



Funded by the  
European Union



**ICMPD**  
International Centre for  
Migration Policy Development



# Best Practices in Diaspora Engagement for Azerbaijan

---

2024



# Best Practices in Diaspora Engagement for Azerbaijan

---

2024

**International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)**

Rotschildplatz 4  
Vienna A-1020  
[www.icmpd.org](http://www.icmpd.org)

**International Centre for Migration Policy Development**

Vienna, Austria  
2024

International Centre for Migration Policy Development in Azerbaijan  
Baku, Azerbaijan  
Samad Vurgun str. 43, World Business Centre  
2024

Authors: Melissa Siegel, Giulia Mori

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, copied or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission of the copyright owners.

This document was produced with the financial support of the European Union. The contents of this Publication are the sole responsibility of ICMPD and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1. Best Practices in Economic Engagement</b>	<b>11</b>
1.1 Remittances	11
A. Liberal Remittance Regimes	11
B. Strengthening the Remittance Infrastructure	12
C. Provide Opportunities for More Productive Investment of Remittance	12
1.2 Direct Investments	13
A. Provide Access to Information	13
B. Provide Access to Networks and Training	14
C. Facilitate Entrepreneurs' Access to Funds	14
1.3 Capital Market Investment	15
<b>2. Best Practices in Diaspora Social Engagement</b>	<b>22</b>
2.1 Skills and Knowledge Transfer	22
2.2 Philanthropy	23
<b>3. Best Practices in Institutional Organizations for Diaspora Engagement</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>4. Engaging with the Diaspora in Times of Crisis</b>	<b>37</b>
4.1 Before the Crisis	38
4.2 During the Crisis	39
<b>5. Conclusions</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>48</b>



# Introduction

---

This paper aims to advise the Azerbaijani government on better engaging their diaspora. It covers good diaspora engagement practices in general as well as in selected countries. Additionally, it includes lessons learned after the COVID-19 pandemic and presents the kinds of support that can be given to members of the diaspora in times of crisis.

The notion of diaspora is multifaceted, encompassing various definitions, from its classical origins to the modern conceptualizations prevalent in scholarly, institutional, and national contexts. Originating from the Greek compound ‘diaspeirō’ (dia = between, through; speiro =sow, scatter), the term ‘diaspora’ initially described historical dispersals; particularly the experiences of Jewish, Greek, and Armenian populations. Its contemporary meaning denotes not only the process of becoming dispersed but also the community formed through dispersal and the spaces in which this dispersed population resides (Vertovec, 2009). Current definitions of diaspora emphasize factors such as cultural, linguistic, and national ties, or an imagined connection between a post-migration population and their place of origin (Marienstras, 1989; Sheffer, 2003; Vertovec, 2009). Diaspora, thus, embodies an amalgamation of shared identity, historical connections, and a collective concern for a homeland, whether real or imagined (Cohen & Kennedy, 2013).

Institutional definitions of the term diverge in scope, ranging from the World Bank’s ‘foreign-born population’ concept, which excludes subsequent generations born abroad, to more inclusive definitions like the African Union’s, encompassing individuals of African origin willing to contribute to the continent’s development (African Union, 2005). The Scottish Government’s ‘affinity diaspora’ concept even recognizes those with special affection for the nation-state, regardless of their nationality (Ancien et al., 2009).

Generally, the delineation of a diaspora for policy purposes within a country is contingent upon the specific demographic targeted by the policies. In Azerbaijan, the definition of the diaspora is thus crucial for shaping policies that cater to distinct segments of the Azerbaijani community living abroad. The Azerbaijani diaspora comprises various groups: individuals born in Azerbaijan and their descendants residing overseas, as well as Azerbaijani minorities in other nations. The legal definition, as outlined in the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan, as encompassing citizens of Azerbaijan and their children residing outside the country, former citizens of the Azerbaijani SSR or the Republic of Azerbaijan living abroad with their children, and those identifying with Azerbaijan based on ethnic, linguistic, cultural, or historical connections (Azerbaijan Official Website, n.d.). Acknowledging these diverse components within the diaspora necessitates tailored policies to address their unique needs, considering factors such as their relationship to Azerbaijan, cultural ties, and varying experiences of integration in their host countries. Recognizing and developing different policies for the diverse sections of the diaspora is essential to effectively engage and support these communities scattered across the globe.

Understanding the spheres where diaspora engagement may take place is important for effective policymaking. Effective diaspora engagement predominantly encompasses three key spheres: the household and/or extended family sphere; the known community sphere; and the imagined community sphere. These spheres encompass a spectrum of interactions, ranging from intimate, private engagements within family units to interactions within familiar social circles, and extending to broader collective connections. The household and extended family represent the private and personal realm, where cultural traditions, language, and familial ties are sustained. The known community involves interactions within immediate social circles and established networks, influencing economic and social engagements. Lastly, the imagined community denotes the broader collective purpose, where a shared identity and cultural heritage bind a dispersed population, influencing cultural, social, and economic connections (Van Hear & Cohen, 2017). Multifaceted engagement across all spheres can influence economic, social, and cultural ties within the diaspora.

Understanding the areas in which a diaspora can contribute to home-country development is also important for effectively leveraging their potential. Such areas may include economic remittances and investments, social and cultural contributions, tourism, philanthropy, and knowledge transfer. Economic remittances refer to the financial support sent by individuals of the diaspora to their home countries, which often play a pivotal role in local economies. Investments made by diaspora members contribute to businesses, infrastructure, and various sectors within the origin country. Social and cultural contributions involve activities such as preserving cultural heritage, supporting educational initiatives, and fostering community development. Philanthropic efforts within diaspora communities often result in funding social projects, humanitarian aid, and community welfare programs. Knowledge transfer involves the sharing of expertise, skills, and experiences between the diaspora and the home country, which can significantly impact various sectors such as education, technology, and innovation (Fernandes, 2022; Fang & Wells, 2022; Nurse, 2019; Williams, 2018; Gevorkyan, 2022). Understanding the nuances and diverse practices within these crucial areas becomes paramount in leveraging the potential for socio-economic development within the origin country.

In the Azerbaijani context, the main governmental entity in charge of diaspora engagement is the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of the Republic of Azerbaijan, founded in 2002 with the primary mission of initiating and sustaining connections with the Azerbaijani diaspora across the globe, and providing assistance to Azerbaijanis worldwide to strengthen national cohesion. Its role involves managing economic, social, and cultural programs to promote ties between Azerbaijanis residing abroad and their homeland. From facilitating investments to providing social and educational support, the committee is in charge of policy coordination, protection of civil rights, and fostering relationships with diaspora organizations. Additionally, it is tasked with ensuring a secure operational environment while transparently disseminating information, ultimately aiming to strengthen the unity and impact of the diaspora locally and internationally. In practice, its main initiatives for diaspora engagement are centred around organizing events tailored to diaspora

members, with a particular focus on preserving cultural heritage. Notable examples of these initiatives include the Summer Camps of Diaspora Youth, which have seen four editions held between 2018 and 2023. These camps cover a wide range of topics, including youth policy, conveying Azerbaijan’s realities to the global community, intercultural dialogue, diaspora development, cultural enlightenment, sports, and media representation (State Committee on Work with Diaspora of the Republic of Azerbaijan Official Website, n.d.).

Given that the area of cultural engagement is already well established for Azerbaijan, this report focuses on the engagement of economic and social spheres, as well as institutional organization for diaspora engagement. It will also explore how engagement efforts can adapt to challenging times and crises. Each of the following sections will highlight key policies and program options within each sphere, drawing examples from various countries. By showcasing diverse engagement practices and policies, the report intends to serve as a valuable tool for policymakers in Azerbaijan to refine their diaspora engagement policies and foster a stronger relationship with their global citizens.

# 1. Best Practices in Economic Engagement

---

Economic engagement of diaspora communities is complex and multifaceted, involving tailored policies for effective impact across various financial channels. This section looks at the ways to boost diaspora economic participation, exploring strategies, policies, and real-world examples (Table 1). The sphere of economic engagement of the diaspora consists of financial contributions on the part of diaspora members, including remittances, direct investment, and capital market investment.

## 1.1 Remittances

Remittances, as the most tangible link between migration and development, necessitate carefully crafted policies that balance control and encouragement. What can governments do to attract and retain remittances?

### A. Liberal Remittance Regimes

A first option to encourage and retain remittances consists of liberalizing remittance regimes (Gayle et al., 2013). Recognizing the pitfalls of strict remittance regulations, as exemplified by past practices in countries like Vietnam and Tajikistan, governments are increasingly shifting towards creating liberal remittance regimes. This transition stems from a deep understanding of the negative impacts of strict remittance regulations. Taxing remittances not only results in double taxation for migrants who are already fulfilling their tax obligations, but also serves to raise the overall cost of remittances. This increase, in turn, has the counterproductive effect of diminishing the volume of remittances sent (Carling, 2004;

Sander & Maimbo, 2003; Aycinena et al., 2010). Furthermore, imposing controls encourages informal transfers, which, being excluded from GDP calculations, fails to contribute to the country's foreign exchange position and additionally gives rise to security risks (Nurgaliyev et al., 2015). As a result, the prevailing trend is to pivot away from restrictive measures and embrace a strategy focused on easing obstacles.

### **B. Strengthening the Remittance Infrastructure**

A second strategy to encourage and retain remittances consists of strengthening remittance infrastructures. This may involve different policies. Firstly, it is crucial to facilitate the transition from informal to formal systems, which not only promotes financial inclusion but also addresses security concerns associated with informal transfers. Policy strategies to “bank the unbanked” may include offering consular ID cards for irregular migrants (such as in the case of Mexico), providing financial literacy training, and making banks more migrant-friendly. These initiatives promote financial inclusion and foster a secure and supportive environment for migrants to engage with formal financial systems (Virak et al., 2022; Chuc et al., 2022). Other strategies include reducing transaction costs through the encouragement of competition among financial service providers, to ensure that a more substantial portion of remitted funds directly enhances the economic development of the recipient country. Moreover, promoting transparency by making information on transfer fees publicly available empowers migrants to make informed decisions and to consider alternatives that may be more cost-effective (Siegel & Luecke, 2013).

### **C. Provide Opportunities for More Productive Investment of Remittance**

A third strategy to attract and retain remittances from the diaspora involves providing opportunities for more productive investment. This entails cross-selling complementary financial services to remittance receivers, including innovative offerings such as remittance-backed mortgages, short-term loans, or insurance (Hagen-Zanker, 2014).

Countries like Colombia and Burkina Faso have demonstrated the effectiveness of building programs from scratch, tailoring them to the specific needs of their diaspora populations. Mexico and the Philippines have both expanded on existing programs designed for local residents, extending these initiatives to cater to the specific circumstances and aspirations of their diaspora communities.

## 1.2 Direct Investments

Direct investments represent another significant form of financial contribution by the diaspora. Unlike remittances, which are largely private and often employed for short-term needs, direct investments have the potential to foster entrepreneurship, stimulate technological transfer, and contribute to the development of priority economic sectors (Franc et al., 2020; Siwale, 2018;). The diaspora is uniquely positioned to drive such investments, having a nuanced understanding of the local landscape, regulatory requirements, and cultural complexities. This insider knowledge not only enables diaspora members to evaluate investment opportunities more effectively, but also mitigates risks associated with unfamiliar environments through linguistic and cultural familiarity (Siwale, 2018; Leblang, 2010; Rodriguez-Montemayor). A balanced approach is necessary to fully harness the potential of diaspora-driven investments; while emotional ties may occasionally compromise impartiality and independence in decision-making, these factors should not be overemphasized, and the diaspora should be recognized as rational economic actors. What can governments do to stimulate direct investments from the diaspora?

### A. Provide Access to Information

One policy option to attract direct investments from the diaspora involves ensuring easy access to information on investment procedures and requirements. This can be achieved by establishing user-friendly, online one-stop shops, catering not only to the diaspora but also to foreign investors (Globerman & Chen, 2010). The Ethiopian Investment Commission (EIA), established in 1992 as a government agency,

provides an exemplary model. The EIA plays a crucial role in promoting private investment and foreign direct investment (FDI) by streamlining information and procedures. As part of this strategy, offering privileged services and tailored information to diaspora members serves to incentivize their involvement in investment activities, fostering a supportive environment that encourages the diaspora to actively engage in economic development initiatives within their home country.

### **B. Provide Access to Networks and Training**

Another policy option involves providing access to networks. Governments, in collaboration with diaspora communities and international organizations, often establish diaspora business networks. These networks, some of which are virtual, serve as vital platforms for fostering connections and facilitating investment opportunities. The diversity in their structure, ranging from free membership to those with fees, ensures inclusivity and engagement across various segments of the diaspora (Dutia, 2012; Sirkeci & Zeren, 2018). The Annual Kenya Diaspora Homecoming Convention, organized by The Kenya Diaspora Alliance (KDA) through the Diaspora Investment Club Limited (DICL), exemplifies the impact of such networks. This three-day event strategically targets a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including diaspora communities, local families, investors, corporates, professionals, embassies, students, support organizations, and service providers. Similar initiatives in Morocco, where the government leads network events focused on technology and diaspora-led African networks, showcase the versatility and effectiveness of such policies in cultivating diaspora-driven direct investments.

### **C. Facilitate Entrepreneurs' Access to Funds**

A third policy option involves facilitating entrepreneurs' access to funds. Governments, in collaboration with international or private organizations, can implement various financial instruments to encourage investment (Poliakova et al., 2019). This includes providing grants,

matching funds programs such as Mexico’s Tres por Uno (3x1) Program, offering loans at favourable rates, and introducing tax incentives to facilitate the creation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). In Colombia, a noteworthy example is the partnership between “Colombia Nos Une” and the Colombian Foreign Trade Bank, which collaborated to provide loans to entrepreneurs, demonstrating the impact of public-private cooperation. Additionally, international organizations like the German Development Agency (GIZ) offer funding opportunities specifically tailored for diaspora organizations. These initiatives not only ease financial barriers but also incentivize and empower diaspora entrepreneurs, fostering a favourable environment for sustained economic growth and development.

### 1.3 Capital Market Investment

In addition to remittances and direct investments, diaspora engagement in capital markets presents a significant but often overlooked avenue for financial contributions. Capital market investments offer governments the opportunity to raise long-term funds from both public investors and the diaspora, channelling these resources into crucial development projects and addressing balance of payments needs. This dynamic market involves various securities such as stocks, bonds, loans, and asset-backed securities. Diaspora bonds emerge as a prevailing and impactful form of capital market investments, representing debt instruments issued by a state to citizens abroad. These bonds, repaid with interest over the long term, may see diasporas accepting a “patriotic discount” (Ketkar & Ratha, 2007). Understanding the conditions for success and the factors contributing to the success or failure of diaspora bonds is crucial. Preconditions for success include:

1. A reasonably large and relatively affluent diaspora, particularly dispersed across high-income OECD countries.
2. A significant percentage of first generation of migrants, since returns on patriotism potentially diminish over time, except during crises.

3. State governance capacity, requiring relative financial and political stability, the absence of conflict, and a high level of trust in institutions.
4. Ability to design instruments tailored to specific migrant markets, including compliance with international regulatory bodies.

**Table 1. Examples of Diaspora Economic Engagement Strategies Worldwide**

Sphere of Economic Engagement	Strategy/Policy	Country Example	Description
REMITTANCES	<p>Strengthening remittances infrastructures</p> <p>→ Offering consular ID cards for irregular migrants</p>	Mexico	<p><b>Matrícula consular.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matrícula consular serves as a recognized identification card for Mexicans in the U.S., accepted by states, municipalities, and businesses.</li> <li>• Widely acknowledged by financial institutions, the card is a valid proof of identification, facilitating secure and efficient transactions.</li> <li>• Recognized by several states for obtaining a driver’s license, promoting mobility and integration of Mexican nationals into local communities.</li> <li>• Issued for five years, the card can be renewed, ensuring continued accessibility by providing evidence of address within the consular district (CitizenPath, n.d.).</li> </ul>

Sphere of Economic Engagement	Strategy/Policy	Country Example	Description
	<p>Provide opportunities for more productive investment of remittances</p> <p>→ Cross-selling complementary financial services to remittance receivers (i.e., remittance-backed mortgages; short-term loans; insurance)</p>	Colombia	<p><b>Mi Casa con Remesas.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Mi Casa con Remesas” is a housing program by “Colombia Nos Une” in collaboration with the National Bank of Colombia and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), facilitating home purchases for emigrants needing financial assistance (Colombia Nos Une, n.d.).</li> </ul>
		Philippines	<p><b>Pag-IBIG Overseas Program.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Pag-IBIG Overseas Program (POP) is a voluntary savings program designed to help Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs), immigrants, and naturalized citizens buy a house in the Philippines. The program allows members to contribute a minimum of \$US 5 monthly to build savings for future housing investments.</li> <li>• Participants in the Pag-IBIG Overseas Program are eligible for various benefits, including housing loans, multi-purpose loans, and dividends (Pagibig Financing, n.d.).</li> </ul>

Sphere of Economic Engagement	Strategy/Policy	Country Example	Description
<b>DIRECT INVESTMENT</b>	Provide access to information → Create (online) one-stop shops (not only for diasporas but also for foreign investors)	Ethiopia	<b>Ethiopian Investment Commission (EIC).</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Ethiopian Investment Commission (EIC) was established in 1992 to promote private investment, particularly foreign direct investment in Ethiopia. It provides a streamlined online portal for services like business licenses, investment permits, and tax incentives.</li> <li>Actively engaging with the Ethiopian diaspora, the EIC encourages and facilitates diaspora investments in Ethiopia through various initiatives and forums promoting investment opportunities in the country (Ethiopian Investment Commission, n.d.).</li> </ul>
		Albania	<b>“Connect Albania” Program.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Created under the IOM Albania Project, Connect Albania engages the Albanian diaspora for economic development. It facilitates digital applications for diaspora members to become “Development Agents,” granting access to sectorial information and guiding them through the investment process.</li> </ul>

Sphere of Economic Engagement	Strategy/Policy	Country Example	Description
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Connect Albania program encourages Albanian diaspora members to apply digitally, becoming “Development Agents” to contribute to economic development. Once registered, they gain access to detailed information on business registration, strategic investment areas, and legislative guidance (IOM, 2021).</li> </ul>
	<p>Provide access to networks</p> <p>→ Establish (online) diaspora business networks</p>	Kenya	<p><b>Kenya Diaspora Homecoming Convention (KDHC).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An annual event, KDHC brings together Kenyans abroad to celebrate, network, and discuss economic interests. It serves as a platform for diaspora connection, sharing experiences, and exploring investment opportunities through in-person and virtual participation.</li> <li>The convention includes networking sessions, panel discussions, and exhibitions, facilitating updates on opportunities, future projections, and engagement with organizations. With a hybrid format, KDHC allows participants from around the world to connect both in-person and virtually (Kenya Diaspora Homecoming Convention, n.d.)</li> </ul>

Sphere of Economic Engagement	Strategy/Policy	Country Example	Description
		Lebanon	<p><b>DiasporaID.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A digital platform launched by the Lebanese government in August 2017 with USAID funding, DiasporaID aims to strengthen connections between Lebanese individuals abroad and Lebanon.</li> <li>• DiasporaID facilitates stronger engagement with the Lebanese diaspora to boost foreign investment in Lebanon (Maamary, 2018).</li> </ul>
	<p>Facilitate (entrepreneurs') access to funds</p> <p>→ Governments (or international/private organizations) can offer grants, matching funds, loans at favourable rates, tax incentives to facilitate the creation of SMEs</p>	Mexico	<p><b>Tres por Uno (3x1) Program.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Program encourages Mexicans abroad to contribute to hometown development through social infrastructure and projects.</li> <li>• Operating on a matching funds principle, it involves municipal, state, and federal governments collectively providing three units of funding for every unit contributed by migrants.</li> <li>• The 3x1 program facilitates projects addressing social and economic needs, including infrastructure, education, healthcare, and productive initiatives (Gobierno de México, 2017).</li> </ul>

Sphere of Economic Engagement	Strategy/Policy	Country Example	Description
<b>CAPITAL MARKET INVESTMENT</b>	Diaspora Bonds	Israel	<b>Israel Bonds.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diaspora bonds in Israel are a financial tool used since 1951 to engage the Jewish diaspora in financing the government.</li> <li>• Sold at a premium to diaspora members, these bonds leverage a sense of patriotism to raise funds for community infrastructure, housing, medical, and other development projects (Ketkar &amp; Ratha, 2010).</li> </ul>
		India	<b>India's Diaspora Bonds.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diaspora bonds in India are debt instruments issued by the government to raise financing from overseas Indians, providing them an investment opportunity in their home country.</li> <li>• India has successfully issued these bonds three times since 1991, raising over US\$35 billion.</li> <li>• The main aim is to support the balance of payments in financially difficult times (Ketkar &amp; Ratha, 2010).</li> </ul>

## 2. Best Practices in Diaspora Social Engagement

---

This section provides an exploration of diaspora social engagement, focused on skills and knowledge transfer, and philanthropy. It examines key policy and program options that form the foundation of effective diaspora social engagement strategies and subsequently presents examples of best practices in diaspora social engagement from various countries (**Table 2**).

### 2.1 Skills and Knowledge Transfer

The transfer of skills and knowledge presents a unique opportunity to counterbalance the so-called ‘brain drain’ phenomenon by channelling diasporas’ expertise back to their countries of origin. Facilitating this transfer involves considerations around the concept of return, which may manifest permanently, temporarily, or virtually.

Governments play a crucial role in incentivizing return, and one possible avenue is through partnerships with international organizations such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on temporary return for the purpose of knowledge transfer. By engaging in non-political, development-oriented programs, governments collaborate with IOM to coordinate the temporary return of diaspora members who fill key positions in priority sectors facing skilled labour shortages. These return programs vary in duration, ranging from a few weeks to a year or more, and may target specific corridors or adopt a broader regional approach tailored to the unique needs of each country. The success of such initiatives depends on favourable conditions that encourage diaspora members to return for skills and knowledge transfer. Key factors for

success include the migrant's strong integration in the host country and a genuine belief that their return trip will yield tangible benefits for their home country (Ionescu, 2006).

Other options to encourage permanent or temporary return include designing comprehensive incentive packages aimed at addressing the practical challenges that diaspora members might face upon return. These incentives could include practical support such as assistance in finding suitable housing, coverage of moving costs (including airfare for immediate family members), provision of medical and accident insurance, supply of necessary equipment and literature essential for the returnee's work, salary top-ups, and even subsidies for mortgage payments if they choose to purchase a new house upon return. Striking the right balance is crucial: an effective mix should be appealing enough to attract diaspora members without creating resentment among the local population. It is important to tailor incentive packages to the specific context, ensuring that returnees are qualified for their roles and do not inadvertently displace local workers or undermine existing businesses (Bilgili & Siegel, 2015; Binkerhoff, 2012).

The concept of virtual return has also gained prominence in recent years, leveraging Internet and Communication Technologies (ICT). This innovative approach enables migrants to transfer knowledge without the necessity of a physical return to their country of origin. The cost-effectiveness of virtual return makes it an attractive option, allowing for knowledge exchange not only at the individual level but also among organizations or networks. The evolving landscape of remote work further enhances the feasibility of such arrangements, showcasing the adaptability and efficiency of this strategy of diaspora engagement (O'Dowd, 2018; Hiller & Franz, 2004).

## 2.2 Philanthropy

Diaspora philanthropy channels the goodwill and resources of diaspora communities towards altruistic causes in their countries of origin. Contributors can choose to make individual or collective donations through intermediaries,

often in the form of civil society organizations established by diaspora communities engaged in philanthropic activities. The motivations driving such philanthropy are diverse, spanning a spectrum of objectives and capacities, and may manifest through monetary donations, in-kind contributions, or the dedication of time. This emerging form of philanthropy challenges traditional perceptions by embodying a “non-elite philanthropist” ethos, symbolizing a departure from conventional, wealth-driven giving to a more inclusive, community-centric approach (Binkerhoff, 2013; Agunias & Newland, 2012).

While philanthropy is deeply ingrained in the cultural fabric of many communities, the impact of policy decisions in both host and home countries cannot be understated. Effective policy measures encompass a range of tools from tax incentives and matching grant programs to the certification and monitoring of charities and non-profits. Additionally, the promotion of internet-based platforms and capacity-building activities can play pivotal roles in encouraging diaspora philanthropy. Again, finding a balance is crucial: public policies should provide support to diaspora philanthropic initiatives with a light touch, ensuring that these activities remain driven by the philanthropists’ intrinsic motivations and fostering a collaborative approach to sustainable development.

**Table 2. Examples of Diaspora Social Engagement Strategies Worldwide**

Sphere of Social Engagement	Strategy/Policy	Country Example	Description
<b>SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER</b>	Incentivize temporary return → Establish partnerships with International Organizations (IOs) (i.e., IOM)	Netherlands & Ethiopia, Ghana, Iraq, Morocco, Sierra Leone, and Somalia/Somaliland (Afghanistan on hold)	<b>Connecting Diaspora for Development (CD4D).</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Connecting Diaspora for Development (CD4D) program, led by IOM Netherlands and the Dutch government, facilitates the return of diaspora members from Ethiopia, Ghana, Iraq, Morocco, Sierra Leone, and Somalia/Somaliland, with Afghanistan currently on hold.</li> </ul>

Sphere of Social Engagement	Strategy/Policy	Country Example	Description
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants engage in knowledge transfer and capacity-building activities in their home countries during the program's 2 to 3-month duration, focusing on long-term engagement and building on successive assignments.</li> <li>• Host institutions, selected by IOM, include ministries, hospitals, and higher education institutions; the program includes mandatory pre-assignment training to enhance the effectiveness of knowledge transfer, and experts are encouraged to establish exit strategies for sustainability, ensuring ongoing impact through follow-up activities. (Connecting Diaspora for Development, n.d.).</li> </ul>
	<p>Incentivize temporary/permanent return</p> <p>➔ Design comprehensive incentive packages aimed at addressing the practical challenges that diaspora members might face upon return (i.e., housing, moving costs, etc.)</p>	Ireland	<p><b>Housing supports for returning Irish emigrants.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irish citizens returning to Ireland, regardless of their time abroad, have the right to live and work in the country; eligibility criteria are based on income and housing needs.</li> <li>• Financial support and assistance programs are available, including rent support and schemes for buying a home.</li> </ul>

Sphere of Social Engagement	Strategy/Policy	Country Example	Description
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To apply for social housing, individuals must establish a 'local connection' by meeting specific criteria related to residency, work, education, or family ties in a particular area.</li> <li>• Older Irish emigrants returning to Ireland can access social housing specifically designed for seniors, provided by local authorities or approved housing bodies (Citizens Information Board, n.d.).</li> </ul>
	<p>Incentivize virtual return</p> <p>→ Create or support organizations that facilitate virtual interactions and knowledge exchange</p>	Scotland	<p><b>GlobalScot.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GlobalScot is a network connecting Scottish organizations with influential business leaders, entrepreneurs, and professionals worldwide who have a connection to Scotland.</li> <li>• Comprising senior figures in international markets, GlobalScot supports Scottish businesses in expanding globally by offering insights, information, and practical experiences.</li> <li>• The network, active for over 20 years, provides free registration for Scottish business owners, entrepreneurs, and professionals, fostering internationalization through knowledge exchange and impactful introductions (GlobalScot, n.d.; Business Scotland, n.d.).</li> </ul>

Sphere of Social Engagement	Strategy/Policy	Country Example	Description
PHILANTHROPY	Promote the creation of diaspora philanthropic organizations & support already-existing ones	India	<p><b>American India Foundation (AIF).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The American India Foundation (AIF) was established in 2001 at the suggestion of Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and with the support of US President Bill Clinton. It operates as a secular, non-partisan organization with a focus on improving the lives of underprivileged individuals in India, especially women, children, and youth.</li> <li>• AIF receives significant backing from the Indian diaspora. Its programs cover critical areas such as education, livelihood, and public health, aiming to provide quality education, create sustainable livelihoods, and enhance maternal and child health.</li> <li>• In times of major national disasters in India, AIF actively engages in relief and rehabilitation efforts, employing a multi-phased approach that includes relief, reconstruction, and long-term rehabilitation. The organization's impact extends to vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities, migrant workers, sex workers, and tribal communities, achieved through collaborations with government entities, NGOs, civil societies, and various stakeholders (Kashyap and Kakar, 2003; American India Foundation, n.d.).</li> </ul>

### 3. Best Practices in Institutional Organizations for Diaspora Engagement

---

This section first presents a categorization of diaspora institutions, with related policy options, and subsequently presents examples of best practices from various countries (**Table 3**).

Diaspora institutions, defined as public or semi-public bodies exclusively or partly mandated to provide services to the diaspora, or create an enabling environment for diaspora engagement, play a crucial role in fostering collaboration for sustainable development. While ministries of foreign affairs are commonly perceived as the primary interlocutors in diaspora engagement, a global landscape reveals a myriad of institutions involved in diaspora affairs (Tittel-Mosser, 2023).

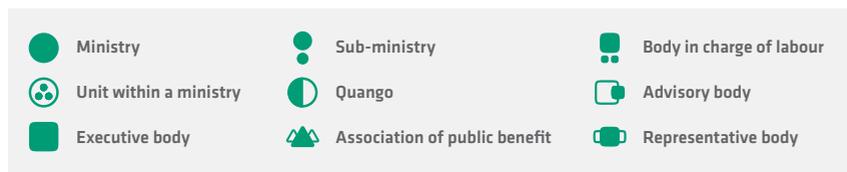
Various typologies have been proposed to categorize diaspora institutions. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has proposed a system that categorizes institutions based on their hierarchical level, influence, and mandate. Such a system identifies six distinct types of diaspora institutions: at the apex of this classification are *Ministries* (or equivalent ministry-level institutions), representing entities with consistent budget allocations and high-level government support. *Sub-Ministry Institutions*, on the other hand, typically operate under the auspices of the Ministry of Labor and/or Foreign Affairs, aligning their mandates with the broader goals of the parent entity but not necessarily focusing specifically on development. *Other National-Level Institutions* includes institutions reporting directly to the highest executive

body. These institutions wield considerable influence and occupy strategic positions in the government hierarchy. *Local Diaspora Institutions* or offices, governed by local-level governments, represent a decentralized approach to engaging with the diaspora, complementing the efforts of higher-level institutions. *Consular Networks* highlight the integration of diaspora outreach within consular services. Finally, *Public-Private Bodies*, classified as quasi-governmental institutions, may take on advisory roles, contributing a unique layer to the diaspora institutional landscape (Migration Data Portal, 2019; Agunias & Newland, 2012).

Gamlen et al. (2019) offer an alternative typology based on the following six categories: *Hybrid Ministry*, characterized by a lack of exclusive dedication to diaspora engagement; *Full Ministry*, fully committed to diaspora affairs; *Sub-Ministry*, positioned as a subsidiary entity; *Executive Body*, aligning with IOM’s “other national institutions” classification; *Quango*, a designation reserved for semi-private institutions; and *Legislative Body*, encompassing institutions embedded within the legislative branch.

Building on these typologies, the European Union Global Diaspora Facility (EUDiF) has recently identified nine types of diaspora institutions. Their mandate may be fully dedicated to diaspora engagement or have a hybrid focus (Tittel-Mosser, 2023).

**Figure 1.** EUDiF’s typology of diaspora institutions (Tittel-Mosser, 2023, p. 12)



- **Ministry:** Countries have diverse options in the establishment of ministries for diaspora engagement. While some opt for ministries exclusively dedicated to diaspora affairs, a more prevalent approach involves integrating diaspora engagement as part of a broader governmental mandate. Notably, there is a prominent trend in the creation of hybrid ministries, where diaspora-related responsibilities are intertwined with functions linked to foreign affairs, finance, economic affairs, and labour. This strategy allows for a comprehensive approach to diaspora engagement, acknowledging the multifaceted nature of connections with diaspora communities (Tittel-Mosser, 2023).
- **Unit Within a Ministry:** Typically hosted within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, diaspora engagement units serve as crucial intermediaries, connecting with and addressing the concerns of diaspora communities. While some units are solely dedicated to diaspora engagement, others exhibit shared competencies, extending their responsibilities beyond diaspora affairs while still operating under the overarching mandate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, or, the Ministry of Labour (Tittel-Mosser, 2023).
- **Executive Body:** Executive bodies play a pivotal role within the framework of diaspora engagement, directly affiliated with the executive branch of government. These bodies, equipped with diverse responsibilities, address and manage diaspora affairs at the highest levels of governance. A recurring trend among executive bodies is their broader scope, often extending beyond diaspora engagement to encompass economic development more broadly. This expansive approach aligns diaspora engagement with larger national development goals, ensuring a comprehensive strategy (Tittel-Mosser, 2023).
- **Sub-Ministry:** To establish sub-ministerial institutions for diaspora engagement, governments can consider various forms such as institutes, offices, or councils, hierarchically linked to ministries or executive bodies. As with other types of institutions, the creation of sub-ministries necessitates

a clear understanding of their role, whether focused exclusively on diaspora affairs or integrated into larger national development frameworks (Tittel-Mosser, 2023).

- **Quango:** Quangos, as hybrid institutions with both private and public characteristics, offer a unique avenue for diaspora engagement. Typically associated with investment or financial activities, they may provide a hands-off approach for governments. While some quangos are fully dedicated to diaspora engagement, others like national banks or chambers of commerce, have a broader scope. Establishing a quango requires balancing autonomy with government influence, emphasizing its role in supporting diaspora-related activities within a larger framework (Tittel-Mosser, 2023).
- **Association of Public Benefit:** Associations of public benefit, autonomous yet closely linked to the government, present an unconventional but effective approach to diaspora engagement. These institutions, often recognized as of public utility, can also be fully dedicated to diaspora engagement or have shared competencies (Tittel-Mosser, 2023).
- **Body in Charge of Labour:** For regions where diaspora engagement is mainly linked to labour migration, establishing a public body in charge of labour becomes an important option. Found predominantly in Asia and the Pacific, these institutions are dedicated to training, recruiting, and protecting labour migrants. The establishment of these bodies requires a keen focus on addressing unemployment, linking workers with national and international labour markets, and aligning strategies with the specific context of labour migration (Tittel-Mosser, 2023).
- **Advisory Body:** Advisory bodies are specially designed to coordinate the work of various institutions and provide advice on diaspora engagement matters. Most of these bodies are fully dedicated to diaspora engagement, while some may have a broader scope and may focus on economic issues or migration in general (Tittel-Mosser, 2023).

- Representative Body:** Representative institutions, often linked to legislative branches, play a crucial role in representing the rights of the diaspora in the country of origin. Whether hosted under ministries or legislative bodies, these institutions are typically fully dedicated to diaspora engagement. In case they have a shared mandate, it is important to carefully balance legislative functions and diaspora engagement responsibilities (Tittel-Mosser, 2023).
- Embassies and Diplomatic Missions:** Finally, embassies and diplomatic missions, including consulates, are an additional category of institutions playing a pivotal role as key interfaces for diaspora engagement. Successful engagement models highlight the importance of serving and reaching out to the diaspora *before* expecting their involvement in development initiatives. Beyond consular services, these missions actively build ties with the diaspora, strengthening relations in economic development, culture, and education. Their unique local presence enables them to measure diaspora needs, informing the national approach to engagement. Embassies and diplomatic missions can also be proactive partners in gathering information and conducting activities, such as diaspora profiles and data collection (Tittel-Mosser, 2023; EUDiF, 2021).

**Table 3. Examples of Institutional Organization for Diaspora Engagement Worldwide**

Type of Institution	Country Example	Description
Ministry	Mali	<b>Ministry of Malians Abroad and African Integration.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established in 2004, it serves the purpose of addressing the needs of Malians living abroad and facilitating their integration into African societies.</li> <li>The Ministry’s mission includes protecting Malians settled abroad, promoting their interests, and supporting them upon their return to Mali.</li> <li>The Ministry organizes visits to the main countries of destination to meet with diaspora members (IOM, 2018)</li> </ul>

Type of Institution	Country Example	Description
<b>Unit Within a Ministry</b>	Senegal	<p><b>Directorate-General for Senegalese Abroad.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initially established as a Ministry in 2003, and later integrated into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Senegalese Abroad in 2012.</li> <li>It comprises two divisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Directorate for the Assistance and Promotion of Senegalese Abroad, focusing on protection and assistance to Senegalese abroad.</li> <li>Directorate for the Promotion of Investment and Projects, focusing on the economic promotion of Senegalese abroad.</li> </ul> </li> <li>The Directorate-General plays a crucial role in providing basic information, administrative assistance, and consular services to Senegalese citizens living abroad.</li> <li>Oversight and responsibility for the Directorate lie with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Senegalese Abroad, which also engages with Senegalese associations abroad and formalizes official policy commitments toward citizens living outside Senegal (Smith, 2020).</li> </ul>
<b>Executive Body</b>	Democratic Republic of Congo	<p><b>National Agency for the Promotions of Investments of the Democratic Republic of Congo (ANAPI).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Executive body responsible for promoting international investment in DRC.</li> <li>ANAPI facilitates the establishment of investors and offers various services to enhance their competitiveness.</li> <li>ANAPI's main responsibilities include advocating for the improvement of the business environment, promoting the positive image of the DRC as an investment destination, and providing investment facilitation services.</li> <li>ANAPI plays a crucial role in simplifying the investment process, increasing transparency in procedures, and assisting new foreign investors.</li> <li>ANAPI's website provides detailed information about the general background of the country, investment guides, popular sectors, and the current business climate (Democratic Republic of Congo, n.d.).</li> </ul>

Type of Institution	Country Example	Description
Sub-Ministry	Angola	<p><b>Institute for the Support of Emigration and Angolan Communities Abroad.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established in 1992, it is part of the Ministry of Foreign Relations.</li> <li>Tasks of the institute include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receiving returning Angolans, whether permanently or temporarily.</li> <li>Providing information and advice on employment and investment opportunities.</li> <li>Assisting Angolans abroad with administrative and legal matters.</li> <li>Maintaining links between the country and its diaspora (IOM, 2021)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Quango	Barbados	<p><b>Barbados Investment and Development Corporation (BIDC).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public-private agency established in 1992.</li> <li>Mandate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribute to the diversification and growth of the economy.</li> <li>Foster the development of competitive business enterprises.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Responsibilities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advising on, promoting, and facilitating the development of export trade.</li> <li>Conducting and facilitating research into investment, industrial development, and export of products and services.</li> <li>Engaging in the export of products and services (Barbados Investment and Development Corporation (BIDC), n.d.)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Type of Institution	Country Example	Description
<b>Association of Public Benefit</b>	Benin	<p><b>High Council of Beninese Abroad (HCBE).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established in 1997, recognized as an “association with public utility” in 2000.</li> <li>Aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate the participation of nationals abroad in national political life.</li> <li>Protect their rights and interests.</li> <li>Promote investment in Benin.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Implements cultural, economic, and sports exchanges between Benin and migrants’ countries of residence.</li> <li>Organized into sections in countries of residence, including a community assembly, a community council, and a community office.</li> <li>Central level structure includes a general assembly, coordination committee, and executive office (Harley, 2020).</li> </ul>
<b>Body in Charge of Labour</b>	Kiribati	<p><b>National Career Counselling &amp; Employment Centre.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National one-stop employment centre operating within the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) section of the Ministry of Labour.</li> <li>Provides career counselling services and promotes employment opportunities for skilled I-Kiribati.</li> <li>Focuses on offering career guidance and counselling, especially to the youth, for securing jobs domestically and overseas (International Labor Organization (ILO), 2018; Tittel-Mosser, 2023).</li> </ul>

Type of Institution	Country Example	Description
<b>Advisory Body</b>	Jamaica	<p><b>Diaspora Advisory Board (DAB).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An advisory body established in 2004 to engage and collaborate with the Jamaican diaspora.</li> <li>• It serves as a platform for the diaspora to contribute to the development and growth of Jamaica.</li> <li>• Aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide advice and recommendations to the government on diaspora-related matters. Protect their rights and interests.</li> <li>• Facilitate communication and partnerships between the government and the Jamaican diaspora.</li> <li>• Leverage the skills, resources, and expertise of the diaspora for the benefit of Jamaica.</li> <li>• Strengthen the connection and relationship between Jamaica and its diaspora communities worldwide (Ministry of Foreign Affairs &amp; Foreign Trade, 2018).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Representative Body</b>	Tunisia	<p><b>Higher Council for Tunisians Abroad (<i>Conseil Supérieur des Tunisiens à l'Étranger</i>).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultative body established in 2016 under the Office for Tunisians Abroad (<i>Office des Tunisiens à l'Étranger</i>, OTE).</li> <li>• Originated from diaspora proposals dating back to 2011, with legal provisions made in 1990.</li> <li>• Designed to be consulted on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft laws and regulations concerning Tunisians abroad.</li> <li>• International conventions and treaties pertaining to Tunisians abroad (Africa Foundation for Development (AFFORD), 2020).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## 4. Engaging with the Diaspora in Times of Crisis

---

Diaspora engagement emerges as a crucial aspect of response strategies employed by home countries in times of crises, encompassing a diverse range of scenarios such as conflict, natural disasters, and health-related emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic. The strategic collaboration with diaspora communities during such difficult periods involves harnessing their multifaceted resources, specialized expertise, and expansive networks to contribute meaningfully to humanitarian assistance, recovery, and development initiatives.

Diasporas play a distinctive role as multi-sectoral, rapid-response entities operating transnationally, particularly in regions struggling with humanitarian crises (DEMAC, 2022). Notably, diaspora organizations have proven to be pivotal first responders in the aftermath of disasters, leveraging their connection to and profound understanding of their countries of origin. Their agility in raising alerts during crises is facilitated by the frequent communication channels maintained between local communities and diaspora entities. Real-time information exchange, coupled with the rapid mobilization and dispersion of funds, positions diaspora organizations as crucial contributors to early responses in crisis settings. In regions with challenging access, their local connections and ties provide a unique advantage, enabling effective engagement in hard-to-reach places where conventional humanitarian actors may encounter obstacles (Shabaka, 2021; DEMAC, 2022).

Furthermore, the transnational positioning of diaspora organizations is instrumental in meeting the evolving demands of remote management and cross-border responses, especially in areas with a limited international

presence. Their advocacy efforts on behalf of crisis-affected populations in the policy arenas of their countries and regions of residence underscore their role beyond immediate relief (DEMAC, 2022).

This section provides an exploration of diaspora engagement in times of crisis. It begins by examining key policy options and strategies for effective diaspora engagement before and during crises, before presenting examples of best practice in diaspora engagement in times of crisis from various countries.

## 4.1 Before the Crisis

To enhance diaspora engagement in times of crisis, proactive measures must be taken before the onset of emergencies. Streamlining diaspora involvement within the government's overarching vision and priorities is a fundamental step, necessitating the establishment of transparent cross-governmental mechanisms. This integration ensures a cohesive approach to leveraging the diaspora's social, human, and financial contributions, aligning with the humanitarian objectives outlined in government policies (Shabaka, 2021). Moreover, fostering early connections with diaspora communities before a crisis occurs is paramount, laying the groundwork for efficient communication and collaboration. To bolster crisis response capabilities, governments should develop national pools of diaspora experts (or establish ties with existing ones) possessing relevant skills in fields such as medicine, engineering, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), and reconstruction. Coordinating with diaspora organizations, which inherently possess valuable connections, is crucial for maximizing impact and avoiding duplication of efforts during crises. The importance of this coordination extends to engaging with national authorities, both in countries of destination and origin, to secure official permissions for humanitarian operations (Shabaka, 2021; DEMAC, 2022). Such proactive engagement not only facilitates smoother collaboration with other actors but also lays the groundwork for partnerships that can amplify the impact of diaspora contributions, particularly at the local level. Such strategic foresight can prove to be essential, especially when navigating complex emergency

settings or conflict zones where negotiation with non-state actors may be necessary for humanitarian activities (DEMAC, 2022).

## 4.2 During the Crisis

During a crisis, effective diaspora engagement relies on a multifaceted approach encompassing communication, coordination, technical exchange, emergency measures, voluntarism, and advocacy. Leveraging online technologies, diaspora communities can utilize platforms like WhatsApp and Telegram for instantaneous communication, updates on ground needs, and forming collaborative groups. Offline engagement, including community activities and volunteering (i.e., through faith groups), remains pivotal. To optimize communication, targeted channels must be created for and by diasporas, with regular updates on government websites in relevant languages for second and subsequent generations (Shabaka, 2021). Conferences and meetings serve as vital avenues for direct coordination during crises (Romano, 2023). In facilitating technical and knowledge exchange, diaspora organizations contribute their expertise, particularly in health, engineering, WASH, and reconstruction, bolstering emergency response and recovery efforts (DEMAC, 2022). Emergency measures, such as the temporary suspension of customs duties, enhance diaspora assistance, while extending existing schemes streamline resource mobilization (Shabaka, 2021). Recognizing the predominantly voluntary nature of diaspora engagement, systems should be established to facilitate voluntarism, including recruitment, to further harness the diasporas' skills and knowledge (Shabaka, 2021). Moreover, diaspora organizations play a crucial role in advocacy and awareness raising, amplifying the voices of affected populations, fostering effective communication, and holding stakeholders accountable for humanitarian interventions (DEMAC, 2022).

**Table 4. Examples of Diaspora Engagement in Times of Crisis Worldwide**

Type of Crisis	Strategy/Policy	Country Example	Description
<p><b>COVID -19</b></p>	<p>Facilitate technical and knowledge exchange            → Develop national pools of diaspora experts or establish contact with already-existing ones</p>	<p>Sudan</p>	<p><b>Sudanese American Physicians Association (SAPA).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established in 2019, SAPA is a humanitarian organization for physicians and medical professionals of Sudanese descent primarily within the United States.</li> <li>Objective: Provide a platform for engagement and collaboration among members in the United States, Sudan, and globally, contributing to health policy development and quality healthcare services in members’ communities.</li> <li>SAPA’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Sudan included forming a COVID-19 task force, supplying personal protective equipment (PPE), and transferring knowledge and expertise to hospitals through remote technology.</li> <li>Lessons Learned: Facilitated contact with ministries through personal and educational networks, leveraging connections with local authorities built during the resistance movement. Emphasis on the linkage between political and professional medical work, requiring constant updating on the situation and flexibility in addressing technical needs with available capacities (Shabaka, 2021).</li> </ul>

Type of Crisis	Strategy/Policy	Country Example	Description
COVID-19	Facilitate technical and knowledge exchange → Develop national pools of diaspora experts or establish contact with already-existing ones	Tunisia	<p><b>Association des Tunisiens des Grandes Ecoles (ATUGE) (Tunisian Association of former students of Prominent Schools)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established by Tunisian diaspora members in France in 1990, comprising engineers, business school students, doctors, and researchers.</li> <li>Objective: Strengthen connections and cooperation between Tunisia and the global community.</li> <li>Effective response to the July 2021 COVID-19 wave in Tunisia, leveraging existing contacts within the Tunisian embassy in France.</li> <li>Collaborative efforts with the embassy, involving ATUGE's network of students and engineers, in making donations, providing logistical support, and transporting relief items, including PPE and oxygen, to Tunisia (DEMAC, 2022).</li> </ul>
COVID-19	Facilitate Communication	China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wide use of <i>WeChat</i> by the Chinese diaspora during the pandemic for communication within social networks.</li> <li>The Chinese community in Italy organized and sent donations to Wuhan using <i>WeChat Pay</i> during the initial outbreak</li> <li>Establishment of numerous <i>WeChat</i> groups by Chinese officials in Italy for direct communication with individuals and dissemination of online declaration forms for virus-infected individuals to submit to the Chinese embassy.</li> </ul>

Type of Crisis	Strategy/Policy	Country Example	Description
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective use of <i>WeChat</i> groups for communication and coordination of activities, such as patrols in areas with dense Chinese populations organized by Chinese associations mobilized by the Chinese embassy and consulates in Italy.</li> <li>• Points of criticism: government's excessive interference in the daily lives of its expatriates (Ceccagno e Thunø, 2023).</li> </ul>
<b>COVID-19</b>	Facilitate Communication	Cyprus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of measures by the Cyprus government to support Cypriots abroad during the pandemic, despite low COVID-19 cases and deaths.</li> <li>• Provision of basic information by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), including contact details for Cypriot diplomatic missions and emergency contacts.</li> <li>• Establishment of an online platform to manage non-residents' requests and disseminate information related to repatriation.</li> <li>• Points of criticism: selective engagement with the diaspora, with a focus on specific communities and vulnerable groups in Greece and the UK, while limited initiatives were directed at Cypriots outside of the EU (Konstantinidou &amp; Vintila, 2020).</li> </ul>

Type of Crisis	Strategy/Policy	Country Example	Description
<b>Conflict</b>	Create avenues for directly coordinating during crises	Ukraine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organization of six national conferences and four rounds of local conferences between March and November 2022, engaging 52 Ukrainian diaspora organizations.</li> <li>Conceived as a response to internal coordination needs and humanitarian cooperation among Ukrainian diaspora organizations, facilitating dialogue with institutional actors involved in crisis response in Italy.</li> <li>Aimed at addressing gaps in diaspora organizations' coordination systems and enhancing direct access to institutional interlocutors.</li> <li>Focused on operational aspects of assisting Ukrainian refugees entering Italy, providing a platform for information exchange, peer-to-peer support, and liaison with national and local institutional actors through the facilitation functions of IOM (Romano, 2023).</li> </ul>
<b>Conflict</b>	Advocacy	Afghanistan	<p><b>Omid International</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established in 2021 by the Afghan diaspora in the UK</li> <li>Objective: creating sustainable futures for those fleeing war and conflict.</li> <li>Strong advocacy campaigns accompany Omid's activities, raising awareness about the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan and advocating for sustainable solutions, particularly focusing on the violence faced by girls and young women.</li> </ul>

Type of Crisis	Strategy/Policy	Country Example	Description
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The organization actively uses various tools, including statements, face-to-face communication with politicians, conferences for diaspora advocacy, and social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and other websites.</li> <li>Lessons Learned: Key lessons include the importance of a clear message and target audience in advocacy campaigns, involving victims in recommendations, engaging refugees and diaspora for a sustainable approach, and fostering comprehensive advocacy efforts through collaboration with humanitarian actors to build networks and identify opportunities for awareness-raising and advocacy (DEMAC, 2022).</li> </ul>
<b>Natural disaster</b>	Advocacy Coordination Skill and Expertise Deployment	India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unprecedented high rainfall in 2018 and 2019 in Kerala, India, causing severe devastation and displacing 1.4 million people. Extensive economic losses and massive infrastructure and land damage.</li> <li>Global Keralan diaspora collectively responded, setting aside differences to provide immediate assistance.</li> </ul>

Type of Crisis	Strategy/Policy	Country Example	Description
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilization of pre-existing connections and networks: diaspora leveraged existing social and cultural connections to deliver aid, focusing on regions with international migration ties.</li> <li>• Advocacy and lobbying, skill and expertise deployment, diaspora coordination networks: diaspora engaged in advocacy and lobbying efforts, deployed diverse skills and expertise, and established coordination networks for efficient mobilization during the crisis (Taylor et al., 2023).</li> </ul>

## 5. Conclusions

---

This report offers valuable insights towards leveraging the full potential of the Azerbaijani diaspora by presenting a comprehensive overview of best practices for diaspora engagement. The multifaceted nature of diasporas themselves, as outlined in this report, emphasizes the necessity of nuanced and adaptable policies that consider their diverse interpretations, ranging from cultural ties to a shared affinity for the nation-state. The report underscores key areas where diaspora contributions can significantly impact Azerbaijan's development.

Recognizing and leveraging the economic potential of the diaspora is essential for sustained socio-economic development. Tailored policies that encourage liberal remittance regimes, strengthen remittance infrastructures, stimulate diaspora-driven direct investments, and explore avenues in capital markets can contribute to Azerbaijan's economic growth.

In the realm of social engagement, the report presents effective policies to incentivize and facilitate the active involvement of diaspora communities in contributing their expertise and resources. Skills and knowledge transfer, philanthropy, and the innovative concept of virtual return are crucial elements to countering the 'brain drain' phenomenon. Policies that strike a balance in incentive packages and support philanthropic activities can significantly contribute to Azerbaijan's socio-cultural development.

The report also introduces the critical aspect of institutional organization for diaspora engagement, presenting a comprehensive categorization of diaspora institutions. Recognizing the diversity of diaspora institutions and adopting a multifaceted approach to engagement is identified as a key strategy for strengthening ties with the Azerbaijani diaspora.

Lastly, the report explores diaspora engagement in times of crisis, emphasizing the pivotal role of diaspora organizations as first responders. Proactive measures taken before a crisis, including streamlining diaspora involvement and fostering early connections, are crucial for effective engagement during challenging periods. The report highlights the multifaceted approach needed during crises, encompassing communication, coordination, technical exchange, emergency measures, voluntarism, and advocacy.

In implementing these best practices, Azerbaijan has the opportunity to unlock the full potential of its diaspora for sustainable development. By recognizing the unique strengths of diaspora communities, fostering early connections, and implementing proactive measures, Azerbaijan can build resilient responses to complex challenges, ultimately fostering a collaborative and impactful relationship with its diaspora.

# References

---

- Africa Foundation for Development (AFFORD) (2020) *Diaspora Engagement Mapping - TUNISIA*. EUDiF. Available at: [https://diasporafordevelopment.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/CF\\_Tunisia-v.2.pdf](https://diasporafordevelopment.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/CF_Tunisia-v.2.pdf) (Accessed November 27, 2023).
- African Union (2005). *Report of the meeting of experts from member states on the definition of the African diaspora*. Council of Ministers & Executive Council Collection. Available at: <https://archives.au.int/handle/123456789/4391?locale-attribute=en> (Accessed November 8, 2023).
- Agunias, D. & K. Newland (2012) *Developing a Road Map for Engaging Diasporas in Development: A Handbook for Policymakers and Practitioners in Home and Host Countries*. International Organization for Migration, Geneva.
- American India Foundation (n.d) *American India Foundation Official Website*. Available at: <https://aif.org/home/> (Accessed November 15, 2023).
- Ancien, D., Boyle, M. & Kitchin, R. (2009) *The Scottish Diaspora and Diaspora Strategy: Insights and Lessons from Ireland*. Scottish Government. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-diaspora-diaspora-strategy-insights-lessons-ireland/documents/> (Accessed November 27, 2023).
- Aycinena, D., Martinez, C., & Yang, D. (2010). The impact of remittance fees on remittance flows: Evidence from a field experiment among Salvadoran migrants. *Report, University of Michigan*. [1672].



- Azerbaijan Official Website (n.d.) *General Information. Azerbaijan Diaspora*. Available at: <https://azerbaijan.az/en/related-information/205> (Accessed November 8, 2023).
- Barbados Investment and Development Corporation (BIDC) (n.d.) *About Us*. Available at: <https://exportbarbados.org/about-export-barbados-bidc-2> (Accessed November 27, 2023).
- Bilgili, Ö., & Siegel, M. (2015). To return permanently or to return temporarily? Explaining migrants' intentions. In *Migration and Development*, Vol. 6, Issue 1, pp. 14–32. SAGE Publications.
- Brinkerhoff, J. M. (2012). Creating an Enabling Environment for Diasporas' Participation in Homeland Development. In *International Migration*, Vol. 50, Issue 1, pp. 75–95. Wiley.
- Brinkerhoff, J. M. (2013). Diaspora Philanthropy. In *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, Vol. 43, Issue 6, pp. 969–992. SAGE Publications.
- Business Scotland (n.d.) *GlobalScot – 20 years of promoting Scotland internationally*. Available at: <https://www.businessscotlandmagazine.com/globalscot-20-years-of-promoting-scotland-internationally> (Accessed November 15, 2023).
- Caraman, O.S., & Stancu, S. (2012). Foreign Direct Investments, Technology Transfer and Economic Growth. A Panel Approach. *Romanian Journal of Economic Forecasting*, 85-102.
- Carling, J. (2004). *Policy options for increasing the benefits of remittances*. Centre on Migration, Policy & Society.
- Ceccagno, A., & Thunø, M. (2023) *Digitized diaspora governance during the COVID-19 pandemic: China's diaspora mobilization and Chinese migrant*

*responses in Italy*. *Global Networks*, 23(1), 90–105. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/glob.12389> (Accessed November 15, 2023).

Chuc, A. T., Li, W., Phi, N. T. M., Le, Q. T., Yoshino, N., & Taghizadeh-Hesary, F. (2022). The necessity of financial inclusion for enhancing the economic impacts of remittances. *Borsa Istanbul Review*, 22(1), 47-56.

CitizenPath (n.d.) *Mexican Matrícula Consular*. Available at: <https://citizenpath.com/faq/mexican-matricula-consular-card/> (Accessed November 14, 2023).

Citizens Information Board (n.d.). *Housing supports for returning Irish emigrants*. Available at: <https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/returning-to-ireland/finding-somewhere-to-live/guide-to-housing-supports-for-returning-irish-emigrants/> (Accessed November 15, 2023).

Cohen, R. & Kennedy, P. (2013) *Global Sociology, Third Edition*. NYU Press.

Colombia Nos Une (n.d.) *MI CASA CON REMESAS*. Available at: [https://www.redescolombia.org/MI\\_CASA\\_CON\\_REMESAS/](https://www.redescolombia.org/MI_CASA_CON_REMESAS/) (Accessed November 14, 2023).

Connecting Diaspora for Development (CD4D) (n.d.) *Connecting Diaspora for Development Official Website*. Available at: <https://connectingdiaspora.org/> (Accessed November 15, 2023).

Democratic Republic of the Congo (n.d.) *Ministry of Planning. National Investment Promotion Agency*. Available at: <https://www.investindrc.cd/en/?lang=en> (Accessed November 27, 2023).

Diaspora Emergency Action & Coordination (DEMAC) (2022). *Diaspora Humanitarian Response & Engagement Good Practices*. US AID & Danish Refugee Council. Available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/diaspora->

humanitarian-response-engagement-good-practices (Accessed November 20, 2023).

Dutia, S. G. (2012). *Diaspora Networks: A New Impetus to Drive Entrepreneurship*. In *Innovations: Technology, Governance, Globalization*, Vol. 7, Issue 1, pp. 65–72. MIT Press - Journals.

Ethiopian Investment Commission (n.d.) *Ethiopian Investment Commission*. Available at: <https://eic.waliatechnologies.net/> (Accessed November 14, 2023).

EUDif (2021) *What is the role of homeland governments in diaspora engagement?* Available at: <https://diasporafordevelopment.eu/what-is-the-role-of-homeland-governments-in-diaspora-engagement/> (Accessed November 27, 2023).

Fang, T. & Wells, A. (2022) *Diaspora Economics*. IZA Discussion Paper No. 15334, Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4123775> (Accessed November 9, 2023).

Fernandes, D. (2022) *Diaspora and Transnational Communities' Economic Contributions*. In *Routledge International Handbook of Diaspora Diplomacy*. Routledge.

Franc, S., Perić Kasel, M., & Škreblin Kirbiš, I. (2020). Policies for promoting diaspora investment in countries of origin. In *Obrazovanje za poduzetništvo - E4E* (Vol. 10, Issue 1, pp. 104–116). *Europska poslovna skola Zagreb / European Business School Zagreb*. <https://doi.org/10.38190/ope.10.1.5>

Gamlen, A., Cummings, M. E., & Vaaler, P. M. (2019) *Explaining the rise of diaspora institutions*. In *The Microfoundations of Diaspora Politics* (pp. 20–44). Routledge.

- Gayle, N., Navarro, D., Murekezi, P., & Barchue, A. (2013). *Leveraging and tapping the Diaspora and remittances for development*. In Conference of International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). Available at: [https://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/prolaw/documents/REMITTANCES%20FINAL%20VERSION%20\(1\).pdf](https://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/prolaw/documents/REMITTANCES%20FINAL%20VERSION%20(1).pdf) (Accessed November 27, 2023).
- Gevorkyan A. V. (2022) *Diaspora and Economic Development: A Systemic View*. The European journal of development research, 34(3), 1522–1541.
- GlobalScot (n.d.) *GlobalScot Official Website*. Available at: <https://www.globalscot.com/become-a-global-scot> (Accessed November 15, 2023).
- Globerman, S., & Chen, V.Z. (2010). Best Policy Practices for Promoting Inward and Outward Foreign Direct Investment. *ERN: Positive Analysis of Policy-Making & Implementation (Topic)*.
- Gobierno de México (2017). *Programa 3x1 para Migrantes*. Available at: <https://www.gob.mx/bienestar/acciones-y-programas/programa-3x1-para-migrantes> (Accessed November 14, 2023).
- Hagen-Zanker, J. (2014). *Potential Products and Policies to Leverage Productive Use of Migration and Remittance*. *Economic and Private Sector, Professional Evidence and Applied Knowledge Service*. EPS-PEAKS. Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/57a08999e5274a31e0000188/Products\\_and\\_policies\\_to\\_leverage\\_use\\_of\\_migration\\_and\\_remittances\\_58.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/57a08999e5274a31e0000188/Products_and_policies_to_leverage_use_of_migration_and_remittances_58.pdf) (Accessed November 29, 2023).
- Harley, L. (2020). *Diaspora engagement mapping - BENIN*. EUDiF. Available at: [https://diasporaforddevelopment.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CF\\_Benin-v.2.pdf](https://diasporaforddevelopment.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CF_Benin-v.2.pdf) (Accessed November 27, 2023).
- Hiller, H. H., & Franz, T. M. (2004). New ties, old ties and lost ties: the use of the internet in diaspora. In *New Media & Society*, Vol. 6, Issue 6, pp. 731–752. SAGE Publications.

International Labor Organization (ILO) (2018) *Kiribati: Employment services starts with 18 skilled workers securing jobs in Australia*. Available at: <https://apskills.ilo.org/news/kiribati-employment-services-starts-with-18-skilled-workers-securing-jobs-in-australia> (Accessed November 27, 2023).

International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2018) *Migration governance profile: Republic of Mali*. Available at: <https://www.migrationdataportal.org/sites/g/files/tmzbd1251/files/2019-07/Migration%20governance%20profile-%20Republic%20of%20Mali.pdf> (Accessed November 27, 2023).

International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2021). *Connect Albania, an Ambitious Program for the Engagement of Albanian Diaspora on the Economic Development of Albania*. Available at: <https://albania.iom.int/news/connect-albania-ambitious-program-engagement-albanian-diaspora-economic-development-albania> (Accessed November 14, 2023).

International Organization for Migration (IOM), (2021) *Migration Governance Indicators Profile 2021 – Republic of Angola*. IOM. Geneva. Available at: <https://publications.iom.int/books/migration-governance-indicators-profile-2021-republic-angola> (Accessed November 27, 2023).

Ionescu, D. (2006). Engaging Diasporas as Development Partners for Home and Destination Countries. In IOM Migration Research Series. UN.

Kashyap, P. & Kakar, S. (2003). *American India Foundation – Tapping into US wealth for India's development*. Available at: <https://www.alliancemagazine.org/feature/american-india-foundation-tapping-into-us-wealth-for-india-s-development/> (Accessed November 15, 2023).

Kenya Diaspora Homecoming Convention (KDHC) (n.d.) *Kenya Diaspora Homecoming Convention*. Available at: <https://kdhc.co.ke/> (Accessed November 14, 2023).

- Ketkar, S. L., & Ratha, D. (2007). Development Finance Via Diaspora Bonds Track Record And Potential. In Policy Research Working Papers. The World Bank.
- Ketkar, S. L., & Ratha, D. (2010) *Diaspora bonds: Tapping the diaspora during difficult times*. Journal of International Commerce, Economics and Policy, 1(02), 251-263.
- Konstantinidou, A., & Vintila, C.-D. (2020) *Policy Measures for the Diaspora during the COVID-19 Crisis: The Case of Cyprus*. HAPSc Policy Briefs Series, 1(1). Available at: <https://orbi.uliege.be/handle/2268/251355> (Accessed November 21, 2023).
- Leblang, D. (2010). Familiarity Breeds Investment: Diaspora Networks and International Investment. In American Political Science Review (Vol. 104, Issue 3, pp. 584–600). Cambridge University Press (CUP).
- Maamary, N. G. (2018). *The Virtual Diaspora: The Case of The Lebanese Diaspora After the Civil War*. Available at: [https://laur.lau.edu.lb:8443/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10725/10490/Nicole\\_Georges\\_Maamary\\_Thesis\\_Redacted.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://laur.lau.edu.lb:8443/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10725/10490/Nicole_Georges_Maamary_Thesis_Redacted.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y) (Accessed November 14, 2023).
- Marienstrass, R. (1989) *On the Notion of Diaspora*. In G. Chaliand (Ed.), *Minority Peoples in the Age of Nation-States*, London, Pluto Press.
- Migration Data Portal (2019) *Diasporas section*. Available at <https://migrationdataportal.org/themes/diasporas> (Accessed November 24, 2023).
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Foreign Trade (2018) *Terms of Reference for the Diaspora Advisory Board*. Available at: <https://jhcuk.org/assets/files/terms-of-reference-dab-16-1-2018.pdf> (Accessed November 27, 2023).

- Nurgaliyev, B. M., Lakbayev, K. S., Boretsky, A. V., & Kussainova, A. K. (2015). The informal funds transfer system” hawala” as a segment of the shadow economy: Social impact assessment and framework for combating. *American Journal of Applied Sciences*, 12(12), 931-937.
- Nurse, K. (2019) *Migration, diasporas, remittances and the sustainable development goals in least developed countries*. *Journal of Globalization and Development*, 9(2), 20190006.
- O’Dowd, R. (2018). From telecollaboration to virtual exchange: state-of-the-art and the role of UNICollaboration in moving forward. In *Journal of virtual exchange*, Vol. 1, pp. 1–23). University of Groningen Press.
- Pagibig Financing (n.d.) *The Pag-IBIG Overseas Program*. Available at: <https://www.pagibigfinancing.com/articles/2010/the-pag-ibig-overseas-program/> (Accessed November 14, 2023).
- Poliakova, E., Riddle, L., & Cummings, M. E. (2019). Diaspora investment promotion via public–private partnerships: Case-study insights and IB research implications from the Succeed in Ireland initiative. *Journal of International Business Policy*, Vol. 3, Issue 1, pp. 23–37. Springer Science and Business Media LLC.
- Rodríguez-Montemayor, E. (2012). Diaspora Direct Investment Policy: Options for Development. *Inter-American Development Bank*. Integration and Trade Sector. POLICY BRIEF No. IDB-PB-183.
- Romano, R. (2023) *A Model for Diaspora Engagement in Humanitarian Contexts at Country Level: Engagement of the Ukrainian diaspora organizations - Italian Case Study*. International Organization for Migration (IOM), Rome. Available at: <https://publications.iom.int/books/model-diaspora-engagement-humanitarian-contexts-country-level-engagement-ukrainian-italian> (Accessed November 21, 2023).

- Sander, C., & Maimbo, S. M. (2003). Migrant labor remittances in Africa: Reducing obstacles to developmental contributions.
- Shabaka (2021) *Diaspora Engagement in Times of Crisis*. EUDiF case study, Brussels: ICMPD. Available at: <https://diasporafordevelopment.eu/library/report-diaspora-engagement-in-times-of-crisis/> (Accessed November 21, 2023).
- Sheffer, G. (2003) *Diaspora Politics: At Home Abroad*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/CBO9780511499432.
- Siegel, M., & Luecke, M. (2013). Migrant transnationalism and the choice of transfer channels for remittances: the case of Moldova. *Global Networks*, 13(1), 120-141.
- Sirkeci, I., & Zeren, F. (2018). Diaspora Marketing Revisited: The nexus of entrepreneurs and consumers. In *Transnational Marketing Journal*, Vol. 6, Issue 2, pp. 139–157. Oxbridge Publishing House.
- Siwale, J. (2018). Mapping of Diaspora Direct Investment: Critical Areas of Investment. In *African Diaspora Direct Investment* (pp. 63–85). Springer International Publishing.
- Smith, E. (2020) *Diaspora Policies, Consular Services and Social Protection for Senegalese Citizens Abroad*. In: Lafleur, JM., Vintila, D. (eds) *Migration and Social Protection in Europe and Beyond* (Volume 3). IMISCOE Research Series. Springer, Cham. Available at: [https://doi-org.mu.idm.oclc.org/10.1007/978-3-030-51237-8\\_17](https://doi-org.mu.idm.oclc.org/10.1007/978-3-030-51237-8_17) (Accessed November 27, 2023).
- State Committee on Work with Diaspora of the Republic of Azerbaijan Official Website (n.d.) *About the Committee*. Available at: <https://diaspor.gov.az/en> (Accessed November 9, 2023).

- Taylor, S., Booth, D., & Irudayarajan, R. (2023) *Diasporic engagement and the climate crisis in Kerala: Inclusive disaster relief and reconstruction?* South Asian Diaspora, 15(2), 217–231. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19438192.2023.2240172>
- Tittel-Mosser, F. (2023) *A Typology of Diaspora Engagement Institutions*. EUDiF, Brussels: ICMPD. Available at: <https://diasporafordevelopment.eu/library/typology-of-institutions/> (Accessed November 24, 2023).
- Van Hear, N. & Cohen, R. (2017) *Diasporas and conflict: distance, contiguity and spheres of engagement*. Oxford Development Studies, 45:2, pp. 171-184, DOI: 10.1080/13600818.2016.1160043.
- Virak, K., & Bilan, Y. (2022). The role of formal and informal remittances as the determinants of formal and informal financial services. *Equilibrium. Quarterly Journal of Economics and Economic Policy*, 17(3), 727-746.
- Williams, N. (2018) *Mobilising diaspora to promote homeland investment: The progress of policy in post-conflict economies*. Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space, 36 (7). pp. 1256-1279.
- World Bank (2001) *Migrants' Capital for Small-Scale Infrastructure and Small Enterprise Development in Mexico*. World Bank, Washington, DC.

