National Migration Policy and National Labour Migration Policy, among other policy frameworks, relies on the committed and engaged participation of all relevant migration stakeholders. This strategy provides a set of targets around which IOM Ghana, the GoG and all levels of society can forge a coherent partnership to improve the management of migration in the next four years.



Returnees leaving the airport to their final destination ©IOM/Ghana





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