

Community responsibility for successful 2020 census

• Baraka Policy Institute rolls out 6th lecture

Education Matters

With Anis Haffar



THE year was 2015, but it seemed like only yesterday when I was invited by the Baraka Policy Institute (BPI) to speak on the relevance and quality of the curriculum for Ghana's development at the British Council, Accra.

That was the Institute's first anniversary public lecture. Also to speak at that event was Prof. Clement Oduonu, President of the Accra Institute of Technology. We thank God that the Institute's commitment to reflect on key developmental issues in Ghana persists to this day since its founding in 2014. Amen.

2020 census

This year's lectures focused on the general theme of Ghana's 2020 national population and housing census. Though a census is needed for national planning, experiences from the past of a few low spirited community

Speaking on the theme, "Ensuring accurate and reliable national population census: The community responsibility," Prof. Imoro Braimah declared at the outset that what he was about to say was controversial.

Serving as the provost of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Prof. Braimah noted that the population census was, in fact, much more important to Ghana than the much acclaimed and energy charged Voter's Register being bandied about by the political parties.

In other words, if planned and executed properly, the voter register itself could be extracted from the population census. He added that a census covered everybody; it is a total count demanding more resources and must be done every year to include the new births, the migrated, immigrated and even the dead.

The population figures are used for planning and resource allocation and are staunchly related to the provision of roads and utility services such as water, electricity, and sanitation. The irony was that, for the lack of education for a proper understanding, those in deprived communities - who needed the provisions the most and stood to gain - avoided the exercise.

the ambassadors and support the census and not exclude themselves, their wives and children even if they did not all live in the same place. In other words, one household with multiple geographical locations would favour the numbers.

He said it helped to know the census officials assigned to every community in the country, and to let honesty and integrity with their numbers be of paramount concern to everyone.

Prof. Ellen Bortei-Doku Aryeetey spoke on the theme: "National population census: Implications and dynamics for effective social policy interventions". The former senior research fellow at the University of Ghana (ISSER, Legon) noted the importance of the census for United Nations figures and for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as they addressed the questions: How many are we? Who are we? Where do we live? And How do we live?

In her remarks, Dr Leticia Adelaide

census is the laboratory to enhance the norms for optimal health.

BPI Mission

Since the inception, the BPI lecture series were designed purposefully to reflect on critical policy areas needing attention. The series have brought together key stakeholders and experts including government officials and civic society groups.

Past speakers have included Prof. Joshua Alabi, former Vice Chancellor, University of Professional Studies, Accra (UPSA); Prof. Mohammed Salifu, Executive Secretary, National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE), Prof. Mahama Duwiejua (NCTE), psychiatrist Dr Akwasi Osei (Mental Health Authority), Prof. Ato Essuman (Methodist University College), Dr Fred

Kyei Asamoah (COTVET) and others.

Mr Salem Kalmoni, the Managing Director of Japan Motors, and President of BPI, noted at the onset that "We would like to re-emphasise that we at Baraka Policy Institute (BPI) see those in

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charge of national policy as partners. And we are fully aware of the difficulties and complexities of policy drafting and implementation. Our intervention in these matters is to draw attention to those important details that might have escaped the attention of the government, policy makers and authorities. We do this by offering suggestions and alternative ideas