Technical Meeting Report on the
The Participation of the Diaspora in the Joint Africa-EU
Strategic Partnership

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
16-17/12/2009
# Table of Contents

Background .......................................................................................................................... 3  
Objectives ............................................................................................................................ 4  
Addresses .............................................................................................................................. 4  
Field Experience: Employment and Vocation Training ......................................................... 6  
**Diaspora Perspectives on SMART Partnerships** .................................................................. 8  
Dir Foundation– the Case of Ethiopia ...................................................................................... 8  
Diaspora for Development - the Case of Sudan ...................................................................... 10  
NEDSOM Foundation– the case of Somalia .......................................................................... 11  
African Diaspora Fund for Development ............................................................................ 13  
Strengthening Cooperation between Diaspora Organisations and Civil Society Forums in Africa ........................................................................................................................................ 14  
Economic Community of West African States and the Diaspora .......................................... 17  
NEPAD Program on Diaspora ................................................................................................ 16  
The Process of an EU-wide Diaspora Network Building/Platform Creation ............................ 18  
Discussions on African Diaspora Communiqué ................................................................... 21
Background

The potential of the diaspora to contribute to sustainable development through remittances, the transfer of skills and knowledge, investments, brain circulation and the building of valuable transnational networks has become a prominent issue of discussion among major stakeholders such as the African Union (AU), the European Union (EU) and African civil society organisations. This initiative recognises the crucial role that diasporas are currently playing in the development of the homelands and host countries.

In June 2008, the African Diaspora Policy Centre (ADPC), in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme’s (UNDP) Brussels office and the EU Commission, organised a two-day policy seminar in Brussels. This policy seminar brought together more than fifty African diaspora organisations from 10 EU countries. The major objective was to contribute to the ongoing policy dialogue regarding migration and development from the perspective of the diaspora – a point of view that has not yet been sufficiently heard. Hence, the seminar was intended to support the active participation of the diaspora in the dialogue and in the generation of ideas and policy insights in order to make their critical voices count in discussions related to migration and development at various policy levels.

The ADPC also organised a one-day consultation meeting in The Hague on 9 July 2009 in order to solicit the perspectives of the diaspora on the topic of the recently adopted Africa-EU Strategic Partnership and Action Plan. The meeting was part of the project Participation of the African Diaspora in the Joint Africa-EU Strategic Partnership, which was initiated to further strengthen the Partnership by mobilising the considerable potential (in terms of capital, knowledge and networks) of the enormous African diaspora in Europe to play a valuable bridge-building role in the process.

As a result of the dialogue provoked by these meetings, the proposition of creating a EU-wide African diaspora platform or forum was gaining increased support and momentum, not only from diaspora organisations but also from the EU Commission. The ADPC thus organised another policy seminar in Brussels on 1–2 October 2009 in order to raise awareness of the bridge-building role that the African diaspora can play in the new Africa-EU Strategic Partnership and to influence policy and practical changes at the AU and EU levels. The majority of diaspora organisations who were present at the seminar endorsed the creation of a formal, EU-wide African diaspora forum. The ADPC was elected to take the initiative of determining how to go forward in the creation of this forum in Europe.

The most recent meeting in this series, the technical meeting in Addis Ababa on 16–17 December 2009, was hosted by the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) Regional Integration Division, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the ADPC, and was supported by the Netherlands Ministry of the Foreign Affairs. The meeting was chaired by Gibril Faal, Board Director of the African Foundation for Development (AFFORD) in the United Kingdom. Twenty-nine participants attended the two-day meeting.
Objectives
The main objective of the technical meeting was to provide African diaspora development practitioners in Europe, representatives of civil society forums in Africa and African Union policy makers dealing with diaspora-related issues the opportunity to explore formal partnerships in the practical implementation of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership and Action Plan via concrete activities on the ground. The focus of the technical meeting was on producing feasible, actionable activities from which concrete results could be achieved and additional partnerships could gradually stem.

The event was also a showcase of how African diaspora organisations in Europe tangibly contribute to the practical implementation of the Partnership and Action Plan in the area of technical and vocational education and training, employment and development through smart partnerships.

Addresses
Three brief welcoming addresses were given by different stakeholders at the start of the meeting. Paul Gosselink, Cluster Head of the International Migration and Development Division of the Consular Affairs and Migration Policy Department at the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, gave the first address. Mr. Gosselink began by emphasizing the special attention paid to migration and development in the Netherlands and noted that, in 2008, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs presented a detailed policy document on the subject. He also noted that the ministry conducted wide consultations with migrant organisations before finalising the policy document. The policy document identified six priorities for the coming years, aimed at specific areas in which the Netherlands can make a difference in international development. The six priorities described by Mr. Gosselink were:

1) Focusing more on migration in the development dialogue and on development in the migration dialogue;
2) Fostering institutional development in migration management;
3) Promoting circular migration/brain gain, with an emphasis on encouraging circular migration as a means of reinforcing the positive contributions migrants and migration can make to development;
4) Strengthening the involvement of migrant organisations;
5) Strengthening the link between remittances and development, and;
6) Encouraging sustainable return and reintegration to the country of origin.

Mr. Gosselink also indicated that the Government of the Netherlands is pleased to support the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership at varying levels. The ministry, with its focus on Migration, Mobility and Employment, wishes to put efforts into implementing the directives of the Action Plan. The ministry also wants to focus on capacity building for African governments so that they
may more effectively develop migration and development policies of their own. Additionally, the ministry would like to continue dialoguing with diaspora organisations in the Netherlands so that they may hear and better understand their unique perspectives. Furthermore, the ministry has expressed its support to the project proposal *European-Wide African Diaspora Platform for Development* with a maximum contribution of 10 percent of the total project budget. This pledge of support was one of the outcomes of ADPC’s policy seminar in Brussels on 1-2 October 2009.

The second welcome address for the technical meeting was given by Dr. Awil Mohamoud, Director of the ADPC. Dr. Mohamoud began by explaining that the ADPC is an independent organisation that was established in The Netherlands in 2006, and that it provides a platform that enables the African diaspora in Europe to connect more closely with Africa as a collective force, pool their resources and proactively undertake initiatives for the promotion of peace, better governance and brain gain in Africa. The ADPC pursues its goals by supporting and facilitating the effective use of the considerable, and largely untapped, social capital of the huge African diaspora population in Europe for the promotion of peace, better governance and brain gain in Africa.

Dr. Mohamoud posited that there should be active dialogue between the African diaspora, the EU and Africa in the interest of development cooperation on the continent. Dr. Mohamoud went on to say that since the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership was initiated in 2007, little has been done concerning the implementation of its objectives. In a recent ADPC position paper on the diasporas’ perspectives on the African-EU Strategic Partnership, particular emphasis was given to:

- The practical implementation of the Strategic Partnership (specifically on what Southern African, West African and East African governments and civil societies do and the need to learn from one another’s efforts)
- What can be learned from the diaspora’s development efforts that are implemented on the continent
- The kind of partnerships can be created to continue the dialogue at a higher level. Focus here was on two areas:
  - Making sure that diaspora programmes have entry points where partnerships can develop
  - Strengthening the cooperation between the diaspora and civil society institutions in Africa

The third brief welcome address was given by Saul Kaye, Manager of Governance and Public Administration at the AU/NEPAD Office. Mr. Kaye explained that NEPAD is an integrated and comprehensive socio-economic development programme aimed at accelerating Africa’s renewal. NEPAD has several overarching objectives, including the eradication of poverty, the promotion of sustainable development and the arrest of the marginalisation of Africa under globalisation. Mr. Kaye then noted that the engagement of the diaspora and their initiatives are now hitting the
ground, and that Africans believe by touching. A partnership now exists between NEPAD, the AU, the EU, the African diaspora and African civil society, and NEPAD is in a strategic position to mobilise member states in the areas of health, agriculture, migration and other sectors. Mr. Kaye also indicated that NEPAD, too, is using its connections with member states in order to create conditions for effective employment and an internship programme for its members, and the diaspora can play an important role in these efforts.

**Field Experience: Employment and Vocation Training**

*Ms. Emem Ekong,*  
*Director, Urban inclusion Ltd. Enterprise*

In the previous consultative meetings, employment creation was identified as one of the key areas in which the diaspora can contribute to the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership. Based on this observation, Ms. Emem Ekong, Director of Urban Inclusion Ltd. Enterprise, was invited to share the experiences of this organisation in employment and vocational training.

Urban Inclusion Ltd is an economic development and regeneration company based in the heart of London’s East End, and was established eight years ago. It is entirely diaspora-led, with one director and five associates from West Africa. Ms. Emem gave an introduction about the organisation and shared their experiences of economic development in urban London and how they have transferred this knowledge to develop and deliver practical schemes in West Africa in partnership with AFFORD and other groups from the diaspora.

Urban Inclusion specialises in community economic development, which includes the development and delivery of enterprise, employment and vocational skills programmes. Urban Inclusion works within some of the poorest boroughs in London, where unemployment levels are especially high among ethnic minority groups including black and Asian communities, as well as among youth and women. Many of these ethnic minority communities are living in poverty and suffering from high levels of crime in their area. In addition, their skill levels are low, and unemployment is high compared to their white counterparts. These issues have prompted policy makers to embark on a number of strategies to help address the problems and improve the quality of life of these communities.

Urban Inclusion’s projects in London over the years have involved working and supporting employers such as British Airways, the London Eye, the Tate Modern and Transport for London to provide more jobs and skills attainment opportunities to Londoners, and especially to black minority ethnic groups. This practical experience in the London Enterprise, Employment and Skills arena was used to transfer knowledge and deliver development programmes in West Africa in Nigeria, Ghana and Sierra Leone in partnership with AFFORD and other community groups. The disadvantaged communities were targeted to improve their skills, job and advancement prospects through an integrated employment support and vocational training
programme. Outcomes included increasing the rate of employment, raising the skills levels of disadvantaged groups to meet business needs and enterprise support to improve the productivity of local enterprises leading to job creation.

**Enterprise Support Programmes:** Small business is the fuel for most economies and is a sure-fire way of creating jobs within communities. Urban Inclusion works on several enterprise support programmes including:

- Social enterprise development, including cooperative development and intermediate labour market models
- The Fair Enterprise and Trade project, which focuses on the development of black-led businesses and supports them to grow and take advantage of the London 2012 Olympics

Urban Inclusion has taken over twenty years of directors’ experiences in regeneration in urban London into the field of African development. In 2005, The African Foundation for Development (AFFORD) started working formally with Urban Inclusion. The AFFORD Supporting Entrepreneurs and Enterprise Development in Africa (SEEDA) program had the primary objective of creating jobs and employment for local communities. The first mission of the AFFORD director was to Ghana in 2006, as a volunteer resource person. This is where the practical skills transfers and the company’s expertise were sought in projects and programmes that support the homeland in enterprise, employment and vocational training. SEEDA, with support from the Voluntary Services Overseas Diaspora Volunteering Initiative, mobilised over seventy members of the diaspora who invested over £120,000 worth of their time and money and who engaged with 800 plus businesses. The diaspora professionals assisted them with bookkeeping, business planning, marketing, and even with opening bank accounts and securing capital.

Other AFFORD/Urban Inclusion initiatives include:

**AFFORD Business Bomba:** In partnership with AFFORD, diaspora resource persons responded to a tender put out by the Sierra Leone Ministry of Trade, DFID and the Soros Foundation to run the first business plan competition in the country, which Urban Inclusion won. At present, Urban Inclusion is delivering the programme and is down to the final twenty businesses competing for a prize of $25,000.

New links and networks: By working with AFFORD, Urban Inclusion has explored further partnerships and is presently supporting groups that deliver women’s enterprise support programmes in Nigeria. These include training the trainer, vocational skills such as childcare and micro-credit initiatives.
New Projects: From the work in Sierra Leone and the Business Bomba, Urban Inclusion has put in a Comic Relief application to facilitate the development of women’s agricultural cooperatives and intermediate labour market models. These models will facilitate learning in a supported environment and could create sustainable employment for whole communities. These include the development of the value chain for fruits and vegetables and the rehabilitation and development of cocoa and coffee plantations.

Regarding questions related to how, specifically, the diaspora works to create employment within Africa and how the diaspora can contribute to development sustainability, enterprise development, risk assessment and conducive socio-political conditions within the different countries, Ms. Umem noted that development initiatives should target victims of war and human rights violations, but that risk assessments are required before businesses can be successfully supported or managed. Working with local governments to create employment at the community level is also appropriate. For sustainability, it is better to build a system whereby, for instance, the agricultural market is linked to local systems such as banks, networks of mentors, supermarkets, business people and the diaspora in order to link newly created businesses in that market with international investors and trade partners. In areas where the crisis is not economic, e.g. Congo or Zimbabwe, a revolutionary approach does not work, but some of the big political work should be done in order for the economic issues to be tackled. Again, in business creation and development, education and training play a great role. However, sending people abroad is not necessarily a sustainable solution. Rather, sending experts from the diaspora to train and advise local businesses contributes to sustainable strategies because of diaspora-run enterprises in the host countries. Hence, using their expertise is vital for both parties. Finally, in order to replicate best practices, studies should be conducted on what would work in different scenarios.

**Diaspora Perspectives on SMART Partnerships**

In order to translate the African–EU Strategic Partnership principles into practical actions, SMART (Strategy, Marketing and Rational Thinking) partnerships are needed between diaspora organisations and other development actors in the field both in Europe and Africa. Initiating SMART partnerships on concrete projects enables the diaspora and other development actors to join forces in the implementation of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership, to incorporate themselves into development circles and to solicit additional resources, expertise and networks. Three diaspora-led organisations shared their experiences on their own projects in their respective countries of origin at the technical meeting.

**Dir Foundation– the Case of Ethiopia**

*(Mulugeta Asmelash – Project Coordinator, DIR Foundation)*

The Dir Foundation (Dir) is an organisation that was established by four Ethiopians and actively works in both the Netherlands and Ethiopia. Dir was founded in 2000 with the following objectives: to contribute to the development of Ethiopia, to promote the integration of Ethiopians in the Netherlands and to uphold sustainable partnerships between the Netherlands and Ethiopia.
In the past ten years, Dir has implemented many successful projects. Examples of these projects include the residential and employment project for former prostitutes in Addis Ababa, the disabled project in collaboration with the International College and Windeheim and coffee corner Buna Bet in Amsterdam and some of the best cafes in Ethiopia.

Since 2004, Dir took the initiative to innovative and implemented income generation activities within their NGO strategy. Dir now has projects in Ethiopia that have created employment for their target groups, which are sex workers, ex-military members and people with disabilities.

The name Dir is a word from a very popular Ethiopian saying "Dir Biyabir Anbessa Yasir" which translates to "When spider webs unite, they can tie up a lion." Dir nicely sums up the goal of getting people to work together to tackle some of the seemingly intractable problems of Ethiopia. That is exactly what the foundation has in mind: that partnerships between the diaspora, namely Ethiopians in the Netherlands, and those who live in the country of origin can make a difference in the development of Ethiopia.

**Dir initiatives:**

**Buna Bet Ethiopian Coffee:** Buna Bet is a social enterprise that creates jobs for Ethiopians in Ethiopia and in Amsterdam. Former prostitutes have been reinstituted and employed and the lives of coffee farmers have improved. The profit of the café is used for the initiation of new social projects.

**Working with People with Disabilities:** People with disabilities in Ethiopia are another group who are marginalised and in need of development assistance. Sport and exercise is used as a tool for people with disabilities to experience freedom, to organise, to be made visible and to become incorporated into all aspects of society. The following activities have been organised:

- annual seminars for policy makers
- workshops for local teachers
- range of motion movements and rehabilitation for the disabled in and around Addis Ababa
- developing methods to make sport accessible (especially for girls)
- creating a curriculum "sport for people with disabilities” in Ethiopia
- the establishment of an organisational structure in terms of moving people with disabilities

More than 100 students were sent to Ethiopia from universities in the Netherlands to conduct cycling training to Ethiopian cyclists. Social projects were also created and subsidised by business people in the Netherlands.

The challenges faced by Dir so far have included overestimating one’s capacity, establishing the culture of giving within the Ethiopian community and, last but not least, facing the lack of collective thinking whilst focusing solely on the development of one’s own country.
The Diaspora Forum for Development (DFD) is a platform of more than forty diaspora organisations networking in more than thirty countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia. DFD was formally registered as a foundation in The Hague in October 2008. They serve as a coordinating body of diaspora organisations that are active in the field of migration and development.

DFD envisions a just and humane society where migrants - both men and women - are equally empowered and visible and can exercise their fundamental human rights. DFD also recognises the unique transnational role of migrants as actors in development. It seeks to harness the capacities of migrants so that they can actively participate in the social, economic, and political spheres, and contributes to initiating viable interventions to improve the quality of life of migrants, their families and their wider communities. A good number of DFD member organisations have local counterparts and support projects in their respective countries of origin. This diversity enables DFD to cover a wide range of development issues and establish a common stock of multi-faceted knowledge, skills and expertise from its members. Hence, its principle of complementarities in diversity allows these individual strengths to become part of the common good.

When one examines the case of Sudan, which is said to have nothing in common to dialogue with other nations, it becomes apparent how DFD’s partnership model can be considered SMART. The idea of sitting together and brainstorming to discuss the question of “what is unsaid?” has become an issue of interest for different parties, and the diaspora gradually becoming much more active in development has brought different parties together. The added value of bringing the diaspora together as an entity of different Africans united for training, coaching and development in general will make the partnership unique in its initiatives.

The main challenge of DFD is that the members are not full-time workers -- they are “professionals by day and migrants by night.” This reality has hindered the full-fledged engagement of the diaspora in the field of migration and development both in the Netherlands and in Africa.
**NEDSOM Foundation– the case of Somalia**  
*Yusuf Guled – General Coordinator of NEDSOM*

Nedsom is a Dutch-Somali foundation that aims to bring together the Somali diaspora in the Netherlands in order to promote Somali culture and to support development projects in both Somaliland and Somalia, Puntland.

In 1999, Somalis living and working in the Netherlands founded Nedsom with the goal of supporting development projects in their home country, but the organisation is also active in the Netherlands in strengthening contacts between the Dutch and Somalians, and using this role as intermediary to do research into repatriation opportunities for Somalians living in the Netherlands.

The Nedsom Foundation has the following objectives: to provide information and support to the Somali community in the Netherlands, to improve the relationship between the Dutch and Somalians using media; to support education in Somalia by sending materials and transferring knowledge; to fulfill the intermediary role between Dutch NGOs, businesses and counterparts in Somalia; and to improve living conditions in Somalia through fundraising efforts. Nedsom works with the counterpart Qardoaid in projects in Somalia. Qardoaid was founded in 1999 to contribute to rehabilitation and reconstruction in the community of Qardho, in Puntland. Qardoaid implements projects in the field of assisting the return of Somalian refugees, rehabilitation, vocational training, and small-scale initiatives around water, livestock, agriculture, and so forth.

Somali migrants have useful skills and knowledge that could help organisations improve their effectiveness and efficiency. By sharing their expertise, the Somali diaspora can increase the capacity of local organisations and contribute to the development of Somaliland and Somalia, Puntland. In the past ten years, the Nedsom Foundation has made quite a lot of progress. Without the determination and devotion of the diaspora, this progress would have been unthinkable.

**Nedsom’s Diaspora Partnership Programme:**

Projects in the Netherlands
- Talk2Me Program
- Making Remittances productive
- Sport Program (especially for youth)
- Entrepreneurship Training
- AfrikaDag event
Projects in Somalia

- Diaspora Radio (Horseed Media)
- Small Chalk Factory
- Documenting Diaspora Investment
- ICT center in Bosaso & Qardho
- ICT Training in collaboration with UNPOS
- Gender Training
- Poultry Farm in Qardho
- Center for the Disabled in Bosaso
- Humanitarian Assistance in Mogadishu
- Zem Zem Water Project in Burco (Somaliland)
- Diaspora Partnership Program in Somaliland and Puntland
- Shipyard Project in Puntland
The African Diaspora Fund for Development (ADFD) is an international not-for-profit platform of African migrant / diaspora organisations for development. It has four major objectives:

1) **Fund for development** - To pool human, intellectual, technological and financial resources including remittances into a fund to be used to support development initiatives undertaken by the African diaspora in their respective countries of origin and elsewhere in Africa to impact poverty reduction.

2) **Job creation** - To promote and stimulate the development of micro and medium-scale enterprises initiated by African migrants in Africa through training and coaching on best practices. This activity facilitates job creation to reduce unemployment in Africa.

3) **Awareness raising** - To organise conferences, debates, seminars and exhibitions to display the businesses, talents, artistic works, publications, sports and cinema of Africans and address the pressing issues of Africa in order to seek solutions.

4) **Partnership** - To collaborate with state and non-state actors and other relevant institutions including the business and private sector to provide skills, education and financing for programmes that are designed to introduce, expand or improve trade and investment by enterprises that are undertaken by African migrants.

In order to achieve these objectives, members of ADFD are involved in three major activities: the transformation of development, community development and socio-economic development. The major strategies to address the pressing issues facing Africa include:

- Seeking formal and systematic engagement with public, private and diaspora communities
- Identifying the right partners for specific defined purposes for short and long-term objectives
- Creating partnerships: both North – South and South – South
- Attracting, motivating and organising Africans who are committed to development

Partnership with the public includes consulting knowledge institutions, liaising with mainstream NGO’s and other development agencies, linking social and community networks with diaspora organisations and partnering with government development agencies and international bodies. Partnership with the private sector includes liaising between European business networks and the Africa diaspora business community, engaging with the African and European Chambers of Commerce, identifying opportunities that yield business benefits and create jobs, linking social
and community networks with diaspora organisations and transferring technology and business know–how.

In order to allow the diaspora to invest in their respective countries of origin, ADFD posits that African governments should open doors as:

- **Custodian** – to provide protection for business start-ups, policing and regulating infant industries.
- **Midwife** – to attract Diaspora private enterprises into new sectors.
- **Husbandry** – to teach, cultivate, nurture, and prod entrepreneurial forces that have already been activated.

Additionally, the ADFD maintains that the Africa–EU Strategic Partnership should deliver win–win results where mutual benefits are achieved. This means that diaspora inputs should be considered vital for development, EU funds should be well invested in productive projects that yield job and knowledge creation and peace throughout African countries should be made a top priority. In short, the pursuance of an environment that is conducive for the Partnership will end up in both partners being satisfied with their achievements.

The African diaspora are key stakeholders who understand both the European and African contexts. The diaspora has a pool of knowledge that, through the transfer of skills, experiences and professionalism, has accumulated over time in host countries in Europe. A number of the diaspora are in a strategic position to facilitate the process of trans-national activities and networks. They can channel information, innovative ideas, intellectual capacities, new technological skills, smart and innovative business and trade practices, peacemaking tools and techniques and democratic political habits from the West to Africa.

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**Diaspora policy should emerge as an important public policy matter, more focus on dialogue between EU & Africa on Diaspora involvement on Africa development policies.**

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**Strengthening Cooperation between Diaspora Organisations and Civil Society Forums in Africa**

Boichoko Abraham Ditlhake, Executive Director,
Southern African Development Community – Council of NGOs

Mr. Ditlhake, Director of the Southern Africa Development Community Council of Non Governmental Organisations (SADC-CNGO) provided the civil service perspective during the technical meeting. SADC-CNGO is a membership-based organisation operating in all southern African countries. SADC-CNGO was formed in 1998; however, it officially started operations in
2004. It has 15 members drawn from southern African countries and aims to promote constructive dialogue and engagement with civil society.

The formation of the SADC was originally influenced by the need to promote and support political liberation in southern Africa. With the fall of apartheid and the attainment of political independence in the region, SADC was transformed to become a vehicle for socio-economic and political development. Through SADC, the region has embarked on complex processes of pursuing sustainable economic and social development while at the same time making efforts to consolidate the emerging democracies and good governance in line with the SADC Treaty.

The formation of SADC-CNGO as an umbrella body for NGOs was aimed to facilitate meaningful engagement between civil society agents in addressing issues of poverty alleviation, democratisation, good governance, instability, human insecurity, and other challenges that hinder human-centered developments and pro-poor integration of the SADC region.

Key Challenges for the SADC region:

Democratic deficit: good governance peace and stability is the bedrock of sustainable human development. Unfortunately, a number of African countries are rocked with electoral disputes, weak institutions, and systems of bad governance.

Leadership deficit: member countries are largely captured by the post liberation movement’s elites.

Accountability deficit: weak civic participation in development processes, feedback on performance, process and targets missed.

Delivery deficit: on the social, economic and integration front: sub-Saharan Africa has most of the poorest countries in the region. The regional integration agenda has been derailed by low funding, multiple membership to economic blocks, political drama and lack of focus.

Establishing linkages between southern African society and the diaspora

- The Africa-EU Strategic Partnership presents an opportunity for north-south and south-south partnership.
- It is indeed an opportunity to galvanise Africans in the diaspora to support the priorities of Southern African civil society.
- The connections should be informed by a common set of principles, shared vision, and a commitment to transform the continent and our sub-regions.
- Diaspora organisations need to establish relationships with apex organisations, while at the same time directly engaging specialised or thematic organisations.
- Diaspora organisations should tap into the knowledge, presence and social capital found in sub-regional civil society forums.
The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is a regional group of 15 West African countries and has eight specialised agencies and four institutions. ECOWAS works to promote economic integration of member states by means of creating a single trading community or economic and monetary union. ECOWAS began as a top-down organisation with a structure that focused on human rights and regional integration. In addition, there is a horizontal structure in which lead organisations serve on various issues as a consortium working together in economic activities.

Migration has been a major development issue for ECOWAS. There have been consultative meetings and forums organised for discussions focused on policy coherence, human rights issues, legal migration as a contributor to ECOWAS member states’ development and so forth.

The place of the diaspora in ECOWAS should be established as a major agenda item and there should be a platform where diaspora issues can be addressed. Civil society has a role to play as well in raising awareness at the community, national and regional level by reaching out to stakeholders such as government representatives, women, youth and faith groups. Civil society can also conduct advocacy efforts by lobbying and briefing national and ECOWAS parliamentarians and their committees about specific resolutions or initiatives, using the ECOWAS conflict prevention framework, emphasising the cultural values of African collective responsibility and using different media to inform the general public and to call on governments to be accountable. Additionally, agreements should be signed between EU countries and African countries to engage the diaspora in intra-regional development. ECOWAS promotes the common approach policy: if we give opportunity to the youth, they can move horizontally. Internal migration is more important than international migration, for problems are much greater in the international zone. However, since brain drain is usually caused by bad governance, local administrations should break from the issues that cause the crème of their society to depart. Africa should not tie its future to Europe.

At present, ECOWAS faces two challenges in relation to working with the diaspora:

1) Developing projects that would address problems that maximise the inputs of the diaspora.
2) Strategic planning – considering the maximum benefits for the region. Strategic planning is needed to tackle strategic issues.

ECOWAS member states mandated the EU Commission to consider the development of expertise and financial resources of West African diasporas with a view to contributing to the development of their countries of origin and effectively combating brain drain. This consultation should take into account best practices, and propose joint measures notably with regard to the facilitation of financial transfers and investments in the region as well as supporting the
Diaspora’s involvement in development projects. ECOWAS member states are committed to strengthening solidarity between the diaspora and their respective countries of origin.

**NEPAD Program on the Diaspora**

*Saul B. Kaye*

*Manager, Governance and Public Administration AU/NEPAD Office*

*NEPAD, Midrand, South Africa*

NEPAD’s priority sectors include agriculture and food security, infrastructure development, human resources, science and technology, trade and market access, environment and climate change, culture and tourism, governance and capacity development and gender and development. The technical meeting explored formal partnerships in the practical implementation of the Strategic Partnership via concrete activities on the ground. Additional partnerships can gradually stem from planned, feasible, actionable activities from which concrete results can be achieved.

The message from NEPAD is clear: it is now time to reduce resources spent on planning meetings and proceed to actual implementation on the ground with projects in AU member countries. The African people are eager to see actual sustainable activities in their countries that will empower them and eventually be part of the process to pull them out of poverty.

This consultative meeting was an opportunity to provide African diaspora development practitioners in Europe the chance to inform policy makers on the continent about the development-related activities they are currently implementing in Africa. It showcased how Africa diaspora organisations in Europe tangibly contribute to the practical implementation of the Action Plan of the Partnership in the areas of technical and vocational education and training, employment and development through SMART partnerships. It also addressed the issue of strengthening cooperation between diaspora organisations in Europe and the newly formed civil society forums in Africa, specifically in the areas of lobbying, campaigning and advocacy with regard to monitoring the progress of the partnership programme in both Europe and Africa.

**Planned Activities:**

1) Develop new knowledge (research) tailored to the policy making needs of the diaspora.

2) Mobilise the diaspora as development actors for the development of the continent. Examples could be preparation of national development plans and implementation of the National Program of Action for those countries already reviewed under the Africa Peer Review Mechanisms.

3) Support the diaspora to be structurally integrated into the existing programmes and projects implemented by the mainstream development circles either in the home or the host countries, thus contributing more to poverty reduction and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) in their respective homelands in Africa.

4) Empower the diaspora and create conditions to enable them play an active role in development, democracy building (election, etc), conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction processes.
However, NEPAD believes that the above planned activities could be achieved as joint projects with the ADPC. NEPAD is more than ready to join all stakeholders to mobilise the diaspora as development actors for the improvement of the continent. Without the full and active participation of Africans in the diaspora, economic growth and development of Africa will be extremely difficult, if not impossible.

**The Process of an EU-wide Diaspora Network Building/Platform Creation**

*Lulessa Abadura, Network Coordinator, ADPC*

Mr. Lulessa Abadura briefed the participants of the technical meeting on the background of the African diaspora movement in Europe in general and in the Netherlands in particular, focusing on development issues in home countries.

The history of the post-colonial African diaspora in Europe varies from country to country, and some have larger African diaspora communities than others due to their historical relations. The current diaspora movement in EU countries is also quite different. The number of diasporas in the old EU member states and the newly joined EU member states from Southern, Eastern and Central Europe are not comparable. Because of historical reasons and the development engagements of the diaspora, the ADPC is primarily engaged with Diaspora organisations based in the older EU member states.

The ADPC was established in 2006 and focuses primarily on African diasporas in the Netherlands. It has built a database of African diaspora organisations that are engaged with development issues and the MDGs and diaspora professionals working in the Netherlands. One of the objectives of building the database, especially for African diaspora professionals, was to make the existence of the pool of African diaspora human capital and experts visible for Dutch labor market and encourage different agencies to engage African professionals in various fields of activities.

Entering the Netherlands’ labour market has never been easy for African diaspora professionals, which was one of the pushing factors for African diaspora professionals to set up small scale development agencies. Today, in the Netherlands, more than forty African diaspora organisations are busy with development projects. Most diaspora development practitioners work for their organisations after they work a full day at their regular, paying job. Most of them also hope to develop their organisations and graduate from employment elsewhere to creating their own careers in the development sector. In all of these cases, the enabling environment that existed in the Netherlands and the support of different organisations and the ministry for diaspora/migrant organisations has been of great assistance.
In addition to the above mentioned activities, the ADPC aims to:

- Mobilise African diaspora organisations in the West to contribute more effectively to the development of Africa
- Produce and make available information and policy-supporting documents aimed at strengthening the policy-making capacity of the newly formed diaspora institutions in Africa dealing with migration and development
- Inform and influence migration and development policy makers in host countries
- Promote research collaboration between diaspora and homeland researchers
- Facilitate diaspora network-building by organising meetings, seminars and conferences
- Foster viable partnerships between African diaspora organisations in Europe and civil society institutions in Africa

ADPC’s activities include:

- Conducting evidence-based policy-related research
- Organising workshops, expert meetings and conferences
- Providing capacity building training
- Facilitating contacts and networking relations
- Disseminating information through publications

In addition, ADPC believes that setting up an EU-wide Network-building /Diaspora Forum is required to:

- Provide a platform for diaspora to connect with each other and the continent
- Facilitate the development of an African diaspora constituency in EU countries
- Share experience to learn from one another
- Develop common strategy for lobby, campaign and advocacy
- Serve as a platform and bridge-building role in the implementation of the Africa – EU Strategic Partnership
- Support capacity building of diaspora organisations
- Create a diaspora development bank
- Secure consultative position in the EU policy making body

In the next three years, ADPC hopes to expand its activities to the following target countries:

- Germany, France, UK,
- Belgium, Sweden, Spain
- Portugal, Italy and Denmark
Diaspora Network Building

African Union
European Union
UN
Policymakers
- Ministries
- Institutions
- Universities
- NGOs

African Diaspora Policy Centre Secretariat

- Diaspora Capacity Building
- Facilitate Info. Sharing
- Building up strategic alliances

Network Building
- Diaspora organizations in EU – countries
- Diaspora & other stakeholders in the field
- Database

Policy-related research and Publications

Workshops & Conferences
- Expert meetings
- Training
- Seminars
Group Discussions
In relation to implementing the African-EU Strategic Partnership,

- What should civil society groups do to work with the diaspora?
- What should diaspora groups do to work with civil society groups?

Suggestions include:

- Further research on diaspora activities that can be shared as part of migration and development
- Raising awareness within civil societies on diaspora development activities
- Building the capacities of stakeholders to better understand the EU–AU Partnership framework
- Document and break down the key components of EU-Africa and diaspora partnership
- Develop/update the database of individuals, groups, and institutions and ensure that it is classified by specialisations within development.
- Development of diaspora policy at the national level in African and European countries

Discussions on African Diaspora Communiqué
At the end of the two-day meeting, the participants agreed to issue an African Diaspora Communiqué. After intensive discussions and deliberation, all participants agreed on the following communiqué with one reservation, by the Nigerian Embassy representative in Addis Ababa, in the last paragraph.
COMMUNIQUE ON
AFRICAN DIASPORA PARTICIPATION
IN THE JOINT AFRICA-EU STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Addis Ababa – 17 December 2009

We, members of African Diaspora organisations in Europe, civil society from ECOWAS and SADC Regional Economic Communities, invited participants from African diplomatic missions, donor and civil society organisations and the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs;

Having met on December 16-17, 2009 at the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) Conference Centre, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, with the support of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs to deliberate on 'Participation of the Diaspora in the Joint Africa-EU Strategic Partnership'; organised by African Diaspora Policy Centre (ADPC) and African Foundation for Development (AFFORD);

Recalling that this meeting is a follow up from the previous meetings on the same topic held on 9 July 2009 at The Hague, Netherlands, and on 1-2 October 2009 at Brussels, Belgium; with the aim of mainstreaming the Diaspora in the Partnership;

Aware of the fact that the Africa Diaspora has been identified in the African Union Constitutive Act and the Joint Africa-EU Strategic Partnership as a stakeholder and a key player in the development of Africa;

Noted and applauded the resolutions and decisions of the African Union which declares its commitment and keenness to involve the African Diaspora in the activities, processes, policy programmes and projects of the African Union and its institutions;

Conscious of the strategic position of the Diaspora to make significant contributions in policy, programme and project development and implementation in both the host and home countries;

Urge the African Union to encourage and facilitate practical and result-oriented partnerships between national governments and Diaspora organisations, amongst other things, through the creation and maintenance of regularly updated databases of Diaspora institutions, organisations, groups and individuals, with interest, expertise and experience in developmental activities;

Further urge African governments to create, maintain and strengthen national Diaspora engagement institutions, complemented by comprehensive and active policies covering themes that affect the effectiveness of the Diaspora in their efforts to contribute to the development of their countries of origin;

Encourage African civil society organisations and African Diaspora groups to share experiences and exchange knowledge of best practices through training, action-based research and communication programmes and projects, documenting and publicising the relevant work of both Diaspora and continental civil society organisations, as well as exploring practical opportunities for collaboration, joint ventures and partnerships;
Encourage the African civil society and Diaspora organisations to increase and promote awareness of the Joint Africa-EU Strategic Partnership, the work and activities of Diaspora groups; and that such awareness can be achieved through the publication and dissemination of multi-media materials that provide simple and accessible explanations and information;

Urge and encourage Citizens and Diaspora Directorate (CIDO) and the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) to take practical steps to substantively and consistently engage with the African Diaspora groups and networks based in the European Union;

Urge Diaspora groups to continue, extend and expand their collaborative work with partners in Africa, focused on attaining practical development outcomes;

Finally, agreed on the need for Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to be concluded between the African Diaspora organisations in Europe, WACSOF, SADC-CNGOs, and other regional organisations and institutions, involved in African development, with a view to operationalising and monitoring the implementation of the Joint Africa-EU Strategic Partnership.

Signed By:

African Diaspora Policy Centre (ADPC)
African Diaspora Fund for Development (ADFD)
African Foundation for Development (AFFORD)
Diaspora Forum for Development (DFD)
DIR Foundation
NEDSOM Foundation
Southern African Development Community - Council of NGOs (SADC-CNGOs)
West African Civil Society Forum (WACSOF)


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