

Migration between developing countries higher-UNU-WIDER

By Konrad Kodjo DJAISI

The volume of South-South migration is higher than South-North migration, and this fact is often overlooked, Director of the United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER), Professor Finn Tarp said last week.

Professor Tarp, who spoke at the opening of a two-day international conference on Migration and Mobility: NEW Frontiers for Research and Policy, noted that migration and mobility are key facets of our increasingly globalised world.

He went on to add that according to the UN DESA Population Division projections, international migration is likely to increase in the coming years, and has done so for decades.

The conference, jointly organised by UNU-WIDER and the African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA), which was inaugurated in Dakar in March 2015, bringing together sixteen (16) of Africa's leading universities.

UNU-WIDER provides economic analysis and policy advice with the aim of promoting sustainable and

equitable development for all and is based in Helsinki, Finland.

Speaking in an interview, Professor Tarp noted that south-north migration has gained a lot of global media attention because of the Syrian war and other events that have led to large streams of migration to the North.

"But if one actually looks at the numbers of those moving, the numbers moving south-south are certainly larger than those moving south-north. With all attention to south-north movement, we must not lose sight of the importance of the large numbers migrating towards the south.

Conference therefore seeks to bring attention to this movement between south-south countries as it certainly closely linked to development processes that we study. Hence, research into this movement is important to help shape policy.

He went on to say, issues of migration and mobility have become very contentious in recent years. "The refugee crisis, sparked by the Syrian war, has shown that policies governing international migration are in a tangle.

Many issues are often bundled together in the public debate, and it can be difficult to disentangle the various elements

in the mix. This is not helpful from a policy nor from a research perspective".

He observed that uncovering some of the key facts on internal and international migrations-both voluntary and forced-can help people understand the issues currently at hand.

Professor Tarp said this is UNU-WIDER's first conference explicitly on migration and that migration, mobility and development are inextricably intertwined.

Former Chancellor of the University of Ghana, Professor Ernest Aryeetey, is ARUA's founding Secretary General observed that research guides policy and that is how it is meant to be. He noted that often when migration is spoken of in our context, it is usually rural-urban migration.

In a post event interview, Professor Aryeetey said the conference looked at migration and mobility, what factors account for migration, how research can find out the cost benefit of migration. The conference will find ways of tracking, recording and documenting migration.

The Two-day event was held on October 5-6 at the ISSER Conference Hall, University of Ghana.