

# CLOSING THE DISTANCE

HOW GOVERNMENTS  
STRENGTHEN TIES  
WITH THEIR DIASPORAS

DOVELYN RANNVEIG AGUNIAS, EDITOR



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# FOREWORD

*Kathleen Newland*

Diaspora populations can be an asset or a liability to the governments of their countries of origin—and sometimes both at once. The focus has shifted to the positive in recent years as governments increasingly have come to see their diasporas as assets and as the international policy discussion about the relationship between migration and development has gathered momentum. Building on the newfound awareness of the tremendous importance of remittances to many developing countries (in Tajikistan, the world's most remittances-dependent economy, remittances make up more than half of the gross national product, or GNP), governments have become interested in the other contributions that members of the diaspora can and do make to the development of their homelands. These include direct investment in businesses, portfolio investment in emerging stock markets or government bonds, philanthropic contributions, development of global trade and business ties, and the transfer of knowledge and skills acquired abroad.

Beyond their contributions to economic development, diasporas with close ties to their countries of origin may also catalyze the adoption of new attitudes. Some of these, such as greater acceptance of new gender roles or lower tolerance for corruption, are conducive to development. More generally, ties with a group of “transnational” citizens may allow developing countries to enjoy some of the benefits of globalization rather than only suffering its disruptions.

Simple awareness of the potential of an engaged diaspora does not, however, translate automatically into benefits. Increasingly, many governments are becoming aware of the need to pursue a more active role in relation to diaspora populations in order to involve them productively in development. Of course, some governments, such as China and South Korea, have long done so, and their experience offers lessons for others with similar ambitions.

This volume illustrates the great variety of ways that governments engage with their diasporas. The first chapter, by Dovelyn Agunias, offers an unprecedented taxonomy of government structures set up for this purpose, presenting data on 45 institutions in 30 developing countries. The research highlights the tremendous variety of forms that these institutions take, at different levels of government, in the homeland and abroad, formally independent from the government or embedded in official structures. It also points to the gap between the ambitions and the achievements of diaspora institutions, often because of inadequate resources, but also because of inexperience, poor design, and divisions within diasporas.

Ms. Agunias draws some important, practical conclusions from her research. She emphasizes the importance of serious preparation. Before a government embarks on a diaspora-engagement program, it should learn as much as it can about what the diaspora needs and can offer. Governments seldom are starting from scratch, so an inward-looking assessment of existing structures and programs is also recommended. Diaspora engagement is as much process as product; how it is done has a major impact on the outcome. Getting the process right is key to building trust with members of the diaspora, assuring them that their views are taken into account and avoiding bureaucratic rivalries that can undermine achievement.

Ms. Agunias suggests that governments need to invest in capacity building to make sure that their agendas for diaspora engagement can be implemented. She identifies three key “force multipliers”: funding, technical know-how, and partnerships. Finally, she recommends that diaspora engagement be linked to the country of origin’s development planning, while recognizing that substantial challenges are involved in doing so.

The three country case studies that follow demonstrate quite different approaches to diaspora engagement.

Patricia A. Sto. Tomas, writing of the Philippines, strongly emphasizes the country of origin’s role in protecting migrant workers abroad. The Philippines was a pioneer in the large-scale deployment of temporary contract workers to the Middle East, starting in the early 1970s, and to other countries subsequently. Today, more than one-quarter of the active labor force works overseas, and the government aims to deploy 1 million Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) every year. This huge labor flow brings great economic benefits (more than 10 percent of the Philippines’ GNP comes from remittances) but also substantial social and political costs. Families endure chronic separation, and the government is revealed as unable to foster job creation at home.

With the country and people so dependent on emigration, the government of the Philippines has built administrative structures to regulate the recruitment process, assist in placement, impose sanctions on recruiters and employers (or even entire countries) that abuse or exploit OFWs, provide legal and social services to migrants abroad, and monitor their welfare through a network of government offices in the most important destinations for Filipino migrants. Ms. Sto. Tomas emphasizes, however, that the responsibility for protecting migrant workers does not lie only with the country of origin. Countries of destination also are responsible for assuring that basic human and labor rights are observed, and that migrants have recourse when they are abused by local employers, recruiters, or officials. She concludes that many other actors, including employers, nongovernmental organizations, international agencies, and migrant workers themselves all have responsibilities for protecting migrant workers.

Ms. Sto. Tomas, the former Secretary of Labor and Employment and currently Chairman of the Development Bank of the Philippines, reflects the priorities of her government in the emphasis she places on temporary labor programs. In the Philippine government's case, interest in the diaspora population is heavily focused on current contract workers, rather than the broader diaspora of Filipinos permanently settled abroad and their descendants. The Philippine government does not officially recognize migration as a development tool, so it devotes little attention to taking advantage of the wealth and experience of Filipino expatriates or Philippine-origin citizens of other countries. Rather, the government works to open labor opportunities for its citizens overseas and sees its foremost duty as protecting its citizens.

Mali, by contrast, has sought to integrate its diaspora into the political and economic life of the nation from the moment it returned to democratic governance in 1991, as explained in the case study contributed by Dr. Badara Aliou Macalou. The government regards migrants and their descendants as the "ninth region of Mali." In 1993 it established the High Council for Malians Abroad (HCME) as a consultative body composed of representatives elected by national councils of Malians residing in more than 50 countries. The members of the High Council have an official role in representing the interests and views of the Malian diaspora to the government in Bamako. In their countries of residence, they extend the capacity of the government to strengthen the diaspora's ties to Mali.

Mali also created a Ministry for Malians Abroad and African Integration. Most Malians abroad live in other African countries; only 3 percent live in Europe. Nearly 2 million Malians live in Côte D'Ivoire, for example, while only about 120,000 live in France, the most important destination country in Europe. (The small minority in Europe, however, send

back about three-quarters of Mali's remittance receipts.) Thus Mali's diaspora relations are complex. The government wants to attract the money, skills, and knowledge of the highly educated migrants living in the North, but must also attend to the needs of the vast number of poor Malians following traditional migration routes or new livelihood strategies throughout West Africa. The ministry has the task of maintaining policy coherence in this challenging policy environment, and with very limited resources. As Dr. Macalou points out, the 2008 budget of the ministry was less than \$4 million, and over half of that went to general administration.

The Ministry of Malians Abroad and African Integration has looked to partnerships, both conventional and innovative, to loosen the resource constraints that inhibit migration-and-development activities. It works closely with other departments of government, notably the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, whose 30 embassies and nine consulates provide services to Malians abroad. It has worked with international organizations such as the United Nations Development Program to bring back skilled nationals for temporary teaching assignments in Mali. Donor governments, individually or collectively, fund some migration-and-development programs, although there is often a heavy *quid pro quo* in the form of cooperation from Mali in preventing unauthorized departures to Europe or facilitating returns to Mali of unauthorized migrants.

Above all, Mali has reached out to Malians abroad to contribute resources to the country's development efforts—and they have responded both to crisis and opportunity. Dr. Macalou cites the plague of locusts that destroyed crops in 2004 as one occasion on which the diaspora responded with an outpouring of contributions. Migrants from the Kayes region pour about \$7 million a year into collective investments in their communities—almost twice the ministry budget. The ministry and HCME encourage migrants to seek development partnerships at the local level, and some have born fruit. The French town of Montreuil, for example, launched a development program in Mali's Yelimane region, which is the original home of most of its 6,000 Malian migrants. It has attracted substantial diaspora financing, as well as funding from the municipality, the French government, and numerous other public and private partners.

Dr. Macalou, as the serving Minister for Malians Abroad and African Integration, deserves credit for understanding that “the diaspora does not require a ministry to contribute to Mali's development.” Diaspora contributions have supported development and reduced poverty since long before the ministry came into being. However, he asserts that the ministry has an important role as a bridge between the diaspora and the Malian government and between the diaspora and the governments of destination countries.

While Mali's diaspora is scattered among rich and poor countries, North and South, near and far, Mexico's is overwhelmingly concentrated in one country: the United States. Carlos González Gutiérrez describes the work of the Mexican government's Institute of Mexicans Abroad (IME), which was established under the Foreign Ministry in 2002. IME exists to serve and strengthen ties with the estimated 12 million Mexican-born and 19 million descendents of Mexicans who live in the United States today. IME is built on an innovative premise: that successful integration in the country of destination *increases* the ability and inclination of the diaspora to contribute to the development of the country of origin rather than loosening those ties. Thus, IME's programs focus on the needs of the diaspora, particularly in education, health, financial literacy, local-to-local collective philanthropy, and official identity documents (particularly important since so many Mexicans live in the United States without authorization). In each of Mexico's 50 consulates in the United States, a community affairs officer is responsible for the implementation of IME's programs. The density of Mexico's diplomatic and consular networks in the United States is without parallel, and makes possible a high level of interaction with the diaspora.

The services provided through IME to the Mexican diaspora have helped in the ongoing work of constructing a relationship of trust between the diaspora and the Mexican government. One of the mechanisms for communication and trust-building is the Consultative Council of IME (CCIME). Like the High Council for Malians Abroad, CCIME is composed of elected members resident in other countries (Canada and the United States in this case)—although CCIME also has about 15 members, out of 128, appointed by the government.

Mr. González, who was Executive Director of IME (and is currently Mexico's Consul General in Sacramento, California), acknowledges that there are tensions between the members elected to represent their communities and Mexican government officials. But he describes the expression of differences as constructive, and notes that the council has influenced Mexican government policies in important ways on issues such as overseas voting, fees for passports and consular identification cards, and support for the remittance-matching programs known as the Three-for-One program.

The government of Mexico encourages immigrant communities in the United States to organize themselves, often on the basis of a common place of origin, and to federate their grassroots organizations into larger bodies that can be more effective channels for action and information. The strategy underlying Mexico's diaspora policy is to empower Mexicans abroad (as well as Mexican-Americans, Mexican-Canadians, etc.), to strengthen their identification with Mexico, and to promote cooperation with the Mexican government's

agenda on education, health, economic development, and so on. Despite Mr. González's evident confidence in the strategy, it carries some risk. A strong and independent diaspora may not always agree with the government's policy priorities, or may even choose to oppose them. But Mexico is taking the long view, and is banking on closer integration among the North American states to lift Mexico into the ranks of developed countries. In this project, a committed diaspora, particularly one that exercises increasing political power in the United States, is an irreplaceable asset.

Three countries with three very different histories of emigration, and different approaches to their diaspora populations—the Philippines, Mali, and Mexico—demonstrate the rule that, with diaspora institutions, one size does not fit all. As these three cases and Ms. Agunias' opening chapter show, a rich array of models exists. Each government will have to tailor its institutional design to the circumstances of its diaspora and its own capabilities. Is the diaspora resident in just a few countries or is it widely scattered? Is it hostile or friendly to the government in power in the homeland? Is it relatively homogeneous or fragmented along lines of education, ethnicity, religion, or region? Does the government have the resources to maintain a large consular network in the countries of destination? Does it have some other way of reaching diaspora populations? How can it help to meet their needs? Is it willing to accept input from the diaspora and create mechanisms to translate some of that input into workable policies and practices?

Despite the large number of possible variations, a few ingredients can be identified in whose absence it is difficult to imagine a diaspora-engagement institution (or set of institutions) succeeding.

One of the most important is a clear set of goals. What does the government expect to gain by engaging the diaspora? The Philippine government's focus on deployment and protection of migrants abroad reflects the goals of maintaining a strong flow of remittances (to relieve poverty and support the balance of payments), reducing unemployment, fulfilling a duty to protect its citizens, and deflecting the political criticism that flows from so many Filipinos having to seek work abroad in positions that leave them vulnerable to abuse. Mali's government certainly values migrants' remittances but seems to be equally if not more concerned about persuading members of the diaspora to use their skills and global connections to promote Mali's economic development. Mexico, which is a middle-income country where remittances make up a very small proportion of GNP, has a long-term goal of integrating Mexican migrants and their descendents more widely into North American labor markets (particularly the US market) and the broader society, knowing that their success and their continuing attachment to Mexico will bring benefits to their communities of origin but

also—and perhaps more importantly—help to balance Mexico’s relationship with its powerful northern neighbor. The goals of diaspora engagement will (or should) shape the structures established to accomplish those goals.

A second important ingredient is information about the diaspora. Governments will find it hard to formulate engagement policies without knowing the location, composition (by age, gender, and region of origin), human-capital endowment, income levels, and other key characteristics of the diaspora. Yet such information is often hard to come by. The Ministry for Malians Abroad and African Integration has an Office for Migration Statistics and Forecasting to do its own research and analysis and to draw in data from other departments of government, destination countries, and international institutions. All diaspora institutions should aspire to this type of capability.

The nervous system of institutions for diaspora engagement is communication. Members of the diaspora need a way of receiving information from the homeland government and conveying their ideas, needs, and priorities. Face-to-face communication through consular networks, for example, is ideal, but for a large or scattered diaspora it is costly in both funds and personnel. The creative use of information technology can expand the range of interactive communication, although many government-run Web sites for the diaspora have proved to be static and little used. Representative structures such as Mali’s HCME and Mexico’s CCIME represent another useful mode of interaction, as long as these structures are seen as legitimate and authoritative, both by members of the diaspora and government officials.

A fourth critical ingredient of diaspora institutions is coordination of efforts. Without some means of achieving policy coherence, different actors within the government may pursue initiatives that duplicate, overlap, and contradict one another. A single source of revenue may be tapped by multiple supplicants or overlooked, and information may not reach those who need it. Members of the diaspora may be confused by competing claims on their attention or uncertain where to turn when they need services or want to contribute. Many governments have concluded that they need to establish a single portal for interaction with the diaspora. Because diaspora engagement is multifaceted, several departments of government will need to be involved, but a coordinating body may help to ensure that the whole of their efforts is greater than the sum of the parts.

Finally, institutions of diaspora engagement must have something to offer the diaspora. The self-generated psychic satisfaction of having helped a cherished homeland may be enough to sustain the engagement of some individuals, but motivations of even the most dedicated can



be strengthened by evident benefits. These may take the form of intangible rewards of recognition and honors, or of economic opportunities that open with involvement in the country of origin. A number of governments have chosen to give special benefits to members of the diaspora, such as preferred tax treatment of their investments, fast-track approval of business licenses, privileged access to land and housing, university placements or scholarships for their children, and even special cemeteries. These benefits can be abused and can generate resentment on the part of nonmigrants, but the record shows that they can also be effective in generating or sustaining diaspora commitments.

Each government will design—and probably redesign—its own institutions for diaspora engagement. This volume provides a structure for thinking about the options and three thoroughly elaborated examples of different patterns. The Migration Policy Institute offers it as a contribution to the ongoing debate on migration and development, in the hope that both governments and members of diaspora groups will find it useful.

## CHAPTER I

# INSTITUTIONALIZING DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT WITHIN MIGRANT-ORIGIN GOVERNMENTS

*Dovelyn Rannveig Agunias*

## I. INTRODUCTION

More than ever, diasporas—the “scattered seeds” most governments previously ignored and in some cases even maligned—are increasingly seen as agents of development. Aware of this potential, some developing countries have established institutions to more systematically facilitate ties with their diasporas, defined here as emigrants and their descendants who have maintained strong sentimental and material links with their countries of origin.<sup>a</sup> The possible size of diasporas varies, from under 50,000 from the Caribbean nation of Dominica to over 30 million from China. The number of countries with diaspora institutions has increased, especially in the last ten years, and they range across multiple continents, from Armenia to Somalia.

This chapter reviews the objectives and activities of 45 diaspora-engaging institutions in 30 developing countries.<sup>b</sup> Although far from exhaustive, the analysis shows the various ways

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a. This review only includes institutions in developing countries. Definition of diaspora includes temporary and permanent migrants and is adapted from Gabriel Scheffer's classic work on modern diasporas. See Gabriel Sheffer, “A New Field of Study: Modern Diasporas in International Politics,” in *Modern Diasporas in International Politics*, ed. Gabriel Sheffer (London: Croom Helm, 1986).

b. The 30 countries are Albania, Armenia, Bangladesh, Benin, Brazil, Chile, China, Dominica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Georgia, Haiti, India, Lebanon, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Syria, Tunisia, Uruguay, and Yemen.

governments choose to institutionalize their relations with the diaspora. 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 like 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; if they do, they are not available for public consumption. The limited discussions in both academic and policy literature have mainly assumed a descriptive, nonevaluative tone. Nearly a third of institutions reviewed here are also fairly new, having been established in the last five years.

Even at this nascent stage, however, we can draw some insights that are potentially useful for origin governments as they think about, design, and/or manage diaspora institutions. No matter what kind of diaspora population they have—highly educated or not, concentrated in a few countries or spread all over—experiences of countries in this review point to the importance of doing one’s homework, valuing the process as much as the outcome, investing in capacity building, and linking the institution to national development priorities.

## II. CARVING A NICHE IN THE INNER WORKINGS OF GOVERNMENT

National bodies established to deal with diaspora issues are based in destination countries as well as countries of origin. Among the countries studied, three types of bodies emerge: government institutions at home (four types), consular networks, and quasi-government institutions.

### A. Government Institutions at Home

Most diaspora-centered government institutions operate at the national or federal level while others operate at the local level. Depending on where they stand in the organizational structure of the government, these institutions can roughly be grouped into four types of institutions: (1) ministry level, (2) subministry level, (3) special offices including diaspora committees, and (4) local level. This categorization is useful because an institution’s position within the government hierarchy in many ways affects its influence within and outside of the government, as well as its mandate and effectiveness.

### *Ministry-Level Institutions*

An increasing number of developing countries have established ministries whose explicit purpose is to address the needs of diaspora populations, with many formed after 2001. Fifteen of the countries examined have a separate diaspora ministry (see Table 1). Nine of these ministries are dedicated solely to diasporas (for a detailed matrix, see Appendix 1).

**Table 1. Countries with Ministry-Level Diaspora Institutions**

<i>Country</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Stock of emigrants, 2005</i>	<i>Stock of emigrants as percentage of the total population, 2005</i>	<i>Top destination, 2005</i>
Armenia*	Ministry of Diaspora	812,700	26.9	Russia
Bangladesh*	Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment	4,885,704	3.4	United States
Benin	Ministry for Foreign Affairs, African Integration, the Francophone Community, and Beninese Abroad	508,640	6.0	Nigeria
Dominica	Ministry of Trade, Industry, Consumer and Diaspora Affairs	42,723	54.1	United States
Georgia*	State Ministry for Diaspora Issues	1,024,598	22.9	Russia
Haiti*	Ministry of Haitians Living Abroad	834,364	9.8	United States
India*	Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs	9,987,129	0.9	United Arab Emirates
Lebanon	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants	621,903	17.4	United States
Mali	Ministry of Malians Abroad and African Integration	1,213,042	9.0	Cote d'Ivoire
Serbia*	Ministry for Diaspora	2,298,352	21.9	Germany
Somalia	Ministry for Diaspora and Community Affairs	441,417	5.4	Ethiopia
Sri Lanka*	Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare	935,599	4.5	India
Syria*	Ministry of Expatriates	480,708	2.5	Saudi Arabia
Tunisia	Ministry of Social Affairs, Solidarity and Tunisians Abroad	623,221	6.2	France
Yemen*	Ministry of Expatriate Affairs	593,137	2.8	Saudi Arabia

\*Ministry dedicated to diaspora.

Source: For stock and destination data, World Bank, *Migration and Remittances Factbook 2008* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2008).

One of the earliest examples of a diaspora ministry in the developing world is Haiti's Ministry of Haitians Living Abroad.<sup>1</sup> Created in 1995, the ministry aims to encourage the participation of diaspora communities in technical and professional activities to advance Haiti's development efforts. The ministry informs the diaspora of local realities and changes in Haiti and encourages the diaspora 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, particularly to youth. One program, "Know India," is a three-week internship to promote social, economic, and cultural awareness of India among second and subsequent generations. 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.<sup>2</sup>

Roughly similar institutions can be found in Serbia (Ministry for Diaspora),<sup>3</sup> Syria (Ministry of Expatriates),<sup>4</sup> and Armenia (Ministry of Diaspora).<sup>5</sup> 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 can 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 a further brain drain as the ministry's most pressing task.<sup>6</sup> To this end, the ministry created an Economic Council that includes experts from the homeland and the diaspora. It also has plans to establish a virtual business network that would house information on relevant organizations, individuals, and investment opportunities.<sup>7</sup>

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 in 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.<sup>8</sup> 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.<sup>9</sup>

*"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 sectors, 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.<sup>10</sup>

Mali’s ministry aims to protect temporary and permanent emigrants while they are abroad and 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, a temporary return program for expatriates wishing to work in the areas of health, education, agriculture and the private sector.<sup>11</sup>

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, inform the diaspora regarding government policies, and propose measures to create favorable conditions allowing Beninese abroad to contribute to Benin’s development.<sup>12</sup>

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.

By establishing either a separate diaspora ministry or a hybrid one, a government recognizes that traditional ministries like labor and foreign affairs cannot manage the expatriate portfolio in all its dimensions. This review suggests that unlike other institutions occupying lower positions in the hierarchy, diaspora ministries generally enjoy more consistent budgetary allocation, 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. Indeed, some of these ministries started out as smaller offices within other ministries.

Creating a hybrid ministry can also 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, hybrid ministries are positioned to make more coherent policies that address the shared and contrasting agendas of the merged sectors. Ideally, the approach can minimize “turf wars”

that may arise when two or three ministries deal with the diaspora population in different ways.

#### *Subministry-Level Institutions*

Other countries have institutionalized diaspora engagement at the subministry level by creating special offices, typically under the ministry of labor and/or foreign affairs. One of the earliest examples comes from the Philippines. Faced with increasing problems brought about by a rapidly expanding temporary worker population abroad, the government established in 1981 the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), an agency under the Department of Labor and Employment. OWWA, which is tasked with protecting Filipino migrant workers, provides various services, from repatriation to new-business loans.<sup>13</sup> Another office, the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), was created a year later. Considered the “manager” of the overseas employment program, POEA has the sole authority to regulate temporary overseas employment, including recruitment agencies.<sup>14</sup> 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.<sup>15</sup> It was created as a response to increasing reports of maltreatment, illegal recruitment, and even deaths of temporary workers.

More recently, a number of developing countries set up diaspora offices, many just after 2001. A review of the missions and activities of 10 countries with diaspora offices (see Table 2) suggests that, like the Philippines, four have a particularly strong focus on protection (see Appendix 1). Based on its 2006 activities report, Romania’s Department for Relations with Romanians Abroad focuses largely on protecting Romanians abroad and partnering with Romanian associations. Peru’s Undersecretary for Peruvians Abroad, under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, assists with consular paperwork and documentation and provides legal and humanitarian assistance. Also, it has created a *Guide for the Peruvian Migrant* that discusses important issues encountered in host countries.<sup>16</sup> In 2004, El Salvador created the Vice Ministry for Salvadorans Abroad under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Like Peru, the vice ministry’s mission is to defend the rights of the migrant workers, heighten their opportunities, and safeguard their interests.

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 in the host country 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

**Table 2. Countries with Subministry-Level Diaspora Institutions**

<i>Country</i>	<i>Institutions</i>	<i>Stock of emigrants, 2005</i>	<i>Stock of emigrants as percentage of the total population, 2005</i>	<i>Top destination, 2005</i>
Albania	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The National Diaspora Institute	860,485	27.5	Greece
Brazil	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Undersecretary General for Brazilian Communities Abroad	1,135,060	0.6	Japan
Chile	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, General Office for Consular and Immigration Services; Office for Chileans Abroad	584,869	3.6	Argentina
El Salvador	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Vice Ministry for Salvadorans Abroad	1,128,701	16.4	United States
Ethiopia	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ethiopian Expatriate Affairs	445,926	0.6	Sudan
Mexico	Secretariat of Foreign Affairs, Sub-secretariat for North America; Institute for Mexicans Abroad	11,502,616	10.7	United States
Peru	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Undersecretary for Peruvians Abroad	898,829	3.2	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	3,631,405	4.4	United States
Romania	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department for Relations with the Romanians Abroad	1,244,052	5.7	Israel
Uruguay	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate General for Consular Affairs and Expatriate Ties	288,480	8.3	Argentina

*Source:* For stock and destination data, World Bank, *Migration and Remittances Factbook* 2008.



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, 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.<sup>17</sup> IME's website also provides information about remittances to Mexico, an overview of the government's three-for-one 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.<sup>18</sup> In the long term, the Mexican government hopes to "create a strong relationship with the communities" to pursue joint objectives that the diaspora and the government share in relation to both Mexico and the United States.<sup>19</sup>

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."<sup>20</sup> Ethiopia has a similar agency. Established in 2002 under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ethiopian Expatriate Affairs has as one of its four main objectives encouraging "the active involvement of the Ethiopians in Diaspora in socioeconomic activities of the country."<sup>21</sup> Likewise, Albania's Institute of National Diaspora is closely linked to the brain-gain initiatives of the United Nations Development Program and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).<sup>22</sup>

The activities and general orientation of subministry diaspora institutions seem to follow the mandate and priorities set by the mother agency, which itself 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.

#### *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. Six 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

**Table 3. Countries with Other Diaspora Institutions at the National Level**

<i>Country</i>	<i>Institutions</i>	<i>Stock of emigrants, 2005</i>	<i>Stock of emigrants as percentage of the total population, 2005</i>	<i>Top destination, 2005</i>
Chile	Interministerial Committee for Chilean Communities Abroad	584,869	3.6	Argentina
China	State Council, Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the State Council; Overseas Chinese Affairs Committee	7,258,333	0.60	United States
Mexico	National Council on Mexican Communities Abroad	11,502,616	10.7	United States
Morocco	Ministerial Delegate for the Prime Minister Responsible for Moroccans Resident Abroad	2,718,665	8.6	France
Philippines	Office of the President, Commission on Filipinos Overseas; Committee on Overseas Workers Affairs	3,631,405	4.4	United States
Poland	Inter-Governmental Committee for Polonia and Polish Minorities Abroad	2,316,438	6.0	United States
Sierra Leone	Office of the President, Office of the Diaspora	78,516	1.4	United States

*Source:* For stock and destination data, World Bank, *Migration and Remittances Factbook 2008*.

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 that have either established permanent residence or acquired citizenship in the destination country.

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.<sup>23</sup>

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 (it includes the premier and ministers, among others). The SCOCAO staff of 120 supports the premier and assists in a wide range of activities. These include establishing databases in each city, county, and province so that overseas Chinese can find their ancestral roots, homes, and properties, and operating two universities catering mainly to members of the Chinese diaspora.<sup>24</sup>

Another example is Morocco's Ministerial Delegate for the Prime Minister Responsible for Moroccans Resident Abroad. Created by a Royal Decree in 1993, the institution, attached directly to the Prime Minister, provides a wide range of resources including remittance/banking references, cultural events, and advice on investment, financial planning, diaspora tax, customs, commerce, transportation, and social security.<sup>25</sup>

Other governments have created intergovernmental and parliamentary committees to coordinate actions on both the executive and legislative fronts. For instance, Poland's Inter-Governmental Committee for Polonia and Polish Minorities Abroad was formed in 2000. Headed by an undersecretary of state (deputy minister) in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the eight-member committee includes representatives from the ministries of Education, Culture, Finance, and Internal Affairs, as well as the Chancellery of the Prime Minister.<sup>26</sup>

Similar committees also exist in Mexico and Chile. 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, Rural Development, Fisheries and Nutrition; Public Education; Environment and Natural Resources; Health; Tourism; and Labor and Social Welfare ministries.<sup>27</sup>

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 another 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 1973–1989 dictatorship; and the National Women's Service, which protects women abroad and their gender rights included in international agreements.<sup>28</sup>

Some governments have also established special committees within the legislative branch of government. For instance, Poland formed the Polish Diaspora Commission in the lower

house of its parliament to engage on policy matters pertaining to the diaspora.<sup>29</sup> 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 diaspora committees ease passage of critical legislation that supports creating larger and more organized diaspora bodies.

#### *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 region or locality of origin, where they are familiar with the local context and, in many cases, still have family ties.<sup>30</sup> Thus, it is not surprising that special offices for diasporas have sprung up locally. Four countries in this review have created institutions at the local level (see Table 4).

China exhibits one of the most expansive networks of local diaspora offices. The Overseas Chinese Affairs Office, 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

**Table 4. Countries with Diaspora Institutions at the Local Level**

<i>Country</i>	<i>Institutions</i>	<i>Stock of emigrants, 2005</i>	<i>Stock of emigrants as percentage of the total population, 2005</i>	<i>Top destination, 2005</i>
China	The Overseas Chinese Affairs Office (OCAO) of Shanghai Municipal People's Government	7,258,333	0.60	United States
India	Government of Kerala, Department of Non-Resident Keralites Affairs; Government of Gujarat, Non-Resident Indian Division	9,987,129	0.9	United Arab Emirates
Mexico	National Coordination for State-level Migrant Affairs Offices (various states)	11,502,616	10.7	United States
Somalia	Office for Development and Partnership with the Puntland Diaspora Community.	441,417	5.4	Ethiopia

*Source:* For stock and destination data, World Bank, *Migration and Remittances Factbook* 2008.

universities. The goal is to let Chinese in the United States know about business and research opportunities in Shanghai.<sup>31</sup> To coordinate its implementation of national diaspora policies, the central government holds annual conferences of the local diaspora offices.<sup>32</sup>

Some states in India have diaspora offices as well, the most active of which can be found in Kerala and Gujarat. The Keralan government created the Department of Non-Resident Keralite 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 scheme for unemployed returnees, unskilled laborers, and domestic workers.<sup>33</sup>

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 their technical and professional skills, the NRI Division seeks to strengthen ties with Gujaratis abroad. For a fee of US\$5, 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 large discounts at local hotels and shops.<sup>34</sup>

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.<sup>35</sup> 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 grassroots organizations of Mexicans.

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. Members of the diaspora 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.

## B. Consular Networks

For some governments, full diaspora engagement requires creating and developing institutions that are rooted 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 2004 survey of IOM member governments revealed that 76 percent had consular services interacting with citizens abroad.<sup>36</sup> A review of the embassy and consulate websites of countries in this study suggests an active consular presence in top destinations of their respective diasporas. More than ever, governments are instructing their consulates to interact with emigrants more systematically.

#### *Help in the Destination Country*

The primary responsibility of consulates remains basic consular services, such as processing passports and visa applications and authenticating legal documents like birth certificates, marriage certificates, etc. Almost all countries in this review provide such services (see Appendix 2).

Consulates also have been involved in integration efforts. For instance, the Salvadoran Embassy in the United States operates a Legal Assistance Section. It offers immigration assistance and advice, as well as information on Temporary Protected Status (TPS), a special status that allows citizens of El Salvador, among other countries, to stay temporarily and work in the United States because they cannot safely return due to ongoing armed conflict, an environmental disaster, or other extraordinary and temporary conditions.<sup>37</sup>

Some consulates help connect migrant communities at the destination. The Sri Lankan High Commission in India offers information to organizations that support Sri Lankans in India, such as the Buddhist Pilgrims' Rest, which takes care of Sri Lankan pilgrims in India, and the Association of Sri Lankans in Delhi, a voluntary association of Sri Lankans living in Delhi and other parts of India.<sup>38</sup> The Embassy of Morocco in France maintains Web pages devoted to discussing the presence of Moroccan diaspora in France, including a detailed search tool to find local Moroccan associations.<sup>39</sup>

Consular identification cards that citizens abroad can use in the destination country have also become more popular. For instance, the Consulate General of Pakistan in the United States issues the National Identification Card for Overseas Pakistanis, which is available to all Pakistani citizens in the United States and serves as a national identification card.<sup>40</sup> Mexico offers a similar card, the *Matricula Consular*, at its consulates. Since the US Department of the Treasury announced in 2002 that consular cards are valid government-issued identification, these cards have become increasingly accepted at US banks and government offices.<sup>41</sup>

Some consulates partner with other actors in the private and public realm to assist migrants. For instance, in May 2003, the Mexican Consulate in Chicago responded to feedback from the community and improved access to the US banking system for recent Mexican immigrants by partnering with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and other stakeholders. By December 2003, 35,000 immigrants in the Midwest had participated in financial education classes or workshops, and immigrants had opened 50,000 new accounts in Chicago containing \$100 million in deposits. Similar initiatives are now underway in Boston, Austin, Kansas City, Los Angeles, and Charlotte and Raleigh, North Carolina.<sup>42</sup>

Beyond helping diasporas integrate at the destination, some 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.<sup>43</sup> In the United Arab Emirates, 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.<sup>44</sup>

#### *Links to the Homeland*

For most consulates in this review, however, activities have focused most on linking migrants, including 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 (see Appendix 2).

The Philippine, Chinese, and Sierra Leonean embassies in the United States post news updates on their Web sites. Many consulates also host cultural events to engage their diasporas. The Bangladeshi High Commission in India supports and/or conducts book fairs, cultural festivals, and celebrations for Independence Day and International Mother Language Day, which promotes linguistic diversity and has been commemorated in Bangladesh under a different name since the early 1950s.<sup>45</sup> The Embassy of the Dominican Republic in the United States hosts cultural events specifically 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.<sup>46</sup> The Moroccan Embassy in France offers an extensive online list of special programs and/or universities where Moroccan nationals may study in Morocco.<sup>47</sup>

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 the diaspora's assets. Israel and India have raised billions of dollars through their diaspora bond initiatives.<sup>48</sup> The Ethiopian Embassy in the United States provides information on how to buy the country's first diaspora bond, the Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation (EEPCO) Millennium Bond.<sup>49</sup>

Some governments have expanded their diplomatic presence to places with large diaspora populations. Although Mexico has maintained an extensive consular network in the United States since the 1800s, the government 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.<sup>50</sup> As of mid-2009, Mexico had 50 consulates throughout the United States.<sup>51</sup> Similarly, the Philippines has opened four diplomatic posts since 2008 to reflect the increasing presence of Filipinos in Ireland, Syria, and China.<sup>52</sup> The Philippine government also plans to open additional posts in Finland, Portugal, and Poland. Currently, it maintains 88 offices in 65 countries.<sup>53</sup>

The composition of diplomatic staff has evolved to accommodate diaspora needs and interests. For instance, each Ethiopian Embassy has assigned a diplomat to handle expatriate issues.<sup>54</sup> About 70 to 75 IME representatives in Mexican consulates in the United States are in charge of implementing IME programs and projects.<sup>55</sup> Likewise, given its focus on protecting its workers abroad, many consular offices of the Philippines have welfare and labor attachés to attend to distressed and abused workers.

### C. Quasi-Government Institutions

Some governments have adopted more unconventional ways to institutionalize their engagement in destination countries. By establishing and/or maintaining foundations and diaspora councils, a number of developing countries have essentially created quasi-government 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. Five countries in this review support quasi-government diaspora institutions (see Table 5).

#### *Foundations*

In 1990, Morocco created the Hassan II Foundation for Moroccans Residing Abroad (FHII). Established via a royal decree, FHII is officially described as a “nonprofit institution with a



**Table 5. Countries with Quasi-Government Diaspora Institutions**

<i>Country</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Stock of emigrants, 2005</i>	<i>Stock of emigrants as percentage of the total population, 2005</i>	<i>Top destination, 2005</i>
Dominican Republic	National Presidential Council for Dominican Communities Abroad	1,068,919	12.0	United States
Mali	High Council of Malians Abroad	1,213,042	9.0	Cote d'Ivoire
Mexico	Consultative Council of the Institute for Mexicans Abroad	11,502,616	10.7	United States
Morocco	Hassan II Foundation for Moroccans Resident Abroad	2,718,665	8.6	France
Peru	Advisory Council	898,829	3.2	United States

*Source:* For stock and destination data, World Bank, *Migration and Remittances Factbook* 2008.

social vocation, endowed with a moral personality and financial autonomy.” FHII is a private organization that has an especially close relationship with the Moroccan government. It is not a government institution, although the government sets its mandate. Interestingly, at one point in time, the minister in charge of Moroccans abroad also ran the foundation. Currently, FHII’s president is Princess Lalla Meryem. In an analysis of FHII, international relations expert Laurie Brand mentions an interview with then director-general Abderrahman Zahi in which Zahi 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.”<sup>56</sup>

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.

#### *Advisory Councils*

Another type of quasi-government diaspora institution is an advisory council. The councils, usually a mix of community leaders and government officials, advise the government on

diaspora-related matters. One of the earliest examples is Mali's High Council of Malians Abroad, which serves as the official representative of the diaspora in Mali and in the country of residence. The council aims to promote solidarity between the diaspora and Mali, assist consular officials in the protection of Malians abroad, identify potential investors from the diaspora, and promote a positive image of Mali. Local councils are elected in various countries where Malian expatriates are concentrated. These national councils then elect representatives to the High Council.<sup>57</sup>

Since 2003, Mexico's Institute of Mexicans Abroad has collaborated 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 2009–2011 CCIME had 101 of its members elected or appointed by the Mexican communities that each of the consulates in the United States and Canada serve; 27 members were appointed based on merit and career.<sup>58</sup>

More recently, the Dominican Republic created in 2006 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.<sup>59</sup>

Government-financed councils are particularly significant since they can be an excellent source of feedback from, and other relevant information about, the diaspora. Like local-level institutions, they are ideal and, in some cases, necessary complements to government bodies at both the national and local level. However, 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 the diaspora sees council members as unrepresentative or irrelevant, the councils will at best be ignored and at worst maligned.

### III. BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN AMBITION AND IMPLEMENTATION

In many developing countries, creating effective and viable government institutions that address the needs of the local population has always presented a major challenge. Their main problem, not surprisingly, is insufficient resources—financial, technical, and political—often resulting 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—not surprising as 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 for reasons outlined earlier: few evaluations, if any, and limited discussions in the academic and policy literature. Moreover, of the 45 institutions included in this review, an overwhelming majority were established fairly recently, making assessments of their effectiveness and impact even more difficult. Yet these countries' experiences allow us to draw four insights useful for origin-country governments: do your homework, value the process as much as the outcome, invest in state capacity, and link diaspora institutions to national development priorities.

### A. Do Your Homework

Successfully creating formal government institutions at home and abroad is a complex process. It requires, first and foremost, serious preparatory work aimed at understanding diasporas' needs, wants, and potentials; 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's crucial to ensure that institutions adopt policies based on skills, capacities, and intentions that complement one another. India provides an excellent case study of such policymaking. The Indian government tasked a high-level committee with recommending a broad but flexible policy framework and country-specific plans to engage the estimated 20 million nonresident Indians (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 their 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. It includes 22 country and regional profiles, a discussion of issues important for the diaspora, and policy

recommendations on topics ranging from the issuance of NRI/PIO identification cards to a new government structure for diaspora engagement.<sup>60</sup> The committee's work proved critical to the creation of the Ministry for Overseas Indian Affairs in 2004.

Clearly, India used a time- and resource-consuming strategy that may not be applicable or relevant to other developing countries, such as those with smaller or less dispersed diasporas. The approach should be adapted to suit contexts, goals, and more importantly, budget. Peru's consulate in the United States, for instance, conducts a small survey annually while the Philippines uses its administrative data on temporary workers to gather information on overseas Filipinos' locations and skill levels.

#### B. Value the Process as Much as the Outcome

*How* institutions were created and *how* activities were chosen are critical indicators of success.

It is important to delineate clearly the division of responsibilities among government agencies during the planning phase and establish sufficient buy-in from the key actors. If the 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 a more "careful" creation of the Institute for Mexicans Abroad.<sup>61</sup>

Very similar dynamics played out in Lebanon, which established a separate Diaspora Ministry in 1990, right after the civil war. Opposition to the new ministry arose immediately from within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), partly over turf, partly over religious differences. According to Brand, calls for a diaspora ministry came primarily from Christians. However, when the ministry was finally established, the appointed minister and director-general were Shiite Muslims. This reportedly alienated the Christians. Although a change in minister partially addressed the problem, the turf wars between the two ministries continued until August 2000, when the Ministry of Expatriates, with all its employees and property, was formally reintegrated into MFA under a new prime minister.<sup>62</sup>

Similarly, the main institution in charge of Moroccans abroad has been demoted and promoted as it has gained and lost support within the government. Started as a ministry in 1993, it was downgraded to an office under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1995.<sup>63</sup> According to public policy scholar Natasha Iskander, senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs felt that the diaspora ministry “was raiding their portfolio.”<sup>64</sup> In 2007, it was promoted to its current position—an institution headed by a minister-delegate (undersecretary) directly under the prime minister’s office.<sup>65</sup>

In Yemen, various diaspora institutions have been created and taken down since the first office, the Department of Immigration and Expatriates, was set up in 1962. Most recent incarnations include the Ministry of Expatriates Affairs in 1990, the Expatriates Affairs Council in 1996, the Ministry of Expatriates Affairs in 1997, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants in 2005. In 2007, the diaspora institution was promoted back to Ministry of Expatriates Affairs.<sup>66</sup>

Valuing the process is also important because some diasporas have little trust in their origin-country government. 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, Vietnam (until recently), or Iran.

Among diasporas that emerged 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 pay careful attention when setting their agendas. Experience shows that programs are more likely to succeed if diasporas have input on the agenda, either directly or indirectly. Consulting them also generates trust and ownership

For instance, Mexico’s Consultative Council of IME (CCIME) described earlier has played an important role in shaping the Mexican government’s diaspora agenda. In this case, a critical step precedes agenda setting: democratic selection of council members. The majority are chosen through an election conducted every three years in Mexican consulates in the United States and Canada. Council members can only serve one term to avoid becoming tools for special interests and to encourage the participation of more individuals.

During the plenary session of the Consultative Council, which meets twice a year, the council members agree on a set of recommendations for the Mexican government. Between

2003 and 2008, the council issued 340 recommendations addressed to various ministries and federal government agencies; all are posted on the IME website so Mexicans abroad can easily find them.<sup>67</sup> In a study of IME's operations, analyst Laureen Laglagaron noted that the recommendations influence the activities of IME and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For instance, IME decided after a recommendation from CCIME to fund a scholarship program for adult Mexican migrants who would like to initiate, continue, or complete their studies in the United States.<sup>68</sup>

Beyond agenda setting, the experience of the Philippines' OWWA and Mexico's IME suggests that operational transparency and effective programs also gain 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 them. 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.

#### *Adequate Funding*

Analyst Michael Fullilove has noted that most diaspora institutions are underfunded.<sup>69</sup> A closer look at the budgets of institutions in the Philippines and Mexico—two countries with the most sophisticated diaspora institutions in the developing world—supports this observation.

The responsibility for protecting and engaging the Philippines' huge diaspora largely rests on three government agencies: the departments of Labor and Employment, Foreign Affairs, and the Office of the President. In 2006, the three bodies spent a total of 14.5 billion pesos (US\$220 million) or 1.9 percent of total government expenses in 2006.<sup>70</sup> In contrast, the Education and Defense departments respectively claimed 15 and 10 percent of the 2006 budget. The largest budget allocation, about 315 billion pesos (US\$7 billion) or 41 percent, went to paying interest on the national debt, a problem that plagues many heavily indebted countries. The Labor and Employment and Foreign Affairs departments have always received a relatively small allocation from the national government, which is surprising given the

importance of migrants and diaspora to the Philippine economy.<sup>71</sup> Mexico's spending on its Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as a proportion of the total executive branch budget, is also quite low, at only 1 percent or 4.5 billion pesos (US\$426 million) in 2006.<sup>72</sup>

The budget allocations of two agencies, Mexico's IME and the Philippines' CFO, within their departments is also lower than might be expected. IME spent US\$5.7 million in 2006, about 1.3 percent of the total budget of its mother agency, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (this figure may not include in-kind contributions budgeted to other agencies within the ministry—such as consular staff salaries directly allocated to the Consular Affairs directorate—or funds from private sources). CFO's 2006 spending was even lower, about US\$1 million, or 0.7 percent of the Office of President's total spending.<sup>73</sup>

The amount of money governments should allocate for diaspora institutions is highly debatable. In general, analysts use overall budget allocations to assess a country's spending priorities and values: examining, for example, how much is spent on defense versus health care or education. Determining the appropriate level of spending, however, is more difficult when the target audience and main beneficiaries are abroad, have higher incomes than their compatriots at home, and, in some cases, are not even citizens.

In the absence of reliable data or standards, one reasonable measure of spending might be to compare the budget allocation with the percentage of a country's population that lives abroad. With that in mind, Mexico and the Philippines, which both have nearly 10 percent of their respective populations abroad, could arguably increase their Labor and/or Foreign Affairs budgets and the diaspora institutions' share within each department.<sup>74</sup> Another suggested yardstick pertains to remittances sent as a percentage of GDP. Using this measure, the Philippines, where remittances make up 13 percent of GDP, should be spending a significantly higher proportion of its budget than Mexico, where remittances are 2.9 percent of GDP.<sup>75</sup>

However, 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. Therefore, diaspora institutions have to 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. 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.

### *Technical Know-How*

Budgets alone are imperfect measures of state capacity. Spending more money does not necessarily mean a higher-quality outcome (as the public school systems in many US cities show).

For many developing countries, technical know-how—the operational knowledge and skills needed to pursue goals effectively—presents a larger hurdle than money. Many successful grassroots diaspora organizations have arisen spontaneously, usually with minimal government involvement, if any. Their success springs partly from acquiring critical technical know-how through years of trial and error. Replicating their success in the public sphere also requires designing smart ways of delivering services and programs to a dispersed population.

A good case in point is OWWA in the Philippines. In 2005, despite amassing huge reserves, OWWA spent only 0.03 percent of its fund balance on services, in most cases meeting only the minimum requirements mandated by law. OWWA's limited experience in administering programs partially explains its conservative spending. For instance, it has tried to provide livelihood loans for many years but has always had poor repayment rates. Aware of its service-delivery problems, OWWA opted to safeguard its funds by placing them in development banks.<sup>76</sup>

Potential solutions to lack of technical know-how include instituting pilot projects and learning from others by sharing good practices and experiences. Ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and frequent adjustments of programs should also be the foundation of improved expertise.

### *Meaningful Partnerships*

Problems with funding and technical know-how highlight why diaspora institutions need meaningful partnerships, both with the public and private sector at home and where the migrants live. Private-public initiatives could augment tight budgets that many countries of origin are facing due to the global economic crisis. The quasi-government institutions described earlier are good examples in this respect because 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.



As remittances have grown and received more attention, destination countries have become more than eager to harness migrant resources to development efforts, seeing them as complements to official development assistance. The “co-development” policy that France introduced in the early 1990s is now back in vogue. The concept made its debut as a theoretical justification for leveraging the resources of African migrant organizations in France to promote development in Africa. The approach emphasizes developing local economies and promoting partnerships between enterprises, local authorities, training institutions, and associations.<sup>77</sup> Countries like Italy and Spain have seen an increase in public policy plans and funding schemes to support co-development projects.<sup>78</sup> Developing countries should explore this shared interest with destination governments and identify projects of mutual interest.

#### D. Link the Institution to National Development Priorities

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 plan; many already have such plans, often devised with the support of multilateral organizations. Yet most of the institutions examined here, such as those in Mexico and the Philippines, have not been fully integrated with development planning at home. Analyst Mohamoud Awil 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.”<sup>79</sup>

Programs within diaspora institutions, such as protection of migrant workers or integration of citizens abroad, do not often directly complement short-, medium- and, especially, long-term development goals, such as the development of critical industries that can generate jobs and lift people out of poverty. (The exceptions to this generalization tend to cluster in East Asian “developmental states,” such as China, South Korea, and Taiwan.) This gap between programs and development planning exists despite the fact that many diaspora institutions were created with a development mandate. For some, as in Bangladesh, Peru, and the Philippines, protection seems to be the only priority while Mexico has centered on integration at the destination. Even Mexico’s much-lauded three-for-one program has been widely criticized for its limited impact on development, particularly in the area of job creation.<sup>80</sup>

According to IOM, governments face serious challenges in clearly identifying the professional, financial, and social capital of diasporas abroad, and in matching these forms of capital with concrete development strategies at home.<sup>81</sup> Beyond problems of identification

and matching, however, is a bigger issue that is mainly political in nature. For some countries, such as the Philippines and Mexico, treating migrants as development actors remains highly contentious because it implies that the government cannot fulfill its obligation to promote development.

The gap between diaspora institutions and development policy should concern origin-country governments. But we should not overlook the strong, if not immediate, development impact of delivering social protection and/or promoting integration in the host country. Since these policies address the diaspora's needs, they allow trust to build between migrants and their home-country governments, and position migrants to play a key development role in the future. The governments of Mexico, China, and India all have reestablished ties with their diaspora populations mainly through trust-building activities.

Linking diaspora policy with national development planning is the best option. However, in cases where the current priorities of a diaspora do not coincide perfectly with the development plan or needs of the origin country, or when the diaspora does not have the skills or the confidence in the government to collaborate, the origin-country government will have to take a long-term view of the benefits of diaspora engagement. It may begin by giving priority to integration and/or protection services in the destination country.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Migrants often seek positive involvement with their communities at home and abroad. Governments can play a key role in channeling migrants' skills and financial resources for development. This review of the objectives and activities of 45 diaspora-engaging institutions in 30 countries suggests that an increasing number of developing countries have chosen to institutionalize their engagement efforts in various ways. Nearly all countries examined have an institution either at the ministry or subministry level while a few countries with huge diasporas abroad have institutions at nearly all levels of government. Some governments have created innovative institutions at the local level as well as abroad by capitalizing on their consulates and creating quasi-government institutions found typically in civil society.

A closer look at some of these institutions reveals that translating a diaspora's promise into reality is more easily said than done. Origin governments, guided by modesty and pragmatism—and the awareness that members of their diasporas may distrust them—should start with obtaining information about their citizens abroad and what they would like from

the government. An honest assessment of the government's capacity and resources (financial and technical know-how) to initiate and, more importantly, maintain these institutions must also take place early on. The type of diaspora institution that would be most effective varies from country to country. It should be based on the diaspora's needs and the existing institutional structure. All types of institutions can benefit from building up their technical know-how, creating meaningful partnerships, and forging a stronger link with national development plans.

Any diaspora institution should continually monitor and evaluate its services and programs, making adjustments as often as are necessary. A forum in which government practitioners and members of diaspora could share lessons learned and best practices would be valuable. The Global Forum on Migration and Development and associated preparatory meetings could play this role.

In the final analysis, diaspora institutions are in many ways no different from other institutions in developing countries. They are not immune to the challenges of institutionalization, and they cannot solve the structural problems plaguing the developing world. Governments can only realize the considerable development benefits of diaspora institutions if they have a national development policy that recognizes their diasporas as critical partners.

## Appendix 1. Diaspora Institutions by Type

<i>Country</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Year created</i>	<i>Key objectives</i>	<i>Sample of activities</i>	<i>Web site</i>
<b>Ministry-level institutions</b>					
Armenia	Ministry of Diaspora	2008	Preserve Armenian identity. Discover and tap into the potential of the diaspora to help empower the homeland. Facilitate repatriation efforts. <sup>a</sup>	Planned activities include extending equal medical aid and educational support to diasporas abroad and organizing a series of conferences, competitions, and festivals in Armenia.	<a href="http://www.mindiaspora.am/">http://www.mindiaspora.am/</a>
Bangladesh	Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment	2001	Mainly protect the overseas employment sector. Ensure the welfare of expatriate workers and enhance overseas employment opportunities.	Provides job placement and programs, offers training and capacity building programs, addresses complaints of expatriates. Facilitates expatriate investment. Implements economic and social welfare projects. Administers the Wage Earners' Welfare Fund. Promotes Bangladeshi culture. Forms alliances and liaisons with Bangladeshi associations abroad.	<a href="http://probashi.gov.bd">http://probashi.gov.bd</a>
Benin	Ministry for Foreign Affairs, African Integration, the Francophone Community, and Beninese Abroad Subagency: Directorate for Relations with Beninese Abroad	2009	Manage relations with the diaspora via Benin's embassies and consulates; propose measures to create favorable conditions allowing Beninese abroad to contribute to Benin's development; identify the main concerns of the diaspora and avenues for addressing their concerns.	Provides humanitarian assistance to Beninese abroad in the case of mass deportations or expulsions; inform the diaspora regarding government policies. Contributes to the periodic census of Beninese abroad in coordination with other agencies.	<a href="http://www.maebenin.bj">http://www.maebenin.bj</a>

(continues)

## Appendix 1. Diaspora Institutions by Type (continued)

<i>Country</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Year created</i>	<i>Key objectives</i>	<i>Sample of activities</i>	<i>Web site</i>
Dominica	Ministry of Trade, Industry, Consumer and Diaspora Affairs	Diaspora Affairs portfolio added in 2008 <sup>b</sup>	Formulate and implement sound policies and measures to advance and encourage Dominica's trade, industry, domestic and foreign investment, private-sector relations, consumer protection, and the full engagement of the diaspora for greater growth and development.	Holds responsibility for export development and promotion, regional integration in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, external trade negotiations, industry development, investment promotion, consumer protection, standards management and meteorology, and diaspora relations.	<a href="http://www.dominica.gov.dm/cms/index.php?id=node/199">http://www.dominica.gov.dm/cms/index.php?id=node/199</a>
Georgia	State Ministry for Diaspora Issues	2008	Integrate Georgians abroad and deepen their ties to the homeland.	Created a coordination board composed of a deputy minister from each of the ministries acting in Georgia. Operates Diaspora fund. Manages special forum for businessmen leaving inside and outside of Georgia. Engages Georgians living abroad in governmental programs. Gathers information about diaspora Georgians.	<a href="http://www.diaspora.gov.ge/">http://www.diaspora.gov.ge/</a>
Haiti	Ministry of Haitians Living Abroad	1995	Connect the diaspora to the Haitian government. Respond to the needs of the diaspora and facilitate their representation before the government. Facilitate the involvement of the diaspora in Haiti's development.	Helps communities with their return to Haiti. Informs the diaspora of local realities and evolutions in Haiti. Promotes investment in Haiti among Haitian diaspora. Establishes co-development partnerships with destination countries. Involves the diaspora and destination countries in policy and program evaluation. Provides information to the diaspora.	<a href="http://mhav.gouv.ht/">http://mhav.gouv.ht/</a>

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**Appendix 1. Diaspora Institutions by Type (continued)**

<i>Country</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Year created</i>	<i>Key objectives</i>	<i>Sample of activities</i>	<i>Web site</i>
India	Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs	2004	Coordinate various activities aimed at reaching out to the Indian diaspora, particularly to youth. Promote investment by overseas Indians. Facilitate interaction of overseas Indians with India in fields such as trade, culture, tourism, media, youth affairs, health, education, science, and technology in consultation with concerned ministries.	Conducts "The Know India Program." Promotes awareness of India among diaspora youth. Monitors a scholarship program for diaspora children to help them pursue higher and technical education in India. Provides information on investment opportunities and taxes. Provides information on recruitment agencies and foreign employers. Celebrates diaspora day (Pravasi Bharatiya Divas) annually and honors diaspora members with awards. Organizes events and conferences relating to social issues of diaspora.	<a href="http://moia.gov.in">http://moia.gov.in</a>
Lebanon	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants	2000	Advance cultural and educational ties of expatriates.	Prepares a map of Lebanese community around the world. Provides information about Lebanese education and cultural institutions, associations, and clubs around the world. Celebrates International Day of the Lebanese Expatriates and Emigrants Day Abroad.	<a href="http://emigrants.gov.lb/eng/">http://emigrants.gov.lb/eng/</a>
Mali	Ministry of Malians Abroad and African Integration	2000	Protect the interests of Malian citizens living temporarily or permanently abroad. Promote and assist Malians' return and reintegration into Malian society. Coordinate Mali's consular actions. Encourage Malians abroad to participate in the economic and social development of Mali. Assure the	Distributes a "practical guide for Malians abroad" (2003) that includes basic information about employment, social security, reintegration, consular services, and remittances. Assists in administration of diaspora skill transfer programs such as the United Nations' Transfer of Knowledge through	<a href="http://www.maliens.delexterieur.gov.ml">http://www.maliens.delexterieur.gov.ml</a>

(continues)

## Appendix 1. Diaspora Institutions by Type (continued)

<i>Country</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Year created</i>	<i>Key objectives</i>	<i>Sample of activities</i>	<i>Web site</i>
Mali (con't)			proper implementation of treaties regarding the circulation of goods and people.	Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN) program.	
Serbia	Ministry for Diaspora	2003 <sup>c</sup>	Ensure the status of citizens residing abroad. Improve conditions for exercising the voting rights of the diaspora. Enhance relations between expatriates and persons of Serbian origin with the Republic of Serbia. Create conditions for involving the diaspora in the political, economic, and cultural life of Serbia. Aid in reintegration.	Administers projects of economic cooperation between Serbia and the diaspora. Facilitates foreign investment. Manages Economic Council including experts from the homeland and diaspora. Plans to establish Virtual Business Network integrating the data on organizations and individuals, projects, investment potentials, opportunities, and initiatives by using best practices worldwide. Monitors and protects the status rights of the diaspora. Promotes Serbian culture, education, sport, and language. Oversees public relations.	<a href="http://www.mzd.sr.gov.yu/">http://www.mzd.sr.gov.yu/</a>
Somalia	Ministry for Diaspora and Community Affairs	No date confirmed*	Facilitate diaspora in engaging in Somalia. Enable federal and regional Somali governments to effectively communicate with diaspora. Harness skills, material, and human resources of diaspora. Address diaspora needs spanning from cultural preservation in host countries to hassle-free homecoming experience for visiting and returning diaspora.	Conducts voluntary and youth programs including training, internships and consultancy, language literacy programs, and cultural and heritage-revival activities. Implements brain-gain initiatives. Encourages diaspora investment.	<a href="http://somalidia.sporaministry.org/">http://somalidia.sporaministry.org/</a>
Sri Lanka	Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion	2007 <sup>d</sup>	Promote employment of Sri Lankans outside Sri Lanka. Regulate operations	Conducts awareness programs. Looks after welfare of migrants and their	

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**Appendix 1. Diaspora Institutions by Type (continued)**

<i>Country</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Year created</i>	<i>Key objectives</i>	<i>Sample of activities</i>	<i>Web site</i>
Sri Lanka (con't)	and Welfare Subministry: Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment		of licensed foreign employment agents. Ensure protection and welfare of Sri Lankans employed abroad and their families.	families. Introduces reintegration programs. Monitors the registration process. Conducts training programs. Takes part in recruitment of Sri Lankans for foreign jobs. Administers and monitors the activities of labor sections of Sri Lankan missions abroad. Attends to complaints made by migrant workers and their relatives. Identifies new markets and is involved in promotional activities. Regulates activities of recruitment agencies. Settles disputes between employers, employees, and recruitment agents.	<a href="http://www.priu.gov.lk/Ministries_2007/Min_foreign_emp_promotion_welfare.html">http://www.priu.gov.lk/Ministries_2007/Min_foreign_emp_promotion_welfare.html</a> <a href="http://www.slbfe.lk/">http://www.slbfe.lk/</a>
Syria	Ministry of Expatriates	2002	Strengthen the bond of the diaspora with the motherland. Encourage expatriates' effective involvement in the process of overall national development. Mobilize resources for emigrants' development and overall development. Promote cultural exchange through Syrian expatriates around the world. Encourage diasporas as partners for national reform and development.	Conducts national campaign for the census of expatriate Syrians abroad. Promotes youth and education programs for people of Arabic language overseas. Carries out school-related activities in countries where Syrian expatriates live.	<a href="http://ministryofexpatriates.gov.sy">http://ministryofexpatriates.gov.sy</a>
Tunisia	Ministry of Social Affairs, Solidarity and Tunisians Abroad Subministry: Office for Tunisians Abroad	1988	Advise the government in designing policies to protect Tunisians abroad. Develop and implement a cultural agenda to strengthen the ties of Tunisian children abroad with Tunisia.	Places Social Affairs attachés in Tunisia's embassies and consulates to defend and protect diaspora interests. Monitors the implementation of bilateral agreements on labor and	<a href="http://www.ijtimaia.tn/masste_fr/">http://www.ijtimaia.tn/masste_fr/</a>

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## Appendix 1. Diaspora Institutions by Type (continued)

<i>Country</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Year created</i>	<i>Key objectives</i>	<i>Sample of activities</i>	<i>Web site</i>
Tunisia (con't)			Facilitate the reintegration of return migrants.	social security. Conducts cultural programs. Liaises with Tunisian community associations abroad. Provides social workers at consulates to address family issues in the diaspora. Organizes "exploratory and study visits" and "summer camps" in Tunisia for diaspora youth. Organizes Arabic language courses. Registers highly skilled expatriates.	
Yemen	Ministry of Expatriate Affairs	2007	Ensure overseas services and facilities, and the social, economic, and political rights of expatriates. Preserve the cultural identity of emigrants and their links to the homeland. Encourage diaspora participation in social and economic development at home.	Maintains database on the quality and quantity of Yemeni expatriates. Organizes events, activities, and conferences on migration issues. Supports cultural and educational activities. Promotes activities of associations and bodies of Yemeni communities abroad. Carries out technical studies and legal proceedings relating to the establishment of Expatriate Welfare Fund. Manages adoption issues and defends the rights, property, and interests of adoptees. Encourages investment from expatriates. Provides consultancy and advisory services related to investment opportunities. Collects information on Yemeni expatriate business men, remittances, and their investment projects at home.	<a href="http://www.yemen.gov.ye/portal/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D8%A6%D9%8A%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%A9/tabid/1996/Default.aspx">http://www.yemen.gov.ye/portal/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D8%A6%D9%8A%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%A9/tabid/1996/Default.aspx</a>

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Appendix 1. Diaspora Institutions by Type (continued)

Country	Institution	Year created	Key objectives	Sample of activities	Web site
<b>Subministry-level institutions</b>					
Albania <sup>e</sup>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The National Diaspora Institute	1996	Protect the rights of the old and new diaspora. Motivate and support Albanian organizations, associations, and clubs to preserve national identity, language, and culture. Strengthen contacts of diaspora with their home country and mutual assistance. Make business climate conducive for Albanian diaspora businessmen. Launching concrete activities to counter the negative image of the country and the Albanian diaspora.	Records and updates the Geographic and Demographic Atlas of the Albanian Diaspora. Operates centers that promote Albanian culture. Cooperates with the United Nations Development Program the International Organization for Migration on a "brain-gain" initiative to tap into the networks, expertise, and education of the Albanian diaspora.	No web site
Brazil	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Undersecretary General for Brazilian Communities Abroad	2007	Address the needs of Brazilians abroad with a focus on the most vulnerable and most numerous. Identify, develop, and protect Brazilians abroad and help them maintain ties with Brazil.	Plans and supervises consular activities. Assists Brazilians abroad. Executes legal and procedural norms regarding travel documentation. Administers an online portal for support to Brazilians abroad; Web site includes information on Brazilian consular services. Aids in reintegration.	<a href="http://www.mre.gov.br/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=1783&amp;Itemid=351">http://www.mre.gov.br/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=1783&amp;Itemid=351</a>
Chile	Ministry of Foreign Affairs: General Office for Consular and Immigration Services, Office for Chileans Abroad	2001	Attend to the demands and needs of communities of Chilean residents abroad and encourage their participation in national development.	Connects Chilean diaspora communities to communities in the country. Defends expatriates' human and social rights regardless of place of residence. Promotes the exercise of citizens' rights and their inclusion in national development initiatives. Provides valuable information regarding social security, repatriation	<a href="http://www.chilesomos todos.gov.cl">http://www.chilesomos todos.gov.cl</a>

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Appendix 1. Diaspora Institutions by Type (continued)

Country	Institution	Year created	Key objectives	Sample of activities	Web site
Chile (con't)				law, and education. Coordinates services to address the needs of Chilean communities abroad.	
El Salvador	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Vice-ministry for Salvadorans Abroad	2004	Attend to and safeguard the interests and needs of Salvadorans abroad. Integrate Salvadorans abroad with those in El Salvador. Defend expatriates' rights, heighten their opportunities, promote their projects, and strengthen their national identity.	Provides human rights and legal assistance. Aids in migratory stability and family reunification. Promotes remittances and local development. Provides social and humanitarian assistance. Aids in economic integration. Promotes ties to diaspora communities and their political participation. Fosters national identity through supporting civil society organizations for Salvadorans abroad.	<a href="http://www.rree.gob.sv">http://www.rree.gob.sv</a>
Ethiopia	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ethiopian Expatriate Affairs	2002	Serve as a liaison between different ministries and the diaspora. Encourage the active involvement of the diaspora in Ethiopian socioeconomic activities. Safeguard the rights and privileges of Ethiopian expatriates. Mobilize the Ethiopian diaspora for sustained and organized image building.	Disseminates accurate information to the Ethiopian community abroad through media outlets. Conducts research to identify problems of the diaspora in order to improve legislation for their increased participation. Ensures the well-being, safety, and security as well as the rights and privileges of Ethiopians abroad. Keeps the diaspora informed of relevant issues.	<a href="http://www.mfa.gov.et">http://www.mfa.gov.et</a>
Mexico	Secretariat of Foreign Affairs: Sub-secretariat for North America, Institute for Mexicans Abroad	2003	Work to elevate the standard of living of Mexican communities abroad. Promote strategies to engage Mexicans abroad, and listen to proposals and recommendations from the	Provides financial counseling and information about scholarships for education. Writes the <i>Practical Guide for the Mexican Traveler</i> . IME's website provides information about sending	<a href="http://www.ime.gob.mx/">http://www.ime.gob.mx/</a>

(continues)

Appendix 1. Diaspora Institutions by Type (continued)

Country	Institution	Year created	Key objectives	Sample of activities	Web site
Mexico (con't)			communities abroad, members of civil society organizations, and consultative bodies.	remittances to Mexico, the three-for-one investment program, and how to find consular support.	
Peru	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Undersecretary for Peruvians Abroad	No date confirmed*	Provide improved consular services to Peruvians abroad by simplifying administrative procedures, upgrading technology, and promoting and protecting their interests abroad. Support ties between the diaspora and Peru with an emphasis on channeling sufficient resources to development. <sup>f</sup>	Assists with consular paperwork and documentation. Provides legal and humanitarian assistance. Promotes the successful integration of Peruvians into destination-country societies. Defends human rights of Peruvians abroad. Conducts cultural programming and distance education courses so that migrants and their children can retain ties with Peru (especially in Japan). Promotes the productive use of remittances—such as through home purchases—and civic engagement in Peru's political life.	<a href="http://www.rree.gob.pe">http://www.rree.gob.pe</a>
Philippines	Department of Labor and Employment, Overseas Workers Welfare Administration	1981	Protect the interest and promote the welfare of temporary workers through the administration of a welfare fund.	Repatriates distressed workers. Provides insurance, livelihood loans, and scholarships to migrants and their children, as well as other forms of training.	<a href="http://www.owwa.gov.ph">http://www.owwa.gov.ph</a>
Philippines	Department of Labor and Employment, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration	1982	Regulate temporary overseas employment and protect the rights of temporary migrants.	Issues licenses to recruitment agencies. Hears and arbitrates complaints and cases filed against recruiters, workers, and employers. Evaluates and processes employment contracts. Provides legal assistance to victims of illegal recruitment. Conducts marketing missions to find employment opportunities abroad.	<a href="http://www.poea.gov.ph">http://www.poea.gov.ph</a>

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## Appendix 1. Diaspora Institutions by Type (continued)

Country	Institution	Year created	Key objectives	Sample of activities	Web site
Philippines	Department of Foreign Affairs, Office of the Undersecretary for Migrant Workers' Affairs	1995	Provide and coordinate all legal assistance services to be provided to Filipino migrant workers as well as overseas Filipinos in distress.	Issues guidelines, procedures, and criteria for the provisions of legal assistance services. Taps the assistance of reputable law firms and the Integrated Bar of the Philippines and other bar association. Administers legal assistance fund.	No web site
Romania	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department for Relations with the Romanians Abroad <sup>a</sup>	2005	Protect the rights of Romanian communities living abroad. Secure the promotion and observance of the rights and interests of Romanian citizens abroad, in compliance with international laws and norms, and with the values of human rights, freedom, and democracy.	Protects Romanians abroad. Disseminates cultural information. Partners with Romanian associations.	<a href="http://www.mae.ro/index.php?unde=doc&amp;id=11855&amp;idlnk=1&amp;cat=3">http://www.mae.ro/index.php?unde=doc&amp;id=11855&amp;idlnk=1&amp;cat=3</a>
Uruguay	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate General for Consular Affairs and Expatriate Ties	2005	Coordinate, plan, and execute a national policy regarding emigration; support and supervise Uruguay's consulates in implementing this policy. Maintain a database of expatriates and means to contact them. Promote scientific, technological, cultural, commercial, and economic exchanges with the diaspora. Recommend legislative changes related to emigration. Coordinate assistance to expatriates. Provide consular services.	Publishes and distributes a magazine and digital television station for the diaspora ( <a href="http://www.connexionuruguay.gub.uy">www.connexionuruguay.gub.uy</a> ). Oversees civil society councils of Uruguayans abroad (Consejos Consultivos). Provides identity documents to Uruguayans abroad and their children. Publishes a tourist guide and other cultural materials. Translates credentials received abroad. Manages a temporary return program for highly qualified expatriates. Promotes Uruguayan exports. <sup>b</sup>	<a href="http://www.mrree.gub.uy/gxpsites/hgxpp00177,1,80,O,S,0,PAG;CONC;49;15;D;326;2;PAG;MNU;E;17;2;100;1;MNU;">http://www.mrree.gub.uy/gxpsites/hgxpp00177,1,80,O,S,0,PAG;CONC;49;15;D;326;2;PAG;MNU;E;17;2;100;1;MNU;</a>

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Appendix 1. Diaspora Institutions by Type (continued)

Country	Institution	Year created	Key objectives	Sample of activities	Web site
<b>Other national institutions</b>					
Chile	Interministerial Committee for Chilean Communities Abroad	2008	Create a formal and permanent mechanism to coordinate among relevant government agencies public policies relating to the needs of Chileans living abroad.	Approved the National Action Plan <sup>i</sup> for Chilean Communities Abroad for 2009–2010 with an “emphasis on the themes of human and civil rights, social protection, cultural support and national identity, socioeconomic status and social inclusion, access to justice, and the creation of support networks.” Based on an agreement, plans to create a profile of socioeconomic data on Chileans abroad to better identify their needs and facilitate better access to social policies available to all Chileans. Plans to create an information network for victims of rights abuse with a focus on women and indigenous peoples. Based on an agreement, plans to implement and update the social security agreements Chile has concluded with 22 countries.	<a href="http://www.gobiernodechile.cl/chilenos_exterior/comite_interministerial.asp">http://www.gobiernodechile.cl/chilenos_exterior/comite_interministerial.asp</a>
China	State Council, Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the State Council	1978	Study, formulate, and supervise policies that protect the rights and interest of overseas Chinese, including returnees and their relatives. Enhance the unity and friendship among overseas Chinese communities and facilitate their cooperation with China.	Helps establish comprehensive databases in each city, county, and province so that overseas Chinese can find their ancestral roots, homes, and properties. Operates two universities catering mainly to members of the Chinese diaspora. Facilitates return programs.	<a href="http://www.gov.cn/english/2005-10/03/content_74290.htm">http://www.gov.cn/english/2005-10/03/content_74290.htm</a> , and <a href="http://english.gov.cn/2005-10/03/content_74290.htm">http://english.gov.cn/2005-10/03/content_74290.htm</a> ; <a href="http://www.gqfb.gov.cn">http://www.gqfb.gov.cn</a> (In Chinese).

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## Appendix 1. Diaspora Institutions by Type (continued)

<i>Country</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Year created</i>	<i>Key objectives</i>	<i>Sample of activities</i>	<i>Web site</i>
Morocco	Ministerial Delegate for the Prime Minister Responsible for Moroccans Resident Abroad	1993; reformed 2007	Develop and implement a policy relating to Moroccans residing abroad. Promote economic, social, cultural, and educational activities benefiting Moroccans abroad. Safeguard the material and moral interests of the diaspora in both destination and origin countries. Encourage community participation among the diaspora. Study the phenomenon of Moroccan migration. Participate in the negotiation of bilateral and multilateral agreements affecting the diaspora. Represent the government at international conferences and meetings on migration and diasporas. Ensure the successful reintegration of Moroccans returning from abroad.	Facilitates return of qualified Moroccan diaspora, mostly high skilled and/or well financed. Provides advice on investment, financial planning, diaspora tax, customs, commerce and transportation, social security, remittance/banking references, and cultural events. Promotes Arabic language courses.	<a href="http://www.marocainsdumonde.gov.ma">http://www.marocainsdumonde.gov.ma</a>
Philippines	Office of the President, Commission on Filipinos Overseas	1980	Promote economic and cultural ties between the Philippines and its diaspora.	Provides predeparture registration and orientation seminars, guidance and counseling services, and cultural and educational immersion trips for second and subsequent generations.	<a href="http://www.cfo.gov.ph">http://www.cfo.gov.ph</a>
Sierra Leone	Office of the President, Office of the Diaspora	2007	Address critical capacity gaps in the government by bringing diaspora professionals and other experts to deliver results in specific areas.	Provides information regarding financial services, including banks, insurance and housing, tax, and customs duties. Provides information on investing in and starting a business in Sierra Leone. Provides a list of jobs in government departments, a list of	<a href="http://www.diasporaaffairs.gov.sl/index.php?option=com_content&amp;view=frontpage&amp;Itemid=1">http://www.diasporaaffairs.gov.sl/index.php?option=com_content&amp;view=frontpage&amp;Itemid=1</a>

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Appendix 1. Diaspora Institutions by Type (continued)

Country	Institution	Year created	Key objectives	Sample of activities	Web site
Sierra Leone (con't)				educational institutions and professional associations in Sierra Leone, and a list of contact details of government officials. Provides information on dual citizenship and other acts.	
<b>Local-level institutions</b>					
China, Shanghai	The Overseas Chinese Affairs Office (OCAO) of Shanghai Municipal People's Government	1978; renamed in 1980 <sup>1</sup>	Protect the lawful rights and interests of returned overseas Chinese and their relatives and facilitate their integration in Shanghai. Work with other relevant departments in providing services for overseas Chinese-owned enterprises, Chinese nationals residing overseas, and overseas Chinese coming to Shanghai for development.	Prepares development plans and annual plans for Overseas Chinese Affairs work in the municipality. Oversees the use of materials and funds donated by the diaspora. Conducts publicity campaigns, cultural exchanges, and Chinese language classes for Chinese nationals residing abroad.	<a href="http://www.overseas.sh.cn">http://www.overseas.sh.cn</a>
India, Kerala	Department of Non-Resident Keralites Affairs	1996	Protect migrant workers by addressing complaints of abuse and maltreatment from employers and recruiters. Facilitate diaspora investment.	Implements an insurance scheme for unemployed returnees, unskilled laborers, and domestic workers. Runs a welfare agency in order to rehabilitate those who return home after finishing assignments abroad. Manages a fund to facilitate diaspora investment in infrastructure. Operates emergency repatriation fund that provides financial assistance for repatriation. Runs a department for assistance in getting compensation of workers in Kuwait. Takes part in awareness programs and drives against illegal recruitment.	<a href="http://www.kerala.gov.in/dept_norka/programs.htm">http://www.kerala.gov.in/dept_norka/programs.htm</a>

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## Appendix 1. Diaspora Institutions by Type (continued)

<i>Country</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Year created</i>	<i>Key objectives</i>	<i>Sample of activities</i>	<i>Web site</i>
Mexico	National Coordination for State-level Migrant Affairs Offices (CONOFAM) (various states)	National Coordination: 2007; dates for state offices vary.	Promote collective thinking and share experiences through regular and special meetings of CONOFAM. Assist in the organization of Mexicans living abroad for the joint design of public policies, programs, and actions of common interest. Foster local economic development programs. Encourage the creation of tools and programs that promote productive investment of migrant remittances. Encourage binational programs on the areas of education, culture, social and economic.	Varies by state. The Jalisco office coordinates or promotes migrant-sponsored infrastructure projects. It also organizes Jalisciense hometown clubs in the United States, Jalisciense fairs in US destinations, and visits of municipal presidents to US cities with large Jalisciense populations; arranges annual meetings in Jalisco of Jalisciense émigré leaders; and promotes Jalisciense products and binational health and educational programs. <sup>k</sup>	<a href="http://www.conofam.org.mx/index.php">http://www.conofam.org.mx/index.php</a> (Includes links to state offices)
Somalia, Puntland	Office for Development and Partnership with the Puntland Diaspora Community.	2008	Strengthen the support that the State of Puntland receives from its diaspora community.	No activities confirmed.*	<a href="http://www.puntland.govt.com/en/current_issues/information/current_issues_more.php?id=638">http://www.puntland.govt.com/en/current_issues/information/current_issues_more.php?id=638</a>
<b>Quasi-government institutions</b>					
Dominican Republic	National Presidential Council for Dominican Communities Abroad	2006	Integrate the diaspora with the Dominican Republic's national development efforts via policies that promote community organization among the diaspora. Adopt policies that promote and strengthen ties with the Dominican Republic.	Organizes the Dominican diaspora with the purpose of integrating them into the economic, political, social, cultural, and technological development of the Dominican Republic. Facilitates dialogue between the Dominican diaspora and national institutions. Helps improve the management capacity of the State for the formulation of diaspora policies.	<a href="http://www.condex.gob.do">http://www.condex.gob.do</a>

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Appendix 1. Diaspora Institutions by Type (continued)

Country	Institution	Year created	Key objectives	Sample of activities	Web site
Mali	High Council of Malians Abroad	1993; reformed 2004	Serve as official representatives of the diaspora in Mali and in the country of residence. Promote solidarity between the diaspora and Mali. Assist consular officials in the protection of Malians abroad. Identify potential investors from the diaspora. Promote a positive image of Mali.	Makes recommendations to the Dominican government to support the implementation of programs, plans, and projects.  Participates in economic development, environmental protection, social, cultural, and sports activities. Provides information to Malians who are considering emigrating.	<a href="http://www.maliensdel-exterieur.gov.ml">http://www.maliensdel-exterieur.gov.ml</a>
Mexico	Consultative Council of the Institute for Mexicans Abroad	2003	Advise and consult the Institute for Mexicans Abroad. Bring together the efforts and experiences of Mexicans abroad to identify and analyze the problems, challenges, and opportunities they face. Propose alternatives to increase the living standards of Mexican communities abroad.	Helps the Institute for Mexicans Abroad promote strategies to engage Mexicans abroad and articulate actions in favor of Mexican communities abroad.	<a href="http://www.ime.gob.mx/ccime/ccime.htm">http://www.ime.gob.mx/ccime/ccime.htm</a>
Morocco	Hassan II Foundation for Moroccans Resident Abroad	1996	Maintain and develop the links between Moroccans abroad and Morocco. Assist Moroccans residing abroad to overcome the difficulties they face as a result of emigration. Promote investment in Morocco by the diaspora. Promote development cooperation with destination-country governments.	<i>Cultural activities.</i> Provides Arabic language and Moroccan culture courses for the children of Moroccans residing abroad. Organizes cultural visits and summer camps for diaspora children. Provides support to mosques. Organizes a special program during Ramadan. <i>Legal activities.</i> Provides social and legal assistance, including partial funding for	<a href="http://www.alwatan.ma/">http://www.alwatan.ma/</a>

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## Appendix 1. Diaspora Institutions by Type (continued)

<i>Country</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Year created</i>	<i>Key objectives</i>	<i>Sample of activities</i>	<i>Web site</i>
Peru	Advisory Councils	2001	Represent the interests of Peruvians abroad in each consular jurisdiction.	<p>the repatriation of the deceased.  <i>Economic activities.</i> Evaluates the economic climate in Morocco.            Provides information on investment opportunities.</p> <p>Creates a dialogue between the diaspora and the government. Supports government efforts to protect and support the diaspora. Strengthens national ties, promote Peru's culture, and contribute to its economic development. Facilitates the positive integration of Peruvians into destination countries. Encourages civic participation in Peru and in destination countries.</p>	<a href="http://www.consejodeconsulta.com">http://www.consejodeconsulta.com</a>
Uruguay	Consultative Councils for Uruguayans Abroad	2006 <sup>1</sup>	Communicate the desires, proposals, demands, and suggestions of Uruguayans abroad to consular and government officials in policy development.	<p>Identifies policy priorities, supports consular activities, and disseminates information relevant to the diaspora.</p>	<a href="http://www.presidencia.gub.uy/_web/decretos/2008/11/597_00003.PDF">http://www.presidencia.gub.uy/_web/decretos/2008/11/597_00003.PDF</a> ; <a href="http://www.mrree.gub.uy/gxpsites/hgxp00177,1,109,O,S,Q,MNU;E;30;2;MNU;">http://www.mrree.gub.uy/gxpsites/hgxp00177,1,109,O,S,Q,MNU;E;30;2;MNU;</a>

\* This information not available from interviews or public sources.

Compiled by the Migration Policy Institute from interviews with consular, embassy, and other government officials, and from government Web sites and other sources where interviews could not be arranged.

*Note:* The information provided in this table is not exhaustive and is intended to give an overview of diaspora institutions in 30 developing countries. Due to disparity in publicly available information, the compendium may underrepresent the activities of some developing countries. All information current as of July 2009. This table does not reflect subsequent changes to government organization, responsibilities, or actions.

- a. Vincent Lima, "Hranush Hakobyan: 'The Diaspora Ministry is the home of every Armenian': An interview with the new minister," *Armenian Reporter*, November 21, 2008, [http://www.armenianreporter.org/index.php?title=Diaspora\\_Ministry](http://www.armenianreporter.org/index.php?title=Diaspora_Ministry).
- b. Anne Lewis, Government of Dominica, Ministry of Trade, Industry, Consumer and Diaspora Affairs, interview by Aaron Terrazas of the Migration Policy Institute, August 6, 2009.
- c. See Jovan Filipovic, "The Serbian Focus on E-Government and Strategic Orientations" (PowerPoint presentation, Republic of Serbia, Ministry for Diaspora, n.d.), <http://www.wego.3dnet.co.yu/download/SerbiaFilipovicMinistryOfDiaspora#256,1>, The Serbian Focus on E-Government and strategic orientations.
- d. Philip Martin, "Another Miracle? Managing Labor Migration in Asia" (Paper presented at United Nations Expert Group Meeting on International Migration and Development in Asia and the Pacific, UNESCO, Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Bangkok, Thailand, September 2008).
- e. Flamur Gashi, "The National Diaspora Institute," *Typescript*, August 6, 2009.
- f. Peruvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Política de reforma consular, asistencia y promoción de las comunidades peruanas en el exterior* (Lima, n.d.), [http://www.irree.gob.pe/portal/aconsular.nsf/7fe99ca6ad554d4505256bf006da07a/1f2c55822814821c052570d60053132a/\\$FILE/Publicacion1.pdf](http://www.irree.gob.pe/portal/aconsular.nsf/7fe99ca6ad554d4505256bf006da07a/1f2c55822814821c052570d60053132a/$FILE/Publicacion1.pdf).
- g. Ovidiu-Adrian Tudorache, Third Secretary (Political), Embassy of Romania in Washington DC, e-mail message to Phoram Shah of the Migration Policy Institute, July 27, 2009.
- h. Uruguayan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate General for Consular Affairs and Expatriate Ties, "La política migratoria del estado uruguayo: La vinculación con la patria peregrina" (PowerPoint presentation at the Organization of American States, 2008), <http://scm.oas.org/pdfs/2008/CP20070T01.ppt#256,1>, La política Migratoria del Estado Uruguayo La vinculación con la Patria Peregrina.
- i. General Office for Consular and Immigration Services, Office for Chileans Abroad "Sesión el Comité Interministerial para las Comunidades Chilenas en el Exterior," [http://www.chilesomostodos.gov.cl/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=596&Itemid=7](http://www.chilesomostodos.gov.cl/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=596&Itemid=7); Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Chile, "Van klaveren preside Comité para Comunidades Chilenas en el Exterior" (Press Release, May 6, 2009), [http://www.minrel.gov.cl/prontus\\_minrel/site/artic/20090506/pags/20090506152133.php](http://www.minrel.gov.cl/prontus_minrel/site/artic/20090506/pags/20090506152133.php).
- j. The Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of Shanghai Revolution Committee was established in August 1978 after the Cultural Revolution. In January 1980, it was renamed the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of Shanghai Municipal People's Government. Alina Zhu at OCAO of Shanghai Municipal People's Government, fax message to Doreen Aguiar, August 5, 2009.
- k. David Fitzgerald, "State and Emigration: A Century of Emigration Policy and Mexico" (Working Paper no. 123, Center for Comparative Immigration Studies, University of San Diego, September 2005), <http://www.ccis-ucsd.org/PUBLICATIONS/wrkkg123.pdf>.
- l. Uruguayan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Primer encuentro mundial de Consejos Consultivos," <http://www.mrree.gub.uy/gxpsites/hgxp00117,1,73,O,S,0,PAG;CONC;73;3;D;1712;1;PAG>.

## Appendix 2. Developing Countries' Consular Activities in Top Migrant-Destination Countries

<i>Sample of activities in country of top destination*</i>				
<i>Country</i>	<i>Top destination</i>	<i>Help in destination countries</i>	<i>Links to the homeland***</i>	<i>Web site(s)**</i>
Bangladesh	India	Issues visas. Provides information on how to apply for visas and necessary forms.	Promotes cultural events and expositions including a book fair (featuring Bangladeshi works and food). Celebrates National day, International Mother Language Day, etc. Supports Bengali state government-sponsored art gallery in Kolkata. Offers extensive list of links to Bengali newspapers. Provides information about Bangladesh's history, land, people, heritage, government (its structure and offices), and economy. Provides information on foreign students' admission to Bangladeshi colleges.	Bangladesh High Commission, New Delhi, India: <a href="http://www.bhcdelhi.org">http://www.bhcdelhi.org</a> Bangladesh Deputy High Commission, Kolkata, India: <a href="http://www.bdhckolkata.org/">http://www.bdhckolkata.org/</a>
Brazil	Japan	Issues public notices and press releases (e.g., press releases on the H1N1 flu virus from April to July 2009 cited latest statistics in Japan and Brazil as well as procedures at airports in Brazil.) Provides information on how to obtain different types of visas, and how to obtain a birth certificate in Japan.	Promotes cultural programs and events. Lists Brazilian cultural events (e.g., concerts, photo and art exhibits, and musicals). Provides information on Brazil's people, history, agriculture, industrial development, transport, education system, arts, architecture, fashion, music, and political system. Offers information on opportunities to invest and do business in Brazil, particularly with regard to bilateral trade. Maintains <i>BrazilTradeNet</i> , a trade portal in English, Portuguese, and Spanish that facilitates research on Brazilian companies. Offers tourist information. Runs a "Brazil Kids Corner" that offers basic historical facts and data on Brazil.	Embassy of Brazil, Tokyo, Japan: <a href="http://www.brasemb.or.jp/">http://www.brasemb.or.jp/</a>
Chile	Argentina	Issues visas, passports, travel ("laissez-passer") documents, and identity cards. Provides services for certifications, registrations, affidavits, travel authorizations, and legalization (similar to a notarization but performed by a government official),	Recruits for military services as required by the Chilean national army. Facilitates inscription in Chilean birth, death, and marriage registries.	Consulate General of Chile in Buenos Aires, Argentina: <a href="http://www.consuladodechile.org.ar/">http://www.consuladodechile.org.ar/</a>

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## Appendix 2. Developing Countries' Consular Activities in Top Migrant-Destination Countries (continued)

<i>Sample of activities in country of top destination*</i>			
<i>Country</i>	<i>Top destination</i>	<i>Help in destination countries</i>	<i>Links to the homeland**</i>
China	United States	Issues visas and passports for those going to China, Hong Kong, and Macao. Provides marriage registration services. Provides authentication/notary services.	Features online news updates about China (particularly regarding its relations with the United States) and commercial news. Offers online updates about embassy programs. Provides online information on Chinese policies and policy areas (education, diplomacy, public health, etc.). Provides information on Overseas Chinese Affairs office. Provides information on Chinese economy, geography, nationality, population, customs, and climate. Provides information on bilateral visits, supply and demand of goods, exhibitions in China, and laws and regulations related to business, trade, customs, investment, and taxation.
			Embassy of the People's Republic of China, Washington, DC, United States: <a href="http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/">http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/</a>
Dominican Republic	United States	Issues visas and passports. Provides marriage and divorce registration services in the Dominican Republic. Provides services for certification and legalization. Assists DR nationals who are deportees/prisoners and their families. Provides translation services. Provides a list of Dominican consulates in the United States.	Features embassy newsletter that provides recent information on development in the Dominican Republic, US-Dominican Republic relations, etc. Provides links to news and information on Dominican Republic geography, culture, history, government, economy, sports, natural resources, climate, language and religion, education, tourism, etc. Provides links to government departments Provides information on tourism and doing business in the Dominican Republic. Promotes and organizes cultural events for children of Dominican Republic heritage living in the United States (events cited are all in the Washington, DC area).
			Embassy of the Dominican Republic, Washington, DC, United States: <a href="http://www.domrep.org/">http://www.domrep.org/</a>
El Salvador	United States	Issues visas. Offers legal immigration assistance, including interview assistance and legal assistance and advice (in civil,	Features promotional information on trade, investment, and business opportunities in El Salvador. Provides tourism/cultural information for travel to El Salvador.
			Embassy of El Salvador, Washington, DC, United States:

(continues)

## Appendix 2. Developing Countries' Consular Activities in Top Migrant-Destination Countries (continued)

<i>Sample of activities in country of top destination*</i>			
<i>Country</i>	<i>Top destination</i>	<i>Help in destination countries</i>	<i>Links to the homeland***</i>
El Salvador (con't)		legal, labor, administrative, and criminal matters). Provides information on changes in migration laws, including information on Temporary Protected Status (TPS). Offers assistance to Salvadorans who are deported. Distributes easy-to-read reports regarding the 1997 Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA), which provides various forms of immigration benefits and relief from deportation. Provides detailed online information on different consulate locations in the United States.	Provides online information of Salvadorian political system, policy projects, and diplomatic affairs (particularly on bilateral relations with the United States). Provides online news updates on embassy and Salvadoran affairs.
			<a href="http://www.elsalvador.org/embajadas/eeuu/home/home/">http://www.elsalvador.org/embajadas/eeuu/home/home/</a>
Haiti	United States	Issues visas and passports. Authenticates documents. Provides certification services. Offers information on consular representation of Republic of Haiti in the United States. Offers links to relevant US government documents and laws, e.g., the HOPE Act, which gives trade preferences to Haitian-manufactured textiles.	Organizes and promotes cultural events and activities that connect, preserve and promote Haitian art and culture and serve as a link to cultural institutions and practices. Provides information about government and political affairs, main state institutions (executive, legislative, and judicial), and the educational system. Offers information for travel to Haiti. Offers links to news related to Haiti. Offers links to documents including the constitution.
			Embassy of Haiti, Washington, DC, United States: <a href="http://www.haiti.org/index.php?option=com_content&amp;view=frontpage&amp;Itemid=1">http://www.haiti.org/index.php?option=com_content&amp;view=frontpage&amp;Itemid=1</a>
India	United Arab Emirates (UAE)	Issues visas and passports. Provides services for attestation of legal documents (educational certificates, marriages, death, and burial registration). Translates documents in regional Indian languages. Provides information and links to UAE government, embassies, airports,	Issues Person of Indian Origin and Overseas Citizen of India cards. Provides information on trade and commerce and links to businesses in India. Offers tourism information. Offers links to information about Indian art. Offers information on bilateral treaties in the areas of legal assistance, judicial cooperation, efforts to combat drug trafficking, civil aviation, defense training, information
			Embassy of India, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates: <a href="http://www.indembassyuae.org/">http://www.indembassyuae.org/</a>

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## Appendix 2. Developing Countries' Consular Activities in Top Migrant-Destination Countries (continued)

Country	Top destination	Sample of activities in country of top destination*		Web site(s)**
		Help in destination countries	Links to the homeland***	
India (con't)		newspapers, banks, schools, businesses, city guides.	cooperation, cultural exchanges, channel carriage and broadcasting, and manpower sourcing. Provides information on Indian schools and the Indian community in the United Arab Emirates, e.g., community history, size, cultural activities, etc.	
Lebanon	United States	Issues visas and passports. Provides official translations of Lebanese IDs and certificates. Legalizes documents and signatures. Provides services for registration of Lebanese citizenship. Organizes the transferring of bodies and furniture. Issues exemptions from military drafts and oversees compulsory conscription.	Offers opportunities to seek employment at embassy. Sends embassy mailings to those who register. Provides information on Lebanese geography, climate, government and politics, business, education, media, etc. Provides data related to population, macroeconomic indicators including GDP, banking system, agriculture, industry, exports, imports, trade, stock market, balance of payment, etc. Provides information on doing business in Lebanon and investing and banking in Lebanon. Offers tourism information.	Embassy of Lebanon, Washington, DC, United States: <a href="http://www.lebanonembassyus.org/">http://www.lebanonembassyus.org/</a>
Mexico	United States	Issues visas and passports. Provides consular ID cards ( <i>matricula consular</i> ). Issues passports, military registrations, acts of civil registry, notary services, information about pensions, and visa certification. Oversees legal work for family affairs (e.g., wills and burials). Promotes scholarships (particularly for postgraduate study) for Mexican nationals for study in universities outside of Mexico. Provides information on Mexico-US relations.	Provides general information about Mexico's geography, political divisions, climate, government, population, languages and religion, export destinations and imports sources, etc. Offers online news updates about social, economic, and political affairs in Mexico (particular focus on Mexico-US relations). Shows those who are interested how to register companies, create trusts, acquire properties, acquire regulatory letters (a means of communication between judicial authorities in different countries through which judges request background information necessary for a trial) apply for scholarships, and acquire visas for travel to Mexico. Dispenses social security fund for braceros, meaning those migrant laborers	Embassy of Mexico, Washington, DC, United States: <a href="http://portal.sre.gob.mx/usa/">http://portal.sre.gob.mx/usa/</a> Consulate General of Mexico, San Antonio, Texas: <a href="http://portal.sre.gob.mx/sanantonio/">http://portal.sre.gob.mx/sanantonio/</a>

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## Appendix 2. Developing Countries' Consular Activities in Top Migrant-Destination Countries (continued)

<i>Sample of activities in country of top destination*</i>			
<i>Country</i>	<i>Top destination</i>	<i>Help in destination countries</i>	<i>Links to the homeland***</i>
Mexico (con't)			<i>Web site(s)**</i>
		who worked in the United States from 1942 to 1964 as part of the Bracero temporary worker program. Promotes and organizes cultural events and programs for Mexican and Latin American communities.	
Morocco	France	Processes requests for passports and visas. Provides registration services particular to family affairs (e.g., marriage, divorce, and inheritance). Offers online news bulletin on political, economic, and cultural developments related to France-Morocco relations. Offers online list of legalization bureaus in Morocco. Offers extensive list of Moroccan missions in France.	Promotes opportunities to register for Arab and Moroccan culture and language classes in France. Promotes Moroccan cultural activities in Morocco. Features special Web pages on the Moroccan diaspora in France. Offers information/statistics on Moroccan economy and state, a religious calendar and daily prayer schedules, and an economic calendar. Offers information on bilateral political, economic, social, and cultural agreements between France and Morocco. Offers extensive online list of special programs and/or universities where Moroccan nationals may study in France and Morocco. Provides information on how to invest in Morocco and on the Moroccan economy (e.g., policy projects, sector breakdowns), political system (e.g., party system, policy projects, and legal structure), and culture. Provides names and links to French and Moroccan media. Offers tourism information.
Philippines	United States	Issues visas and passports. Protects rights and interests of Filipino nationals living abroad. Offers updates on procedures for travel to the Philippines (e.g., information on machine-readable passports, duty-free importation of personal effects, etc.). Provides list of Filipino consulates across the United States.	Offers information on dual citizenship application. Promotes Philippine culture. Promotes Philippine interests in the business community, the national and international media, the academic community, think tanks and policy institutes, nongovernmental organizations, and within the Filipino-American community. Promotes cultural events (e.g., short film competitions, cultural exchange programs, banquets, festivals, and parades) and economic
			Embassy of the Philippines, Washington, DC, United States: <a href="http://www.philippineembassy-usa.org/home.htm">http://www.philippineembassy-usa.org/home.htm</a>

(continues)

## Appendix 2. Developing Countries' Consular Activities in Top Migrant-Destination Countries (continued)

<i>Sample of activities in country of top destination*</i>			
<i>Country</i>	<i>Top destination</i>	<i>Help in destination countries</i>	<i>Links to the homeland***</i>
Philippines (con't)			<i>Web site(s)**</i>
Romania	Israel	Issues visas and identity cards. Provides certification services, notary services, driver's licenses, and travel documents.	developments and opportunities in the Philippines. Features an online newsletter about the Filipino community in the United States. Offers online news about the Philippines.  Provides general information about Romania's history, geography, population, ethnic structure, religions, culture, tourism, transport, government, and foreign policy. Promotes Romanian cultural events (e.g., at the Romania Cultural Institute in Tel Aviv). Promotes scholarships for Romanian study in Israel.
Sierra Leone	United States	Issues visas and passports. Certifies legal documents and processes citizenship registration forms.	Embassy of Romania, Tel Aviv, Israel: <a href="http://telaviv.mae.ro/index.php?lang=en">http://telaviv.mae.ro/index.php?lang=en</a>  Embassy of Sierra Leone, Washington, DC, United States: <a href="http://embassyofsierra.leone.net/">http://embassyofsierra.leone.net/</a>
Sri Lanka	India	Issues visas and passports. Certifies legal documents.	High Commission of Sri Lanka, New Delhi, India: <a href="http://www.newdelhi.mission.gov.lk/index.htm">http://www.newdelhi.mission.gov.lk/index.htm</a>

(continues)

## Appendix 2. Developing Countries' Consular Activities in Top Migrant-Destination Countries (continued)

Country	Top destination	Sample of activities in country of top destination*			Web site(s)**
		Help in destination countries	Links to the homeland***		
Tunisia	France	Issues visas and national ID cards.	Provides tourism information. Offers web links and contact information for important organizations tied to Tunisia. Offers online information about the Tunisian state, news updates related to Tunisian foreign affairs, and bilateral agreements. Offers information about opportunities to study in Tunisia. Promotes investment in Tunisia.		Embassy of the Republic of Tunisia, Paris, France: <a href="http://www.amb-tunisie.fr/">http://www.amb-tunisie.fr/</a>
Uruguay	Argentina	Issues visas and passports. Provides certificates of good conduct background, permits, certificates of existence, certificates of residence, and certificates of citizenship for minors. Provides support unit for Uruguayan entrepreneurs (so they can comply with Argentine regulations and procedures.	Facilitates return to Uruguay. Promotes Uruguayan culture via a Department of Culture. Offers information on political and economic situation in Uruguay and on bilateral agreements between Uruguay and Argentina.		Embassy of Uruguay, Argentina: <a href="http://www.embajadadeluruguay.com.ar/cdistrto-bsas.htm">http://www.embajadadeluruguay.com.ar/cdistrto-bsas.htm</a>

\* Cited activities are not exhaustive and may underrepresent the activities of some developing countries due to disparity in publicly available information.

\*\* Sample activities cited are offered at embassies or consulates noted in this column. More than two diplomatic posts were consulted in some corridors to reflect the wider array of activities typically found in key destination cities.

\*\*\* Includes information that is useful to prospective tourists and businesses as well as migrants living in that country.

Note: All information current as of July 2009. This table does not reflect subsequent changes to government organization, responsibilities, or actions.

Compiled by the Migration Policy Institute based on a review of embassy and consulate general Web sites.

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## CHAPTER II

# PROTECTING OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS

### The Government's Role in the Contract Labor Migration Cycle

*Patricia A. Sto. Tomas*

#### I. INTRODUCTION

**T**he movement of Filipinos to other countries started as early as the 1800s, when many worked aboard the Spanish trade galleons that plied the oceans. During the US occupation of the Philippines that began in 1898, Filipinos continued to migrate, primarily to work on the pineapple plantations of Hawaii. Although migration for the purpose of work dates back to those early periods, it was actually only in the 1970s that the surge of what is now referred to as labor migration began. The 1970s opened the door for many Filipinos to work abroad because the Middle East needed to recruit a skilled manpower for its economic development initiatives, and the Philippines proved a successful match because of its labor force surplus and high literacy rate. During the same period, larger numbers of Filipinos began to leave the country to fill workforce shortages of industrializing countries, taking on jobs as nurses, construction workers, domestic helpers, entertainers, and nannies, among others.

This phenomenon of labor migration, which continues in large numbers to this day, allows many Filipinos to find jobs, and has long been seen as a means to address the Philippines' persistent unemployment problem. In addition, migrant workers contribute to the increase in



revenues and help keep the economy afloat through their remittances. In 2008, the Philippines was among the top remittance-receiving countries, with a value reaching US\$18.26 billion and representing 10.5 percent of GDP.<sup>a</sup> Responding to the labor migration phenomenon, the Philippine government in 1974 initiated a national program of contract labor migration, which was adopted through the Labor Code of the Philippines.

Contract labor migration, also known as temporary migration, has been an institutional practice in the Philippines for the past 40 years. Established in the 1970s during the authoritarian rule of Ferdinand Marcos, the practice of contract labor migration has been further enhanced and systematized through a legal and regulatory framework under the subsequent administrations of Corazon Aquino, Fidel Ramos, Joseph Estrada, and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

The movement of workers to skills-deficient economies has become a global phenomenon and now embraces most nationalities and categories and skill levels of workers. Today, an estimated 9 million Filipinos, representing one-fourth of the Philippine labor force, work in more than 190 countries on renewable work permits, with about 1 percent of the total annual flow eventually acquiring permanent residency abroad.<sup>b</sup>

Overseas employment is a politically sensitive issue in the Philippines. It is often cited by government critics as proof that the country's elected and unelected leadership is not creating sufficient jobs in the economy, forcing people to look overseas for work. On the other hand, the present government sees overseas employment as providing a choice for workers, particularly when the wage differential is a major consideration in their decision making.

Other issues concerning labor migration are the seemingly perpetual "brain drain" and social costs experienced due to the separation of migrant workers from their families and communities. And, perhaps most paramount, among the considerations that must be taken into account is the protection of migrant workers from abusive employers, illegal recruiters, and others.

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a. The World Bank reports that the top countries that received the highest remittances (in billions of US dollars) in 2008 are: India (45.0); China (34.5); Mexico (26.2); Philippines (18.26); France (13.75); Bangladesh (8.9); Pakistan (7.0); and Morocco (6.7).

b. The Commission on Filipinos Overseas estimates that there were 8.73 million Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) in 193 countries as of December 2007. The Philippine government targets to deploy 1 million OFWs every year as per the Philippine Medium-Term Development Plan (MTPDP) for 2004–2010. If the target is on track, an estimated 9 million OFWs were deployed as of the first quarter of 2008.

This chapter discusses the role of the Philippine government in protecting migrant workers. It focuses on the protective mechanisms and institutions that have been created to assure that workers are protected in the most effective way possible.

## II. PROTECTION: HOW AND WHY

The role of Filipino migrant workers in keeping a balanced economy and increasing the country's GDP is well recognized, in the view of the author, who served the Philippine government as administrator of overseas employment and labor issues and concerns. Labor migration is described in the *Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan for 2004–2010* as one of the solutions to the unemployment problem.<sup>c</sup> Labor migration not only helps the national economy, but also allows improvement in the economic situations of the migrant workers at the household level. Inasmuch as the government wants to provide a range of choices and opportunities for its citizens, it is unlikely that any policy or legislation would be promulgated that would limit the flow of workers to legitimate overseas destinations and through legal migration channels.

Since the government promotes contract labor migration, it also constitutes a responsible practice that it dedicates itself to the protection of migrant workers, not as agents of national economic development, but as citizens of the country, as workers, and as human beings who are entitled to such protection. Given this premise, protecting overseas workers is therefore equally important as protecting workers located within the national territory. Republic Act 8042, otherwise known as the Migrant Workers Act of 1995, provides policies for the protection of migrant workers, including provision of repatriation assistance through the Emergency Repatriation Fund and legal assistance at the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA). The Migrant Workers Act also has resulted in disciplinary actions against principals and employers who violate migrant workers' rights as provided under the rules of the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA).

Responsibility for protecting overseas workers is undertaken by the government in a number of ways, and a comprehensive regulatory framework was instituted through the Labor Code of the Philippines in 1974 and strengthened through subsequent laws such as the Migrant Workers Act of 1995. This framework, based on the needs and rights of migrant workers,

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c. See National Economic and Development Authority, *Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan for 2004–2010* (Pasig City: National Economic and Development Authority, 2001), <http://www.neda.gov.ph/ads/mtdpd/MTPDP2004–2010/PDF/MTPDP2004–2010.html>.

involves the participation of various government agencies specifically established and designed for the purpose of advancing migrant protection and welfare.

### Philippine Overseas Employment Administration

POEA is at the forefront in ensuring that Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) are protected. Created in 1982 through Executive Order 797, the agency's foremost mandate is to develop and promote the overseas employment program and protect the rights of migrant workers. POEA is heavily involved in the labor migration process, beginning with the assurance that a standard employment contract is provided for each overseas worker which stipulates the minimum terms and conditions of work, including the remuneration that may be acceptable for each category of work.

As a predeparture protective mechanism, POEA strictly permits deployment only to destination countries that recognize the rights of Filipino workers and have protective mechanisms in place. Among the required protections: The existence of social laws that protect migrant workers' rights, and being signatory to multilateral conventions committed to the protection of migrant workers in particular and human rights in general.

Another essential part of the overseas employment framework is the regulation by POEA of the activities of the parties involved in the recruitment and deployment of OFWs. In this regard, POEA regulates the private-sector participation in the recruitment of OFWs. This oversight has two aims: Ensuring that private recruitment agencies follow the basic rules and regulations, and holding the private recruiters accountable in cases of rules violations by themselves or by the employers (principals). Private-sector activities are regulated through the issuance of licenses that allow recruitment agencies to operate legally. To obtain a license, they are required to hold in escrow a significant amount of money (about US\$50,000) that can be drawn upon if they are found to have violated OFWs' contracts. The recruitment agencies' leadership may also be subject to criminal prosecution for illegal recruitment practices, such as imposition of fees beyond the legally permissible amount, for which they may be held without bail while the case is on trial or when there are five or more complainants.

POEA also has a verification, registration, and accreditation mechanism to assure that foreign employers that hire OFWs are in good standing. A local recruitment agency will be allowed to deploy Filipino workers if the counterpart employer overseas is a duly licensed entity that is allowed to operate under the laws and policies of the destination country. In cases where an employer is already registered and accredited by POEA, it can still be

suspended or banned from hiring Filipino workers if found guilty of violating the contractual rights of workers.

Aside from its regulatory function, POEA also is heavily involved in the formulation and implementation of a system that promotes and monitors the status of Filipino workers while they are employed overseas, focusing on their welfare and workplace protection. POEA also serves an information dissemination role as a proactive means of preventing rights abuses, informing OFWs about their rights as migrant workers and human beings and how they can assert those rights or seek remedies if violations occur. This information sharing is done at a predeparture seminar conducted by the agency for all outbound workers.

### Overseas Workers' Welfare Administration

The Overseas Workers' Welfare Administration (OWWA) joins POEA as the other organization involved in the Philippine overseas employment framework. While POEA serves more of a regulatory function, the majority of OWWA responsibilities involve the administration and delivery of welfare and benefits for OFWs and their families. OWWA programs include the provision of insurance and health-care services, education and training through scholarship grants, social services and family programs (including repatriation and reintegration), and workers' assistance and on-site services such as legal assistance, counseling, provision of temporary housing, and legal representation in court. Other services offered by OWWA include placement assistance, cultural services such as orientation to the destination country's norms and legal system, remittance services, psychological counseling and stress debriefing, values formation, housing for distressed OFWs, and assistance for OFWs in trouble with host-country rules and laws.

OWWA funds its programs and services through a capital build-up derived from the payment of a US\$25 membership contribution from each documented OFW, with the membership valid for two years. The proceeds are invested in high-yielding financial instruments. In addition, OWWA manages the Emergency Repatriation Fund, which amounts to 100 million pesos (US\$ 2 million)<sup>d</sup> used for emergency repatriation of OFWs, as provided in the Migrant Workers Act of 1995.

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d. Exchange rate used: U.S. \$1 = 48 pesos

## Philippine Overseas Labor Offices

The functions of OWWA and POEA are complemented by Philippine Overseas Labor Offices (POLOs). POLOs are located in destination countries where significant numbers of OFWs are deployed. When the POLOs were established, starting earlier this decade, labor attaches assigned to various Philippine embassies were provided with additional staff and funding.

POLOs are primarily tasked with providing on-site protection and services to Filipino migrant workers. Apart from the idea that protection is more easily achievable if on-site mechanisms are available, the establishment of the POLOs is based on the premise that the government should be brought closer to its people even when they are overseas. In cases of emergencies requiring the movement or evacuation of OFWs, for example, the Philippine government, through the POLOs, becomes more accessible despite the real geographic distance. Other than the provision of on-site protection, POLOs also have the responsibility of verifying the legitimacy of employers located within their jurisdiction and report relevant information to POEA. Currently, there are 32 POLOs, located in the Middle East (14), Asia-Pacific (11), Europe (5), and Americas (2).

OFWs also gain protection informally through their membership in overseas diaspora organizations, which are usually formed based on regions or specific hometowns in the Philippines. The Philippine government, which believes that the voices of Filipino migrant workers can be best articulated when they are collective and organized, encourages the creation of diaspora organizations. And the government also encourages the organization of family circles in the Philippines for the beneficiaries of overseas workers to facilitate communication, support, and problem-solving activities for those who are left behind.

## Other Offices Involved in Migrant Worker Protection

POEA, OWWA, and POLO all are located within the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE). Outside the Department are a number of other government offices also involved in migrant worker protection. Among them:

- The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA): Issues passports for departing workers and, more importantly, provides on-site protection to Filipino workers, particularly in countries where there are no assigned labor attaches or POLOs. DFA also assumes jurisdiction over assistance to nationals abroad, including unauthorized or irregularly deployed migrants.

- The Philippine National Police (PNP) and National Bureau of Investigation (NBI): The two law enforcement agencies play a valuable role in the campaign against illegal recruitment.
- Anti-Illegal Recruitment Task Force: This agency, which is under the Office of the Vice President, is charged with validation of reports concerning illegal recruitment practices, surveillance of suspected illegal recruiters, and arrest when necessary. Task force members are from PNP and NBI.
- The Department of Justice's Prosecution Service: Assists in the filing and prosecution of criminal cases, especially in the area of illegal recruitment.
- The Bureau of Immigration and Deportation: Assists in the departure and return of documented migrant workers. As a preventive mechanism to avoid violation of migrant workers' rights, the Bureau is tasked with ensuring that migrant workers are properly documented. At least in principle, the agency maintains that citizens not properly documented are not allowed to leave the country.

### III. PROMISE AND CHALLENGES IN INSTITUTIONALIZING PROTECTION AT ORIGIN

There is an existing reality that the Philippines needs the benefits of labor migration to complement its development efforts. The establishment and institutionalization of POEA as the labor migration authority in the country offers a promise in itself. The agency is not just a linkage to opportunities beyond the Philippine borders, but also the commitment to extend its arms to protect the country's citizens when they do venture overseas. This responsibility is based on the POEA mandates, as already mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, to promote labor migration and uphold migrant workers' protection.

Many claim that these mandates are often two conflicting objectives, as this issue is politically sensitive. This author, however, begs to disagree with the preceding idea. The agency's first objective is complemented by the second, and there seems to be no conflicting or contradictory relations between the two. Perhaps there can be a conflict if the first mandate directly results in the abuse and violation of workers' rights without any provisions for protection. But protection is available.

One of the lessons that the Philippines can share insofar as the management of labor migration is concerned is how partnership and cooperation worked for this purpose.

Although the government initially intended to operate a manpower recruitment monopoly, the plan evolved into one with private-sector participation and public-private partnership in the process—an acknowledgment of the continuing demand for overseas employment and the private sector's positive contributions to the boom, at least in terms of the number of processed contracts. Broadening participation in the process beyond the government, however, required regulation in order to prevent private recruitment agencies from doing harm to would-be migrants, as well as to allow the government to monitor the situations of migrants after deployment and while bounded by their respective contracts.

Although POEA claims authority and takes the lead in the process, it alone cannot manage migration effectively without the help of other government organizations, such as those mentioned earlier in this chapter. The Philippine experience in migration management and migrant protection is based on a collective interagency approach where each government agency concerned is tasked with specific work such as the prosecution of violators, enforcement of the law, welfare of migrants, and provision of documentation.

The Philippine approach also does not limit itself to managing migration within the country's institutions, but also beyond the borders, and this is through managing and maintaining good diplomatic relationships with other countries. Through this, the chances of realizing strategies such as bilateral and multilateral agreements to promote protection of Filipino migrant workers are enhanced. International cooperation is one mechanism to maintain that protection of migrant workers should be a shared responsibility of both the sending and receiving countries.

#### IV. BEYOND INSTITUTIONALIZATION: EXTERNAL CONSTRAINTS TO MIGRANT WORKER PROTECTION

Protecting migrant workers is not an easy task as the Philippine experience has shown, requiring a large-scale administration and bureaucracy across government agencies. While it can be said that the Philippines has had some measure of success, much remains to be done. This is because the task of providing full protection to migrant workers and prospective migrant workers is not as simple as having adequate policies, rules, and regulations governing the entire labor migration process. Certainly, there should always be rules and regulations that are comprehensive enough to cover all aspects of the process, from predeparture to departure and on-site protection—and even to the workers' reintegration when the time comes that they decide on a permanent return to the country.

Yet problems still arise, and often when the media highlight cases of maltreatment of OFWs by their employers, the public sees government as ineffective in pursuing its task of protecting migrant workers. Mistreatment often is a function of cultural circumstances rather than deliberately criminal acts. These circumstances, however, are difficult to guard against even if adequate rules, regulations, protective mechanisms, and institutions are in place.

Despite the array of programs that exist to protect migrant workers, gaps still exist and must be addressed if worker protection is to be optimized. Areas of continuing concern include:

### Narrowing the Development Gap

The Philippines, like other developing countries, is confronted with problems of unemployment, underemployment, and low-level pay often insufficient to provide for family needs. Given these and the fact that many Filipinos have seen how circumstances for the families of OFW neighbors and friends have improved with a family member working abroad—home renovations, and furniture and motor vehicle purchases among them—many are enticed to do the same. And as those who left for overseas employment have improved their living conditions, the enticement of labor migration has become stronger over the years.

There is nothing wrong with this except for the fact that some have used the enticement and attractiveness of overseas employment for their own selfish interest. Problems have arisen, including illegal recruitment by unscrupulous unlicensed individuals out to make money from poor, unsuspecting, and naive applicants; as well as illegal recruitment activities by licensed recruitment agencies operating in cahoots with partners such as trade testing centers and medical clinics.

Rules and regulations exist to deal with the problem of illegal recruitment. Laws do provide for severe penalties for illegal recruitment; and task forces have been created to conduct surveillance operations against possible bad-faith actors, resulting in many arrests and prison sentences as well as the suspension and eventual closure of several licensed agencies.<sup>e</sup> Still, the problem persists and will continue to do so as long as the economic reality in the country remains characterized by unemployment, underemployment, and low levels of pay.

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e. POEA statistics indicate that the government handled a total of 1,687 cases of illegal recruitment in 2008. Government anti-illegal recruitment efforts also resulted in the arrest of 98 persons and closure of ten establishments which violated POEA rules on overseas employment.



On a positive note, the government's campaign against illegal recruitment has gained ground over the years, evidenced by the declining statistics in illegal recruitment. In 2008, illegal recruitment cases declined by 4.4 percent compared to 2007 and it is hoped that this will continue to go down despite the economic reality of rising inflation, declining value of the peso, and increased prices for commodities like rice and fuel.

## The Cultural Divide

Problems experienced or caused by migrants often are a function of cultural differences between the sending and receiving societies. While it might be acceptable in Western society for unmarried members of the opposite sex to be seen together, this is considered an offense in certain parts of the world. Drinking alcohol, not covering one's hair, carrying the Bible or rosaries, or watching pornographic films are considered taboo in certain cultures and constitute a felony which can lead to imprisonment. Having a child outside of marriage may cause incarceration, not only of the mother but of the infant as well. While some of these transgressions may be inadvertent or unintentional, they can affect the employer-employee relationship. For instance, domestic helpers in the Philippines expect to work no longer than 10 hours a day and expect one day off a week. These practices are not recognized in some societies.

## The Absence of Counterpart Protective Mechanisms in Receiving Countries

Cultural differences have caused conflicts in the employer-worker relationship. In some cases, cultural differences, coupled with the migrant workers' ignorance of the host-country justice system, have allowed workers to be taken advantage of by some employers—especially for those involved in household work. These violations of the rights and dignity of migrant workers often remain unresolved for long periods and in some cases for the entire duration of their stay abroad. If action is eventually taken, typically it results from the intercession of embassy staff after the embassy is informed of the predicament by the migrant worker's family in the Philippines. The process is cumbersome and risky at times for migrant workers who have to surreptitiously send letters back home or ask returning OFWs to inform their family members about their problems. This type of situation occurs because of the absence of counterpart protective mechanisms in receiving countries which migrant workers can access. This is not to say that there is no justice system which migrant workers can avail themselves of in the host country. Surely there is. More often than not, however, the system is not available to migrant workers or if it is, the system is not easily accessible. This, coupled with the migrant worker's feeling of isolation and of being a stranger in a foreign land, can make him or her more susceptible to abuse and exploitation. It is important, therefore, that

receiving countries must also have in place protective mechanisms with their processes, structure, and organization made known and accessible to migrant workers. It is always important for receiving countries to demonstrate that they take care of the strangers among them because the reputational risk is significant.

### Difficulty in Getting Bilateral Agreements

The constraints mentioned above could best be addressed by bilateral labor agreements (BLAs) between the labor-sending and labor-receiving countries. Through a bilateral agreement, the parties can define the protocols for migrant-worker protections and provide for the specific systems and procedures that may be put in place to achieve them. From experience though, bilateral agreements are not that easily concluded. This is because the agreement can entail commitments that labor-receiving countries may, for some reasons, be reluctant to agree to. A long period of diplomatic negotiation may be necessary before an agreement can be concluded.

The Philippine experience offers clear evidence of that. After more than four decades of continuous diplomatic dealings and negotiations with countries employing OFWs, the government has succeeded in concluding BLAs with fewer than half the number of countries employing OFWs. Still, it has signed 82 BLAs, which is significantly more than any other sending country.

### Absence of Binding International Protocols

Other than bilateral agreements, one other instrument which labor-sending countries can take advantage of to ensure migrant worker protection is an international protocol or agreement. But except for the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families,<sup>f</sup> there appears to be no other substantive international protocol on migrant-worker protection. Yet even the convention itself, while comprehensive in its enumeration of the rights of migrant workers, is not binding on nonsignatories as to compel strict adherence to its provisions. An aggrieved migrant worker or the interceding government that wishes to take advantage of the convention as the mode for protection has to be content with negotiations between state parties as the means for settling the dispute. It must be pointed out that most of the labor-receiving states are

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f. The convention was created through United Nations Assembly Resolution 45/158 of December 18, 1990, which entered into force only on July 1, 2003.

nonsignatories. Should negotiations fail, the parties can resort to arbitration or refer the matter to the International Court of Justice for resolution. This can be a long and tedious process and precisely for this reason the Philippines has adapted a policy that, pursuant to national interest or when public welfare so requires, the government may at any time terminate or impose a ban on the deployment of migrant workers to a particular destination country. At least ten such bans have been imposed.

## V. CONCLUSION

As shown by the Philippine experience, the complete protection of migrant workers, while difficult to attain especially when their number is huge and their area of distribution is wide, still can be possible so long as certain conditions are present. The three most important considerations are

1. presence of operational rules and regulations within the labor-sending country governing the recruitment and placement of workers overseas; and that these rules are properly disseminated and understood by workers, the recruitment agencies, the receiving countries, and the employers;
2. adequate implementing mechanisms, government institutions, and actual oversight and enforcement to ensure that the rules are duly followed;
3. maintenance of good diplomatic relations with labor-receiving countries so that the sending country can operate on-site protective mechanisms or negotiate bilateral labor agreements to protect workers.

The third condition is extremely important in situations where the top destinations for migrant workers are countries with cultural and religious norms and practices that are far different than those of the labor-sending countries. As shown in the discussion above, the cultural divide between the labor-sending and labor-receiving countries requires the protection of migrant workers not only from inadvertent and unintentional violation or transgression of customs and practices but also protection from conflicts and misunderstandings with their employers, and even more so, from violation of their personal dignity during the course of employment.

It must be stressed that migrant-worker protection is not the responsibility of the labor-sending country alone. It is also the responsibility of the worker, the employer—and beyond

that the responsibility of the labor-receiving country. In short, migrant worker protection is a shared responsibility.

The fact remains that migration is politically controversial. In many developed countries, there is a growing wave of resentment, even fear, of migrants, presumably aggravated by the global economic crisis and post-9/11 security concerns. There is also unwillingness on the part of some political regimes to alienate voters and dilute specific political platforms that cater to isolationist tendencies. And, there is a lack of solidarity between and among members of source and destination countries.

Migratory flows have been a reality across the history of mankind, and given the increase in labor migration, it is important to delineate what has been done, what is possible, and the gaps that exist to protect labor migrants. It is important to demonstrate that when migration is regular, organized, and legal, worker protection is a responsibility that is easier to discharge. And it must also be stressed that worker protection is not just the province of one person or one country. All actors concerned—the workers themselves, their employers, intermediators, source and receiving governments, nongovernment organizations, and international agencies—should be made more aware and better positioned to assume their roles in protecting workers outside their national territories.



## CHAPTER III

# CREATING PARTNERSHIPS WITH DIASPORAS

## The Malian Experience

*H.E. Dr. Badara Aliou Macalou*

### I. MIGRATION IN MALI: BASIC FACTS AND FIGURES<sup>a</sup>

Located in the heart of West Africa, Mali historically has been a *country of immigration*—that is, a land of exchange and of the intermingling of peoples, religions, and cultures. But it has also been a *country of emigration*—the departure point for a significant portion of its population—and a *country of transit* as a result of its geographic position between Africa and Europe. So Mali has been a veritable melting pot for centuries.

The vicissitudes of history and political-economic circumstances have gradually transformed Mali, which was formerly a country that received immigrants, into a major country of emigration. This trend has accelerated since the 1970s. There are multiple, varied causes of departure from Mali. Migration is the response to a complex set of factors that can be grouped into two broad categories: the internal causes—or factors of departure—and the external causes—or factors of attraction.

The factors of departure or push factors include, for instance, cultural norms that consider mobility as evidence of maturity and self-worth. Particularly in West Africa, religion has

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a. This chapter draws upon earlier presentations developed over the course of several years by the Ministry for Malians Abroad and African Integration.

been (and continues to be) a motivating force behind movements toward Mecca and the commercial tradition of the *Dioula* prompts many circular movements within the region.<sup>b</sup> Earlier in history, the slave trade forced the migration of many individuals both within and beyond the region.

In recent decades, the main factors motivating emigration have been economic (poverty, unemployment, the lack of job opportunities, substandard working conditions, low salaries, and professional isolation for skilled workers), political (political instability, poor governance, nepotism, and corruption), and environmental (drought and desertification in agricultural areas of Mali).

On the other hand, factors of attraction or pull factors—especially toward more developed countries—include higher salaries and better job opportunities (the result of demographic aging and skill shortages in developed countries), greater technology and opportunities for research and professional development, the prospect of student scholarships and access to higher quality public education and health care, and the perception of greater security and political liberty.

However, the phenomenon of migration is not only a story of flight and moving from a poor country to a richer country. Migrants can also be a stimulus for development and facilitators of co-development for their country of origin, which is healthy. To succeed in developing genuinely, Mali needs to protect and defend all of its citizens—both those at home and abroad.

One major challenge in attending to the needs of the Malian diaspora is a lack of comprehensive data on their numbers and characteristics. The Malian community residing abroad has never been comprehensively counted. Without such demographic analysis, it is difficult to provide an exact number for the size of the diaspora.

Census and survey data from destination countries are rarely comparable. Data sources from some important destinations for Malian emigrants, such as France, suffer from significant deficiencies. France's National Statistical Agency only counts individuals born abroad who are long-term legal residents of France.<sup>1</sup> This approach excludes temporary residents (such as

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b. The *Dioula* (also spelled *Dyula*, *Diula*, and *Jula*) are a largely Muslim ethnic group, located primarily in the West African countries of Ghana, Guinea, Mali, and Senegal, who have a historical tradition of working as commercial traders.

students and binational businessmen), unauthorized migrants, and the second generation (i.e., individuals born in France of Malian parentage). Data on migration within Africa (the destination of most Malians who emigrate) are notoriously spotty.

Estimates of the size and composition of the diaspora based on reports from Mali's diplomatic missions and consulates are also inevitably incomplete. However, in light of the deficiencies of other data sources, embassy and consular reports may provide the most reliable portrait of the Malian diaspora and are doubtlessly close to reality. Using these reports, the government estimates that there are about 4 million Malians residing abroad.<sup>2</sup> Importantly, the diaspora accounts for about one-quarter of Mali's total population.

The overwhelming majority of Malians abroad (about 3.5 million) reside in other African countries, of which Cote d'Ivoire (about 2 million) is the most important destination. Other major destinations in Africa include: Senegal, Ghana, Nigeria, Mauritania, the Republic of Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola, Gabon, Cameroun, Equatorial Guinea, and the Central African Republic.

About 3 percent of Malians who live outside the country are in Europe—notably France (about 120,000), Belgium, Spain, and Italy. Some Arab and Asian countries—such as Saudi Arabia, China, and Thailand—also are important destinations, as are the United States, Canada, Cuba, and Mexico.

The diaspora is composed of skilled and unskilled workers, refugees and asylum seekers, and, increasingly, women. About 48 percent of all international migrants in Africa are women and the feminization of migration flows is a major recent trend. Some of the most highly educated and talented Malians are lured abroad by job opportunities. Many scientists and mathematicians are among the Malian diaspora. Still, more than 60 percent of Malian emigrants have not completed basic secondary education.<sup>c</sup> (The share of skilled Malians is much higher among the diaspora compared to the population resident in Mali.) The most popular sectors where Malians abroad work include commerce and trade, brokerage and financial intermediation, agriculture, manufacturing and construction, higher education and research, and international organizations.

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c. This includes individuals who have not obtained a *Diplôme d'Etudes fondamentales* (DEF), which is a basic secondary education certificate in Mali awarded for a three-year program of study typically for students age 13 to 16. It is roughly equivalent to a US middle school or 9<sup>th</sup> grade education.



## II. THE INVOLVEMENT OF MALIANS ABROAD IN DEVELOPMENT

The Malian diaspora has a number of skills and attributes that make it an invaluable resource for development. The members of the diaspora have formidable assets: personal networks developed through travel and residence abroad, technical skills and professional experience honed working in multinational enterprises and international organizations, and accumulated financial capital. In addition, many Malians living abroad retain emotional ties that unite them with their country of origin despite the physical distance.

The worldly experience of Malian expatriates—coupled with the knowledge of institutions, practices, and opportunities in Mali—makes the diaspora an important development partner and an effective bridge between Mali and the world. This section focuses on three ways that the Malian diaspora has become involved in Mali's development: financial transfers, skill and knowledge transfers, and co-development partnerships.

These transfers and partnerships typically occur through virtual returns (i.e., using virtual presence technology to become involved in development work while diaspora members physically remain in the destination country), temporary returns or visits, and permanent returns. Virtual returns includes the transmission of funds to support families and for investment, the defense of Malians and Malian interests in their host countries, encouraging trade between Mali and their host country, and using Internet technology to engage in training or consultancy work in Mali. Temporary returns (other than holidays and business travel) include short-term volunteer or consultancy work such as occurs under the Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN) program described below. Permanent return may occur at retirement or in some cases to launch a business venture.

### A. Financial Transfers

Traditionally, migrants send funds to support their families who remain in the country of origin. The World Bank estimates that Mali officially received US\$192 million in remittances in 2007.<sup>3</sup> However this number omits informal remittances which account for as much as 73 percent of all remittances sent to Mali according to one estimate from the African Development Bank.<sup>4</sup> When informal flows are included, remittances account for about 10 percent of Mali's GDP and are almost equal to official development assistance.<sup>5</sup> Remittances from Malians in France account for nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of all remittances sent to Mali compared to 18 percent from Malians in Africa, 10 percent from Malians in Spain, and 4 percent from Malians in the United States.<sup>6</sup>

Sometimes, these funds are used for private investment, notably in housing, trade, transportation, and community development (for instance, by constructing village schools, health centers, roads, water-storage facilities, wells, irrigation, bridges, and religious structures). The region of Kayes in Mali is one of the most important migrant-sending regions in the country (as a result of its severe climate and cultural traditions) and has benefited from these types of investments from the diaspora. According to one estimate, the global amount of remittances from the Malian diaspora in France that goes to collective investments in the Kayes area is about 3.5 billion CFA francs each year (US\$7 million), which is equal to 10 percent of France's annual aid assistance to Mali.<sup>7</sup> Malian banks maintain about 100,000 accounts in the names of expatriates, reinforcing the financial standing of these banks.

The Malian diaspora also has demonstrated solidarity with its country of birth during times of crisis, as was the case during the 2004 locust invasion when it contributed a record 140 million CFA francs (about US\$260,000).<sup>d</sup> Similarly, when the country's international image was at risk due to slow progress in preparing facilities for the 2002 African Cup of Nations soccer tournament, the diaspora contributed to completing preparations.

## B. Skill and Knowledge Transfers

The Malian diaspora includes a number of extraordinary individuals who are actively involved in development work in Mali. Some notable examples include:

- Dr. Cheick Modibo Diarra, a Malian-born astrophysicist who was recruited by Caltech's Jet Propulsion Laboratory and played important roles in several NASA projects, including the Mars Observer and Mars Pathfinder programs. In 1999, Dr. Diarra established the Pathfinder Foundation for Education and Development, an organization that encourages and supports female students in their pursuit of scientific education. He is currently chairman of Microsoft Africa.<sup>8</sup>
- Malamine Koné, a Franco-Malian entrepreneur and founder of Airness, a sportswear label that has successfully challenged larger and established brands through innovative marketing strategies and alliances with French soccer players.
- The Kagnassy family in the agricultural industry.

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d. Currency converted at the average daily interbank exchange rate for January 1, 2004 to December 31, 2004.

- Zoumana Yoka Bernard in the transportation, money transfer, and travel agency sectors.
- Bakary Cissé de Batexi, who has reinvigorated the Malian textile industry.
- Youssouf Issabré, Director of the Fondation Mérieux in Lyon, France which works in the field of public health and particularly in helping developing countries combat infectious disease.

Beyond these extraordinary individuals, Malian expatriates with technical or scientific skills are also able to contribute to development efforts in Mali through the TOKTEN program. Launched in October 1998 and co-financed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), France, and Mali, TOKTEN-Mali currently targets the higher education sector. The program's principal objective is to leverage the skills of Malians abroad to improve the quality of education in Malian colleges and universities. Beyond improving the quality of teaching and filling vacant positions, diaspora consultants broaden the universities' global perspectives and sometimes create lasting institutional linkages.

Under the TOKTEN program, experts and technicians from the diaspora return to their countries of origin for brief stays (ranging from one week to three months) to engage their fields of expertise. Compared to the international experts typically recruited for these jobs, diaspora experts may be more familiar with the inner workings of the countries and often charge less for their services. Since 1998, about 150 Malian diaspora members have completed 381 teaching missions through TOKTEN.

Mali's experience with the program suggests that it is a cost-effective means to address teaching gaps, especially since UNDP typically covers travel costs and stipends. The diaspora consultants for their part often receive great personal satisfaction from contributing to the development of their country of origin. In the future, it may be desirable to expand these diaspora consultancies beyond higher education to include public and private enterprises.

### C. Co-Development Partnerships

In some cases, destination-country governments work with the Malian diaspora to promote development in Mali. In France, which hosts a significant number of Malians, this type of cooperation is official policy and is known as "co-development." Co-development policy recognizes the social, economic, and cultural contributions of migrants, and aims to support development initiatives that emerge from the diaspora. Broadly, the program's objectives

include supporting diaspora civil-society groups, facilitating the transfer and productive use of remittances, and strengthening the ties between immigrant-origin youth and their ancestral country.

The governments of Mali and France first signed a co-development agreement in December 2000.<sup>9</sup> The first phase of the co-development program (2003 to 2005) mobilized about 3.5 million euros in financing—2.5 million from the French government and about 900,000 euros from the Malian diaspora—to fund 250 return and reintegration programs, 22 local development projects, and ten projects for youth of immigrant ancestry (in France).

Despite some discontent concerning what is considered the low subsidy granted to Malians willing to return to Mali (about 7,000 euros per returnee), the agreement has been productive and introduced concrete objectives into the Franco-Malian partnership. It is a shared development policy that reduces international tensions and creates an economic partnership based on equality and solidarity.

Co-development cooperation can occur at various levels of government. For instance, the French municipality of Montreuil, which is home to about 6,000 migrants from the Yélimane region of Mali, has been involved in development projects in Yélimane since 1985.<sup>10</sup> (Yélimane is an area in western Mali that is composed of 12 municipalities, 94 villages, and about 150,000 people.) Malian migrants in Montreuil have formed associations to support these projects and serve as a bridge between the two countries.

Montreuil launched a project to support sustainable development in Yélimane, which is known by its French acronym PADDY (*Programme d'Appui au Développement Durable de Yélimané*). PADDY, which received support from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in 2005, targeted various sectors including water, health, education, and food security.

According to the French International Development Agency (*Agence Française de Développement*, AFD), the program has received more than 4 million euros in funding from a variety of sources during its first phase from 2003 to 2005. Malian migrants contributed over one-third (36 percent) of these funds (see Table 1).

This type of cooperation between municipalities in the countries of destination and origin appears to be a promising avenue for future collaboration. It may be desirable to pursue similar agreements and partnerships with other countries that host Malian immigrants, such

**Table 1. Sources of Funding for PADDY, Phase I (euros)**

Migrants	1,500,000
AFD	500,000
Montreuil municipality (France)	500,000
Paris regional water authority <sup>a</sup>	500,000
Government of Mali	477,000
Veolia Environment Foundation <sup>b</sup>	300,000
Government of Vietnam	145,000
SCAC <sup>c</sup>	120,000
Ile-de-France regional government	50,000
Marmande municipality (France)	20,000

Notes: (a) Syndicat des eaux d'Ile de France. (b) A private foundation in France. (c) Service de Coopération et d'Action Culturelle, a cultural promotion fund of the French Foreign Ministry.

Source: Agence Française de Développement.

as Spain, Italy, Portugal, the United States, Canada, and Arab, East Asian, and Scandinavian countries.

### III. EXISTING GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES FOR THE DIASPORA

Mali's leaders recognized the importance of integrating the diaspora into national politics early in the country's democratic history. Since the country returned to democratic rule in 1991, Mali has been very active in creating government structures that involve the diaspora and address its needs.

In particular, Mali has created a federative representative body to represent diaspora interests before government authorities in Mali: the High Council for Malians Abroad. Mali has also established a ministry responsible for diaspora affairs. These two institutions are distinct and fully autonomous although the Ministry for Malians Abroad and African Integration is responsible for overseeing certain operations of the Council. By creating these institutions, Mali recognizes that the most effective approach to involving the diaspora in development efforts is to ensure a policy environment that allows the diaspora multiple avenues for engagement.

#### A. The High Council for Malians Abroad

##### *Origins*

In summer 1991 as Mali returned to democratic rule, President Amadou Toumani Touré convened a national council in Bamako to draft a new constitution and discuss the country's

future. Recognizing the enormous human and economic potential of the diaspora, President Touré envisioned including Malian expatriates of all political affiliations in a federative structure. By the end of the national conference in November 1991, the delegates decided to establish a consultative and nonpolitical body for the diaspora. This body, the High Council for Malians Abroad (*Haut Conseil des Maliens de l'Extérieur*, or HCME) was formally created by law No. 0764/MAT-DNAT on November 7, 1993.

In 2003 and 2004, members of the diaspora met to update the HCME bylaws and the current HCME governing rules were adopted in December 2004.<sup>e</sup> HCME has a federative structure and is composed of elected representatives from the national councils known as the *Conseils des Maliens de l'Extérieur* (CMEs). Each of the national councils is composed of associations, civil-society groups, and national federations existing in the countries of residence. In order to participate in the CMEs, these associations must register with Mali's embassy or consulate in their country (or the embassy or consulate that has jurisdiction over their country).

#### *Responsibilities*

The HCME members have a wide range of responsibilities, both in Mali and in their countries of residence. In Mali, they serve as the official representatives of the diaspora before political authorities and are encouraged to participate in economic development, environmental protection, and social, cultural, and sports activities.

In their countries of residence, they promote solidarity between the diaspora and Mali, assist Mali's diplomatic representatives in protecting and providing assistance to the Malian community abroad, identify potential investors in the diaspora, promote a positive image of Mali, promote cultural and sports exchanges, and encourage decentralized cooperation between regions and localities in Mali and regions and localities in their countries of residence.

They also play a communications role by providing information to Malians considering emigrating and by assisting Mali to develop and implement return migration policies.

#### *Structures*

HCME is composed of representatives from 63 national councils (58 are active and have updated their leadership). HCME representatives are charged with representing the interests

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e. This section draws on *Les Statuts du Haut Conseil des Maliens de l'Extérieur*, adopted on December 23, 2004 in Bamako, accessed May 5, 2009, [http://www.maliensdelexterieur.gov.ml/mes\\_photos/Statuts\\_HCME.pdf](http://www.maliensdelexterieur.gov.ml/mes_photos/Statuts_HCME.pdf).

of their national councils in the High Council, participating in HCME activities and issuing policy criticisms and suggestions.

Officially, HCME is the primary interlocutor for the Malian government for all questions relating to the Malian diaspora. The government, HCME, the national councils, and Mali's embassies and consulates all work together for effective cooperation.

The HCME Executive Bureau is composed of a president, a vice president, five representatives from West Africa, and two representatives each from Central Africa, East and Southern Africa, North Africa, Europe, Asia, and the Americas, as well as two representatives of Malians employed in international organizations and the diaspora intelligentsia. The president of the Executive Bureau cannot be involved in a political party or political movement. All are elected for renewable five-year terms (the president can be reelected only once).

The Permanent Secretariat is the executive body charged with carrying out the decisions of the Executive Bureau. The Permanent Secretary is installed by Mali's Council of Ministers upon the suggestion of the Minister for Malians Abroad in consultation with the HCME president.

The supreme authority governing HCME is a National Summit composed of five representatives from each national council of Malians abroad, the members of the HCME Executive Bureau, the HCME representatives to the various government institutions in Mali, invited observers, and honorary participants. A national summit is necessary before HCME elections and is responsible for developing the HCME agenda for the subsequent five-year term. It alone can change the HCME governing statutes.

HCME receives its funding through various sources, including membership fees from the national councils, voluntary contributions, the sale of membership cards and other items, subsidies from the state or other parties, and donations.

### *Membership*

Any Malian national permanently residing abroad who has registered with one of Mali's diplomatic missions and is in possession of a consular identification card or a valid destination-country residence visa is eligible to participate in the national councils. However, if an individual returns to Mali, he or she loses eligibility after one year. (If the return is involuntary, such as by deportation, this limit does not apply.)

HCME participation is limited to active members of the national councils (i.e., must have a valid membership card).<sup>f</sup> Individuals who have made extraordinary contributions to the Malian community abroad or who have demonstrated a particular and widely recognized interest in Mali are eligible to become honorary HCME members.

HCME representatives are elected by the national councils for five-year terms and the council elects a president. Although this level of coordination and cooperation is difficult and even decisive at times, it is also essential to the success of HCME.

Abdrahamane Chérif Haidara of Senegal presided over the High Council between 1993 and February 2009 when he retired and was replaced by Habib Sylla of Gabon. The Fifth Meeting of the HCME, which took place in Bamako on February 13–16, 2009, included representatives from more than 50 countries. The success of this process is evident in the words of Dioncounda Diawara of China, who lost the HCME presidential election to Mr. Sylla. Following the election, Mr. Diawara declared, “I found that the election was democratic and that the best man won. . . . I did not become president, but I will continue to serve the Malian diaspora. We should congratulate ourselves for working together, because only unity will enable us to contribute substantively to the development of Mali.”<sup>g</sup>

#### B. The Ministry for Malians Abroad and African Integration

The Malian diaspora—in light of its size and skill level—constitutes a unique opportunity for Mali. The effective management of the diaspora is one of Mali’s foreign-policy priorities. President Touré included actively engaging the diaspora among his priorities for Mali’s development alongside democratic consolidation, defense and security, economic growth, agricultural expansion, infrastructure development, private-sector development, civic participation by women and youth, human-resource development, and African regional integration.<sup>11</sup>

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f. Fees for membership cards are capped at 5,000 CFA francs (about US\$10) and must be valid for five years. See Ministry of Malians Abroad and African Integration, *Feuille de Route Relative au Renouvellement des Conseils des Maliens de l’Extérieur* (Bamako, Mali: Ministère des Maliens de l’Extérieur et de l’Intégration Africaine, 2005), [http://www.maliensdelexterieur.gov.ml/mes\\_photos/Feuillederoute.pdf](http://www.maliensdelexterieur.gov.ml/mes_photos/Feuillederoute.pdf).

g. Statement of Dioncounda Diawara, “Je trouve que le vote a été démocratique et que le meilleur a gagné. . . . Je ne suis pas devenu président, mais je continuerai à me mettre à la disposition des Maliens de l’Extérieur. Nous devons nous donner la main pour travailler ensemble car seule l’union fait la force et nous permettra, à coup sûr, de parvenir à quelque chose dans le cadre du développement du Mali,” [http://www.maliensdelexterieur.gov.ml/cgi-bin/view\\_article.pl?id=936](http://www.maliensdelexterieur.gov.ml/cgi-bin/view_article.pl?id=936).



### *Origin*

In light of the critical mass of emigrants, their numerical importance, and their economic influence in Mali's development, the leaders of Mali decided to create the Directorate General for Malians Abroad (*Délégation Générale des Maliens de l'Extérieur*, DGME) in September 2000 with Order No. 00-046/P-RM. In 2004, DGME was elevated to full ministry status dedicated to the diaspora and became the Ministry for Malians Abroad and African Integration (*Ministère des Maliens de l'Extérieur et de l'Intégration Africaine*).

Assuring the human and proprietary security of the diaspora, protecting their human dignity, and further encouraging their involvement in the economic development of Mali were all important reasons that motivated that creation of a ministry dedicated to the diaspora.

### *Structure*

The original Directorate General for Malians Abroad was preserved as a unique structure within the new ministry alongside a Directorate General for African Integration. The Directorate General for Malians Abroad is organized into an Office for Migration Statistics and Forecasting and two departments: the Department for Consular Affairs and the Department for Economic Promotion and Reintegration of Malians Abroad.<sup>h</sup>

The Office for Migration Statistics and Forecasting is tasked with researching the international migration of Malians, analyzing statistical data, and conducting a census of Malians working in international organizations.

The Department for Consular Affairs is responsible for coordinating diaspora initiatives and activities with Mali's diplomatic representatives and consular offices. This includes providing assistance, protection, and security to Malians abroad and their belongings, tracking the distribution to the diaspora of civil documents (i.e., birth and marriage certificates), and coordinating cultural and educational activities with Mali's embassies and consulates.

The Department for Economic Promotion and Reintegration of Malians Abroad is responsible for coordinating the various return programs offered to Malians abroad through destination-country governments and international organizations, creating the necessary

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h. The following section draws on Décret No. 00-611/P-RM issued on December 7, 2000, "Fixant l'organisation et les modalités de fonctionnement de la Délégation Générale des Maliens de l'Extérieur, Secrétariat Général du Gouvernement."

conditions to permit active participation by the diaspora in the socioeconomic development of Mali, and promoting savings and investment by the diaspora.

Mali's 30 embassies and nine consulates around the world, which are part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (*Ministère des Affaires Étrangères et de la Coopération Internationale*, MAECI), are also an integral part of Mali's governmental structure dedicated to diaspora affairs.

### *Responsibilities*

DGME has a range of official responsibilities that range from protecting Malians abroad to encouraging diaspora involvement in development activities, facilitating the reintegration of return migrants and deportees, and coordinating a number of skill-transfer programs run by international organizations.<sup>12</sup>

The directorate performs all of these functions in coordination with other ministries that include diaspora affairs in their portfolios to some degree or another, including: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Ministry of Internal Security and Civil Protection, the Ministry of the Economy and Finance, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training, the Ministry for National Unity, and the Ministry for Regions and Localities.

In 2008, the Ministry for Malians Abroad and African Integration had a total budget of about 1.8 billion CFA francs (about US\$3.7 million), of which 56 percent went to general administration, 25 percent went to the Directorate General for African Integration, and 18 percent went to the Directorate General for Malians Abroad.<sup>13</sup> (This does not include government funding for services to Malians abroad provided through consulates, which is budgeted through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.) This may appear like a small amount compared, for instance, to the 22.2 billion CFA francs (US\$46.1 million) dedicated to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, but is a similar amount as was budgeted to the Supreme Court of Mali (1.4 billion CFA francs, or about US\$2.9 million).

### *Activities*

The DGME activities in recent years have focused on supporting the renewal of HCME, promoting the TOKTEN program and other co-development initiatives, raising awareness about development issues in the diaspora, and mobilizing funds from the diaspora for development projects in Mali.

The HCME renewal began with conferences in 2003 and 2004 to update the High Council's governing texts and culminated in February 2009 with new elections to the HCME Executive Council. Throughout this process, the ministry has provided guidance and technical support to HCME.

The ministry has also launched communications campaigns to raise awareness among the diaspora about development and investment opportunities in Mali. These efforts notably achieved success in 2002, when members of the diaspora helped finance the necessary infrastructure for the African Cup of Nations, and in 2004 when they provided aid after locusts devastated crops in Mali.

Providing assistance to returning migrants and migrants in distress abroad is another important focus of the ministry, which in 2003 opened the first Welcoming, Information, and Orientation Office (*Bureau d'accueil, d'information, et d'orientation*) at the Bamako airport. Others have subsequently been opened at other major ports of entry to Mali, including at other international airports, train stations, and bus stations. Similarly, in coordination with Mali's diplomatic and consular offices, the ministry provides assistance to expatriates in distress—which is unfortunately a growing phenomenon in light of increased illegal migration, deportations, and the global economic crisis. When Malians are forced to return to Mali against their will, the ministry provides reintegration assistance. This notably occurred following the expulsion of Malians from Cote d'Ivoire. Assistance can include finding publicly subsidized housing for returnees, orienting them through the purchase of real estate, or directing them toward available agricultural opportunities.

Finally, the ministry also coordinates with international organizations and foreign governments on the various migration and development programs that they operate in Mali. For instance, the ministry has worked with the French government under the aegis of the co-development partnerships, with UNDP on coordinating the TOKTEN initiative, and with the European Commission to launch the Migration Management Information Center (*Centre d'Information et de Gestion des Migrations, CIGEM*).

CIGEM is a novel initiative on the part of the European Commission, which represents an important advance in collaborative migration management. CIGEM's objectives are to contribute to a better understanding of migration, provide information and orientation to potential and returning migrants, disseminate information on the risks of illegal migration, and develop the financial, technical, and human capital of Malians abroad. It provides job-placement information for potential migrants and supports professional and vocational training in Mali. For Malians resident abroad, CIGEM provides information on investing in Mali.

Another unique initiative that is coordinated through the Malian Embassy in the United States is the biannual Symposium on Applied Sciences. Every two years since 2000, diaspora scientists organize the Mali Symposium on Applied Sciences, which is held in Bamako. The symposium is an international forum that allows scientists to present their research and discuss topics of special interest to Mali and Africa. It encourages collaborative research between Africans and other scientists around the world. These meetings are organized under the aegis of Maliwatch, an expert dialogue established with guidance from the Ministry for Malians Abroad and African Integration and the Embassy of Mali in the United States.

#### IV. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Despite its substantive record of activities and potential for further success, the ministry has faced a number of challenges in its work. Development is a long-term process and often it is difficult to measure progress. Migration, on the other hand, is a politically sensitive issue in both migrant-origin and destination countries. Navigating the politics of migration and development simultaneously is tricky. To avoid being viewed as a beggar sleeping on a mountain of gold (an expression coined by President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania), Mali must manage the issue of migration as effectively as possible in its position as a country of origin, destination, and transit.

Yet, as policymakers around the world have come to realize, efforts to manage migration cannot be limited to cooperation on border controls and repatriation. Mali must also draw maximum benefit from the “9th region of Mali,” which is composed of migrants and their descendents. The diaspora represents a unique opportunity for Mali. In some respects, diaspora members are emissaries of Malian culture and civilization to the world and they represent some of the brightest talent that Mali has to offer. Together, they constitute a formidable base of knowledge, know-how, accumulated experience, and potential wealth to accelerate the country’s development. The public safeguarding of this function and guidance for its expansion and deepening are the principal *raison d’être* for the Ministry of Malians Abroad and African Integration.

As this chapter illustrates, the diaspora does not require a ministry to contribute to Mali’s development. Diaspora members already were actively supporting their families and communities long before the ministry was established. President Touaré eloquently noted this when he said, “I cannot but have an honorable view of all our compatriots who, far from their homeland, work for the development of their beloved country because they have a magnified love of family and of country, and a heightened sense of solidarity and sacrifice.

The idea of return shelters and nourishes their thoughts during the long months and years residing abroad.”<sup>14</sup>

But the ministry does have an instrumental role in creating an attractive and reassuring political, social, economic, and fiscal environment that takes account of the needs of the diaspora. For instance, the ministry represents the diaspora in advocating policies such as lowering the tax on money transfers to Mali; creating multiple openings in the private sector that are attractive for all foreign investors (not limited to the diaspora) and that are likely to generate knowledge transfers and create employment; encouraging involvement in Mali’s political life through voting in elections and holding seats in some government institutions; simplifying administrative procedures and regulations for monetary transfers, philanthropic giving, and home purchases; and communicating regularly information about Mali and available business and job opportunities.

The ministry is also an intermediary between (a) the diaspora and the Malian government, and (b) between the diaspora and foreign governments. This function is particularly important because the ministry can be an instrumental voice to defend and protect the interests of diaspora members while they are abroad, and to leverage third-party resources (other than resources from the diaspora and from the government of Mali) for development initiatives proposed by the diaspora. This has proven particularly effective, for example, in the mobilization of the TOKTEN program and co-development financing from the governments of France and Spain. Finally, the ministry is essential to ensuring what some experts have labeled policy coherence.<sup>15</sup> Simply stated, the ministry can ensure that the development initiatives of the diaspora, foreign donors, and the government of Mali work together to produce concrete advances.

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## CHAPTER IV

# THE INSTITUTE OF MEXICANS ABROAD

## An Effort to Empower the Diaspora

*Carlos González Gutiérrez*

### I. INTRODUCTION

It is estimated that by 2050, one out of every five Americans will be of Mexican descent. This represents an enormous opportunity for all parties, not least for Mexico and the Mexican diaspora. Without minimizing the natural, understandable loyalty both Mexican immigrants and their descendents always will feel toward the United States, it is clear that their increasing access to US economic and political power has the potential to catalyze greater stability and prosperity. The key question for all parties is how to use this unfolding opportunity to best advantage, and central to that question is how to structure a dialogue of trust between diaspora leaders and the Mexican government. How will that dialogue take shape, who will do the talking, and what benefits can it yield?

Part of the challenge of structuring this dialogue is the very speed with which the United States has been, as some have characterized it, “Mexicanized.” Although Mexico-US migration has been almost uninterrupted for more than a century, it really took off in the 1970s, when the number of Mexican-born living in the United States tripled. In the 1980s, that population doubled; in the 1990s it doubled yet again. Even in the 1970s, Mexicans were already the fourth-largest national group residing in the United States, trailing only those born in Germany, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

Today, Mexicans are unquestionably the most numerous national group in the United States.<sup>1</sup> It is estimated that more than 12 million Mexican immigrants—legal and



unauthorized—live in the United States and that they, along with the almost 19 million US-born people of Mexican descent, constitute most of the Mexican diaspora.<sup>2</sup> This change, which has happened over scarcely 30 years, signifies a substantial and long-term impact on the demographic profile of the United States.

It is possible to overestimate, however, the political and cultural challenges this rapid transformation represents, while overlooking the benefits. The available research shows that Mexicans residing in the United States can live in harmony with norms or cultural values that are not contained in a single country. Crossing the border forces them neither to adopt a new code of values nor to develop attachments to a single nation, as if it were a zero-sum game where loyalties, or the sense of belonging to one society or another, were mutually exclusive. Many of them fit the paradigm of transnational migrants: people able to work, participate politically, and develop community or religious bonds in several cultural contexts, regardless of the political borders that divide their countries of origin or adoption.<sup>a</sup>

In this context, cross-border ties have been an increasing necessity and simple reality. For example, the mere presence of a Latino electorate has helped to reduce the kind of anti-immigrant campaigns (most notably, those targeting Mexico) that some candidates for public office promoted in California in the early 1990s.<sup>3</sup> The result has been a dampening of politically destructive, economically counterproductive, and socially divisive rhetoric and policies. If positive outcomes of this nature can be achieved without great organization, what could happen within a systematic, honest, and constructive dialogue between Mexico and its migrants?

## II. CREATING A FORUM: THE INSTITUTE OF MEXICANS ABROAD

The Institute of Mexicans Abroad (IME), in partnership with the leaders of the Mexican diaspora and US allies, may hold the key to structuring the crucial dialogue. IME, created in order to empower the Mexican diaspora, is a homeland government initiative that seeks to facilitate the autonomous organization of Mexican communities abroad. The aim is to

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a. "Transnationalism can be seen as the opposite to the canonic notion of assimilation as a gradual but irreversible process of the integration of migrants to the receiving society. Instead, transnationalism recalls the image of a continuous round-trip movement between countries of origin and reception, allowing migrants to be present in both societies and cultures and to exploit economic and political opportunities created by such dual lives," Alejandro Portes, "Un diálogo Norte-Sur: el progreso de la teoría en el estudio de la migración internacional y sus implicaciones" (working paper 05-02, Princeton University Center for Migration and Development, January 2005), 10.

increase the visibility of Mexicans and strengthen their voice, not only within their country of origin but also in their adopted land.

The democratic change in Mexico, the consolidation of a Mexican-American middle class, and the growing political maturity of these communities created conditions ripe for a new dialogue to take place with “the other Mexico.”<sup>4</sup> To capitalize on these conditions, the Mexican government took the important step, in August 2002, of establishing a new institutional framework to promote ties between Mexicans on both sides of the border.

The central axis of the new institutional arrangement is composed of the Institute of Mexicans Abroad (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior) and the Consultative Council of IME (Consejo Consultivo del IME).

IME works under the Secretary of Foreign Relations. Its first president, Cándido Morales, is a migrant from Oaxaca who heads the agency’s workforce of 40 public servants based in Mexico City. In addition, IME works through Mexico’s global network of embassies and consulates, particularly the 50 consulates in the United States and the six in Canada.

In each of the Mexican embassies and consulates in North America, an Office of Community Affairs is responsible for promoting IME’s agenda. In most cases, the local office is overseen by a career diplomat who manages public programs, sponsored mostly by the Mexican government, in the areas of education, public health, community organization, financial literacy, and economic development. These programs constitute the bulk of the services agenda that will be analyzed later in this chapter. The Offices of Community Affairs are also responsible for helping the ambassador or consul-in-chief to foster ties with Mexican and Mexican-American leaders in their respective jurisdictions. For that purpose, they promote the information agenda described below.

The IME Consultative Council is made up of 128 *consejeros* or council members. The council members are independent community leaders who reside either in the United States or in Canada and are elected by the communities they represent. The position of *consejero* is unsalaried; the government of Mexico covers only their travel expenses to two plenary sessions every year. They serve for a term of three years; reelection is not permitted.

So far there have been two generations of *consejeros*, and a new one began its three-year term in January 2009, after IME’s 2008 electoral process was over. On average, two-thirds of the *consejeros* were born in Mexico and the others are native-born Americans of Mexican

descent. In terms of gender, the proportion has been similar: two-thirds male, one-third female.

The job of the Consultative Council members is to make public recommendations to the Mexican government about policies towards the diaspora. They also bring resources to the table in terms of contacts, funding, and ideas to implement IME programs. The relationship between the Mexican government and the council members is conflict-prone by nature, given the traditional mistrust with which immigrants regard government initiatives from their country of origin. It is also driven by the independence of the *consejeros*, whose political base is naturally in the communities they represent.

Far from hampering the ability of either side to work effectively, the inherent tension that exists between the Mexican diaspora-oriented bureaucracy (career diplomats and public officers who work at the consular network, IME, and other federal and state agencies that serve immigrant communities abroad) and independent leaders elected by migrants to serve on the council has allowed for “the quiet work of institutionalizing the diaspora’s relations with the Mexican State and its capacity to act for itself.”<sup>5</sup>

The council has been successful in influencing government policy on several occasions. Due in large measure to the pressure exercised by *consejeros*, nowadays all funds collected as passport and consular ID fees are used by the Foreign Affairs Ministry to finance the activities of the consular network. From a different perspective, the lobbying efforts that prompted the electoral reform allowing Mexicans to vote from abroad in 2006, the annual Binational Health Week, or the continuous strengthening of existing development projects such as the Three-for-One matching funds program,<sup>b</sup> are examples of campaigns that imply the collective action of thousands of immigrants throughout the United States, incubated within or triggered by the IME Consultative Council.

Despite migrants’ traditional lack of confidence in their native government, the formation of the Consultative Council demonstrated the broad convoking ability of the Mexican State.<sup>c</sup> Given existing rivalries between the different local leaderships, it hardly seems possible that

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b. Binational Health Week and the Three-for-One program are discussed in greater detail in the next section.

c. The creation of an advisory organ composed of migrants was interpreted from the beginning as a direct response to the complaint of various community leaders that the Mexican government was continuing to act unilaterally, without consulting the people who were the object of its concerns. See videotaped statement by Mexican President Vicente Fox on the occasion of the investiture of the Consultative Council of Mexicans Abroad, March 20, 2003, <http://fox.presidencia.gob.mx/multimedia/videos/?contenido=4833&pagina=105>.

a nongovernmental institution would have been able to seat at the same table such disparate Mexican and Mexican-American leaders. Its mere establishment represents one of the most significant achievements in relations between Mexico and its diaspora to date. This is especially true in two symbolic senses: First, it is an organization with genuine national coverage (in the United States); and second, it unites members exclusively by virtue of being Mexican (either by birth or ancestry).

The council has become a natural meeting point between Mexican and Mexican-American leaders, who are currently dispersed among many coalitions of strictly local or regional scope. It fosters face-to-face dialogue between Mexican leaders concerned with migrant issues and their Mexican-American counterparts.

This new approach to developing an empowered and engaged Mexican diaspora has been cultivating the long-needed systematic dialogue by

1. recognizing, in a formal way, the need to incorporate communities abroad into the process of forming Mexican policies that affect them;
2. sponsoring the gradual identification of a shared agenda by seating at the same table all interested parties (hometown associations, national Latino organizations, state governments, federal government agencies, Mexican-American intellectuals, etc.);
3. encouraging transparency and accountability for the benefit of the population of Mexican origin that lives outside the national territory.<sup>d</sup>

In the words of a Mexican-American analyst, David Ayón, IME and its Consultative Council are network-building machines. The Consultative Council “attempts to play the role of the coordinating assembly of the diaspora network as a whole—a formal and institutionalized network of networks, with an identified membership that is convened twice yearly and which is divided into functional commissions . . . This creation, in spite of its unwieldy aspects, allowed the Mexican state to impose a much higher degree of order than ever before on its relations with the rising diaspora meta-network.”<sup>e</sup>

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d. For a more detailed discussion about how the Consultative Council works, see Carlos González Gutiérrez, “Del acercamiento a la inclusión institucional: la experiencia del Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior,” in *Relaciones Estado-Diáspora: aproximaciones desde cuatro continentes*, ed. Carlos González Gutiérrez (México DF: Miguel Angel Porrúa, 2006), <http://www.ime.gob.mx/investigaciones/bibliografias/cgg5.pdf>.

e. “If nothing else, the further development of this network is likely to force the domestic-policy oriented Latino network to elevate the priority it places on both Mexican immigrant and even more directly Mexico-related

### III. IME'S SERVICES AGENDA

International law recognizes Mexico's right and obligation to offer consular protection services to its citizens abroad, particularly when they are in dire straits. Given the size of the Mexican diaspora and the fact that most Mexican immigrants are concentrated at the bottom of the US social pyramid, for the last two decades the Mexican government has designed a series of public policies that go beyond the scope of traditional protection services. The goal is to have a systemic impact on the well-being of the most vulnerable sectors of Mexican immigrant communities.

By creating IME and its Consultative Council, the Mexican government tried to take advantage of the communities' autonomous capacity for organization in order to aggressively promote cooperation with Mexico in terms of education, health, community organization, consular protection, and business promotion. Working with the community through the consular network in a decentralized and intimate way, IME is able to obtain support and resources that complement the government's contributions. In turn, this approach guarantees the appropriateness of the new institutional framework, since IME's agenda is inevitably linked to the needs of the organized communities themselves. At the same time, that agenda is constantly being nurtured by Consultative Council members.

The first six years of IME's work have demonstrated that focusing government-diaspora collaboration on a services agenda for the immigrant community can create synergies and virtuous circles in fields such as distance learning, health promotion, community organization, financial education, and projects designed to add value to remittances.

In one example of services delivery, the Mexican consular network, with the support of several educational institutions,<sup>f</sup> is providing books,<sup>g</sup> teacher exchanges,<sup>h</sup> literacy programs,

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issues. To the extent to which this is the case, and as the Latino network continues to become more influential in US politics, Mexico will be likely to consider its most recent diasporic policy experiment to be worthwhile and continue to pursue and expand it indefinitely in future administrations." See David R. Ayón, "Latino and Mexican Leadership Networks in the U.S. and the Role of the Mexican State" (paper prepared for the 2006 Meeting of the Latin American Studies Association, San Juan, Puerto Rico, March 15–18, 2006), <http://www.ime.gob.mx/investigaciones/bibliografias/ayon2.pdf>.

f. Participating organizations include the Department of Public Education (SEP), National Institute for the Education of Adults (INEA), National Education Council for Life and Work (CONEVYT), Tecnológico de Monterrey (ITESM), Latin American Institute for Educational Communication (ILCE), Colegio de Bachilleres, National Commission for Free Textbooks (CONALITEG), and more than a dozen state governments.

g. In collaboration with CONALITEG, which is part of the Department of Public Education, more than 9,700 collections—around 1,000,000 books in Spanish for basic education and children's literature—were distributed in

elementary and secondary-level schooling,<sup>i</sup> or open or distance-learning high school education<sup>j</sup> to adult immigrants. Thousands of beneficiaries have used these services to develop their academic training in English, complete an academic degree left unfinished in Mexico, better help their children with their education, or, in the case of detainees, make good use of their time while in prison.<sup>k</sup>

The task of Mexican consuls is to negotiate support from local authorities and community organizations in order to open *Plazas Comunitarias* (distance education schools),<sup>l</sup> set up Web portals in collaboration with Mexican educational authorities,<sup>m</sup> or promote the acceptance of Mexican high school credentials by school districts or educational authorities in the United States. Since 2005, these programs have been strengthened by the creation of an IME scholarship program, through which, via the annual provision of 10 million Mexican pesos (US\$730,000), the Mexican government supports Mexican students registered in adult education courses offered by the consular network.<sup>n</sup>

With regard to health, the services offered by IME and the consular network center around two main projects, which are implemented in close coordination with Mexico's Department of Health. First, there is Binational Health Week, which each year mobilizes resources and focuses attention on the health of migrants. This is accomplished by organizing annual health fairs and academic conferences in different regions of the United States and Canada during the second week of October. With the support of the University of California Binational Health Initiative and members of the IME Consultative Council, each of the 56

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schools, public libraries, and school districts in 2008, with the purpose of supporting education and reinforcing the identity of children and young people of Mexican origin.

h. During the summer of 2008, 140 Mexican teachers coming from 19 federative entities participated in the Teachers Exchange Mexico-USA 2008 program. The participating professors visited 17 US states.

i. In 2008, IME coordinated, in collaboration with INEA, assistance to approximately 14,156 students in literacy courses or open elementary and secondary schools in the United States through the *Plazas Comunitarias* program.

j. The Colegio de Bachilleres assists a registered population of more than 1,400 students through the open and distance learning system, which has an online system for registration, consultancy, training, and exams.

k. The service is offered in some prisons in California, New Mexico, and Arizona.

l. At the moment, 298 *Plazas Comunitarias* have been set up in 30 US states, with the collaboration of the Mexican consular network and INEA. With the support of the new technologies, the *plazas* offer educational services of literacy, elementary school, secondary school, open and remote high school, college or further education, English as a Second Language, computing, topics of general culture, and education for life and work.

m. Six CONEVYT-INEA educational portals have been set up in collaboration with local educational organizations. These portals were created to improve the effectiveness and reach of the educational services offered by INEA to the Mexican population in the United States.

n. Between 2005 and 2007, 210 nonprofit organizations mostly dedicated to immigrant adult education have received a grant from the IME Scholarship Fund. In total, these grants helped 14,482 male and female students over the age of 15. Figures for 2008 are not yet available.

consulates in North America invites local health providers and community clinics to offer basic health and wellness services for the Mexican population in their respective consular jurisdictions. More than 300,000 people benefit every year from this effort.<sup>6</sup>

The second track is the *Ventanillas de Salud* program (VDS, or Windows to Health). The VDS program is a multistrategy approach to providing personalized assistance and outreach to Mexican immigrants unfamiliar with the US health system. This program is a binational collaboration of government, nonprofit, and private agencies working to increase access to health care and health education among low-income and migrant Mexican families, especially children. There are currently 28 VDS initiatives in the United States, each operating in a different Mexican consular office. A typical VDS initiative helps clients without health care apply for public health-care programs for which they are eligible. VDS staff also provide them with public benefits and health-insurance education and enrollment assistance; refer consulate visitors to an appropriate clinic or health center; and promote health awareness by providing education and, when possible, screenings for health issues affecting the Latino community (i.e., hypertension, diabetes, obesity, HIV/AIDS, cancer, and substance abuse as well as prenatal, dental, occupational health, and mental health care). In 2007, more than 69,000 immigrants received some type of health care through a VDS initiative.

A third type of service that IME and the consular network offer concerns the promotion of the Three-for-One Program administered by the Ministry of Social Development. The Three-for-One program is an initiative through which Mexican federal, state, and local authorities match funds sent by hometown associations to support local infrastructure projects in their communities of origin. Access to these funds serves as an incentive for diaspora organizations to collaborate, and the consul plays a fundamental role in identifying the organized communities and putting them in contact with authorities at the federal, state, and local level.<sup>o</sup> In 2007, 1,613 hometown association projects were sponsored, benefiting 443 municipalities.

With regard to financial education and efforts to add additional value to remittances, the services offered by IME and the consular network are intimately linked to the use of the *matrícula consular* (consular ID card). One of the most basic services the Mexican State offers the almost 6 million unauthorized immigrants from Mexico residing in the United States is the provision of identification documents. For card holders, the consular ID represents the

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o. This strategy of encouraging attention for communities of relatively less development permits coverage for almost all the Mexican states that want to be assisted by the Three-for-One program. See Josefina Vázquez Mota, "El Programa Iniciativa Ciudadana Three-for-One: un instrumento para respaldar la inversión social de los inmigrantes mexicanos" in *Foreign Affairs en Español*, vol. 5, July–September 2005, pp. 37–42.



possibility of establishing their identity with the police, entering a public building where identification is required, opening a bank account, or in certain states applying for a driver's license. As a result, the Mexican consular network has prioritized adding value to the consular ID by negotiating its acceptance by US banks, state and municipal governments, police departments, school districts, and public buildings.

Currently, almost 4 million Mexicans residing in the United States possess a consular ID. Growing acceptance of the card testifies to the will of thousands of elected and appointed US officials to find practical solutions, at a local level, to the issues raised by illegal immigration. With the help of sympathetic local authorities from both the private and public sectors, IME and the consular network almost every week organize events to promote a wide array of migrant-related financial services. These range from the simple opening of bank accounts to more sophisticated credit schemes to help expatriates invest part of their remittances in home buying in Mexico.

Finally, there are more than half a million college-educated Mexican immigrants living in the United States. With them in mind, and in contrast to the services mentioned so far (which target comparatively low-skilled immigrants), IME has launched the Mexican Talent Network. This project facilitates contact between highly qualified Mexicans living abroad (who migrate mostly because of the global hunt for talent) and their counterparts in Mexico, as a way to promote the better integration of Mexico into the global economy, particularly the knowledge-based economy. With the support of Mexico's National Council on Science and Technology (Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología, or CONACYT), consular offices are encouraging the formation of "talent chapters" in their respective jurisdictions, as a first step toward linking them with Mexico-based institutions designated by CONACYT as national points of contact.

#### IV. IME'S INFORMATION AGENDA

To the extent that Mexico can begin a systematic dialogue with the most important leaders and organizations of its communities abroad, the country and the diaspora will be able to promote a shared agenda focused on creating synergies.

The Consultative Council's members emerge from grassroots efforts initiated from within diaspora communities themselves. The *consejeros'* membership in the council grants them clear, predictable, and institutional access to Mexican policymaking. Furthermore, they participate knowing they will be replaced after three years by a new generation of *consejeros*, so the continuous churning of council members is guaranteed. There is no room for the



emergence of caciques or “illuminated” (self-appointed) leaders. The best chance to find the interlocutors that Mexico requires for the dialogue with its diaspora comes from within this group and the institutionalized guarantee it offers.

Within this framework, IME and the consular network in the United States and Canada have singled out the processing and distribution of information as a crucial element for contributing to the emergence and consolidation of support networks. As one of its main duties, therefore, IME has kept in close contact with these support networks by providing them information about IME’s activities and, in general, about the leaders, organizations, events, and community work that the networks carry out. In order to reach this aim, IME sends a daily electronic bulletin, the *Lazos*, full of important news and messages to almost 12,000 leaders in the United States and Canada.

Moreover, IME invites an average of 400 opinion and community leaders (hometown association board members, elected officials, educators, health professionals, journalists, sport activists, restaurant owners, and union representatives, among others), most of them of Mexican origin, to come to Mexico each year as part of a program of *Jornadas Informativas* (informative conferences). The conferences promote better awareness of migration issues, share offers of cooperation from the Mexican government, and disseminate government positions on diverse topics. Each month from March through December, IME organizes a symposium for a 40-member delegation.

By virtue of the fact that the Mexican consuls know the grassroots community leaders best, they nominate candidates for each delegation. The participants see the invitation as both stimulating and recognizing their community work. Some of them are almost certainly future Consultative Council members. Most leverage what they learn at the conferences to better serve their communities, or they may take advantage of the international cooperation of Mexico, for example, in education or health programs. In any case, most develop a sense of belonging to the network of community leaders that maintains a special relationship with the Mexican government.

A prime example of what has been accomplished by IME when creating a shared agenda with communities abroad took place in 2003, when the US Treasury Department reaffirmed its support for financial institutions to accept the consular ID as a valid form of identification.

The Treasury Department’s reevaluation of the *matrícula consular* came after some US members of Congress complained that acceptance of a foreign identification card could pose a national security risk.

In response, the Treasury Department reopened its public comment period and received tens of thousands of comments, most of them generated after an information campaign launched by IME, the consular network, and groups such as the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) and the National Immigration Law Center. The organizations sent email messages to thousands of Mexican-American community leaders explaining the negative consequences of banks' rejection of the consular ID as an identification document. This campaign spurred a critical community mobilization. As a result, 83 percent of the 34,000 opinions received were in favor of continued acceptance of the document.<sup>7</sup> By September 2003, the Treasury Department announced that its policy of allowing the acceptance of the consular ID would not change. The *Wall Street Journal* observed shortly thereafter that these efforts and outcomes appeared to demonstrate how Mexico had developed a considerable lobbying apparatus by teaming up with the Mexican-American community.<sup>8</sup>

From a foreign-policy perspective, Alexandra Delano has argued that Mexico's emigration policies are in part the result of a gradual redefinition of principles and strategies, mainly as a consequence of transformations that took place in US-Mexico relations since the late 1980s and particularly since enactment of the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1994. The institutionalization of diaspora-engagement policies through IME is part of a new proactive attitude from the Mexican government regarding its responsibility towards Mexican immigrants. This reflects a better understanding of how the US political system works and represents "a fundamental change in the Mexican government's position regarding traditional definitions of 'consular protection' and situations of 'interference' in another state's sovereignty."<sup>9</sup>

## V. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

IME is the most complete expression of the efforts undertaken by Mexico to empower its diaspora. Its success has been accomplished by building skills and capacities in autonomous leaders and by providing them with tools to facilitate the integration of Mexican communities into their host society.

IME's goal is to provide Mexicans living abroad with institutional access to the formulation of Mexican public policies, as well as to create synergies with those same expatriates. Taking advantage of the autonomous capacity of migrants' organizations, IME functions as the center of a web of networks that offers services to improve the Mexican diaspora's daily life and, at the same time, establishes the appropriate conditions for a systematic dialogue with its diverse leadership. Since its priority is the training of independent community leaders,

IME is called upon to have a multiplying effect that surpasses the particular agenda of the Mexican government.

IME and its Consultative Council have proved to be useful tools and institutions where synergies can be created. However, where deeply opposing interests coexist within the diaspora (as in the case of free trade or the issue of guest worker programs), or where diaspora initiatives do not find wide support in Mexican political circles (as in the case of expatriate voting rights in homeland elections), the new institutional framework can serve to reduce differences, facilitate mediation and, in so doing, create an orderly dialogue around these differences. Before the IME Consultative Council existed, there was no institutional channel through which the organized communities could express their points of view in a systematic way.

Rather than striving for an unreachable consensus on thorny issues, IME and its Consultative Council help the many and diverse actors involved in Mexico's relations with its diaspora to distinguish that which unites them from that which separates them. It is hoped that this systematic dialogue between the Mexican government and the diaspora leadership will create a mutually beneficial relationship that develops neither by decree nor spontaneously, but rather is built over the course of many years, through trust.

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# ABOUT THE MIGRATION POLICY INSTITUTE AND ITS MIGRANTS, MIGRATION, AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The Migration Policy Institute is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit think tank in Washington, DC dedicated to analysis of the movement of people worldwide.

MPI provides analysis, development, and evaluation of migration and refugee policies at the local, national, and international levels. It aims to meet the rising demand for pragmatic and thoughtful responses to the challenges and opportunities that large-scale migration, whether voluntary or forced, presents to communities and institutions in an increasingly integrated world.

Founded in 2001 by Demetrios G. Papademetriou and Kathleen Newland, MPI grew out of the International Migration Policy Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

MPI is guided by the philosophy that international migration needs active and intelligent management. When such policies are in place and are responsibly administered, they bring benefits to immigrants and their families, communities of origin and destination, and sending and receiving countries.

## THE MIGRANTS, MIGRATION, AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Policy discussion of the linkages between migration and development has progressed beyond simple notions that development is a cure for migration or that migration is a recipe for development. There is now a more sophisticated understanding of the intersection between the two policy areas, which has fostered an increasing interest in the potential development benefits of allowing migrants at all skill levels to circulate more freely, unlocking the potential of diasporas and creating more productive possibilities for the use of remittances.

While there is increased research focused on the actual and potential contributions of migrant communities to sustainable development and poverty reduction in their countries of origin, the findings have not been systematically translated into policy guidance and important topics remain underinvestigated. One result is that little coherence is to be found between the development policies and the migration policies of governments in either countries of destination or countries of origin.

MPI's Migrants, Migration, and Development Program, directed by Kathleen Newland, is addressing the paucity of policy analysis through its research and policy development projects, and is deeply engaged in efforts to encourage multilateral discussions through the Global Forum on Migration and Development and other policy councils where synergies between migration and development are being shaped.

The program's recent work has helped to develop the concept of circular migration and guidelines for implementation of effective policies to manage circular migration. A second strand of work is producing new research findings on contributions of diasporas to development in their countries of origin and elaborating a template for effective engagement between diasporas and governments of both origin and destination countries. The program also is working on projects that focus on the role of migration intermediaries, such as recruitment agencies, and the migration systems of developing countries.

Among the program's recent published research:

- *Managing Temporary Migration: Lessons from the Philippine Model*  
By Dovelyn Rannveig Agunias

Developing countries can proactively manage large-scale, systematic, and legal movement of temporary migrant workers. This MPI report analyzes the system the Philippines uses to manage the temporary migration of millions of Filipinos who work

in countries around the globe. For many observers, the Philippines' system of managing temporary migration has unrivaled sophistication, making it a model for other developing countries hoping to access the benefits of global labor mobility.

- *Learning by Doing: Experiences of Circular Migration*

By Kathleen Newland, Dovelyn Rannveig Agunias, and Aaron Terrazas

Increasingly, policymakers are considering whether circular migration could improve the likelihood that global mobility gains will be shared by migrant-origin and destination countries alike—as well as by migrants themselves. This MPI Insight examines the record of circular migration, both where it has arisen naturally and where governments have taken action to encourage it.

- *Hometown Associations: An Untapped Resource for Immigrant Integration?*

By Will Somerville, Jamie Durana, and Aaron Matteo Terrazas

Hometown associations, the organizations that immigrants create for social, economic development, and political empowerment purposes, play an important—and underexamined—role in immigrant integration. Though policymakers focus chiefly on the associations' development potential, this MPI Insight recommends cooperative interventions to strengthen their immigrant integration capacity.

- *Protecting Overseas Workers: Lessons and Cautions from the Philippines*

By Dovelyn Rannveig Agunias, MPI, and Neil Ruiz, Brookings Institution

The Philippine case highlights the importance of meeting the core needs of overseas workers without overextending the government's capacity; establishing political, administrative, and financial transparency and accountability; and effectively using government resources.

These publications, and further information about the Migrants, Migration, and Development Program, can be found at

[www.migrationpolicy.org/research/migration\\_development.php](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/migration_development.php).

For more on the Migration Policy Institute, please visit

[www.migrationpolicy.org](http://www.migrationpolicy.org).





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# CLOSING THE DISTANCE HOW GOVERNMENTS STRENGTHEN TIES WITH THEIR DIASPORAS

DOVELYN RANNVEIG AGUNIAS, EDITOR

More than ever, emigrants and their descendants who maintain strong links to their countries of origin are seen as agents of development. Eager to embrace this potential, some developing countries have created institutions to more systematically strengthen ties with their diasporas.

This book offers an unprecedented taxonomy of 45 diaspora-engaging institutions found in 30 developing countries, exploring their activities and objectives; it also provides important perspectives from country case studies by senior practitioners from Mali, Mexico, and the Philippines.

Developing countries have established diaspora institutions at different levels of government and with diverse priorities and degrees of organization. Many are quite new, having been established after the turn of the millennium. The effectiveness of these institutions is hard to pinpoint, as is their impact on development efforts in the homeland. Even at this nascent stage, however, insights can be drawn that are potentially useful for developing-country governments as they think about, design, and manage diaspora institutions.

Contributors include Kathleen Newland (Director of the Migrants, Migration, and Development Program, Migration Policy Institute), Dovelyn Rannveig Agunias (Associate Policy Analyst, Migration Policy Institute), Patricia A. Sto. Tomas (Chairman, Development Bank of the Philippines and former Secretary of the Department of Labor and Employment, Government of the Philippines), Badara Aliou Macalou (Minister of Malians Abroad and African Integration, Government of Mali), and Carlos González Gutiérrez (Consul General of Mexico in Sacramento, California, and former Executive Director, Institute of Mexicans Abroad, Government of Mexico).

## ABOUT MPI'S MIGRANTS, MIGRATION, AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Governments, multilateral agencies, and development specialists in recent years have rediscovered the connections between migration and development. Increasing volumes of research are focusing on the actual and potential contributions of migrant communities to sustainable development and poverty reduction in their countries of origin.

The findings have not been systematically translated into policy guidance, however, and important topics remain underinvestigated. One result is that little coherence is to be found between the development policies and the migration policies of governments in either countries of destination or countries of origin. The Migration Policy Institute's Migrants, Migration, and Development Program is addressing the paucity of policy analysis through its research and policy development projects, and is deeply engaged in efforts to encourage multilateral discussions through the Global Forum on Migration and Development and other international encounters.

The program's recent work has helped to develop the concept of circular migration and guidelines for implementation of effective policies to manage circular migration. A second strand of work is producing new findings on contributions of diasporas to development in their countries of origin and elaborating a template for effective engagement between diasporas and governments of both origin and destination countries.



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