



IOM International Organization for Migration



GHANA

MAPPING EXERCISE
LONDON, APRIL 2009

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The aim of this Mapping Report is to guide IOM's outreach activities and communications strategies. The report does not purport to be exhaustive. The mapping consultant who conducted the exercise and wrote the report on behalf of IOM has taken every effort to ensure accuracy in his/her reporting and the views expressed in this report are his/hers. IOM cannot be held responsible for any omissions or inaccuracies.



INTRODUCTION

AIM OF THE MAPPING EXERCISE, TARGET GROUP AND METHODOLOGY

The aim of the mapping exercise carried out by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) was to identify the main channels of information used by potential beneficiaries of IOM's voluntary return programmes, which are open to asylum seekers and irregular migrants. The aim was also to identify the location of their communities in the UK. The ultimate goal of this mapping exercise is to help IOM to improve its communications with the Ghanaian diaspora in the United Kingdom through media articles, advertisements, and presentations to community groups.

A mapping exercise of the Ghanaian community across the UK was carried out between November 2008 and March 2009.

The fieldwork for the exercise used a combination of survey approaches: individual interviews with respondents; small group interviews; and interviews with multipliers¹. Respondents were selected in a number of ways, including contacts with community organisations, at local gatherings and by networking.

A survey was conducted by means of a structured questionnaire with 20 questions divided into two sections. The first section asked about media channels and other sources of information available to Ghanaians in the UK. Other sources of information included voluntary organisations, transport, communications and local services. This section also asked about the geographical locations and sizes of the Ghanaian communities in the UK. The second section of the questionnaire requested baseline data from each respondent about their age, gender and length of stay in the UK.

Informal interviews were then undertaken to allow for more spontaneous responses, to test hypotheses derived from the survey undertaken earlier, and to obtain a deeper insight into responses to the questionnaire. This report includes tables and charts with all the questionnaires results.

Extensive networking was also undertaken to identify media organisations with a particular focus on the Ghanaian community.

¹ This term is used to indicate individuals or organisations that are well known amongst diaspora groups and could therefore play a key role in delivering information.

1 GHANAIS IN THE UK

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Britain's role in the colonisation of Africa and the slave trade meant that Ghanaians, either by coercion, or, in time, through trade, have found themselves living in London and actively engaged in its life since the seventeenth century. At first, most Ghanaians were part of the transient community of sailors around London's Docklands. Now, a thriving community has grown up in London around the areas of Tottenham (Broadwater Farm Estate), Seven Sisters, Hackney, and Enfield. There are also Ghanaian communities in Milton Keynes, Birmingham and other major cities in the UK.

1.2 MIGRATION TIME-LINE

The first wave of migrant Ghanaians in contemporary times arrived in the UK in the early eighties, seeking political asylum because of the political situation at home, while the economic situation led others to "embark on labour migration".²

A second wave of migration occurred in the 1990s, as the government of Ghana moved from military rule to a multi-party democracy. According to the Home Office, about 21,485 Ghanaians entered the UK in the decade 1990–2001. By 1991, more than 32,000 Ghanaians were living in the UK. The Ghanaian High Commission believes that around 1.5 million registered Ghanaians live in the UK, with 850,000 settled in London³, although the 2001 Census records only about 56,000 Ghanaian-born people in the UK.

1.3 THE SIZE AND GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF GHANAIS IN THE UK

Gathering information on the geographical locations and sizes of the Ghanaian community across the UK presented a challenge, since respondents gave varying numbers and locations. It would appear that the largest number of Ghanaians lives in London, with sizeable communities in Manchester, Birmingham, Milton Keynes and Swansea.

It was virtually impossible to cross-check the information obtained. The highest estimate given for the size of the community within the UK was about 2 million people, of which 500,000 were thought to be irregular migrants.

A 2007 report prepared by the Institute for Public Policy research for a Channel 4 programme estimated that there were 96,590 Ghanaian-born nationals living in the UK in 2006.

² Parsons, C. & Smeeding, T *Immigration and the transformation of Europe* (2006)

³ John A. Arthur, *The African Diaspora in the United States and Europe*, (Ashgate Publishing) p. 159

Geographical Spread of the Ghanaian Community in the UK, 2009



The above figures are estimates provided by community leaders

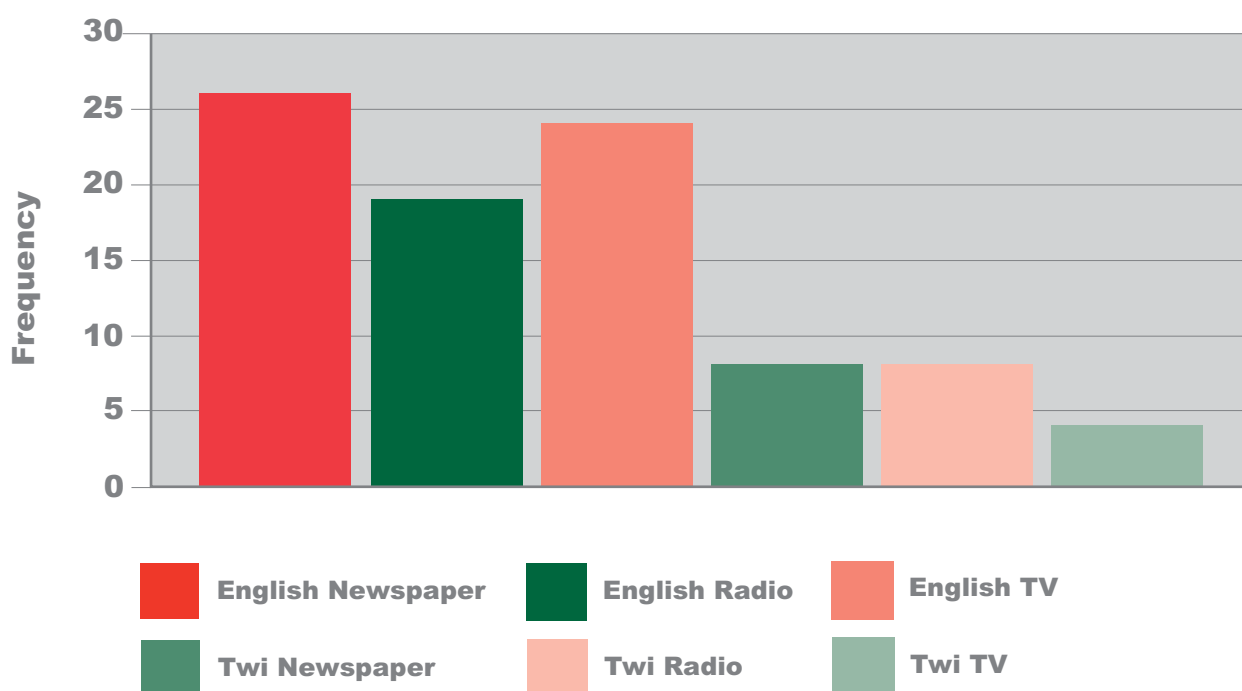
2 MAPPING EXERCISE OUTCOMES

INFORMATION CHANNELS

2.1 MEDIA

Respondents were asked in which language they could best understand information such as newspapers, leaflets, radio and television. The responses are presented in figure 1.

Figure 1: Preferred Language for Media



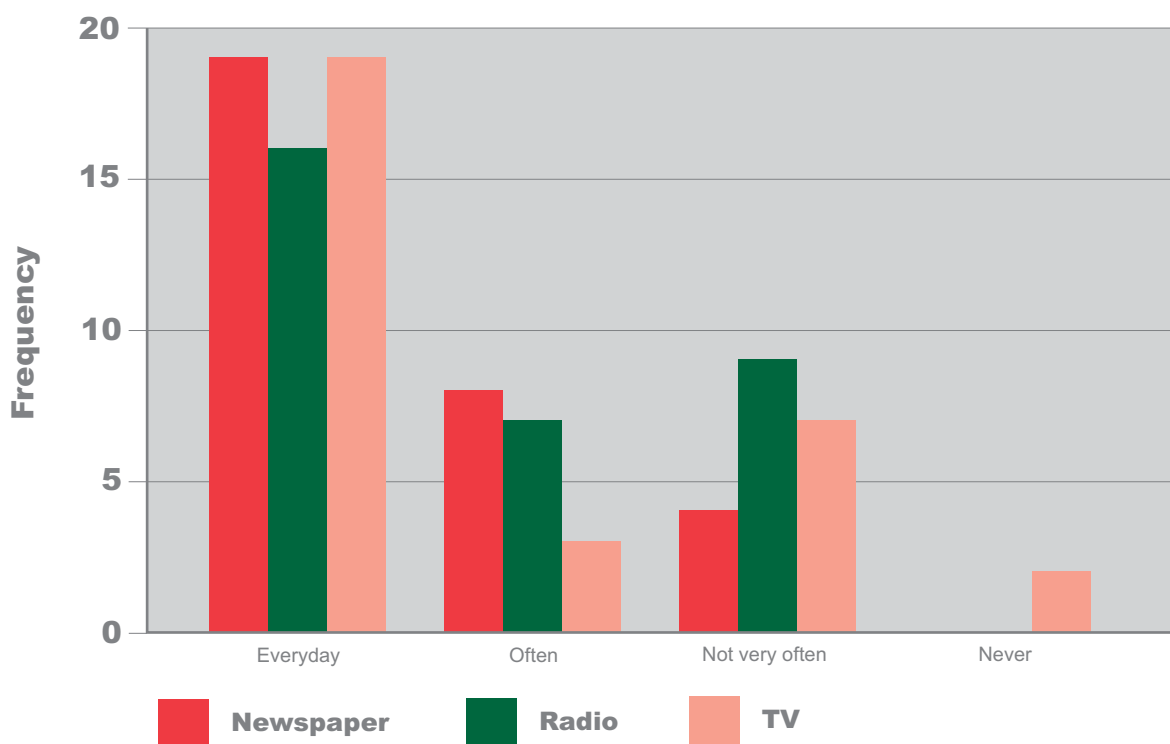
While English is the language in which most respondents say they obtain information from the media, Twi is the local language most widely understood by them.

2.2 MEDIA CONSULTATION

Respondents were asked which media, such as newspapers, leaflets, radio, and television, they consult for information. Figure 2 shows that a large proportion of respondents read newspapers with a regional focus (such as *African Echo* and *Ghana Review*). Some of respondents preferred the free paper, *Metro*.

The most commonly consulted media were newspapers and television. IOM should therefore explore these media in its outreach campaigns to the Ghanaian community.

Figure 2: Frequency of Media Consultation



Radio

Community representatives and individual respondents indicated their preference for the online radio station, *Voice of Africa Radio* (VOAR)⁴. Another online radio station is *Ghana Today*⁵. The only digital station mentioned was *Rainbow*⁶ on Sky digital channel.

A number of respondents cited the following unlicensed radio stations, *Hot FM*, *Kasapa*, *Power FM*, and *JoyFM*. The popularity of pirate radio stations with respondents supports the independent research commissioned by OFCOM⁷, which suggested that "... Illegal stations are... appreciated for their super-local relevance (to minority community groups), which often manifests itself in the form of information and advertisements about local community events"⁸.

This and other observations during the fieldwork led to the conclusion that the Ghanaian community is an established one with its own networks outside mainstream society. An outreach campaign would only be successful if these networks were identified and utilised.

IOM should give consideration to the online *Voice of Africa Radio*⁹, which is "aimed at African and African-speaking people who are normally excluded from mainstream broadcast activities and opportunities"¹⁰, as a means of reaching the community.

⁴ www.voiceofafricaradio.com

⁵ www.ghanatoday.com/

⁶ Sky 0207

⁷ The independent regulator and competition authority for the UK communications industries

⁸ Illegal Broadcasting. Annex2: An independent report on listening to illegal broadcasting in Hackney, (Haringey & Lambeth)

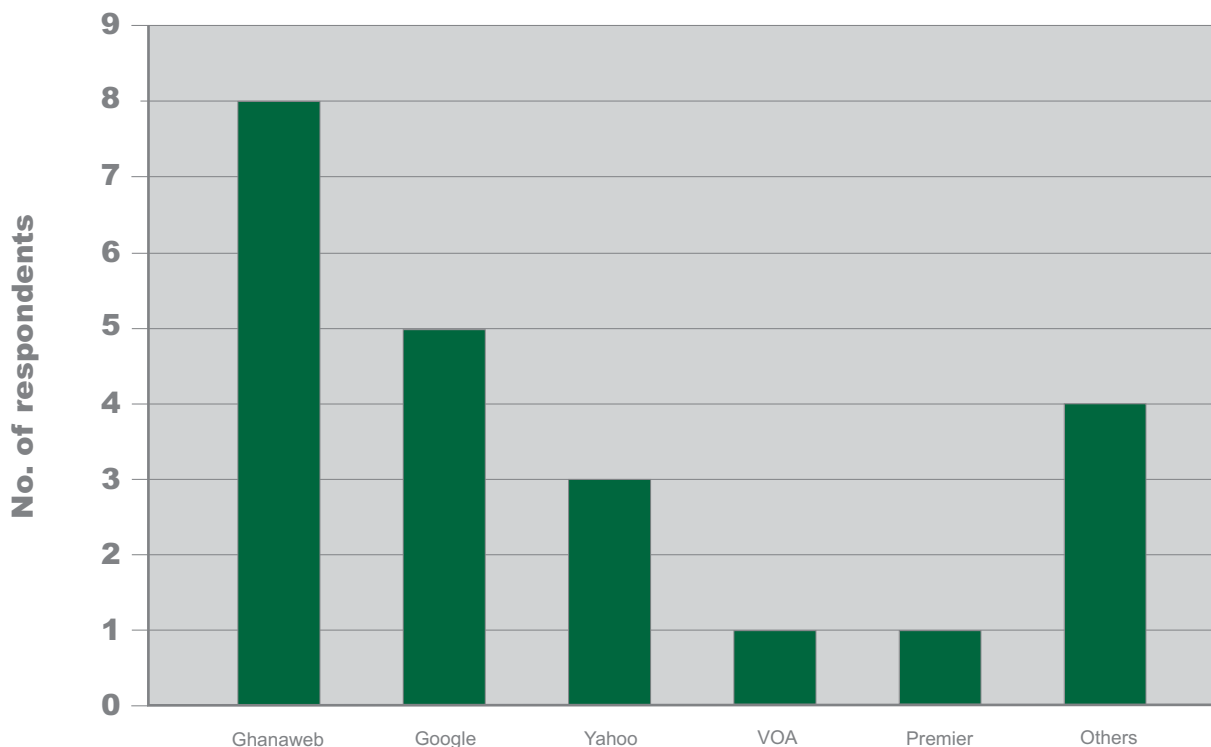
⁹ License details can be accessed at <http://www.ofcom.org.uk/static/radiolicensing/Community/CR070.htm>

¹⁰ Community radio license Key Commitments <http://www.ofcom.org.uk/static/radiolicensing/Community/CR070.htm>

Television

Interviews with community representatives indicated that the most popular television channel was OBE¹¹ on Sky digital. However reports and subsequent monitoring of this station revealed that it was subject to frequent outages.

Figure 3: Most Frequently Visited Websites



Websites

The Ghanaian community has a very strong online presence. Many respondents use the Internet frequently and the majority of community organisations that were interviewed maintain their own websites. By far the most popular website, consulted on a daily basis by most Ghanaians, is the *Ghanaweb*¹² portal, which offers one stop news, comment, and discussion. Its news channel features items from the homeland and the community news of the diaspora in the UK.

Recommendations

IOM should consider securing information slots during programmes aired by the *Voice of Africa Radio* and the *Rainbow* digital satellite radio station.

IOM should give serious consideration to using the *Ghanaweb* portal for disseminating information to the Ghanaian community because of its huge popularity with both respondents and interviewees.

¹¹ OBE reaches a primary target audience among the African and Caribbean communities in the UK.

¹² www.ghanaweb.com



2.3 OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Many organisations with a community focus were encountered in the course of the survey. Their objectives are mainly to support the welfare and well-being of Ghanaians in the UK. A large proportion of them however had the stated objective of raising the development profile of their communities back in Ghana.

Religious Centres and Organisations

Most respondents referred to the important role played by religious organisations in the Ghanaian community. Religious organisations act as a medium for information dissemination. Churches in north London (Tottenham and Seven Sisters) were suggested by many community representatives and individual respondents as ideal places for accessing the Ghanaian community.

IOM should engage in a campaign to inform church and mosque leadership about its activities, with an emphasis on the charitable role it could play in alleviating the conditions of irregular migrants who may be faced with destitution. This would chime with the stated objects of these organisations, which are the overall well-being of their members. IOM's work may save them from using limited resources to fund the return of members who may have fallen into destitution.

Community Events and Festivals

The Ghanaian community regularly runs well-organised and well-attended events. These usually occur in March to commemorate the nation's independence. Several other events also take place throughout the year. The Ghana Family Fun Day is an event that occurs in the summer and is organised by the Akwaaba events company. It has an attendance of about 9,000 people.¹³ It features Ghanaian and African music, spectacular costumes, a Durbar of Chiefs, cultural dancers, a fashion show, football, children's activities, and traditional freshly cooked African food. There is also an exhibition with stalls showcasing arts and crafts.

Miss Ghana UK is another event which brings together Ghanaians in the UK, with an attendance of about 3,000 people.¹⁴ IOM should consider having a stall at both events since they occur at different times of the year and appeal to different groups of people.

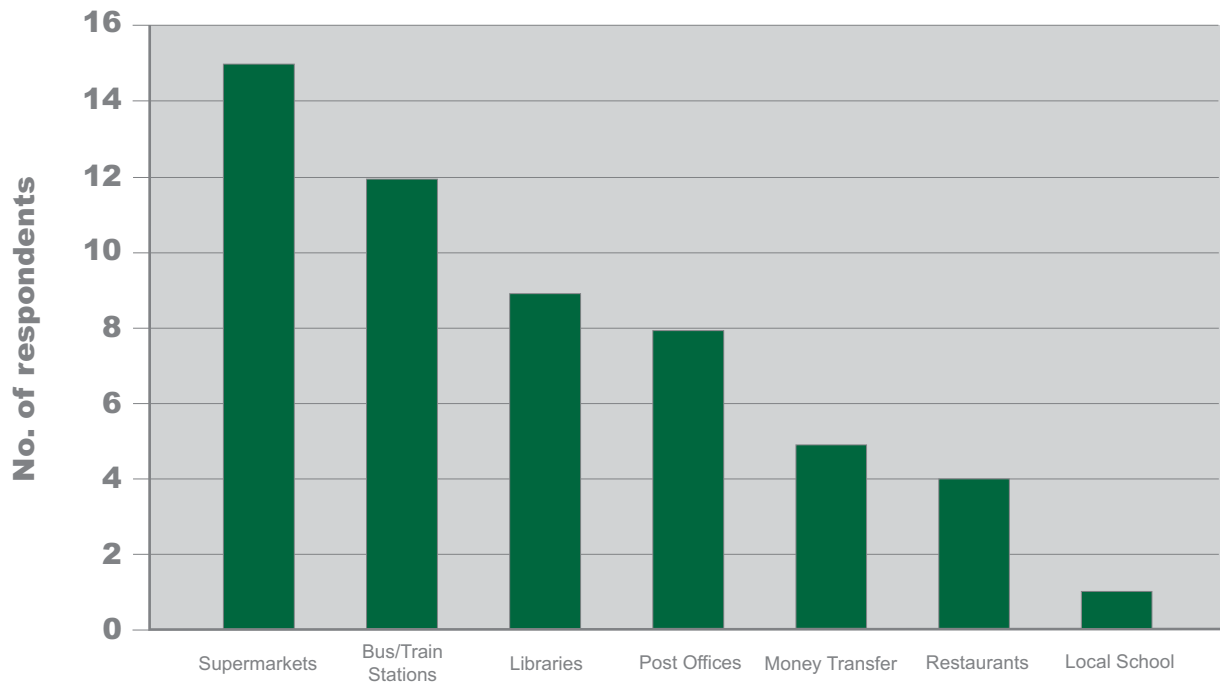
¹³ <http://ghanauk.co.uk/partyinthepark/aboutus.html>

¹⁴ <http://www.themisghanauk.com/>

Recommended Sites for Publicising Information About IOM

Figure 4 shows that supermarkets are the most easily accessible sites for Ghanaians. Ghanaian supermarkets sell indigenous food and tend to be a meeting point for the community. IOM could place flyers on notice boards, which are usually placed prominently within these supermarkets. The same would apply to libraries and bus stations.

Figure 4: Easily Accessible Advert Sites



Ghanaian Community Organisations

The umbrella group for community organisations is the Ghana Union. This is an association of Ghanaian community and voluntary groups across the UK and of individuals (both Ghanaian and otherwise) whose objects are the welfare of Ghanaians in the UK.

However, a fair number of respondents indicated a lack of interest in participating in community organisations. This suggests that an outreach campaign should not focus exclusively on community groups.

2.4 GENERAL INFORMATION ON USE OF TRANSPORT, PHONES AND LOCAL SERVICES

Respondents were asked what means of transport they use most often. Figure 5 shows that 45% of respondents used buses, 12% used mainline train services, 30% used the Underground, 10% own their own vehicles and only 3% used tram or metro services.

Figure 5: Use of Transport

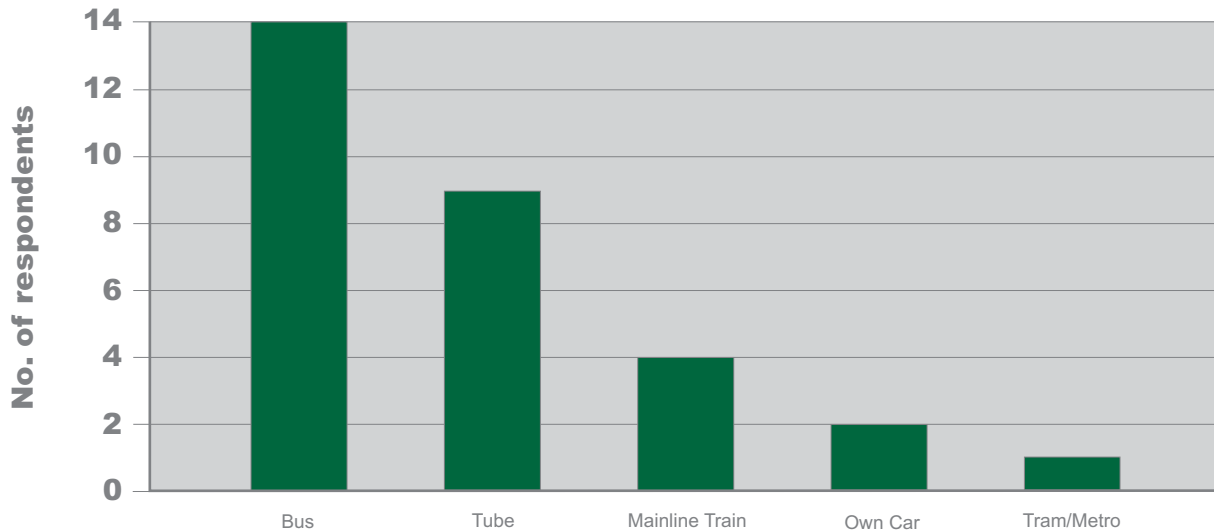
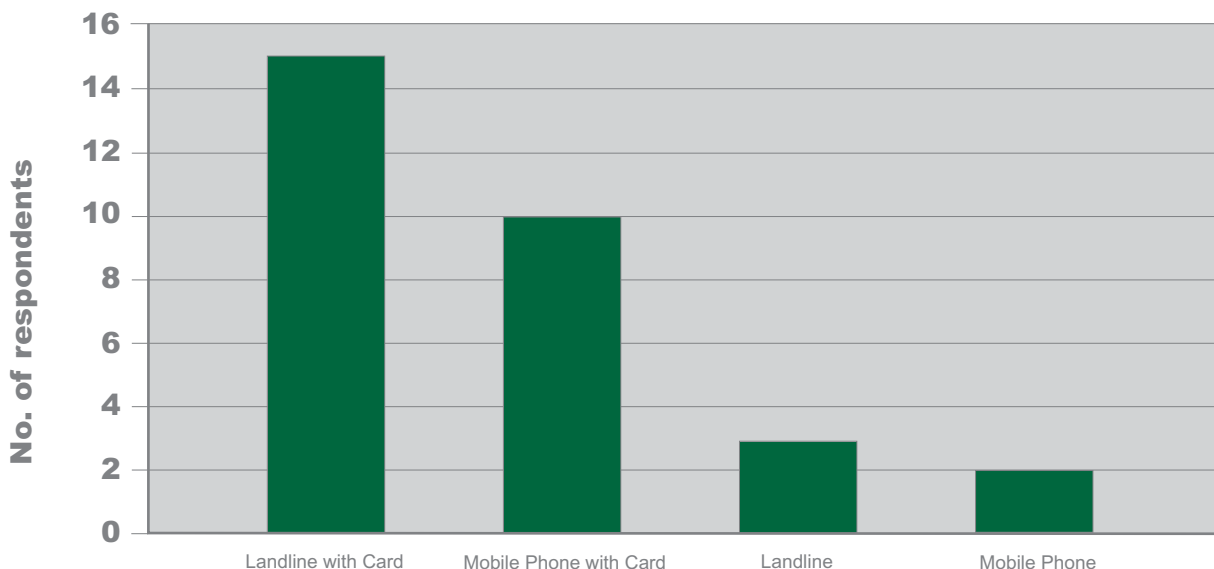


Figure 6 shows that the most common way Ghanaians made phone calls to Ghana by using a calling card with a landline (51%). 31% called home using a card with a mobile phone, 10% called home directly on a land line and 8% called directly by mobile.

Figure 6: Phone Calls to Ghana



Respondents were asked what local services they used the most. 10% indicated their local GP's surgery and 9% used libraries. 25% would consult a Citizens Advice Bureau and 49% used Ghanaian shops.

3 MAPPING EXERCISE OUTCOMES

CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

The second section of the questionnaire was designed to gather baseline data for each respondent about their gender, age, and length of residence in the UK.

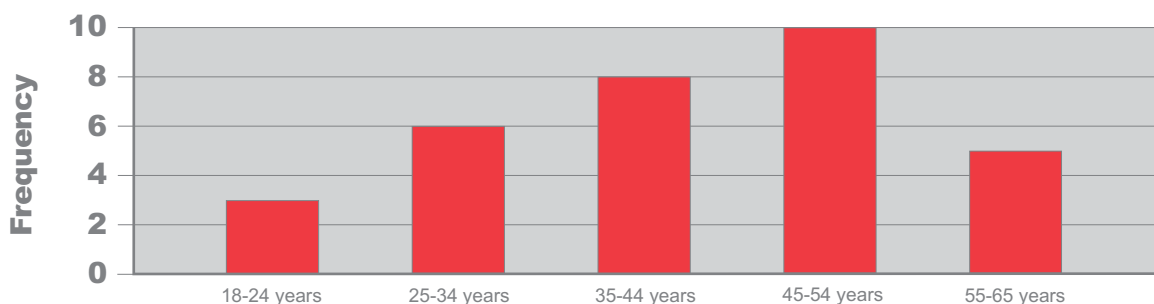
3.1 GENDER

15 of the 30 respondents were men and 13 were women. Two respondents did not indicate their sex. It is noteworthy that, despite the gender balance amongst respondents, there was a preponderance of men among the leaders of the organisations and community groups interviewed during the exercise.

3.2 AGE

32 % of the respondents were from 43 to 54 years old. 25% were between 35 and 44.

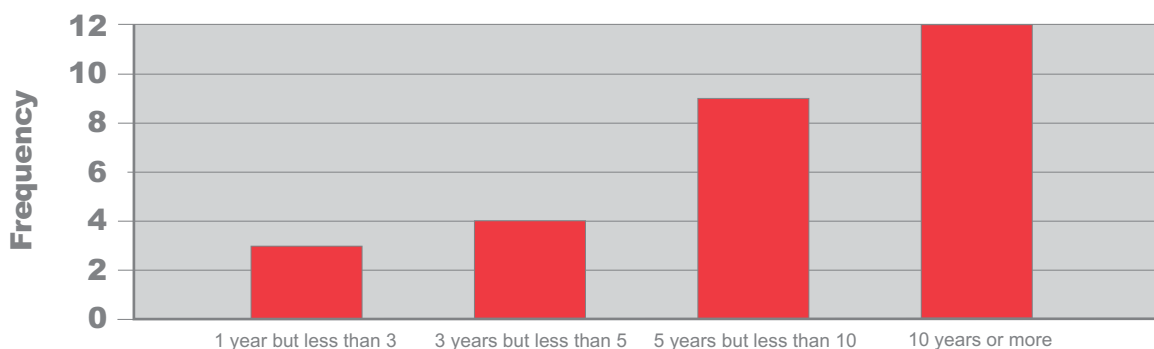
Figure 7: Age Distribution of Respondents



3.3 LENGTH OF RESIDENCE IN THE UK

Length of residence in the UK varied between respondents. 32% of the respondents had been in the UK for a period of at least 5 years but less than 10, whilst only 11% had been here for at least 1 year but less than 3.

Figure 8: Length of Residence in the UK



4 CONSTRAINTS

The biggest challenge faced by this mapping exercise was the difficulty of retrieving questionnaires mailed out to respondents. Another difficulty was persuading respondents to participate in the exercise. Most were apprehensive that they might be obliged to discuss their immigration status. A number of potential respondents were inclined to opt out of participation even after reassurances were given that IOM is independent of the UK Border Agency.

In the course of networking within the diaspora, it was clear that the Ghanaian community is well established in the UK. Despite this, it was still exceptionally difficult to identify community organisations and meeting places readily. This leads to the conclusion that that the community is self-effacing and aims for a low profile. If this is true, a painstaking and persistent campaign may be needed to establish networks within it.



5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The exercise was able to identify the main communication channels and locations of Ghanaians in the UK. The following conclusions were drawn from observations made during the exercise.

The main language of communication among the community is English and most Ghanaians in the UK are able to comprehend information in the English language. Using English also ensures that every Ghanaian ethnic language group is represented.

Popular sources of information within the Ghanaian community include newspapers, television, and radio. IOM should explore placing information material in the *African Echo* newspaper, a freely distributed paper featuring local Ghanaian news. IOM should also consider giving interviews on the *Voice of Africa Radio* channel.

Money transfer services play a vital role in the ability of Ghanaians to support family and businesses in Ghana. IOM should consider placing information materials in Wayoosi, a popular Ghanaian money transfer service.

In all its engagements with the community, IOM must stress its independence from the UK Border Agency, as there is a strong sense of affiliation between the two agencies in the minds of the community.

When engaging with Ghanaian community organisations, it is important to include a wide range of different groups, since community groups have specific and individual objectives. These include fund raising for community projects back home for professional groups.

Religious organisations are a vital part of the Ghanaian community and should be explored as an opportunity for outreach. IOM should establish contacts with church congregations with a Ghanaian majority, in order to draw on their leadership in its outreach work.

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