

REPORT ON THE 9TH ANNUAL GHANA SOCIOLOGICAL AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (GSAA) CONFERENCE

Executive Summary

The Ghana Sociological and Anthropological Association (GSAA) held its 9th Annual Conference from 7th–8th August 2025 at the University of Ghana, Legon. Coinciding with the 75th Anniversary Celebrations of the Department of Sociology, the two-day event brought together over 100 participants comprising academics, students, practitioners, and policymakers.

Themed “*75 Years of Sociology and Anthropology in Ghana: Critical Reflections, Societal Impact, and Future Directions*,” the conference created space to examine the historical trajectory of the disciplines, their contributions to Ghanaian society, and pathways for the future. Activities included an opening ceremony, keynote lecture, paper presentations, a panel discussion, and a GSAA business meeting. Out of 33 abstracts received, 18 were presented across diverse thematic areas ranging from health and illness narratives to knowledge production, law, gender, environment, social justice, media, youth and indigenous knowledge.

Key outcomes included a renewed call for disciplinary relevance, stronger academia–policy linkages, enhancing youth engagement, and improving visibility of sociological and anthropological research in national development discourse and ensuring sustainable funding for GSAA activities.

Introduction

The 9th GSAA Annual Conference was hosted by the Department of Sociology, University of Ghana as part of its 75th Anniversary celebration. The conference served as a platform for intellectual exchange, capacity building, and institutional strengthening, reaffirming the role of GSAA in fostering collaboration across member institutions, including University of Ghana (UG), Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), University of Cape Coast (UCC), University of Education (UEW), University of Media, Arts and Communication (UniMAC) and University for Development Studies (UDS) amongst others.

Day 1: Opening Ceremony and Keynote Address

The opening ceremony began with a Welcome Address by Prof. Peace Mamle Tetteh, Head of the Department of Sociology (UG). Prof. William Boateng, GSAA National Convener, delivered an address that highlighted the importance of academic leadership and institutional resilience.

The Chairperson’s Remarks were delivered by Prof. Mavis Dako-Gyeke, Dean of the School of Social Sciences, on behalf of Prof. Joseph Yaro, Provost of the College of Humanities. She praised the Department for its longstanding contributions to postgraduate training and policy-relevant research.

The Keynote Address, delivered by Prof. Steve Tonah, traced the evolution of sociology and anthropology in Ghana, highlighted their role in responding to contemporary challenges, and suggested forward-looking strategies for strengthening the disciplines.

Special honours were awarded to institutional representatives: Prof. Jonathan Dapaah (KNUST), Prof. Peter Dwumah (KNUST), Dr. Razak Jaha Imoro (UCC), and Dr. Rosemond Akpene Hiadzi (UG) for their dedication and service to the Association.

Paper presentations on Day One covered themes such as Health and Illness Narratives and Care Practices, Land, Environment, and Indigenous Knowledge, Family, Gender and Sexuality, and Children, Youth, and Community Protection.

Day 2: Panel Discussion and Research Presentations

The second day began with a high-level panel discussion on “*Navigating the Discipline: Institutional Experiences, Challenges and Practices.*” It was moderated by Prof. Isaac Mensah Bofo. Panelists included Prof. Peace Mamle Tetteh (UG, HoD), Prof. Georgina Yaa Oduro (UCC, HoD), Prof. Jonathan Dapaah (representative of KNUST, HoD), and Prof. Alfred Kuranchie (UEW). The discussion addressed institutional challenges, ways of strengthening disciplinary visibility, and strategies to better link sociological and anthropological research with policy.

This was followed by paper presentations under the themes of Knowledge Production, Law, Conflict Resolution and Social Justice, and Technology, Media, Work and Entrepreneurship. The conference ended with the GSAA Business Meeting, where members reviewed activities, shared updates from their institutions, and mapped out strategies for the Association’s future.

Highlights from Research Presentations

1. **Health, Illness Narratives, and Care Practices** (Chair: Prof. Jonathan Dapaah)
 - Experiences of living with lupus.
 - The impact of HIV normalization campaigns amidst persistent stigma.
 - Migration of nurses abroad shaped by age, gender, and family responsibilities.
→ *These studies underscore how health intersects with culture, stigma, and systemic practices in Ghana.*
2. **Land, Environment, and Indigenous Knowledge** (Chairs: Prof. John W. Ansah; Dr. Mary Sefa Boampong)
 - Indigenous ecological knowledge in sacred grove protection and agroforestry.
 - Cultural relics and micro-heritage tourism for local development.
 - Urban flood management strategies combining lived realities and formal interventions.
→ *Emphasized integrating indigenous knowledge and community participation into environmental governance.*
3. **Family, Gender, and Sexuality** (Chair: Dr. Daniel Fiaveh)

- Technology and transnational family interactions.
 - Diplomatic spouses and shifting gendered roles.
 - Measurement tools for gender norms and progress toward SDG 5.
 - Sexual performance pressures on male undergraduates.
 - Juvenile delinquency and family/peer influences.
→ *Provided critical insights into how family and gender dynamics are evolving in Ghana.*
4. **Sociology Knowledge Production, Law, Conflict Resolution, and Social Justice**
(Chair: Prof. James Dzisah)
- The role of ADR in intimate disputes.
 - Indigenous conflict resolution in Bawku.
 - Challenges of sociology/anthropology at UG and reforms for relevance.
→ *Highlighted sociology's role in justice and institutional reform.*
5. **Technology, Media, Work, and Entrepreneurship** (Chair: Dr. Rabi Asante)
- Limited visibility of sociological/anthropological research in mainstream media.
 - Need for stronger collaboration between scholars and media outlets.

Acknowledgment of the Planning Committee

The success of the conference was made possible through the dedication and hard work of its planning team. Prof. Isaac Boafo played a key role in preparing the ORID grant, compiling the book of abstracts, and coordinating accommodation arrangements. Dr. Rabi Asante managed the ORID application process and facilitated QR code registration. Prof. Steve Tonah provided valuable guidance and reviewed abstracts, while Dr. Albert Kpoor contributed to abstract reviews and coordinated correspondence with presenters. Dr. Rosemond Akpene Hiadzi oversaw invitations, venue booking, logistics, catering, stationery, and accommodation, ensuring the smooth execution of the event.

Special appreciation is also extended to the 75th Anniversary Planning Committee members, Drs. Fidelia Ohemeng and Mark Obeng, and Prof. Sylvia Esther Gyan, as well as the Department of Sociology, University of Ghana, and all GSAA member universities, for their invaluable support.

Key Outcomes and Recommendations

1. Strengthen Academia – Policy Linkages: Enhance collaboration between sociologists/anthropologists and policymakers to influence national development strategies.
2. Youth Engagement: Create platforms for postgraduate students and early-career scholars to take leadership roles in GSAA.
3. Increase Visibility: Build stronger media partnerships to showcase sociological and anthropological research in Ghana.

4. Institutional Collaboration: Consolidate ties across GSAA member universities to foster joint research and publications.
5. Sustainability: Secure long-term funding and sponsorship to broaden participation and ensure continuity of conferences.

Conclusion

The 9th GSAA Conference, held as part of the Department of Sociology's 75th Anniversary, was a resounding success. It celebrated the achievements of sociology and anthropology in Ghana, showcased new research, and provided a platform for critical reflection on the disciplines' societal impact. Most importantly, it charted pathways for the future, ensuring that the disciplines remain relevant, visible, and impactful in addressing Ghana's social transformation needs.

Appendix I: Conference Programme and Book of Abstracts

The full conference programme and book of abstracts, containing session details, presenter information, and extended abstracts of all accepted papers, is available as a supplementary resource.

 [Access the Conference Programme and Book of Abstracts](#)

This appendix provides a detailed record of the scholarly contributions made during the 9th Annual GSAA Conference, complementing the thematic highlights summarized in the main report.

Appendix II: Photo Galleries of the Conference

A curated collection of photographs capturing key moments during the 9th GSAA Conference and the Department of Sociology's 75th Anniversary celebrations is available via the following links:

-  [Conference Photo Gallery 1](#)
-  [Conference Photo Gallery 2](#)

These images include the opening ceremony, keynote lecture, panel sessions, research presentations, networking events, and group photographs.

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