Diaspora organisations and their development potential

An analysis of Ghanaian diaspora organisations in the UK, Germany and the Netherlands

by Antony Otieno Ong'ayo

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September 2016

Key messages

Integration, stability and improved capacity in the country of destination are important prerequisites for transnational initiatives targeting the country of origin.

From a development cooperation policy perspective, diaspora initiatives might seem to compete with the activities of mainstream development agencies, but there is actually evidence that their input may be complementary.

Collective diaspora activities are one of the positive aspects of migration that can be used to address local challenges in the EU such as ageing population, the transformations generated by migration flows and the demand for skilled labour.

A policy framework that seeks to achieve coherence among different institutions at the different levels at which diasporas operate could help to ensure that diaspora activities complement local initiatives.

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Acronyms

ASDA	African Social Development Aid
BAMF	German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees
CHAT	Community Health Action Trust
Cordaid	Catholic Organisation for Relief and Development Aid
DFID	UK Department for International Development
ECDPM	European Centre for Development Policy Management
EU	European Union
FRIDE	Fundación para las Relaciones Internacionales y el Diálogo Exterior
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GLN	Ghanaian Londoners Network
GTZ	Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
HTA	Hometown organisation
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
MIPEX	Migrant Integration Policy Index
NCDO	National Committee for International Corporation and Sustainable Development
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NOMRA	Network of Migration Research in Africa
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
RECOGIN	Representative Council of Ghanaian Organizations in the Netherlands
STAND	Stichting Africa Next Door
UGAG	Union of Ghanaian Associations in Germany
UK	United Kingdom
UN DESA	United Nationsl Department of Economic and Social Affairs
USA	United States of America
VOSAW	Voice of Sub-Saharan African Women

1. Introduction

The heightened impact of international migration in both the countries of destination and the countries of origin highlights the significance of human mobility in the migration and development debates (Nyberg-Sørensen, 2012; Nyberg-Sørensen et al. 2002). The link between migration and development derives from the centrality of transnational diaspora activities and their translocal development outcomes (Zoomers and Van Westen, 2011). The development potential is reflected by the increased volume of financial remittances (World Bank, 2009), and various forms of social remittances (Levitt, 1998). These resources largely emanate from individual and collective initiatives, with the countries of origin as the main focus.

The issue of migration has received a great deal of attention in destination countries due to the perceived challenges in terms of demographic shifts, pressure on the welfare system, integration and participation, global competition for skilled labour (Ong'ayo et al. 2010), the increasing multiculturality of many towns and cities in the EU, and the large flows of refugees in need of protection seeking to cross the EU's southern borders. These concerns inform the sharper focus on migration policies aimed at managing migration flows (Boswell, 2007).

They also provide an impetus for a re-examination of the development potential of diasporas in a framework that looks at their contributions from both a 'here' and a 'there' perspective. At the same time, it is imperative to take account of the development potential of diaspora organisations,[1] in particular their contribution to the countries of destination. This is an aspect that has received only limited attention in the debate on the migration and development nexus. Human mobility not only benefits families and countries of origin, but also makes a significant contribution to development processes in destination countries, thanks to the reverse flows generated by individual and collective initiatives (Mazzucato, 2011).

For the purpose of this paper, the term 'diaspora' is defined as an 'ethnic minority who reside and act in host countries, yet maintain strong sentimental and material linkages with their homelands and with individuals and groups of the same background residing in other host countries' (Sheffer, 2003, pp. 3 and 10-11). Although not prominent in the debate on the migration and development nexus, diaspora organisations play an important role in terms of settlement, learning about the new society, developing safety nets and establishing cross-border networks (Faist, 2010). Combined with local political opportunity structures,[2] collective organisations provide individuals with the ability to integrate and function within the host society and undertake transnational activities. Collective organisations of diasporas can be oriented towards both the country of origin and residence, although some are oriented towards just one of the two.

The geographical focus of collective diaspora organisations is influenced by factors linked to the living conditions in both the country of destination (such as welfare in the form of emergency situations like illness, death, debt, temporary housing), culture, identity and integration challenges) and the country of origin (such as drivers of migration, continued linkages and family ties).

The ability of diaspora to organise collectively in the country of destination depends on characteristics such as the size of the community, the political and policy environment and individual attributes, i.e. leadership,

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[1]   The term 'collective organisation' is used here to refer to all forms of diaspora initiatives that target the mobilisation of groups from the diaspora community, as well as the use of resources and involvement in policy processes through lobbying and advocacy.

[2]   The concept of a 'political opportunity structure' as used in this paper refers to the aspects of the political environment that provide incentives for people to undertake collective action. It incorporates political, cultural, structural, material and organisational elements, including the formal rules and institutions of the political system (Kriesi, 1995).

experience and legal status. By contrast, their participation in public affairs in the country of origin depends on the relationship between the diasporas and the government of the day, and whether the political situation is stable enough to guarantee their return. These conditions determine the nature of diaspora organisations and their role as transnational development agents (Faist, 2008) operating between the countries of destination and origin.

Of the various diasporas from sub-Saharan Africa present in EU member states, the Ghanaian diaspora are a good illustration of the potential of collective organisations and transnational activities for generating social transformation in both the country of origin and the country of residence. Previous studies have already observed the nature of Ghanaian diaspora organisations in the form of hometown associations (Orozco and Reus, 2007; Orozco, 2005). These form a major conduit for various types of remittances (financial and material) and for the preservation of culture and identity. They also serve as a useful support mechanism for newcomers and as an instrument for facilitating integration in the destination countries. However, there are variations in the conditions in which such organisations are formed and operate. These relate to the prevailing political and policy environment as well as the legislative framework, all of which influence diaspora entry, integration and participation in the host society.

The main objective of this paper is to examine the conditions in which collective diaspora organisations are active and their development potential in terms of the complementarities of such initiatives to EU-wide and national policies. The activities of Ghanaian diaspora in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Germany are used by way of illustration. The paper explores the nature of diaspora organisations and their development potential relevance to EU and member state policies on migration and development policies vis-à-vis the countries of origin. The paper applies the concept of political opportunity structures in examining policies and programmes that influence collective diaspora organisations and looking at how the initiatives could be scaled-up by means of coherent engagement by the EU and countries of origin.

The data used in this paper are based on field studies conducted in the Netherlands (Amsterdam, The Hague and Almere; see Ong'ayo, 2014a), the UK (London, Birmingham and Oxford) and Germany (Frankfurt, Hamburg, Mannheim and Cologne). The UK was chosen due to its status as the leading host country for Ghanaian migrants in Europe, its well-established Ghanaian community and its historical links with Ghana (through its colonial past, plus language, education and trade) and the recruitment of healthcare workers by the National Health Service.

In Germany, Ghanaians are the third-largest African community after Moroccans and Tunisians. The liberal German asylum and labour policies of the 1970s and 1980s encouraged Ghanaian immigration. The Ghanaian community in Germany is well-organised and is displaying a growing engagement with the government at state, federal and local levels.

The Netherlands was chosen because of its 300-year history of relations with Ghana, its status as a major country of destination for Ghanaians due to its asylum policies (in the 1990s), its perceived tolerance, institutionalised diaspora engagement framework and well-established Ghanaian organisations. In addition, the political opportunity structures, the approaches to migrant integration, the local political debates, policy shifts in all three countries and the influence of EU migration policies are useful elements for a comparative analysis of collective diaspora organisations.

The study involved face-to-face and telephone interviews with leaders of umbrella organisations, hometown associations, churches and charities. Additional data and the analytical framework used in this paper are derived from a PhD research project that examined the development of Ghanaian diaspora

organisations and their contribution to development in the Netherlands and Ghana (see Ong'ayo, forthcoming).

This paper is structured as follows. Chapter 2 presents an overview of the Ghanaian diaspora community in the three countries studied in terms of their migration history, size and geographical distribution. Chapter 3 examines the institutional and policy frameworks in the three countries and how they shape the formation of diaspora communities and collective organisations. Chapter 4 analyses collective diaspora organisations in terms of their legal status, motives, characteristics, thematic focus and activities. Chapter 5 discusses the nature of diaspora engagement and participation, their policy relevance and how their activities translate into development outcomes for both the country of destination and the country of origin. The chapter concludes with a summary of some of the challenges encountered by diaspora organisations. Chapter 6 revisits the concept of political opportunity structures by examining their manifestations and influence on collective diaspora organisations and their activities. The final chapter contains the main reflections on the development potential from a 'here and there' perspective, and concludes with a set of recommendations for policy consideration and points for further research.

2. Ghanaian diasporas in the UK, Germany and the Netherlands

The migration of Ghanaians to EU countries can be traced back to a combination of factors of a socio-economic and political nature. The major push factors include economic decline, political instability and dictatorship in the late 1970s (Anarfi et al., 2003). The post-independence military coups in 1966-1992 and subsequent regime changes (Antwi-Bosiakoh, 2010) brought political instability, which consequently changed the dynamics of mobility from single groups to mass movements (Adepoju, 2005). Later push factors included the impact of Structural Adjustment Programmes in 1983 and acute drought and famine in 1983 and 1984 (Osman, 2010), in addition to poverty, unemployment and conflict at the beginning of 1990s. These resulted in the emigration of a large number of Ghanaians between 1990 and 2010, who left the country in search of better opportunities abroad. Africa, Europe and North America were the three main destinations. The above factors have also influenced Ghanaian diaspora organisations and type of activities they undertake in the countries of residence and also in specific locations in their regions of origin in Ghana.

Partly due to the lack of comprehensive national data, there are conflicting accounts about the actual number of Ghanaians living abroad (Higazi, 2005). Similarly, estimates in the countries of residence reflect the numbers identified by the official documentation systems used by various agencies and institutions. Yet the figures from these sources do not account for the undocumented, people with a changed residency status and people who have moved (either permanently or temporarily) between Europe, North America and other destinations or back to Ghana.

In addition to West Africa, Ghanaians have a very large presence in several EU member states, as Table 1 shows. The size of the diaspora community in the destination country plays an important role in determining the prevalence of collective organisations. As Table 1 shows, there was a 33% average increase in the size of the Ghanaian population in the three countries between 1990 and 2010, with the bulk of the rise occurring in the period after 2000.

Figure 1: Top five destination countries for Ghanaians in the EU 1990-2010

Year	UK	Italy	Germany	Netherlands	Spain	Total
1990	32336	25093	16892	5935	310	80566
2000	58572	34369	32477	15609	2541	143568
2013	98000	48661	35525	20829	14561	217576

Sources: UN DESA (2013); Statistics Netherlands (2015); Office of National Statistics (2015)

According to the UK Office for National Statistics (2013), there were 98,000 Ghanaians living in the UK in 2013. The large number of Ghanaians in the UK may be ascribed to the colonial ties, the English language, the fact that the UK is a major destination for Ghanaian students and professionals, and an increase in the second-generation population. Studies citing estimates by the Ghanaian High Commission suggest that there were about 1.5 million Ghanaians registered as UK residents. This is an indication of the large number of undocumented people, most of whom are not captured in census records.[3]

In Germany, the Ghanaian diaspora are the largest migrant group from sub-Saharan Africa, despite the fact that Germany does not have any colonial ties with Ghana. According to the Federal Statistics Office, the number of Ghanaians rose from 3,275 in 1977 to 26,000 in 1993 (Nieswand, 2011). This number subsequently fell to about 20,587 in 2006, but then rose to 23,150 in 2012 (German Federal Statistical Office, 2012). Informal estimates suggest some 35,000 Ghanaians live in Germany. This is corroborated by umbrella organisations.[4] The main drivers for Ghanaian immigration to Germany are education in the 1960s and 1970s, asylum in the period between 1970 and 1993, linked to political instability in Ghana and family formation/reunification (*ibid.*). Since the introduction of a visa requirement for Ghanaians, there has been an increase in the number of undocumented people and also in on-migration to other EU countries (Nieswand, 2011). The decline between 1993 and 2006 was coupled with the improved state of the Ghanaian economy during the period after 2000. The Ghanaian population in Germany is composed of first and second generations and people who have lived in Germany for more than 20 years (whose number was estimated at 17.2% in 2007) (Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), 2009).

The Netherlands is the fourth EU destination of choice for Ghanaian migrants. Although the immigration of large numbers of Ghanaians to the Netherlands is a recent phenomenon, Ghanaians were some of the earliest sub-Saharan Africans to set foot in the Netherlands (see Blakley, 2004; Van Kessel, 2002). The size of the Ghanaian community in the Netherlands is currently estimated at 22,556 (Netherlands Statistics, 2015). This figure is composed of first-generation Ghanaians (61%) and a growing number of second-generation residents (39%) with both Dutch and Ghanaian nationality. The gender balance is neutral, with both male and females accounting for 50% of the population.

The figures suggest that a number of factors have influenced the choice of the Netherlands as a destination country. The first is the past inflow of Ghanaian refugees in the Netherlands (see Van Kessel and Tellegen, 2000), linked to conditions of political instability, economic stagnation and a lack of future prospects. The second is family formation and family reunion, which has led to Ghanaians acquiring permanent residency status and becoming naturalised as Dutch citizens. The third factor is work-related, with highly skilled and semi-skilled migrants making use of new policies targeting highly skilled migrants in the EU member states and outside (Ong'ayo et al. 2010). The policies on highly skilled migrants have also facilitated the settlement of family members of expatriates (European Migration Network, 2007).

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[3]   Interview with the Chairman of Ghana Union UK, 22 September 2014.
[4]   Interview with the Secretary-General of the Union of Ghanaian Associations in Germany, 22 December 2014.

The main motives for Ghanaian migration to the UK, Germany and the Netherlands may be summarised under the four headings of work, family, studies and asylum. Asylum was a major motive in the 1990s, but has since subsided due to the stability in Ghana. Work, family and studies remain the main reasons, though with variations among the three countries due to restrictions on family formation and reunion (Kraler and Kofman, 2009), the language barrier in the Netherlands and Germany, and problematic access to the labour market. In terms of the level of education, Ghanaians in the UK, Germany and the Netherlands are highly educated, with majority (62%) having undertaken secondary education. The UK is host to the most highly educated Ghanaians, followed by Germany and the Netherlands.

In terms of ethnic composition, the main groups in the three countries of destination are Akan (Asante, Fante, Akwapim, Akyem, Akwamu, Ahanta, Bono, Nzema and Kwahu), Ga-Adangbe (Ga, Adangbe, Ada and Krobo), Ewes and Gur (Gurma, Grusi and Mole-Dagbane). There are some variations among these groups, however, in terms of size and social demographic structures. For instance, groups from the southern part of Ghana, especially from the Ashanti, Volta, Eastern, Cape Coast Brong Ahafo and Greater Accra regions are overrepresented compared with the north-eastern and northern regions.[5]

The location of Ghanaian diasporas in the three countries

A mapping exercise of the Ghanaian community in the UK in 2008-2009 revealed that most Ghanaians lived in Greater London, especially in Tottenham (the Broadwater Farm Estate), Seven Sisters, Hackney, Enfield, Dalston, Brixton and Lewisham (International Organisation for Migration, 2009). According to the 2011 census, Ghanaians account for 0.3% of the population of London. The UK Office of National Statistics estimated that some 65,000 were living in London in 2013, making it the place with the highest concentration of Ghanaians in the UK. Following London are regions such as Southeast, the East and the West Midlands, with a population of more than 14,000 Ghanaians.

Figure 2: Geographic distribution of Ghanaian population in the UK by region

Region	Population	% of total local population
UK	41,195	0.1
London	25,736	0.3
South East	4,397	0.1
East	3,288	0.1
West Midlands	2,046	0
North West	1,600	0
East Midlands	1,454	0
Yorkshire and the Humber	1,429	0

Source: UK Office for National Statistics (2013)

Ghanaians account for about 0.4% of the three million inhabitants of central London. In recent years, their presence has extended to locations outside London such as Enfield (0.6% of 312,466 inhabitants), Croydon (1 % of 372,759 inhabitants) Milton Keynes (0.5% of 248,821 inhabitants), Watford (0.4% of 90,301 inhabitants), Telford and Wrekin UA (0.2% of 166,641 inhabitants), Birmingham (0.1% of 1,073,045 inhabitants) and Coventry (0.1% of 316,960 inhabitants) (Office for National Statistics UK, 2013).

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[5] Interview with the Chairman of the Ghana Union UK on 26 September 2014, and with the Secretary-General of the Mannheim Ghana Union on 22 December 2014.

Figure 3: Geographic distribution of Ghanaian population in the UK by district/town

London	
Newham	2,132
Southwark	1,893
Lambeth	1,695
Hackney	1,502
Croydon	2,242
Enfield	1,936
Barking and Dagenham	1,372
Outside London	
Cardiff	12,000
Liverpool	9,000
Southampton	8,000
Milton Keynes UA	1,319

Sources: UK Office for National Statistics (2013), IOM (2009)

In Germany, there is a large concentration of Ghanaians in North Rhine Westphalia, Hamburg, Hesse, Berlin, Baden-Württemberg, Lower Saxony and Bremen (see Figure 4). According to the German Federal Statistical Office, 22.7% of Ghanaians in Germany live in Hamburg, 23.8% in North Rhine Westphalia, 9.8% in Hesse and 9.2% in Berlin. There are also Ghanaians living in Frankfurt, Cologne, Mannheim, Krefeld, Karlsruhe, Düsseldorf, Munich, Aachen, Saarbrücken, Stuttgart, Landshut, Worms, Freiburg and Darmstad. The strong presence of Ghanaians in these regions and cities is due to economic activities, access to job opportunities and migrant support networks.[6]

Figure 4: Geographic distribution of Ghanaian population in Germany by region

Region	Population	% of total
Baden-Württemberg	1,643	8.0
Bavaria	1,110	5.4
Berlin	1,866	9.2
Brandenburg	3,288	0.4
Bremen	2,046	5.2
Hamburg	1,600	22.7
Hesse	1,454	9.8
Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania	1,429	0.6
Lower Saxony	1,139	5.5
North Rhine Westphalia	4,909	23.8
Rhineland Palatinate	635	3.1
Saarland	457	2.2
Saxony	93	0.4
Saxony Anhalt	78	0.4
Schleswig-Holstein	644	3.2
Thuringia	24	0.1
Total for Germany	20,587	100

Source: Adapted from GIZ (2009).

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[6]   Interview with the Secretary-General of the Mannheim Ghana Union on 20 December 2014.

In the Netherlands, Ghanaians are concentrated mainly in the provinces of North Holland, South Holland, Flevoland, and North Brabant (see Figure 5). This is due to the proximity to the Western conurbation known as the *Randstad* region[7] and the big cities of The Hague, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht and Almere.
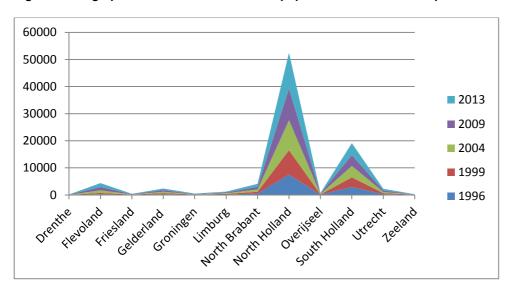
Figure 5: Geographic distribution of Ghanaian population in the 12 Dutch provinces

Source: Adapted from Ong'ayo, forthcoming.

Ghanaians have a big presence in Amsterdam, The Hague, Almere and Rotterdam (see Figure 6). In Amsterdam, the majority of Ghanaians are found in the Bijlmer area of southeast Amsterdam. The concentration of Ghanaians in this area is due to the role of Amsterdam as the first point of arrival in the Netherlands. In The Hague, the majority of Ghanaians live in the *Laakkwartier*, *Transvaal*, *Valkenboskwartier* and *Schilderswijk* districts near the city centre. Ghanaians have set up shops, churches and meeting places for clubs and associations in these locations, which are similar to their Amsterdam equivalents. These settings provide Ghanaians with dense networks of people from their villages, towns and regions of origin in Ghana. The networks facilitate access to housing, jobs and social amenities for new arrivals through an informal system that operates in parallel with the mainstream Dutch system in terms of service provision.[8]

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[7] The Randstad region comprises the city of Almere and the provinces of North Holland, South Holland and Utrecht. The region generates 46% of the country's aggregate GDP and is home to 41% of the Dutch population.

[8] Interview with an Integration Policy Advisor from Southeast Amsterdam Council, 2011.
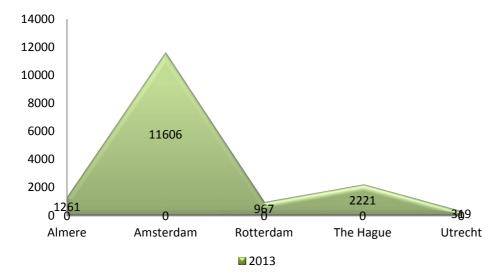
Figure 6: Ghanaians in the five big Dutch cities

Source: Adapted from Ong'ayo, forthcoming

Almere is a preferred location because it is relatively cheap and close to Amsterdam and Schiphol Airport, where many migrants work for logistic companies serving the airport. The Ghanaian community in Almere is spread over different locations, where they live in mixed residential areas together with native Dutch and other migrant groups. Ghanaians in Almere do not live in enclaves because most of them have been living in the Netherlands for a long time and own their own properties (Ong'ayo, forthcoming).

Although colonial ties and the absence of a language barrier (Hooghe et al. 2008) may explain the migration of large numbers of Ghanaians to the UK, their migration to Germany and the Netherlands is due to other factors. The most significant of these are immigration policies, existing communities and networks in the host country. This is reflected by the concentration of Ghanaians in southeast Amsterdam, London, Hamburg and the Frankfurt metropolitan areas in Germany. From a social capital theory perspective (Portes, 1998), these patterns can be explained by the primary role of social networks (Marsden, 2000). Important factors here are next of kin, relatives, friends, a shared identity (through hometown associations that provide information and play host to newcomers).

3. The institutional, policy and legislative environment

The institutional, policy and legislative framework in the destination countries shapes the formation of diaspora communities and collective organisations. Institutions 'play a role in defining policy alternatives capable of securing compromise' (Held and Krieger 1984, p. 18), especially among governments, citizens, civil society and interest groups. It is in the latter category that diaspora organisations fall. They are receiving growing recognition as non-state actors in the field of development (Ionescu, 2006). The host country's development cooperation policy priorities vis-à-vis the country of origin also affect the amount of policy attention given to its diaspora communities and organisations.

Migration policies in the destination countries play an influential role in relation to diaspora organisations and their engagement in transnational activities. This starts with immigration policies (that relocate entry and exit) and policies on integration (i.e. settlement and participation). In some cases, migration is also

involved in development cooperation policies, e.g. the management of migration in the regions of origin. Migratory policies address the following aspects:

- labour mobility (skilled and semi-skilled);
- family union;
- education;
- residency;
- participation;
- citizenship and rights.

Some policies are aimed mainly at addressing demographic challenges or specific problems in the labour market, such as shortages of IT specialists, doctors and nurses.

The UK

In the UK, immigration policies are based on the 1971 Immigration Act, which distinguishes between people who are subject to immigration controls and those who are not subject to immigration controls, i.e. UK nationals, people with a right of abode and European Economic Area (EEA) and Swiss nationals.

Alongside asylum and family reunion or formation, current UK immigration policies also focus on labour migration. Migrant settlement in the UK is granted on the basis of employment and residency and includes dependents through family formation and reunion. Migration policy in the UK is also characterised by two aspects, namely a focus on immigration and citizenship, which has implications for benefits and access to publicly funded housing. Attention is given to skills levels for labour migrants under a points-based system introduced in 2008 and restrictions on the entry of low-skilled labour migrants from outside the EU (Home Office, 2006).

The UK has provisions for employment support programmes for refugees under the Refugee Education Training and Advisory Service, The Partnership for Refugee Employment through Support, Training, and Online Learning, and free ESOL (English as a Second Language) courses for low-skilled workers (Cangiano, 2008).

In terms of diaspora participation, the UK has had a policy orientation of 'active citizenship' since the 1997 Labour government (Mayo and Rooke, 2006). More recently, the emphasis has been placed on citizenship (Home Office, 2010). In a recent policy document entitled *Creating the conditions for integration* (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012), the UK government set out its plans to enable everyone to play a full part in national and local life.

Acting in collaboration with the voluntary sector and civil-society organisations, the local authorities play an important role in the implementation of migration policy. The UK government's policy of engaging with diaspora groups and migrants focuses mainly on employment support services and programmes that facilitate the integration of migrants. Charities, foundations, government and the EU are the main sources of funding for the related activities. In this context, diaspora organisations feature prominently in the co-implementation of migration-related policies as well as activities targeting black and minority ethnic groups under the Connections for Development programme launched in 2003.

Germany

In Germany, the institutional and policy framework for managing migration is 'complex due to structures of the federal government, as well as regulations and responsibilities' (Schneider 2012, p. 10). Responsibility for migration and asylum policy is divided between the state, federal and municipal levels. As in other EU countries, integration, asylum and migration remain contentious in Germany due to the increasing ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity. Migration laws in Germany relate mainly to citizenship, freedom of movement, immigration, emigration, extradition, passports, residence, registration, identity cards, and the settlement of foreign nationals (see Schneider, 2012). These aspects are regulated mainly at a national level, and affect diaspora organisations and participation as they determine people's residency status, access to public services and participation in German society (education and labour).

Overall German policy on Ghanaian diasporas is a mix of immigration and integration policies (e.g. language and integration courses as regulated in the Residence Act), labour market and health policies, and development policy priorities. The policy on return, security and anti-discrimination also has connections with the issue of migration (Schneider 2012 p. 5).

There has been a shift in migration policy in Germany since 2000, with more emphasis being placed on the integration of non-nationals and the promotion of community relations. This also includes simplifying the visa system, introducing civic integration courses, and adopting schemes on labour migration such as the German Green Card system, which targets skilled and highly skilled immigrants. This scheme allows foreign students who complete their degrees to stay in the country if they find employment.

Germany also published a National Integration Plan in July 2007. In line with article 45 (2) of the Residence Act, Germany pursues different integration programmes in an institutional configuration involving *Länder* (states), local authorities and private providers. Integration programmes targets the following areas:
* linguistic integration;
* education;
* social integration;
* integration in the workplace.

One of the focus areas in the national policy on integration is social integration, which covers diaspora organisations. The policy recognises the role played by diaspora organisations in facilitating integration. This recognition is reflected by the growing demand for the services of migrant organisations from central government, *Länder*, local authorities and private providers (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF), 2011).

In terms of development cooperation, Ghana was one of the 23 partner countries in the Returning Experts Programme. However, migration and development are relatively new as themes in German policy. A pilot project has been going for some time now as part of the GIZ Migration and Development Scheme.[9] This has a focus on the following areas:
* policy advice;
* remittances;
* cooperation with diaspora communities and support for active diaspora organisations.

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[9]   Other initiatives launched as part of this scheme include online money transfers (www.geldtransfair.de) developed and managed by GTZ and the Frankfurt School of Finance & Management as a public-private partnership on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development; and the Mentori programme for small and medium-sized enterprises developed by Inspiris (UK/Spain) in cooperation with Shell African Network, Barclays, GTZ and Busyinternet.

An example of the institutional and policy focus on diaspora engagement is the support for African migrant organisations from the state of North Rhine Westphalia through the inclusion of migration in its development policy. This policy environment led to the formation of the Ghana Forum NRW e.V., with a membership of some 40 groups representing 'associations, churches and the Ghanaian diasporas' (GIZ 2009, p. 15).

The Netherlands

In the Netherlands, the institutional and policy framework is a corporatist model in which non-state actors have space to participate in policy consultation, formulation and implementation together with state institutions. Among the characteristics of the Dutch institutional setting and policy implementation are decentralisation, institutional autonomy, corporatism in decision-making, and space for the involvement of interest groups in policy processes (Ong'ayo, forthcoming).

In terms of migration policies, a combination of economic factors, namely the reality of a multicultural society and populist politics, have shaped Dutch attitudes to migrants and migration policies. Studies have shown that the economic situation at any given moment shapes attitudes to and perceptions of migrants (Facchini and Mayda, 2008; Dustmann and Preston, 2007). This applies particularly during economic downturns and crises, when natives are anxious about the implications for their jobs and the welfare system (Constant et al., 2011).

The Dutch government published a policy memorandum on international migration and development in 2008 (Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2008). The main policy priorities are:

1. migration in the development dialogue and development in the migration dialogue;
2. fostering institutional development in migration management;
3. promoting circular migration/brain gain;
4. strengthening the involvement of migrant organisations;
5. strengthening the link between remittances and development;
6. encouraging sustainable return and reintegration.

These policy priorities have repercussions for the Dutch government's migration programmes in the Netherlands, as well as its external migration and development policies.

The Netherlands has also enacted various forms of legislation for managing migration, based on article 2 of the Dutch Constitution. These set out certain conditions for would-be immigrants: the validity of documents, the financial means needed to cover the cost of living and the cost of travel back to the country of origin, and the requirements for different durations of stay.

Concluding words

Global events such as wars, oil crises, post-war conflicts, terrorism and international migration, as well as domestic issues such as economic recession, unemployment, labour shortages, integration challenges, xenophobia and politics (Demmers and Mehendale, 2010), have all had a big influence on migration policies in the three countries taken as case studies for the purpose of this paper. Most of the migration policies in the three countries have moved to a more selective and restrictive approach in the past two decades. This has led to an emphasis on desirable forms of immigration in the context of global

competition for highly skilled migrants. At the same time, the migration policies of the three countries are increasingly integrated and have been transformed by the Common European Asylum System (Ong'ayo et al., 2010).

4. Ghanaian organisations in the countries of residence

Types of organisation

Ghanaian diasporas typically set up a variety of collective organisations in the three destination countries. This is due to the diversity in terms of regions of origin in Ghana, the motives for forming such organisations, and the fragmentation of the community as a result of internal conflicts and interorganisational competition. The most prominent types of organisation are hometown organisations (HTAs), umbrella organisations, religious organisations, professional organisations, media organisations, businesses and political parties.

There were about 100 Ghanaian associations in the UK in 2004-2005 (Van Hear et al., 2004). A conservative estimate now suggests there are some 200 Ghanaian associations in the UK. They consist mainly of umbrella organisations, charities, voluntary organisations, hometown associations, churches, NGOs, media houses and businesses. These are oriented along ethnic, professional, regional, cultural, and religious and gender-based lines. Among the important umbrella organisations is the Ghana Union, which is an association of 50 Ghanaian community groups, voluntary groups and individuals (Van Hear et al., 2004). The HTA category includes Ga Dangwe UK, Nzema Association, Asante Town club, Kassena-Nankana Development League London. Examples of migrant development NGOs[10] include the GUBA Foundation, Noble Friends, Akwaaba UK, Ghanaian Londoners Network, Afro Pulp and MeFiri Ghana. They also include media houses.[11] The business category includes shops and regular and microfinance banks.

The number or Ghanaian organisations in Germany is estimated conservatively at 616. These consist of various types of organisation, including 15 umbrella organisations operating under the Union of Ghanaian Organisations in Germany (UGAG), 40 HTAs, two regional student unions, and 500 churches, with Hamburg alone hosting about 40 churches.[12] There are about 45 active associations in the Ruhr region alone (GIZ, 2009). The UGAG is the main umbrella organisation. Based in Berlin, it has a membership that has grown from 15 local associations in 2005 (Nieswand, 2009) to 21 associations today (Schmelz, 2009).

There are about 245 Ghanaian organisations in the Netherlands (Ong'ayo, 2014a). The main types are HTAs, umbrella organisations, religious organisations, professional organisations and media organisations.[13] The latter are independently registered and serve the community in various capacities, e.g. spiritual, the dissemination of information and community mobilisation. While Ghanaians do not have

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[10] This category is composed of Ghanaian diaspora organisations whose activities are geared towards development. Their choice of location is based on topics and themes that transcend cleavages such as ethnicity, regionalism, and political and religious affiliations.

[11] Examples are Hot Digital FM, London, Osibisa Radio London; WBLS, Amansan FM, Ahomka Radio UK, Kasapa, Power FM, Ghana Today and JoyFM.

[12] Interview with the Secretary-General of the Mannheim Ghana Union, 22 December 2014.

[13] Examples include Adom TV in Amsterdam, AFAPAC Radio, Ghana Today Media, Ghanatta (Radio & TV), Godiya Radio, Radio Akasanoma, Radio Recogin, Radio Voice of Africa, Sankofa TV, Spirit FM in Amsterdam, STG. Quayson K. Media Ministries, Word FM in The Hague, and Soul Hour Radio in Amsterdam.

political parties focusing on local issues in the Netherlands, they are members of two main Ghanaian political parties, the National Democratic Congress and the New Patriotic Party.

Motives

A review of the reasons for forming collective organisations among Ghanaian diasporas in the UK, Germany and the Netherlands reveals that several motives predominate (see Figure 7).

The welfare of the Ghanaian community and its members is an important motive for the formation of membership-based organisations such as HTAs and umbrella organisations. Community leaders have observed that 'collective organisations are critical for social, financial and material mobilisation'.[14] This entails engagement with host institutions and policy-makers in order to access public services and influence national and local policy.[15] Welfare-related motives are influenced by vulnerabilities during crises and emergencies. These include the need for emergency financial support for members, and the provision of support networks for newcomers.[16]

A second important motive relates to the poor socio-economic conditions in the regions of origin,[17] concern about which provides an impetus for collective philanthropic activities in terms of mobilising financial and material resources. A third important motive is the endeavour by various Ghanaian ethnic groups to maintain socio-cultural practices and traditional values.[18]

While Ghanaian diaspora organisations generally have a collective orientation, certain motives for their establishment are based on personal interests. This is most common among organisations in the non-membership category and includes individual efforts to create employment opportunities and improve conditions in the region of origin in preparation for return (Ong'ayo, forthcoming).

Figure 7: Motives for setting up collective diaspora organisations

- Catering for the welfare of the community and members in the destination countries
- Providing a safety net during crises and emergency situations
- Addressing socio-economic and political conditions in the regions of origin
- Preserving socio-cultural and traditional values
- Serving individual interests

Source: Ong'ayo (2014a)

Organisational characteristics

Ghanaian diaspora organisations in the UK, Germany and the Netherlands consist of both formal and informal associations organised on the basis of religious, ethnic, regional and gender identities, age, platforms and development issues (local and national). Both earlier and recent migrants are behind their establishment, which means that their concerns are influenced by different generational experiences.

In terms of *membership and composition*, Ghanaian diaspora organisations in the UK, Germany and the Netherlands represent a mix of both corporate and individual memberships. However, the legal status

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14 Interview with the Director of STAND, southeast Amsterdam, 2011
15 Interview with the Vice Chairman of RECOGIN, southeast Amsterdam, 2011.
16 Interview with the Chairman of the Fayila Youth Association, The Hague, 8 June 2012.
17 Interviews with the Directors of ASDA, Afro-Euro and Sankofa, Almere and The Hague, various dates in 2011.
18 Interview with the Chairman of the Kumasi Youth Association, 6 June 2011.

available in the three countries dictates the type of organisation that can be formed, either with or without membership. In the UK, for instance, all non-profit organisations register as charities, a status that applies to all categories of non-profit oriented organisations. In the Netherlands, the two main types of relevant legal status are a *stichting* (a type of non-profit-making foundation) and a *vereniging* (association). The former is non-membership-based while the latter is membership-based. Ghanaians in the Netherlands adopt either of the two forms of legal status for strategic reasons. This applies especially to the *stichting*, which opens up avenues to sources of funding other than members (as is the case with associations).

Another important trait of Ghanaian diaspora organisations is their *management structure and leadership*. Regardless of the organisational category, each organisation has a structure for decision-making and activity implementation. While this is a trait that is linked with the statutory requirements for registration in the respective destination countries, the management structure of membership-based organisations entails collective deliberations, decision-making and equal participation for officials and members. In the case of non-membership-based organisations, on the other hand, the executive board or committee is the main decision-maker.

In terms of *manpower and professionalism*, nearly all Ghanaian diaspora organisations are entirely volunteer-led. At the same time, they have in their ranks people with both low and high-skilled professional backgrounds. Only very few individuals who work for migrant development NGOs are involved on a full-time basis. All organisational categories pay attention to their capabilities and mode of operation, with the aim of meeting local standards. Consequently, the majority of the organisations seek to improve their management techniques, fund-raising abilities and competence in drafting project proposals and writing reports.

Another critical trait is the *geographical orientation* of activities. The focus may be local or national in the destination country, transnational between the country of destination and the country of origin, or local or national in the country of origin. This characteristic is significant in that it determines the kind of policy-related issues the organisation in question can pursue and its resource mobilisation strategies. It is also an important because it is linked to the location where diaspora activities and their impact can be verified.

Another important trait is the nature of the *resources* at the disposal of Ghanaian diaspora organisations. These include not just finance, but also manpower and facilities. Resource capacity derives on the one hand from community mobilisation and the organisation's own inputs, but also from finance and training provided by host institutions and local NGOs. Input from within the organisation takes the form of membership fees and donations, but also skills and expertise provided by members on a voluntary basis.

The *visibility* of the organisations is also essential. Regardless of the focus of their geographical activities, Ghanaian diaspora organisations need to pay attention to their visibility, since they need to deal with public institutions either for obtaining funding or for exerting influence. Visibility is also a matter of track record and recognition, aspects that are important for consideration in programmes targeting migrant communities. Every organisation strives to have an online presence.

Themes

The main themes addressed by the different types of organisation depend on the motives underlying their formation and geographical orientation. Diaspora organisations with a focus on the destination country typically address topics such as skills training, access to the labour market, entrepreneurship, youth, gender, media, politics, sports and culture. Most of these themes are linked to local policy issues that affect

the lives of migrants, namely welfare rights, benefit claims, housing, health awareness, education, racial discrimination, crime prevention, juvenile delinquency and domestic violence.[19] For organisations whose focus is on the country of origin, the main themes are health, water, education, entrepreneurship, community development and politics.

Activities

Collective diaspora organisations perform a wide variety of activities, the nature of which is linked to motives, regions of origin in Ghana, the period and trajectory of migration, as well as individual interests, collective concerns and organisational capacities. By way of illustration, the activities of a small number of organisations from the three countries are examined in the next chapter.

5. Diaspora engagement and participation in the EU and member states

The role of integration and participation

The development potential offered by diaspora collective initiatives in destination countries is linked directly to their engagement and participation at both national and local levels. However, this depends on the level of integration, which involves matters such as family reunions, residency, education, health, labour participation, political participation, citizenships and discrimination (Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX), 2015).

Diaspora engagement (De Haas, 2006; Gamlen, 2006) takes the following three-dimensional forms: top-down, bottom up and iterative. Top-down engagement initiatives are those taken by institutions through policy frameworks that provide for consultation mechanisms and funding for activities that target migrant involvement in policy priority areas. A bottom-up perspective means that diaspora organisations themselves demand space to participate and be heard. Iterative approaches are initiatives that originate from interactions between diaspora leaders and actors (e.g. policy-makers, officers from development agencies and NGOs) through networks outside formal processes.

Tölölyan observed (2012, p. 4), diaspora engagement and participation are about 'how diasporas gain their economic livelihoods, organise social life, participate in public and political life, produce a culture that represents them, and attributes and values and meaning to their lives'. Following Tölölyan's line of argument, we need to revisit the role of the policy environment, particularly its influence on the integration of migrants. A critical policy field after immigrant entry is that of integration. Integration in the new society is central to all forms of diaspora engagement, as it is the basis for settlement, participation in collective organisations, resource mobilisation and transnational activities. If we look at the performance of the UK, Germany and the Netherlands in the MIPEX survey (see Figure 8), we see variations in the overall score for integration policies. Specific policy fields within overall integration policy have direct links to various initiatives taken by different types of Ghanaian organisations in the respective countries. They also constitute the local political opportunity structures that either facilitate and or hinder migrant participation, including collective action.

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[19] Interview with the Director of the Community Health Action Trust (CHAT) and the Chairman of the Kassena-Nankana Development League, London, 24 September 2014.

Figure 8: Migrant Integration Policy Index (2015)

	UK	Germany	Netherlands
Ranking	15 out of 38	10 out of 38	11 out of 38
Score	57	61	60
Labour market	56	86	73
Family reunion	33	57	56
Education	57	47	50
Health	64	43	55
Political participation	51	63	52
Permanent residence	51	60	55
Access to nationality	60	72	66
Anti-discrimination	85	58	73

Source: Adapted from MIPEX, 2015

The UK has dropped out of the top 10 due to a shift in policies that have made it difficult for families to reunite, settle and acquire UK citizenship. Integration remains a responsibility of local authorities while national policies and funding for integration mainly target common values, mutual commitments and obligations, social mobility, local civic participation and tackling intolerance and extremism (UK Department of Communities and Local Government, 2012). Linked to collective diaspora initiatives are policies on participation and funding. The UK has the lowest score in this area compared to Germany (see Figure 10).

The German score indicates that its policies promote equal opportunities and a welcoming culture to a certain degree, placing it among the top 10. Integration policies have contributed to rising employment rates and positive public attitudes to immigrants (MIPEX, 2015). Germany has a comprehensive national integration strategy, in which local authorities work together with civil-society organisations and immigrant communities such as the Ghanaian community.

In the Netherlands, an increasing restrictive policy (Van Oers, 2008) has led to mandatory language courses. This restrictive policy environment hampers the integration of migrants and their participation in Dutch society. The fact that the Netherlands has dropped out of the top 10 EU countries with the highest score for their integration policies is due to austerity measures and cutbacks in funding for policies on the participation of immigrant bodies. This has had a direct impact on diaspora initiatives, especially by organisations that rely entirely on subsidies for their activities (Ong'ayo, 2014a).

In response to these policy environments and migrants' general welfare needs, collective organisations form an important dimension of migrant engagement and participation as they address challenges faced by migrants in relation to education, employment and housing among others. Diaspora initiatives help to meet policy challenges in a context of diverse needs, mobile populations and cohesive communities (Benton et al., 2015).

However, a recurrent question with regard to diaspora engagement and participation is which types of organisations are capable of undertaking transnational activities offering a development potential in the countries of destination and origin. Among the various types of organisation, HTAs, umbrella organisations and migrant development NGOs are the most suited for inclusion in policy processes.

Consultative mechanisms

From a destination country perspective, the three above types of diaspora organisations provide policy-makers with platforms for engaging with migrant communities, selling their policies and involving them in the co-implementation of policy priority fields. Diaspora involvement in policy consultation processes is of fundamental importance here.

In the UK, for instance, the House of Commons' International Development Committee has invited submissions from diaspora organisations and their representatives to provide oral evidence during an inquiry on migration and development. Among umbrella organisations, the Ghana Union is a leading representative of Ghanaians in the UK, even though other unions also exist in the north of the country.[20] According to the chairman, the Ghana Union serves the Ghanaian community in the UK by providing a focal point for connections and keeping the community informed. The Union works in partnership with external agencies, community groups, government organisations and corporate members.

In Germany, the national and federal governments engage with diaspora organisations at platform level. As the Secretary-General of the Union of Ghanaian Associations in Germany (UGAG) observed,

"As a platform with more than 13 member organisations, the UGAG engages with the German government on diaspora policy matters that affect the welfare of the Ghanaian community in Germany. Acting in consultation with the government, its role is to represent and serve as a mouthpiece for Ghanaians at state, federal and international levels."

In the Netherlands, there is a consultative mechanism in the form of the annual consultation, and the pre- and post-Global Forum for Migration and Development consultation organised by the Dutch foreign and justice ministries. These meeting provide diasporas with a platform for airing their views, contributing to policy debate, receiving recognition, but also influencing policies on matters affecting the community.

From a development corporation perspective, the UK Department for International Development (DFID) engages diaspora organisations in the preparation of Country Assistance Plans. Similar mechanisms also exist in Germany in the form of GIZ initiatives. In the Netherlands, major development agencies such as Oxfam-Novib and Cordaid engage with diaspora organisations on development issues affecting their countries of origin.

Welfare in the destination countries

The main focal areas for activities undertaken by Ghanaian diaspora organisations include welfare, integration, social enterprise, and business and community development. In the UK, a variety of organisations combine welfare with personal development and entrepreneurship. This is demonstrated by the activities of the Ghanaian Londoners Network, which targets diaspora entrepreneurship, networking and the empowerment of women and young people. In Germany, the focus is more on welfare in general, but also embraces rights such as employment benefits and provisions to facilitate transnational activities. This is evident in the UGAG's involvement in negotiations on baggage allowances, insurance and the transferability of social benefits. The main focal areas in the Netherlands are welfare and emergency situations, integration, culture, and financial and material resource mobilisation for charity projects in the region of origin. In all three countries, all types of organisations engage in lobbying and advocacy at different levels, raising issues linked to policy fields that impact on the welfare and integration of Ghanaians in the host society and development in Ghana.

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[20]   Interview with the Chairman of the Ghana Union UK, 26 September 2014.

From a migrant welfare perspective, diaspora organisations offer a safety net to members and the community by offering a range of services either independently or in collaboration with and funded by local institutions. In the UK, some of the initiatives that target the community include advisory services provided by the Ghana Union.[21] Others are for education and training, support in job searches and access to public services, as demonstrated by the activities of the Ghanaian Welfare Association in North London.

Specific diaspora initiatives, especially those driven by migrant development NGOs and professional organisations, also address particular policy fields using diaspora skills, expertise and experiences. In the health sector in particular, organisations such as the Community Health Action Trust (CHAT) in London offer preventive health and elderly care services for Ghanaians in London.[22] Likewise, the Ghana Nurses' Association UK undertakes lobbying and advocacy to advance the cause of Ghanaian nurses in collaboration with other black and ethnic minority nurses' associations, and also gives guest lectures.

In Germany, the UGAG umbrella organisation has been active in welfare-related issues that target the wider Ghanaian community, in particular providing support during emergencies and facilitating access to education and the labour market. At a policy level, it seeks to influence government decision-making in Ghana, Germany and the EU. The main area in which the UGAG has demonstrated the potency of collective organisations has been in lobbying the German government to allow social benefits to be transferred upon the claimant's retirement. A second initiative involved lobbying Lufthansa airlines to provide safe flights and allow a maximum of 40 kg checked-in baggage.

In the Netherlands, collective initiatives on welfare have been taken by HTAs providing emergency assistance for members during periods of ill-health, after the death of a relative or during a financial crisis. A few umbrella organisations operating at a local level, such as RECOGIN and Ghanatta, also address the welfare needs of the community, especially people who live in the municipalities in which they operate (Ong'ayo, 2014a).

These examples show that there are variations in the focal areas adopted by the different types of organisation. In the UK and the Netherlands, all types of organisation address the welfare needs of their members and the local community, whereas in Germany this is done mainly by HTAs and umbrella organisations but not by migrant development NGOs.

Social policy

The added value of diaspora collective organisations is not tied only to specific government-related policy issues. Indeed, they have a much broader impact in their host societies. For instance, umbrella organisations that organise nationwide activities facilitate intercultural exchanges between migrants and natives. This is observable in the Annual Ghana Cultural festival organised by the UGAG in Germany, the Annual Ghana Day organised by the Council of Ghanaians in the Netherlands (CoGhaN) in Almere (the Netherlands), and the Afrika Festival organised by Sankofa in The Hague (also in the Netherlands) (Ong'ayo, forthcoming).

As regards participation and social mobility, Ghanaian diaspora organisations are paying more and more attention to facilitating access to the labour market. The focus is not only on the first generation, but also on large numbers of second-generation Ghanaians, who still face obstacles in both education and the labour

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21   ibid.
22   Interview with the Director of the Community Health Action Trust, London, 30 September 2014.

market.[23] The Ghanaian Londoners Network (GLN) is a collective initiative for social enterprise, which unlocks the potential of individuals. Its core focus is on enterprise, education and networking. The aim is to promote the welfare of Ghanaians in the UK, specially their economic and social needs. Among the initiatives taken are internship opportunities for Ghanaians and programmes to promote entrepreneurship for young people. The organisation operates a Youth Entrepreneurs Programme in the form of weekly business mentoring and learning sessions for young people, in order to give them the training, skills, encouragement and support to begin a career as an entrepreneur. GLN targets not just Ghanaians, but other young people from an African background.

Capacity-building activities are also undertaken, with the aim of improving the linguistic abilities of Ghanaians in English and various Ghanaian languages. For example, the Ghana Welfare Association in London provides advisory services for Ghanaian migrants based in London in Twi, Ga, Fante, Ewe and Hausa. It also provides English language courses and literacy and numeracy along with translation services and immigration advice.

The examples of activities performed by different types of Ghanaian diaspora organisations in the UK, Germany and the Netherlands show that they are active in the following areas:
- welfare of community members – reducing the burden on the host society;
- integration, complementing local institutional initiatives and policy goals;
- cultural and social activities, helping to preserve identity while enriching the cultural milieu in the host society;
- social enterprise targeting charitable works, personal development and entrepreneurship;
- community development in the countries of origin. This entails financial and material resource mobilisation and the transfer of skills for local development in Ghana and the regions of origin.

A significant proportion of collective initiatives in the five above domains are concentrated in the destination countries. The implication is that they contribute to social transformation in the destination countries. At the same time, the activities performed in the five domains provide the diasporas with the necessary capacities for undertaking transnational activities with development outcomes in the country of origin. These activities thus form part of the policy priorities for the EU and the member states, namely the integration of immigrants and migration and development (see Figure 9). More specifically, they affirm migrants' contributions to employment and growth (Münz et al., 2007).

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[23] Interviews with the Director of VOSAW in May 2014 and the Director of CHAT on 26 September 2014.

Figure 9: Development outcomes of diaspora collective initiatives

Outcomes	In EU members states	In the country of origin
Integration policies	Participation Social cohesion Social remittances Diaspora participation	Translocal linkages and exchanges Collective remittances (social and financial) Lobbying and advocacy
Development cooperation	Aid and trade Linkages for investment in emerging markets Reverse flows Skills mobility Complementary to mainstream initiatives	Skills transfer and exchanges Material goods Trade and investment Employment and poverty reduction
Migration policies	Management of migration Harnessing diaspora potential Diaspora engagement	Circular migration Harnessing diaspora potential Diaspora engagement

Levels of engagement

As Figure 10 shows, there are variations in the level of engagement by each type of organisation. While HTAs focus on the local level, umbrella organisations are active at both national and local levels. Migrant development NGOs, on the other hand, engage mostly with development agencies and government institutions at a national level.

The level of engagement also varies between the three countries: in the UK, all types of organisation have a strong presence at a local level, whereas in Germany they engage mostly at state, regional and local levels. In the Netherlands, diaspora engagement and participation takes place at both local and national levels due to the presence of an institutional consultation framework that taps into diaspora input at different levels.

The intensity of diaspora involvement is also linked to the concentration of the population in specific locations. This is observable in London, Birmingham in the UK, in Hamburg and Frankfurt in Germany, and in Amsterdam, The Hague and Almere in the Netherlands (Ong'ayo, forthcoming).

Figure 10: Overview of types of organisation, activities and level of implementation

Main organisational types	UK		Germany		Netherlands	
	Local	*National*	*Local*	*National*	*Local*	*National*
HTAs	+	-	+	-	+	-
Migrant development NGOs[24]	+	+	+	-	-	+
Umbrella organisations	+	+	+	+	-	+
Churches	+	-	+	-	+	-
Businesses	+	-	+	+	+	-

+ = High intensity of involvement / - = Low intensity of involvement

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[24] In the UK, this category includes organisations registered as charities and limited companies.

Development outcomes in the country of origin

Activities geared towards the country and regions of origin mainly concern community development, but also involve the promotion of ties between Ghana and the UK.[25] The main activities are the delivery of services, especially in relation to education, health, skills training and agriculture. For example, the Kassena-Nankana Development League mobilises resources for development projects in the region of origin in Northern Ghana. The activities mainly target health facilities and equipment in Navrongo and Paga. For example, the League donated oxygen cylinders for the district hospital, as well as benches and 250 anti-malaria nets for women and children on the wards and a further 250 for the villages in Paga. The League has also donated anti-mosquito insecticide for spraying in rural areas. The organisation is also active in public health, and is planning to build a morgue and toilets in the market square and other public places.[26] Similar activities are performed by the Fayila Youth and Kumasi Muslim Youth associations in The Hague, which come from the same region (Ong'ayo, 2014b).

Ghanaian diaspora organisations also engage in material resource mobilisation. This includes fund-raising for equipment purchases, or materials upgrading facilities (in health, education, agriculture and water). In education, several Ghanaian organisations give support of various kinds. In the Netherlands (Ong'ayo 2014b), the work of the Bokemei Foundation illustrates the input of a migrant development NGO. The organisation has established a knowledge centre in Greater Accra, with facilities that include a nursery school, a primary school, a junior high school, a vocational college and farms where orphans, school 'dropouts' and adults are trained in computer skills, carpentry, masonry, plumbing, hairdressing and dress-making.[27]

In the area of skills training and capacity-building, the Voice of Sub-Saharan African Women (VOSAW) addresses the knowledge gap in the care of the elderly in Ghana in its efforts to set up a model care facility and make use of specialist knowledge and skills in elderly care, based on Dutch experiences. The VOSAW foundation offers training in elderly care in partnership with an NGO based in Accra (Ong'ayo, 2014b). Other examples of initiatives targeting healthcare provision are the fund-raising activities of the GUBA foundation for funding awareness-raising programmes on child mortality and the purchase of incubators for underfunded hospitals in Ghana.[28] The focus on autism is based on experiences gained in London, where healthcare facilities and programmes are available for people with different conditions. According to the programme coordinator:

"Those affected by autism hardly come out due to shame and as a consequence fail to get the right help on time. For these reasons, we are taking up the issue in Ghana, where people are also affected but hardly come out due to traditions, shame and lack of adequate services for such medical conditions."

Similar initiatives for healthcare provision in the country of origin have been taken by the Ghanaian Doctors Association and the Ghana Nurses' Association. These examples show that organisational type, motives and activity orientation are critical determinants of the likely development outcomes in locations where diasporas perform activities in the country of origin. For instance, interventions by HTAs tend to focus on the regions of origin, whereas migrant development NGOs focus on public services. Activity orientation and the choice of location therefore have implications in terms of how inclusive the development outcomes of diaspora collective activities are.

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[25] Personal communication by the Chairman of the Ghana Union, London, 30 September 2014.
[26] Interview with the Chairman of the Kassena-Nankana Development League, 27 September 2014.
[27] Interview with the Secretary of the Bokemei Foundation, Amsterdam, 10 April 2012.
[28] Interview with the Programme Coordinator of the GUBA Foundation, 29 September 2014.

Umbrella organisations are the most active vis-à-vis the Ghanaian government, focusing mainly on influencing policy. For instance, the UGAG is currently lobbying for a change of policy on the €400 fee charged for the surrender of Ghanaian citizenship. The organisation is also pressing for a change in the policy on dual citizenship under the Citizenship Act of 2002 (Act 591). As the Secretary-General of the UGAG observed, the fact that this act has not entered into force yet prevents Ghanaians with dual citizenship from undertaking business transactions in Ghana. The same applies to voting rights, which is regulated under an Act passed in 2000.

Partnerships and networks

In terms of diaspora partnerships and transnational networks, Ghanaian diaspora organisations in the UK, Germany and the Netherlands operate at different levels. This is largely influenced by the motives for their establishment, their thematic focus and their resource capacities. Nearly all organisations are active in both the country of destination and the country of origin. Few have transnational links with similar organisations in the EU and in other regions such as North America, Asia and different regions in Africa. HTAs tend to have the most elaborate transnational networks, due to their ethnic affinity with certain regions. Example includes Kwahuman Europe, Ga Dangwe Europe and Ashantiman associations.

Some of these linkages and networks are used for mobilising resources for community projects in the regions of origin, whereas others are largely sentimental or geared towards cultural exchanges. Although the Kassena-Nankana Development League, for instance, has links with co-ethnics in the United States, there is no direct collaboration on projects. The League has a close working relationship with co-ethnics in Germany, on the other hand. One of the main objects of this collaboration is the need to procure ambulances since vehicles in Germany have left-hand drive, as in Ghana (and as opposed to the UK). The Chairman of the League reported that:

"Networks with others are a challenge due to the different priorities of groups in the respective destination countries. Our networks in Europe and with North America can help in terms of accumulating resources, sharing responsibility and reducing costs. They can also have bigger impact due to their resource capacity and their inputs from different sources."

6. Political opportunity structures in the destination countries and their implications for transnational activities

The Ghanaian diaspora initiatives taken in the three countries covered by this study make it clear that contextual factors and conditions play a critical role in collective action (Moya, 2005). For this reason, the concept of political opportunity structures (Kriesi, 1995) is a useful tool for analysing the factors that influence the formation of diaspora organisations, their development, their resource mobilisation strategies and their transnational activities.

The main political opportunity structures in the countries of destination consist of formal state institutional structures and informal procedures. According to Faist (2000, p. 214), political opportunity structures in host countries 'encourage migrant transnational activity'. Political opportunity structures in the form of a favourable policy environment, 'citizens' access to and influence over decision-making processes

(institutional openness versus closure) and the material reactions of authority to challengers (repression or facilitation of mobilisation)' (Koopmans et al., 2005, p. 17) are highly influential in determining the extent to which diasporas can form collective organisations and engage in transnational activities with development outcomes.

In the three countries covered by this study, the local political opportunity structure takes the form of a policy environment that is conducive to the participation of non-state actors in policy processes. It is in such an institutional configuration that diaspora organisations receive recognition, since it 'encourages the use of collective action' (Tarrow, 1994, p. 18). At the same time, the policy environment in the three countries in question involves a decentralised system of policy implementation. This kind of framework also enables diaspora organisations to have direct contact with relevant institutions responsible for policies that affect the lives of their members. In the UK, the Department of Communities and Local Government's decentralisation guide states that diaspora organisations are part of the framework for diversifying the supply of public services, lifting the burden of bureaucracy and empowering communities. In case of Germany, migration and asylum policy is divided between federal, state and municipal levels. In the Netherlands, on the other hand, migration policies are often implemented by municipal institutions and civil-society organisations including diaspora organisations working together in partnership.

The second aspect of local political opportunity structures is the type of policies that target migrant involvement. In the case of the Germany, opportunities for diaspora involvement follow from the policies pursued by the Migration Advisory Service for Adult Immigrants funded by the Federal Ministry of the Interior; and the Youth Migration Service funded by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. In the UK, diaspora involvement is undertaken through Migration Advisory Committee, Department for International Development (DFID), the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) and All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Diaspora, Migration and Development. These agencies are guided by UK government policy outlined in a document entitled *Creating the Conditions for Integration* (Department of Communities and Local Government UK, 2012) issued pursuant to the Localism Act 201. The document emphasises social mobility, participation, responsibility, common ground, the need to tackle intolerance and extremism, and constitutive integration. Such policies and development systems provide openings for collective action by diasporas and for their involvement in the co-implementation of policies in collaboration with local agencies and other civil-society organisations.

In Germany, both state and federal governments have been organising consultation meetings with Ghanaian associations. For example, the UGAG has taken part in seminars and workshops on migrant integration, re- integration issues and on how to link the Ghanaian diaspora in Germany to development processes in Ghana. At the same time, Ghanaians have invited local institutions to give lectures on relevant policy fields in order to improve access for Ghanaians.[29] In the Netherlands, the minority policies of the 1980s, and also the current generic policies within the broad theme of diversity, have enabled migrant groups to undertake collective action at a local level.

The third type of political opportunity structure is the availability of resources, subsidies or activities in policy priority fields. Diaspora organisations in the three countries receive subsidies for activities and co-development programmes (Nijenhuis and Broekhuis, 2010). Most of these subsidies are disbursed through local NGOs and charities, but some come from local authorities. In addition to direct support for diaspora organisations, the subsidies also support capacity-building programmes targeting various types of diaspora

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[29]   Interview with the Secretary-General of the Union of Ghanaian Associations in Germany, 22 December 2014.

organisations. This applies to the programmes organised by DFID in the UK, GIZ in Germany and Oxfam-Novib and Cordaid in the Netherlands.

The fourth structure consists of local networks. These are important, since they facilitate resource mobilisation, especially access to facilities or materials for community projects in the country of origin. This applies for example to the Ghana Union for the Mannheim area in Germany, which is hosted by a local organisation at a shared facility from where the Union launches its community activities. Local networks are also used by migrant development NGOs in the UK, such as CHAT in London and the GUBA Foundation, and HTAs such as the Kassena-Nankana Development League in London.[30]

The EU's migration-related policies constitute the fifth type of political opportunity structure. Besides specific country policies, the EU-wide migration policy plays an important role in diaspora engagement and participation. The first type of EU policy is that on cross-border mobility, especially on the free movement of people, including both students and workers (Ong'ayo et al., 2010; Favell, 2009). Apart from making it easier to build networks and partnerships extending beyond a single country, cross-border mobility also enables diasporas to broaden collective action to include resource mobilisation, lobbying and advocacy. Examples are HTAs operating at EU level such as Kwahuman Europe (GhanaWeb, 2011), and Ga Dangwe Europe. The second type of EU policy consists of those on immigrant integration and participation targeting migrant workers and reunited family members, refugees and persons under international protection (Commission Communication on immigration, integration and employment; COM/2003/0336). The main policy areas involved here are education, employment and social cohesion (Collett and Petrovic, 2014).

The EU immigration policies that deal with citizenship also affect the integration and participation of diasporas in host societies. As Bevelander and Veenman observed (2006), such policies relate to free movement, voting rights and improved access to the EU labour market. For example, the UK and Germany formally allow emigrants to have dual nationality, whereas this is forbidden in the Netherlands.

7. Conclusions

The main objective of this paper is to examine the conditions in which diaspora organisations are formed and their development potential both in the countries of origin and in the countries of destination in the EU. Taking Ghanaian diaspora organisations as a starting point, the paper examines the complementarities of collective diaspora initiatives to the integration, migration and development policies pursued by the EU and its member states. This requires an insight into organisational characteristics as a key determinant of the capabilities of diaspora organisations. These characteristics determine the level of focus, the thematic focus and the capacities for undertaking transnational activities with a potential for producing development outcomes in both the country of destination and the country of origin.

An examination of Ghanaian organisations in the three countries covered by the study, i.e. the UK, Germany and the Netherlands, reveals a great diversity in terms of organisational type. For this reason, we need to work out which organisational types are most relevant to diaspora engagement policies, and also which organisation types perform activities that add value to local policy priorities. The main challenge for policy-makers in the three countries and the EU in general is the heterogeneous nature of the diaspora

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[30] Interview with the Programme Coordinator of the GUBA Foundation, 29 September 2014, and the Director of CHAT, 28 September 2014.

groups. This raises the question of legitimacy in terms of whom and what they represent, since diversity has the propensity to generate competition and conflicts.

The following three types of organisation are identified as being the most significant: hometown associations, migrant development NGOs and umbrella organisations (Ong'ayo, 2014a). These three types of organisation have legal statuses, structures, capacities, and a high degree of embeddedness in multiple contexts that enable them to mobilise resources for transnational activities.

The diversity of Ghanaian organisations in the UK, Germany and the Netherlands displays a complex mix of motives underpinned by the dual affinity of diasporas (Ong'ayo, 2014b; Wunderlich and Warrier, 2007). This is manifested in activities geared towards both the host country and the country of origin ('here and there'). Activities focusing on 'here' mainly target the welfare and integration of members, while those focusing on 'there' target development projects in Ghana. Welfare and integration activities are not only beneficial to the diasporas. They also further policy goals pursued by local institutions in the areas of integration, participation and social cohesion. The welfare and integration activities of diasporas have a direct relation with diaspora experiences and pursuits linked to the country of origin. This suggests that integration, stability and improved capacity in the country of destination are important prerequisites for transnational initiatives targeting the country of origin.[31]

Ghanaian diasporas in the three countries form collective organisations in response to the prevailing policy environment, in the first place to shifts in politics and policies at local and national levels in the countries of destination; and in the second place to conditions in the country of origin. Diaspora organisations thus address the impact of policies both on their members' welfare and on the country of origin. This is demonstrated by their lobbying and advocacy activities at a national level and by their formation of transnational networks targeting development challenges in the regions of origin. While most initiatives fall outside formal policy processes, they contribute to areas of policy interest from both an integration and a participatory perspective. From a development cooperation policy perspective, diaspora initiatives might seem to compete with the activities of mainstream development agencies, but there is actually evidence that their input may be complementary. Moreover, their involvement is likely to enhance ongoing initiatives, notably in the case of diaspora from countries that are politically stable and have relatively good relations with their diasporas.

While pursuing their policy priorities, the EU and EU member states can take account of diaspora interests and motives in order to harness the potential of diaspora organisations. Evidence from the UK, Germany and the Netherlands confirms the relevance of diaspora activities, even though some of them remain outside formal policy frameworks. Increasingly restrictive policies (Rinne, 2012) and cutbacks in subsidies for minority groups are some of the obstacles to full diaspora participation in the context of the disadvantaged status of the majority of migrants in the destination countries. Highly stringent policies affect migrants in significant ways, including their ability to organise and mobilise resources for transnational activities and their motivation to return. As Flahaux observes (2014, p. 7), such policies 'reduce migrants' freedom or opportunities in terms of work and living conditions' – areas that are critical for diasporas contributions to host societies.

Diaspora organisations and transnational activities and their development outcomes (Ong'ayo, 2014b) spring from two major factors. The first is the presence of political opportunity structures in the form of favourable policies, programmes and subsidies provided by host institutions. The second is diaspora

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[31]   Interviews with the Director of the Afro-Euro Foundation, 12 August 2014, and the Director of CHAT on 28 September 2014.

agency relating to 'the meanings held, and practices conducted' (Vertovec, 1999, p.24), which also contributes to the reproduction of political opportunity structures. These two factors are a major influence in collective diaspora activities, some of which complement the host countries' socio-economic and political goals.

Linked to the importance of local political opportunity structures is the degree of embeddedness of diaspora organisations in the local institutional setting and the networks that boost their social capital. Ghanaian diaspora activities in the three countries examined in this study illustrate the social capital, financial capital and materials goods that diasporas are able to mobilise through networks and relationships that they form with local institutions, development agencies and individuals. At the same time, networks that the diasporas establish play an important role in facilitating resource mobilisation and securing the cooperation of local communities in the performance of activities.

Migration as a social phenomenon at a time of intensifying globalisation brings both challenges and opportunities with it. Collective diaspora activities are one of the positive aspects of migration, in which managed human mobility can be used to address local challenges in the EU. These challenges include an ageing population, transformations generated by migration flows, and the growing demand for highly skilled labour. Diaspora organisations contribute to the attainment of these goals, especially EU goals relating to integration and participation. In terms of social cohesion policy, collective diaspora initiatives enrich the local culture through cross-cultural exchanges and activities that bring natives and migrants together. Diaspora activities therefore have implications for socio-economic and political participation, cultural and religious diversity, and citizenship issues. These areas remain a challenge for policy-makers as populations become increasingly diverse and ultimately reaching a state of 'superdiversity' (Vertovec, 2007).

The diversity and fragmentation of diasporas (Ong'ayo and Sinatti, 2010) means that policy-makers need to rethink the issue of diaspora engagement from a strategic perspective. These are the criteria that organisations will need to meet in the future:
- structure (formal and informal);
- representation (addressing diversity and fragmentation);
- inclusivity (target groups and activity outcomes);
- participatory (mobilisation and implementation process);
- policy relevance (convergence);
- development-oriented motives (non-private);
- transnational activities (i.e. linking 'here' and 'there');
- organisational capacity (i.e. management and resource mobilisation and use);
- accountability (within and outside the organisations).

8. Recommendations

- *Policy coherence:* collective diaspora initiatives are diverse, fragmented and uncoordinated. While most of these are private initiatives implemented by informal arrangements, formalising them by linking up with different actors and institutions could make it easier to leverage the development potential of diaspora. Moreover, a policy framework that seeks to achieve coherence among different institutions at the different levels at which diasporas operate could help to ensure that diaspora activities complement local initiatives. Coherence in this regard also entails developing appropriate

tools for measuring diaspora input and matching this with the required institutional support. Policy coherence also implies developing linkages with the countries of origin as part of a broader framework for scaling-up diaspora translocal development outcomes.

- *Fostering commonality and convergence*: due to the fragmentation of diasporas, host country institutions could encourage more collaboration and sharing of resources within funding programmes that target diaspora involvement. This could take a thematic orientation and adopt a process approach. Furthermore, consultation process could incorporate strategies that enhance trust between diaspora, governmental and non-governmental organisations as a way of minimising differences that can spill over into conflicts and lead to further fragmentation.

- *Reciprocity and win-win scenarios*: diaspora contribution to development in the destination countries entails the realisation of integration and participation policy goals through diaspora involvement, diaspora entrepreneurship and other forms of reverse flows (through transnational linkages). At the same time, it also requires a facilitating policy environment in which diaspora organisations can also achieve their collective objectives. This calls for a complementarity framework in which initiatives taken by diaspora organisations are linked to the priorities of local institutions and agencies.

- *Enhancing diaspora capacities*: different categories of diasporas, such as professionals, highly skilled workers and semi-skilled workers, possess ideas, skills, expertise, experience and cross-cultural knowledge that are hardly recognised and deployed by civil society. These capacities can be leveraged innovatively to open up new opportunities for cross-organisational collaboration and partnerships that enhance the quality of development cooperation projects and promote investments in emerging markets. This requires structured institutional support and sustained funding for diaspora initiatives that have demonstrated policy relevance.

- *Scaling-up innovative and sustainable initiatives:* the various examples of diaspora initiatives illustrate the relevance of diaspora organisations and activities in the destinations countries. There is therefore a need to develop a menu of policy options for scaling-up the best practices and embedding them in local policy frameworks for diaspora engagement. This also calls for a rethinking of strategies for sustaining diaspora initiatives. the majority of which are primarily products of individuals and not necessarily sustainable, even though they add value to local policies on immigrant integration and participation.

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