NB. “Glocal” Partnerships for Agribusiness Development in Ethiopia: Sub-National Diaspora Engagement Policies and Practices is a Tailor Made Training supported by Nuffic.
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Over the past 10 years, academic researchers, development practitioners and policymakers have been exploring methods of making Diaspora remittances more productive towards the overall development goals in their countries of origin. They have been particularly keen in grasping the modus operandi of mobilizing Diaspora entrepreneurship for homeland development. This is due to the fact that Diaspora entrepreneurs are uniquely positioned to recognize opportunities in their countries of origin. They are also in a better position to exploit such opportunities as “first movers”. The knowledge of the Diaspora of the local political, economic and cultural environment, as well as their personal connections, and linguistic abilities, often give members of the Diaspora a comparative advantage over others when investing in or starting business in their countries of origin.

Yet, despite all these advantages that Diaspora entrepreneurs can offer, many developing countries have not sufficiently benefited. So far they have had limited success in attracting Diaspora direct investors and entrepreneurs to their countries of origin or ancestry for a number of reasons. The first reason is that the governments of many developing countries have not put in place policy strategies aimed at reaching out to the Diaspora entrepreneurs and to entice them to set up businesses and thereby becoming deeply engaged with the development in their countries of origin. The second reason is the poor investment environment which puts off the Diaspora entrepreneurs setting up business in their homelands. The third reason is the limited access of many developing countries (particularly those in Africa) to existing experiences and good practices from other countries in leveraging Diaspora remittances to agribusiness development. Addressing those obstacles listed above would require developing programmes like this one that supports governments of the developing countries to design and implement policies that respond to the major challenges that Diaspora entrepreneurs face in establishing or running businesses of all types in their countries of origin.

More importantly, creatively galvanizing the Diaspora investment, expertise, experience and transnational networks for agribusiness development can considerably contribute to increased food production, transfer of advanced technical skills, local employment and income generation of rural poor workers. It can also contribute to meeting one of the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) which is inclusive and sustainable economic growth and decent work for all.
INTRODUCTION

This Tailor-Made-Training (TMT) programme targeted Ethiopian government officials serving in the numerous Diaspora Coordinating Offices (DCOs) in different regions of the country, as well as Diaspora returnees already engaged in Agribusiness. The direct beneficiaries of the training were senior policymakers tasked with mobilising the Diaspora entrepreneurs in the growth and expansion of the agri-business sector of the economy. The project was jointly managed by the Diaspora Engagement Affairs Directorate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and ADPC.

Ethiopia is one of the leading countries in Africa for creating enabling domestic environments for the diaspora to participate in the development of their homeland. Furthermore, Ethiopia has developed a National Diaspora Policy which the government has been trying to translate into programmes and practical actions in a number of critical sectors for economic growth and development in the country. In addition to that, the government has been providing a host of incentives to the members of the Diaspora interested in participating in the development of their homeland. More importantly, the government has initiated a meaningful and reliable dialogue with the Diaspora and even celebrated a Diaspora Day in August this year.

Nevertheless, when it comes to the practical engagement of the Diaspora entrepreneurs at the regional level, the policy is oftentimes hampered by a lack of awareness and misperception about the potential role that Diaspora can play, and what regional governments can do to support this.

For instance, regional DCO staff experience a lack of communication and coordination among themselves as well as a lack of access to expertise and “best practice” examples of diaspora engagement for agribusiness development. Similarly, many of the regional DCOs have insufficiently institutionalized and contextualized the National Diaspora Policy, and that also hinders the development of appropriate interventions to support diaspora-driven agribusiness development in a sustainable manner. This problem to a lesser extent also applies to the federal DCO officials engaged in translating the diaspora policy into practical actions. In short, both regional and federal DCO staff have not yet developed coherent policy instruments for sustainable diaspora-driven agribusiness development in the country.

ABOUT ADPC

The African Diaspora Policy Centre (ADPC) is a leading African Diaspora think tank in the field of migration and development. It is committed to strengthening policymaking capabilities within the newly-formed Diaspora-oriented institutions in the Africa-Caribbean-Pacific (ACP) region. Without sufficient institutional and individual policymaking capacity, these newly-formed institutions in the ACP region will neither adequately manage the emerging challenges of migration, nor sufficiently benefit from its opportunities and development potential. ADPC is convinced that enhancing the policymaking capacity of Diaspora-oriented officials and institutions in the ACP region will enable them to engage their Diaspora in the overall development of their countries of origin in a sustainable manner.

For more information please visit http://www.diaspora-centre.org
The long-term goal of this action was to leverage diaspora-driven agribusiness development for increased food security and agricultural transformation in different regions of the country.

The short-term goal of this action was to contribute to a more systematic and sustainable engagement between regional DCOs and prospective diaspora agribusiness entrepreneurs and professionals active in this sector of the economy.

The tailor-made training course contributed to:

- A better understanding of the nexus between migration and development, by presenting the most recent insights and developments in the field. The training course was tailored to the specific policymaking needs of the Ethiopian government officials serving in the Diaspora Coordinating Offices (DCOs) set up in different regions of the country, as well as the diaspora returnees interested in investing in agribusiness enterprises;

- A consultation platform for multi-stakeholders in the agri-business sector of the economy for best practices and ‘lessons learned’ about leveraging diaspora engagement for agribusiness development;

- Hands-on tools to enhance the know-how, technical capabilities and the increasing of networks and strategic partnerships among diverse stakeholders active or interested in the agri-business sector, including the international SMEs operating in the country;

- Guidance on facilitating the institutionalisation of Diaspora relations and the integration of Diaspora-driven development into a national development agenda; and,

- Methods of improving communication with the diaspora to dispel misconceptions, better coordination mechanisms and developing coherent policy instruments for sustainable diaspora-driven agribusiness development in the country.

By the end of the tailor-made training, participants were:

- Better equipped to manage and mitigate common misperceptions about the engagement of the diaspora in the promotion of the private sector of the economy in general, and in the agri-business in particular;
• Able to compare and contrast their own strategies and interventions used to leverage diaspora engagement in the agribusiness sector with those from other regions of the country;

• Able to access to a network of expertise and a range of best practices from across the African continent and beyond on, on which new interventions can be based and/or existing interventions can be fine-tuned; and,

• Able to have developed a policy ‘roadmap’ for how to implement and contextualize the national diaspora policy in their own regional context, specifically with regard to agribusiness.

PROGRAMME CURRICULUM

The Tailor Made Training workshop utilized an innovative methodology, combining theoretical discourse, best practice case studies and hands-on assignments to enhance technical policymaking capacity in the field of Diaspora Engagement in Agribusiness. The following section provides a brief overview of the workshop curriculum, broken down into these components. For a more detailed overview of the programme and the individual modules, please refer to Appendix I for the workshop programme.

The participants arrived at the training from the various regional Diaspora offices, as well a small number from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and also some Diaspora returnees already engaged in agribusiness in Ethiopia. This mix of knowledge and capabilities allowed for a fruitful dialogue amongst the participants as the training progressed, where they were able to learn from the practical experiences of others. For a full list of participants please see Appendix II.

With the emphasis on the ‘tailor made’ aspect of the training, the programme was very much geared to the specific needs of the participants. Therefore, within the initial programme devised, room was given for changes in focus to suit the needs of the participants. It quickly became apparent that the participants already had a good grounding regarding the issues being raised and this allowed for further and more fruitful discussions to occur more quickly.

The mix of experts and facilitators used for the delivery of the training lent itself well to a fuller understanding of the issues, from different perspectives. Mr Abubakarr Bangura was able to effectively increase the participants knowledge on other experiences of similar issues in other African countries. By using his own personal experience from Sierra Leone, as well as his extensive work with Diaspora organisations in The Netherlands,
participants were able to discover best practices in other contexts, which could potentially be applied to the Ethiopian Agribusiness context. Further local insight was added by our local expert Mr. Bruk Asmellash. By linking the concepts brought up during the theoretical discourse, Bruk was able to show how they could be applied effectively in the context of Ethiopia. By using the unique insights from these two experts, along with the vast experience on Diaspora related issues that Prof. Dr. Gerd Junne brought to the training, participants were able to effectively see the links between the global and local aspects of agribusiness, and how these links could potentially be utilised to improve diaspora engagement in Agribusiness in Ethiopia.

The various aspects of Diaspora Agribusiness Engagement were discussed during the training, including knowledge transfer, technology transfer and financial issues, all within both Ethiopian and more global contexts. By encouraging the participants to undertake some more hands on assignments during the week the link and importance of each topic became clear. The most fruitful of these was an exercise where participants formed small groups and assessed the value chains and implementation of various agribusiness proposals. These included proposals focused on camel milk, sesame, coffee and honey to give a few examples. This allowed participants to talk through ideas, see the linkages of the different aspects of diaspora agribusiness engagement and also give an insight into where Diaspora Engagement policy could be improved.

In order to give a more practical sense of the issues, a field trip was organised where the participants could come into direct contact with Diaspora Agribusiness projects. Firstly a flower farm was visited, along with a diary and cattle feed enterprise. This experience proved invaluable, as the direct results of diaspora policy could be viewed first hand. It also allowed for an examination of the numerous challenges the diaspora face in agribusiness, from before the establishment of their business, to the production and right through to the eventual export and other market related issues. The visit to the flower farm in particular was of immense value to the participants. The owner of the farm Mr. Yassin Legesse Johnson gave an insightful explanation of his operation which highlighted many of the issues raised during the training. Mr. Johnson’s operations are truly impressive, and could well serve as an example of good practice for prospective diaspora investors. Since operations began 2006, the farm has
steadily increased in size to its present state at 19 hectares. In 2014 (with 13.5 hectares in production) he produced 22 million rose stems. Presently 70 percent of production goes to Europe, 20 percent goes to the United States, 5 percent to Canada and 5 percent to other countries. He employs approximately 450 workers, of which 80 percent are women. The farm holds a number of certifications, including Fair Trade International. By viewing such a successful diaspora venture, the participants became better informed and are now able to give more practical and realistic advice to future agribusiness investors. The field trip proved a very worthwhile experience and allowed for the previous work during the training to be given more context.

In line with the ‘tailor made’ aspect of the training the participants were asked to complete an evaluation after the completion of the first week. This was in order to be able to adjust the programme for the second week to accommodate the needs of the participants and make the experience truly ‘tailor made’. From this midterm evaluation it became clear that the participants would appreciate more clear and concrete examples in other national and international contexts. Therefore the second week was tailored to give more of these examples. As well as this, the participants expressed the wish for more link to the context of agribusiness in Ethiopia. Therefore it was decided to utilise the knowledge of Bruk more, thus allowing for a more local view during the discussions. This flexibility during the training meant that the participants were able to gain as much as possible during the limited time that was spent together.

The culmination of the group work took place at the end of the week, in the form of presentations of the different groups work. It was clear from these presentation just how well the groups were able to apply the knowledge that they had learnt during the training, and how this will potentially aid them in the process of engaging Diaspora in Agribusiness.

**RECURRING ISSUES**

During all sessions the three resource persons were careful to guide discussions in a constructive and flexible way so that the concerns and interests of the participants were always leading the debate. Consequently, some sessions were shortened, while others were extended and elaborated upon. While a full review of all topics addressed is beyond the scope of this synthesis report, the following themes were recurrent and occupied a large share of discussion time:

**Recognising all Stakeholders Involved**

It became clear to the participants that the nature of engaging the diaspora in agribusiness is not a simple process with only a limited number of stakeholders. Beyond the government
and the potential diaspora investor there are a wide range of other stakeholders and issues to consider. For example, the need to consider the family of the returnee may be something that is overlooked. Information about schools, potential visa issues for a non Ethiopian spouse, work opportunities for family members etc., are all things that a potential returnee must also consider. By catering for the wider spectrum of stakeholders in a diaspora agribusiness investment the chances of completion are considerably increased. The idea of a ‘one stop shop’ for all information needed by returnees was an idea that was constantly brought up during the training.

The Importance of Understanding Value Chains

This was a point that recurred throughout the training, and the importance of understanding the wider chain surrounding agribusiness must not be underestimated.

The lack of Systems of information and Knowledge to aid Diaspora Offices and Diaspora themselves

This is an issue that was a theme of the whole training period, as well as being discussed numerous times within this report. This is an issue that needs to be addressed in order to produce an increasingly coherent diaspora agribusiness policy. The good work of many of the regional offices could achieve even greater impact if shared with other offices, and better coordination more generally would help streamline the process for diaspora returnees as well as diaspora offices, leading to the potential for increased agribusiness investment from the diaspora.

Adding Value- Processing

The need to think of further ways to entice diaspora investors was something discussed at length. It was stated that it can often be hard to attract diaspora into agriculture, with the perception being that it is hard, long and dirty work. By highlighting other aspects of the chain, such as processing of agricultural products, the industry may become more attractive, with the potential for higher returns on investment and a more obvious value chain.

EVALUATION

During the final day of the training, as well as at the end of the first week, participants were asked to fill out an evaluation questionnaire about the quality of the training, the content, methodology, experts, professionalism of trainers, etc. Based on this initial valuation, ADPC was able to conclude that all participants were very positive about the training and found the content useful.

Overall the participants scored the training a very credible **8 out of 10**, which indicates the excellent level of the training, as well as extra expertise that the participants were able to take away with them.
As already discussed, the midterm evaluation helped tremendously in helping to put emphasis on the points that needed further elaboration for the second half of the training. The results of this can be seen in the final evaluations which emphasised just how much the participants gained from the training. There were several key themes that the participants highlighted which were of importance and in which they gained significant extra knowledge. These included the importance of understanding value chains, specific examples from other countries which had real potential to be implemented in Ethiopia, the recognition of a more integrated system of information for diaspora engagement in agribusiness and better ways of gaining access to diaspora professionals. The evaluation also highlighted the impact the training had in the sharing of ideas and knowledge across the different regions. By bringing the various regional diaspora officials together it is clear that a network has been established, which will hopefully be maintained to the benefit of Diaspora Agribusiness engagement in the country.

RESULTS/OUTCOMES

In the preparation of this Tailor Made Training several key outcomes were hoped to be achieved. After the initial evaluation of the programme it has been established whether they have been achieved or not. See below for an analysis of the expected outcomes;

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<th>Type of Outcome</th>
<th>Expected Results</th>
<th>Preliminary Results</th>
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| The Long-term overall objective to leverage diaspora-driven agribusiness development for increased food security and agricultural transformation in the regions | Regional DCO support for diaspora-driven agribusiness development is better coordinated and more comprehensive; DCOs gain the necessary capacity and know-how to provide support on a coordinated and sustainable basis. 

NOTE: experience shows that the contribution to such a goal through a capacity development intervention (training) only manifests in the long run and beyond the evaluation period of this training. | As noted, such long term goals will only manifest themselves beyond the evaluation period of this training. 

However, early indications suggest that the importance of better coordination was realised by Regional Diaspora officers and that the necessary capacity has been improved. |
| Behaviour | By the end of this tailor-made training, key regional DCO officials | The participants who attended the training could |
### Action
- **Have developed a policy ‘roadmap’ for how to implement and contextualize the national diaspora policy in their own regional context, specifically with regard to agribusiness**

- **The group work allowed for a thorough examination of the entire policy and implementation process. Clear plans were created that highlighted the importance of every step of diaspora engagement, and also the need to take into account all stakeholders.**

### Relationships
- **Be able to compare and contrast their own strategies and interventions used to leverage diaspora engagement in the agribusiness sector with those of other regions**
- **Have access to a network of expertise and a range of best practices from across the**

- **This was perhaps the most obviously achievable outcome. Interactive group discussions led to participants being able to compare and contrast experiences. Some regions had more developed programmes than others, therefore allowing the less developed regions to gain a**
African continent and beyond on which new interventions can be based and/or existing interventions can be fine-tuned. Participants were also exposed to best practices both worldwide and from other nations in Africa. Channels for accessing networks of expertise were noted. A network amongst the participants themselves has also been established, which will lead to further sharing of experiences and best practices.

A very welcome additional outcome of the training has been the networking of a Diaspora returnee with one of our experts, Abubakarr Bangura. Abubakarr plans to support Efrem in his efforts to add value to the product he already manufactures, coffee, by processing it, and then go further by discovering ways of exporting this product to other global regions.

**KEY LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. **Concrete, practical examples work best when attempting to illustrate ideas**

   The evaluation revealed that the participants, almost unanimously, appreciated the more concrete and practical examples given during the training. This is something that should be taken into consideration for future capacity building trainings.

2. **Importance of Linking to Local Context**

   This was addressed during the training period by enhancing the role of the local expert, Mr. Bruk Asmellash, during the second week of the training. This is also something that should be remembered for future trainings on the topic.

3. **Regional officials have a lot of knowledge that could be shared**

   It became evident during the training that the sharing of knowledge from other regions was very important. Some regions, such as Amhara, were at a much more advanced stage of developing a strategy, and therefore using other regions as examples to increase knowledge and improve lesser regions strategies could prove very fruitful.

**Recommendations;**

1. Gather even more participant information prior to training in order to further tailor the experience. The training was tailored as much as possible, however the midterm evaluation
indicated more was necessary. More interaction with participants before any future training would have the desired effect of a fully tailored course programme.

2. Data exchange: facilitate exchange of documents, reports, contact details, etc. between participants. Participants already engage in this, but with some extra support this can be simplified so that all participants can access each other’s data.

3. Increase efforts to increase awareness that investment in agribusiness does not always mean investment in land, but that investment in the whole ecosystem around agriculture might contribute more to increase yields.
APPENDIX I: WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

Day 1 - Diaspora Policy Challenges and Discussion

1. Opening Session

Words of welcome by ADPC and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The participants introduced themselves and explained some of their experiences and challenges, as well as what they hoped to gain from the training.

The Global context regarding Diaspora Engagement in Agribusiness in Ethiopia was introduced.

2. Insertion of diaspora entrepreneurship in agribusiness into the global context

Participants were introduced to several themes including, demographic development in the world, in Africa, in Ethiopia, rural – urban migration (national and international), changes in the global and national discourse on diaspora and its contribution to development, decentralization of diaspora policy in a federal state (like in Ethiopia), development of world agricultural production, trade in agricultural products and land grabbing and land rights

3. Local Expert view of Diaspora Engagement in Agribusiness

Local Expert explained the local context regarding Diaspora Engagement in Agribusiness in Ethiopia. This led to a discussion where participants presented and discussed contexts, policies and practices of diaspora engagement more generally, as well as in agribusiness in the regions in which returning entrepreneurs plan to do business.

Day 2 - Diaspora Investments and Remittances

1. How to increase remittances

Participants gained knowledge in how to increase remittances, make them cheaper, using formal channels, and contributing more to development; improving remittances to rural areas: IFAD’s experience; solutions for the “last mile”, use of remittances for agribusiness development.

2. Discussion on Diaspora Investment Instruments

Explanation of experiences with different investment instruments, forms of Diaspora investment in agriculture, agricultural cooperatives (AUXFIN model); other sources of finance for entrepreneurs in agribusiness (national and international ), joint ventures in the regional agriculture and horticulture sectors.

3. Value Chains
Diaspora contribution to the insertion of Ethiopian agriculture into regional and international value chains.

**Day 3 - Diaspora in Agribusiness, knowledge and technology transfer**

1. **Brain Gain and Brain Drain**

   Discussion about how to turn the Agribusiness Brain Drain into a Brain Gain: Contacts with diaspora associations at the world’s most famous agricultural institutions (like Wisconsin, Wageningen, Noragric), partnerships between diaspora agriculturalists and regional universities.

2. **Diaspora Organisations**

   Engagement with diaspora organizations (send them samples of agricultural products); diaspora web portal, cooperation with content providers – agribusiness content on the web portal; engagement with 2nd and 3rd generation diaspora (field trips for diaspora youth).

3. **Knowledge Transfer**

   Transfer of agricultural technology, improved extension services, new seeds, new crops, new production techniques; The example of an Agricultural Business School in Sierra Leone.

**Day 4 - Diaspora agribusiness: innovation in production, processing, and distribution**

1. **Empowering agriculture with clean energy**

   Diaspora investment in wind, solar energy, and biogas; diaspora contributions to ecological production, protection against weeds, diseases, pests and beasts.

2. **Processing and Harvesting**

   Diaspora contributions to harvesting, processing of agricultural products, conservation and distribution.

3. **Marketing and Retail**

   Diaspora contributions to the marketing and retail sales in regional cities.

**Day 5 - Practical Examples of Diaspora Agribusiness**

1. **Field trip led by Local Expert**

   The perspective of the Private Sector within Agribusiness in Ethiopia. Participants were shown two different farms, where
the practical challenges and perspective of private sector Diaspora Agribusiness practitioners were shared.

The second week offered five days of co-creation and parallel work on three types of results:
- policy proposals to effectively facilitate diaspora entrepreneurship in agribusiness,
- concrete business initiatives of the participating returnee entrepreneurs, and
- a manual that captures the major workshop content for regional replication

**Day 6 - Further Discussion on Mobilizing financial resources**

1. **Remittance Increase**

   How to increase remittances, make them cheaper, using formal channels, and contributing more to development; improving remittances to rural areas: solutions for the “last mile”.

2. **Investment Plans**

   Investment plans, using different forms of Diaspora investment in agriculture, agricultural cooperatives (AUXFIN model)

3. **Further Sources of Finance**

   Mobilising other sources of finance for entrepreneurs in agribusiness (national and international), identifying partners for joint ventures in the regional agriculture and horticulture sectors.

**Day 7 - Realising a Brain Gain for Improved Agribusiness**

1. **Links to last week’s discussion on same topic**

   Participants used the knowledge from work on the topic in the previous weeks agenda to work towards the outcomes expected of the second week.

**Day 8 - Implementation of Diaspora agribusiness: innovation in production, processing, and distribution**

1. **Links to last week’s discussion on same topic**

   Again participants engaged on this topic using last week’s knowledge in the pursuit of the goals set for week 2

**Day 9 - International organizations and the Global Forum**

1. **Use of diaspora as a channel for improving traditional agricultural exports**

   Exploration of candidates for partnerships along the value chain of food production in agriculture, including the international SMEs already operating in the country.

2. **Export Strategies and International Trade**
Formulating viable agricultural export strategies and realistic propositions for international trade negotiations on agricultural products: diaspora as ambassadors in global negotiations.

3. Coordination Mechanisms and Policy Strategies

Drafting better coordination mechanisms and coherent policy instruments for sustainable diaspora-supported agribusiness development

Day 10 - Follow Up

1. Presentation of three types of results: draft policy papers, business plans, and educational manual

2. Imbedding of diaspora agribusiness policy into general diaspora policy

3. Follow-Up, Certificates, Evaluation, Closing ceremony
## APPENDIX II: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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### Experts and Guest Speakers

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<td>Bruk Asmellash</td>
<td>Local Expert, Independent Consultant</td>
<td><a href="mailto:brukh@yahoo.com">brukh@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
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</table>