The ADPC aims to contribute to better development in Africa by providing a platform that enables African diaspora in Europe to pool their resources for the development of Africa.
The African Diaspora Policy Centre (ADPC) was set up in 2006 to contribute to development in Africa. The urgent need to establish the Centre arose from a genuine concern about the complex challenges currently confronting many African societies. Despite the remarkable progress of the past 40 years, much of Africa has been left behind in terms of development, with the majority of countries actually regressing. Furthermore, Africa has benefited far less from the advances in knowledge and technology during the past 25 years that have resulted in unprecedented growth, poverty reduction and accelerated development in other regions of the world. Consequently, the scale and complexity of the challenges currently confronting Africa are tremendous. Meeting these challenges successfully requires unified action from all the available social forces, social capital, intellectual ideas, economic means, creative initiatives and activities (both domestic and international) and the redoubling of the existing efforts in order to achieve better results and shape a better Africa in the future. This will also necessitate mobilising the huge African diaspora population in Europe for the promotion of peace, the construction of viable and democratic governance and the development of knowledge (brain gain) in Africa.

Diasporas are indeed Africa’s greatest offshore asset, and whose potentials in terms of its immense human and financial capital are waiting to be exploited for the benefit of the continent. The African diaspora occupies a vital strategic position between the North and Africa. For example, African diasporas are now in a unique strategic position in this ever-globalising world as being scattered in different economic and power centres around the globe. The huge presence of African diaspora in such powerful political centres such as London, Paris, New York and Washington has an especially important strategic significance and development potentials.

The social remittances (social capital) which can be transferred to Africa by the African diaspora include innovative ideas, valuable transnational networks, knowledge, sound political contributions, valuable democratic habits and attitudes, appropriate peace-making ideas and practices, new technological skills, social values and cultural influences – all of which are equally as significant as financial remittances. If this considerable social capital is effectively harnessed, it could profoundly affect the attitude of African societies and governments towards issues such as freedom and the tolerance of differences, safeguarding human rights, security and justice, the promotion of fair and transparent political practices and the importance of upholding accountable and democratic systems of governance.

Herein lies the great importance of mobilising the African diaspora in EU countries and connecting them with Africa. The objective is to ensure that the considerable social capital of the African diaspora is far better integrated into the existing initiatives undertaken by the mainstream donor agencies and other institutions in the Netherlands and other EU countries for the development of Africa. The goal is to contribute in a tangible way to the efforts geared to the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals in Africa by 2015 and beyond. It is here that the comparative advantage of the African Diaspora Policy Centre for the development of Africa is located.

From 2006 to 2007, ADPC has gone through a process of establishing itself. In 2008, ADPC has embarked on innovative activities aimed at facilitating network-building and strategic partnerships between the diaspora and other stakeholders in the field of migration and development in 10 EU countries. This is a major accomplishment and would not have been possible without the full support of the board of
ADPC: Domenica Ghidei, Sjoera Dikkers, Edzo Tonkes and Alberta Opoku. I am also particularly grateful to Lulessa Abadura, Juliette Verhoeven, and Theo Wijngaard, who assisted in the organisational development and helped ADPC to grow and mature within this short period of time into a promising organisation. An indication of the growing profile of ADPC is that in 2007 we received support from 4 Dutch donors – the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NCDO, ICCO and Oxfam Novib. In 2008, ADPC received financial support from 9 donors both in the Netherlands and abroad such as NCDO, Cordaid, Oxfam Novib, European Commission, UNDP, Agence Française de Développement (France), Ministry of Intergenerational Affairs, Family, Women and Integration of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (Germany), MacArthur Foundation (USA), and The 7th EU Framework Programme.

This magnificent support from such diverse donors is a clear demonstration that ADPC is gaining more acknowledgement in the Netherlands, Europe and beyond. It is also an encouragement to redouble our efforts and continue the strategic role we are playing in facilitating the African diaspora organizations in Europe to join forces, pool their efforts and collectively undertake initiatives for the overall development of Africa.

**Dr. Awil Mohamoud**
Executive Director
In 2007, the African Diaspora Policy Centre (ADPC) successfully implemented several activities. They were cross-cutting activities aimed at mobilizing the African diaspora in the Netherlands for the development efforts in Africa. In the context of migration and development, the term development is considered in a broader sense encompassing economic, social, transnational networks and contacts and political dimensions, etc, with which diasporas interact vis a vis the domestic situations in the homelands. For instance, the contributions of diaspora organisations and individuals to peace building, improving human rights conditions, advancing institutional knowledge, upgrading and strengthening governance institutions, deepening democratisation processes and facilitating knowledge transfer (brain gain) are all viewed to be forms of development that should get proper policy attention. The first activity was undertaken to improve the peace-building of the African diaspora organisations in the Netherlands so as to contribute more effectively to the peace processes in their respective home countries of origin. The second activity was carried out to strengthen and professionalize the communication capacity of the African Diaspora Policy Centre so as to make the added value of the ADPC better and widely known, not only to the in-crowd, but also to a wider public both in the Netherlands and abroad. The third activity was undertaken to contribute to the policy discussions on migration and development in the Netherlands from the experiences, ideas, insights and perspectives intimately informed by the point of view of migrants.

ADPC implemented such activities in 2007 in order to advance its overall objective aimed at mobilizing the African diaspora in the Netherlands to contribute more to the initiatives and processes targeted at poverty reduction but also to the efforts geared towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals in Africa by 2015 and beyond.

ADPC therefore focuses on four interlinked themes as briefly outlined below. Furthermore, the Centre achieves its goals by conducting evidence-based policy-related research, organizing expert meetings and conferences, undertaking capacity building training, facilitating contacts and networking relations and providing consultancy and information services.
The aim of this theme is to contribute to the discussion on the migration and development related issues, by generating knowledge and insights intimately informed by the African diaspora perspectives, mindsets, experiences and expertise. On this theme, ADPC acts as a platform for constructive dialogue between diaspora and the various stakeholders in the field of migration and development. A good example is the policy dialogue forum that ADPC organised between the diaspora and other stakeholders in the field in 2007. ADPC initiated the policy dialogue forum in order to provide migrant opinion leaders and experts with a platform in which they can exchange information, best ideas, practical experiences, successful achievements, positive exceptions and share new insights and perspectives on diverse issues in the migration and development field. The forum also provided an opportunity to enrich and influence the migration and development debates and policy discussions from the migrant experiences, insights, perspectives and mindsets; it created an environment that stimulates active participation of migrants in the discussion and generation of ideas and policy insights so as to elevate and increase their critical voices in the migration and development related matters. The dialogue forum also created a platform for informing and raising awareness among policy makers and others involved in the migration and development field of the potential contribution that migrant experts can provide to the formulation of right and effective migration and development policy instruments. The forum made it possible to make visible migrant initiatives, activities and successful achievements and partnerships that contributes to development in their home countries; and to translate practical activities and experiences of migrants into analyses and development models that can be further translated into policy proposals, options and action plans.

The intention of initiating the policy dialogue was to facilitate the inclusion of the voices of the diasporas in policy deliberations at the local, national and international levels. This is to mainstream the diaspora voices in the policy discussions in the field in a more structured and formalized manner.

On this project, ADPC has undertaken the following activities to realise its objectives successfully.

**Expert meeting**

In 2007, ADPC organised an expert meeting among 15 key figures from the African diaspora representing organisations from Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ghana, Cameroon, Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. The one-day expert meeting was held at the E-Motive building located in Amsterdam on 23 June 2007. The setting of the meeting was purposefully designed to encourage the participants to air their views, concerns, ideas, expectations and perspectives in an uninhibited manner. There were also breakout sessions at intervals that allowed for participant interaction. Before the meeting, several discussion points and a set of corresponding questions were drafted and distributed to the participants. The meeting produced a brief report (minutes) which was used in the drafting of a policy paper that compiled factual narrations, knowledge and insights intimately informed by the migrant perspectives, mindsets, practical experiences and expertise.
Policy report

After the expert meeting, ADPC drafted a policy paper that compiled the main issues, points, views, ideas, suggestions and recommendations raised in the meeting. Moreover, the report draws on the little available data on the topic, as well as the experience of other diasporas elsewhere. Furthermore, the report critically reflects on the shortcomings of the subject thus far. The report was written in a manner that narrates the experience of migrants as concretely as possible regarding migration and development dynamics and practices. It was also written in a manner that stimulates a wider discussion on the modalities that the considerable potentials of the already established migrants in the Netherlands can be mobilised to contribute more to the development efforts in their countries of origin. Furthermore, the report was written to contribute ideas, experiences and perspectives from the migrant point of view to the Netherlands government policy proposals, options and actions regarding Migration and Development in general.

The policy report was distributed to a wider range of diaspora organizations both through printed and electronic version. It is also published on the website of ADPC (www.diaspora-centre.org). This is in line with the policy of the African Diaspora Policy Centre (ADPC) to facilitate access to the knowledge and information produced in the field of migration and development by the diaspora organisations. This is because the diaspora organizations lack access to useful and up to date information in this field as the material is not targeted at them although this is urgently needed. Diaspora organizations also have no access to valuable information because of their marginal position in comparison to other stakeholders in the field. ADPC addresses this problem by producing knowledge and information aimed at informing, raising awareness and mobilizing the African diaspora organizations in the Netherlands and elsewhere, so that they could able to contribute efficiently and substantially to the development of the Africa.

More importantly, the policy report has substantially contributed to the drafting of the new Dutch policy document on International Migration and Development published in July 2008.

Policy dialogue seminar

In October 2007, ADPC in cooperation with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized a policy seminar at the Institute of Social Studies (ISS) in The Hague. The policy seminar was organised in a manner in which both policy discussions and practical experiences were combined. In the morning session, policy issues were discussed that essentially addressed questions on how to facilitate an open policy dialogue among diverse stakeholders in the migration and development field such as diaspora, academic researchers, development practitioners, policy makers in the government institutions, civil society organisations and the private sector, etc. A dialogue in which information, knowledge, expertise, experiences, new ideas, insights and different perspectives are exchanged and shared by all these diverse stakeholders concerned with migration and development issues both in the Netherlands, other European countries and beyond.

In the afternoon session, four concrete projects were presented by four diaspora organizations. The objective was to showcase experiences of diaspora organizations as agents for development and best practices. The four projects were: Sankofa Family Poultry Project in Ghana implemented by Sankofa Foundation; Coffee project in Ethiopia by Dir Foundation; Income generating project for poor women in Northern Uganda by African Humanitarian; and Farm Company in Ethiopia (FAMIX) by Fedis AgriMix.
In short, the policy seminar attempted to make known and visible, the successes achieved through concrete development-related activities initiated by migrant organisations and groups and the specific factors that have contributed to their positive outcomes.

80 people participated in the policy seminar. The background of participants in the policy seminar was wide and diverse. They included migrant groups and grass roots diaspora organizations, policy-makers and practitioners both in the mainstream development agencies and in government institutions, private sector, civil society organisations and others interested in the migration and development issues. The meeting provided them with an opportunity to come together, dialogue, network, share and exchange information, new insights, experiences and best practices on diverse issues in the field of migration and development.

The policy dialogue contributed to the current policy discussions in the field in the following ways:

- Documented as concretely as possible, the experiences, expertise, activities, best practices, lessons learned from the past experiences, positive exceptions, interests, priorities, challenges and the specific needs of the migrant groups and organisations in the Netherlands. This information is urgently needed since without narrating the migrant’s part of the story satisfactorily, the knowledge that we now know in the migration and development field will neither be complete nor adequate enough for sound policy formulations.

- Informed, raised awareness and mobilized migrant organizations and groups to be proactively involved in the migration and development activities at different levels. This is important since migrant organizations and groups occupy a unique strategic position which enables them to
act as bridge-builders between the Netherlands and their homelands. This strategic position makes migrants an indispensable human agency for channeling wealth, information, innovative ideas, intellectual capacities and skills, and democratic political habits from the Netherlands to their countries of origin. Exploiting and awakening this latent potential was one of the expected results from the project.

- Stimulated a broader public discussion on the practical modalities on how the considerable potentials (capital, knowledge and networks) of the already established migrants in the Netherlands can be sufficiently harnessed and mobilised to contribute more to the migration and development efforts in their countries of origin.
- Made visible migrant initiatives, activities and successful achievements and partnerships that contribute to development in their home countries.
- Translated practical activities and experiences of migrants into analyses and development models that can be further translated into policy proposals, options and action plans.
- Contributed ideas, experiences, and perspectives from the migrant point of view to the Dutch government policy proposals, options and actions regarding Migration and Development issues.
- Produced a policy report that will be available to migrant organizations, policy makers and practitioners both in the mainstream development agencies and in government institutions, and other stakeholders in the migration and development field.
- Contributed ideas and perspectives from the point of view of the diaspora to the drafting of the new policy document on migration and development that the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs is planned to compile before the end of 2007; as well as the drafting of a new Dutch Africa policy memorandum which was also supposed to be compiled that year.
The aim of this theme is to mobilise the African diaspora in the EU countries originating from the conflict-torn countries located in the Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa regions to play a proactive role in the promotion of peace and political stability in their respective countries of origin.

On this theme, ADPC organised a conflict transformation skills training for African Diaspora Women Peacemakers at Kontakt der Kontinenten, Soesterberg on June 30- July 1, 2007. The project was initiated as a result of a request by the African Diaspora Women Peacemakers who are part of the wider Multi-cultural Women Peacemakers Network-Netherlands. They requested the African Diaspora Policy Centre to organize a separate training for them since the earlier organised trainings were mainly attended by men. Since 2003, the ADPC has been playing a catalyst role in facilitating the African diaspora organizations and groupings to gain access to and develop conflict transformation know-how, tools and skills which they badly need but have no access to, due to their marginal social position in the host society.

Furthermore, the African Diaspora Women Peacemakers are scattered in the country and they realised that they needed to come into contact, network and learn from each other’s experiences and peace building activities, even though they are separately engaged in their respective home countries. According to one of the African diaspora women, “we want to promote peace in our homelands but we do not have the knowledge of doing it in a constructive way. We need training to acquire conflict transformation methods and tools which enable us to operate more efficiently in our peace making activities”. It was because of this particular capacity deficiency that this training was organized to address. In this training course 15 African diaspora women participated, representing 15 diaspora organizations. The participants in the training course originally come from the following countries: Angola, Burundi, Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan and Zimbabwe. Please see the list of participants.
Purpose of the training

The overall purpose of the training was to equip the African Diaspora Women Peacemakers with up to date knowledge and techniques on peace-building skills and practices. Acquiring this knowledge would enable them to upgrade their peacemaking capacity towards homeland conflicts. The knowledge would also empower African diaspora organizations to play (as pro-active peace promoters) a vital bridge building role between the Netherlands and the home countries. For instance, some diaspora organizations are already involved in the peace processes in their homelands but they do it in an amateurish manner, as they lack sufficient peace building capacities and skills to contribute more professionally. This was the need that the programme was responding to since providing training in conflict transformations to the diaspora organizations can help them to professionalize their peacemaking activities, thereby contributing more effectively to the peace building processes in their respective homelands. Another purpose of the training was to inform, educate, raise awareness and mobilize the African diaspora in the Netherlands coming from the conflict plagued countries located in the Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa regions to play a positive role in the development of their region of origin. The focus countries are Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan in the Horn of Africa; and Burundi, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo in the Great Lakes. The objective was to inculcate in the diaspora organisations and groups with a new attitude, which will stimulate them to voluntarily initiate concrete conflict transformation focused projects as one of their foremost activities so as to contribute directly to the peace process in the homeland. In short, the underlying intention of the programme was to involve the diaspora actively in the promotion of peace and political stability in their respective countries of origin. This was with the objective of joining forces for peace and also widening the civil society peace constituency in the Netherlands with respect to Africa.

Results achieved

- The training facilitated the African diaspora women organizations to build up contacts and networks which would enable them to meet on a regular basis and organize peace-building activities jointly.
- According to the ADPC monitoring instrument, the impact of the knowledge gained from the training has indeed been wide and considerable. The monitoring instrument of the ADPC is designed to measure the impact in the following manner: the frequency the trained women participate in meetings and workshops organized in the Netherlands in which they share the knowledge with other diaspora individuals, groups and organizations; the frequency they return home with the objective to impart knowledge to the local organizations active on the ground.
- There was tangible impact, as some of the trained women returned to their home countries in order to impart conflict transformation skills to their target groups on the ground. Similarly, after they returned to the Netherlands, they shared their experience with other diaspora women organizations through the meetings that the Multi-cultural Women Peacemakers Network-Netherlands organize on a regular basis. A good example is Stephanie Mbanzendore of the Burundian Women for Peace and Development. Stephanie returned to Burundi through the Cross Over programme of PSO where she provided capacity building training to women peace activists she had already set up in her home country. After she returned to the Netherlands, she began giving talks about her experience to different forums in the country.
- The training enhanced beyond doubt the peace building skills and conflict...
transformation know-how, raised awareness and mobilized the African diaspora women organizations so as to contribute more effectively to the peace process in their respective homelands.

- Helped to empower the leaders of the African diaspora women organizations to play (as pro-active peace promoters) a vital bridge building role between the Netherlands and the home countries.
- Facilitated a platform in which members of the African diaspora women organizations can exchange and share information, practical experiences, best practices and successful achievements. The aim is to learn from each other, to create alliances and cooperate and act jointly on certain peace related activities such as lobbying, campaigning and advocacy, etc.
- Stimulated cadres of the African diaspora women organizations to initiate more peace building activities geared towards homelands
- Contributed to enlarging the peace-building professionals in the Netherlands with respect to Africa
Strengthening the communication capacity of ADPC

The objective of this project which was supported by NCDO was to make more visible the activities of the ADPC to wider circles in the migration and development field in the Netherlands through the efficient use of the communication tools - website, newsletter, fact-sheets and skills database directory – that are now accessible. This is to make the added value of the ADPC better and widely known, not only to the in-crowd, but also to a wider public in the Netherlands.

The project helped to strengthen and professionalize the communication capacity of ADPC. Moreover, with efficient communication tools, ADPC gained the capability to increase its profile to wider stakeholders and target groups in the field such as diaspora organisations, policy makers, mainstream donor organisations, universities and other knowledge centres, media, and interested parties at large. ADPC is now in a position to broadly disseminate useful information that is aimed at making visible the contribution of the African diaspora organizations to the poverty reduction initiatives in their respective home countries of origin. Furthermore, the improved communication strategies enable ADPC to make visible the contribution of the African diaspora organizations to the efforts geared towards the realization of the Millennium Development Goals, which is an aspect of great interest to the mainstream development agencies, government institutions, civil society and others involved in the field of migration and development. More importantly, the communication tools of ADPC are used to facilitate the exchange of information, new ideas, best practices and successful initiatives among the migrant organizations, civil society associations, the mainstream development agencies, the government institutions and other stakeholders concerned with migration and development issues in the Netherlands.

The Website

The renewed website (www.diaspora-centre.org), launched in October 2007, offers an important source of information – a market place of information – with an overview of key publications, concrete projects, articles, books and reports, proved overviews of key organisations working in this field. This website is a key important source of information for policy makers, diaspora organisations, journalists and others interested in the diaspora and development related issues regarding Africa. Furthermore the website contains information on best practices and lessons learned regarding the role of diaspora in development and peacebuilding in their homelands. This website has become the key information point for diaspora organisations, policy makers, journalists and public at large to find information on these topics. On average, the website attracts 10,000 unique visitors per month.

The Newsletter

The newsletter, published three times per year, contains information regarding ADPC research and publications, other key documents such as reports, literature and research documentation produced by others; reports from meetings and conferences that have taken place; forthcoming conferences, public debates, news column or articles, and personal stories from role models. The newsletter is available on the website but is also emailed to relevant organisations, policy makers, academics and practitioners in the field of development, migration and Africa. This is the first newsletter in the Netherlands (and to our knowledge, in all of Europe) dealing with these issues. The newsletter is currently read by some 1,500 subscribers.
List of Donors

• Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
• The National Committee for International Cooperation and Sustainable Development (NCDO)
• Inter-church Organisation for Development Cooperation (ICCO)
• Oxfam Novib

About the ADPC

The African Diaspora Policy Centre is an independent platform of knowledge and expertise by and for the African diaspora in Europe and the Netherlands in particular. The mission of the ADPC is to contribute to better development in Africa by providing a platform that enables African diaspora in Europe to connect more closely with the continent as a collective force, to pool their resources and proactively undertake initiatives for the promotion of peace, better governance and brain gain in Africa. The mission of the ADPC is concretely pursued and implemented by conducting applied policy oriented research, organising expert meetings and conferences, disseminating relevant and timely information and analysis through publications, providing capacity building training to the African diaspora organisations and offering advisory services on the African diaspora and development related issues regarding Africa.

ADPC Board

• Domenica Ghidei Biidu, Commissioner of the Equal Treatment Commission in the Netherlands (Chair)
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About ADPC

The African Diaspora Policy Centre (ADPC) is an independent platform of knowledge and expertise by and for the African diaspora in Europe and the Netherlands in particular. The Centre compiles, analyses and disseminates information and insights from the diaspora perspective in a number of critical areas, including migration and development, peace-building, governance and brain gain.

Programmes 2008 – 2010

The ADPC in cooperation with the European Union and the MacArthur Foundation are implementing three major programmes. They aim to foster the active participation of the diaspora in peace-building initiatives, policy dialogues at national, regional and international level and the promotion of sustained institutional cooperation between the diaspora and homeland governments in Africa.

ADPC collaborates with:

Diaspora-Centre.org

The ADPC website contains articles, reports, personal stories and publications from and about the African diaspora in the Netherlands and Europe. It is a central network platform, linking people, professionals, policy makers, journalists and organisations of the African diaspora, as well as others interested in the diaspora and development related issues regarding Africa.

Fact Sheets

The ADPC Fact Sheets offer easily accessible information about recent diaspora developments. They summarise important publications (reports, research findings, policy recommendations) that address migration/diaspora development related issues for the diaspora organisations, development organisations, practitioners, policy makers, members of parliament and the public at large.

Newsletter

The quarterly newsletter reports on major events in the area of migration and development. It highlights the activities of the diaspora that are contributing to the development of Africa, as well as news items on current affairs related to migration and development.

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