



Of Africa's natural resources, underdevelopment, and poverty

• Kwamina Panford: the brain behind a brave new book

THE exodus of U.S.-based Indian and Chinese professionals and businessmen to India and China to contribute and do bigger and better things there has initiated what has been termed "Brain circulation" as opposed to the nauseous "Brain drain" of the past. I have often been intrigued by the large numbers of African professionals in the diaspora and wondered how such energies can be turned homeward and harnessed to benefit Africa. Why must Africa continue to be poor and isolated considering the continent's substantial natural resources coupled with the mind power of its sons and daughters in the diaspora

mentoring.

His story reflects a case study of how Ghanaian professionals abroad can be of immense help to Ghana, in particular and Africa in general. Prof. Panford was born in Koforidua in the Eastern Region and attended Koforidua Catholic Schools, St Augustine's College - Cape Coast, and the University of Ghana.

Since being abroad finishing his Masters and PhD degrees, he has contributed to Ghana's higher education by donating books to University of Ghana and University of Cape Coast, and hosting over 400 Ghanaian students and faculty at Northeastern.

Liaising with Ghanaian compatriots

Prof. Panford is now on a sabbatical and fellowship leave to teach at the Institute for Development Studies,

June 2007, he shifted gears and became involved in this bold new sector. He started this journey of oil discovery and production in

September 2009 on a sabbatical at IDS/UCC. Led by the then director, Prof. J.V. Mensah and the new director Patrick Agbesinyale and other colleagues, they conducted a massive survey of Ghana's six oil districts to provide a baseline for measuring the social and economic impact of Ghana's new oil industry.

Prof. Panford literally commuted from Boston (from 2009 to 2014, and from 2015 to the present) to stay engaged with his Ghanaian compatriots. Additionally, in 2010 - 2011, he helped the Ministry of Finance under the guidance of Prof. Joe Amoako Tuffour - another Ghanaian diasporan

Education Matters
With Amis Hafar



helped UCC to found Ghana's first public university-affiliated Institute for Oil and Gas Studies.

Although Ghana still has teething petroleum production issues, some of the measures and bills and institutions he was involved in - if managed as intended to perform - will assist Ghana to avert the proverbial resource curse.

After reflecting on his experience in Ghana and many African / non-African states' experience and involvement with oil and other natural resources in December 2016, Panford has now completed his 249-page book. A very candid book, it unravels the myths surrounding a hugely popular

On first meeting prof. Kwamina Panford

In 2012, while visiting Boston, I