

DISCUSSIONS • NETWORKING • EXHIBITION • FUN

VOL. 1



BOOK OF CONNECTIONS

CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS & NETWORKING

*Connecting trailblazers, seeking to make
change in Ghana and across the continent.*

DISCUSSIONS • NETWORKING • EXHIBITIONS • FUN

the "LET'S LINK UP" initiative



NORI GOAL: "Cultivate a global community of professionals sharing knowledge and resources to establish systems that support the progression of Africans".

Community is often used to describe physical spaces that people, often by chance occupy. However, the form of community we are discussing here transcends location and is centred around reciprocal relationships. Ones where all parties feel they belong, matter to the group, have aligned goals and believe their needs will be met through their commitment to the community¹. Community is intrinsic to African culture and the breakdown of such is a direct contributor to the issues we face. The "African Community" is the bedrock of Pan Africanism and is a principle we need to subscribe to if we are to see any real change in this lifetime.

Etienne Wenger, a key educational theorist and educator, used the term "Community of Practice" to define a group of people who share a common goal, work toward it and become more effective through regular interaction. They negotiate what is worth pursuing and the best way to do so. According to Wenger, there are three components of thriving community; a joint enterprise, mutual engagement, and a shared repertoire.

MUTUAL ENGAGEMENT

A sense of belonging among those with a shared ideology. There is respect for all members unique characteristics, perspectives, and competence, striking a balance between diversity and homogeneity.

JOINT ENTERPRISE

A shared ideology, where all are clear on what they stand for. Individuals remain invested in and committed to the vision as their fundamental needs are met and there is accountability.

SHARED REPERTOIRE

Organically developed and equitably distributed resources necessary for the goal to be achieved. Resources include tangible things like, tools, equipment etc, and intangible things like ideology, rules and social structures. (This is the rationale behind the book of connections).

Source: Wenger, 2008

Communities of practice remain the bedrock of innovation and transformation throughout the world. Essentially, people with a "by any means necessary" mindset come together for a specific goal. They put their personal issues aside and press toward the goal, which in reality transcends any one person. It can be difficult to achieve and maintain, but as Wenger points out, as long as there are improvements, things are moving in the right direction.

Ghanaians whether at home, in the diaspora or in-between have a wealth of knowledge and resources. If we establish our own communities of practice, we could see transformation on this continent within 10 years. This belief is the core principle on which NORI is built on. This philosophy could be applied to solving key structural problems in Ghana.

One of the NORI objectives is to **“develop a set of educational principles empowering Africans to become self-reliant”**. Applying the communities of practice theory, this is our strategy for achieving this objective.



Step 1: Consultation:

A consultation with educators, parents and children with the goal to gain an in-depth understanding of the issues on the ground. Key variables would include community types (rural, urban, city, coastal, river, forest, etc), ensuring voices are represented from the vast array of communities that exist in Ghana.



Step 2: Research:

An interdisciplinary team of researchers and stakeholders collaborating to create a set of curriculum principles and design of educational spaces. The curricular for each subject would be developed in consultation with experts in their respective fields. Educational spaces would be designed with due regard for the physical, emotional and social needs of students.



Step 3: Implementation planning:

Sharing findings and recommendations with a team of lawyers and political analysts etc to develop a strategy to effectively navigate the socio-political climate.



Step 4: Implementation:

Supporting pre-existing schools to implement the strategies in a context specific culturally significant manner. In the long term, establishing a world class educational facility.



Step 5: Education:

Providing education for the general public (parents, teachers and other stakeholders), to empower them to apply principles themselves.



Step 6: Advocacy:

Advocating for national implementation through supporting governmental bodies and where necessary engaging in forms of activism to see positive strategies implemented.

Through the “Let’s Link Up” initiative, we aim to mobilise individuals committed to this goal. Together, we can collaborate and shape the future, not just in Ghana, but across the continent and the world.

Through developing a community of practice, we can achieve this, and any other goal we set our mind to. As a research centre we aim to apply this approach to other areas such as health, infrastructure, agriculture etc.

Please consider becoming a member of NORI. By becoming a member, you are joining a group of like-minded individuals, seriously dedicated to make a change and you are also supporting our initiatives.

Membership benefits

- Community of like-minded individuals
- Invitation to executive members meetings
- Access to members only resources including all materials from NORI events, publications, reports etc.
- Contributing to the strategic development and direction of NORI
- Free or discounted tickets to paid events, exhibitions, conferences etc.
- Discount off consultation services

Memberships: 50ghc Per month (500ghc per year – one off payment).



OLIVER BARKER- VORMAWOR

*EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
DEMOCRATIC ACCOUNTABILITY
LAB, PUBLIC INTEREST LAWYER
AND SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTIVIST*

PANELIST

Oliver Barker-Vormawor was born and raised in Ghana, until the age of 16, when he began travelling to study Law. His stops include Morocco, The Netherlands, the United States, the United Kingdom and of course Ghana. Throughout this process, Oliver developed transformative ideas that afforded impressive employment opportunities in key organisations such as the United Nations, International Court of Justice, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, working with Law and Policy firms, and Cambridge University. Oliver's life took a significant turning point when he was arrested in Ghana in 2022 for treason over a Facebook post with regards to the E-Levy.

Oliver's personal and professional life has led him to develop a keen interest in and dedication to Law and Policy reform with the goal to fix the political landscape, and provide a more equitable society for all. Worldwide, Government response to the COVID-19 pandemic triggered conversations around governmental power and hypocrisy and Ghana was no different. This was a turning point for Oliver, where he began to actively engage members of the public in various forms of advocacy, resulting in becoming a convenor of the #FixTheCountry movement.

The work of advocacy is time and labour intensive as well as unpaid. This important work occurs alongside employment and the challenges of life itself. The time spent focusing on one arena often results in "dropping the ball" in another area of life. Nonetheless, Oliver continues to pursue the vision of transforming the legal and political landscape, despite the great personal cost to himself.

Oliver's return to Ghana after travelling extensively led him to the realisation that over time, Ghanaians have developed a value system of being peaceful and "Not wanting to cause trouble". This is now seen as a virtue, resulting in "a kind of" civic apathy "that emboldens the abuse of power, and social injustice". People have to be personally affected before they consider speaking out, and even then, they often do not. The vast majority of young adults in Ghana have been raised and educated with these values systems instilled in them. This culmination of events makes trying to advocate for change difficult as oftentimes, the voices Oliver and co are trying to represent end up working against them.

A small amount but rapidly growing amount of people are educating themselves outside of the formal education system and are becoming inspired and motivated by the information that they are now able to access, to question what has become normalised. This has resulted in an increased number of Ghanaians of all ages paying more attention to the political landscape and demanding better for themselves.

Oliver's experiences have taught him that although democratic protections exist on paper, in reality, the systems that are meant to protect our democracy are not respected. When efforts are made to implement "constitutional rights" or enforce accountability, there is a lot of bureaucracy and red tape that stalls progress. The typical Ghanaian is also aware of this, but due to the civic apathy described earlier, the majority accepts it as - just the way it is. An example of this is how governmental institutions continue to restrict the right to protest.

Oliver's strategy for addressing these issues is through constant engagement with and manoeuvring through legal bureaucratic systems, advocacy strategy and street action.



ABENA RICHARDSON

EDUCATOR, PRESENTER,
PHILANTHROPIST

PANELIST

Born in the United Kingdom, Abena lived there for the first 3 years of her life. She moved to Ghana for 6 years before returning back to the UK., where she studied, worked got married and had children.

In 2019 Abena and her family decided to return to Ghana. Personally, the Richardson's wanted to raise their children in an environment where they belong and can build a strong African identity. They also wanted to directly contribute to the development of the continent and do this through:

1. Empowering parents to raise "outstanding African leaders".
2. Facilitating connections among diasporas
3. Supporting diasporans to transition to Ghana.

Since being in Ghana, Abena has had many achievements, including hosting television programmes on many major stations such as TV3, GBC, MX24 and Lifestyle TV. She organised brand ambassadors such as Nana Ama Mcbrown, Sam George, Gitty Anti, Wode Maya, KSM, Honorable Idrissu, Honourable Atta Akyia, Dentaa and many more to inspire the children. She also established a virtual parenting community which grew to around 1000 people in a few months. On top of this, Abena also works with various orphanages around the country.

Goals

Abena hopes to establish a Pan Afrikan curriculum in all schools, to enstill a sense of cultural pride in the next generation. She is currently focusing on expanding her growing network of stakeholders working towards a vision for all our children.

To achieve this, Abena believes there needs to be a conscious and collective effort to instil a sense of cultural pride in every child. On the micro level, she recommends addressing children by their African names, and speaking to them in their native tongue. On the macro scale, Abena is working on a petition to be presented to Ghana Education Service.

Challenges

Abena has faced challenges finding reliable, consistent people to work with. The poor infrastructure makes manoeuvring around challenging. Abena has also observed a lack of self-pride among some Ghanaians which has and continues to be being passed from generation to generation.

📍 [Destafricagrps](#) (soon changing to: [Afroparentingvillage](#))

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Nea Onnim Research Institute

Research and Education for the socio-economic empowerment of Africa and Africans.

It is clear that we must find an African solution to our problems and that this can only be found in African unity. Divided we are weak; united, Africa could become one of the greatest forces for good in the world

– Dr Kwame Nkrumah

Nea Onnim Research Institute is a start-up intradisciplinary, non-partisan, non-profit think tank dedicated to the social and economic development of Africa and Africans, regardless of their physical location on the earth. We believe through research and education, sustainable growth, development and transformation in Africa is achievable in this lifetime.

The Name:

Our name is from the Akan proverb "Nea onnim no sua a ohu," translated as "When he who does not know learns, he gets to know" (adinkrasymbols.org). Our interpretation is that our ancestors recognised the importance of knowledge-driven action.

Mission:

Our overall goal is to establish a world-class research institute to find African solutions to African problems, disseminate the knowledge widely and support all interested parties with implementation. (Concept Sketch with the label: designed by Lyndsey Asare - Bediako Architectural Designer)

We do this by:

Cultivating a global community of professionals sharing knowledge and resources to establish systems that support the progression of Africans.

The 'let's link up' initiative is the first step in fulfilling this objective. Our long-term goal is to evolve the let's link up initiative into an annual international summit held in Ghana. The summit will unite experts from different fields to strategize and collaborate to solve problems.

Identifying pragmatic solutions to pressing issues, with due regard for the interplay of social and political factors.

Adopting a pragmatic methodology, we aim to produce research that has real-world impact. We do this by ensuring our research recommendations are realistic and consider the socio-political implications.

Developing a set of educational principles underpinned by the philosophy to empower Africans to become self-reliant.

Education reform is a significant aspect of our work. We advocate for a complete revolutionization of the education system. Education should provide the knowledge and skills individuals need to improve their lives and communities. We also provide a wide range of training and community education.

Supporting individuals, organisations and policymakers to implement research-based solutions.

We support all interested parties to develop, implement and monitor systems to improve efficiency and accessibility.

Collaborations:

Nkrumah highlighted the need for unity for the progression of the continent, and this is a significant principle that drives our work. Here you will find organisations we are collaborating with to make a positive impact across the continent. Donations made to NORI help us to support these and other projects.

Kindergarten Drobo

Collaborative Partner: Africa Future Kids

Project Name: Kindergarten Drobo

Project Location: Bono Region

Project Website: <https://www.africanfuturekids.de/en/>

Overview of project:

Kindergarten Drobo is a passion project conceived by Stephen Takyi, who desires to see the children in his hometown Drobo, Ghana, receive the same opportunities as his own child in Germany. Educational inequality is a global issue, and for many around the world living in rural areas like Drobo, the gaps are even more significant. African Future Kids (AFK) is dedicated to closing these gaps. Our goal is to provide free access to quality education that will provide the knowledge and skills for individuals to live independent, self-determined lives equipped with practical life skills.

Our involvement:

We are working with Kindergarten Drobo to:

- Raise money to complete the construction, furnishing and overall running of the school
- Develop and implement a unique culturally significant curriculum that will have a positive impact on the entire community.
- Training the teachers in child-centred play-based pedagogies using the local environment.
- Monitoring the impact of our efforts on the children and the community.



Elroi GNC Playground/Library

Collaborative Partner: Elroi Good News Club

Project Name: Elroi GNC Playground/Library

Project Location: Greater Accra Region – Tema Community 3

Project Website: www.elroignc.org

Project Summary:

Elroi Good News Club aims to build a children's centre, including a library and a playground to serve the entire community. Construction has begun, yet has stalled due to lack of finances. On a weekly basis, the children in the community, regardless of the weather gather in the incomplete structure. For some, this is the only stability they have throughout the week.

NORI's involvement:

We are supporting Elroi Good News Club to:

- Raise funds for the project, as well as provide education and training to the community.
- Supplementary education for local children
- Community training initiatives



DEMOCRACY HUB



#FixTheCountry is a youth-led protest movement in Ghana that is convened and supported by two interrelated NGO's called Democracy Hub and Democratic Accountability Lab.

The movement is committed to the creation of a free, open, and just democracy that delivers people from the tyranny of poverty, prejudice and the abuse of power; nurtures the respect for fundamental human rights; promotes the rule of law, tolerance and respect for difference and dissent; as well as promotes equality of opportunity in all spheres of civic life.

FixTheCountry is organized as a decentralized movement of political and social activists, which endeavours to create community and solidarity by linking the activities of various rule of law, pro-democracy and social justice activists as well as build coalitions with all progressive-minded organisations that subscribe to the values of the Movement.

As part of its goals, FixTheCountry aims to

1. Create a framework for more engaged citizenry in the democratic process, by connecting them with direct resources for holding institutions to account; trainings, holding public education forums, town hall meetings and creating a network of community level mobilizers, to become conduits and pivots of community level democratic activism. This will help ground organic mechanisms for democratic accountability in community-based approaches and community-led initiatives.

2. Pursue the case for the adoption of a New Constitution that is in consonance with the democratic and socially just aspirations of the people, through a democratic and people-driven process. Towards the drafting of a new Constitution that better responds to the values of #FixTheCountry, the movement shall seek a people-centred and citizens-led process for urgently developing a new constitutional document which is responsive to the needs of this and future generations.

In particular, #FixTheCountry supports a constitutional reform process that is consistent with its values, principles and guiding objectives and entrenches avenues for citizens to be custodians of our democracy and mechanisms for democratic accountability; leads to the significant reduction of executive powers; ensures equitable representation in parliament; aggressive decentralization of power and resources from the centre to the regions, districts and communities; and enables direct community ownership over their natural resources.

#FixTheCountry supports constitutional forms that protect the place of minorities, women, the youth and other marginalized groups in our democracy through several targeted strategies aimed at increasing minority, women and youth participation in the avenues for policy and political decision-making; reducing age-based restrictions on minimum eligibility to all public offices; and by bringing down the minimum voting age.

3. Advocate for a new Economic Charter that is constitutionally binding on Governments; and which provides a path to reducing graft; wastage of public funds; a guarantee for the provision of the basic necessities of life to citizens; and a programme for economic freedom for citizens.

In this connection, the movement is working towards building a protest culture in Ghana that promotes, protects and institutionalizes the exercise of the freedom of assembly through demonstrations, picketing and petitions as a mechanism for achieving democratic accountability and strategic goals. **#FixTheCountry** views non-violent civil disobedience, positive actions, protests, strike actions, sit-ins, and all other peaceful and democratic forms of civic expressions of dissent as a core part of its identity and advocacy. Accordingly, the movement has since its inception in May 2021 held 7 massively attended protests in 5 regions in Ghana and has succeeded in bringing nearly 120,000 people unto the streets.

Contact Information

Find out how you can join us or support our work.

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Email us at secretariat@ghfixthecountry.org

You can also check out our website: www.fixthecountrygh.com

Destination Africa Group

- Consultations for diasporans transitioning to Ghana with families.
- Physical and online cultural developmental classes for children of all ages.
- Online educational resources for children offering African studies, Financial Literacy, Human Psychology, Self Defence, Crypto Currency and much more.
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Technologies that Drive Success

Support Our Work



Our work is heavily dependent on donations and funding. Donations enable us to keep our work pure and allows us to begin to identify and implement strategies that will improve all our lives now and secure the future of our children.

There are several ways you can support our work:

Our registration is currently in the hands of the Ghana government, so these donation channels are temporary until our registration certificates are issued.

PayAngel:

PayAngel is a Ghanaian owned payment processing platform (like PayPal). Type "Nea Onnim Research Institute" into the platform.

Bank Transfer:

1441003179727 (Andrea Yankah) EcoBank Ghana – Accra HQ branch

Vodaphone Mobile Money:

0508959812 – (name on account) Afua Yeboah

Cash donations:

Please complete donation envelopes. Envelopes help us to keep our accounting transparent.





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Brand Showcase



This is a showcase of the brand in action. All the elements come together in a manner to create a unique brand experience.








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