# COLLECTION OF
DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES

Rabat Process
Euro-African Dialogue
on Migration and Development
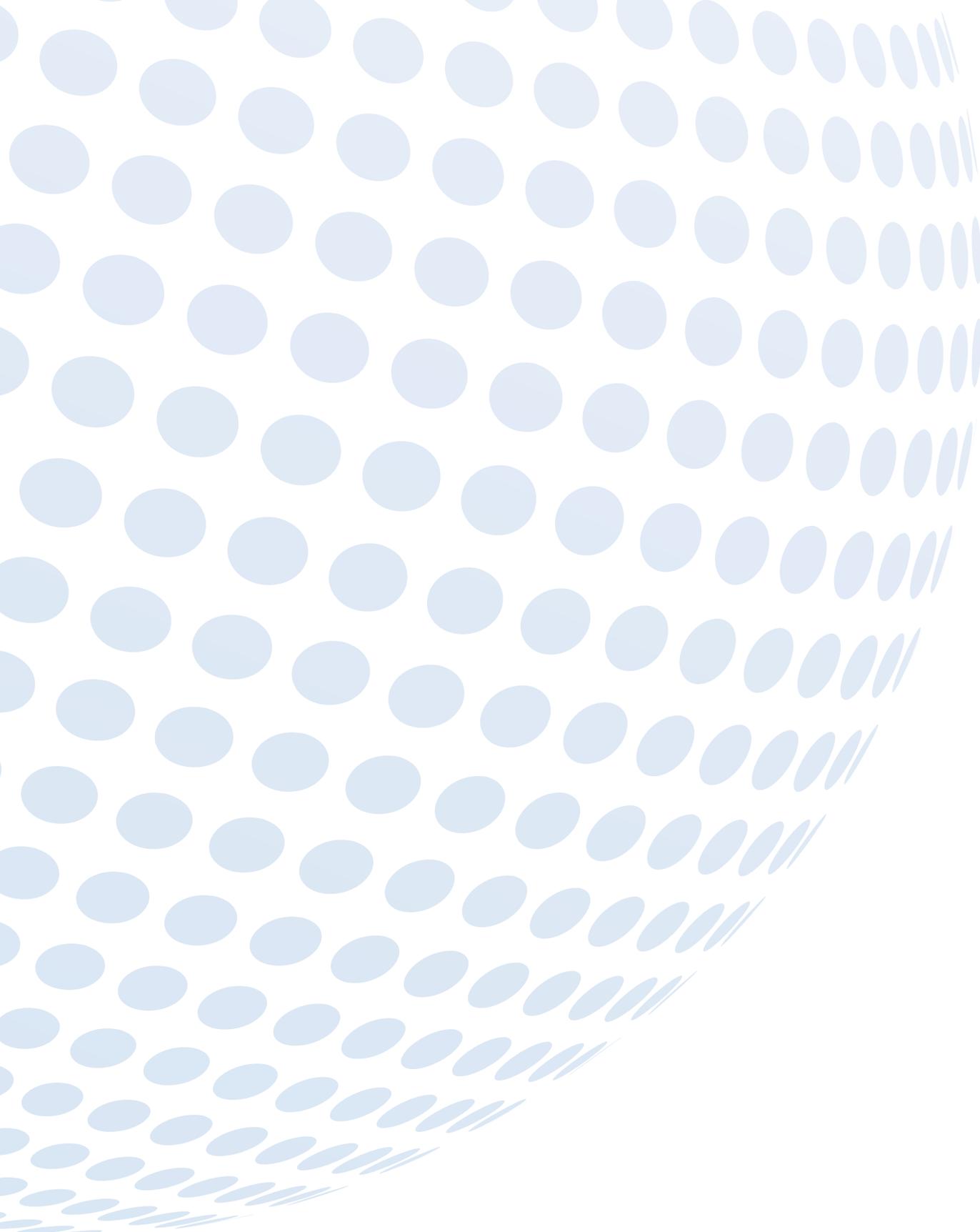
COLLECTION OF
DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Rabat Process Secretariat is pleased to present this Collection of Diaspora Engagement Practices, an innovative publication designed to support partner governments in their diaspora engagement activities, as well as key stakeholders working with diasporas.

The Euro-African Dialogue on Migration and Development (Rabat Process) is an intergovernmental migration dialogue. It was created in 2006 with the objective of providing a platform for exchanges and cooperation on migration issues between all countries involved in the Western African migration route. The Dialogue now brings together 57 partner countries from Europe and North, West and Central Africa, as well as the European Commission and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) holds the Secretariat for the Rabat Process. As a Secretariat, it facilitates the exchange of practices and ideas between partners and helps to generate knowledge through technical and thematic meetings, workshops and the production of tools and documents, such as this Collection of Diaspora Engagement Practices.

This publication is the result of extensive desk research and interviews with key stakeholders carried out between May 2019 and December 2019 in the framework of the Rabat Process. It is in line with the willingness of Rabat Process partner countries to develop a tool to enhance their collaboration with their diasporas, expressed notably at the 5th Ministerial Conference of 2018 that led to the adoption of the Marrakesh Action Plan 2018-2020. The Secretariat hopes that this publication will be a useful tool for the decision-makers and practitioners of the Rabat Process regions. The Collection complements existing knowledge tools developed by the Dialogue since 2006 and offers an innovative approach that aims at promoting mutual learning among partner countries. The Rabat Process Secretariat would thus like to thank the national focal points of its partner countries and the stakeholders involved in the implementation of the initiatives showcased in this publication for their critical contributions.

In addition, the Secretariat wishes to extend its thanks to the following experts (in alphabetical order) for their valuable inputs: Abdelkader Benbrahim (Making Finance Work For Africa), Charlotte Brault (Diaspora Denmark), Marilisa Fantacci (Expertise France), Olivier Kaba (Agence Française de Développement), Marion Noack (ICMPD), Khady Sakho Niang (ADEPT), Onyekachi Wambu (AFFORD), Martin Wolf Andersen (Danish Refugee Council), and Valerie Wolff (independent consultant).

Finally, the Rabat Process Secretariat wishes to warmly thank Loksan Harley, the lead coordinator of the publication, whose quality work strongly contributed to shaping this Collection, and the remarkable team of regional experts, Martin Russell, Anna Ferro, Paul Absalon and David Lelu, whose research is at the core of this publication.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The content of this publication does not necessarily reflect the views of ICMPD or the Rabat Process partner countries.

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FOREWORD

Diasporas worldwide make significant contributions to economic, social and cultural development in their countries of origin. They do so by sending home money to support basic needs and investment, sharing their skills and contacts acquired overseas, and embodying their country's image abroad. Diasporas of the Rabat Process region make particularly significant contributions, with partner countries of the dialogue having their own unique diaspora engagement challenges and opportunities. It is therefore no surprise that Rabat Process ministers outlined in the Marrakesh Action Plan 2018-2020 their desire to enhance their knowledge of their diasporas and to strengthen their economic, social and cultural development contributions.

It is in this spirit that the ICMPD, as part of its role as the Rabat Process Secretariat, has launched this Collection of Diaspora Engagement Practices. This new publication is the fruit of an extensive mapping of recent innovative diaspora engagement policies, programmes and projects by a team of experts from all regions of the Rabat Process. It consolidates ICMPD's previous research on diaspora engagement, while drawing on literature produced by governments, international organisations and civil society. It condenses this wide-ranging body of research into a concise Collection aimed specifically at Rabat Process partner governments, whilst relevant to a much wider range of stakeholders. The Collection provides guidance at the strategic level on how to maximise the diaspora's economic, social and cultural development contributions, punctuated with concrete examples of initiatives from across the Rabat Process and beyond. In addition, this Collection sheds light upon new and exciting trends in the field of diaspora engagement. It looks at how innovations in crowdfunding, blockchain, and mobile telephony are transforming the landscape of diaspora remittances and investments; how some partner governments have decentralised their engagement activities; or how diaspora engagement can take a segmented approach to reach different generations, as well as the diaspora "elites" and "champions" who can often make the biggest contributions.

As Director of Migration Dialogues and Cooperation, I would like to personally thank the numerous experts, officials and diplomats from partner governments and other organisations who provided critical inputs into the publication. I would also like to thank the European Union, who is funding the Dialogue and its Secretariat under the Migration and Mobility Dialogue – MMD Support Project and implemented by ICMPD. I would also like to thank the research team and authors of this report, as well the Rabat Process Secretariat (Audrey Jolivel, Laura Arana, Fiona Cook) whose contribution led to the success of this exercise. ICMPD is confident that this publication, in the spirit of the Rabat Process, will promote mutual learning among partner governments, who will hopefully be inspired to replicate some of the exciting innovations in their own countries.

Martijn Pluim
Director, Migration Dialogues and Cooperation
International Centre for Migration Policy Development

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Factsheets

08

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ASciNA   Austrian Scientists and Scholars in North America

CEMAC   Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa

CFA   West African franc

ECOWAS   Economic Community of West African States

ESP   Emigrant Support Programme

EU   European Union

FINCOME   Forum International des Compétences Marocaines à l'Étranger

GCM   Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

GDFP   Greek Diaspora Fellowship Program

GDP   Gross Domestic Product

GIZ   Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit

ICMPD   International Centre for Migration Policy Development

IFAD   International Fund for Agriculture Development

KYC	Know Your Client
MEETAfrica	Mobilisation Européenne pour l'Entrepreneuriat en Afrique
MFI	Microfinance institutions
MMD	Migration and Mobility Support Programme
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SMS	Short message service
UN	United Nations
UN DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
USSD	Unstructured Supplementary Service Data
WAEMU	West African Economic and Monetary Union
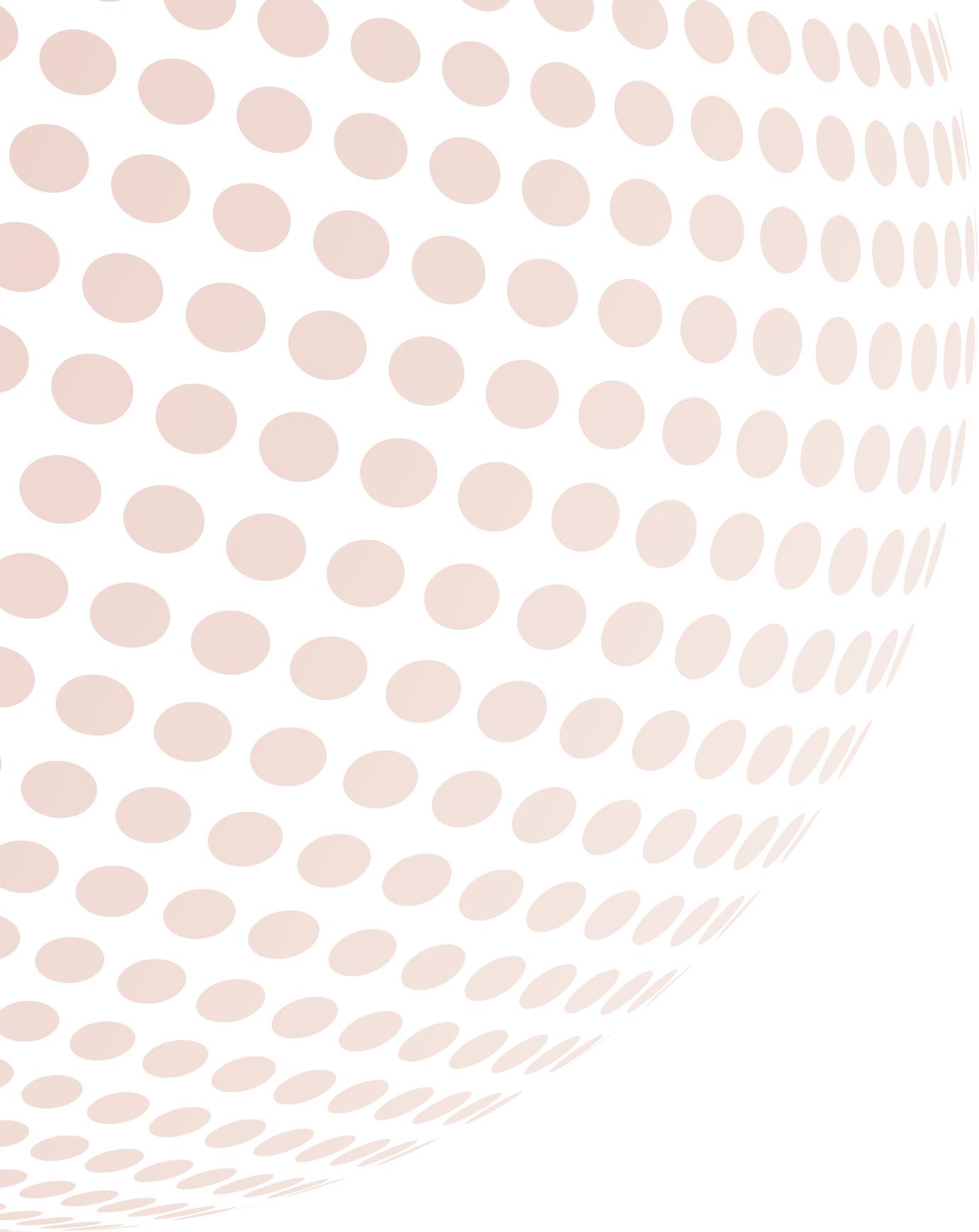
INTRODUCTION

Diaspora contributions to sustainable development

Diasporas[i] contribute significantly to the sustainable development of both destination and origin communities, making diverse economic, social and cultural contributions. **Diasporas send money home** to fund basic goods and services, while helping **mitigate shocks and supporting recovery from crises**. **They invest** money to improve lives, to make a financial return, or both. They **share the skills** acquired from experiences abroad, either virtually from distance, or by returning to their community of origin. Diasporas are the **embodiment of their heritage country's image abroad**, forging ties and creating transnational spaces.

Diaspora contributions to development

Economic

- Remittance transfers
- Entrepreneurship and investment
- Tourism
- Trading relationships

Social

- Skills and ideas circulation
- Social norms transfer

Cultural

- Contributions to soft power and diplomacy
- Promotion of national cultures and languages
- Transnational networking

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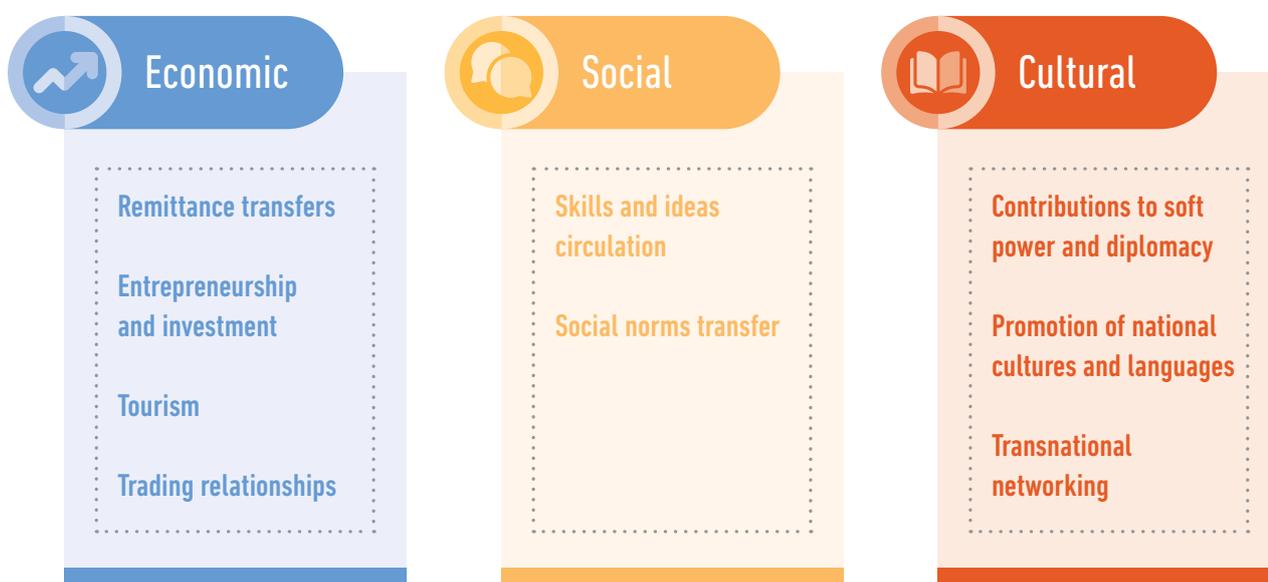
i   "Modern diasporas are ethnic minority groups of migrant origins residing and acting in host countries but maintaining strong sentimental and material links with their countries of origin – their homelands." Sheffer, G. (1986). *Modern diasporas in international politics*. London: Croom Helm, p.3..

Facts on the diasporas of the Rabat Process regions

The Gambia (15.1%) has the largest ratio of remittances to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), followed by Cabo Verde (12.2%), Liberia (11.9%), Senegal (9.2%), Togo (8.5%), Nigeria (6.1%) and Ghana (5.8%).[1]

The Irish government estimates a 70 million strong diaspora population, which includes 1.47 million *citizens* residing abroad,[2] compared with a national population of 4.9 million.[3 4]

The UK (4.9 million), Poland (4.7 million), Germany (4.2 million) and Romania (3.6 million) are the partner countries that feature in the 20 largest countries of origin of international migrants.[5]

15% (more than 400,000) of Moroccans abroad are university educated – a share that is twice as high as that of the domestic Moroccan population.[6]

Most African migrants reside in other African countries, with intra-regional migration particularly significant in West and Central Africa.[7]

Worldwide, female migrants send home higher percentages of their income than men.[8]

Engaging diasporas to maximise these development contributions is a shared imperative of Rabat Process partners. It can enable them to achieve their Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), while improving the lives of diasporas and their families, as well as fostering exchanges between origin and destination countries. In order to maximise the contributions of diasporas, partner governments need to:

Integrate diaspora engagement into institutional and policy frameworks → **Understand the characteristics of their diasporas and build trust with them** → **Maximise economic, social, cultural and other diasporic transfers through targeted policies and initiatives**
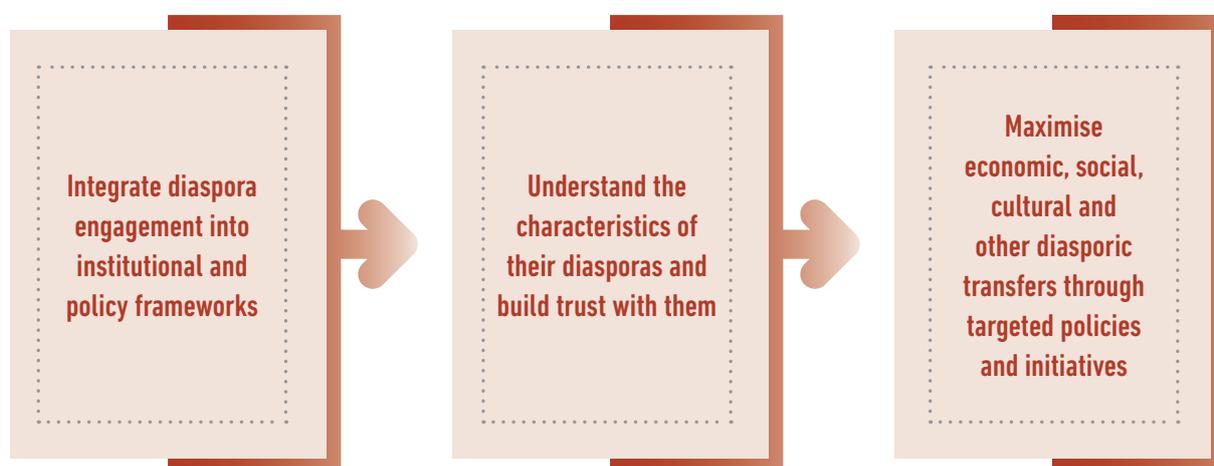
Global and regional frameworks of relevance

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[9] and the Global Compact for Migration (GCM)[10]

- 2030 Agenda Declaration: as migrants and their families face discrimination and marginalisation, they are central to achieving the key pledge to "leave no-one behind".

- SDG target 10.c: diaspora engagement policies can help meet the target to reduce to less than 3% the transaction costs of migrant remittances and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5%.

- Other SDGs: diasporas contribute money, ideas and skills to destination and origin communities, which can support the achievement of multiple SDGs, including goals 1 (no poverty), 3 (health), 4 (education), and 13 (climate action).

- GCM objective 20: diaspora engagement policies can help achieve objective 20 to promote faster, safer and cheaper transfer of remittances and foster financial inclusion of migrants.

African Union and Agenda 2063

- The African Union considers the African diaspora the continent's sixth region.[11]

- The main continental development strategy, Agenda 2063, aspires for the continent to "have dynamic and mutually beneficial links with her diaspora", with diaspora mobilisation considered one of the "critical enablers for Africa's transformation".[12]

Why this publication?

The Collection of Diaspora Engagement Practices **shares innovative policies, programmes, projects, and business models** which have been implemented in Rabat Process partner countries. It directly responds to the desire outlined by partners in the Marrakesh Action Plan 2018–2020 to gain a better knowledge of their diasporas, and to strengthen their economic, social and cultural development contributions.[ii]

ii   Marrakesh Action Plan 2018-2020, Domain 1, Action 1: *"Identify and share good practices that enable countries to gain better knowledge of the profiles of their diasporas and to adopt or to optimise strategies that promote their economic, social and cultural potential for development, whilst also analysing the potential obstacles to the adoption and optimisation of these good practices."* Euro-African Dialogue on Migration and Development (2018). Marrakesh Political Declaration. [online] Marrakesh: Euro-African Dialogue on Migration and Development. Available at: https://www.rabat-process.org/images/documents/EN_Marrakesh-Declaration-and-Action-Plan-Rabat-Process.pdf [Accessed 19 Dec. 2019].

This Collection **highlights new and exciting approaches, providing guidance** on to what extent some of the initiatives illustrated can be replicated by other Rabat Process partner countries. It complements the Background Paper prepared for the 2019 Rabat Process Technical Workshop on Diaspora Remittances and Sustainable Development.

Whom is this publication for?

The Collection has been **developed for diaspora engagement policymakers and practitioners in Rabat Process partner countries** but may also be of interest to other stakeholders working on migration and diaspora engagement.

How to use this publication?

This publication is divided thematically and mainly focuses on the economic, social and cultural development contributions of Diasporas. Each of these sections provides an overview of:

- Key issues ("what's at stake?");

- Innovative initiatives (factsheets on specific initiatives);

- Other policies and initiatives ("options to enhance diaspora engagement").

In addition, guidance on how to develop policy frameworks, get to know and build trust with diasporas is outlined at the end of the Collection. Getting these cross-cutting aspects right is vital to enabling the initiatives shared throughout the publication.

Methodology

This Collection intends to go beyond traditional mappings of diaspora engagement practices. It has consolidated existing literature and mapping exercises, and consulted key stakeholders and thematic experts, with the objective of highlighting new innovative[iii] policies, programmes and projects. In particular, it focuses on initiatives adopted in Rabat Process partner countries, as well as on those adopted elsewhere that partner countries can learn from. Since the emphasis of the Collection is on promoting mutual learning between partner countries, the initiative factsheets utilise a **"replicability scale"**. This scale provides a brief and indicative assessment of how easy it is for partner countries to adopt the initiative in question based on its cost and complexity (an assessment of "advanced" means that an initiative is relatively difficult to replicate, while "basic" indicates that an initiative is easier to replicate).

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iii   The Collection considered initiatives "innovative" based on the selection criteria outlined in Annex 2.

The Collection was written by a team of five experts working in close collaboration with the Rabat Process Secretariat. Four Regional Experts were responsible for developing the initiative factsheets and one coordinator was responsible for the overall methodology, the policy-level and contextual analysis, and coordination of the Regional Experts.

The development process involved an extensive review of recent diaspora engagement literature and a wide-ranging consultation of diaspora engagement policymakers and practitioners from Rabat Process partner governments, international organisations, civil society and private sector operators (see Annex 1).

ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

What's at stake?

- Diasporas make significant economic contributions through their **remittances, entrepreneurship, investments and transnational relationships**.

- Diasporas send money to their families, the majority of which **finances basic goods and services** or fixed asset investments.[13]

- Remittances exceed Official Development Assistance,[14] tend to be counter-cyclical,[15] add to foreign exchange reserves,[16] and fluctuate less than other financial flows.[17]

- **Diasporas invest in enterprises** in their origin communities, leveraging the skills and capital acquired abroad to complement their connections "back home".

- **Diasporas help forge international trading and business relationships**, fostering trade and investment.

- **A small number of highly-skilled and high-net-worth diasporas facilitate a large proportion of diaspora investments**. However, low-skilled migrants' remittances can also significantly impact poverty, entrepreneurship and investment, depending on recipient demographics and size of origin country's informal sector.[18]

- High remittance transfer costs, administrative barriers to entrepreneurship and investment, low internet penetration, a lack of appropriate financial instruments, and poor governance constrain economic contributions.

- Technological advancements, particularly the rise of **digital remittances, mobile telephony and internet penetration, are supporting innovations** like mobile remittances and crowdfunding, but require an enabling policy environment to ensure their rollout.

Diaspora contributions in numbers

1 billion: the number of people who are either remittance senders or receivers.[19]

80%: the proportion of remittance volumes allocated to basic goods and services.[20]

$529 billion: the volume of remittances sent to low and middle-income countries in 2018 (expected to reach $551 billion in 2019).[21][22]

15.3%: remittances in The Gambia as a share of GDP – the highest ratio among Rabat Process partner countries.[23]

$53 billion: the estimated annual savings of the African diaspora.[24]

41%/42%: the percentage of the West/Central African Franc zones' remittances that come from the Eurozone.[25]

Innovative initiatives for economic development
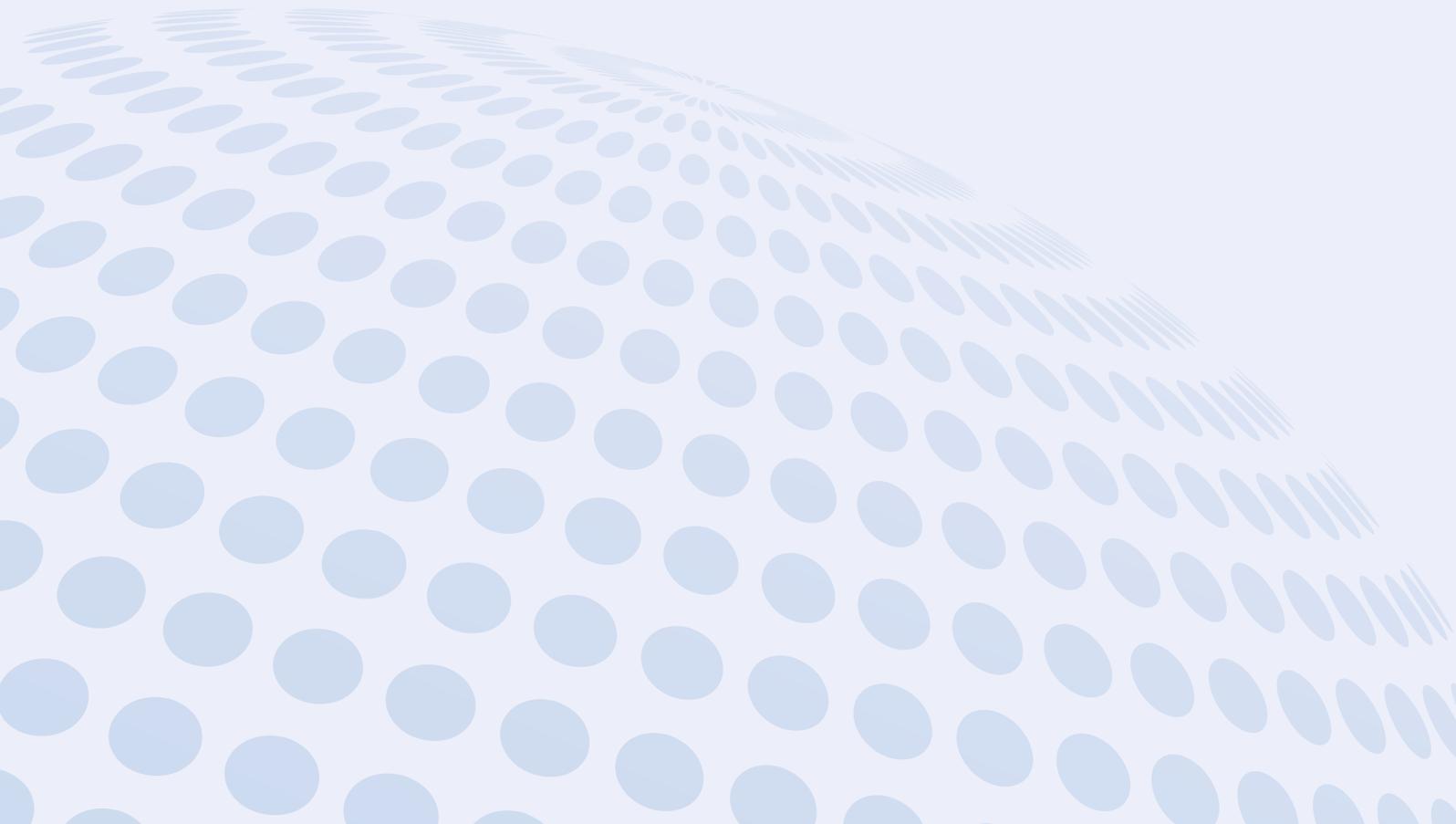
1. NIGERIAN DIASPORA BOND

Retail bond to channel diaspora funds towards national investment

Diaspora contributions:
economic

Overview

Nigeria's diaspora bond is a retail bond issued by the Nigerian Debt Management Office in 2017, primarily aimed at Nigeria's global diaspora community seeking to invest in the country's development.

Diaspora bonds can enable partner countries to effectively borrow money from their diasporas, thereby channelling funds towards national development projects, while providing diasporas with a financial return on investment. They also give diasporas the opportunity to contribute to development "back home". Diaspora bonds are similar to other retail bonds in that they involve subscribers purchasing the bond in exchange for regular interest and reimbursement of the principal at the end of the term. Many partner countries have limited access to fundraising via international markets to fund much needed investment, due to low credit ratings, an inability to back assets, and/or political instability. A major aspect of diaspora bonds is their potential to raise lower-cost capital through a "patriotic discount" – or the willingness of diaspora members to invest in their optimistic outlook for their country of origin – although this discount can be overestimated. They can also provide more "patient" capital, as investors may be more likely to accept extensions to the maturity terms.

UK

USA

Nigeria

- Country of origin
- Country of destination
- Lead agency

Objectives

➡ Raise funds from overseas Nigerians to support infrastructure investment in Nigeria.

➡ Offer diasporas a financial return and the opportunity to invest in the country's development.

➡ Enhance funding liquidity of the Nigerian economy.

Innovative characteristics

- First bond of its kind from Sub-Saharan Africa.

- First African bond targeted at retail investors in the USA, considered a highly-regulated market. Its registration with the USA Securities and Exchange Commission and UK Listing Authority allowed access to a wide range of investors.

- Clearly linked funding to infrastructure, which appealed to the diaspora market.

- Ensure low minimum-purchase requirements for the bonds to reach a wider base of subscribers.

- Structured as a retail instrument and denominated in international currencies that diasporas use and offered through private banks and wealth managers giving the bond wide investor appeal.[26]

Results

- Raised $300 million for investment in infrastructure – much of which came from diaspora investors in the UK and USA, including through Nigerian banks (FBN and UBA) in London and New York.[27]

- Provided diaspora investors with interest of 5.625% over five years.[28]

- Attracted considerable interest from investors worldwide, with the issue attracting initial orders worth 190 per cent of the offered amount.[29]

- Expected to have a positive impact on the country's credit rating and Financial Markets Development Index rating.

Implementation challenges

- Meeting the many external conditions required for successful bond issue, including strong financial and political stability, relatively high credit rating, and a relatively wealthy diaspora with a high level of trust in institutions and confidence in the country's prospects.

- Reaching diaspora investors, as USA and UK/EU consumer protections precluded the direct marketing of the product to the diaspora. This meant that outreach had to be indirect, through the organisation

of diaspora interaction events that did not reference the bond issuance directly. Reaching diaspora investors can also be challenging as many do not have trading accounts with brokerage services. Removing barriers which prevent members of the diaspora from opening domestic bank accounts (including those denominated in foreign currency) could be one way to enable the diaspora to invest in financial products (as well as accessing a range of other services that can facilitate their engagement).

- Substantial time and financial resources required for planning and issuance. Nigeria took around four years to plan and navigate complex regulatory processes in several host country jurisdictions, especially in the UK and USA. Registering with key host country regulators is vital, based on lessons learnt in particular from Ethiopia's experience with diaspora bonds in 2011.[30]

- Finding financial advisers with the right capacities. Nigeria had to work with financial institutions with the necessary licences in all the target countries to ensure access retail diaspora investors. Securing legal counsel from a firm that has handled diaspora bonds before also helped Nigeria to navigate the complexities of its issuance.

Replicability

ADVANCED

- Requires overseas regulatory approval to list the bond abroad, which takes time and financial resources.

- Requires strong outreach and trust-building with diaspora communities.

- Requires identification of financial advisers with the right capacities and licences

Further information

Issuer/implementing agency: Nigeria Debt Management Office, Federal Republic of Nigeria

Budget: Unknown

Web link: https://www.dmo.gov.ng

2. FINANCING RURAL YOUTH FROM THE MALIAN DIASPORA

Channelling Malian diaspora funds towards youth-run agricultural activities in rural regions of origin

Diaspora contributions:
economic

Overview

The Financing Rural Youth from Malian Diaspora initiative allows Malians residing in France to make loans to micro entrepreneurs in rural Mali through an online crowdfunding platform. GRDR, a French NGO, and Babyloan, a crowdfunding platform, work together to mobilise investment from Malians living in Paris.[31] Babyloan vets and selects local microfinance institutions (MFIs), which disburse and follow up on the loans guaranteed by the project. Babyloan refinances the MFIs after they have made the micro-loans. The rural youth micro-project entrepreneurs receive financing through the Babyloan's platform, along with other support provided by the project. The initiative responds to the funding needs of Malian rural youth, the Government of Mali's new migration policy that promotes the creation of businesses and facilitates diaspora investment, and the wishes of members of the Malian diaspora to contribute to their regions of origin.

France

Mali

● Country of origin
● Country of destination
◎ Lead agency

Objectives

➤ Link the Malian diaspora to young people from their regions of origin targeted by the "Rural Youth Vocational Training, Employment and Entrepreneurship Support Project".

➤ Provide rural youth in Mali with financial support to develop agricultural activities, along with vocational training and career development planning. The micro-project entrepreneurs can receive up to €2,000 through Babyloan's platform.[32]

➤ Create opportunities for young rural Malians, providing them with alternatives to irregular migration.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Innovative characteristics

- Utilises crowdfunding to directly channel diaspora funds towards productive agricultural activities in rural communities.

- Maximises diaspora ownership of investments, as members of the Malian diaspora can choose which activities to finance and channel this into the regions with which they have strong affinities.

- Integrates diaspora engagement through crowdfunding into the framework of a broader rural development intervention.

- Helps increase standards among local micro-finance institutions, as they have to meet stringent governance and financial criteria in order to partner with Babyloan.

Results[iv]

- Raised €175,000 to fund 276 projects funded through Babyloan, approximately 10% of which were funded by the diaspora.

- Supported 108 projects in 2019 with €74,950 in loans. Each project received on average €80 (including €23 from the diaspora) in funding.

- Saw 100% of the money lent on the platform reimbursed to the diaspora.

Implementation challenges[v]

- Building trust and stimulating the interest of the Malian diaspora in France, especially members of the diaspora who no longer have family or emotional ties to the target communities. GRDR and Babyloan's awareness-raising activities were key in this respect. Both arranged information sessions with members of the diaspora to explain how the platform worked and used key influencers to promote the platform online. Babyloan's approach also enables the diaspora to choose the projects and geographical areas to support, ensuring greater tailoring to diaspora demands.

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iv   Information provided by Babyloan.
v   Information provided by Babyloan.

- Time required to partner with MFIs in Mali. Since Babyloan only refinances local MFIs (without directly lending themselves), they conduct in-depth assessments of local partner institutions, which takes time and financial resources. Qualifying just one MFI takes on average six to nine months. Fundraising from international donors and building on Babyloan's presence and contacts in Mali has helped to overcome this challenge.

- Finding qualified local MFIs. Since Babyloan at present only lends through one local MFI, there is a mismatch between the number of projects validated by the technical partner FIER (too many) and the lending institutions making loans (too few). This should be resolved when Babyloan qualifies a second MFI, but this underlines the ongoing challenge of qualifying such institutions in undeveloped financial markets.

- Measuring the impact of Babyloan's outreach work targeting members of the diaspora for lending is challenging, because both diaspora and non-diaspora investors provide funding via Babyloan. As such, the funds received from members of the Malian diaspora are estimates (based on the family names of lenders). Babyloan is considering requesting information from prospective lenders on their country of origin and on how they found out about Babyloan in order to better monitor the effectiveness of outreach

Replicability

- Crowdfunding elements can be integrated into any intervention that involves linking diaspora funds with projects in origin countries.

- Requires time and financial resources to thoroughly audit and qualify MFIs.

- Better suited to countries with specific "zones of emigration", with which members of the diaspora can be connected, in order to make the most of the localised "emotional" connection.

- Requires awareness-raising in both regions of origin and destination, which can be costly and time-consuming, requiring implementing partners at both ends.

- Requires a high level of trust among both diaspora investors and those receiving funding.

Further information

Donor: IFAD

Implementing agency: Government of Mali, Babyloan (ABC Microfinance)

Budget: $425,000 (€372,400)

Web link:
https://www.babyloan.org/fr/mali

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

3. MEETAFRICA

Diaspora contributions:
economic, social

Overview

The European Mobilisation for Entrepreneurship in Africa ("MEETAfrica") aims to create employment and foster innovation in Africa by helping 80 African end-of-course diaspora students and highly qualified young professionals in Germany and France to start businesses that provide innovative solutions in the agricultural, industrial or service sectors of their countries of origin. The programme selects innovative diaspora start-ups, provides them with financial and technical support, and also helps authorities in countries of origin to support the start-ups. Phase I of the programme was funded by the EU in the framework of the Migration and Mobility Support Programme (MMD) implemented by the ICMPD.

Germany

France

Tunisia

Morocco

Algeria

Mali

Senegal

Cameroon

● Country of origin
● Country of destination
◎ Lead agency

Objectives

➡ Generate jobs, wealth and innovation through the transfer of know-how from graduate African diasporas to countries of origin.

➡ Build the capacities of African partner countries to provide technical support to innovative diaspora business start-ups.

➡ Cultivate a spirit of entrepreneurship among African diasporas trained in France and Germany that enables them to contribute to their origin countries.

➡ Facilitate the integration of young African diasporas into their countries of origin.

➡ Promote cooperation between institutions in countries of origin and destination, as well as between organisations in the education and financial sectors to help business start-ups succeed.

Innovative characteristics[vi]

- Specifically targets start-ups that develop innovative solutions for their African countries of origin, which meant most proposed projects involved a strong technological component in high-growth sectors like agribusiness, environment, energy, and health.

- Integrates a "tripartite approach" that links migration, development and diaspora engagement, maximising the development benefits of migration for the young diaspora entrepreneurs (by supporting their start-ups) and their countries of origin (by building their capacities and increasing their inbound investment).

- Focuses on young graduates and young professionals within the African diaspora in Europe.

- Consolidates the past experiences of three Europe-based organizations, combining the expertise of each, while leveraging the role of public institutional partners in countries of origin which served as interfaces between the initiative and the State.

Results[vii]

- Created 26 enterprises.

- Created 272 jobs (including 30 permanent jobs).

- Reviewed 279 project proposals in 2016, 258 of which were considered eligible, of which 130 persons were interviewed by the Evaluation Committee and 80 start-ups (27 in Sub-Saharan Africa and 53 in North Africa) were selected (known as "laureates").

- Supported start-ups in the following sectors: food and beverage, environment, renewable energies, health and new technologies.

- Integrated a focus on gender equality, ensuring at least 30% of candidates and laureates were women.

- Extended for a second phase due to its success.

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vi   Insights drawn from the 2018 independent evaluation of phase I of MEETAfrica.
vii   Insights drawn from the 2018 independent evaluation of phase I of MEETAfrica.

Implementation challenges[viii]

- Time-lags between the selection of laureates and beginning of support created practical challenges for some participants, such as visa issues. However, this also allowed more time for putting in place necessary support for the laureates – a key added-value of the project.

- Evaluating the longer term impacts of the initiative is difficult – 272 jobs were created by the start-ups but time will tell whether these jobs will remain in the longer term.

- Finding service providers to provide support for the more innovative and high-tech laureate start-ups was challenging.

- For some start-ups, commissioning design briefs and other business specifications (*cahiers des charges)* required significant costs which were not fully covered by the budget allowed by the initiative.

Replicability

INTERMEDIATE

- Can be adapted to different pairs of countries, being especially suited to partner countries who send large numbers of students to specific regions.

- Requires forging partnerships with public institutions in countries of origin, which can require first building their capacities. This adds an additional layer of cost and complexity.

- Requires engaging a diverse range of partner organizations and service providers – from public institutions in countries of origin to business mentors who can support young entrepreneurs.

Further information

Donor: European Union, Government of France (through the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs)

Implementing agencies: Expertise France (coordinator), Campus France, Institute of Research for Development, GIZ (consortium members).

Budget: €1.7 million (supporting 60 laureates), with additional co-financing from France (supporting 20 laureates)

Web link: http://meetafrica.fr

viii   Insights drawn from the 2018 independent evaluation of phase I of MEETAfrica.

4. CINETPAY

Diaspora contributions:
economic

Overview

CinetPay is a Côte d'Ivoire-based fintech company created in 2016. It functions as an electronic payment solutions aggregator[x] that facilitates national and international payments and transfers made through mobile money and electronic wallets in 8 African countries. Cinetpay targets mobile phone users who do not have bank accounts. They maintain a presence in several West and Central African countries, claiming to give businesses access to more than 85 million electronic wallets. It offers a single payments gateway for businesses through their website, mobile app or physical store.[33]

Senegal

Mali

Burkina Faso

Guinea

Cameroon

Togo

Côte d'Ivoire

DR Congo

● Country of implementation
◉ Lead agency
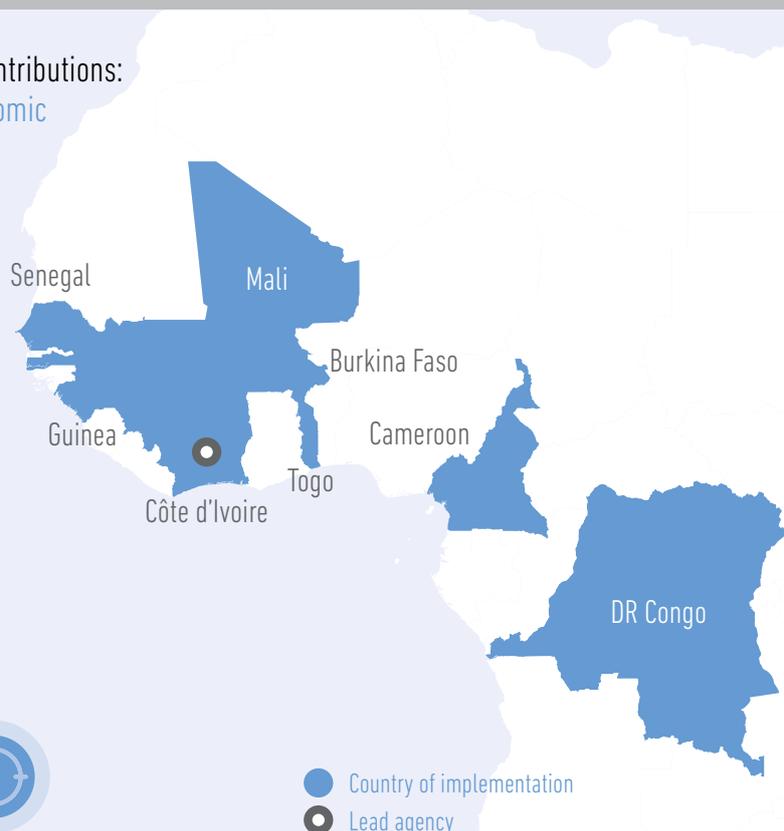
Objectives

➼ Enable unbanked African businesses and consumers to make and receive payments and transfers via different payment systems, particularly those that use mobile phones.

➼ Increase access to digital financial services and markets, by providing low-cost and low-threshold electronic payment solutions that do not rely on payment cards and bank transfers.

➼ Allow companies greater scope to use mobile-money services to encourage their inclusion in the formal economy.

➼ Encourage the uptake of mobile and online purchases, as a safer and more transparent means of payment than cash.

ix   Financial technology (Fintech) is used to describe new tech that seeks to improve and automate the delivery and use of financial services. It helps companies, business owners and consumers better manage their financial operations, processes, and lives through specialised software and algorithms that are used on computers and, increasingly, smartphones (definition: Investopedia)

x   A payment aggregator is a service provider that allows merchants to process mobile or e-commerce payments. They let businesses accept credit and debit card payments without setting up a merchant account through a bank.

Innovative characteristics

- Allows the unbanked access to the digital economy through an interoperable payment platform based on mobile money – a key driver of financial inclusion in Sub-Saharan Africa.[xi]

- Works through agreements with mobile phone operators, allowing companies and consumers to unlock the potential of mobile wallets.

- Offers interoperability of financial services, allowing users to transfer money between different mobile money platforms – a key constraint on the uptake of digital transfers in many African countries.

- Allows users to manage payments through different platforms in an integrated way.

- Incorporates supplementary services and payments, such as subscriptions to public and private services (e.g. insurance and school tuition fees), with potential to digitise payments for many other services.

Results[xii]

- Facilitated more than 8 billion transactions to date, including 950 million CFA (€1.45 million) worth of transactions in September 2019.

- Signed agreements with major payments companies, including Visa, Mastercard, Orange Money, MTN Mobile Money, M-Pesa and Wari.

- Reached 2,500 users in four countries – three of which are members of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (who use the West African Franc), promoting regional economic integration and trade. The platform plans to expand to Guinea, the DR Congo, Burkina Faso and Togo by the end of 2019. CinetPay has established local teams in all eight countries (existing and targeted markets).

Implementation challenges

- Neither of the main sub-regional regulators of the two West and Central African economic and monetary unions have introduced specific regulations for e-payments platforms, leading to regulatory uncertainty. CinetPay conforms to existing regulatory requirements on payment institutions from French and West and Central African regulators on due diligence and anti-money laundering but the absence of clear regulation makes it harder to find investors.

xi   As reported by *World Bank Global Findex 2017* on Financial Inclusion, mobile money drove financial inclusion in sub-Saharan Africa; https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2018/04/19/financial-inclusion-on-the-rise-but-gaps-remain-global-findex-database-shows

xii   Information provided by CinetPay.

- Limited number of daily operations and transaction amounts (on a daily and weekly basis) that CinetPay can process due to anti-money laundering regulations. This prevents scaling up.

- High transaction costs applied to electronic operations, in part due to the presence of bank intermediaries behind the digital payment systems, discouraging users. Given the large market potential (in West Africa alone, 95% of transactions are in cash),[34] action by regulators and more time are needed to encourage people to switch to digital payments.

- Reliance on external trends of uptake in mobile payments. CinetPay's model relies on this trend increasing rapidly in Africa,[xiii][35] as only 12% of adults in Sub-Saharan Africa currently have a mobile money account; and only 45% of them *only* have a mobile money account.[36] The extent to which CinetPay and similar platforms can rapidly scale up depends on how rapidly these numbers continue to increase, especially if inter-regional mobile transfers are the target.

Replicability

- Requires managerial and technical skills to develop the platform.

- Needs customers to have some level of internet access and literacy, which can be an impediment in many partner countries – particularly in rural areas.

- Limited by national and international regulations, which can constrain the potential of digital payments (costs, rules on the amount and frequency of transactions).

Further information

Donor: started with private funds and a small grant from the Tony Elumelu Foundation[xiv]

Implementing agency: CinetPay

Budget: €65,000 in start-up funding

Web link: https://cinetpay.com

xiii   A third of mobile users, 250 million, have a smartphone in sub-Saharan Africa according to GSMA, *The Mobile Economy Sub-Saharan Africa 2017*.
xiv   https://www.tonyelumelufoundation.org/

Options to enhance diaspora engagement

✓ **Enable easier and cheaper remittance transfers[xv]:** governments can adopt policies that **promote financial inclusion and the uptake of technology-driven platforms** to increase competition and bring costs down.

Remittances in the Rabat Process regions

Transfers are made through formal and informal channels, ranging from sending cash to using Money Transfer Operators, banks and mobile phones.

Among the factors that cause high remittances costs are a lack of transparency of costs, a lack of competition, and the prevalence of informal transfers.

Many remittances receivers, particularly in West and Central Africa, are now more likely to have mobile phones than bank accounts (according to the World Bank, mobile money drove financial inclusion: the share of adults with a bank account remained flat, while the share with a mobile money account almost doubled).[37] Globally, women are even less likely to have a bank account.[38]

Mobile money transfers are 50% cheaper[39] and two-thirds of the world's unbanked population have access to a mobile phone.[40]

Mobile-to-mobile cross-border transactions is another emerging trend which can be more accessible, faster and cheaper than bank-to-bank or cash-to-cash services.

Financial technology ("fintech") represents a regulatory challenge but a massive opportunity.

● **Enhancing transparency and competition:** in addition to **supporting online databases that compare transfer costs (see box), exclusivity agreements, such as those between postal services and Money Transfer Operators, can be reviewed** to enable different stakeholders (banks, telecommunications operators, post offices and Money Transfer Operators) to work together. Exclusivity agreements have particularly limited the development of remittance agent networks in Central Africa.

xv   Further analysis of remittance-related instruments can be found in the Background Paper prepared for the 2019 Rabat Process Technical Workshop on Diaspora Remittances and Sustainable Development.

Example

The Malian government's **removal of exclusivity clauses** in 2012 led to a visible increase in the number of Money Transfer Operators in the market and of partnerships with banks.[41]

- **Facilitating technological solutions:** while fintech start-ups have significantly disrupted transfer markets in Europe, other Rabat Process regions still see financial sectors dominated by banks, with high market-entry barriers. To support new tech-driven entrants, governments can **review regulatory frameworks to ensure risk-proportionate approaches to financial licencing and Know Your Client (KYC) requirements,**[xvi] while addressing barriers to the inter-operability of money transfer platforms (i.e. make it easier to send money from one platform or account to another).

National remittance databases

France: www.envoidargent.org
Germany: www.geldtransfair.de
Italy: www.mandasoldiacasa.it
Norway: www.sendepenger.no
UK: https://www.fxcompared.com/

When considering the regulatory implications of technological innovations like blockchain and mobile transfers, regulators can issue new entrants with "letters of no objection" – a way to enable innovation, while giving regulators space to consider regulations for new market segments. It is essential that partner governments work collaboratively with market operators to develop risk-proportionate safeguards.[42] In addition, liberalising Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD) codes (the codes which enable mobile phone users to communicate with their mobile network operators' computers), typically restricted to the operators themselves, could enable other remittances service providers to leverage the power of mobile devices to roll out their service offerings.

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xvi "Know Your Customer" (KYC) refers to government regulations that mandate the collection of client information designed to prevent money laundering, financing terrorism and other crimes involving money. The Financial Action Task Force recommends that, "where the risks of money laundering or terrorist financing are lower (e.g. with low value transactions), financial institutions could be allowed to conduct simplified consumer due diligence measures, which should consider the nature of the lower risk."

Expert voices

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As more fintech solutions come to market, growth of digital remittances is expected to continue across the Rabat Process regions. In partner countries like Senegal, which has a well-established agent networks and strong international remittance flows, digital remittances can advance more quickly. Elsewhere, trust needs to be built through awareness-raising, especially in rural areas with low financial and digital inclusion and literacy. Governments and providers also need to better enforce consumer protection, promote transparency and establish clearer rules for remittances.

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Making Finance Work For Africa on the growth of digital remittances.

Examples

In the West African Economic and Monetary Union, a new **inter-operability initiative with the central bank** will see Mobile Network Operators and eventually microfinance institutions and fintech platforms become part of the payment ecosystem. This could bring down prices and increase the offering of digital financial services that suit the specific needs of senders and receivers. Partner countries in Central Africa could consider how the initiative might be replicated for the Central African Economic and Monetary Union.

Cinetpay is a Côte d'Ivoire-based platform that allows **transfers between different accounts of different platforms** – for example between Airtel Money and a bank account – helping to address the lack of interoperability between transfer platforms in West Africa. This platform could be replicated to other transnational currency zones, such as in Central Africa.

Bitpesa, which operates in DR Congo, Ghana, Morocco and Nigeria, uses **blockchain technology**[xvii] to transfer money more directly, cheaply and quickly by reducing the number of intermediaries. Platforms like these typically target the financially literate and banked senders and receivers.

xvii   "Blockchain" refers to a system in which a record of transactions made in bitcoin or another cryptocurrency is maintained across linked computers.

In Cameroon, **MTN's app allows mobile transfers** of up to €762.25 to 25 African countries at a 1.3%-5% transaction cost.[43] MTN and Orange Money, through Mowali, are providing a similar service, while MFS Africa that and WorldRemit have launched a partnership to enable mobile-to-mobile cross-border transfers in five African countries, including Niger and Guinea. For many users, remittance transfers are often the entry point for digital financial services. Therefore, **platforms which link to other digital financial services** can create the conditions that bring down remittance costs and build truly interoperable digital ecosystems.

The Tanzanian government adopted an anti-money laundering/financial terrorism regime which **allowed customers to use different identity documents to open mobile money accounts** (only 25% have identity cards),[xviii] which boosted mobile money transfers.[44] Such a regulatory change could be replicated to help bank the many unbanked senders and receivers in West and Central Africa.

Regulators in both Kenya and Tanzania issued **letters of no objections** to foster partnerships between mobile network operators and banks, boosting competition and mobile remittance transfers.[45]

✓ **Incentivise diaspora entrepreneurship and investment:**[xix] while most remittances are used for daily consumption,[46] opportunities remain to better **channel remittances and unlock the potential of diaspora savings** (mostly held in bank deposits) – estimated to be worth approximately $497 billion per year.[47] **Diasporas need information, adapted products and a supportive regulatory environment** in order to invest in origin communities.

- **Channelling diaspora savings:** much of the role of governments is to **provide information** on opportunities and available support (like Côte d'Ivoire's Official Portal) and to **make it easier to do business** (with room for improvement in all Rabat Process regions (see Box)).[xx] Governments can also **directly raise funds by issuing diaspora bonds (see initiative 1)** and by **removing barriers to private sector offerings of diaspora-focused financial products** (e.g. harmonising bankruptcy legislation to enable diasporas to use their overseas assets as financing collateral).

> ## Doing business ranking ranges
>
> **Europe:** 3 (Denmark) - 84 (Malta)
> **North Africa:** 60 (Morocco) - 186 (Libya)
> **West Africa:** 114 (Ghana) - 175 (Guinea-Bissau)
> **Central Africa:** 166 (Cameroon) - 184 (DR Congo)

xviii Including voter registration cards, pension cards, employee cards, or a letter from a village head.

xix Further analysis of diaspora investment-related instruments can be found in the Background Paper prepared for the 2019 Rabat Process Technical Workshop on Diaspora Remittances and Sustainable Development.

xx In the Ease of Doing Business rankings, countries are ranked in ascending order from number 1 (most business-friendly environment) to 190 (least business friendly). World Bank. (2019). *Rankings*. [online] Available at: https://www.doingbusiness. org/en/rankings [Accessed 19 Dec. 2019].

● **Enabling the development of diaspora-focused financial products and investment platforms: crowdfunding[xxi]** is emerging across the Rabat Process regions.[xxii] These platforms can funnel diaspora funds towards investments and philanthropy. **Crowdfunding-friendly regulatory frameworks, capacity-building for those seeking to crowdfund**, and **confidence-building among those providing funds** are required to unlock the potential.

Crowdfunding regulation has been developed in the UK and France but is barely nascent in other Rabat Process regions. Platforms have had to work with regulators both in their home countries and where they wish to operate, which is expensive and stifles development.[49]

Diaspora bonds – lessons learned

What are they? Bonds issued to raise funds from diasporas – sometimes at a lower interest rate (the "patriotic discount") than sovereign bonds – to be invested in communities of origin.

Which governments have issued them? Nigeria (see initiative 1) in 2017, Ghana in 2007 and Greece in 2011. Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire are preparing bond issues. Beyond the Rabat Process regions, diaspora bonds have been issued by Ethiopia, India and Israel, among others. Rwanda plans to issue a diaspora bond to finance affordable housing in Kigali.

What are the lessons learned for governments?

● Don't overestimate the "patriotic discount".
● Build trust with the diaspora and mobilise partners through consultations and roadshows in key countries of destination.
● Bonds work better for countries with sizable first-generation diasporas in middle to high-income countries.
● Make bonds accessible to a wide range of diasporas (e.g. low minimum purchase requirements).
● Denominate bonds in international currencies to increase confidence.
● Set aside resources to obtain regulatory registration in key diaspora markets.
● Link bonds to concrete development projects (e.g. financing infrastructure).

xxi   Crowdfunding is the practice of raising money from groups, typically through an online or mobile platform. It is generally classified in four distinct models: donations-, rewards-, lending-, and equity-based. FSD Africa (2019). *East Africa Crowdfunding Landscape Study*. [online] Nairobi: FSD Africa. Available at: https://www.fsdafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/16-11-07-Crowdfunding_Report-final-1-compressed.pdf [Accessed 19 Dec. 2019].
xxii   These are online platforms that crowd often small amounts of money to finance lending or equity investments or philanthropy.

In addition, **regulatory frameworks can support the development of other instruments that enable diaspora investments**, such as remittances-backed credit and diaspora-targeted mutual funds and savings accounts. Allowing the diaspora to open domestic bank accounts can be particularly critical in promoting investment. Partner countries may need to **facilitate agreements with financial institutions** present in both their country and key countries of destination, while **addressing regulatory barriers to offering transnational products**.

Finnovation in Africa – a gamechanger?

Africa has shown great potential to "leapfrog" technology – rapidly adopting mobile phones to bypass landline telephony. This approach could be extended to reach the many "unbanked" Africans and facilitate transfers, with many financial innovations ("finnovations") integrating crowdfunding, mobile payments, microcredit, and blockchain technology.

In any move to promote diaspora-focused investment platforms, it is essential that partner governments **develop a deep understanding of the different segments of their diaspora who are likely to invest, tailoring strategies to reach them**. For instance, it is often a small proportion of high net worth diaspora individuals who catalyse large volumes of investment. In this context, partner governments may need to **support non-state actors to develop platforms**, as private initiatives may be better placed to formulate separate brand identities that customers buy into, and to effectively identify and reach certain diaspora profiles. Moreover, diasporas often serve as conduits between countries of origin and destination, making them a potential initial target audience for banks seeking to expand into destination countries.[50]

Expert voices

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One of the biggest impediments to mobilising global diaspora capital are country of destination regulations preventing ordinary diaspora citizens from investing back home. To counteract this, country of origin governments and banks could make it easier for diaspora to open domestic bank accounts. In doing so, they can facilitate the flow of capital which can support development finance and domestic capital markets, as well as financing housing and small and medium-sized enterprises. Anti-money laundering and terrorism financing (AML/KYC) concerns that might limit this initiative are often overblown, particularly considering advances in technology which can assist global regulators weed out bad actors from the vast majority of diaspora citizens interested in keeping a lifeline with the country from which they hail.

"

Homestrings, a global diaspora engagement consulting firm.

Finally, diplomatic staff play key roles in interfacing with diaspora members seeking to invest. **Embassies in key destination countries hence need to be staffed with personnel who understand diaspora** needs and behaviours, which further underlines both the high-level need to make diaspora engagement front and centre of foreign policy (see "Developing policy frameworks for action"), in addition to ensuring at the operational level that personnel terms of reference provide a clear remit, along with training, on diaspora engagement.

Examples

The UK has facilitated **crowdfunding through a hands-off regulatory approach**, allowing early-stage industry development before introducing tailored regulation in 2014 following consultation.[51] Regulators from less developed markets may need to focus on learning how the industry works and considering basic consumer protections in the meantime.

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency provided **investment protection to lenders** using the platform Lendahand,[52] which can serve as an example of how other partner governments can engage development partners to provide guarantees for investors to build confidence.

The International Fund for Agricultural Development **integrated crowdfunding into a rural development initiative**, by engaging Babyloan to crowdfund investment from Malian diasporas for youth-led agricultural activities in Mali (see initiative 2).

Some Portuguese banks offer their France-based diaspora clients **access to mortgages at favourable rates**,[53] taking into account remittance transfers as a form of guarantee or as part of the applicant's creditworthiness profiling.

The Ethiopia Diaspora Trust Fund is a non-profit organisation which **channels diaspora funds towards people-focused development projects**. The Fund's call to action was simple: donate $1 a day to restore your "home country". Ethiopians worldwide responded and provided almost $5 million within 10 months.[54] The Fund's status as a non-profit social-impact organisation is perhaps one way that it has been able to develop a unique "identity" – separate from government – that stakeholders can buy into. Its strong governance structure, which includes an advisory council composed of prominent overseas Ethiopians, is an additional factor which has made the Fund more likely to succeed.

Tools
Crowdfunding in East Africa: Regulation and Policy for Market Development[xxiii].
Toolkit for Understanding Diaspora Investment.[xxiv]

✓ **Supporting and incentivising entrepreneurship:** a variety of mechanisms can be used by government and the private sector to attract diaspora investments and returning entrepreneurs, including:

- **Supporting diaspora investor networks and targeted investment funds;**

- **Incentivising diaspora entrepreneurship, investment and philanthropy**, such as through tax breaks;

xxiii FSD Africa (2019). *East Africa Crowdfunding Landscape Study.* [online] Nairobi: FSD Africa. Available at: https://www.fsdafrica. org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/16-11-07-Crowdfunding_Report-final-1-compressed.pdf

xxiv According to Making Finance Work For Africa, the Diaspora Investment Toolkit is designed for African governments to assess the viability of the diaspora investing financially back home and to determine the best approach for attracting this investment. The Toolkit provides a systematic guide for governments to work through, where the findings and recommendations will form the basis for robust diaspora investment strategies and shed light on what development finance institutions, multilateral and bilateral agencies can do to support them. Available at: https://www.mfw4a.org/publication/toolkit-understanding-diaspora-investment

- Setting up **one-stop shops (*guichets uniques*) to help diaspora investors and entrepreneurs** navigate the regulatory environment, harnessing the power of the internet and leveraging e-government services to reach newer audiences.

Monitoring diasporas' economic activities is challenging, with often no differentiation of diaspora investments from foreign investment. **Adopting statistical nomenclature that specifically identifies diaspora-owned enterprises and investments** could allow better tracking.

Examples

The Portuguese and Irish governments have developed **programmes to support returning diaspora entrepreneurs**. Portugal's Programa Regressar (see initiative 6) offers tax breaks and financial support for returning emigrants and their families, with dedicated contact points who guide them through the process. Ireland's Back for Business initiative, part of the Emigrant Support Programme (see initiative 9), offers six months of peer-to-peer support to returnees.

Denmark's Copenhagen Goodwill Ambassadors programme (see initiative 10), which initially started as a private initiative before being later adopted by the government, **activates a network of business leaders and other prominent diaspora Danes to promote Denmark** and Copenhagen globally, while providing advice to the government on competitiveness and other economic and branding issues.

A range of initiatives provide **financial and technical support to diaspora entrepreneurs** wishing to return to start a business, including the EU-funded (and ICMPD-supported) DiafrikInvest and MEETAfrica (see initiative 3). These can work in all partner regions and require actively-engaged focal points in key administrative support services in countries to return, as well as private sector advisers with an in-depth market understanding of needs in countries of origin to ensure sustainable impact.

While many Rabat Process partners, such as Tunisia, have already established **offline one-stop shops** for diasporas, the Filipino government has gone one step further by setting up BaLinkBayan, an online one-stop shop for Filipinos abroad, with business support and integrated e-government services. Moves towards online one-stop shops should consider the costs of not only creating a website but also hosting and maintaining it in years to come. They should also dovetail with the development of e-government services – diasporas, by definition, reside abroad and require online services.

SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

What's at stake?

- Diasporas facilitate the **exchange of ideas, skills and behaviours** between their communities of origin and destination.

- Communities of origin can engage their diasporas through initiatives that target temporary, permanent, or virtual return.

- **Transfers of skills can add to human capital** ("brain gain" or "brain circulation"), which can offset negative effects of emigration on societies left behind ("brain drain").

- Diaspora networks can **foster research collaborations** and **intellectual and technology transfers**.

- **Allowing migrants to withdraw social protection benefits** in their country of origin makes circular and regular forms of migration more attractive and can enhance the developmental benefits.[55]

- Some partner countries – including Algeria and France, Morocco and Spain, Côte d'Ivoire and Mali, and Cameroon and France – have concluded agreements on their nationals' social protection rights in destination countries.[xxv] Yet benefits in many partner countries are not portable or are limited based on nationality.[56]

- **Diasporas play vital roles during and after humanitarian crises**, providing lifelines to hard-to-reach populations in communities of origin – often more sustainable than short-term institutional humanitarian assistance – while contributing to dialogue between groups involved in conflict.

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xxv   A review of countries which have legal provisions granting equality of treatment between nationals and non-nationals can be found here: van Panhuys, C., Kazi-Aoul, S. and Binette, G. (2017). *Migrant access to social protection under Bilateral Labour Agreements: A review of 120 countries and nine bilateral arrangements*. ESS – Working Paper. [online] Geneva: International Labour Organization. Available at: https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/RessourcePDF.action?ressource.ressourceId=54405 [Accessed 19 Dec. 2019].

Innovative initiatives for
social development
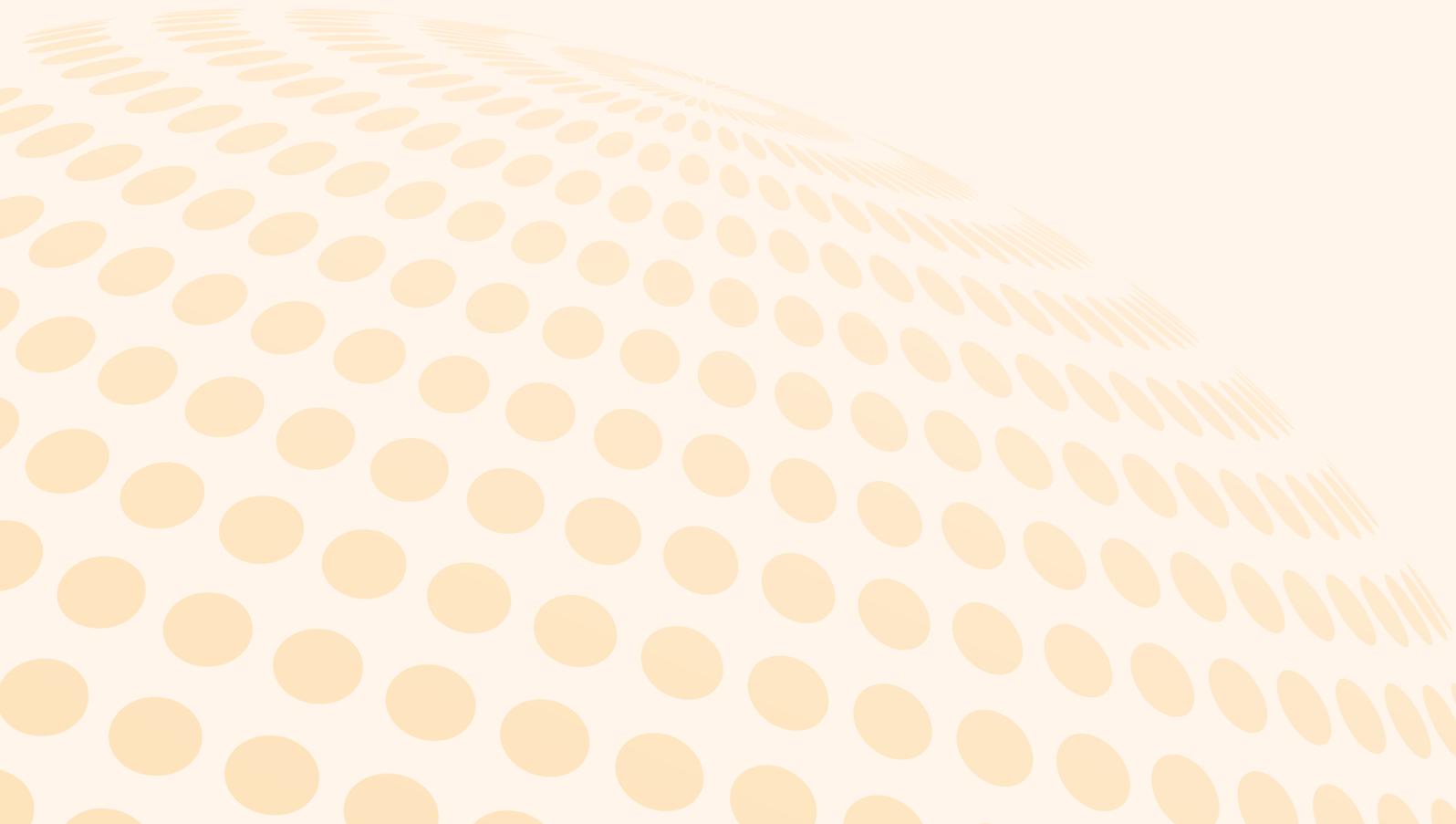
5. SUSU

Diaspora contributions:
Social

Overview

SUSU ("solidarity" in Yoruba) is a digitally-driven healthcare start-up that allows diasporas to subscribe to healthcare for their relatives in countries of origin. It was founded by a Beninese female diaspora entrepreneur after she experienced a personal tragedy directly linked to the lack of access to quality healthcare in her country of origin. SUSU arranges healthcare and health insurance for its beneficiaries in Côte d'Ivoire, working with a network of local partners based in Abidjan.

SUSU's services comprise preventive care, medical care, treatment of chronic illness, and provision of medicines based on the specific needs of diasporas. It provides different packages with different prices and levels of care, with some including emergency care and insurance. Following a successful pilot phase in France and Côte d'Ivoire, SUSU is in the process of raising funds to finance its rollout in several other African countries.

France

Côte d'Ivoire

● Country of origin
● Country of destination
◉ Lead agency

Objectives

➤ Offer members of the African diaspora an efficient way to channel their funds directly to providing healthcare to families back home.

➤ Allow members of the diaspora to track the health status of families "back home" more directly via a digital platform.

➤ Offer packages that are tailored to the subscription preferences of diaspora clients and the healthcare needs of their families.

Innovative characteristics

- Packages tailored specifically to the subscription needs of African diaspora clients: diaspora living overseas can subscribe monthly in euros to fund healthcare for their families based in Africa, and monitor their status digitally, from distance.

- Considering health as a key element of sustainable development, SUSU works with a network of healthcare providers that meet high quality standards.

- SUSU's users can access a digital platform through a mobile device or computer, which enables diaspora users to follow their family members' healthcare journey, such as through a medical calendar containing scheduled appointments. Users can also manage subscriptions and payments digitally, and SUSU's mobile app can also be connected to medical devices like blood pressure monitors.

- While medicines are not part of SUSU's packages, diaspora clients can arrange pre-payment so that beneficiaries (their family members) can pick them up from partner drugstores in Abidjan, helping to address issues of diaspora informally sending medicine back home to their families.

- Takes a holistic approach to healthcare, with prevention at the core of SUSU's packages.

Results[xxvi]

- After the pilot project (3 months), the number of subscriptions doubled in two months. Within only two months of operation, more than 500 beneficiaries from Abidjan were covered.

- Won the Sanofi challenge in May 2019 in Paris as the most innovative solution to diabetes.[57]

- Established an extensive network of medical professionals in Côte d'Ivoire, including around 800 doctors.

- Established partnerships with a major international insurance provider, integrating health insurance as part of some packages.

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xxvi   Information provided by SUSU.

Implementation challenges[xxvii]

- Operating in more than one country multiplies regulatory compliance and administrative requirements. For example, it took the company four months to open a bank account in Côte d'Ivoire. As such, SUSU is developing close contacts with local regulators and constantly updating its operations in order to keep up to date and to comply with regulatory changes in Europe and West Africa.

- Building trust with clients and beneficiaries in relation to health data protection management – both in Europe and West Africa. This is particularly challenging for the West African healthcare sector due to misinformation and scams. As a result, SUSU has carefully cultivated its brand, communicating its achievements (client testimonies) and strong network of health professionals to build trust. It also uses social media to engage with its stakeholders.

- Lack of actuarial data, which makes it difficult for insurers in West Africa to measure risk, meaning insurance is often overpriced. Since insurance is part of some of SUSU's packages, it can make it difficult to keep costs low.[58] SUSU is trying to fill the gap by collecting data to share with insurance companies and other health stakeholders, so they can more accurately calculate risk and provide more services adapted to beneficiaries' healthcare needs and risk profiles.

Replicability

INTERMEDIATE

- Requires enabling regulatory frameworks in countries of implementation.

- Involves dealing with regulatory requirements in more than one country, which increases the complexity.

- Requires teams in diaspora countries of origin and destination – one responsible for sales and diaspora outreach (destination) and another responsible for arranging the healthcare packages and developing a network of healthcare providers (origin).

- Represents a relatively simple business model that effectively enables the diaspora to better channel their funds back home and enhance healthcare for their families.

Further information

Donors: BpiFrance (start-up funding)

Implementing agency: SUSU

Budget: €200,000 in start-up funding to establish operations in France and Côte d'Ivoire

Web link: www.susu.fr

xxvii Information provided by SUSU.

6. PROGRAMA REGRESSAR

Providing a comprehensive package of welcome-home support for returning Portuguese nationals

Diaspora contributions:
Social, economic

Overview

Programa Regressar ("Return Programme") is the Portuguese government's new initiative to support the return of emigrants to Portugal in order to invest, set up a new business, or work. The programme brings together different government services to provide concrete measures to support returnees.

The programme's key support components are: a more favourable tax regime (50% reduction in taxes for five years to those who have lived abroad for at least three years),[59] financial support for emigrants and their families, and a credit line to support their business investment and start-ups back in Portugal. The "Emigrant Return to Portugal" financial support mechanism also helps ease returning diaspora members back into employment in Portugal.

Portugal

● Country of origin
◉ Lead agency
➡ Initiative targeting the global Portuguese diaspora
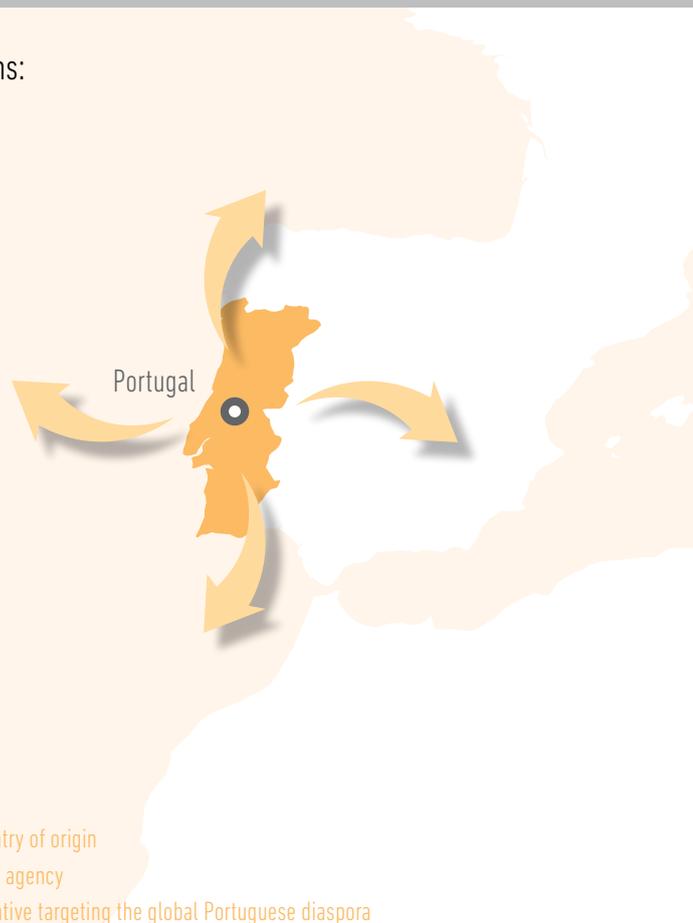
Objectives

➡ Increase and facilitate diaspora return to and investment in Portugal.

➡ Attract overseas diaspora talent to Portugal's labour market to address labour shortages.

➡ Help address Portugal's demographic challenge of a shrinking population.[60]

Innovative characteristics

- Hybrid approach that combines financial incentives with traditional employment-matching (through the Institute of Employment and Vocational Training) and business support services.

- Phased roll-out of financial support to ensure sustainability of returnee employment.

- Combines digital talent-matching with traditional frontline employment services (e.g. advisory services and training).

- Adopts an inclusive approach based on a non-discriminatory tone. For example, it actively promotes return of lower skilled diaspora members – not only the highly skilled or high net worth. It also accommodates diaspora families, with level of financial support based on size of the returnee's household.

- Takes a holistic approach to addressing a range of challenges faced by returning emigrants, including the reimbursement of expenses for travel and goods transport to Portugal, as well as possible expenses associated with the recognition of their qualifications.

- Puts in place dedicated programme contact points to guide diaspora participants through the return process.

Results

- More than 150,000 companies currently using the online employment portal for returning emigrants to advertise job vacancies, with close to 19,000 vacancies currently open. [61]

- After the first month of launching, around 1,700 people from 72 different countries had registered on the government's website for returning emigrants.[62]

- Requests for information received by Portuguese consulates, with the highest number of requests coming from Macao, the UK, Switzerland, and Belgium. [63]

Implementation challenges

- Raising awareness of the programme among beneficiaries and key stakeholders. There is therefore a need to embed a strong marketing campaign into such initiatives, requiring a media strategy that carefully analyses how diaspora communities can be reached.

- Ensuring inter-institutional collaboration. It is vital to clearly define roles and responsibilities for departments involved, as well as a coordination mechanism.

- Ensuring diaspora participants can navigate the procedural processes of the programme. As such, dedicated contact points provide guidance directly to participants. Embassies and consulates can also be key interfaces with intended users.

- Insufficient financial incentives were considered one reason why only 71 people took up the offer in the first two months following its launch.[64] In response, the government removed the obligation to apply within 60 to 90 days of starting work back in Portugal and reduced applicants' documentation requirements. [65]

Replicability

- Entails financial and legislative reform requirements to implement the returnee incentivisation mode, making it more time-consuming and complex to replicate.

- Requires initial and regular investment in digital marketing and capacity building to effectively identify and attract diaspora talents.

- Can be piloted through public-private partnerships with philanthropic partners, with the latter providing some of the financial incentives while government focuses on the legislative reform requirements.

Further information

Donor: Government of Portugal

Implementing agency: Institute for Employment and Vocational Training (national employment service)

Budget: €10 million – maximum of €6,536 in financial support per returnee.[xxviii][66]

Implementation dates: 2019-present

Web link: https://www.programaregressar.gov.pt/

xxviii The incentives breakdown provided on the official IEFP online portal, available at
       https://iefponline.iefp.pt/IEFP/medFixacaoEmigrantes.do?action=overview

7. GREEK DIASPORA FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Connecting Greek universities with diaspora scholar

Diaspora contributions:
Social, cultural

Overview

The Greek Diaspora Fellowship Program (GDFP) is an exchange programme that enables Greek universities to host Greek-born or Cypriot-born scholars residing in the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa in the areas of collaborative research,[67] curriculum co-development and/or graduate and undergraduate research mentoring.

The GDFP has a two-ended application process: 1) a *project request* is submitted by a Greek host institution; and 2) a *scholar application* is submitted by a diaspora scholar. The GDFP then matches both parties. Diaspora scholars receive financial and logistical support during the programme, before being kept engaged after their fellowship ends through the alumni network.

Canada

USA

Greece

Cyprus

Australia

New Zealand

South Africa

- Country of origin
- Country of destination
- Lead agency

Objectives

➡ Promote equitable, effective and mutually beneficial international higher education engagements between institutions in Greece and diaspora academics.[xxix]

➡ Support diaspora scholars and higher education institutions to pursue capacity-strengthening education projects for curriculum co-development, collaborative research, and graduate and undergraduate.

➡ Strengthen long-term institutional linkages and innovations to address education transformation and sustainability issues in Greece.

➡ Develop networks of diaspora scholars ("fellows") and host institutions.

➡ Integrate diversity into fellowships and provide access to educational opportunity.

Innovative characteristics

● Co-ownership of fellowship promoted: projects are proposed and implemented as a joint effort from both faculty in Greece and diaspora scholars.

● Sustainability delivered through the development of alumni networks, keeping participants engaged after the end of their fellowships.

● Strong evaluative frameworks in place, with evaluative criteria that promotes a focus on impact for its donors and partners. This includes evaluative research with fellowship participants and institutional partners.

● Advisory Council comprised of thought leaders from USA, Canadian and Greek universities determines strategic visioning and final approval of projects, leveraging intellectual resources of the Greek academic diaspora and reflecting the needs of the Greek higher education community.

● Exemplary governance framework driven by the Advisory Council. The Council ensures the fellowship is guided by market realities, facilitates partnerships for the fellowship, and sustains high-level support.

● Continuous dialogue between the programme, its fellows and host institutions to ensure optimal impact of the fellowships.

● Adds value to individual (diaspora fellows) and institutional beneficiaries (host institutions) simultaneously, responding to interests and needs on both sides, while many traditional initiatives focus on "getting something" from the diaspora.

xxix   Insight adopted from Zehra Mirza. (2017). *2017 Final Evaluation: Greek Diaspora Fellowship Program.* IIE, Washington DC. Available via https://www.iie.org/Research-and-Insights/Publications/Greek-Diaspora-Fellowship-Program. Interviewee from IIE also provided a one-page information/impact overview sheet that informs next sections of the factsheet.

Results[xxx]

- 49 fellowships supported during the two-year pilot (January to December 2017) phase that created collaborative, mutually beneficial engagements between Greece and the academic diaspora. Programme renewed in 2019 to support an additional 75-80 fellows.

- Over half of hosts and fellows engaged in collaborative research, resulting in: 17 conferences, workshops, or seminars; 17 published journal articles; and 4 new reports.

- Hosts and fellows involved in the programme from 2016-2018 continued working together on 25 research projects.

- 81% of fellows engaged in teaching or mentoring of students during their GDFP; 46% of fellows continued to mentor students after their fellowship.

- At least 5 formal or informal linkages formed between host and fellow institutions.

Implementation challenges

- Identifying academic communities/diaspora who are eligible/beneficiaries of the initiative. In response, the project implementers devoted significant resources to the project design phase to scope out potential partners and participants.

- Identifying areas of mutual interest for collaboration for fellows and host institutions. In response, the programme has supported fellowships in a wide range of fields – from traditional social science projects to cutting-edge scientific and technological projects.

- Ensuring sustainability of impact after the end of the fellowships. To overcome this challenge, the programme has nurtured alumni networks. Alumni and diaspora are similar at a conceptual level so there is an opportunity to create micro-diaspora networks of influence as part of any diaspora engagement programme.

xxx   Evaluation Highlights 2016-2018.

BASIC

Replicability

- Developed a proven track record of replicability, with the Institute for International Education also predating this programme with the Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship.

- Engages partners using Information and Communication Technology, so there is a limited need for significant investment in programme infrastructure.

- Can be tailored to the market realities and capacities of different partner countries by replicating the programme's phased roll-out approach (from pilot stage to full implementation).

- Can be adopted by partner countries who are in the process of scaling their engagement beyond internal institution-building, as such forms of human capital exchange programmes are natural "first mover" projects with proven records of impact.

Further information

Donor: Stavros Niarchos Foundation

Implementing agency: Institute for International Education in collaboration with the Fulbright Foundation in Greece

Budget: Pilot: $1.25 million (€1.12 million); Renewal: $1.25 million (€1.12 million)

Implementation dates: 2016-present

Web link: https://www.iie.org/programs/greek-diaspora-fellowship-program

Options to enhance diaspora engagement

✓ **Encourage diasporas to share their skills through temporary, virtual and permanent return:**

- **Promoting temporary return and skills exchange:** in addition to making it easier for diasporas to visit (e.g. through visa exemptions and multiple citizenship legislation), governments can **support programmes that transfer diaspora skills** "back home", through mentoring, internships, consultancies and job placements. Simple low-cost initiatives can utilise video or telephone communication to bring diasporas and communities of origin together. Higher-budget options involve arranging longer-term job placements. It is essential that exchanges are demand driven and identify diaspora members who have the availability (e.g. the recently retired) and possess needed skills. **Competency networks** – which can be organised by sector and locality (especially for countries with specific regions of emigration) – can also be developed to connect certain diaspora profiles with real local needs. Countries with large first-generation diasporas can **utilise consular networks to identify competencies** in collaboration with employment agencies and the private sector. Those looking to engage later-generation diasporas may, on the other hand, need to focus on reaching them through **digital platforms**.

Did you know?

Tunisia has around 300 diaspora professionals specialised in renewable energies –
a key growth sector for the national economy.[68]

Examples

The Global Lithuanian Leaders programme's LT Big Brother initiative sees Lithuanian diaspora professionals ("big siblings") provide **structured mentoring** to students and young Lithuanian professionals ("little siblings") in relation to career planning, business and communication, among other areas. Since 2009, the initiative has attracted more than 2,500 participants.

Morocco (FINCOME), Senegal (SenExpertise), and Nigeria (Global Database of Nigerians in the Diaspora), among other Rabat Process partners, have developed **competency networks**. Experiences with state-

driven networks have been mixed. Often, sufficient (non-donor) funds and organisational capacities are not in place to operationalise such networks, while branding suffers from an over-association with state authorities, with some diasporas reluctant to provide information to government databases. It may be worthwhile for partner governments to consider how they can support other actors seeking to engage diaspora talent or working with actors whose activities imply a cataloguing of diaspora talent (in addition to the other case studies, pan-African diaspora headhunting firm, Homecoming Revolution, is an example).

Club Efficience is a **private diaspora-driven networking** initiative that brings together specific diaspora segments (in this case the educated and highly-skilled "economic diaspora"), along with corporate, institutional and higher education partners. It is a subscription service (packages range from €80-€250 per month) with modern branding (surely a factor that has contributed to their strong and highly active followings on LinkedIn and Facebook), whose subscribers benefit from accessing the members directory and networking events.

GlobalScot is a publicly-financed **network which also targets higher-skilled corporate diasporas**, with a focus on engaging them to support Scottish enterprises abroad. Any Scottish company can register and the network relies on the 600 GlobalScots volunteering their time, as well as support from public business support agencies. While GlobalScots has established a large network of diaspora members, its publicly-owned status is perhaps one reason why it has not been able to unlock the potential of its large database through concrete actions. The independent Scottish Business Network, on the other hand, has accumulated 8,000 members since 2016 through a service-driven paid-subscription model, and is investing in getting to know the Scottish business diaspora.[69]

Benin has demonstrated that diasporas can be engaged to build public sector capacities as well. In 2018, the National Association of Communes of Benin (Association Nationale des Communes du Bénin) signed an agreement with the Association of French Elected Officials of Beninese Origin (Association des élus français d'origine béninoise). The partnership, which saw high-level support from the Beninese presidency, will see **Beninese-origin elected officials from France work with Beninese mayors to strengthen local governance**.

- Promoting the permanent return of diaspora talent: governments can provide **tax breaks, other forms of financial support and reintegration assistance** to make temporary and permanent return an attractive option for diaspora members. Governments can partner with key country of destination governments, as well as private sector and civil society organisations to **link diasporas to sustainable livelihood opportunities**. When supporting return (just as with other diaspora support), partner governments need to **consider the potential opposition** by those residing in the country. One way to do this is to ensure parallel programmes exist that help residents. Croatia found that tensions between local and diaspora scientists are limited if parallel programmes exist that help local scientists compete for funding.[70]

Example

Croatia's pilot Registry of Croatian Entities Abroad has experimented with a more **interactive database and networking tool**, which allows users to search and contact diaspora companies and individuals based on location, sector or interest. Users can sign up instantly using Facebook login – the low participation threshold likely one reason why many users have joined. Such platforms could be replicated in smaller partner countries with more scattered diaspora communities – a process which could also be a stepping stone to better structuring diaspora representative organisations, while facilitating networking and identification of diaspora talent.

✓ **Make social security accessible and portable[71]:** governments can allow migrants (regardless of migratory status) to **access social security systems and to later transfer their contributions** back to their country of origin or to another country of destination. This could not only reduce migrants' overall precarity, but also stabilise remittance transfers and provide greater opportunity for diaspora return, particularly upon retirement. **Legislative changes can remove barriers that migrants often face in contributing to, transferring between, and accessing social security systems**. Governments may also need to **raise awareness among migrants about eligibility for protection**. In addition, partner countries can **conclude bilateral or multilateral framework agreements**, allowing migrants' social security contributions in different countries to be added together to ensure contributions are not lost when moving countries. While several **intra-regional portability schemes** within the Rabat Process have already been developed,[xxxi] implementation of agreements is patchy. For example, while Moroccan migrant workers can accrue portable social protection and retirement benefits in Spain, employers have not always provided them with the right documentation.[72]

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xxxi In particular, the 1991 Arab Maghreb Union Social Security Convention, the 2004 EU Regulation on the coordination of social security systems, the 2014 EU Directive on minimum requirements for enhancing worker mobility between Member States by improving the acquisition and preservation of supplementary pension rights, and the 2013 ECOWAS General Convention on Social Security.

Expert voices

"

"Social protection, migration and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Non-portability can reduce migrants' incentives to contribute to social security systems, and can increase incentives to work in the informal economy, with negative effects for host countries and migrants themselves. It can also reduce the incentives for regular, circular and return migration, which potentially deprives countries of origin of the beneficial development effects of migration."

"

Overseas Development Institute.

Key portability challenges[73]

- **Totalisation:** migrants' social security contributions in different countries are not added together, making it difficult to obtain a full pension.

- **Limited exportability:** some countries restrict the proportion of pensions (or outright ban portability) that migrants can take back to certain countries.

- **Partial portability:** some benefits are not covered under portability clauses, including healthcare entitlements and many tax-funded benefits, which particularly affects retired migrants.

Examples

In Morocco, the 11 Migrant Welcome and Orientation Offices (Bureaux d'Accueil et d'Orientation des Migrants) located in local municipalities **help diasporas (particularly prospective retirees) access social security entitlements**, while also providing **investment assistance**.[74]

Initiatives like SUSU (see initiative 5), Diaspo Assur and SOLIDARCO have emerged in recent years, which allow **diasporas to subscribe to healthcare packages** for their families "back home". They both represent ways to more efficiently channel funds towards specific social needs, as such platforms take payment in countries of destination in exchange for providing services in countries of origin. While insurance products generally come with stringent regulatory approval procedures, initiatives like these operate as subscription-based service providers, which could make them easier to replicate.

✓ **Promote intellectual networks and educational exchanges:** governments can work with diaspora representatives and civil society to **promote collaboration between diaspora and home academics and researchers**. This can take the form of support for diasporas to study, conduct research or take up academic posts in countries of origin; initiatives to strengthen **diaspora-focused intellectual networks**, such as overseas alumni groups; and prizes and competitions that encourage collaborations between home and diaspora students and researchers. Consulting academic institutions to gauge real need and building alumni networking into initiatives to keep participants engaged in the long term are success factors. Supporting academic networks can also contribute to identifying diaspora talent who can later contribute through skills exchange, entrepreneurship and investment. Initiatives have been developed in Europe and North Africa, with opportunities for other African partner governments in particular to work with European partners to engage the many African students that study in Europe.

Examples

The Greek Diaspora Fellowship Program (see initiative 7) supports Greek universities to **host diaspora scholars** in the areas of collaborative research, curriculum co-development and student mentoring and teaching. It has funded 49 fellowships over two selection cycles, building on the experience of the Carnegie African Diaspora Program.

The Austrian Scientists and Scholars in North America (ASciNA) is an **independent network of Austrian scientists and scholars,** with 13 local chapters in North America and alumni chapters in Europe. Its main activities are the ASciNA Award and the Mentoring Program, which connects early-career and accomplished ASciNA members. Partner countries can draw inspiration from the ways that ASciNA specifically identifies promising diaspora talent, creates value for members, and collaborates with the Austrian government.

The Algerian Engineering Competition, which brings together innovators and tech workers to solve problems, is an example of a **domestic initiative which has opened itself to its overseas students**, which can be a simple way to adapt existing initiatives that target resident citizens.

Help diasporas engage in humanitarianism: diasporas provide assistance to crisis-hit origin communities to alleviate suffering and accelerate recovery. Many do this through websites, online donation platforms, SMS donations, volunteerism, translations, and in-kind donations.[75] Diaspora media outlets and social media platforms mobilise community efforts in times of crisis. [76] Diaspora communities view traditional aid organisations in different ways. On the one hand, diasporas have been found to have a more natural affinity with their overarching goals. On the other, they do not easily find trusted interlocutors among mainstream actors, which is one reason why **diasporas often prefer to act through smaller-scale independent initiatives** (enabled by the rise of crowdfunding and other peer-to-peer financing platforms).[77] Partner countries can **magnify and better channel diaspora contributions during and after crises** through the following actions:

Origin countries experiencing crisis	Destination countries providing humanitarian support
• Develop crisis-related policy and operational frameworks that facilitate diaspora contributions.	• Ask diaspora organisations to advise on humanitarian response in their origin countries.
• Involve diaspora representatives in crisis and post-crisis recovery and reconciliation consultative mechanisms.	• Support platforms and depoliticised spaces, including umbrella networks, for dialogue on humanitarian issues among diaspora groups.
• Support diaspora return and knowledge transfer in post-crisis recovery contexts.	• Develop frameworks to enhance coordination between diaspora groups and humanitarian organisations.
• Use matching grants and customs waivers to facilitate financial and in-kind support.	• Initiate co-creation requests for proposals that encourage diaspora and traditional actors to generate joint project ideas.
• Provide work permits and flexible re-entry arrangements for diasporas providing assistance.	• Provide non-conditional funding opportunities that enable diaspora organisations to explore new approaches, mandating only specific humanitarian standards.
• Work with financial institutions to minimise obstacles associated with transferring funds from diasporas to crisis-affected populations.	• Utilise diaspora networks of trust to facilitate responders' access to hard-to-reach groups, such as displaced populations.
• Facilitate the role of celebrity diaspora in raising awareness.	• Build diasporas' peacebuilding capacities.
	• Embed diaspora return initiatives into crisis recovery support.

Challenges

- Diasporas have different political, religious, economic, ethnic and social backgrounds. These factors can impact how they collaborate and provide assistance. Core humanitarian principles like impartiality need to be maintained.

- There are often barriers to communication between humanitarian and diaspora organisations, particularly due to the operational divide between new and traditional humanitarian actors.[78]

- Some governments may be apprehensive of diaspora engagement as they may be unsure of their motives and ensuing implications.

- Moves to "institutionalise" diaspora groups can expose them to the same access and bureaucracy hindrances as traditional humanitarian actors.

- Peacebuilding is a highly political project and may be one that many diaspora members cannot or do not wish to engage in openly. It also often brings out internal divisions within the diaspora.

Case studies

- The Danish Refugee Council's Diaspora Programme supports the role of diasporas as agents of humanitarian assistance. It supports diaspora-led relief and recovery, strengthens diaspora humanitarian response capacities and coordination, and supports networking and knowledge-sharing.

- In Syria, large-scale diaspora organisations were incorporated into coordination meetings to share information on their beneficiaries and approaches to delivering assistance.[79] Such an approach could be replicated in other partner countries, although the diversity of diaspora backgrounds and sensitivities must be understood by meeting participants.

- Caawi Walaal came from the Somali-language hashtag, "Help a brother or sister". After the hashtag trended, volunteers turned it into a brand to sponsor Somali families. The organisation also coordinated the Mogadishu Victim Fund, using mobile money transfers and crowdfunding to channel diaspora funds towards need. The initiative combines informality with a technology-based platform that enables flexible and rapid response.[80]

- Homs League Abroad, a Germany-based non-profit Syrian diaspora organisation, has a membership of former Homs residents spread across 24 countries. The organisation relies mostly on private donations and supports 700 widows and orphans displaced to Syria's neighbouring countries where they receive psychosocial support and shelter.[81]

Further reading

Creating opportunities to work with diasporas in humanitarian settings, DEMAC, Samuel Hall, 2018.

CULTURAL
DEVELOPMENT

What's at stake?

- **Diasporas can project their nation of origin's image overseas**, while at the same time contributing to the diversity of their communities of residence.

- Diasporas, particularly later generations, may **maintain cultural or emotional ties with their countries of heritage**, which can be nurtured and activated to facilitate more concrete engagement.

- Fostering cultural exchanges between diasporas and communities of origin can **reinforce the emotional connections** and contribute to **building trust**.

- The internet has influenced diasporic identities by creating spaces in which they can be expressed, explored and strengthened. Identities will likely continue to be affected by the emergence of hyper-connectivity (people continuously connected to others online) and social media.[82]

- Diasporas are viewed differently by residents "back home", with some considering them affectionately as compatriots and integral to the nation, while others viewing them as outsiders.

- Diasporas have the potential to be **cultural ambassadors of their countries of origin**, contributing to national branding and cultural diplomacy.

- Fostering the cultural ties between diasporas and their countries of origin can translate into **increased tourism revenues**, particularly through increases in heritage tourism.

Innovative initiatives for cultural development
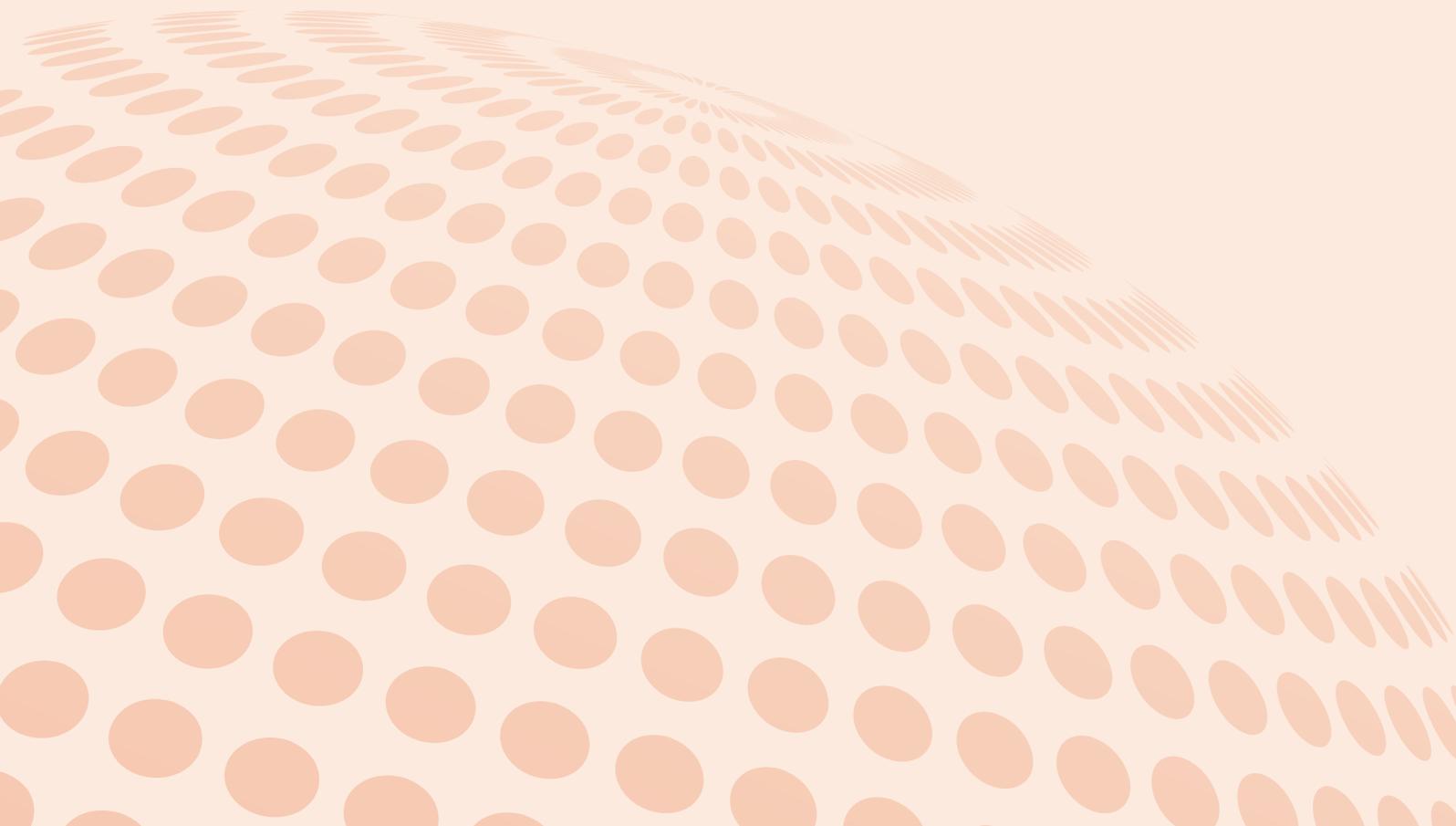
8. GHANA'S YEAR OF RETURN 2019

Large-scale outreach campaign to engage the African diaspora worldwide

Diaspora contributions:
Cultural, economic

Overview

The Year of Return is a year-long landmark marketing campaign that encompasses a series of cultural and social events, with the idea of making the "door of no return"[xxxii] a "gate of return" for all Africans wanting to experience the continent – as tourists or returning migrants.

The campaign has notably targeted African-Americans and celebrated pan-Africanism, reviving the African Union declaration of diaspora as the continent's sixth region and building on the country's previous African diaspora outreach work through the Joseph Project.[xxxiii] The Ghanaian President launched the campaign, which marks 400 years since the first enslaved African arrived in the United States. It is part of the government's "Ghana Beyond Aid" policy to ensure that the national development agenda is financed without external assistance.[xxxiv] It also contributes to the Ghanaian diaspora engagement policy and tourism strategy.

Ghana

● Country of origin
◎ Lead agency
➜ Initiative targeting the global Ghanean diaspora
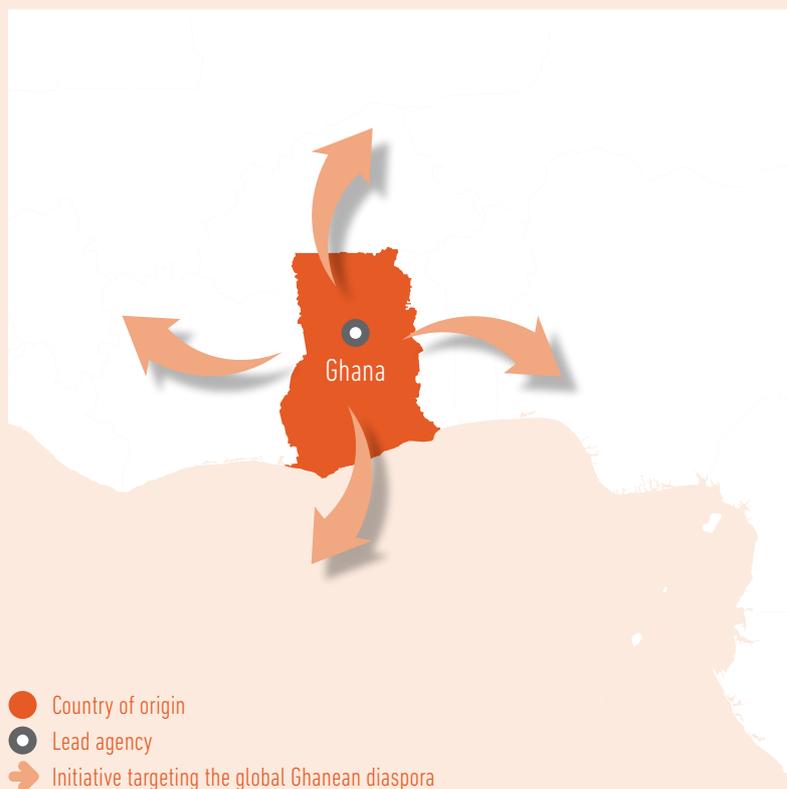
xxxii Over one doorway at Elmina Castle, a former hub of the slave trade in Ghana, a brass plaque reads, "door of no return." It was the last door that captive Africans went through in Africa before they were boarded onto ships and sold as slaves.

xxxiii The Joseph Project is the name of a series of activities, actions and interactions being spearheaded by Ghana to re-establish the African Nation as a nation of all its peoples. Its strategy is "to reconcile and unite the African Peoples so that their positive spirit and strengths are released in a focused manner to elevate Africa and Africans worldwide".

xxxiv The 400 Years of African-American History Commission Act, establishing a Commission meant to develop and carry out activities throughout the United States to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the arrival of Africans in the English colonies at Point Comfort, Virginia, in 1619 (H.R.1242 — 115th Congress (2017-2018): https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/1242)

Objectives

➡ Attract a wide range of African diaspora communities as well as other international visitors to Ghana.

➡ Promote Ghana as a tourist destination and investment opportunity.

➡ Promote youth entrepreneurship as a means to accelerate intra-African trade and boost the continent's economy.

➡ Promote recognition of the historical importance of the slave trade.

➡ Grant Ghanaian citizenship to African diaspora communities.

Innovative characteristics

● Good example of inter-sectoral coordination – it is a large-scale multi-stakeholder initiative led by a steering committee involving several ministries, NGOs, private companies and diaspora organisations.

● Targets a broad range of African diaspora communities – including other African diasporas and African-Americans.

● Takes a pan-African view of diaspora engagement, leveraging the African Union's recognition of diaspora as the continent's sixth region.

● Promotes "heritage tourism", "roots tourism" and "pilgrimage" forms of cultural engagement, with visits to heritage sites, healing ceremonies, theatre and musical performances, lectures, investment forums and relocation conferences – strengthening cultural ties and boosting tourism.

● Involves traditional authorities as well as local and international celebrities in the campaign, and high-level personal endorsement by the President himself.

● Utilised a consistent and powerful set of key messages conveyed by all partners, leveraging social media and celebrity engagement as a low-cost means to promote events.

Results

- Record number of visa applicants in Ghanaian embassies in the Caribbean, Americas and Europe.[xxxv] Flights to and hotel accommodation in Ghana were fully booked for the period of December 2018,[xxxvi] all of which raised funds for the local economy and businesses.

- Visitor numbers from January to September 2019 rose by 45% (to 237,000 visitors) compared with the same period the previous year.[83]

- 40 African diaspora celebrities took part in "The Full Circle Festival" – one of the headline events,[84] thereby helping to increase the visibility of the campaign.

- Following the adoption of the 400 Years of African-American History Commission Act, USA House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi visited Ghana in August 2018,[85] which helped raise the profile of the campaign.

- The campaign paved the way for further heritage tourism attraction initiatives, such as providing visa-free entry to citizens of Guyana and Jamaica,[86][87] among others. As part of the campaign, 200 African-American and African-Caribbean people who live in Ghana will be granted citizenship.[88] The government claims that a record 126 people were granted citizenship in 2019.[89]

Implementation challenges

- Limited government resources for the organisation of the events and the preparation of sites for high-profile visitors. As a result, the campaign's steering committee promoted private sector participation, which led to 70% of the events being self-funded and organised by private companies, with the steering committee playing a coordination and facilitating role.[xxxvii] Prospective event organisers, many of which initially expected to obtain government funding, were required to incorporate non-state funding provisions into their proposals to the steering committee.

- Complementary actions were required by different government departments. For example, the ministries of foreign affairs and the interior needed to make adjustments to visa application fees and processes to accommodate increased visitor numbers, which further underlines the importance of the steering committee's coordination role.

xxxv Interview with Akwasi Ababio, Director of Diaspora Affairs, Office of the President.
xxxvi Interview with Akwasi Ababio, Director of Diaspora Affairs, Office of the President.
xxxvii Interview with Akwasi Ababio, Director of Diaspora Affairs, Office of the President.

- Miscommunication and misinformation, notably via social media, led many to think they could travel to Ghana visa free. As a result, the campaign's representatives have had to make radio announcements to address the false information.

Replicability

- Requires strong organisational capacities due to the large scale of the campaign.

- Needs political stability to obtain sufficient and stable resources to fund the campaign.

- Needs a powerful and unifying rationale that resonates with the diaspora – in this case the bill passed in the USA which could be linked with the aforementioned 400-year anniversary, the Ghana Beyond Aid approach, and tourism strategy.

ADVANCED

Further information

Donor: The Government of Ghana provided direct funding for the steering committee. However, event organisers – state and non-state alike – had to mobilise funding of their activities independently.

Implementing agency: Ghana Tourism Authority with the Office of Diaspora Affairs, through leadership of a 25-member multi-stakeholder steering committee. Numerous events were organised by different state and non-state partners.

Budget: unknown

Web link: https://www.yearofreturn.com

9. IRELAND'S EMIGRANT SUPPORT PROGRAMME

Fostering decentralised diaspora engagement through a comprehensive policy instrument

Diaspora contributions:
Cultural, economic, social

Overview

The Irish government's Emigrant Support Programme (ESP) is a policy instrument that provides financial support to organisations engaged in the delivery of frontline advisory services and community care to Irish emigrants, particularly the more vulnerable and marginalised members of the diaspora, such as the elderly.

The ESP facilitates Irish government investment in a range of cultural, community and heritage projects[90] , which foster a vibrant sense of Irish community and identity, as well as strategic capital projects. The ESP is a tangible expression of the government's support of, commitment to, and interest in the global Irish community; and a key pillar of Ireland's *Global Irish* diaspora policy.

Ireland

● Country of origin
● Country of destination
◉ Lead agency
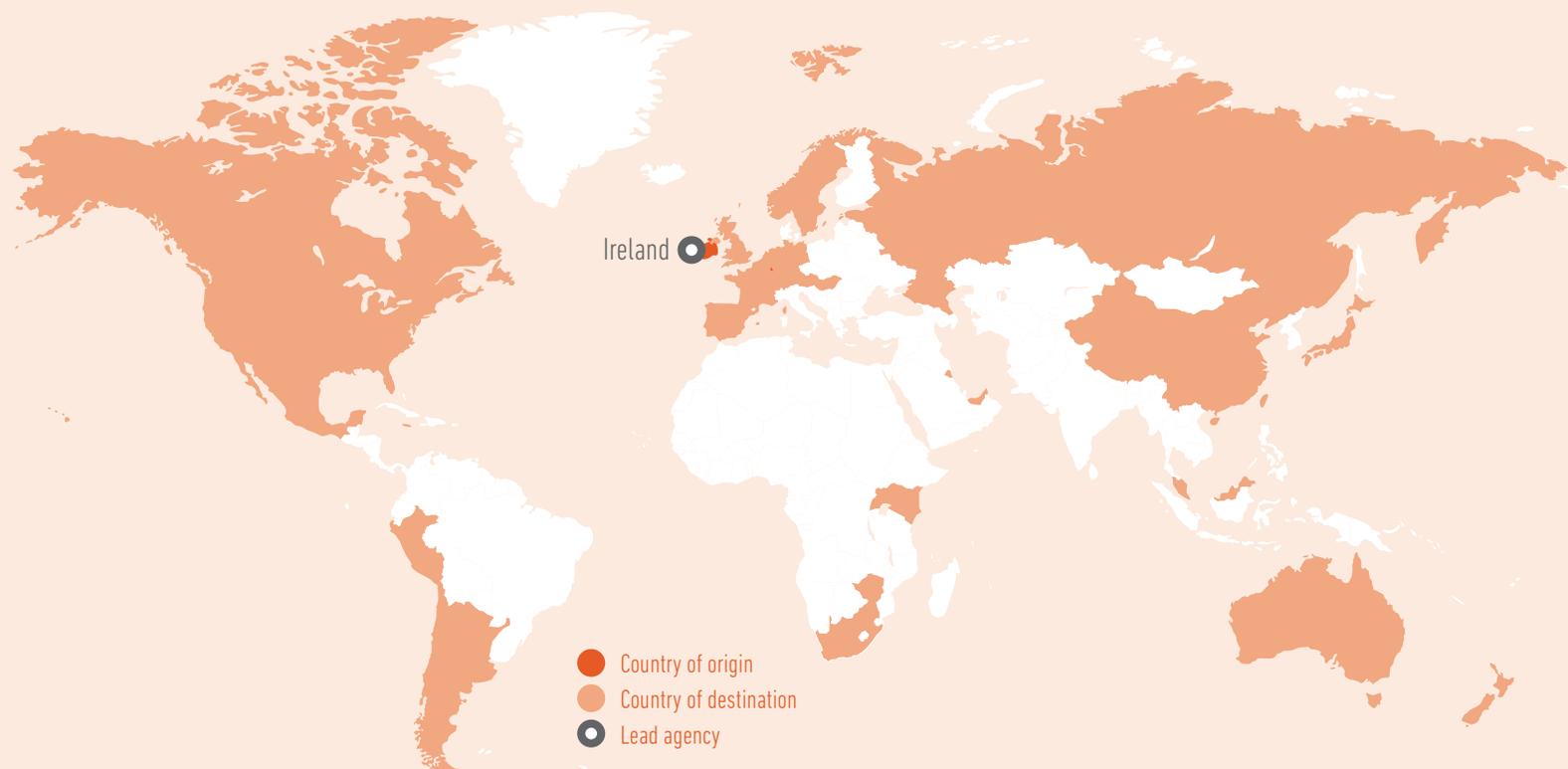
Objectives

➡ Support and build global Irish communities.

➡ Develop the operational capacities and maintain high standards of the partner organisations by enforcing strict eligibility criteria for accessing funds, particularly with respect to accountability, governance, reporting and transparency.

➡ Promote connectedness, collaboration, inter-generational and welfare engagement of Irish communities abroad.

➡ Cultivate a stronger sense of Irish identity through the support of culture, education and heritage.

Innovative characteristics

● Promotes a partnership-driven model that decentralises leadership of diaspora engagement towards local ownership.

● Utilises a reflective evaluative system that is agile and designed to react to the needs and opportunities of a changing diasporic community.

● Embodies a facilitative role for government in diaspora engagement, in which they support organisations which can contribute to broader objectives instead of pursuing direct diaspora engagement as an end in itself.

● Emerging example of smart-power diaspora diplomacy. Smart power diplomacy is based on people-to-people networks. The programme promotes such connectivity between the diaspora and government but also within the diaspora itself (for example, between diaspora organisations working on similar issues).

● Segmented approach to diaspora engagement, with applications for funding categorised by thematic area (e.g. heritage, welfare, capital, networks) and target group (e.g. the elderly).[91]

● Flexible approach that allows the government to support large range of projects ranging from promoting Irish heritage or diaspora networks overseas to those that provide frontline welfare services to Irish communities or develop digital platforms and software.

Results

- Assisted over 530 organisations in 36 countries since 2004, with grants totalling over €170 million.[92]

- Remains the central policy instrument within Ireland's Global Irish diaspora policy, 15 years since its creation.

- Received over 490 applications for support from more than 20 countries in 2018 alone.[93]

- Facilitated other key diaspora interventions for the government – such as the Global Irish Civic Forum.

- Directly responsible for growing a global network of key commercial and cultural influencers for the government.[xxxviii]

Implementation challenges

- Ensuring compliance with global best practices on organisational behaviour among partner organisations which have differing levels of scale and professionalism. Therefore, the ESP provides partner organisations with access to knowledge sources and other forms of capacity-building support on issues including board management and governance.

- Collecting the data necessary to ensure effective allocation of funding, particularly in relation to determining the vulnerability of diaspora communities being supported. To overcome the lack of data, the ESP regularly funds academic research on diaspora engagement.

- Enhancing access to external sources of support for partner organisations so as to avoid dependency on ESP funding. As a result, the government, through events like the Global Irish Civic Forums and the connecting role of its embassies and consulates, supports partner organisations to network and to access other sources of funding. They also provide upskilling materials on such matters.

- Building inter-generational and gender-equal outreach into the ESP portfolio due to the changing nature of the diaspora. It is therefore important to promote the softer dimensions of diaspora engagement, such as cultural and heritage learning, while supporting projects which can build linkages between the generations and support diaspora communities with different opportunities and vulnerabilities (such as support mechanisms for the increasing body of Irish diaspora women professionals).

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xxxviii The programme in recent years has begun to embed emerging business and cultural networks. This has enhanced the number of such networks available to the Government of Ireland that can help in its wider foreign policy vision, *Global Ireland 2025*. Available at https://merrionstreet.ie/MerrionStreet/en/ImageLibrary/20180612_Global_Ireland.pdf

Replicability

- High replicability as an overarching policy implementation tool.

- Requires strong resources to be executed at scale, although lighter financial models can be built into the framework.

- Such a programme could provide a strong purpose for diaspora-focused government units or institutions.

INTERMEDIATE

Further information

Donor: Government of Ireland

Implementing agency: Irish Abroad Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in partnership with Ireland's Embassies and Consulates abroad

Budget: €11.6 million in 2018. €170 million spent since inception in 2004.

Implementation dates: 2004-present

Web link: https://www.dfa.ie/global-irish/support-overseas/emigrant-support-programme/

10. COPENHAGEN GOODWILL AMBASSADORS

Global leadership network leveraging members of the Danish diaspora
to enhance national and city branding

Diaspora contributions:
Cultural, economic, social

Overview

Copenhagen Goodwill Ambassadors is a global leadership network that aims to promote Denmark and Copenhagen internationally to attract foreign investors, companies, conferences, talents and tourists. The initiative has already added 50 "ambassadors" in over 25 countries to the network, providing networking opportunities for members of the Danish diaspora and their ventures whilst also enabling Danish nationals and Copenhagen city authorities to draw from the network's global expertise to enhance their branding.

Once a year, the ambassadors meet in Copenhagen for an annual seminar. During their stay, the network is introduced to international initiatives, challenges and successes of Copenhagen as well as government representatives, Danish businesses and cultural personalities and decision makers.

Denmark

● Country of origin
● Country of destination
◉ Lead agency

CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
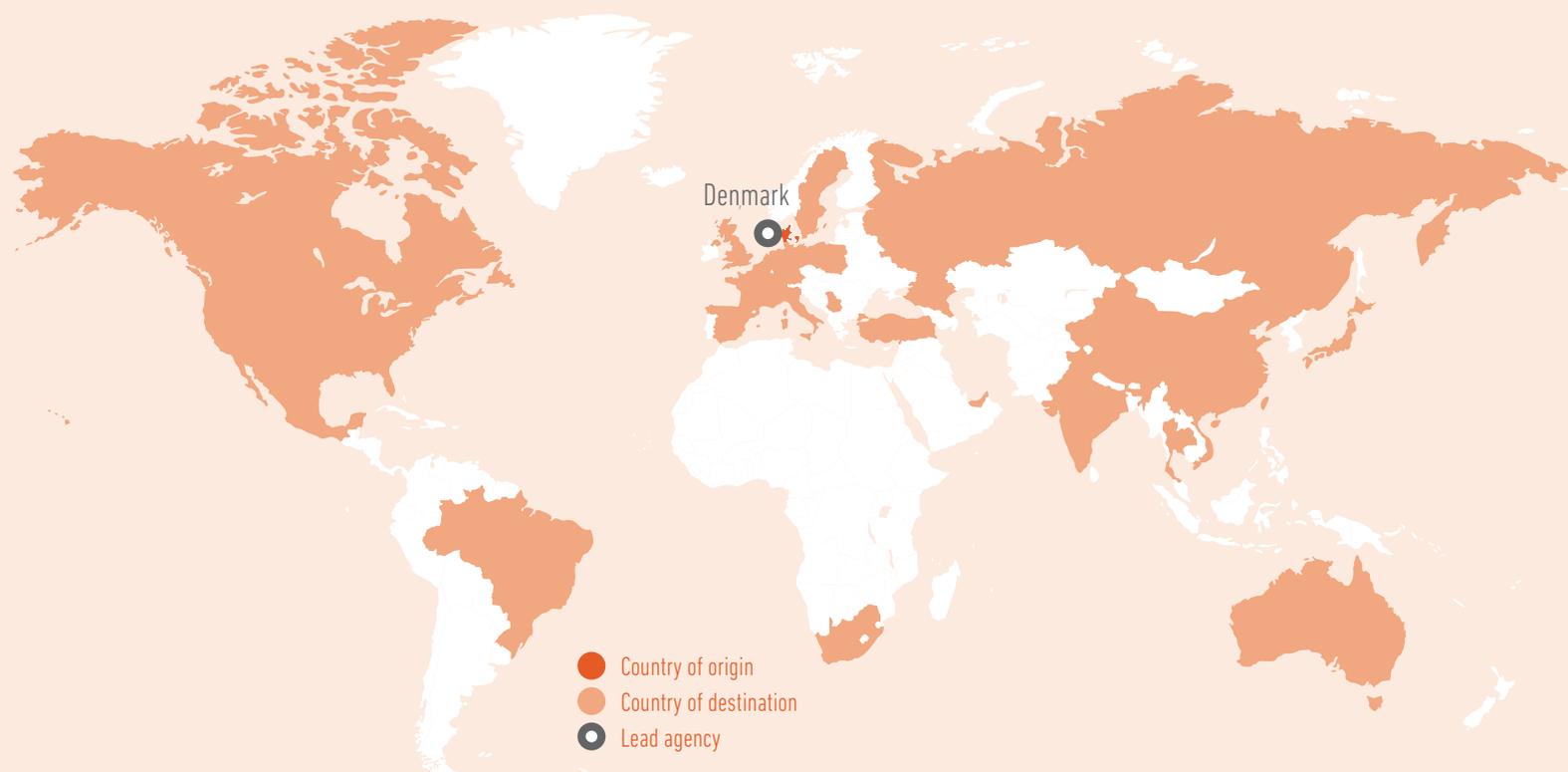
Objectives

➤ Activate a global network of Danish diaspora to enhance "brand awareness" of Copenhagen and Denmark.

➤ Promote Copenhagen and Denmark globally as a destination of choice for business and investment.

➤ Promote Copenhagen and Denmark's values and achievements internationally.

➤ Develop Copenhagen and Denmark's international competitiveness.

➤ Identify emerging areas of development for Copenhagen and Denmark.

Innovative characteristics

● Aligns purpose and interests of the country, capital city, and Danish diaspora to maximise relevance of the network.

● Cultivates an elite global network of influence for Copenhagen and Denmark in an indirect way that allows the initiative to retain its independence (working closely with government but not governmentally driven).

● Purpose-driven network with a clear and concrete call to action, annual activities, and research contributions that promote learning.

● Emerging example of the power of diaspora in enhancing city/place branding.

● Promotes network sustainability through the creation of the Youth Goodwill Ambassadors.

● Utilises a dual methodology of digital and in-person networking, through its offline annual gatherings and ongoing online collaborations through new and social media – particularly important for initiatives with a wide geographical focus.

Results

✓ Cultivated network of 50 high-level business leaders, entrepreneurs, innovators, cultural leaders, branding experts and public opinion formers, living and working in more than 25 countries worldwide.[94]

✓ Contributed to securing key projects and agreements for Copenhagen, including the opening of Cisco's Internet of Everything Research and Development centre in the city, and closer collaboration between Chengdu, China and Copenhagen.[95]

✓ Enhanced Copenhagen and Denmark's profiling in international media – for instance, the capital was showcased on the CNBC series on 'Innovation Cities' and CNN's Future Cities.[96]

✓ Enhanced understanding of Copenhagen's competitiveness, by publishing a series of reports from 2012-2017 on areas for the city to improve.[97]

✓ Initiator of the multi-stakeholder national Diaspora Denmark initiative, which aims to facilitate diaspora engagement in relation to three areas: 1) promotion of Denmark; 2) talent attraction; and 3) export and internationalisation.

Implementation challenges

- Ensuring network members contribute to the purpose of the initiative without being affected by internal and external influences. By managing to overcome this challenge, the initiative has developed its own purposeful culture and retained operational independence.

- Maintaining neutrality while responding to government interest. State interest in the initiative is to some degree a testament to its success. Yet the network's independence and own organisational culture have allowed it to innovate and respond to real needs of multiple stakeholders.

- Building a network that turns quality ideas into concrete action that serves a collective mission. Networks like these can face the challenge of balancing numerous individual interests with a collective interest. The initiative's agile partnership model, particularly the peer-to-peer format of the meetings, helps to instil a code of practice that members can insist upon themselves, making members accountable to one another. The model also enables network members to react to emerging opportunities in their marketplaces.

- Embedding the network into a wider diaspora engagement strategy in Denmark. The initiative and influencers in the network have become key advocates for a wider programme of diaspora engagement in the region, with the establishment of the Diaspora Denmark Association an indicator of the success of their advocacy.

BASIC

Replicability

- Involves varying degrees of resources and complexity depending on the scale envisaged. Small-scale informal networks can be established with minimal start-up capital.

- Requires a comprehensive institutional apparatus in place – as is already the case in many partner countries – such as inward investment agencies, tourism promotion agencies and local/national government offices.

- Requires a strong understanding of the location and role of a country's global influencers, so for many partner countries there would not be substantive research needs to replicate such an initiative. Such networks can also be natural deliverables of existing trade conferences.

Further information

Donor: national government, municipal government, private funding.

Implementing agency: Copenhagen Capacity and Wonderful Copenhagen

Implementation dates: 1996-present

Web link: https://www.copcap.com/gwa

11. OPERATION MARHABA

Comprehensive operation to manage peak diaspora return flows and welcome diaspora visitors

Diaspora contributions:
Cultural, social

Overview

Operation Marhaba (*marhaba* meaning "welcome and attraction" in Arabic) is a seasonal initiative that manages peak-season return migration flows and welcomes and provides assistance to members of the Moroccan diaspora returning for their summer holidays from European countries of destination through 20 key entry and exit points located in Morocco (the ports of Tangier City, Tanger Med, Nador, Al Hoceima, Bad Sebta, Bab Mellila; the airports of Casablanca, Fes, Marrakech, Agadir and Oujda; and equipped rest areas in Tangier, Taourirt, Tazaghine and Jebha), Spain (Motril, Almeria and Algeciras), France (Sète) and Italy (Genoa).

Operation Marhaba is in part a large-scale migration management operation, functioning as a mechanism that ensures different government departments work together to manage annual peak-season return migration across a limited set of migration corridors. It is also a programme that provides a welcome to overseas Moroccans, as a way to strengthen their attachment to their country of origin.

- ● Country of origin
- ● Country of destination
- ◉ Lead agency

Objectives

- ➤ Manage peak-season return migration flows in a coordinated manner.

- ➤ Provide medical assistance to Moroccan travellers in need, such as the elderly and persons with disabilities.

- ➤ Provide information and technical, logistical and administrative assistance to overseas Moroccans.

- ➤ Promote diaspora tourism.

- ➤ Build trust with the diaspora, by demonstrating the country of origin's commitment to supporting the practical and administrative needs of overseas Moroccans.

Innovative characteristics

- Provides assistance at ports in both countries of destination and origin, thanks to strong cross-border cooperation.

- Offers digital guidance through a mobile app in six languages,[98] making it accessible to a wide range of diasporas, including later generations who often prefer digital platforms in their preferred language.

- Provides a wide variety of information and services through the welcome points, offering flexibility and evolution based on the diaspora's needs.

- Combines practical measures to better coordinate the management of peak-season return flows with services that returning diasporas need.

- Enables dialogue with, and provision of assistance to, overseas Moroccans, which allows the government to learn about diaspora needs and build trust with them.

- Has begun to target younger diaspora segments, while expanding its assistance to investment opportunities and philanthropy.[99] [100]

- Involves the diaspora in the organisation, by hiring diaspora volunteers in Spain.

Results

- Accompanied 2.5 million overseas Moroccans in 2019.[101]

- Provided assistance to 91,000 persons in the three-month peak season in 2016 alone,[102] 15,000 of which benefited from medical assistance.

- Mobilised 1,232 persons to provide assistance in 2019, including 800 social workers, 291 medical staff, and 141 volunteers.[103]

Implementation challenges

- Coordinating the multitude of public and private partners in Morocco and Europe. Coordination is assured by a national commission, which brings together national and local government departments and non-state actors.

- Maintaining transnational cooperation, particularly with respect to working with Spain, which is the main country through which most overseas Moroccans transit on their way back to Morocco. As Operation Marhaba has been running for several years, authorities have gradually developed positive working relationships with their counterparts in Spain.

- Accommodating the changing religious agenda. Morocco's religious holidays dictate return flows but fall at different times of the year. This can extend and intensify the peak return season. This underlines the careful planning required to ensure adequate capacity is in place to welcome diaspora travellers.

Replicability

INTERMEDIATE

- Involves coordination among a wide range actors and countries, which makes the adoption of an initiative of a similar scale complex and demanding.

- Suited to partner countries whose diasporas return in large numbers during a short peak season every year via specific corridors. Other partner countries could also consider replicating certain aspects of the initiative – for example the welcome and orientation aspects.

- The initiative involves deploying large numbers of assistants. Even though volunteers can be mobilised, significant resources are required to train personnel.

Further information

Donor: Government of Morocco

Implementing agency: Government of Morocco, through an inter-ministerial commission that includes a variety of implementing partners, such as maritime companies, national airport and highway authorities, Royal Air Maroc, Moroccan banks, media channels.

Budget: 2013-2017 202 million dirhams (€19 million)

Web link: http://www.fm5.ma/marhaba

Options to enhance diaspora engagement

✓ **Encourage diasporas to learn about their heritage:** governments from all partner countries can support the development of **websites and social media platforms** that allow their diasporas to follow events taking place "back home" and to learn about diaspora-focused initiatives. Digital platforms can create spaces in which diasporas can interact with communities of origin or learn more about their heritage ("**reverse genealogy**"). **Subsidising trips for diasporas**, particularly for younger later generations, is another way to not only "get to know", "build trust" and foster emotional connections, but also lays the foundations for more sustained and concrete engagement. These initiatives can take the form of **summer schools, and language and culture classes**. Integrating **alumni network-building** can keep participants engaged after programmes end. Such initiatives can also be used to make diasporas aware of possibilities and other schemes that facilitate further engagement and eventual return.

Examples

Ireland Reaching Out, funded by the government, is a volunteer-based initiative that uses **community forums and online databases to provide information to the Irish abroad about their ancestors and places of origin**. The initiative could be replicated by other Rabat Process partners with high internet usage among diasporas and own residents.

Morocco's Operation Marhaba (see initiative 11) sees **400 assistants welcome diaspora visitors returning during summer at 20 ports of entry**. The initiative also provides information via an app and guide, as well as medical and other logistical support targeted at the 2 million diaspora visitors. Initiatives like these can help build trust and may be particularly suited to other countries, such as Algeria and Tunisia,[xxxix] which also welcome large numbers of diaspora visitors through a small number of ports during a short period every year (overseas Algerians comprise 70% of the country's tourists).[104] They can integrate different services for which diasporas have expressed a need.

Morocco has also since 2009 run a **summer university** (Université d'été) for diaspora students, which could be replicated in other partner countries, although safeguards against overtly-politicised content are required.

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xxxix It has been estimated that the Algerian diaspora provides around 70% of the country's tourists. International Centre for Migration Policy Development (2011). Enhancing Diaspora Engagement. [online] Vienna: International Centre for Migration Policy Development. Available at: https://www.icmpd.org/fileadmin/ICMPD-Website/ICMPD-Website_2011/ICMPD_General/News/AMEDIP/Enhancing_Diaspora_Engagement_EN_Electronic.pdf [Accessed 19 Dec. 2019].

Morocco **engages its diaspora to promote Moroccan films, theatre, arts and other cultural products** via the Council of Moroccans Abroad, an example of which was the 2019 photo exhibition "Morocco, in an instant", which displayed photos from Moroccan photographers residing abroad.

✓ **Celebrate the achievements and contributions of diasporas:** governments can support **events which celebrate the global cultural contributions of their diasporas**. These can run as part of or alongside existing diaspora meetings. States can also **recognise achievements of diaspora individuals and organisations through awards**. One key trend in this regard is reaching out to later generations and different segments of the diaspora, such as female diasporas. These initiatives can contribute to not only building trust but also to identifying members of the diaspora who have the potential and desire to contribute through investment, skills transfer, or other means.

Examples

Several countries organise **annual events that honour diaspora achievements** – low-cost yet potentially high-visibility initiatives that can be adopted by any partner country. Togo's annual "week of achievements of the Togolese diaspora" (Semaine des réussites de la diaspora togolaise) awards seven diaspora personalities and brings the overseas Togolese together for events that facilitate exchange. Laureates are decorated by the president, underlining high-level state commitment to the diaspora, which is a critical factor of success.

Ghana has taken the notion of diaspora outreach one step further by organising its Year of Return (see initiative 8). This **landmark marketing campaign targets African diasporas worldwide**, even extending to African-Americans. It promotes a range of cultural events and links to Ghana's agenda to attract diaspora tourism. It is an example of how a partner country can engage communities not often considered as being part of the diaspora (African-Americans). Countries like Ireland have also been successful in **using broad definitions of "diaspora" and "heritage" to increase global influence and reach more people** who can contribute to the country of origin. Opportunities remain for other partner countries to support cultural **engagement with women and later-generation diasporas**, among other diaspora profiles, such as the Diaspora African Women's Network (DAWN). However, financial resources and adapted outreach strategies are required.

Beyond the Rabat Process, the Lebanese foreign ministry's Lebanese Diaspora Energy campaign **celebrates Lebanese contributions across the world through annual events** in Beirut and key destination countries that gather diaspora executives, artists, researchers, sports personalities etc.. The campaign has a stylish

multilingual website, an app, and (highly-followed) social media channels. Within the campaign, several initiatives focusing on different aspects of diaspora engagement are promoted, such as Diaspora Houses – a cultural project that restores historic buildings to serve as cultural hubs and places of gathering for diasporas and locals. The campaign's success has been attributed to effective organisation and a strong preliminary mapping of the diaspora.[105] Nevertheless, replicating large-scale campaigns like Lebanese Diaspora Energy (and Ghana's Year of Return) may require significant investment (upwards of 1 million euros per year).

✅ **Engage diasporas in cultural branding:** many countries are seeking to engage their diasporas to **promote their country's image worldwide**, which can contribute not only to their cultural influence but also attract tourism and boost trade, investment and cultural exports. Enhancing branding in this way does not require legislative changes. Rather, successful initiatives require a strong understanding of their diasporas, consular support to engage high-profile diasporas, and an awareness of how diasporas can feed into a broader national branding strategy.

Examples

Morocco is particularly active in **involving its diaspora celebrities in foundations, think tanks and events**. The country also **encourages its consular staff to identify not only highly-skilled diaspora professionals, but also those who might contribute to projecting the country's influence abroad**, such as executives, sportspersons and media personalities. Consular staff look for opportunities to engage these potential cultural ambassadors through press interviews, prestigious competitions and other cultural activities.[106] This approach could be high-impact yet low-cost for many other Rabat Process partners, particularly those who already have strong diplomatic networks, with strong collaboration between the foreign ministry and the department responsible for diaspora affairs a success factor. It does, however, require diaspora engagement to feature prominently in foreign policy, as well as well trained diplomatic staff who understand diaspora needs.

The Copenhagen Goodwill Ambassadors programme (see initiative 10) is an example of how **diasporas have been effectively engaged in both city and national branding**, resulting from an engaged network of key influencers from different fields, as well as both online and offline engagement. The initiative has been credited with Copenhagen's success in attracting several international conventions and the city's media appearances.[107] Other partner countries, including their cities and localities with strong diaspora populations, can explore how diasporas can contribute to enhancing their global branding.

CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Much of Ireland's diaspora engagement has been at the local level, embodied in the county-level diaspora engagement strategies (funded by the central government). This has **enabled individual counties to activate diasporas to attract investment and enhance their branding abroad**. The Global Limerick Network, for example, has been credited with attracting overseas politicians to visit Limerick County and with the international success of the #limerickandproud online social media campaign (60% of the hashtag's users came from outside the county).[108]
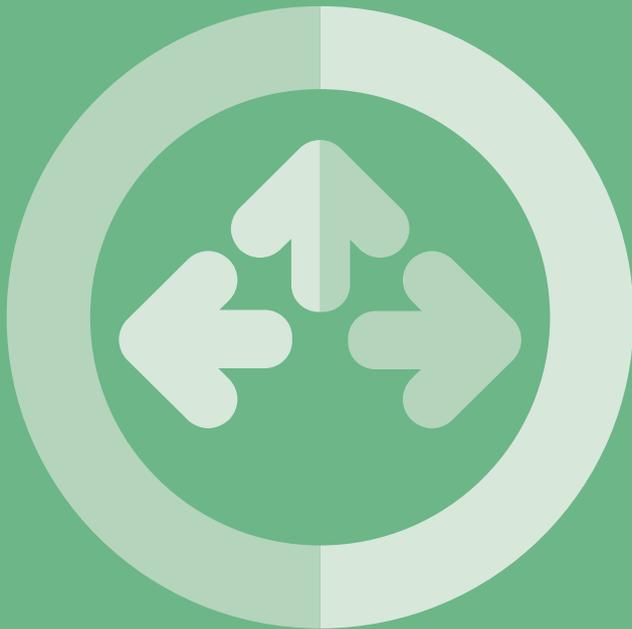
CROSS-CUTTING
GUIDANCE

DEVELOPING POLICY FRAMEWORKS FOR ACTION

What's at stake?

- Diaspora engagement needs to be linked to national and local priorities and coherent with sectoral, national and local policies.

- Diaspora strategies explain "why" and "where" governments are seeking to go and should give an overall picture of the situation. They should be accompanied by action plans which define "how to" get there in concrete terms.[109]

- Effective policy frameworks are as much about designing diaspora-targeted policies as they are about identifying how other policies can facilitate their development contributions, as well as identifying areas where government can "do less" and remove barriers to engagement.

- In the past, governments have tried to target policies towards ill-defined and broad diaspora constituencies, considering engagement as an end in itself instead of a means to achieve broader objectives.[110] It is thus critical that partner countries define specific diaspora profiles among their diverse overseas populations in policy frameworks, particularly the diaspora "champions" and "elites" who facilitate the most transfers. [111]

Options to enhance diaspora engagement

Devise a diaspora engagement strategy, coherent with development plans: the strategy sets objectives based on an analysis of the diaspora (see "Get to know your diaspora"), with concrete actions over 3-5 years and regular monitoring and evaluation. It helps to **develop relationships with the diaspora and to conceptualise engagement** at all government levels, and with a variety of stakeholders.[112] It **mobilises stakeholders** around a common goal and operational objectives.

The **strategy should dovetail with the national development plan and migration policy**, ensuring that engagement contributes to sustainable development. The elaboration process is ideally **led by a dedicated institution** (e.g. a dedicated diaspora ministry, sub-ministerial unit, or inter-institutional committee), which engages across government and consults diaspora representatives and other non-state actors to ensure **the strategy meets national and local needs, and the needs of the diaspora.**

In addition, diaspora **strategies require differentiated actions that take into account the diversity of "profiles"** within the diaspora. Past experience has shown that diaspora engagement strategies too rarely address engagement with high profile diaspora members.[113]

Examples

Ireland's dedicated Minister of State for the Diaspora helps **ensure diaspora engagement remains high up on the political agenda**, while its Inter-Departmental Committee on the Irish Abroad promotes a **whole-of-government approach**.[114]

Ghana has a National Migration Policy in place and **consulted diaspora communities in the development of its diaspora policy** through embassies and other forums,[115] before presenting the policy at the Ghana Diaspora Celebration and Homecoming Summit.[116]

Tools
Enhancing Diaspora Engagement[xl], Developing a Road Map for Engaging Diasporas in Development[xli].

✓ **Mainstream diaspora engagement into other sectoral policies:** the institution responsible for diaspora engagement should **work across government to identify obstacles to engagement and opportunities** for diasporas to contribute to sectoral policy objectives. For instance, business and investment regulations can constrain or support diaspora entrepreneurship, with low scores of many partner countries in the World Bank "Doing Business" index one particular hindrance.

✓ **Support diaspora engagement at the local level:** diasporas often retain ties with their communities of origin. **Sub-national governments can integrate diaspora engagement into local development plans** and develop targeted initiatives.

xl   International Centre for Migration Policy Development (2011). *Enhancing Diaspora Engagement.* [online] Vienna: International Centre for Migration Policy Development. Available at: https://www.icmpd.org/fileadmin/ICMPD-Website/ICMPD-Website_2011/ICMPD_General/News/AMEDIP/Enhancing_Diaspora_Engagement_EN_Electronic.pdf

xli   Agunias, D. and Newland, K. (2012). *Developing a road map for engaging diasporas in development*. Geneva: International Organization for Migration. Available at: https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/diaspora_handbook_en_for_web_28may2013.pdf

Examples of policy obstacles to diaspora engagement

Citizenship and immigration laws that prevent diasporas from returning to visit or invest; or from exercising political rights.

Financial regulations that prohibit diasporas from opening bank accounts, or that stifle competition and innovation in financial services.

Land, investment, tax and customs policies that make it harder for diasporas to own land, capital and enterprises.

Social welfare policies that mean diasporas lose social benefits accumulated abroad if they decide to return.

Examples

In 2019, Ethiopia introduced **legislation that allowed its diaspora to buy shares in local banks and start lending businesses**,[117] representing a consideration of diaspora engagement in the context of a financial market policy.

Niger's **Rural Development Strategy made specific reference to the important role of migrants'** financial resources in local development,[118] representing a consideration of diaspora engagement in the context of a rural development policy.

Senegalese municipalities have developed **territorial migration profiles** to better understand and engage with diasporas.[119]

In Morocco, Migration Développement Citoyenneté et Démocratie **trained local officials on difficulties faced by returnees** in accessing retirement benefits earned abroad. [120]

Tools
Guidelines on mainstreaming migration into local development planning[xlii].

xlii   Siegel, M., McGregor, E. and Langley, S. (2017). *Guidelines on mainstreaming migration into local development planning*

GET TO KNOW YOUR DIASPORA AND BUILD TRUST WITH THEM

What's at stake?

- The better governments **get to know their diasporas by collecting data** on who they are, where they reside, what they do, and what relationships can be facilitated, the better they can design policies that respond to national, local and diaspora needs.

- In tandem with this, and to increase the willingness of diasporas to participate in the actions outlined in this publication, governments need to **build trust**.

- Diasporas may feel a unique connection with their countries of origin and wish to strengthen ties. However, they also have **varied and complex relationships with communities "back home", especially with state institutions**, which can make or break their contributions.

- The traditional profile of the nostalgic migrant worker sacrificing themselves to send money home coexists with that of migrants and their descendants who have differing views about "the homeland" and their identity; as well as differing ways of interacting with the state and contributing to development. Governments need **sustained and differentiated conversations with different diaspora communities** that recognises them not as political tools or merely sources of funding, but as a patchwork of changemakers, cultural ambassadors, and key stakeholders to sustainable development.

- There has been an **overinvestment in underproductive and centralised state-led approaches** to diaspora engagement. Governments have often been hampered by an insufficient understanding of the scale, nature, and impact of existing transnational ties. This has led some to invest in high-profile initiatives without first mapping existing networks, imposing additional barriers to engagement in an already dense network of diaspora-homeland connections. [121]

- Recent experiences have underlined the **importance of targeting initiatives towards "diaspora champions**" – the small proportion of individuals who are responsible for catalysing large transfers. Specific outreach strategies can enhance the enabling roles of these "critical few".

Diaspora champions: did you know?

Irish diasporan, Craig Barrett, is the former Chairman of Intel who was credited with the tech giant's $7 billion investment in Ireland, which was followed by further USA tech investment that transformed the country's economy into the "Celtic Tiger".[122]

Options to enhance diaspora engagement

Collect data on diasporas: through processes like **diaspora "mappings" and developing skills databases**, governments can increase the interactions between state actors and their diasporas and gain a better understanding of the characteristics of their diasporas and what policies to develop. Nevertheless, experience has shown that such **exercises should not be seen as standalone state-led processes** and as ends in themselves. Rather, the data collection should **form part of a coherent policy framework**, while feeding directly into targeted actions. In this context, it can be preferable to **conduct more targeted data collection**, such as surveying specific diaspora groups to determine their engagement, behaviours, needs and opportunities to engage further. It is particularly crucial to **move beyond general surveys** and towards more "high-resolution" case study research that better reveals **how high-value diaspora elite networks develop**. This can enable the fine-tuning of interventions that create, support and enhance a small number of strategically valuable diaspora-homeland relationships.[123]

Collecting data on diasporas: what to know?

- Size and location: number and geographic distribution (concentrated/distributed, OECD/non-OECD, inter/intra-regional)

- Skills: education (primary/higher/vocational) and employment (high-skilled/low-skilled, sectors of employment)

- Engagement opportunities: remittance transfers and direct investments (basic family needs/insurance against shocks/fixed asset investment), representative organisations

- Engagement constraints: trust in institutions, administrative hurdles, social and cultural barriers, integration in country of residence

Examples

Nigeria maintains a Global Database of Nigerians in Diaspora, which serves as **a databank of overseas Nigerian talent** that can be tapped into by the government and its development partners to contribute to national development.

Lithuania's Migration in Numbers website **publishes statistical data** on emigration, immigration, and the rate of return migration, among other issues. This open approach has been credited with fostering understanding of migration, building trust with origin communities.[124]

The independently-established Scottish Business Network is conducting a **survey of the business diaspora** to both gather insights and consult its target audience on how it can tailor its support. Private sector-driven initiatives like these can enhance the impact of mapping exercises, as they may be more directly linked to concrete follow-up actions.

Data sources
Migrant stock (UN DESA, OECD, Eurostat, censuses), remittances (World Bank), diaspora destinations and motivations (censuses, diaspora organisations, consular networks), international students (OECD).

Tools
Enhancing Diaspora Engagement[xliii] (see "Assessing the diaspora").

xliii   International Centre for Migration Policy Development (2011). *Enhancing Diaspora Engagement.* Available at: https://www.icmpd. org/fileadmin/ICMPD-Website/ICMPD-Website_2011/ICMPD_General/News/AMEDIP/Enhancing_Diaspora_Engagement_EN_ Electronic.pdf

✓ **Create spaces for state-diaspora interaction:** a longer-term and ongoing imperative, which reinforces the process of "getting to know" the diaspora, is to engage in multi-level dialogue with them. This can involve: 1) **dedicating a government department to diaspora engagement** to provide a clear diaspora focal point for the government; 2) **activating state (consular) and non-state networks** to conduct listening exercises, arrange conferences, or provide direct assistance to diaspora communities; and 3) **supporting diaspora-specific organisations and networks**. New technologies and social media can facilitate the move from one-off events and one-way communication to more interactive lower-threshold interaction. In many cases, **non-state actors may be best placed to forge closer and more proactive diaspora networks**, particularly for partner countries with an engaged and already-active diaspora, or for those whose diasporas have a low level of trust in state institutions.

✓ **Rethink government's role in diaspora engagement:** It is critical that partner countries **reflect on how their institutional arrangements influence their interactions with the diaspora**. Previous experience has shown a tendency towards state-centric approaches, leading to initiatives that target undefined diaspora communities. Such approaches have not produced concrete and sustainable engagement[125]; instead inadvertently creating obstacles to engagement in a crowded landscape of organic transnational relations. Partner countries need to **consider alternatives that allow the government to act as an enabler – rather than the driving actor** – which can involve "outsourcing" diaspora engagement to voluntary or private sector groups. The extent to which state-led diaspora institutions should act directly (seeing diaspora engagement as an end in itself) versus indirectly (seeing diaspora engagement as a tool) will depend on partner countries' (and their diasporas') own institutional histories and social, cultural, economic, and political needs. **A cautious approach**, which treats existing diaspora-homeland connections as fragile and precious, could work better than a state-centric approach in which governments act first and think later.[126]

Examples

Georgia used **mobile counselling units to reach diaspora communities** by running low-barrier information meetings which did not require registration.[127]

The Ghanaian Diaspora Affairs Office (part of the Office of the President) used the 2019 Ghana Diaspora Celebration and Homecoming Summit to present the draft of its latest diaspora engagement policy.[128]

The Malian government's experience in **restructuring diaspora associations into a federated network** has facilitated networking and simplified communications channels, although this may be challenging in partner countries whose diasporas are strongly divided along ethnic, political or other lines.[129]

The Scottish and Irish governments have taken different approaches to diaspora engagement. Ireland has adopted more **decentralised and indirect approaches**, including through the Emigrant Support Programme (see initiative 9), supporting a portfolio of autonomous and self-sustaining diaspora initiatives developed by a range of actors. Scotland, on the other hand, has adopted relatively **centralised approaches**, with a portfolio of both **direct initiatives** adopted by a cross-departmental government office that specifically target diaspora engagement, as well as **indirect initiatives** like GlobalScot, which see diaspora engagement as a tool towards other ends (e.g. supporting Scottish businesses).[130] The fact that Ireland already has an engaged and committed diaspora is one reason why its light-touch approach works well. More direct initiatives, conversely, can be preferable for partner countries whose diasporas are particularly disengaged.

Tools

Guide on Organising Mobile Counselling for Migrants and Diaspora Members[xliv].

Key trend: institutional engagement of the private sector and civil society

Several Rabat Process partners have built **private sector and civil society engagement into their institutional arrangements for engaging diasporas**. Morocco's Hassan II Foundation and Mohammed V Foundation are NGOs which organise much of the country's diaspora engagement but which the government can work closely with.[140] In Ireland, on the other hand, the state **supports start-up organisations, including private sector operators, that specialise in diaspora engagement**.

These are two different arrangements which can encourage private sector and civil society involvement – critical to effective diaspora engagement.

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✓ **Develop differentiated outreach strategies adapted to different diaspora segments:** diaspora communities are often extremely heterogeneous. Factors such as age, religion, economic prosperity, integration, identity and a sense of belonging can determine how different diaspora profiles engage with their country of origin, and the extent of that engagement.

Diaspora profile	Characteristics	Outreach strategies
First generation "baby boomers"	• Send money home regularly. • Mixed sentiments about "home". • Views about development may stem from first-hand experiences of poverty.[131]	• Activate consular networks or diaspora media outlets to provide information on opportunities to engage.
"Millennial" later generations	• Technologically savvy and online. • Interested in volunteering and entrepreneurship.[132] • View countries of heritage as places of opportunity.[133] • Culturally attached to both countries of origin and residence.	• Adapt communications to the preferences of younger generations for accessing information and using technology.[134] • Take into account their existing knowledge and connections to the homelands.[135] • Leverage the personal connections that later generations often feel towards development issues, which may be connected to their sense of identity and to their families and friends.[136] • Utilise social media platforms that offer spaces for young diasporans to share their vision and ideas about projects in their countries of heritage.
Diaspora elites	• Responsible for catalysing a large proportion of diaspora engagement. • Focused on private initiatives with tangible impact. • Congregate in independently-established networks, such as angel investor networks.	• Connect with and collect information on diaspora "elites" and "champions", and understand their needs. • Identify high-level diaspora talent early on through universities and by recognising diaspora contributions through awards. • Support independently-established and specialised diaspora networks.

✅ **Remove barriers to participation and representation:** diasporas are more likely to visit, invest in and return to their communities of origin if it is less costly and time-consuming to do so and if they feel welcomed by the state. As a basic step, governments can allow **visa exemptions to non-national diaspora members** wishing to visit home. Permitting **multiple nationality** (both for diaspora origin and destination countries), the **right to vote and parliamentary representation** sends a stronger welcoming signal and allows diasporas to directly participate in policies and institutions ("joint diaspora-government decision-making").

Measures	Case studies
Visa exemptions	In 2015 and 2017, respectively, Togo and Côte d'Ivoire introduced visa exemptions for members of their diaspora holding multiple citizenships.[137]
Overseas ID cards	Ethiopia and India,[138] [139] among others, have allowed overseas national ID cards which facilitate return visits and various activities. Poland offers the "Poles' Card" (Karta Polaka) to non-nationals with some connections to the country, which eases administrative processes required to visit and seek employment.
Dual citizenship and the right to vote	Mali's 2011 amendment to permit dual nationality and Ghana's 2000 dual citizenship law and 2006 extension of voting rights (notwithstanding implementation challenges) have enabled broader diaspora engagement, while Cabo Verde grants dual citizenship and the right to vote automatically to all Cabo Verdeans, irrespective of residence and birthplace. Lebanon's Libanity campaign encouraged the country's diaspora to benefit from Lebanese citizenship and invest in the country, using YouTube videos, social media and mobile applications to reach new and later-generation diaspora audiences.
Parliamentary representation	Legislatures in Cabo Verde, Croatia, France, Portugal and Senegal have overseas parliamentary constituencies directly elected by diasporas.

Key challenges in getting to know your diaspora and building trust

Governments may have general knowledge about their diasporas but lack specific information (e.g. on socio-economic background and diaspora needs) required to develop targeted policies for specific diaspora profiles.

Lack of trust can exclude some diasporas from participating in official consultations with state actors or in diaspora-focused databases.

Second generations are often less likely to use consular networks in the same way as their parents.

There is often inadequate and infrequent information flow between consular representations and other departments working with diasporas.

Diaspora conferences are often "one-off" in nature, without clear objectives and follow-up actions.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: ORGANISATIONS CONSULTED

National governments

Organisation	Ministry/Directorate/Office
Government of Belgium	Belgian Development Agency (Enabel)
Government of Cameroon	Directorate of Overseas Cameroonians
Government of Burkina Faso	Ministry of African Integration and Overseas Burkinabè
Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Ministry of Overseas Congolese, Ministry of Labour, Directorate-General of Migration
Government of Chad	Embassy of Chad to the Democratic Republic of the Congo
Government of Côte d'Ivoire	Directorate-General of Ivorians Abroad
Government of France	Agence Française de Développement, Expertise France
Government of Gabon	Embassy of Gabon to the Democratic Republic of the Congo
Government of Germany	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, German-Tunisian Centre for Jobs, Migration and Reintegration
Government of Ghana	Diaspora Affairs Office
Government of Ireland	Global Irish Services Division, Irish Abroad Unit
Government of Italy	Agency of Italian International Cooperation
Government of Mali	Ministry of Malians Abroad
Government of Morocco	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation

Organisation	Ministry/Directorate/Office
Government of Romania	Office of the President
Government of São Tomé and Príncipe	Embassy of São Tomé and Príncipe to the Democratic Republic of the Congo
Government of Switzerland	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
Government of the Republic of the Congo	Embassy of the Republic of the Congo to the Democratic Republic of the Congo
Government of The Gambia	Embassy of the Republic of The Gambia and Mission to the European Communities

International organisations

Organisation	Ministry/Directorate/Office
European External Action Service	Delegation of the EU to Algeria
Food and Agriculture Organization	Subregional Office for North Africa
ICMPD	Rabat Process Secretariat, Vienna office
International Fund For Agricultural Development	Financing Facility for Remittances
International Organization for Migration	Country offices in Chad and the Democratic Republic of the Congo
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Headquarters (legal team)

Non-state actors

Organisation	Ministry/Directorate/Office
African Foundation For Development	Executive management, Sierra Leone office
Africa-Europe Diaspora Development Platform	Executive management
Babyloan Mali	Investment team
Allobledi	Executive management
Centre national de coopération au développement	Research and advocacy team
CinetPay	Executive management
Common Purpose	Executive management
Conseil des Béninois de France	Executive management
Danish Refugee Council	Diaspora Project team, Diaspora Global Programme
Deutsch-Marokkanisches Kompetenznetzwerk	Executive board
Global Lithuanian Leaders	Project management
Homestrings	Executive management
Hungarian Academy of Sciences	Institute for Minority Studies
Making Finance Work For Africa	Financial inclusion team

Organisation	Ministry/Directorate/Office
Migrations et Développement, Organisation de solidarité internationale	Executive management
Migration Policy Institute	Europe office
Soleterre	Morocco office and representative office for Francophone Africa
Susu	Executive management
Tribe 101	Executive management
United Cities and Local Governments of Africa	Executive management
United Nations University – Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology	Maastricht School of Governance
University of Mohamed V	Faculty of Law and Economics
University of Sousse	Department of Geography

ANNEX 2: INNOVATIVE INITIATIVE SELECTION CRITERIA

What qualifies as a relevant diaspora engagement initiative to be pre-selected?

- Project or programme.

- Funded and implemented by a development donor or any other state or non-state actor.

- Implemented on a local, national, or sub-regional level.

- Implemented in the past 5 years (2014-2019).

Which factors should be considered when identifying initiatives?

The initiative should be:

- Implemented or facilitated by any actor, with a focus on initiatives that at least be facilitated by a state actor.

- Considered innovative, as indicated by:

  - ICMPD, directly or through a publication – i.e. ICMPD has already referred to it as an innovative initiative (e.g. in the 2015 Promoting diaspora engagement: What have we learnt?, ICMPD working paper).

  - Another authoritative source has mentioned the innovative nature of the initiative (e.g. UN agencies, governments, international NGOs, diaspora associations, etc. (except in cases where actors are intending to promote their own initiative)).

  - The initiative has utilised an unconventional approach or activities, including targeting diaspora groups or transfers that are rarely targeted, or utilising multi-stakeholder partnerships or funding initiatives, or ways of engaging diasporas in funding or implementation.

- Considered transferable within the region, taking into consideration region-specific implementation challenges.

Which initiatives should be selected?

● Selected initiatives should be varied with respect to the following characteristics:

• Donor and implementer (i.e. initiatives funded and implemented by different donors, including investment agencies, government diaspora departments, local governments, diaspora associations and other civil society organisations, private sector actors etc.)

• Implementation level (i.e. regional vs national vs sub-national)

• Target beneficiaries (i.e. OECD-based/high-income/high-skilled vs same-region/South-South/lower-income diasporas, entrepreneurs vs professional vs lower-skilled migrant workers, women and youth diasporas, students and academics, first vs second generation diasporas)

• Types of contributions/transfers being fostered (i.e. economic (remittances, trade and investment), social, cultural, political, or intellectual transfers; philanthropy or technology transfers)

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