



Africa-Diaspora Forum for Research and Development (ADFRaD) e.V is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) headquartered in Giessen, Germany. Founded in 2019. ADFRaD has been at the forefront of finding lasting and sustainable solutions to global problems. These problematic areas include, among others, human rights, migration, education, gender and children's rights, democratic governance, rule of law, global peace and justice, climate change and development cooperation. To achieve these objectives, ADFRaD work in collaboration with like-minded and identifiable stakeholders, including NGOs and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). Empowering people to act as agents of change in their communities is also fundamental in ADFRaD's strategic and human-centered agentic approach. For ADFRaD's interventions to reach out to global audience, it, among its annual planned activities, organizes annual international conferences and workshops.

ADFRaD's 2022 annual conference was held on **October 14**, in Berlin, Germany. The conference was on the theme: *Combating Irregular Migration and Ensuring Sustainable Reintegration of Migrants in Africa: The Role of State Actors, Non-Governmental Organisations and Civil Society Organisations*. The aim of the conference was to address current challenges in the area of migration, and specifically, international migration, dubbed the 'migration crisis'. Specifically, the conference addressed migration crisis in Europe and proposed sustainable solutions to the causes of irregular migration, especially from Africa to Europe. Facilitating voluntary return and ensuring sustainable reintegration of migrants in countries of origin where also important points of discussion during the conference.



Participants were enlightened on the different programs, opportunities and financial assistance available for migrants who intend or are willing to return voluntarily and reintegrate in their countries of origin.

Participants also emphasized on the need to encourage migrants with no positive prospects to embrace voluntary return as an option rather than to embrace deportation. While the former approach goes with financial benefits and opportunities, the later approach does not. Discussants at the conference also touched on the significant roles of migration-centered organizations, especially in offering financial supports to migrants. They include organizations such as IOM, GIZ, and SOLWODI. Fortunately, these organizations have offices in several African countries of origin. Despite several benefits available



for voluntary returnees, participants and experts expressed dismay on the major challenges faced by voluntary return counseling institutions and organization in Germany



during the process of voluntary return counseling, amongst which include identification of migrants and acquiring legal traveling documents from embassies to facilitate their voluntary return to countries of origin.

The conference also addressed the need to strengthen collaboration between voluntary return counseling organizations, institutions, host societies and various foreign diplomatic missions in Germany to facilitate voluntary return of migrants to countries of origin. The conference also took into consideration the vital role played by state actors and civil society organizations in facilitating voluntary return and reintegration of migrants in countries of origin, and



how they can further strengthen collaboration amongst them to assist migrants in host countries or communities and facilitate the return of those with no positive prospects in countries of origin. The issue of deportation and discrimination amongst migrants was also a major



point of discussion raised by participants. Germany was criticized for exercising discrimination on African migrants linked to the current Ukraine crisis in terms of treatment and call to review her policies on the treatment and opportunities allocated to migration in times of crisis. Unlike other European countries, participants also applauded Germany for the good work done so far in providing humanitarian supports to migrants in time of crisis. However, deportation being a major issue surrounding voluntary return was not well received by some delegates. Some criticized host countries for exercising forceful deportation of migrants without taking into consideration the longevity of stay in the host country, health and migrants' economic situation.



Also, the survival and development of the child and the best interests of the child, as dictated by international law, are often not prioritized during deportation decision-making processes and outcomes. This is exemplified by parents being deported or made to voluntarily

return to their countries of origin without their natal children. This is undemocratic and unconscionable. The conference ended with a panel discussion on the interesting debate on how to combat and counter the incentives of irregular migration from Africa with several questions and recommendations put forward by conference participants and experts to those on the panel (IOM, Nigerian embassy and LAF Berlin). Several delegates from diplomatic missions, state institutions and key organizations in Germany participated actively in the conference as main speakers and presenters with immense contributions. Amongst them were Ambassador Yusuf M. Tuggar (Nigerian Embassy in Berlin); Ambassador Tom Amolo (Kenya Embassy in Berlin); Mr, Omeh Nwokpoku (Nigerian Embassy Berlin); Frau Nadine Schier (Landesamt für Innere Verwaltung-Mecklenburg Vorpommern); Dr. Farida Mellaoui-Murzeau (GIZ -Return and Reintegration scouts-Berlin); and Welella Negussie and Team from IOM Berlin. Their contributions were focused on the following key topics:

- **“Migration Crisis in Europe: Causes and Impact in Europe and Africa”** by Ambassador Yusuf M. Tuggar (Nigerian Embassy Berlin)
- **“Voluntary Return and Reintegration of Migrants”** by Dr. Farida Mellaoui-Murzeau (GIZ)
- **“Life after Return: Prospects and Challenges in Countries of Origin”** by Ambassador Tom Amolo (Kenya Embassy Berlin)
- **“Voluntary Return and the Challenges Faced by State Institutions in Germany”** by Frau Nadine Schier (Landesamt für Innere Verwaltung-Mecklenburg Vorpommern)
- **“Role of NGOs and CSOs in Voluntary Return and Reintegration”** by Ms. Welella Negussie (IOM Berlin)
- **“Identification of Migrants and the Challenges during Consular Interview”** by Mr, Omeh Nwokpoku (Nigerian Embassy Berlin)

N.B: ADFRaD e.V will also like to use this opportunity to announce its upcoming workshop, which will take place in Berlin around October 2023 and our new upcoming project/film on fighting against irregular migration and promoting voluntary return and reintegration of migrants in Africa. More details would be announced on our website at: www.adfrad.org.

ADFRaD e.V Previous Works

For the past years, ADFRaD has been working tirelessly in its objective areas, including global justice, human rights empowerment, women and children’s rights, international migration, good governance, climate change, global partnership and sustainable livelihoods and development. ADFRaD’s recent human rights and empowerment related work/project was from January 2021 to January 2022. Executed in the northern region of Ghana, this year long project, was titled: **“Making Human Rights Work in Practice: Sensitization and Empowerment of Vulnerable Groups to Act as Agents of Change and Development through Social Inclusion”** implemented with ADFRaD’s local partner organisation, *songtaba*. The project was funded by the German Development Organisation for International Cooperation (GIZ) with a sum of 44,951.50 Euros.



The aim of the project was to fight against witchcraft accusations and its associated practices in Ghana. These practices, which are widespread in many parts of Africa, and also entrenched in some jurisdictions,

violate a number of international human rights through false accusations and exclusion from victims' communities. In Ghana, and specifically in the northern region of Ghana, accusations have resulted in the creation and/or emergence of



settlements within some communities as 'witches' camps'. These alleged camps have over the years grown to become 'homes' for accused persons and victims of witchcraft beliefs and practices. Through a number of activities, including a workshop, community meetings, and media engagements, this year long project also trained multipliers and stakeholders on how to deal with cases of witchcraft accusations when they emerge, taking into consideration the culturally-sensitive nature of the practice. With human rights as the strategic and responsive tool, the multipliers were particularly trained and tasked to engage



community actors and stakeholders, including traditional leaders, youth and women groups,



personnel of government institutions and agencies, NGOs and CSOs on ways and manners to deal with witchcraft accusations when they do occur. The media engagements, especially on radio and television, created and raised public awareness on the prevalence and dangers of witchcraft practices in Ghana and the existence of the alleged witches' camps. Like the media engagements, the various community meetings also performed similar functions.



Finally, ADFRaD at the end of this year long project, identified the need, and indeed, the necessity of upscaling the project.

The upscaling shall focus on resettling residents of witch settlements, who are largely women and also quite old and vulnerable. ADFRaD is therefore in search of funding in order to execute this important upscaling initiative. Support in this direction is hence welcomed.