

The Socio-economic Contribution of African Migrants to their Home and Host Countries: The Case of Ghanaian Residents in Belgium

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0. Abstract

The issue of South-North migration, especially Africa-European Union (EU) migration, has moved to the centre stage of international development debate. Unfortunately however, interests and arguments by policy-makers, development agencies and citizens of Europe mainly focus on the consequences of migration on the “receiving” societies. The real causes of migration from Africa and migrants’ contribution to the social and economic development of both the “sending” and “receiving” countries have not been objectively discussed. Provision of labour to EU member countries and remittances, financial transfers to and investments made by African migrants in their respective home countries are essential elements in the African-EU migration and development cooperation debate. For instance, it is estimated that South-North migrants’ remittances to developing countries increased from US\$2 billion in 1970 to US\$71 billion in 2001. It has also been observed that financial flows emanating from African migrants in the developed countries significantly contribute to the development of the continent. In order to concretize and objectify the discussion, a socio-economic survey was conducted on a representative sample of Ghanaian migrants and their families in the Flemish Community in Belgium. An extensive literature review on migration, the administration of questionnaires to Ghanaians resident in Flanders, Belgium, and consultations with African and international experts on migration and international development cooperation are three complementary approaches used for this investigation. The paper identifies and analyzes the factors that “push” and “pull” Ghanaians to migrate to Belgium, the EU and the developed countries in general. The economic and social situation of Ghanaian migrants in Flanders and their contribution to the sustainable development of Belgium, the EU and Ghana are rigorously analyzed. Further more, the challenges posed by South-North migration are identified and appropriate policies and effective win-win mitigation strategies proposed for redressing the problematic in a sustainable way.

Key Words: developing countries, immigrants, integration, migration, remittances, sustainable development

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Acronyms

DFID	:	Department for International Development
ECA	:	Economic Commission for Africa
EU	:	European Union
FDI	:	Foreign Direct Investment
GCIM	:	Global Commission on International Migration
IAMM	:	International Agenda for Migration Management
ILO	:	International Labour Organisation
IOM	:	International Organization for Migration
IDM	:	International Dialogue on Migration
ODA	:	Overseas Development Assistance
OECD	:	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SSA	:	Sub-Saharan Africa
UN	:	United Nations
UNECA	:	United Nations Commission for Africa
UNDP	:	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	:	United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees
UNFPA	:	United Nations Population Fund
USA	:	United States of America
VLIR	:	Flemish Inter-university Council

1. Introduction

Globally, migration is increasingly becoming an unprecedented and important feature of globalization, involving nearly 200 million people in 2006 (IOM, 2007; UNDP, 2007; UNFPA, 2005; UN, 2006). The number of migrants has more than doubled since 1975, with the major migratory flows originating from the developing to developed countries. It is one of the defining issues of the 21st century that constitutes an essential, inevitable and potentially beneficial component of the economic and social life of every country and region (McKinley, 2008). South-North migration has particularly moved to the centre stage of international development debate due to the realization that migration, development and security agendas are interrelated and should be tackled within a coherent policy framework (Katseli *et al.*, 2006). It is also noted the realization that the management of south-north migration for the benefit of the two regions can only be approached in a mutual partnership, comprehensive, integrated and holistic manner.

The migration debate has increasingly been influenced by what is termed the “demographic deficit” because many countries’ fertility rates have dipped so low that deaths exceed births, thereby sparking a decline labour force and a threat to long-term economic productivity (UNPF, 2004). There is therefore, a growing consensus that migration, if well managed, can bring substantial gains both to the receiving countries and the countries of origin (AFRICA-EU, 2007; Katseli *et al.*, 2006).

In an increasingly globalized world where the movement of people is not only possible but desirable and even necessary for various social, economic and cultural reasons, the ultimate goal is not to obstruct or prevent mobility but to better manage it for the benefit of all (McKinley, 2003). This new era has created challenges and opportunities for societies throughout the world (UN, 2006). International economic, political and cultural inter-relationships play an important role in the flow of people between countries, whether they are developing, developed or economies in transition. In its diverse types, international migration is linked to these inter-relationships, which affect and are affected by the development process. In Africa, the issue of migration takes on an added layer of complexity since a significant proportion of African migration takes place within the region itself. Therefore, African countries can be classified as both migrants sending and receiving countries (UNDP, 2007; World Bank, 2007). Table 1 and Figure 1 show the distribution of global migrants in millions.

Table 1: Distribution of Global Migration (in millions)

(Millions)	Developing countries		High-income OECD countries		High-income non-OECD countries		Total	
Migrants from:								
Developing countries	73.9	47%	61.8	40%	20.1	13%	155.8	100%
High-income OECD countries	3.4	11%	25.5	85%	1.2	4%	30.1	100%
High-income non-OECD countries	0.8	17%	3.6	77%	0.3	6%	4.7	100%
Total	78	41%	90	48%	21.6	11%	191	100%

Source UN, 2005

1.1 Migration and Development

Until recently, the subject of ‘migration and development’ was approached from the viewpoint of tackling the root causes of migration, and was concerned largely with promoting sustainable development in areas of high migration pressures in order to discourage emigration (IOM, 2005). However, recent economic studies suggest that migration and development are closely linked to one another: development shapes migration, and migration in turn influences development in ways that are sometimes surprising and often not recognized by researchers and policy-makers (Taylor, 2006). Also the debate on the impact of international migration on development in Africa has largely been shaped by the loss of skilled Africans to the developed world. In fact international migration generates both opportunities and challenges which may be categorized into social, economic, health, political and environmental (Economic Commission for Africa, 2004).

Growing evidence shows that international migration has positive effects on social and economic development in Africa. The estimated 3.6 million Africans in the Diaspora are directly and indirectly contributing to the achievement of the MDGs. Diaspora remittances and the income multipliers they create are becoming critical resources for the sustenance strategies of receiving households as well as agents of local and national development (Economic Commission for Africa, 2006). The discussion often revolves around the negative impact of migration on development such as the emigration of qualified professionals from developing countries, the subsequent loss of skills (‘brain drain’), and the negative effect this has on the local health and education systems (International Migration Organization, 2005). Today, this approach is

increasingly complemented by the rising recognition of the positive effects migration on development via remittances, capital investment, business and social networks, and skills and knowledge transfers (IMO, 2005).

2. Problem Statement and Objectives

IOM (2005) estimates that approximately 20, 000 Africans in various professional occupations leave Africa each year for the industrialized countries. However the migrants receiving countries have adopted a number of measures to limit the number of migrants particularly the unskilled from moving across their borders. Nevertheless, the inflow of migrants is increasing over time and may continue to do so (ECA, 2006). The South-North migration, especially Africa-European Union (EU) migration, is a key issue on the European development agenda. The debate is mainly between the poor sending countries and the richer receiving nations (United Nations, 2006; Mutume, 2006) and tends to be one-sided because of its focus on the interests of and consequences of migration on “receiving” societies (GCIM, 2005). It has also led to fragmented views and interpretations, which tend to hinder the understanding of the real significance and challenges of contemporary human mobility as a force for change. The interests of and arguments by most policy-makers, development agencies and citizens of Europe mainly focus on the consequences of migration on their economies. Paradoxically, while the industrialized countries are promoting easier flows of capital, goods and services, they are at the same time restricting the movement of labour, which comes mainly from developing countries (United Nations, 2006; Mutume, 2006).

In other words, the real causes of migration from Africa and migrants’ contribution to the socio-economic development of both the “sending” and “receiving” countries have not been objectively discussed. For instance, the provision of labour to EU member countries, remittances, financial transfers and investments by African migrants in their respective home countries should be essential elements in the African-EU migration and development cooperation debate. The current approach to migration is hampering a proper understanding of the causes and consequences of the phenomenon. This paper identifies and analyzes the factors that “push” and “pull” Ghanaians to migrate to Belgium, the EU and the developed countries in general. The economic and social situation of Ghanaians resident in the Flemish Community in Belgium and their contribution to the sustainable development of Belgium and Ghana are rigorously analyzed. The challenges

posed by South-North migration are identified and appropriate and effective win-win strategies proposed for redressing the problematic in a sustainable way.

3. The Nature of and Trends in International Migration

Due to differences in demographics, economics, and security, international migrants come from all parts of the world and they go to all parts of the world. More countries in recent times are affected by migration than had been in the past. In addition, migration patterns are more complex. It is no longer possible to draw a simplistic trajectory between points of departure and arrival of migrants (UNPF, 2004). According to IOM (2005), world migrants are numbering almost 200 million, representing 3% of the world population. Europe accounts for 34% of all migrants; Northern America, 23%; Asia, 28%; 9% in Africa; 3% in Latin America and the Caribbean; and another 3% in Oceania (United Nations, 2006). Migrants generally fall into two, though sometimes overlapping, categories: voluntary and forced migrants. Voluntary migrants come for employment and family reunification.

Many countries are sources of international migration flows, while others are net receivers and some are transit countries through which migrants reach the receiving countries (Martin, 2005). More than half of international migrants traditionally have moved from one developing country to another. In recent years, however, migration from poorer to richer countries has increased significantly. In Europe, Switzerland has the highest immigrant population of more than 1 million, which represents 23% of the country's population. Countries in which immigrants form between 10% and 20% of the population are: Latvia (19%), Estonia (15%), Austria (15%), Ukraine (15%), Croatia (15%), Ireland (14%), Moldova (13%), Germany (12%), Sweden (12%), Belarus (12%), Spain (11%), France (10%) and the Netherlands (10%). Figures for other countries are Albania (2%), Poland (2%), Bosnia and Herzegovina (1%), and Romania (0.5%). Denmark, Norway, Iceland, Belgium, Russia, Greece, Portugal, Slovenia and the United Kingdom and Italy each have a proportion of immigrants between 5% and 10% of the total population (UN, 2005).

3.1 International Migration Frameworks and Policies

There is no international framework - multilateral, regional or bilateral cooperative arrangements – for the management of migration (IDM, 2005). Migration policies remain the responsibility of individual countries (ECA, 2006). There are however, a number of international conventions and protocols pertaining to migration, including the Convention on status of refugees and protocol relating to the status of refugees (1954/1967), stateless persons (1960); international convention on racial discrimination (1969); ILO convention on migration for employment, protocol against the smuggling of migrants (2003), protocol to prevent, suppress and punishment for trafficking in persons (2003); and other non-binding policy frameworks such as the Berne Initiative on international agenda for migration management (IAMM) which aims at facilitating cooperation between states in planning and managing the movement of people in a humane and orderly way (IDM, 2005). International legal frameworks on migration are designed for various objectives, including protecting the human rights of migrant workers and their families, or restricting immigration.

3.2 Migrant Labour Regulatory Framework

In recent times Governments of both migrants sending and receiving countries are developing regulatory mechanisms to manage migrant labour. These include selective recruitment policies by countries needing labour and strong marketing and overseas employment strategies by countries supplying labour (ECA, 2006; IOM, 2005). On the part of the receiving countries, restrictive admission policies condition the character and volume of international migration (ECA, 2006; IOM, 2005). While the international community views immigration and refugee policies from a humanitarian perspective and through the parameters provided by international agreements such as the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 *Protocol*, nations and states, especially the receiving countries, tend to view these issues through a combination of humanitarian, domestic, and foreign policy considerations (McBride/UNHCR,1999). The need to achieve policy coherence between migration and development, not only within countries but also internationally, was emphasized during an inter-sessional workshop on migration and development in 2005 organized by IOM in cooperation with the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Geneva.

Prior to the 1990s, there was little international coordination and cooperation regarding the formulation and application of national migration and asylum laws and policies. Since then, however, progress in multilateral cooperation on migration has been tremendous (ECA, 2006). Within the EU for example, migration and asylum matters progressively entered the development agenda during the 1990s. The Schengen agreement (see Box 1), which includes some of the EU as well as non-EU countries, represents a new level of collaboration on border control (Lahav, 2003; Koslowski, 2004).

Box 1: Key Provisions of the Schengen Agreement

The Schengen Agreement was an agreement signed on June 14, 1985, between the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherland. The purpose of the Schengen Agreement was to gradually abolish checks at the signatories' common borders. On June 19, 1990, the Convention Implementing the Schengen Agreement was signed. Its key points relate to measures designed to create, following the abolition of common border checks, a common area of security and justice. The key provisions of the Schengen Agreement are:

- *removal of checks on persons at common EU internal borders;*
- *common set of rules applying to people crossing EU external frontiers, regardless of the EU country in which that external frontier is situated;*
- *separation at air terminals and, where possible, at seaports of people travelling within the Schengen area from those arriving from countries outside the Schengen area;*
- *harmonisation of the rules regarding conditions of entry and visas for short stays;*
- *coordination between administrations on surveillance of borders (liaison officers, harmonisation of instructions and staff training);*
- *definition of the role of carriers in the fight against illegal immigration;*
- *enhanced police cooperation (including the rights of cross-border surveillance and hot pursuit);*
- *strengthening of judicial cooperation through a faster extradition system and transfer of the enforcement of criminal judgments;*
- *creation of the Schengen information system (SIS).*

The countries that have signed the Schengen Agreement are: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, and Sweden. Source: EUROPA: Justice and Home Affairs, 2005

In general, most countries classify immigrants as legal immigrants; undocumented migrants; refugees and asylum seekers; students; trainees; business executives; and 'temporary' workers. Across Western Europe, liberal immigration policies came to a halt in the 1970s. As policies become more restrictive, the costs and risks of all kinds of migration rise and so do the odds of failure with the consequent loss of resources invested in the move.

Box 2: What are the EU's Current Policies on Asylum and Immigration?

*The EU's policies on asylum are more uniform than those on immigration. Under a 2004 policy, people can receive refugee status if there is a "well-founded fear" that they could be persecuted for race, religion, nationality, social group, or political opinion in their home countries. The European Union has agreed on minimum standards for housing, education, and health of asylum seekers, as well as on a set of criteria for determining refugee status. Furthermore, the Asylum Procedures Directive has established that states provide asylum seekers with a minimum level of access to legal aid. In practice, however, these measures have not protected asylum seekers from inadequate legal representation, "inhuman and degrading" treatment (PDF) at government immigration centers, and "unlawful expulsions." (PDF) Moreover, these standards still leave room for differing interpretation by states, and obligatory burden sharing of refugees among member states has yet to reach consensus. Source: **Choe Julia. 2007***

More recently, hostility towards immigrants seems to be growing and immigration is increasingly seen as having negative consequences on the host country (ECA, 2006). Africa, which in the global context, is a sending region, therefore finds that her migrants face severe restrictions in movement to North America and Europe, sometimes on the basis of unfounded cultural dilution or national security concerns. The shift towards more restrictive immigration policies is being accompanied by discrimination against immigrants (see boxes 2 and 3), which is usually in the form of "equal pay for equal work, but unequal work" (ECA, 2006).

Box 3: Blue Card Scheme for EU

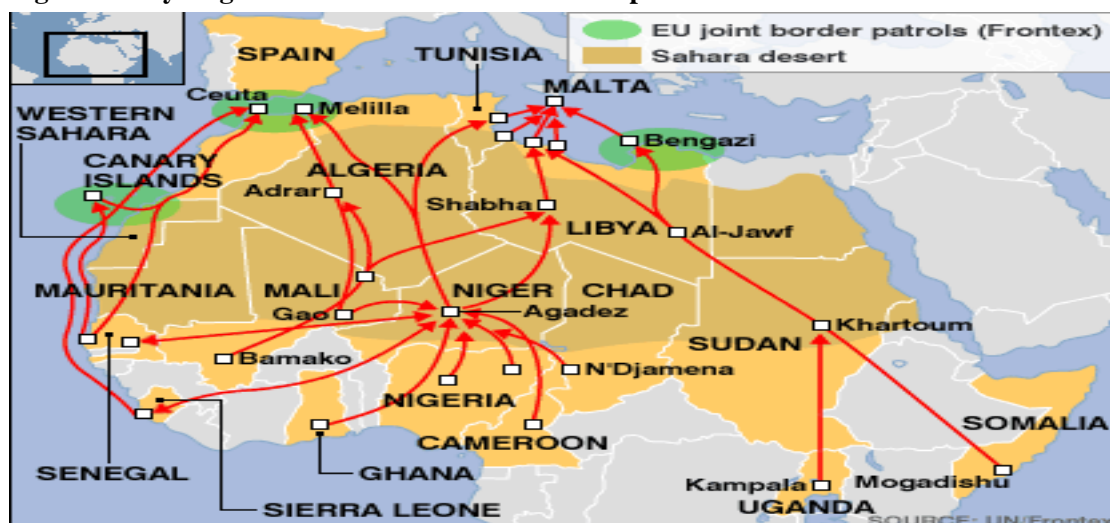
*EU interior ministers endorsed new European Pact on Immigration and Asylum guidelines for managing immigration, and closed in on agreement on a **Blue Card scheme** aimed at attracting highly skilled workers to Europe. The pact - a document of political intent but not binding laws -- sets out principles for managing migration, fighting illegal immigration and forming partnerships with countries that people leave or travel through to get to Europe. It also seeks to make border controls more effective while building better asylum policy. The agreement paves the way for legal immigration to be based on a state's needs and ability to welcome people, while combating illegal immigration and ensuring that foreigners who do not have papers are removed. EU nations would base legal immigration on workers or professionals whose skills are tailored to their particular labour needs, favouring those who would stay in their countries long term. The ministers also agreed to try to avoid handing out residency **permits en masse**. Italy and Spain have angered some of their partners by giving papers to some **700,000** people in recent years. Refugees would be increasingly obliged to apply for asylum from outside. Some 220,000 people did so last year, although the European Union would strive to better channel aid to those countries they are fleeing. On the Blue Card scheme, the ministers struggled to define the notion of "highly skilled" workers but eventually agreed that applicants would have to be earning 1.5 times the average salary in the state in which they hoped to work. With their population growth in decline, EU member states are looking to foreign labour to fill certain jobs. EU is struggling to compete with the United States, which attracts roughly twice the number of skilled workers. The*

Blue Card takes its name from the EU flag, blue with golden stars and aspires, like the US "green card", to entice highly qualified third-country nationals with access to certain rights in any EU nation. Source: EU Business News, 2008

3.3 Africa and International Migration

About 20 million African migrant workers and families live within and outside the continent of Africa. By most recent ILO (2004) calculations, some 7.1 million migrants are economically active in other African countries comprising 1/5 of the global total. By 2025 one in ten Africans will live and work outside their countries of origin. Traditionally, labour migration in SSA has been directed towards a limited number of countries: Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Senegal and Nigeria in West Africa; South Africa and Botswana in Southern Africa; and Gabon in Central Africa and Kenya in East Africa. Migration in Africa falls under three categories: movements to neighboring countries; forced migrations; and rural to urban migrations (UN/UNDP, 2007). The significant outflows of African migrants are mainly directed towards Western Europe, North America and the Gulf States. Migration is not solely driven by income disparities between home and destination countries; it is also motivated by geographic proximity and historical links such as common language and colonial ties which explain between 20 and 30 per cent of the variation of bilateral migration flows between Europe and its development partners (Katseli *et al.*, 2006; IOM, 2005). For example, Congolese would emigrate to Belgium, Senegalese to France; Ghanaians and Nigerians to the UK; and Cape Verdeans to Portugal (IOM, 2005). Key migrant routes from Africa to Europe are presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Key Migrant Routes from Africa to Europe



Source: BBC, 2007

An important aspect of intra-continental migration movements is the flow of Sub-Saharan Africans towards the Maghreb States. This trend dates back many centuries and remains a significant feature of African population movements. However, distance and the cost of migration have largely limited Sub-Saharan African movements to the north. But this has changed rapidly since the end of the 1980s and Sub-Saharan African movements northwards are growing as a result of the deterioration of living conditions in parts of the region due mainly to conflicts, political instability and desertification compared to the relative prosperity and stability of the Maghreb region (IOM, 2005).

Box 4: Which EU Member States are Most Affected by Immigration?

With over one million migrants a year and 299,000 asylum applications in 2006 alone, Europe is the primary destination for migrants worldwide. Countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea such as Spain, Italy, and Malta are most affected. Under the 2003 Dublin II Regulation, the first country in which an asylum seeker lands is solely responsible for examining that person's asylum application. Predictably, this has placed greater strains on countries closest to Africa, the source of the vast majority of immigrants. In 2006, Spain received at least 636,000 migrants, representing almost half of the EU's total and 122,500 more than the number of migrants arriving in Germany, France, Italy, and Britain combined. Authorities on Spain's Canary Islands alone caught almost thirty thousand Africans trying to enter in 2006. Malta, located only two hundred miles from Libya's coastline, has seen up to two hundred immigrants a week, and the Italian island of Lampedusa has also been affected. Non-European countries along the migration route such as Morocco have been strained by mass migration to Europe.

Source: Choe Julia (2007) African Migration to Europe

3.3.1 Impact of Migration on Africa

3.3.1.1 Loss of Skilled Workers

The brain drain of professionals from African (and other developing) countries has recently become a topical development issue, especially in the face of serious health and educational challenges facing the country. Depending on the size of emigrant flows, the kinds of migrants, and labour and product market conditions in the country, the impact of migration on the countries of origin varies greatly. According to IOM (2005), Africa was already losing in excess of 20,000 skilled individuals per year between 1990 and 2000. The continent has already lost 1/3 of its human capital and is continuing to lose its skilled personnel at an increasing rate.

3.3.1.2 Loss of Highly Qualified Academicians

A recent World Bank report (Chacha, 2007) estimates that an average of 23,000 qualified academicians are emigrating from Africa each year, leading to an acute shortage of skilled human resources in the continent (see Table 2). This is a massive drain on a continent already lacking adequate human resources and increases her dependence on foreign technical assistance. Atanga *et al* (2006) note that Africa spends more than US\$4 billion per year to employ about 100,000 western experts to perform functions generally described as technical assistance. This massive brain drain is posing serious challenges to African higher education and socio-economic development as many universities in the continent are experiencing scarcity of qualified academic staff to conduct quality teaching and research work (Tables 2 and 3).

Table 2: Skilled Migration Rates for Selected African Countries

Country	Rate of Emigration
Cape Verde	67.5%
Gambia	63.3%
Seychelles	55.9%
Mauritius	56.2%
Sierra Leone	52.5%
Ghana	46.9%
Mozambique	45.1%
Kenya	38.4%
Uganda	35.6%
Angola	33.0%
Somalia	32.7%

Source: Easterly and Nyarko, 2008

Table 3: Percentage of Tertiary Educated Adult Population from Some Selected Countries in Africa in the EU (2000)

Country	%	Country	%
Gambia	40.32	Somalia	16.56
Mozambique	36.68	Togo	13.45
Cape Verde	31.13	Gabon	12.79
Angola	28.16	Morocco	12.34
Guinea-Bissau	23.80	Malawi	12.06
Sierra Leone	21.29	Mali	11.37
Ghana	19.10	Senegal	11.30
Kenya	18.63	Rwanda	10.76
Uganda	18.10	Tunisia	9.77
Congo	17.16	Cameroon	9.50

Source: Docquier and Marfouk (2005), OECD, 2006

Africa is losing the vital human resources it needs most for her economic, social, scientific and technological progress. The continuous outflow of skilled personnel from Africa is contributing to a widening gap in science and technology between Africa and other continents. Africa's share of global scientific output has fallen from 0.5 in the mid-1980s to 0.3% in the mid-1990s. There are more African scientists and engineers in the USA than in the entire continent (Woldetensae, 2007; Ainalem, 2005). While Africa accounts for 13% of the global population with 832 million inhabitants, its share of the world's economic activity remains relatively insignificant at 1% of global gross domestic product (GDP) and around 2% of world trade (Belai H. Bathseba, 2007; African Union, 2004).

In response to the high demand from developed countries, the number of Ghanaian health and educational professionals joining the brain drain appears to have increased in recent years. Even with the current low baseline staffing levels, Dovlo and Nyongator (1999) and Buchan and Dovlo (2004) indicate that staff vacancy estimates from public health services in Ghana have increased by 100 per cent for nurses between 1998 and 2002. Vacancy rates of doctors increased from 42.6 per cent in 1998 to 47.3 per cent in 2002 despite supply rates of over 100 doctors per annum. Studies on migration of doctors trained by the University of Ghana Medical School show that in the ten years between 1986 and 1995, 61% of the output of the Ghana Medical School had left the country.

3.2.1.2 Flows of Remittances to Developing Countries

Remittances from the Diaspora constitute an important source of funds for development in the south. The increase of South-North migration has been accompanied by an increase in remittances to developing countries. Globally, it is estimated that about US\$250 billion was remitted by around 200 million migrants to their families in the south in 2007, three times the official development assistance (ODA) of US\$78.6 billion dollars; an increase of 11% from 2006 (Clemens *et al.*, 2006; Dilip Ratha *et al.*, 2008). This figure does not include transfers in cash and kind and remittances sent through informal channels. Table 4 contains the remittance flows to developing countries between 2002 and 2007. After foreign direct investment (FDI), remittances by migrant workers are the second-largest source of funds for development in developing countries (De Montclos, 2005). World Bank figures for 2005 indicate a steep increase in remittance transfers to SSA, reaching US\$8.1 billion (UNECA, 2006).

In many African economies, remittances are playing an increasingly central role in socio-economic development, accounting for 5% to 20% of GDP. In some countries, remittances account for half of the national income. Compared to global migration trends, migration from SSA is much lower, accounting for about 25 million in 2005 in actual terms but remittances are increasing; \$6.5 billion to the 34 SSA countries was recorded in the same period (UNDP-Ghana, 2007). However, a significant percentage of remittances are informal and difficult to quantify.

Considering both the positive and negative effects of migration, the impact of African brain drain is not only negative but also positive. Remittances contribute significantly to poverty reduction SSA, leading to increased household investments in education, entrepreneurship and health. In addition to consumption choices, remittances have promoted investments in real assets like building schools and clinics in comparison to the use formal sector financial instruments (UNDP-Ghana, 2007). Table 4 shows that the remittance flows to developing countries from 2002-2007 have experienced a percentage change of 11% between 2002 and 2007 and 118% between 2006 and 2007. The spectacular percentage change of 132% recorded between 2006 and 2007 for SSA clearly signals the importance of remittances for the socio-economic development of the region. As the most steady and predictable source of income for developing countries, remittances have the potential to overtake both FDI and ODA. The challenge therefore is how to explore ways of channeling remittances towards more productive use for individuals and communities through inclusive financial mechanisms and ensuring sustained and equitable sustainable development (UNDP/Ghana, 2007).

Table 4: Remittance Flows to Developing Countries, 2002-2007: (\$billions and % change)

Inflows	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Change 02-07	Change 06-07
Developing Countries	116	143	163	194	226	251	11%	118%
Asia and Pacific	29	35	39	47	53	59	11%	100%
Europe and Central Asia	14	16	23	32	39	47	22%	246%
Latin America and Caribbean	28	35	42	48	57	61	6%	117%
Middle-East and North Africa	15	20	23	24	27	29	8%	89%
South Asia	24	30	29	33	40	44	11%	82%
Sub-Saharan Africa	5	6	8	10	11	12	7%	132%

Source: Dilip Ratha *et al.*, 2008

4. Materials and Methods

The paper is the outcome of an exhaustive review of existing literature on migration. The literature review generated essential information that informed the design of an appropriate conceptual framework and research instruments to guide the collection of primary data and information in the field from August to November 2008. The administration of questionnaires to Ghanaians resident in Belgium and consultations with African as well as international experts on migration and international development cooperation are three complementary approaches used during the field investigation.

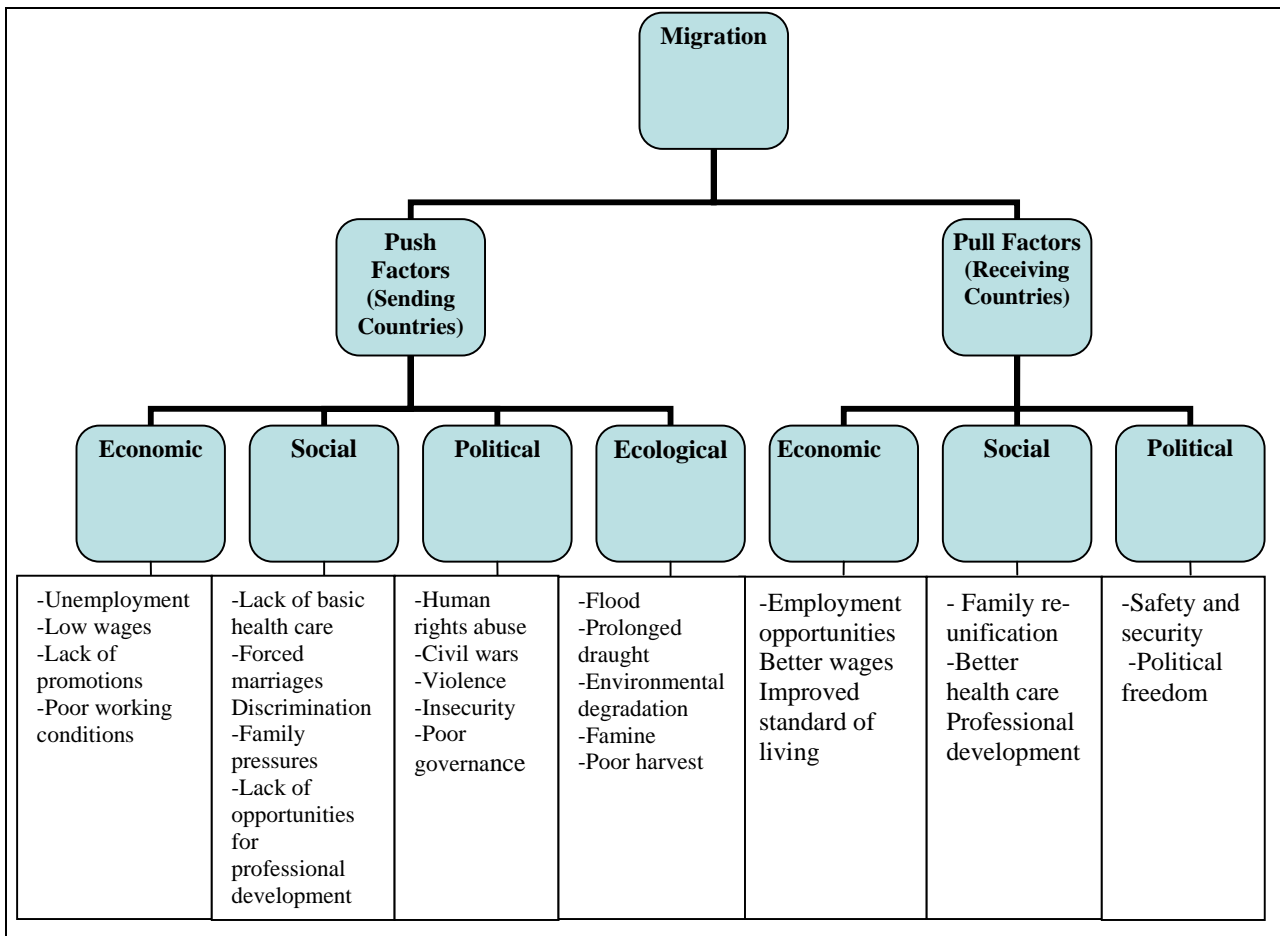
The problems of international migration are complex and broader than realm of any single discipline and can therefore be properly examined using inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary frameworks. To enhance a balanced understanding of this complex issue, the study adopted a Human Ecological Approach (HEA). Human Ecology is an interdisciplinary which integrates concepts across different disciplines and uses a holistic approach to solve problems and enhance human potential within their environments. The study has therefore integrated knowledge from various disciplines such as sociology, economics, geography and psychology etc. A field survey was conducted on 120 randomly selected representative sample of Ghanaian migrants resident in the Flemish Community of Belgium. To further enhance understanding of the interrelationships between migration and development, views of five experts on migration and development cooperation are integrated in the paper. The collected data were quantified and inputted into the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS, Version 16) and the results presented through descriptive statistics.

5. Conceptual Framework: “Push” and “Pull” Factors

Migration involves a complex series of economic, social, ethnic and political push and pull factors. The complex interaction amongst varying perceptions of push and pull factors, individual decision-making processes, and the different migration destinations, make it very difficult to create a unified theory of out-migration from Africa. Nevertheless, a number of attempts have been made to capture and explain the different motivations and processes related to a decision to migrate from Africa. Some of the trends and motivations for migration from Africa to Europe are similar to those found elsewhere in the world and basically involve “push” and “pull” factors. “*Push*” factors refer to events in the country of origin that motivate migrants to leave whilst

“pull” factors are the deliberate and/or unintended actions from recipient countries that attract migrants to their countries (Easterly and Nyarko, 2008). Examples of push factors include low remuneration, poor working conditions, low job satisfaction, lack of professional development and career opportunities and political and ethnic problems including civil strife and poor security. Figure 2 illustrates the migration “Push” and “Pull” factors

Figure 2: Migration “Pull” and “Push” Factors Framework



Source: Authors, 2008

6. Emigration from Ghana

International migration and its attendant results have become an important factor in Ghana's development process. At least, one member of every household in Ghana happens to be a migrant in a developed country. Information compiled by the Ministry of Interior of Ghana indicates that Ghana currently ranks fifth on the migration table of Africa and second on the brain drain scale (Grey, 2007). Large Ghanaian communities exist across the EU and North America. Consequently, remittances to Ghana come from a diverse range of countries. Although the current number of Ghanaian emigrants is uncertain, several estimates have been attempted. For example, it is estimated that over 3 million Ghanaians (15% of the country's population) live outside the country compared to a resident population of about 20 million (IOM, 2008; Higazi Adam, 2005; Grey, 2007). In the 1990s, it was estimated that 12 per cent of the population was living abroad and that Ghanaians form the largest SSA population in the EU (Akyeampong, 2000). Many Ghanaians migrate within the West African sub-region, while each year a considerable number also migrate regularly and irregularly towards Europe and North America (IOM, 2008). Migration of skilled professionals is particularly problematic for the education and health sectors. In addition, large numbers of undocumented semi-skilled or unskilled young migrants venture on dangerous trips in search of better economic opportunities (See Box 5)

Box 5: Testimony of a Ghanaian Migrant through the Sahara Desert to Europe

For months young African men and women risk everything, including their lives, to take on the perilous trip across a number of borders on the Sahara desert and the treacherous waves of the Mediterranean Sea in search of a better life in Europe. Some die along the way, some are expatriated and those who complete the journey realize that life is not necessarily easier in Europe. One migrant from Ghana told his story about how he got to Europe by car and walking through the Sahara desert. I left Ghana on January 15, 1990 with 5 friends through the Sahara desert in search of better life in Europe. We spent 3 days by road in a cargo truck bound for Niamey, the capital of Niger from Bawku in the Upper East Region of Ghana. It took us one week from Niger to Libyan border. At the Niger-Libyan border we had to cross the desert on foot to the nearest Libyan city. We did the walking during night to avoid arrest. On one fateful day, we were attacked by tugs and robbed of all our belongings. In the process one of my friends lost his life. We also saw 2 dead bodies. Our escorts told us that those people died because of weariness and shortage of drinking water. After six weeks of journey from Ghana, we arrived in Tripoli on 22 February 1990. I worked as an assistant mason for two years. At the end of the second year I managed to save 1,500 dollars. In 1992, I secured a Kenyan passport which could enable me to travel to Germany without visa. My efforts to get a resident permit in Germany failed after two years. When I sensed the danger of deportation, I run to Belgium by train to seek asylum. Thank God, after 5 years I was given a stay permit. Happily, I am now a citizen of Belgium.
Source: Interview recorded by Authors, 2008.

A variety of reasons lie behind emigration from Ghana. Traditionally, the reasons encouraging an individual to migrate in Ghana are mainly economic in nature. Seeking greener pastures and improving upon one's standard of living are some of the major reasons. As has already been mentioned, migrant remittances from Ghana have been the backbone of many families. There is a growing interest in the role of remittances in the Ghanaian economy. In recent times, the value of remittances to Ghana is over \$4.5 billion, making it the largest foreign exchange earner (William Davidson Institute, 2007). Remittances have increased and have become more stable than ODA, and FDI. According to the international migration report, remittances as a percentage of Ghana's GDP rose from 3.2 percent in 1990 to 13.3 percent in 2003 (Ghana Web, 2003).

It is very difficult, if not impossible to determine the exact number of Ghanaians in Belgium. This is due to the fact that some Ghanaians are not officially registered as residents in Belgium. Also, a significant number of Ghanaians hold dual Belgium-Ghana citizenship. An interview with the president of Ghana Council in Belgium revealed that over 4,500 Ghanaians are residing in Belgium with two-thirds living in Flanders (Kwaku Acheampong, 2008).

7. Results and Discussion

A socio-economic survey was conducted on a representative sample of 120 Ghanaian migrants resident in the Flemish Community in Belgium. Seventy-three (60.8%) were males whilst 47 (40.2%) were females. About 53% of the respondents were between the ages 31-40; 32.5% were between 41 and 50 years, whilst 14.2% were in their early and mid-twenties. A significant number of the migrants (34.2%) migrated to Belgium between the years 1991-1995. 32.5% between 1996 and 2001; 13.3% between 2001 and 2005; 11.7% 1986-1990; whilst 8.3% migrated to Belgium before 1980. Eighty-three percent came to Europe by air directly from Ghana whilst 17% came to Europe by foot through the Sahara Desert before finally arriving in Belgium. The factors motivating Ghanaians to migrate to Belgium are complex and intertwined. The results of the field survey reveal that although they are not always aware of all the factors motivating their move, a significant number of Ghanaians moved to Belgium due to a combination of push and pull factors. A significant number of the migrants (73.4%) cited economic reasons as the major push factors that motivated them to leave Ghana. Table 5 shows the main factors pushing Ghanaians to emigrate to Belgium.

Table 5: The Main Push Factors of Ghanaian Migrants in Belgium

Push Factors	Frequency	%
Employment/Better wages	88	73.4
Family Re-union	21	17.5
Study in Belgium	8	6.6
Asylum Seeker	3	2.5
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2008

For 85% of the respondents, economic reasons such as job opportunities, better wages, and professional development possibilities attracted them to stay in Belgium. Fifteen percent cited good health care and the prevailing political freedom in Belgium as important pull factors.

7.1 Migration of Skilled and Unskilled Labour from Ghana

It is estimated that 8 industrialized countries, including the United Kingdom, United States, France, Australia, Canada, Portugal, Belgium, and Spain accounted for 94.2% of all African-born university-educated people residing in the OECD countries in 2000 (Clemens *et al.*, 2006). The results of this present study reveal that migration of Ghanaian professionals to Belgium is not so alarming as compare to countries such as the United Kingdom, Canada and USA. This may be due to the fact that traditionally most Ghanaian professionals migrate towards countries having a common language. Out of the total of 120 respondents, 50.8% completed secondary and tertiary education. 40% got basic education whilst “no education” accounts for 9.2%. Table 6 indicates the level of education of Ghanaian migrants in Belgium.

Table 6: Level of Education of Ghanaian Migrants in Belgium

Level of Education	Frequency	%
No Education	11	9.2
Basic Education	48	40.0
Secondary Education	34	28.3
Tertiary Education	27	22.5
Total	120	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

7.2 Socio-Economic Impacts of Migrants on Ghana

7.2.1 Remittances and Investments in Ghana

Remittances constitute a key mechanism through which migrants transfer a part of their earnings to their families in Ghana. While the primary motivation for Ghanaian emigrants in Belgium may not necessarily be for them to contribute to the Ghanaian economy directly, this study reveals that on the average 53.3% of the respondents remit their families 6 times in a year with amount ranging from €100 to €600. These remittances are vital for the livelihood of many families; they contribute to health improvement, poverty reduction and access to education of the members of the family.

Though it was not possible for the study to investigate the correlation between remittances and living standards of migrants' families in Ghana due to time constraints, a similar study by Litchfield and Waddington (2003) established a positive correlation between welfare and migration in the 1991/2 and 1998/9 Ghana Living Standard Survey (GLSS). They also found that student enrolment of migrant households was better compared to non-migrant households. The results of the present survey reveal that about 16.7% of the respondents' remittances are used to pay school fees and to keep children and siblings in school. About 54% of the respondents spend their remittances on health care needs of their families; 22.5% on family feeding whilst 7.5% on organization of funerals of relatives.

The study also revealed that on the average for every migrant in Belgium there are about 3 to 5 people in Ghana who depend on his/ her remittances for their livelihoods. About 59% of Ghanaian migrants in Belgium have about 4-6 dependants in Ghana. Thirty-eight percent of the respondents described the standard of living of their families back in Ghana to be a "dramatic improvement"; 59.2% indicated their living standards of their families have increased; whilst 2.5% said there was no change in the living standards of their families in Ghana. Table 7 shows the use of remittances by Ghanaian migrants' families in Ghana.

Table 7: Use of Remittances by Migrants' Families in Ghana

Use of Remittances	Frequency	%
Payment of School Fees	20	16.7
Health care needs of family	64	53.3
Feeding of family	27	22.5
Funerals	9	7.5
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2008

7.2.2 Investments in Ghana

In addition to supporting their families in Ghana through remittances, 85% of Ghanaian residents in Belgium have invested between **€10,000** and **€50,000** in various sectors of the economy of Ghana including commerce, agriculture, construction, education and transport. About 76% have invested in building houses; 15.5% in business, 5% in agriculture; 4.5% in the transport sector, and 2.5% in the establishment of private schools.

7.3 Education and Cross-cultural Enrichment

Migration is a source of education, cultural and social enrichment for both the sending and the receiving countries. It has helped to produce significant scientific, educational and development added value for the mutual benefit of Ghana and Belgium. Belgium admits students from several countries including Ghana to pursue courses in various disciplines. Five percent of the respondents were students. Some of them are pursuing various masters programmes in Belgium within the framework of VLIR scholarship programme. The increasing migration of Ghanaian students to study in Belgium has significantly increased students' acquisition of knowledge and contributed towards their cross-cultural enrichment.

In addition to professional development and acquisition and transfer of knowledge, migration has also helped to increase students' understanding of race and the importance of cultural diversity both within Belgium and the EU. This has helped to promote dissemination of knowledge and broadening of cultural values and norms between Ghana and Belgium. The knowhow and skills

accumulated by Ghanaian students in Belgium also facilitate the transfer of technology to Ghana. Moreover, as Box 6 illustrates, the opportunity provided to many Ghanaian students to study in Belgium has helped to significantly strengthen cultural cooperation between Ghana and Belgium.

7.4 Contributions towards Community Development

The results of the field survey also reveal that about 86% have contributed towards various development projects in their communities in Ghana. Fifty-nine percent has contributed between €100 and €500 whilst 41% contributed between €500 and €1,000 towards community development projects in Ghana. Table 8 specifies the various community development projects for which Ghanaian migrants in Belgium have made financial contributions. Only about 14% have not made any contribution towards and community development project.

Table 8: Community Development Project

Community Project	Frequency	%
School project	53	51.5
Hospital project	23	22.3
Educational Fund	20	19.4
Other Development projects	7	6.8
Total	107	100

Source: Field Survey, 2008

A number of Ghanaian associations under the umbrella of the Ghana Council in Belgium have set up scholarship schemes for deserving students at all levels of the educational ladder in their various communities in Ghana. In some cases, the contributions are in the form of books and equipment donated to the schools or the construction/ refurbishment of school buildings. Other contributions by Ghanaian migrants include provision of potable drinking water for communities and hospital equipment.

Box 6: Examples of Development Interventions Supported by Ghanaian Associations in Belgium.

- The National Federation of Ghanaians Resident in Belgium, the Ghana Council (formerly Ghanaba) in partnership with the International Centre for Enterprise and Sustainable Development (ICED), the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), and Socialist Solidarity (FOS), with financial support from the Social Fund of the Food Industry (VIA) of Belgium, is supporting about 1,000 poor farmers in Ghana to improve the livelihoods by engaging in all year round production of grasscutters, honey, mushroom and snails.
- Asanteman Association in Belgium has adopted the Maternity Ward of the Okomfo Anokye Hospital in Kumasi.
- Akyem Union in Belgium donated computers to three secondary schools in the Eastern Region of Ghana.
- Kwabere and Sekyere Association in Belgium donated an electric generator, a deep freezer and other equipment to the School for the Deaf and Dumb at Jamasi, and hospital equipment to Asonomaso and Asamang Hospitals.
- Brong Ahafo Association in Belgium: donated computers and other hospital equipment to Sunyani Hospital
- Baako Ankonam Association in Belgium:- adopted of some children from the Anyinam SOS Childrens Home.
- The Ewe Association in Belgium presented medical items worth €2,500 to Keta and Hohoe Government Hospitals in the Volta Region of Ghana. The items included blood pressure apparatus, stethoscope, suction machine, sphygmomanometer, electric stomach-intestines decompressor, disposable syringes with needles, surgical and examination gloves, etc. The association purchased the items from contributions made by members to be donated to various health institutions in the country.
- **Source:** <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=7179>

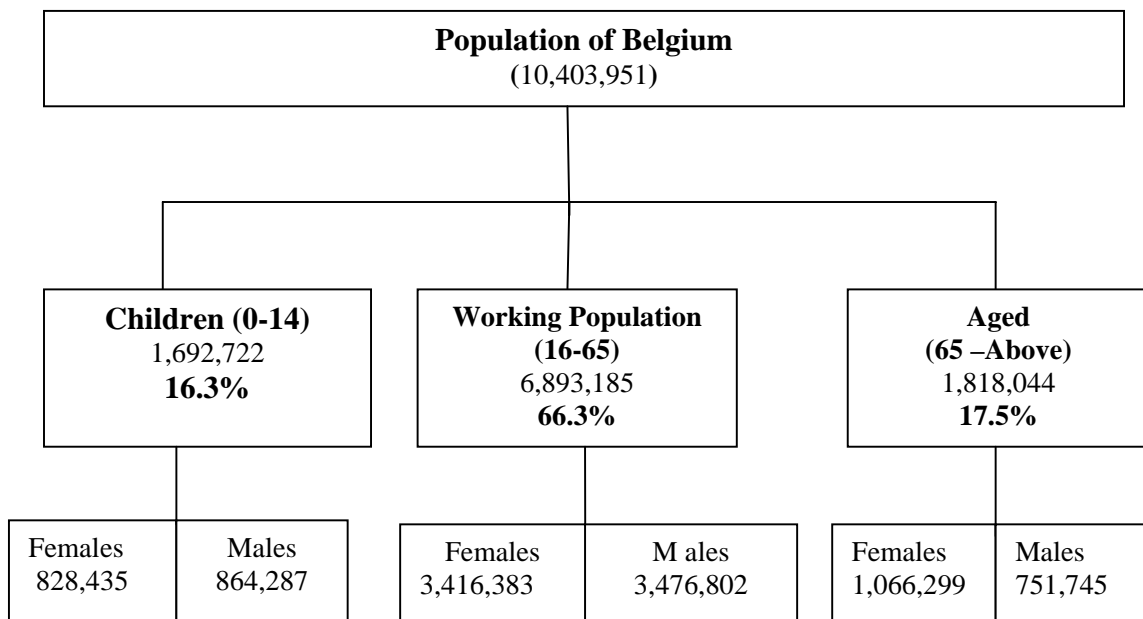
7.5 Socio-Economic Impacts of Migrants on Belgium and the EU

It is acknowledged that international migration has generated enormous economic and social benefits to Belgium and the EU. For example, about 41% of the respondents cited payment of taxes as their contributions to the economy of Belgium; followed by sanitation through cleaning (34.7%), provision of labour (19.5%), ensuring food security (3.4%), and cultural enrichment (1.7%). Respondents were asked to indicate what they can do to make Belgium a better place to live: 36.4% said by abiding to the laws of Belgium; learning the language (37.3%); investing in Belgium (16.9%); payment of taxes (6.8%); and keeping the country clean (2.5%).

7.5.1 Regenerating the Population of Belgium and EU

According to recent OECD statistics, 21.5 million foreigners are living in the 25 EU member countries, representing 5.2 % of the total EU population. It is estimated that future demographic trends in the EU will continue to fuel immigration because the population of the EU-25 may drop from 455 million to less than 400 million by 2050, while the number of persons aged 65 and above is projected to rise from 63.4 million to 92 million by 2025. It is estimated that between 1970 and 2000, the average household size of Belgium decreased from 3.0 to 2.4 persons (UN, 2002). The current population of Belgium is estimated at 10,403,951 (CIA-World Factbook, 2008); 16.3% (1,692,722) of the population is between the ages 1 and 14. The working population (15-64) accounts for 66.3% (6,893,185), while the 65 years and above constitutes 17.5% (1,818,044) <http://worldfacts.us/Belgium.htm>. Figure 5.1 illustrates the population structure of Belgium.

Figure 3: Population Structure of Belgium



Source: Authors, 2008

With more than 66% of the population of Belgium being between the ages 16 and 65 years and an aged population of 17.5%, and also 16.3% being children clearly indicates that if the current trend continues, a significant number of the active population in the active class in the near future will be retired. In other words, only a small proportion of the population will take care of a very large dependent population. This situation will have enormous consequences on the economy of

Belgium if adequate measures are not taken to equilibrate the population, especially the labour force. As Table 9 indicates, in 2000, the country's migrant population reached 8.8 percent of the total population (Martiniello Marco and Rea Andrea, 2003). This figure did not however include foreigners residing illegally in the country.

Table 9: Foreign Population in Belgium by Region (2000)

	EU foreigners	Non EU foreigners	Total foreign population	Belgians	Total population	Percentage of foreigners
Belgium	563,556	333,554	897,110	9,341,975	10,239,085	8.8
Flanders	164,569	129,081	293,650	5,646,601	5,940,251	4.9
Wallonia	270,228	71,813	342,041	3,068,306	3,410,347	10.0
Brussels-Capital	140,356	133,257	273,613	685,705	959,318	28.5

Source: Migration Policy Institute, 2008

<http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=164>

Belgium has, over time, become a country of permanent immigration. The settling of immigrants and their offsprings has contributed to the diversification of Belgian society at all levels. Demographically, immigration has helped to restore some balance between the number of young and old Belgians.

Box 7: Highlights of a Statement by H.E Johan Verbeke, Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations, on the Occasion of High-Level Dialogue on Migration and Development, New York, 2006.

“We are more and more aware of the fact that the globalization of the world, the tremendous development of the means of transport and communication as well as the persistence of considerable inequalities in the economic, political and social field, contribute to the acceleration of the international Migration process, a process that, when badly administered, often drifts off to disastrous, yes even inhuman, conditions.

We have in this respect reaffirmed that a well managed migration can benefit the countries of origin, the countries of destination and the migrants themselves. The work of the Conference of Brussels has in this respect been significant. It has highlighted the need of cooperation between all the parties, including the civil society. It has emphasized the precious role that the Diaspora communities can play in favour of their country of origin. Another obviousness that has been repeated in Brussels they are however evidences that should be reiterated – is that we will not achieve anything if we do not treat the migratory phenomena in a spirit of partnership between all the countries involved. As we can notice, this is a far-reaching program that can only be realized when the international community and all its actors mobilize themselves. These irregular migratory movements sometimes create fears in the destination countries, with regard to disfunctioning of the job market, but also with regard to the respect, by the migrants, for the political and societal values that we consider being fundamental. We have a common interest towards this observation, to determine a global and balanced approach, by taking the multiple dimensions of Migration into account. We need to install a coherent set of short-, middle- and long-term actions and policies that fall under the competence of different actors:

In the short term: we need to display more efforts for the dissuasion of illegal migration by spreading objective information and increased awareness as to the risks of human trafficking that are inherent to irregular migration. The dissuasion also needs to take place by means of increased control of the borders, by the negotiation of a readmission agreement and by the fight against trafficking of human beings. In the medium term: we need to better incorporate the migration dimension into our cooperation policies. This means to promote a favourable environment for development in the countries of origin of migration, examining how migration can contribute to the realization of the Millennium Goals, how migration can be included in the poverty reduction programmes, how migration needs to be handled in order to be directed into a source of enrichment and not of impoverishment for the countries of the South, due to the brain drain. In the long term: make the international politics regarding migration, international trade and agriculture more coherent with our development goals”.

7.5.2 Provision of Labour by Ghanaian Migrants in Belgium

As mentioned earlier, out of the total 120 respondents, 50.8% have some form of secondary and tertiary education whilst 40% has basic education and 9.2% has no education. These Ghanaian migrants are working in various sectors of the economy of Belgium including industry, agriculture, trade and sanitation. Table 10 indicates the sectors in which Ghanaian residents in Belgium work.

Table 10: Distribution of Respondents by Occupation in Belgium

Occupation	Frequency	%
Factory Workers	33	27.5
Farm Workers	20	16.6
Sanitation (Cleaning)	17	14.2
Administrators	13	10.8
Business Person	9	7.5
Technicians	10	8.3
Researcher/Teachers	8	6.6
Students	6	5
Engineers	2	1.7
Secretary	2	1.7
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2008

7.5.3 Impact of African Migrants on Health Care Delivery in Europe

Though research on the migration of health professionals from developing countries suffers from an acute lack of systematic data (Clemens *et al.*, 2006), the migration of doctors and nurses from Africa to the rich countries has raised fears of an African medical brain drain. Between 2001 and 2002, the World Health Organization (WHO) interviewed 2,382 doctors, nurses, and other health professionals in 6 African countries, including Ghana (Awases *et al.*, 2004). Over 80% of the health professionals declared an intention to emigrate and mentioned one of the 8 countries listed in Table 11 as their favoured destination (Clemens *et al.*, 2006). The number African physicians and nurses in 8 selected countries in Europe and America are presented in Tables 11 and 12.

Table 11: Number of African Physicians in Eight Selected Countries in Europe and America

Sending Countries	Domestic	Abroad	%	GB	USA	FRA	CAN	AUS	PRT	SPAIN	BEL
Algeria	13,639	10,860	44	45	50	10,594	10	0	2	60	99
Angola	881	2,102	70	16	0	5	25	0	2,006	14	5
Cameroon	1,007	845	46	49	170	332	20	0	0	4	267
Congo, Dr	5,647	552	9	37	90	139	35	0	42	4	107
Ethiopia	1,310	553	30	65	420	16	30	9	1	1	2
Ghana	1,294	1,637	56	590	850	16	95	0	0	4	2
Kenya	3,855	3,975	51	2,733	865	0	180	110	1	4	1
Morocco	14,293	6,506	31	33	225	5,113	70	4	9	833	213
Nigeria	30,885	4,856	14	1,997	2,510	29	120	0	1	13	6
Tanzania	1264	1,356	52	743	270	4	240	54	1	1	3
Tunisia	6,459	3,192	33	16	30	3072	10	0	0	4	60
Uganda	2,429	1,837	43	1,136	290	1	165	61	1	1	3
Zimbabwe	1,530	1,602	51	553	235	0	55	97	12	1	6

Source: Clemens et al., 2006. A New Database of Health Professional Emigration from Africa

The study reveals that 61.6% of the individual health personnel interviewed had considered leaving the continent to work elsewhere, particularly in the UK (50.7%), USA (35.7%) and in other European countries (13.6%). In Ghana, the reasons given by health personnel for their intention to emigrate were following: to gain experience; received an offer of recruitment from another country; to enjoy better living conditions in the developed countries; to save money quickly to buy or build a house; to upgrade professional skills; and enjoy better remuneration. These are exactly the same reasons given by professionals who have already emigrated (Awases et al., 2004).

7.5.3.1 Loss of Medical Doctors and Nurses to Europe

In 2000, approximately 65,000 African-born physicians and 70,000 African-born professional nurses were working overseas in a developed country (Awases et al., 2004). There are more Ethiopian professionals, including medical doctors, working in the United States than in Ethiopia. There are more than 1,600 Ghanaian doctors practising abroad, representing 56% of the total

number of doctors in Ghana (see Tables 11 and 12). Oyowe (1996) noted that 60% of all Ghanaian doctors trained locally in the 1980s have left the country. The departure of health professionals has eroded the ability of medical and social services in several SSA countries to deliver basic health and social needs. Thirty-eight of the 47 of these countries fall short of the minimum World Health Organization (WHO) standard of 20 physicians per 100,000 people (Ainalem, 2005). By analyzing the American Medical Association 2002 Masterfile, Hagopian *et al.*, (2004) found that a total of 5,334 physicians from SSA are in that group, a number that represents more than 6% of the physicians practising in the region.

Table 12: Number African Nurses in Eight Selected Countries in Europe and America

Sending Countries	Domestic	Abroad	%	GB	USA	FRA	CAN	AUS	PRT	SPAIN	BEL
Algeria	83,022	8,245	9	37	138	7,953	40	6	1	26	44
Angola	13135	1,841	12	22	135	12	10	4	1,639	8	11
Cameroon	4,998	1,163	19	118	664	343	0	0	0	5	33
Congo, Dr	16,969	2,288	12	44	207	206	50	0	9	4	1,761
Ethiopia	5,342	1,077	17	61	888	16	75	37	0	0	0
Ghana	14,972	4,766	24	2,381	2,101	1	275	0	0	2	0
Kenya	26,267	2,372	8	1,336	765	4	135	110	0	0	0
Morocco	29,462	5,176	15	47	276	3,707	60	4	5	560	517
Nigeria	94,747	12,579	12	3,415	8,954	24	160	0	0	8	6
Tanzania	26,023	953	4	446	228	0	240	32	2	1	0
Tunisia	26,389	1,478	5	11	64	1,365	20	0	0	1	17
Uganda	9,851	1,122	10	714	291	0	75	29	0	1	0
Zimbabwe	11,640	3,723	24	2,834	440	0	35	219	14	3	0

Source: Clemens et al., 2006. A New Database of Health Professional Emigration from Africa

A unique feature about migration of health professional from Africa is the migration towards former colonial powers and countries of common language and colonial ties. For example, more Congolese doctors and nurses migrated to Belgium; Angolans to Portugal; while Ghanaians, Nigerians and Kenyan health workers migrate to United Kingdom and USA.

7.6 Challenges Facing Ghanaian Migrants in Belgium

Migration also involves integration challenges that are experienced by Ghanaian migrants. About 38% of the respondents cited difficulties relating to obtaining a resident permit as the most important integration challenge in Belgium (Table 13). This is followed by language difficulties (25%); difficulty to find a job (20%); accommodation difficulties (10%); and family re-union problems (7.5%).

Table 13: Integration Challenges facing Ghanaian Migrants in Belgium

Challenges	Frequency	%
Resident permit	45	37.5
Language barriers	30	25.0
Employment	24	20.0
Housing difficulties	12	10.0
Family Re-union	9	7.5
Total	120	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Integration calls for investment by both the migrants and the host countries. While the later need to address the barriers that migrants face, the former should adapt themselves to their new environment. Language barrier is one of the most important integration challenges facing Ghanaian migrants in Belgium. However, because of the language courses organized by the Belgian Government for migrants, a significant proportion of the Ghanaian migrants in Belgium can speak at least one of the national languages. Seventy-five percent of respondents speak one of the Belgian languages; 79% and 21% speak Netherlands and French respectively.

8. North-South Migration Challenges and Opportunities

It is inevitable that the movement of people across international borders will not stop. As an international community, it therefore important that human movement across international borders be managed in a more holistic and efficient manner for the betterment of the host and sending countries.

South-north migration cannot be adequately understood only in terms of benefits but as an integral aspect of a complex set of challenges and prospects. The massive flow of South-North migration is mainly triggered by unequal economic development and political imbalances between the two regions (ECA, 2006; UNFPA, 2004). In addition, the expanding global economy, geopolitical transformations, conflicts, wars, and ecological disasters have had and continue to have a profound impact on people and their choices to stay at home or to go abroad (Awases et al., 2004; UNFPA, 2004).

In general, southern developing countries have a surplus of labour, while the northern states have a need for labour. However, northern states have increasingly attempted to close their frontiers to migration by strengthening the control of unskilled labour. This is because the irregular migratory movements sometimes create fears in the destination countries with regard to disfunctioning of the job market and respect for the fundamental political and societal values by migrants. However, migration controls put in place by the EU countries do not necessarily prevent emigration from south.

It is clear that migration from Africa to Europe is producing numerous challenges that need to be critically examined for the mutual benefit of the two continents. The key challenges include illegal migration, asylum seeking, human trafficking, brain drain, loss of education and health professionals, policy vacuum, abuse of human rights and national security, low political will to manage migration flows and to address the consequences of migration; lack of institutional capacity; inadequate resources to manage migration flows, especially irregular migration and human trafficking; and marginalisation of migrant communities (OECD, 2006; UNFPA, 2004). The need to encourage more cooperation between EU and African countries and to foster international dialogue with a view to redressing these challenges and to maximize the benefits of migration is quite urgent.

8.1 International Migration Policies

Many countries in both north and south have signed international conventions and protocols addressing migration issues such as ILO Conventions No. 97 and 143 and Migrant Workers Convention (1990), International Convention on racial discrimination (1969), stateless persons (1960) among others (UNFPA, 2004; International Dialogue on Migration/IOM, 2005). However,

integrating these provisions into national legislation and ensuring compliance is proving to be more difficult (UNFPA, 2004). Some countries have embarked on restrictive immigration policies which have proven ineffective in containing migratory flows. Very often, they end up providing incentives to international mobsters who specialize in trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants. To harness mutual benefits of south-north migration, it is necessary to create an appropriate policy and programme environment to maximize the chances for migration to alleviate poverty in countries and regions of origin and also benefit the host countries (IOM, 2004). Exploring the synergies between Africa-EU migration and development cooperation policies would enhance the effectiveness of both policies for the sending and receiving countries alike (OECD, 2006).

8.2 Training and Export of Skilled Workers

It is increasingly being acknowledged that the migration of highly skilled professionals is not necessarily a net loss but a '*brain gain*,' where skilled emigrants are considered as a potential asset and not necessarily a net loss to the home country; migration may in fact benefit both the receiving and sending countries (IOM, 2008; Woldetensae, 2007). This new approach to brain gain emphasizes the idea that the human resource base of developing countries is a potential asset that could be tapped and exported for earning foreign exchange instead of regarding the movement as a total loss to the region. The global market for highly skilled workers is expanding very significantly. Developing countries can take advantage of this growing demand and train more skilled professionals for export. This can significantly help to generate foreign exchange to the sending countries.

8.3 Mobilization and Involvement of the Diaspora in Development

Diasporian communities can play an important role by promoting trade between their home and host countries. They can also help to stimulate investment in the home countries through the establishment of networks of residents associations in the receiving countries. Harnessing the potential of migrants in the Diaspora to contribute towards development projects in their home countries is a vital way to maximize the benefits of migration. One way of harnessing this potential is to develop a strong system of networking and partnerships between the home countries and the diaspora. African countries and the south in general should develop effective strategies for harnessing the benefits of migration into their development policies and bilateral cooperation agreements with the developed countries. There is also the need for the sending

countries in Africa to create an environment that is conducive for enhancing the contributions by their migrants in the diasporas to the development of the continent. Establishment of Diasporian Development Funds into which migrants can contribute financially for national development is a possible effective way of mobilizing resources for development. Host countries in the EU should support the creation of migrant associations to help forge networking and partnerships with communities in their home countries. This can tremendously facilitate the transfer of technology and development initiatives. Allowing dual citizenship is another means of maintaining the attachment of emigrants to the long-term development of their countries of origin.

8.4 Temporary Engagement of Intellectuals in the Diaspora

It is useful to create effective links through which African Diasporians can effectively and productively be connected to their home countries through part-time but useful engagements in identified sectors of their economies. Short-term return assignments can be used to fill skills-gaps in home country institutions. The interest of most of the African intellectuals in the Diaspora to contribute to the socio- economic development of their native countries is a good opportunity to create networks for facilitating temporary engagements (Woldetensae, 2007). For example, experts from the Diaspora can be temporarily placed in areas such as in higher education and the health sector which are suffering from severe shortages of human resources.

8.5 Mitigating Brain Drain: Mobilizing the Diaspora through Virtual Participation

One potential solution to Africa's brain drain is encouraging virtual participation as a means to engaging the Diaspora in the development process of the continent. Virtual participation refers to the participation of African Diaspora in national capacity building without any physical relocation, temporary engagement in home country or permanent return. Virtual participation provides opportunities for the involvement of the intellectuals in diasporians in activities such as preparation of modules for distance teaching and e-learning, sharing of information with local counterparts, collaboration on research work and other development projects (Woldetensae, 2007). It also offers an opportunity to Africa's Diaspora to contribute to the development of the continent through remote resource mobilization such as donation of books and computers to enhance the use of ICT in schools and the provision of equipment to hospitals.

8.6 Facilitating the Return and Re-integration of Migrants

Creating appropriate conditions that will attract African intellectuals abroad to return to their home countries is also important for the sustainable development of the continent. Policies to encourage the return of migrants will significantly help to reduce the negative effects of the phenomenon of brain drain. Returning migrants who bring back their skills and work experience acquired abroad should invest their knowledge in their home countries to catalyze socio-economic advancement. The migration of international students for instance has grown significantly in recent years, including students from developing countries. Developing countries therefore need to create incentives and enabling environment for students who will return to Africa to apply the skills they acquired from abroad.

8.7 Incentives for Boosting Remittances by Migrants

The average charge for the transfer of remittance to developing countries through a formal channel is around 10-15% and in some cases it exceeds 15% of the total amount transferred. High transfer charges create an incentive for migrants to send their remittances through informal channels, but these are often unreliable and money can be lost or stolen in the process. By making transfers cheaper will ensure that remittances are sent through reliable financial channels, including banks and credit institutions.

8.8 Strengthening North-South Cooperation

International migration is an important avenue to developing north-south relations and establishing a new international political and economic order for the mutual benefit of the continents. It helps to arouse the attention of the developed countries to the needs of the south and urge them to take more actions to honour their commitments to increase investment and assistance, reduce trade barriers, speed up technology transfer and reduce or cancel debts. This cooperation will also help to strengthen the economic links between the north and south and enable the two regions to take advantage of each other's strengths for mutual benefits and to work together for a healthy development of the world economy. It can also significantly improve north-south cooperation in science, technology and culture. This would enable millions of people in the developing countries to realize the goal of rapid socio-economic progress.

9. Conclusion

Migration is become increasingly being recognized as an important development instrument and a key feature of the globalizing world in which more people are on the move and the frequency and the various modes of mobility are on the increase. Migration has enormous development potential for both the countries of origin, especially for the least developed countries, and the receiving countries. It can contribute significantly towards poverty reduction, sustainable human development and the reduction of economic vulnerability of developing countries. The disparities in employment opportunities, wages and income, professional development, good medical care, and political freedom are among the main determinants of migration from Ghana to Belgium and the European Union. Ghanaian migrants in Belgium significantly contribute to the socio-economic development of both Ghana and Belgium via remittances, investments, contribution to community development projects, provision of labour, payment of taxes and enrichment of cultural values and experiences. The results of the study indicate that the synergies between south-north migration and development, if properly explored and strengthened, could lead to substantial mutual benefits for both the north and south.

A comprehensive and balanced approach to the implementation of migration policies is required from southern and northern countries to ensure a sustainable management of migration on a win-win basis. The south and the north need to recognize the potential of migration as a force for development. Governments of the receiving countries should therefore not only take into account their own economic and social needs but also the well-being of the migrants, their families, home countries and the long-term demographic implications of migration in the receiving countries. Furthermore governments of migrants sending countries worried about brain drain should formulate policies and incentives to retain their workers and encourage the return of migrants by creating a favourable environment. To create a win-win situation for south-north migration, governments of the host and sending countries must ensure that migration is effectively incorporated into development policy frameworks. The sending countries must mobilize and involve their citizens in the Diaspora in the development and implementation of projects; provide incentives for boosting remittances; ensuring effective management of remittances; and facilitating the return and reintegration of migrants.

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