Developing a Road Map for Engaging Diasporas in Development

A HANDBOOK FOR POLICYMAKERS AND PRACTITIONERS IN HOME AND HOST COUNTRIES

Dovelyn Rannveig Agunias and Kathleen Newland

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

MIGRATION POLICY INSTITUTE

Chapter 4: Building Diaspora Institutions: Carving a Niche in the Inner Workings of Government

An increasing number of countries have established institutions to facilitate ties with their diasporas more systematically. The number of countries with diaspora institutions has increased, especially in the past ten years, and spans multiple continents. From Armenia to Haiti, this chapter reviews the objectives and activities of 77 diaspora-engaging institutions in 56 countries.[111]

Although far from exhaustive, the analysis shows the various ways governments choose to institutionalize their relations with diasporas. The institutions they have created occupy different levels of government and exhibit diverse priorities and degrees of organization. For instance, some are concerned only with their citizens abroad while others specifically target permanent residents, naturalized citizens, and second and later generations. Countries such as Mexico, China, and the Philippines have multiple institutions and represent diasporas at various levels of government.

The real reach and effectiveness of these diaspora-centered institutions are hard to pinpoint, as is their impact on development efforts at home. Evaluations rarely exist; those that do are typically not available for public consumption. The limited discussions in both academic and policy literature usually employ a descriptive, nonevaluative tone. Nearly a third of the institutions reviewed here are also fairly new, having been established since 2005.

Even at this nascent stage, however, we can extract some insights that may be useful for origin governments as they think about, design, and/or manage diaspora institutions. No matter what kind of diaspora populations they have — highly educated or not, concentrated in a few countries or spread all over the world — experiences of countries in this review point to the importance of preparation and planning, of valuing the process as much as the outcome, of investing in capacity building, and of linking institutions to national development priorities.

1 Types of Diaspora Institutions

National bodies established to address diaspora issues are found in both destination countries as well as countries of origin. A survey of states participating in the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), conducted for this handbook, identifies more than 400 institutions in 56 countries that are directly engaging diasporas through various programs and policies. Of these institutions, 77 were created specifically to engage diasporas on a formal basis.

These diaspora institutions are of roughly six types, depending on whether they function at a ministry, subministry, national, or local level; are part of a consular network; or are a quasi-governmental institution. Understanding the differences between these types is useful: an institution's position within the government hierarchy in many ways affects its influence within and outside the government, as well as its mandate and effectiveness.

A. Ministry-Level Institutions

Since 2001 an increasing number of developing countries have established ministries whose explicit purpose is to address the needs of diaspora populations. Twenty-six of the countries examined have a separate diaspora ministry (see Table 1). Twelve of these ministries are dedicated solely to diasporas.

Table 1: Countries with Ministry-Level Diaspora Institutions

Country	Institution	Stock of emigrants, 2010	Stock of emigrants as % of total population 2010	Top destination, 2010
Armenia*	Ministry of Diaspora	870,200	28.2	Russian Federation
Algeria	Ministry of National Solidarity, Family and the National Community Abroad	1,211,100	3.4	France
Azerbaijan*	State Committee on Affairs of the Diaspora	1,432,600	16	Russian Federation
Bangladesh*	Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment	5,380,200	3.3	India
Benin	Ministry for Foreign Affairs, African Integration, the Francophone Community, and Beninese Abroad	513,600	5.8	Nigeria
Comoros	Ministry of External Relations and Cooperation of the Diaspora	38,600	5.6	France
Dominica	Ministry of Trade, Industry, Consumer, Diaspora Affairs	69,300	104.1%**	United States
Georgia*	State Ministry for Diaspora Issues	1,057,700	25.1	Russian Federation
Haiti*	Ministry of Haitians Living Abroad	1,009,400	9.9	United States
India*	Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs	11,357,500	0.9	United Arab Emirates
Indonesia	Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration	2,502,300	1.1	Malaysia
Iraq	Ministry of Migration and Displaced	1,545,800	4.9	Islamic Republic of Iran
Israel	Ministry of Information and Diaspora	1,019,900	14	West Bank and Gaza
Lebanon	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants	664,100	15.6	United States
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*	Agency for Emigration	447,100	21.9	Italy
Mali	Ministry of Malians Abroad and African Integration	1,012,700	7.6	Côte d'Ivoire
Morocco*	Ministry Charged with the Moroccan Community Residing Abroad	3,106,600	9.3	France
Niger	Ministry of African Integration and Nigerians Abroad	386,900	2.4	Nigeria

Pakistan*	Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis	4,677,000	2.5	India
Senegal*	Ministry of Senegalese Abroad	632,200	4.9	Gambia
Serbia	Ministry of Religion and Diaspora	196,000	2	Austria
Slovenia*	Government's Office for Slovenians Abroad	132,000	6.5	Germany
Somalia	Ministry for Diaspora and Community Affairs	812,700	8.7	Ethiopia
Sri Lanka*	Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare	1,847,500	9.1	Saudi Arabia
Syrian Arab Republic	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates	944,600	4.2	Jordan
Tunisia	Ministry of Social Affairs, Solidarity, and Tunisians Abroad	651,600	6.3	France

*Ministry dedicated to diaspora. ** According to the World Bank, the stock of emigrants as percentage of population is defined as the ratio of emigrants of a country to the population—not the sum of population and migrants. Because of this definition, this ratio may exceed 100 percent in certain cases.

Sources: MPI-IOM Questionnaire, Part I, 2011 for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Benin, Comoros, India, Iraq, Israel, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Slovenia; with author research for the remaining countries; for data on emigrants and their destinations, see World Bank, *Migration and Remittances Factbook 2011* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2011).

By establishing a separate, ministry-level diaspora institution, a government recognizes that traditional ministries such as labor and foreign affairs cannot manage the expatriate portfolio in all its dimensions. This review suggests that unlike other diaspora institutions occupying lower positions in the hierarchy, diaspora ministries generally enjoy more consistent budgetary allocation, more support from the top of government, and, interestingly, a more explicit development-oriented mandate. Their existence also signifies that the government accords diaspora engagement the highest political importance (which may mark a shift in policy priority, as some of these ministries started out as smaller offices within other ministries).

An early example of a diaspora ministry established in the developing world is the Ministry of Haitians Living Abroad.[112] Created in 1995, the ministry aims to encourage the participation of diaspora communities in technical and professional activities that advance Haiti's development efforts. The ministry informs the diaspora of local realities and changes in Haiti and encourages its members to return to and invest in the country.

A more recent example is India's Ministry for Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA). Established in 2004 to address the lack of government policy coordination on migration, the ministry has programs that reach out to the Indian diaspora, in particular to youth. One program, Know India, is a three-week internship to promote social, economic, and cultural awareness of India among the second and subsequent generations of

emigrants. Another initiative, the Scholarship Program for Diaspora Children, is designed to assist emigrants in enrolling their children in Indian institutions of higher education. Other activities range from hosting an annual diaspora conference to facilitating diaspora investments.[113]

Similar institutions can be found in Serbia (Ministry of Religion and Diaspora)[114] and Armenia (Ministry of Diaspora).[115] Like India, these countries have large, generally highly educated, and/or well-financed diaspora populations abroad (either in absolute terms or as a percentage of the population). As might be expected, the ministries focus on developing stronger economic links with the diaspora, mainly by encouraging the transfer of financial and/or human capital. For instance, the Serbian minister highlighted the return of young experts and the prevention of further brain drain as the ministry's most pressing task.[116] To this end, the ministry created an economic council that included experts from both the homeland and the diaspora. It also has plans to establish a virtual business network that would publish information on relevant organizations, individuals, and investment opportunities.[117]

Bangladesh's Ministry for Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment and Sri Lanka's Ministry of Foreign Employment, Promotion, and Welfare are unusual because, unlike many of their counterparts, they focus mainly on ensuring the welfare of their expatriate workers and on increasing their ability to find suitable employment abroad. Both ministries attend to complaints from migrant workers, provide international job placement services, and conduct training programs.[118] The Bangladeshi ministry also operates a Wage Earners' Welfare Fund financed by membership fees from migrant workers, interest earned from the deposits of recruiting agencies' licenses, and personal and institutional contributions. The fund covers the cost of providing financial, legal, and other assistance mainly to distressed migrant workers.[119]

Hybrid Ministries

Some countries opt for more innovative institutional structures at the ministry level. Instead of creating a separate diaspora ministry, they combine diaspora affairs with other areas of focus, such as labor, tourism, or foreign affairs, to form a hybrid ministry. For instance, in 2000, both Mali (Ministry of Malians Abroad and African Integration) and Lebanon (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants) created hybrid ministries.[120]

Mali's ministry aims to protect temporary and permanent emigrants while they are abroad and to facilitate their return and reintegration into Malian society. It encourages the transfer of critical skills by participating in the United Nations' Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN) program, which facilitates the temporary return of expatriates wishing to work in the areas of health, education, agriculture, and the private sector.[121]

In 2009 Benin created the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, African Integration, the Francophone Community, and Beninese Abroad to manage its relations with the diaspora. The ministry's objectives, among others, are to provide humanitarian assistance to Beninese abroad in the case of mass deportations or expulsions, to inform the diaspora about government policies, and to propose measures that facilitate the diaspora's contribution to Benin's development.[122]

Similar hybrid setups can also be found in Tunisia (Ministry of Social Affairs and Solidarity and Tunisians Abroad), Somalia (Ministry for Diaspora and Community Affairs), and Dominica (Ministry of Trade, Industry, Consumer, and Diaspora Affairs). Typically, these hybrid ministries contain agencies dedicated solely to diasporas, such as Benin's Directorate for Relations with Beninese Abroad, Tunisia's Office for Tunisians Abroad, and Lebanon's Department for Diaspora Affairs.

Creating a hybrid ministry can be a cost-effective approach because it elevates the government's diaspora portfolio while avoiding the larger administrative and legislative expense normally associated with establishing a new and separate institution. Moreover, a hybrid ministry is positioned to make policies that coherently address the interests of both the government and the diaspora across the areas of focus (for example, trade and consumer affairs) over which the hybrid ministry presides. Ideally, the approach can minimize turf wars that may arise when two or three ministries deal with the diaspora population in different ways.

B. Institutions at the Subministry Level

Other countries have institutionalized diaspora engagement at the subministry level by creating special offices, typically under the ministry of labor and/or foreign affairs. Twenty-one such institutions were identified in 17 countries.

The Philippines was one of the first countries to create such institutions. Faced with increasing problems brought about by a rapidly

expanding temporary worker population abroad, the government established the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) in 1981 as an agency under the Department of Labor and Employment. Tasked with protecting Filipino migrant workers, OWWA provides them with various services, from repatriation to business loans.[123] Another office, the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), was created a year later. POEA has the sole authority to regulate temporary overseas employment, including recruitment agencies.[124] Another body, the Office of the Undersecretary for Migrant Workers' Affairs, was created in 1995, this time under the Department of Foreign Affairs. Like OWWA, the office focuses on migrant protection, mainly through providing legal advice and judicial support to distressed workers.[125] It was created as a response to increasing reports of maltreatment, illegal recruitment, and even deaths of temporary workers.

As with ministry-level institutions, a number of countries have set up diaspora offices since 2001. A review of the missions and activities of 17 countries with diaspora offices at the subministry level (see Table 2) suggests that, like the Philippines, a number focus on protection.

Table 2: Countries with Subministry-Level Diaspora Institutions

Country	Institution(s)	Stock of emigrants, 2010	Stock of emigrants as % of total population, 2010	Top destination, 2010
Albania	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Diaspora Department	1,438,300	45.4	Greece
Brazil	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Undersecretary General for Brazilian Communities Abroad	1,367,100	0.7	United States
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, Department of Diaspora	1,461,000	38.9	Croatia
Burundi	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate of Diaspora	356,000	4.2	United Republic of Tanzania
Chile	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, General Office for Consular and Immigration Services; Office for Chileans Abroad. Ministry of the Interior and Public Security, Department of Immigration and Migration	633,600	3.7	Argentina
Egypt	Ministry of Manpower and Emigration, Emigration Sector	3,739,100	4.4	Saudi Arabia
El Salvador	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Vice Ministry for Salvadorans Abroad	1,269,100	20.5	United States

Ethiopia	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Diaspora Affairs Directorate General; Ministry of Capacity Building, Diaspora Coordinating Office	620,100	0.7	Sudan
Eritrea	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department of Eritreans Abroad	941,200	18	Sudan
Germany	German Technical Cooperation, Sector Project on Migration and Development	3,540,600	4.3	United States
Ghana	Ministry of Interior, National Migration Unit	824,900	3.4	Nigeria
Mexico	Secretariat of Foreign Affairs, Sub secretariat for North America; Institute for Mexicans Abroad	11, 859,200	10.7	United States
Netherlands	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Migration and Development Division	993,400	6	Germany
Peru	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Undersecretary for Peruvians Abroad	1,090,800	3.7	United States
Philippines	Department of Labor, Overseas Workers Welfare Administration; Department of Labor, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration; Department of Foreign Affairs, Office of the Undersecretary for Migrant Workers' Affairs	4,275,200	4.6	United States
Romania	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department for Relations with the Romanians Abroad	2,769,400	13.1	Italy
Uruguay	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate General for Consular Affairs and Expatriate Ties	353,400	10.5	Argentina

Sources: IOM-MPI Questionnaire, Part I, 2011, except for Brazil, Egypt, and Peru; author research for those countries; for data on emigrants and their destinations, see World Bank, *Migration and Remittances Factbook 2011* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2011).

Although migrant protection remains an important facet of their work, other offices at the subministry level have diversified their portfolios by adopting initiatives that facilitate their diasporas' integration into host-country societies and participation in development activities at home. A good example is Mexico's Institute for Mexicans Abroad (IME), a decentralized body of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that aims to elevate the standard of living of Mexican communities by promoting their integration in the destination country. Created in 2003, IME formalized a long-standing Mexican government policy to gain the trust and support of an increasingly influential expatriate population who live mainly in Mexico's most important neighbor, the United States.

IME provides an array of services centered on health, education, and financial services. In addition, along with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, IME has created the *Practical Guide for the Mexican Traveler* (*Guía Práctica para el Viajero Mexicano*), which touches on issues of migration as well as casual travel.[126] IME's website also provides information about remittances to Mexico, an overview of the government's Tres por Uno (3x1) investment matching program (in which municipal, state, and national governments together give $3 for every $1 a migrant invests in a public-improvement project at home), and consular support, among other issues.[127] In the long term, the Mexican government hopes to "create a strong relationship with the communities" to pursue joint objectives in both Mexico and the United States.[128]

Chile's Office for Chileans Abroad, on the other hand, has a more explicit development mandate. Established in 2001 as part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' General Office for Consular and Immigration Services, its main purpose is not only to attend to the "demands and needs of communities of Chilean residents abroad" but also to "encourage their participation in national development."[129] Ethiopia has a similar agency. Established in 2002 under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, one of the four main objectives of the Ethiopian Expatriate Affairs' office is encouraging "the active involvement of the Ethiopians in Diaspora in socioeconomic activities of the country."[130]

The activities and general orientation of subministry diaspora institutions seem to follow the mandate and priorities of their mother agency, which may or may not include a focus on development at home. Interestingly, this review found no diaspora institution directly under a government body or ministry that is mainly responsible for development planning.

C. Other Government Institutions at the National Level

Some diaspora institutions fall short of full ministry standing but still report directly to the highest executive body. These institutions enjoy a fairly influential position within the government. Seventeen countries in this review had such institutions (see Table 3). For instance, the Philippines' Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) is directly under the Office of the President. Established in 1980 as part of an overall government strategy that included OWWA and POEA, the commission has a dual role of promoting both economic and cultural ties between the Philippines and its diaspora. Unlike OWWA and POEA, however, CFO focuses mainly on Filipinos who have either established permanent residence or acquired citizenship in the destination country.

Table 3: Countries with Other Types of Diaspora Institutions at the National Level

Country	Institutions	Stock of emigrants, 2010	Stock of emigrants as % of total population, 2010	Top destination, 2010
Bulgaria	State Agency for Bulgarians Abroad	1,200,600	16	Turkey
Chile	Interministerial Committee for Chilean Communities Abroad	633,600	3.7	Argentina
China	State Council, Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the State Council; Overseas Chinese Affairs Committee	8,343,600	0.60	United States
Egypt	Higher Committee on Migration	3,739,100	4.4	Saudi Arabia
Guatemala	National Council for Migrants from Guatemala	871,900	6.1	United States
Hungary	The Secretariat of Hungarians Living Abroad	462,700	4.6	Germany
Mali	Consultation Framework on Migration	1,012,700	7.6	Côte d'Ivoire
Mexico	National Council on Mexican Communities Abroad	11, 859,200	10.7	United States
Morocco	Interdepartmental Committees	3,106,600	9.3	France
Niger	Committee in Charge of Migration	386,900	2.4	Nigeria
Nigeria	Technical Working Group and Interministerial Committee on Migration	1,000,000	0.6	United Stated
Philippines	Office of the President, Commission on Filipinos Overseas; Committee on Overseas Workers Affairs	4,275,200	4.6	United States
Poland	Interministerial Team on Migration Questions	3,102,600	8.2	Germany
Portugal	Council of Ministers, High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue	2,230,000	20.8	France
Sierra Leone	Office of the President, Office of the Diaspora	267,000	4.6	Guinea
Slovakia	Government Office of the Slovak Republic, Office for the Slovaks Living Abroad	520,100	9.6	Czech Republic
Switzerland	Federal Office for Migration	407,800	5.4	Spain

Sources: MPI-IOM Questionnaire, Part I, 2011, for all countries except China, Egypt, Mali, Morocco, Niger, and Sierra Leone; author research for those countries; for data on emigrants and their destinations, see World Bank, *Migration and Remittances Factbook 2011* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2011).

Similarly, Sierra Leone's Office of the Diaspora is directly under the Office of the President. It encourages the return of professionals and other experts from the diaspora in order to fill critical human resources gaps

within the country's government. Specifically, the office provides a list of jobs in government departments, a list of educational institutions and professional associations in Sierra Leone, contact details of government officials, and information on dual citizenship and other acts.[131]

China's Overseas Chinese Affairs Office (SCOCAO) is uniquely positioned within the Chinese central government. SCOCAO is an administrative office under the State Council, the country's highest executive body (which includes the premier and ministers, among others). A SCOCAO staff of 120 supports the premier and assists in a wide range of activities. These include establishing databases of information categorized by city, county, and province (so that overseas Chinese can find their ancestral roots, homes, and properties), and operating two universities catering mainly to the Chinese diaspora.[132]

Other governments have created intergovernmental and parliamentary committees to coordinate actions on both the executive and legislative fronts. Created in 2002, the National Council on Mexican Communities Abroad includes the secretaries of various ministries, including the interior; foreign affairs; finance and public credit; agriculture, livestock, and rural development, fisheries and nutrition; public education; environment and natural resources; health; tourism; and labor and social welfare.[133]

In Chile, the Interministerial Committee for Chilean Communities Abroad formulates public policies on the diaspora and is composed of 12 public institutions that in some way or other are responsible for addressing the needs and demands of the nearly 1 million Chileans residing abroad. Committee members include the Directorate for Civil Registration and Identity, which issues ID cards and passports and registers marriages and births; the National Health Fund, which provides publicly funded national health care coverage; the Ministry of the Interior via its Committee for Human Rights, which is responsible for exiles who were political prisoners or were tortured during the 1973-89 dictatorship; and the National Women's Service, which protects women abroad and helps them to realize their gender rights as outlined by international agreements.[134]

Some governments have also established special committees within their legislative branches. For instance, Poland formed the Polish Diaspora Commission in the lower house of its parliament to engage on policy matters pertaining to the diaspora.[135] China (Overseas Chinese Affairs Committee) and the Philippines (Committee on Overseas Workers Affairs) have similar committees within their legislative bodies. Experience from these three countries suggests that such committees ease the passage of

critical legislation that supports diaspora interests and, in turn, enhances their contribution to development.

D. Institutions at the Local Level

Diaspora engagement does not stop at the national or federal level. Studies have shown that diasporas are often inclined to engage at the local level, usually in their place of origin, where they are familiar with the context and, in many cases, still have family ties.[136] Thus, it is not surprising that special offices for diasporas have sprung up locally. Five countries in this review have created institutions at the local level (see Table 4).

Table 4: Countries with Diaspora Institutions at the Local Level

Country	Institutions	Stock of emigrants, 2010	Stock of emigrants as % of total population, 2010	Top destination, 2010
El Salvador	National Secretariat for Migrants (various states)	1,269,100	20.5	United States
India	Government of Kerala, Department of Non-Resident Keralites' Affairs; Government of Gujarat, Non-Resident Indian Division	11,357,500	0.9	United Arab Emirates
China	The Overseas Chinese Affairs Office (SOCAO) of Shanghai Municipal People's Government	8,343,600	0.60	United States
Somalia	Office for Development and Partnership with the Puntland Diaspora Community.	812,700	8.7	Ethiopia
Mexico	National Coordination for State-level Migrant Affairs Offices (various states)	11, 859,200	10.7	United States

Sources: El Salvador data from IOM-MPI Questionnaire, Part I, 2011; author research for remaining countries; for data on emigrants and their destinations, World Bank, *Migration and Remittances Factbook 2011* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2011).

China has one of the most expansive networks of local diaspora offices. SCOCAO, described earlier, is replicated in 30 provinces as well as in some cities and townships across China. Although local diaspora offices get their overall policy direction from the central government office, they function with relative independence and are allowed to adopt innovative methods to attract diaspora investments. For example, since 2004, the Economic and Technology Division of the Shanghai government's Overseas Chinese Office has strengthened alumni associations in the United States for all of its universities. The goal is to let Chinese graduates living in

the United States know about business and research opportunities in Shanghai.[137] To coordinate its implementation of national diaspora policies, the central government annually convenes local diaspora offices.[138]

Some states in India have diaspora offices, the most active of which can be found in Kerala and Gujarat. The Kerala government created the Department of Non-Resident Keralites' Affairs (NORKA) in 1996, primarily to protect its migrant workers from abuse and exploitation. NORKA addresses complaints against illegal recruitment agencies, provides assistance to stranded Keralites, and facilitates the repatriation of bodies. It also runs an insurance program for unemployed returnees, unskilled laborers, and domestic workers.[139]

In Gujarat, the local government created a Non-Resident Indian (NRI) Division within its administration department. A review of its objectives suggests a stronger focus on development. Using a database that identifies migrants' technical and professional skills, the NRI Division seeks to strengthen ties with Gujaratis abroad. For a $5 fee, the office also issues a "Gujarat card" to Gujaratis living in other Indian states and outside India. Cardholders receive special treatment at Gujarat government offices and substantial discounts at local hotels and shops.[140]

Similarly, in Mexico, 29 of the 32 states and the Federal District have established state-level offices or ministries that address migrant or expatriate affairs and have a national coordinating secretariat.[141] The local offices aim to strengthen cooperation on migrant protection both within Mexico and abroad. For instance, the coordinating secretariat has issued pronouncements to review proposals of Mexico's bilateral agreements that affect migrant welfare and to create an office in the United States that will strengthen Mexican-American grassroots organizations.

Local-level diaspora institutions are perfectly positioned to design programs in tune with home-country community needs and opportunities. With proper coordination, they can complement the activities of higher-level institutions and even share the cost of engagement. Diaspora members can also more easily monitor their contributions and investments at the local level and more effectively hold their officials accountable, thus increasing the likelihood of successful programs.

E. Consular Networks

For some governments, full diaspora engagement requires creating and developing institutions that function not only at home but also abroad.

This approach requires capitalizing on existing structures in consulates, which remain the most important interlocutors for diaspora populations.

A 2005 survey of IOM member governments revealed that 76 percent of them had consular services interacting with citizens abroad.[142] A review of the embassy and consulate websites of countries in this study suggests that many nations have an active consular presence in the top destinations of their respective diasporas. More than ever, governments are instructing their consulates to interact with emigrants systematically, to provide help in destination countries, and to ensure that migrants maintain their links to the homeland.

1. Providing Help in Destination Countries

The 1964 Vienna Convention on Consular Affairs outlines the specific functions of consulates, foremost of which is to protect the interest of the state and its nationals abroad. One of the primary roles of consulates is to assist distressed nationals and protect their rights in receiving states. For example, the network of 50 Mexican consulates in the United States focuses on assisting and advising Mexicans on US laws and their legal rights in the United States. A particular concern includes Mexicans facing capital punishment. Consulates offer legal assistance to nationals in detention, provide safe repatriation, locate missing persons, assist hospitalized persons, and protect minors.

Recently, consulates have been providing services to the diaspora that may not have been contemplated in the drafting of the 1964 Vienna Convention. These new and expanded consular services and programs include those that help migrants better integrate or live in destination countries, whether through education and skills training, health assistance, the provision of ID cards, community-building events, or counseling for families experiencing domestic problems.

Of consulates that provide their nationals with education and skill training, Mexico's promote adult and children's education programs, many of which focus on English language skills. Other programs focus, for example, on leadership training, financial literacy, and money management skills. Mexican consulates also distribute Spanish-language books to various libraries in the United States where there are large concentrations of Mexican immigrants. Meanwhile, the Ecuadorean consulate in Milan provides leadership and skill training and facilitates Italian language programs for its nationals to promote their social and economic integration in Italy.

Some consulates provide health assistance to their nationals. For example, the Mexican consulate in New York has a Ventanilla de Salud, or health kiosk, that provides Mexican immigrants with basic medical advice, vaccinations, and referrals to medical facilities. Mexico started an annual Binational Health Week in the United States to promote access to quality health care for underserved immigrants by highlighting health and education activities such as workshops, insurance and hospital referrals, vaccinations, and a policy forum for medical practitioners. The consulates of Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru participate in the health program as well. Paraguay has an emergency hotline for citizens who are distressed, including those who are hospitalized. Almost all countries provide medical visitations and guidance to their nationals.

Consular identification cards for use in destination countries have become increasingly popular in recent years. For example, Guatemalan consulates issue a consular identification card alongside passports. Mexican consulates also issue consular IDs, called matriculas consular, which are accepted as an official, government-issued form of identification and can be used to open bank accounts and support other transactions for which a secure form of personal identification is required.

Some consulates help connect migrant communities through cultural events and community gatherings. For example, Paraguayan embassies have hosted organized cultural events — such as the celebration of Paraguay's bicentennial — for the Paraguayan diaspora in Buenos Aires and hosted orchestra performances in Madrid. Mexican consulates engage with various hometown associations (HTAs) in Mexico to host cultural events and conferences in the United States, thus helping sometimes disparate Mexican immigrant groups to interact and strengthen their cooperation.

A number of consulates have established community houses. For example, Ecuador's embassy — through its Ecuador Houses in London, Madrid, Caracas, and Santiago — provides care and protection for its emigrants, as well as information on community resources. In Madrid, the Ecuador House hosts several kinds of community gatherings and provides information on employment opportunities and student services. Likewise, the Israeli consulates in Los Angeles and New York and Israel's embassy in Paris promote Jewish community interaction by hosting cultural activities in Israel Houses. Nowadays, such activities may be in-person or virtual. For example, the Israel House in Los Angeles created an online networking site known as Citizen Ambassador, which is now connected to Facebook.

Many consulates assist migrants in difficult situations. The Embassy of the Dominican Republic in the United States provides counseling and information about deportations to prisoners and their relatives.[143] In the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the Indian Embassy offers a hotline for "women and housemaids in distress" while the Philippines' consulate there maintains a safe house for migrants who escape abusive employers.[144]

Some consulates also assist in migrant disputes, including domestic ones. For example, the Philippines' consulate in Seoul mediates personal disputes between Filipinos, and assists the resolution of marital problems of, for example, Filipino female spouses and their Korean husbands. In some cases, the Philippines' consulate provides a safe house for battered wives and assists them in returning to the Philippines if they wish to do so. Many consulates also maintain emergency hotlines that can be accessed 24 hours a day.

2. Links to the Homeland

An important function of consulates, as outlined in the 1964 Vienna Convention, is to promote business, economic, cultural, and scientific relations between the sending state and the receiving state through friendly relations. For most consulates in this review, however, activities focus on linking emigrants — and their descendants — to the homeland. They do so by providing information on developments at home and by implementing programs on culture, education, and economic development. Consular activities, for example, facilitate sponsorship of cultural shows, language training, and overseas voting.

The Philippine, Chinese, and Sierra Leonean embassies in the United States post news updates from home on their websites. The Bangladeshi High Commission in India supports and/or conducts book fairs, cultural festivals, and celebrations of Independence Day and International Mother Language Day — a United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) event that has been held in Bangladesh (and East Bengal as it was known before independence in 1972) since the early 1950s.[145] The Embassy of the Dominican Republic in the United States hosts cultural events for children of Dominican heritage, while the Moroccan embassy in France promotes language classes.

Aside from cultural events, a number of consulates encourage members of their diasporas to study at home. The Pakistani embassy

in the United States provides links to internships, medical colleges, and other universities in Pakistan.[146] The Moroccan embassy in France offers an extensive online list of special programs and/or universities where Moroccan nationals may study in Morocco.[147]

Although almost all embassies provide information on business and investment opportunities, most do not specifically target members of the diaspora. However, governments are increasingly using their consular networks to sell diaspora bonds, designed to tap into diaspora assets. Israel and India have raised billions of dollars through their diaspora bond initiatives.[148] The Ethiopian embassy in the United States promoted the country's first diaspora bond, the Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation (EEPCO) Millennium Bond.[149]

Some governments have expanded their diplomatic presence in places with large diaspora populations. Although Mexico has maintained an extensive consular network in the United States since the 1800s, the government has established new consulates since 2000 to make sure it could reach the growing number of Mexican citizens in Boise, Idaho; Indianapolis, Indiana; St. Paul, Minnesota; Kansas City, Missouri; Omaha, Nebraska; and Raleigh, North Carolina.[150] As of mid-2009, Mexico had 50 consulates throughout the United States.[151] Similarly, the Philippines has opened four diplomatic posts since 2008 to reflect the increasing presence of Filipinos in Ireland, the Syrian Arab Republic, and China.[152] The Philippines government maintains 88 offices in 65 countries and plans to open additional posts in Finland, Portugal, and Poland.[153]

The composition of diplomatic staff has evolved to accommodate diaspora needs and interests. For instance, each Ethiopian embassy has a diplomat assigned to handle expatriate issues.[154] About 70 to 75 IME representatives in Mexican consulates in the United States are in charge of implementing IME programs and projects.[155] Likewise, given the Philippines' focus on protecting Filipino workers abroad, many consular offices of the Philippines have welfare and labor attachés to attend to distressed and abused workers.

F. Quasi-Governmental Institutions

Some governments have adopted more unconventional ways to institutionalize their engagement with diasporas. By establishing and/or maintaining foundations and diaspora councils, a number of developing countries have essentially created quasi-governmental diaspora institutions that blur the usual distinction between official and nongovernmental

bodies. Such institutions are especially useful to origin governments that do not want to be seen — for whatever reason — as intervening too much in the affairs of host countries. Eight countries in this review support quasi-governmental diaspora institutions (see Table 5).

Table 5: Countries with Quasi-Governmental Diaspora Institutions

Country	Institution	Stock of emigrants, 2010	Stock of emigrants as % of total population, 2010	Top destination, 2010
Dominican Republic	National Presidential Council for Dominican Communities Abroad	1,035,800	10.1	United States
Israel	Jewish Agency for Israel American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee	1,019,900	14	West Bank and Gaza
Morocco	Hassan II Foundation for Moroccans Resident Abroad Council on the Moroccan Community Abroad	3,106,600	9.3	France
Mali	High Council of Malians Abroad	1,012,700	7.6	Côte d'Ivoire
Malta	Malta's Emigrants' Commission	107,500	26.2	Australia
Mexico	Consultative Council of the Institute for Mexicans Abroad	11, 859,200	10.7	United States
Peru	Advisory Council	1,090,800	3.7	United States
Republic of Korea	Overseas Koreans Foundation	2,078,700	4.3	United States

Sources: MPI-IOM Questionnaire, Part I, 2011 for all countries except Dominican Republic, Morocco, Mali, Peru, and Republic of Korea ; author research for those countries; for data on emigrants and their destinations, see World Bank, *Migration and Remittances Factbook 2011* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2011).

1. Foundations

In 1990 Morocco created the Hassan II Foundation for Moroccans Residing Abroad (FHII). Established by royal decree, FHII is officially described as a "nonprofit institution with a social vocation, endowed with a moral personality and financial autonomy." It is a private — not

a government — institution, and has an especially close relationship with the Moroccan government which sets its mandate. Interestingly, at one point in time, the minister in charge of Moroccans abroad also ran the foundation; its current president is Princess Lalla Meryem. In an analysis of FHII, the international relations expert Laurie Brand mentions an interview with the then director-general of FHII, Abderrahman Zahi, in which he said (in Brand's paraphrase) that "a foundation was preferable to a ministry because if it intervened on behalf of immigrants, it would not provoke the same sensibilities, but that as more than [an] association or an NGO [nongovernmental organization], it has a stronger voice with host governments."[156]

FHII works in six areas: education, cultural exchange, sports, and youth; legal assistance; social assistance; economic development; cooperation and partnership; and communication. In collaboration with IOM, the foundation created the Observatory of the Moroccan Community Residing Abroad (OCMRE) — a network of experts, researchers, academics, and FHII partners. OCMRE's main objective is to monitor and analyze the living conditions of Moroccans abroad through data collection and maintenance of an information system.

2. Advisory Councils

Another type of quasi-governmental diaspora institution is the advisory council. Such councils, usually a mix of community leaders and government officials, advise the government on diaspora-related matters. One example is Mali's High Council of Malians Abroad, which serves as the official representative of the diaspora both in Mali and in the countries of residence. The council aims to promote solidarity between the diaspora and Mali, assist consular officials in the protection of Malians abroad, identify potential diaspora investors, and promote a positive image of Mali. Local councils, elected in countries where Malian expatriates are concentrated, elect representatives to the High Council.[157]

Mexico's IME collaborates with an advisory and consultative body, the Consultative Council of IME (CCIME). Created in 2003, CCIME is composed of Mexican, Mexican American, and Mexican Canadian community leaders; directors of Latino organizations; and special advisers and representatives of Mexican state governments. The 2006-08 CCIME had 100 of its members elected or appointed by the Mexican communities that each of the consulates in the United States and Canada serve; 15 members were appointed based on merit and career.[158]

More recently, in 2006 the Dominican Republic created the National Presidential Council for Dominican Communities Abroad. This council primarily aims to integrate the diaspora into the Dominican Republic's national development efforts. The council makes recommendations to the Dominican government and supports the implementation of programs, plans, and projects.[159]

Government-financed councils are particularly significant since they can be an excellent conduit of information and feedback between governments and diasporas. Like local-level institutions, they are ideal and — in some cases — necessary complements to government bodies at both the national and local levels. That said, who sits on these councils, and more importantly, how they were chosen, are crucial factors in determining whether or not they can fulfill their potential. If a diaspora sees its council members as unrepresentative or irrelevant, the councils will at best be ignored and at worst maligned.

2 Challenges and Lessons Learned

In many developing countries, creating effective and viable government institutions that address the needs of local (and diaspora) populations continues to present a major challenge. Their main problem, not surprisingly, is insufficient resources — financial, technical, and political — which often results in institutions rich in ambition but poorly able to implement their vision.

Diaspora institutions are in many ways no different from other institutions in developing countries — a fact that is not surprising, given that they were created from the same mold. It is difficult to fully assess the effectiveness of diaspora institutions, not to mention their impact on development efforts at home. As outlined earlier, there are few existing evaluations, if any, and only limited discussions in the academic and policy literature. Moreover, of the 77 institutions included in this review, an overwhelming majority were established fairly recently, making assessments of their effectiveness and impact over time difficult. Yet the experiences of the 56 countries reviewed allow us to make four recommendations that may be useful to governments: do your homework, value the process as much as the outcome, invest in state capacity, and link diaspora institutions to national development priorities (if suited to the local context).

A. Do Your Homework

- **Successfully creating formal government institutions requires serious preparatory work** aimed at understanding diasporas' needs, wants, and potential; appraising the current government approach to diaspora engagement; and learning from the experiences of other countries. Diaspora institutions have to design and adopt practices that address the unique characteristics of their respective diasporas. For instance, some countries have to deal with large unauthorized populations (e.g., Mexico, Morocco), scattered and highly mobile diasporas (e.g., the Philippines), or persistent intergroup rivalry along political, ethnic, and/or religious lines (e.g., Bangladesh, Haiti).

- **It is crucial to ensure that institutions adopt policies based on skills, capacities, and intentions that complement one another**. The Indian government, for instance, tasked a high-level committee with recommending a broad but flexible policy framework and country-specific plans to engage the estimated 20 million NRIs and persons of Indian origin (PIOs); the latter include emigrants' descendants up to the fourth generation. For two years, the five-person committee — composed of two current members of the Indian parliament, two retired career diplomats, and an NGO leader — undertook a mapping exercise focused not only on identifying the size and locations of the diaspora but also its members' skills, capacity, and willingness to engage. To extract relevant lessons from other countries, the committee studied other diasporas and government efforts to connect with them. It also evaluated existing Indian government institutions and their effectiveness in dealing with diasporas. In 2004, the committee produced an impressive, publicly available 600-page report that included 22 country and regional profiles, a discussion of issues important to the diaspora, and policy recommendations on topics ranging from the issuance of NRI/PIO identification cards to a new government structure for diaspora engagement.[160] The committee's work proved critical to the creation of MOIA in 2004.

B. Value the Process as Much as the Outcome

- **How institutions are created and how their activities are chosen are critical indicators of success**. During the planning phase it is important to delineate clearly the division of responsibilities inside and across government agencies and to establish sufficient buy-

in from key actors. If an institution does not have legitimacy, it will become susceptible to political manipulation. For instance, in 2000, the Mexican government nominated an "expatriates' czar," a ministerial-level post attached to the president's office. In a case study of Mexico, analysts Agustin Escobar Latapi and Eric Janssen argued that despite his "charisma," the new minister "clashed with the ministries that had traditionally dealt with expatriates (Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of Foreign Affairs) who successfully lobbied to oust him." His removal eventually led to what Latapi and Janssen described as the more "careful" creation of IME.[161]

- **Careful planning and communication are particularly important because some diasporas have little trust in their origin-country governments**. This is especially true of diasporas that originated in a refugee flow or voluntary exit following a regime change opposed by groups who then fled into exile — such as Cuba, Viet Nam (until recently), and the Islamic Republic of Iran. Among diasporas that emigrated for mainly economic reasons, a perception of pervasive corruption and ineffective governance at home can also impede a government's ability to build trust. The Indian diaspora is an example of a long-standing and economically driven diaspora whose trust had to be regained before the institutionalization process could succeed.

- **Diaspora-engaging institutions should invite diaspora involvement in setting their agendas**. Experience shows that programs are more likely to succeed if diasporas are involved, either directly or indirectly, in planning them. Consulting the diaspora also generates trust and ownership. Governments should take care, however, to avoid creating a privileged "insider" group of diaspora partners. To avoid this, the majority of members of CCIME — which has played an important role in shaping the Mexican government's diaspora agenda — are chosen through an election conducted every three years in Mexican consulates in the United States and Canada. Moreover, council members can only serve one term to avoid becoming tools for special interests and to encourage the participation of more individuals.

- **Operational transparency and effective monitoring also build trust and legitimacy**. Transparency in managing funds is especially critical. Diaspora institutions should routinely release information about their financial standing, the services they have offered in a given period, and the outcomes of their operations. Operational

transparency is even more critical in instances where institutions are suspected or accused of corruption and mismanaging funds.

C. Invest in Capacity Building

- **An institution's agenda is only as good as the institutions implementing it**. Building institutional capacity, especially for institutions with expansive and multiple roles, must be a priority. Providing adequate funding, improving technical know-how, and creating partnerships are three elements critical to capacity building.

- **Diaspora institutions must learn how to effectively share the cost of diaspora engagement by aggressively tapping into the available pool of resources from the private sector and civil society**. In particular, developing countries with very limited and dwindling financial resources face real spending and allocation constraints, especially when the needs of citizens at home, such as education and social welfare, are as acute as the needs of migrants abroad.

- **Confronting financial constraints head-on also means that governments need to reevaluate what types of institutions are most cost-effective**. For many countries of origin with limited state capacity, working with existing structures rather than creating a new institution may be the most realistic approach — and perhaps the most successful.

- **Private-public initiatives could augment the tight budgets (exacerbated by the global economic crisis) faced by many countries of origin**. The quasi-governmental institutions described in this chapter are good examples of such initiatives, since they use private resources to pursue decidedly public goals. Public-private initiatives also underscore the extent to which migrant-destination countries can make a difference by sharing the financial costs of engagement.

D. Link Diaspora Institutions to National Development Priorities (If Suited to the Local Context)

- **Most home governments have not integrated their development priorities with their diaspora institutions**. In an ideal world, well-funded, capable, and legitimate institutions of diaspora engagement would engage in activities directly relevant to the origin country's national development plans; many already have such plans, often devised with the support of multilateral organizations. Diaspora organizer Awil Mohamoud laments that "many African governments have not yet developed national strategies and policy instruments specifically intended to involve the diaspora in the development efforts of their respective countries."[162]

  The gap between programs and development planning exists despite the fact that many diaspora institutions were created with a development mandate. Programs within diaspora institutions, such as those that protect migrant workers or support the integration of citizens abroad, do not often directly complement short-, medium-, and (especially) long-term development goals such as the strengthening of critical industries that can generate jobs and lift people out of poverty. (Exceptions to this generalization can be found among East Asia's "developmental states," such as China, the Republic of Korea, and Taiwan Province of China.)

- **In cases where the current priorities and capacities of a diaspora do not coincide with national development plans, governments should consider giving priority to integration and/or protection services in the destination country**. The gap between diaspora institutions and development policy should concern governments. But governments should not overlook the strong, if not immediate, development impact of delivering social protection and/or promoting integration in the host country. For some nations — Bangladesh, Peru, and the Philippines among them — protection seems to be the only priority, while Mexico has centered on integration at the destination. Since such actions address diaspora needs, they foster trust between migrants and their home-country governments, and thus position the diaspora to play a key development role in the future.