Diasporas: Policy Challenges and Responses

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1. POLICY CHALLENGES
   - Definitions
   - Obstacles
   - Gaps and priorities

2. ESTABLISHING A « WORKING RELATIONSHIP »
   - Institutions
   - Programmes
   - Incentives

3. WHAT ROLE FOR POLICY?
   - Lessons learnt
   - What role?
1. POLICY CHALLENGES
DEFINING DIASPORAS

- No one common definition: from Diaspora” to “diasporas”
- Transnational **individuals** and **communities**
- **Parameters**: time/birth/citizenship/belonging
- **Examples** of definitions (UK, India, African Union)
- The **definition** influences the shape and direction of **policy**
RESULTS: IOM Survey 2005 (49 countries)

- **Assessing** the diasporas’ development potential
- **Mobilising finance for** governmental work with diasporas
- **Collecting** data on diasporas
- **Overcoming competition** among diaspora groups
- **Building partnerships** with home or host countries
- **Lack of communication** among departments, community representatives and corporate actors

**Problem of capacities, structures and ownership in country of origin**
GAPS & PRIORITIES

✓ Learn about other international **good practices**
✓ Improve **capacity** to implement and manage programmes
✓ Enhance **coherence** between migration and development agendas

✓ Develop a “**policy guide**”
✓ Identify “**good practices**”
✓ Raise **governmental awareness**
✓ Recognize **partners** within diasporas

Knowledge; Exchange; Awareness;
Successful / Unsuccessful?
Lack of evaluation tools
2. ESTABLISHING A « WORKING RELATIONSHIP »
INSTITUTIONS

- **Dedicated to diasporas**: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Benin, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chile, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Lithuania, Mali, Mexico, Romania, Senegal, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, Uruguay, Peru

- **Diversity**: State Agency for Bulgarians Abroad, Presidential Office for Mexicans Abroad, Ministry for Senegalese Abroad, General Directorate for Ethiopian Expatriates

- **Consular services** (Peru)

- **Programmes & Events**: Colombia, El Salvador, Tunisia, Algeria, Benin, India, Syria, Armenia

  Legitimacy, resources, dialogue, registration
Skills circulation through virtual exchanges, temporary and permanent returns

- **Skills databanks**: Nigeria, Ghana, Benin, Colombia, Philippines, Bulgaria, Azerbaijan, Pakistan, Mexico, Portugal, Kenya, Argentina, Senegal, South Africa
- **Matching initiatives**: Africa Recruit, IOM MIDA, UNDP TOKTEN
- **E-learning**: Rwanda; Sweden
- **Temporary and permanent returns**: Tunisia, Sri Lanka, IOM RQAN

**Deskilling**

The **right human resources?**

Return programmes
FINANCIAL CAPITAL

Remittances, FDI, financial transfers, entrepreneurship, business creation

- **Remittances**: reducing transaction costs
- **Expatriate bonds**: India, Israel
- **Tax breaks**: India, Philippines, Ethiopia
- **Special services for diasporas**: Banques Populaires Morocco, Banco Solidario Equator, Banque de l’Habitat, Senegal
- **Chambers of Commerce**: key role
- **Investment Fairs**: Africa Recruit, Africa Axis
INCENTIVES

Relate diasporas policies to diasporas rights

✓ Dual citizenship
✓ Consular support
✓ Voting rights
✓ Property rights
✓ Transferability of pension rights and social benefits
✓ Reduced transportation costs
✓ Simplification of bureaucratic procedures
✓ Match diasporas resources with real development needs
3. WHAT ROLE FOR POLICY?
LESSONS LEARNT (1)

1) Address **heterogeneity** of interests within diasporas
2) Recognize **profit making & altruistic** strategies
3) Favour « **local to local** » responses
4) Support « **sector based** » approaches
5) What is on **diasporas’ agenda**?
6) Identify who are your diasporas **partners**?
7) Assess roles: “**ice breakers**”, “**middle persons**”
8) Provide **gender** specific responses
9) Identify **the limits** of individual strategies
LESSONS LEARNT (2)

10) What is on the governmental development agenda?

11) Promote institutional change and internal policy coherence

12) Recognize “soft” factors: trust, perceptions, images…

13) Build on “social capital”

14) Identify obstacles: institutional, bureaucratic, perceived

15) Relate home and host countries interests

16) Better integrate diasporas into development strategies

17) Assess potential negative effects of policy

18) Estimate the offsetting potential of macro-economic and political settings
WHAT ROLE FOR POLICY?

- “Enabling” role
- “Inclusionary” role
- “Partnership” role
- “Catalytic” role

Diasporas can make a difference in the right policy context

✓ Migration for Development, Across and Within Borders
✓ Migrants’ Remittances and Development: Myths Rhetoric and Realities
✓ Migration and Development: Opportunities and Challenges for Policy Makers, MRS 22
✓ Mainstreaming Migration into Development Agendas, IDM n°8
✓ Migration and Development: the Cases of Angola and Zambia, MRS 21, IOM
✓ The development Potential of Zimbabweans in the diasporas, MRS 17, IOM
✓ Institutionalizing Diasporas Linkages: the Emigrants Bangladeshi in the UK and USA

Forthcoming:

✓ Diaspora across regions, Collection, under the direction of Nyberg Sorensen N.
✓ Remittances in the Great Lakes Region, MRS 25
✓ Engaging Diasporas as partners for the development of the host and home country, Policy Paper, MRS 26