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Background Paper

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Roundtable 1: How to make the migration-development nexus work for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

Session 1.2: Engaging diasporas and migrants in development policies and programs – Their role? Their constraints?

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Team members in the preparation of the session: Governments of Armenia, Bangladesh, Canada, El Salvador, France, Egypt, Ghana, India and Israel

Input to the background paper has also been provided by the EC/ UN Joint Migration and Development Initiative and IFAD

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The 1.2 background paper has been prepared by the Governments of Mexico and the Netherlands in collaboration with the Task Force set up by the Greek Government for the preparation of the third meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD). It also draws on comments and input from the RT 1.2 team government members, as well as from input by international organizations. The background paper was drafted by Ms. Kathleen Newland, Migration Policy Institute (MPI). The sole objective of this document is to inform and facilitate the discussion of Roundtable session 1.2 during this third GFMD meeting. It is based on open sources and does not aim to be exhaustive. The organizers do not accept any liability or give any guarantee for the validity, accuracy and completeness of the information in this document. The document does not necessarily reflect the views of the GFMD organizers or the governments or organizations involved in the Roundtable sessions. As the GFMD is an informal process, the document also does not involve any commitment from any of the parties using it in the GFMD discussions. Any reproduction, partial or whole, of this document should cite the source.

Executive Summary

Building upon previous GFMD session in Brussels and Manila, this session focuses on practices for governments to engage with the diaspora for development and the appropriate efforts that can be undertaken by countries of origin and destination in this regard, taking into account the role and constraints of the diasporas. To that end, this paper will introduce a road map, which is not meant to be a “one size fits all” model, but rather an aid to fitting the many elements of a diaspora policy into a coherent strategy that must be adapted to the circumstances of different countries and diaspora populations. This paper concludes by proposing outcomes to be discussed at the GFMD session in Athens.

Background

The first two meetings of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), in 2007 and 2008, used a working definition of a diaspora as composed of “individuals originating from one country, living outside this country irrespective of their citizenship or nationality, who, individually or collectively, are or could be willing to contribute to the development of this country. Descendents of these individuals are also included in this definition.”¹

The first two meetings of the GFMD each acknowledged the important role of diasporas in the development of their countries of origin. The first, in Brussels, devoted a roundtable session to remittances and other diaspora resources while the second, in Manila, included a session on empowering diasporas to contribute to development. The two meetings promoted certain common understandings among the states participating in the GFMD (although these understandings are strictly informal and non-binding):

- *That diaspora activities and resources can and do contribute to development but are not a substitute for the policies and resources of governments (both country-of-origin and country-of-destination governments). Diaspora contributions are likely to be much more successful if they are facilitated by appropriate government policies and resources.*
- *That national governments are not the only important partners for diaspora groups. Provincial/state and municipal governments, private sector businesses; not-for-profit institutions such as universities, laboratories, hospitals and foundations; NGOs and, of course, civil society structures in communities of origin are also actual or potential partners in diaspora activities.*
- *That governments cannot expect to direct diaspora resources unilaterally, but can provide incentives to encourage diasporas to invest their money, time and knowledge in particular sectors or projects.*

¹ As the GFMD is an informal non-binding process, this working definition does not involve any commitment from the governments and agencies participating in its works, nor does it substitute for the usual terminology they may use in their regular practice. This working definition is conceived as global and included in the migration and development context. It further does not impose any exclusive identity to diaspora members, nor should it be interpreted as a hindrance to their full integration in the host society. Finally, this definition should not be interpreted as creating an obligation for diasporas to be involved in the development of their home country.

Introduction

Forms of diaspora engagement

Diaspora engagement comes in many forms. The forms of engagement that have been shown to contribute to the realization of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) — especially Goals #1,2,4,5 and 6ⁱ—include, most directly, the transfer of remittances from diaspora members to their families and communities in the country of origin. Although the impact of remittances, as well as the human and social costs involved in generating them, are complicated to assess, research has shown that, in some countries, remittances reduce the poverty headcount as well as the depth of poverty, and that a portion of remittance receipts often goes to education, health care and improved nutrition. Other kinds of financial flows also may contribute to development: direct business investment, investment in capital markets (including government bonds marketed specifically to the diaspora), and charitable contributions. These are particularly dependent on the existence of a conducive economic environment in the country of origin.

Less tangible assistance from diasporas are also sought after, in particular the knowledge and skills they transfer by teaching and training students or employees, mentoring young professionals, and involving people from the country of origin in international projects. The “scientific diaspora” from countries such as Armenia, China, India and South Korea have made important contributions to the development of their countries of origin, for example. Members of the diaspora may foster the creation or growth of sustainable agricultural, industrial or service enterprises through technical assistance or by helping to establish supply-chain connections, business partnerships, and markets for local products. They may also introduce new technologies to their countries of origin.

An additional kind of diaspora activity is participation in the development of civil society institutions through volunteerism and private philanthropy. Emigrants often acquire experience of civic participation and community organization while abroad, and then establish or contribute to structures that help to meet origin-community needs. Financial contributions from the diaspora also support many fledgling institutions.

Finally, some diaspora groups have become influential advocates in destination countries for the development needs of their country or community of origin. They have advocated for such development goals as trade agreements, debt relief, or increased foreign assistance.

Need for effective partnerships

The past several years have seen a proliferation of “diaspora and development” projects that attempt to harness the good will and resources of emigrants and their descendents for development purposes. Some have had positive, lasting effects, but the criticism is often heard that they add up to less than the sum of their parts. Projects are not coordinated with each other or with a larger strategic vision. As a result, lessons learned are not always applied to subsequent efforts or shared with other countries.

To ensure lasting, cumulative successes, every form of diaspora engagement a national government may pursue carries the need for effective partnerships with other actors—with members of the diaspora, of course; with subsidiary levels of government in the towns and provinces where diasporas live and from whence they originate; and with the intended beneficiaries of government-supported projects. This Roundtable session will therefore focus on strategies to build these partnerships, emphasizing governmental strategies and partnerships between and among governments of origin and destination countries. Although it is an important topic, this paper does not focus on the benefits that migrants may bring to destination countries.

With a view to providing a tool to help frame the discussion during GFMD Roundtable session 1.2, this background paper will present the idea of a schematic “road map” for diaspora engagement. The road map is not meant to be a “one size fits all” model, but rather an aid to fitting the many elements of a diaspora policy into a coherent strategy that must be adapted to the circumstances of different countries and diaspora populations. The road map will be permanently “under construction” as it is applied to specific cases.

Strategic policies and practices for diaspora partnerships

A government’s strategy for diaspora engagement needs to include the elements outlined in the “road map” for diaspora engagement (see **Figure 1, page 5**): identifying goals, mapping diaspora geography and skills, creating a relationship of trust between diasporas and governments of both origin and destination countries and, ultimately, mobilizing the diaspora to contribute to sustainable development and the realization of the MDGs. The “destination” of this strategy is arrived at when the diaspora is established as a true partner in the development of the country of origin. The strategy, throughout, must devote attention to strengthening the capacity of both government institutions and diaspora communities to work with each other and with other stakeholders. The central boxes in the diagram represent the steps or stages in a diaspora engagement strategy. Although it is presented as a series of stages, in fact the stages will proceed concurrently, loop back upon each other and leap-frog over any orderly progression from one step to the next. Above all, there must be constant feedback among the processes in each stage.

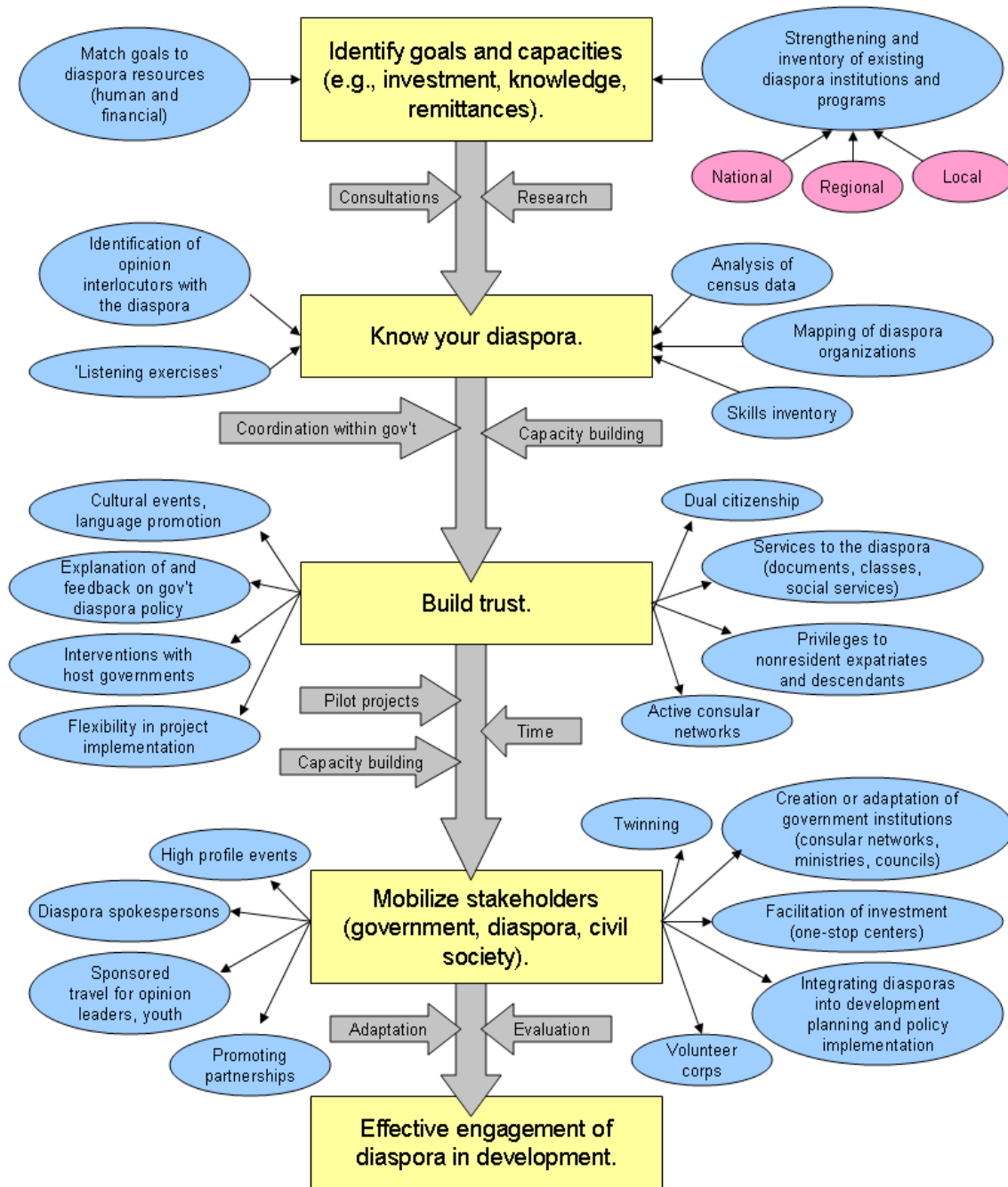
The arrows are the processes necessary to get from one stage into the next (remembering that no stage is ever complete, but must always remain in a state of dynamic interaction with the others). The balloons to the side are representative of the kind of actions associated with each stage of the strategy; they are neither exhaustive nor compulsory. Not all actions will be relevant for all governments, as some are specific to countries of origin and others to countries of destination. This section will be devoted to a detailed explanation of the different steps of the “road map” as well as of the actions associated with each step by providing best practices and lessons learned.

Identification of goals and capacities

The first step for any government in devising a strategy for stronger diaspora involvement in development is to identify its own goals in undertaking this pursuit, and define the appropriate internal tools and mechanisms (administrative, financial, etc.) underpinning this pursuit. For countries of destination, this approach may also be different according to the specificity and the origin of the respective diaspora it would decide to work with.

Governments can then ascertain how well their own capacities as well as those residing in the diaspora match the goals, and which it must seek to create or find from other actors.

Figure 1. A Roadmap for Diaspora Engagement



Source: Copyright Migration Policy Institute 2009.

If, for example, the goal of the country of origin is to reduce poverty or support the national balance of payments, the policy content and policy instruments will likely focus on remittances, business investments and, perhaps, capital markets. If, however, the goal is to improve the country's competitiveness, diaspora policy is more likely to emphasize the knowledge and skills that members of the diaspora can channel to the home country

through their own efforts or by connecting home-country institutions of learning and enterprise to advanced institutions in countries of destination where diaspora members have ties.

The government of the Philippines, for example, pursues a strategy of large-scale contract labor deployment overseas to reduce unemployment and maintain a stream of remittance income. India and China, by contrast, have in recent years given priority to encouraging diaspora entrepreneurs and highly skilled professionals to develop activities in their countries of origin. The government of Armenia has pursued a policy of developing contacts between home and diaspora professionals that have given possibility for career development of Armenian specialists, especially in High-tech and IT-sectors and attracting investments back home through contracts and projects in those fields on preferential terms. If the goal of a destination country is to give technical support to development, its diaspora engagement strategy is likely to focus on the highly skilled members of the diaspora. If, however, its priority is poverty reduction, it is likely to emphasize such measures as lowering the cost of remittances.

Beyond these domestic policy considerations, goals may also be identified as a result of dialogue between the governments of countries of origin and destination. For a country of origin, partnership with the country of destination could facilitate the involvement of diaspora via cooperation in spreading information in diaspora communities, enabling mobility, or providing financial support for joint projects involving the diaspora. For a country of destination that has decided to work with a specific diaspora, it is important to ascertain that the country of origin is willing to involve its diaspora in development activities, and that the goals defined by the destination country are consistent with the development priorities of the country of origin.

Know your diaspora

With reasonably clear goals articulated, the second, crucial step for a government is to “know your diaspora.” This involves serious data collection (a migrant/diaspora census), mapping the diaspora, skills and experience inventories, and extensive listening exercises to understand what the diaspora has to offer, what it is willing to offer and what it expects from the government in turn. It is crucial to acknowledge the diversity of diaspora agendas, interests and strategies. Through the establishment of a continuous dialogue with diasporas, government policies should try to reconcile—or at least understand—differing and often diverging views. Successful government interventions are the result of years of continuous, open engagement.

The Indian government, for example, tasked a High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora to analyze the location, situation and potential development role of the estimated 20 million non-resident Indians (NRIs) and Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs). The information resulting from this two-year exercise led to a new direction in diaspora policy, including the creation of a Ministry for Overseas Indian Affairs in 2004.

For countries of destination, a “know your diasporas” exercise will involve the collection of data in national censuses and surveys to reveal birthplace and ancestry of residents in the aggregate, as well as details on diaspora and migrant organizations, while protecting the identity of sub-groups and individuals. With this aggregate information, countries of destination can judge where best to invest their efforts to create partnerships with countries of origin. More detailed information about diaspora populations can be gathered by both origin and destination countries through cooperation with diaspora organizations such as professional associations, ‘home town’ clubs, and alumni associations. Embassies and consular offices can also play an important role in gathering information about diaspora capacities and interests. The government of Ghana is one of those that is directing resources to the management of migration data—particularly on creating profiles of the diaspora.

The numbers, distribution, skills, prosperity and level of integration of diaspora groups, along with their history, will define the universe of possibilities for diaspora partnerships. The institutional framework for a country of origin’s diaspora policy, for example, will be different for a large and concentrated diaspora residing chiefly in one or a few countries (Mexico) compared to a small and highly dispersed diaspora (Ghana). Similarly, the country of destination’s policy will differ depending on its historical relationship with its diasporas’ countries of origin, and on how successfully its diaspora communities are integrated in the destination country.

Trust building

The long-term project of building partnerships between governments and diasporas is much more likely to succeed if it has a strong foundation of good communication and mutual trust. Partnership is a two-way street. Too often, diasporas have felt that country-of-origin governments see them simply as cash cows, while some country-of-destination governments see diaspora groups demanding support on the basis of weak capabilities to deliver on mutual objectives. Both parties must feel that they are deriving value from the relationship. Building trust is therefore a necessary third element of diaspora engagement strategy.

For the governments of countries of origin, building trust with diaspora populations may also involve creating a welcoming environment for diaspora engagement in development activities. This would include steps to improve the business climate such as greater transparency in regulations and licensing requirements and more consistent application of property law. Other elements of good governance and rule of law are also important in attracting diaspora engagement. Countries of destination, collectively or individually, can support these efforts. The European Commission, for example, has funded projects in a number of migrant-origin countries, intended to help their governments develop sound legal, regulatory and/or institutional frameworks which will encourage increased investment of diaspora.

Few governments have taken the task of gaining the trust of a diaspora as seriously as the government of Mexico. From the late 1990s, the government has invested in communication with and service to the diaspora.¹¹ The creation of the Institute for Mexicans Abroad (IME) in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2002 brought coherence to

these efforts through a dense network of over 56 consular offices in North America. IME works with organized diaspora groups on the well-known 3x1 program, through which three levels of government match the contributions of migrant organizations to infrastructure projects in their communities of origin. Thousands of projects have been financed – 2,454 in 2008 alone, in 574 municipalities².ⁱⁱⁱ A key trust-building element of Mexico’s diaspora engagement strategy is the Consultative Council of IME, composed primarily of *elected* leaders from diaspora communities. The Council makes recommendations to the government about its policies towards the diaspora, and helps set IME’s agenda. The Council freely criticizes and disagrees with government positions when it feels called upon to do so, which—paradoxically perhaps—consolidates the confidence of both parties that disagreement does not mean alienation.

As Mexico's example shows, the establishment of joint diaspora-government decision making is extremely important in trust building. Partnerships of trust with diasporas can be built on many different kinds of programs. In addition to the kinds of services provided by IME, many governments offer privileges to non-resident citizens (and, in some cases, their descendents) such as duty-free imports of goods, tax-free repatriation of foreign-currency income, or the ability to buy assets or hold jobs normally reserved to resident citizens. Successful diaspora initiatives identified by the EC-UN Joint Migration and Development Initiative (JMIDI) reinforce the notion that there is a positive link between the existence of privileges for diasporas (such as the existence of a special fiscal regime, or streamlined processes to set up businesses) and the impact of their initiatives.^{iv}

Many governments sponsor cultural events in countries that have a diaspora presence; some, including Armenia and China, also promote learning of the “mother tongue” by subsidizing lessons and providing teachers and educational materials. Political rights are often a high priority of diasporas; governments can both demonstrate and earn trust by facilitating overseas voting and other forms of political participation by expatriates. Ghana, for example, passed a law permitting dual citizenship in 2000 and one giving voting rights to Ghanaians abroad in 2006. All of these activities are designed to instill a sense of belonging to and engagement with the country of origin.

For the governments of destination countries, building trust with engaged diaspora populations involves acknowledging that their dual sense of belonging and their commitment to their homelands is compatible with thorough integration in the adopted country. Dual citizenship is one signal that a government can send that it trusts people who have multiple commitments to meet all the obligations of full citizenship.

Destination-country governments can take the message of trust to a deeper level, and one more specific to development, by accepting that diasporas have expertise that may be an important input to development policies relating to their countries of origin. The UK country offices of the Department for International Development (DFID) are encouraged to consult diaspora groups in formulating DFID country assistance plans, for example. Furthermore, the UK supports a Senior Executive Service drawn from diaspora members to fill senior positions in governments of post-conflict countries.

2

Mobilization

With trust established between governments and diasporas, the characteristics of diasporas well understood, and the objectives of diaspora engagement clearly articulated, partnerships for development involving diasporas can be more successfully mobilized. This may require the creation of new government institutions or the revitalization of existing ones.^v Senegal was one of the first countries to pioneer this kind of arrangement, in 1993, with a landmark initiative that overhauled the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to include oversight for Senegalese Abroad. An ever-increasing number of migrant-origin countries are creating ministries dedicated to diaspora issues, such as India's Ministry for Overseas Indian Affairs, Mali's Ministry of Malians Abroad and African Integration, Armenia's Ministry of the Diaspora, and Haiti's Ministry of Haitians Living Abroad. Still more have offices at sub-ministerial level or special institutions elsewhere in government. Others have developed internet based networks or digital links with their diaspora. Delegates at the 2007 GFMD's diaspora roundtable repeatedly made the point that countries of origin need an institutional framework at the national level to communicate with the diaspora, coordinate policies, and provide support and follow-up for engagement.

Yet even if it succeeds in building trust, a governmental institution is not necessarily the most suitable channel for the mobilization of financial resources from the diaspora. Israel's experience has demonstrated the advantages of an independent and accountable mechanism for the transfer of philanthropic funds from the diaspora to the homeland—in Israel's case, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee is governed solely by diaspora members. Diaspora Jews and overseas Israelis raise annually well over US\$1 billion in philanthropic contributions, which suggests that formal institutions for diaspora engagement can usefully be augmented by initiatives from civil society. It is also worth noting that in a framework of origin-destination country cooperation, a non-governmental mechanism for the transfer of funds might enjoy tax benefits or incentives in some host countries.

Strategies for diaspora mobilization may include high-profile events, such as India's annual *Pravasi Bharatiya Divas*, the first of which brought together more than 2000 high-profile diaspora Indians for a conference attended by most of India's senior politicians and Nobel Prize winners of Indian nationality or descent. Since 1999, the Armenian Government has convened regular diaspora conferences representing over 7 million diaspora communities from all over the world. In addition, Armenia organizes regular Pan-Armenian Games that bring sportspeople of Armenian origin together in their country of origin. Jamaica, too, holds an annual celebratory gathering of expatriates and descendants of emigrants.

Governments of origin countries also may appoint well-known members of the diaspora as spokespersons on diaspora issues, sponsor travel to the country of origin for opinion leaders and youth, or establish diaspora volunteer programs. For example, Israel initiated a program in 2001, which provides free educational trips to Israel for young diaspora adults aged 18 to 26. Since its inception, over 200,000 diaspora youth from 52 countries have participated in the program. Origin-country governments may also establish centers

or programs to facilitate financial flows from the diaspora, such as India's "one-stop shop" for diaspora investors.

In 1992 the Armenian government undertook the establishment of the "Hayastan All Armenian Fund". The Fund became the structure that enables all Armenian inhabitants and migrants to personally contribute and get involved in the development of Armenia through projects in humanitarian, infrastructure building, education and cultural fields among others. Strategically important issues are defined by the [Board of Trustees](#) – the supreme governing body of the Fund, which includes prominent individuals both from Armenia and the diaspora. The Fund has [Affiliate offices](#) worldwide that work closely with the local Armenian communities abroad.

Country of destination governments, acting alone or in regional organizations, may partner with country of origin governments in development initiatives, particularly those that would benefit from technical assistance or financial support. Since 2006 the Netherlands has financially supported a project on "Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals" (TRQN), carried out by the International Organization for Migration in close cooperation with relevant government institutions in the target countries. The objective of the project is to encourage highly qualified and skilled migrants living in the Netherlands to support development efforts in their respective countries of origin through temporary returns and professional placements in priority areas of need. The countries included in this project (Sudan, Sierra Leone, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Afghanistan, Georgia and Ethiopia) find themselves in a post-crisis transition process. A number of parameters of success can be deduced from the first years' experiences. The participating migrants have indicated that they deeply value the chance to assist development in their home countries and at the same time feel more respected and integrated in the Netherlands as a result. The evaluation also shows that returning migrants can relate to capacity problems in local organisations relatively easily because of their cultural and linguistic affinities with the community of origin. It also cooperates with the IOM/MIDA program in Ghana to support the temporary return of medical doctors in the diaspora to Ghana.

Canada's International Development Agency (CIDA) uses a number of techniques to mobilize diaspora groups for development in their countries of origin. It directly funds development projects executed by diaspora groups with experience in implementing development projects, such as the Association of Haitian-Canadian Engineers and Scientists. Since many diaspora groups do not have relevant experience, however, CIDA has created tripartite partnerships among diaspora organizations, Canadian development NGOs and NGOs in the countries of origin. Linking diaspora organizations with Canadian NGOs with solid country experience has enabled diaspora organizations to gain the knowledge and expertise to seek donor funds and work independently. CIDA experience shows that many Haitian diaspora organizations, after working with Canadian CSOs for several years, now approach CIDA for separate funding to execute development projects in Haiti on their own.

Several donor governments have found it useful to create and/or support platforms to facilitate diaspora involvement in development, such as the Regroupement des Organismes Canado-Haïtiens pour le Développement in Canada and Connections for Development in the United Kingdom. These encourage the systematic sharing of ideas and information while also serving as vehicles for capacity-building. In some cases, they may also evolve into operational partners for national development agencies.

A number of donor governments or consortia, in experimenting with working with diaspora partners, have found that the most successful projects and programs are those that build on existing diaspora initiatives rather than starting anew at the initiative of government. The EC-UN JMDI observes that “Policies too strongly driven by governments can act as a deterrent for diaspora engagement.”^{vi}

Partners in diaspora engagement are by no means confined to the national governments of origin and destination countries. Of particular importance is the establishment of a link between local levels of government and diasporas given that diasporas’ contributions tend to be geared towards migrants’ places of origin. State/provincial or municipal governments may establish partnerships with diaspora populations to assist in development of the countries of origin. Twin Cities programs date back at least to World War II. The Partnership 2000 is an example of twinning between Israeli municipalities and diaspora communities. Programs have organizational structures that feature representation from both sides, whether on governing boards or professional committees consulting on program development and implementation. This allows for the voice and influence of both sides in key areas such as the identifying of needs, priority setting and resource allocation.

What is novel, however, is the interest in twinning with municipalities that are large and/or recent sources of immigrants. The Dutch municipalities have established relations with local governments in countries of immigration such as Turkey, Suriname and Morocco. At present, there are some 39 diaspora-focused municipal twinning initiatives in the Netherlands, and their number is increasing.^{vii} City-to-city partnership projects often focus on strengthening local governance. For instance, the municipality of Zeist advises their partner municipality in Berkane, Morocco on how to improve waste management. A cleaner environment contributes to realizing the health-related MDGs (MDGs 4-6).

Suggestions for policy makers

One of the most serious constraints on diaspora engagement in development is administrative, financial, technical, and other kinds of capacity. The governments of many countries of destination have minimal official structures—or none at all—for relating to diaspora populations in the context of development. Creating an office in the national development assistance agency to relate to diasporas is one step toward a more systematic way of engaging diasporas. The governments of origin countries may have the structures, but do not have the fiscal capacity to staff them adequately or provide them with operational funds. Donor governments and donor agencies could assist the

governments of countries of origin, both technically and financially, to strengthen their diaspora institutions.

Capacity-building is also an issue within diaspora communities. Many non-governmental diaspora organizations are small, poor, and reliant entirely on volunteers. Even those that are larger and better-funded and -staffed commonly have little experience of development work or the often complicated procedures for working with donor agencies to actually implement projects. Both origin and destination governments that want to work with diasporas on development have a stake in developing the capacity of diaspora organizations to participate in both planning and implementing development activities, and to ensure that diaspora issues are taken into account and have a focal point within their own ministries.

Women in diaspora communities may have specific capacity-building needs, which differ from those of their male counterparts. The survival of gender stereotypes and norms as well as a certain gender division of labour within migrant communities can make it difficult for women to fully participate in diaspora associations' activities. In some cases, migrant women prefer to set up their own associations, often with the double objective of assisting newcomers in their integration to the receiving society and developing activities for the benefit of their communities of origin.

Donor governments and institutions may also wish to use diaspora policies to look again at procedures and how to simplify or change them. The aforementioned EC-UN JMDI is one such window; in addition to funding, it provided technical support to migrant organizations in how to prepare responses to EC-UN JMDI's call for proposals in 2009. Although 'capacity building' appears only once, in a process arrow, on the road map for diaspora engagement (See Figure 1), in fact the entire process should be one of continuous capacity building. As much as possible, concrete capacity-building provisions should be part of any government plan for engaging diasporas, and should be sustained over time. The needs of diasporas can evolve: this should be recognized and provided for on an on-going basis. Furthermore, as part of the efforts to reinforce cooperation and policy coherence between the governments of sending and receiving countries, provision of capacity building to diasporas should be a joint effort.

Many of the process and action elements related to the four stages of the road map are relevant to governments of both origin and destination countries. Most of them are suitable for bilateral or multilateral partnerships and some, such as twinning arrangements, require them. A commitment to cooperation throughout the implementation of a diaspora engagement strategy would, in itself, promote the realization of MDG #8: "Building a global partnership for development" in a world of increasing transnationalism.

Questions to guide the RT discussion

- *How can members of the diaspora most effectively be involved in development activities? What are the major obstacles to diaspora engagement in the development of countries of origin?*
- *How do we replicate the steps of the 'roadmap' in respective situations of the session's participants to achieve concrete partnerships and outcomes, policy making, etc.? What are the possible constraints?*
- *What are the prerequisites for the creation of effective bilateral partnerships for the engagement of diasporas in the development of their countries of origin? What are the limitations of such partnerships and how can countries overcome them?*

Proposed outcomes at national, bilateral or multilateral level; research; partnerships, etc.

- *Establish a handbook on involving diasporas in development activities.*
- *Create partnerships at national or bilateral level for the involvement of diasporas in development activities.*

ⁱ They are: 1) Eradicate extreme hunger and poverty, 2) Achieve universal primary education, 4) Reduce child mortality, 5) Improve maternal health, 6) Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.

ⁱⁱ See Carlos Gonzalez Gutierrez, “The Institute of Mexicans Abroad: An Effort to Empower the Diaspora”, in Dovelyn R. Agunias, ed., Closing the Distance: Diaspora Policies in the 21st Century (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, September, 2009).

ⁱⁱⁱ The 3x1 program is best understood as a solidarity program rather than a development program, however, as the choice of projects follows a logic of collaboration and demonstration of ties between diaspora and “home-town” communities rather than an economic logic. Some critics charge that it diverts government development resources to communities that are not the neediest, since they are already in receipt of remittances and charitable contributions from migrant “Home Town Associations”.

^{iv} This global and multi-annual initiative is funded by the EC and implemented by UNDP in partnership with IOM, ILO, UNFPA and UNHCR. It is engaged in the provision of direct financial support to concrete projects in the field of migration and development, and the identification and analysis of good practices with a view to drawing lessons learned to ultimately feed into policy making at national and international levels.

^v See Dovelyn R. Agunias, “Institutionalizing Diaspora Engagement within Governments” in Agunias, op. cit.

^{vi} EC-UN JMDI contribution to GFMD background paper 1.2. ‘Mainstreaming migration in development planning—key actors, key strategies, key actions.’ (undated).

^{vii} Hoetjs Ben, “Trends and Issues in Municipal Twinning from the Netherlands”, *Habitat International*, 2009, pp. 157-164.

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