The Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) program is a capacity-building initiative whose purpose is to promote development goals through the participation and contribution of members of the African diaspora.\textsuperscript{3} The MIDA approach\textsuperscript{4} builds on the experience of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Return of Qualified Nationals (RQN) programs undertaken since 1974, and advocates for a comprehensive long-term strategy. This includes a broad range of actions and concepts, such as the transfer of financial and human capital, the transfer of technology and specific work skills, and migration for development (figure 8.1).\textsuperscript{5}

MIDA and similar projects have been developed in response to the increasingly prominent role attributed to migration in national and regional development policies and programs worldwide. To assist in making migration and development policies operational around the world, the optimization of the contributions of members of the diaspora to the development of home countries needs to be further assessed and institutionalized. This gathering of information and resources will provide a broader base of practical references for future program and policy planning.
This chapter describes the progress achieved in the implementation of MIDA projects, highlights essential lessons learned, and identifies elements of good practice that have emerged. Specifically, the chapter:

- Highlights the importance of trust-building mechanisms to develop links with members of the diaspora and of establishing diaspora rosters to “map” them (see subsection on diaspora rosters)
- Elaborates on opportunities and benefits of sharing human and technical resources, especially the added value of involving members of the diaspora for development in MIDA projects
- Illustrates financial transfers on the basis of the MIDA model
- Explains the importance of integrating migration into the development plans of countries with large diasporas
- Presents key findings and recommendations.
Engaging Members of the Diaspora

Members of diasporas are the most important strategic stakeholders in the migration and development field. It is therefore essential that they be involved in policy discussions, since the practical implementation of any policy proposal requires migrants to play a leading role in the process. More important, migrants are the chief agents in the establishment of linkages between migration and development, and without their strategic interventions it is not likely that initiatives on development and migration can succeed or achieve the expected results. This reality makes it impossible to design appropriate policy instruments without creatively tapping into the input and intellectual resources of members of the diasporas, whose wealth of knowledge and practical experiences are largely undercapitalized. It is as simple as this: the best solutions are likely to be worked out when the primary stakeholders—in this case, the migrants—are involved from the outset (African Diaspora Policy Centre 2008).

To mobilize and engage diaspora members in development initiatives, actions are needed by governments and other stakeholders to develop linkages between the diaspora members and their countries of origin. Their level of participation in development initiatives depends to a large extent on the ability to reach and mobilize suitable and committed members. International agencies and representatives of the private sector and civil society can facilitate this process. Outreach and information campaigns are needed in countries of both origin and destination in order to raise awareness and interest on both sides. Formal cooperation and networks can also be established with diaspora (umbrella) associations.

One factor encouraging diaspora involvement is their degree of integration in the host country. The more integrated they are, the more they can concentrate their efforts on exploring opportunities of engagement for their country of origin and mobilizing their community contacts in both host and origin countries for the benefit of development initiatives. Integrated diasporas are more likely to have active partnerships with state actors at the regional, provincial, and municipal levels, and with local nonstate actors to implement projects through technical assistance and matching funds. The experience under the MIDA Italy projects confirms this finding.
In Italy, these partnerships, based on migrants’ initiatives, supported 18 rural development programs and trained 40 migrants. Integrated diasporas also create associations and collectively remit for the purpose of investment (Stocchiero 2008). The integration of African migrants in the host countries was also found to be of indirect, albeit salient, significance to the development of Africa. Better integration of migrants in Europe stretches beyond the European context because there is a linear relationship between better integration into the host society and the active contribution to the society. Given this, being active agents in European societies, the diaspora would gain a space to shape policies, including policies that link Europe and Africa (African Diaspora Policy Centre 2008).

Building Trust: Diaspora Dialogues

Trust-building mechanisms are necessary for facilitating linkages with diaspora members. Diaspora members should be regarded and approached as partners and not as mere development resources, especially when mistrust between members of the diaspora and their government might exist. This is important because the nexus between migration and development merits continued consultations and policy dialogue at different societal and policy levels. Furthermore, migration and development can be considerably more beneficial to all if they are effectively addressed as a permanent dialogue between diaspora and other stakeholders in the field. Dialogue mechanisms among diaspora members, host and origin governments, and other stakeholders can play an essential part in creating an environment conducive to the discussion of prodevelopment initiatives.

Diaspora dialogues, which can be formal or informal, have thus become an integral part of many MIDA projects. They are intended to create communication channels and links, and to offer a friendly platform for mutually beneficial interactions among diaspora members, governments, and other stakeholders. One cost-effective approach that has been used with success is video conferencing. Since 2006, Diaspora Dialogue video conferences, each bringing together a range of interested interlocutors, have been conducted on topics as diverse as agriculture, health, human resource development, investment, and private sector development. Countries that have participated in these dialogues include Benin, Burundi, Cape Verde, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Sudan, and Tanzania (Diene 2007; IOM 2007a).
Research and evaluation are, however, still needed on how the Diaspora Dialogues can be improved and to explore what other confidence-building mechanisms could be implemented in, for instance, postconflict and peace-building settings where the establishment of trust among different actors is seen as a prelude to reconciliation and eventual development activity (Kleist 2008).

**Diaspora Rosters**

Discussions among diaspora members and governments on how to best reach diaspora members and to ensure their participation in policies and programs have elicited broad agreement on the need for the development of registries, or databases. Once trust is established, these databases can be created. Database information should include the professional qualifications and skills of expatriates living in Europe and North America, and members of diasporas living in countries of the global South who are willing to contribute to migration for development projects. Such diaspora-mapping databases are now a part of most MIDA programs. (See figure 8.2 for an example of the kinds of information included in the MIDA Great Lakes database.)

**FIGURE 8.2**

Profiles of the 1,100 Candidates Registered in the MIDA Great Lakes Database

![Graph showing the percentage of candidates in different职业 categories.](image-url)
Two of the online databases\textsuperscript{10} implemented by IOM are administered centrally in its headquarters in Geneva and gather information on the potential of African diaspora members, with a special focus on African women. Female expatriate experts of African origin, in particular, hold huge potential for contributions to the African development agenda. Indeed, the feminization of migration has led to an enormous untapped resource of highly educated and skilled African women diaspora members. These women can help women in their countries of origin break out of their traditional gender roles. Financial remittances can increase the active participation of all women in the development of their countries. Both migrant women and men send or take home “social remittances” in the form of new skills, attitudes, and knowledge that can lead to new gender norms. The social remittances of migrant women can boost socioeconomic development in their home countries, improve women’s health, and promote human rights and gender equality. The social remittances men convey include adopting behavior they observed in other countries, such as choosing their own spouses and doing more of women’s traditional work, including child care (UNFPA 2006).

Consequently, IOM, in partnership with the International Labour Organisation, is managing a database called “African Women at the Service of the Union” (ILO and IOM 2002), which has compiled more than 70 biographies\textsuperscript{11} of skilled African women who can contribute to the realization of the goals of the African Union. The information resource is also a strategic tool for the promotion of gender equality. Indeed, this initiative may help with the current underrepresentation of women in decision-making positions in Africa. In fact, it might be argued that sustainable development policies will only be fully implemented when they take appropriate account of the principles of gender equality.\textsuperscript{12}

**Human and Technical Transfers**

The MIDA framework model explores innovative possibilities to engage members of the diaspora in a range of actions aimed at harnessing migration for development. One important line of activity consists of opportunities for the temporary or virtual return of diaspora members for whom permanent return might not be a viable option (box 8.1).
BOX 8.1

Different Modalities of Transfer of Intellectual and Socioprofessional Resources

MIDA facilitates the virtual, sequenced or permanent transfer of intellectual and socio-professional resources of the diaspora to support the development of the countries of origin. In order to ensure sustainability, each transfer is brought into line with the national strategy of the respective countries and coordinated with different stakeholders who meet in national MIDA steering committees.

**Sequenced/Repeat visits.** In some cases, skills or competencies of the diaspora members are required in the country of origin to complement the efforts of colleagues on the job and to bring their international perspective to bear on a given assignment. The MIDA framework envisages that this type of assignment may require a limited number of round-trips, go-and-see visits, to encourage the circulation of skills.

**Virtual/tele-work.** The use of Information and Communications Technologies has significantly reduced costs, by eliminating—in many cases—the need for physical presence. Digital data broadcasting, distance business transactions (tele-conferencing) and e-learning are among the most cost-effective options for this type of resource transfer.

**Permanent relocation.** Permanent transfer to the country of origin is based on the voluntary decision of the diaspora member to physically return permanently and to contribute to the development of his or her country.

Source: IOM 2007b, 5.
The cultural and linguistic affinity of diaspora members and migrants with their society of origin and their ability to tackle legal barriers more easily (Devane 2006) are distinct advantages they have over more traditional development experts. Diaspora members and migrants tend to establish contact more quickly, can (re-)adapt more easily to the local context, and are more likely to invest in their country or community of origin than international investors (Kapur 2001). Their high level of personal commitment also brings significant added value to MIDA programs, a fact underlined by their willingness to incur “sacrifices” in the form of unremunerated or annual leave taken or absorption of mortgage costs while away from their residence in the country of destination (IOM, forthcoming).

**Transfer of Knowledge and Expertise**

The temporary return of diaspora members to share skills and resources under IOM’s MIDA programmatic framework aims to partially compensate for the brain drain of highly skilled professionals from developing countries. Ghana, for instance, is facing a high rate of emigration of its health professionals, medical doctors and nurses, in particular. The MIDA Ghana Health Project aims to address this exodus of health workers, which negatively affects the quality of health care services in Ghana. This MIDA Project facilitates periodic and circular, or temporary, returns of qualified health personnel among the Ghanaian diaspora living in the European Union to hospitals and medical training institutions. After an initial assessment of the interest and potential of the Ghanaian diaspora living in the Netherlands to engage in the development of their country of origin, during its second phase (2005–08), the MIDA Ghana Health Project enabled 65 temporary returns. During its current, third phase (2008–12), 150 temporary return assignments are envisaged.

In addition to these short-term missions of Ghanaian diaspora members, the project offers health care training opportunities in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom for capacity building of medical personnel who chose to remain in Ghana. Besides financial support, IOM will provide assistance organizing the assignments and internships. IOM’s services will include:

- Assistance with visa and work permit applications
- Organizing travel and lodgings
• Providing health and travel insurance
• Supervision and monitoring during assignments and internships.

The following groups can participate in the project:

• Ghanaians living and working in the Netherlands or other European Union (EU) countries with a relevant background in health care or a related field
• Health workers from Ghana
• Health institutions in Ghana (special attention is given to rural and deprived areas)
• Health institutions in the Netherlands.  

Transfer of Technology

A different strategic approach has been applied in the MIDA project implemented by IOM in Ethiopia. As part of this project, referred to as the MIDEth Health Project, technology in the form of medical equipment has been transferred to four hospitals in the country. Members of the Ethiopian diaspora and friends living in the United States donated the equipment, estimated to be worth US$1.8 million to US$2 million, and trained the staff of these hospitals, including in how to use the new technology.  

Virtual Transfers

A newer area of MIDA work focuses on the use of e-learning opportunities to enhance virtual transfers. Using new communication technology for the virtual transfer of knowledge has been found to be an innovative means of addressing the shortage and aging of university faculty in certain disciplines. The skills gaps in higher education institutions resulting from high levels of emigration can be reduced by highly skilled experts living abroad providing counseling and training via the Internet. This approach has been used in various MIDA projects, notably in the health sector. It is now clear that communication technology commonly used today enables qualified expatriates to share their expertise with colleagues in their country of origin without necessitating their physical presence in the country (IOM 2005b).  

The experience in MIDA-type projects, such as MIDA Ghana and the Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals Project implemented by IOM in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ethiopia, Georgia,
Sierra Leone, and Sudan, highlighted the constraining lack of availability of this equipment in some host institutions.20

**Opportunities Through Higher Education Institutions**

Universities play a key role in the development of a country by contributing to the creation of a pool of knowledge and skills among those who provide vision and leadership in government, academic circles, business, and civil society.21 Members of the diaspora can assist in this enterprise by sharing their expertise with their professional counterparts who have chosen to stay in their country of origin.

Sequential short-term assignments have been organized under the MIDA Great Lakes program covering Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Rwanda to enable university lecturers to share their skills and assist in the development and teaching of courses (box 8.2). For instance, in 2004, a doctor of Congolese origin living in Belgium developed a distance course in anaesthesiology and intensive care at the University of Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of Congo, with the MIDA program.22 This diaspora engagement for development can lead to the establishment of long-term links between institutions and can support the reduction of education costs.

Higher education institutions can make an important contribution to the professional growth of these practitioners, especially by promoting study and research into the relationship between migration and development. To enhance the skills transfers by diaspora members, South-South and North-South twinning arrangements between universities are being explored by IOM. The offer of such migration study courses at universities and through university partnerships across regions can contribute not only to more effective policy formulation on migration management in general, but also to the elaboration of more effective policy linkages between migration and development.

To extend the potential of higher education as a development tool and to address long-term skills shortages, a core human resource planning strategy needs to be devised in crucial development sectors, including health care and education. This strategy should take account of the effects of migration on development in terms of service provision and human capital formation, and include the contribution through the transfer of
BOX 8.2

**MIDA Great Lakes – Enhancing the Capacity of the University of Goma**

The University of Goma hopes to ensure the autonomy of its “applied geology department” by 2011. Professor Wazi, a researcher at the University of Rouen in France, lends his knowledge and experience to help the University attain this objective. He undertook several MIDA missions to Goma between January 2006 and February 2007. While the MIDA programme had initiated the first steps (i.e., arranging the professor’s missions, financing the syllabi, buying microscopes and geological maps, etc.), other partners have since joined in.

The University of Rouen’s geology department in France contributes six scientific books to Goma on a weekly basis for a period of 18 months. The association “the friends of Goma” sent 100 books and scientific publications in a container to help researchers, students, and research assistants emerge from their scientific isolation.

Today, local academic personnel are trained to take over Professor Wazi’s role in order to assure the independence of the geology department. Based on their personnel evaluation of these missions, both Professor Wazi and IOM are satisfied with the results and progress.

*Source: IOM 2007b, 6.*
skills and knowledge from migrant communities abroad to skilled workers in countries of origin (World Bank 2007).

Financial Transfers

Diaspora members are more likely to invest in their country or community of origin partly out of their personal affiliation to their home country, and partly because of their lower sensitivity to investment risks compared to international investors (Ratha, Mohapatra, and Plaza 2008). National experts living abroad also tend to be considered more trustworthy investors by government authorities and can pave the way for international investors (GFMD 2008).

Investments

While foreign direct investment can stimulate economic growth, facilitate the transfer of knowledge and technology, and generate employment, these financial transfers to developing countries remain relatively marginal compared to other financial flows.

According to the World Bank, in 2005, about US$167 billion in remittances to developing countries were sent through formal channels. Total remittances, including those sent through informal means, were estimated at over US$250 billion. For many developing countries, the amounts received through the diaspora and migrant remittances are greater than both foreign direct investment and Official Development Assistance. However, the bulk of remittances is spent on consumption rather than direct economic and income-generating activities.

Bringing recipient households into the formal financial sector is only the first step in using remittances more effectively. Country surveys undertaken by the International Monetary Fund indicate that, although households typically spend a large proportion of their remittances, their propensity to save can be as high as 40 percent (IMF 2007). For policymakers, the challenge is therefore to channel these savings into productive uses. This is one of the reasons many governments aim to mobilize the remittance flows received from abroad for investment purposes. According to the International Monetary Fund, banks located in Sub-Saharan Africa are a full part of this endeavor.
Sub-Saharan banks can indeed promote investment from remittances by bundling financial services like savings products and entrepreneurial loans for households that receive remittances. The market is currently dominated by specialized money transfer organizations like Western Union that are less likely to offer their clients ancillary financial products. Banks could also consider using the flow of remittances as collateral for small business loans (IMF 2007). The Government of Senegal, for instance, has identified several infrastructure projects as investment targets23 (Panizzon 2008).

The MIDA model seeks, in various ways, to promote and facilitate the mobilization of remittances to achieve specific development objectives.

**Private Sector Initiatives**

The diaspora can act as a catalyst in private sector development. Several initiatives exist to promote diaspora engagement in the private sector with a view of tackling development challenges and opportunities (UNDP 2004). One promising initiative targets entrepreneurs of Sub-Saharan African origin who live in Europe and are willing to support the development efforts of their home countries. The Development Marketplace for African Diaspora in Europe, launched by the World Bank in 2007 with the support of several governments, provides access to funds for pioneering entrepreneurs from Sub-Saharan Africa living in Europe and North America24 (World Bank 2009).

**Financial Assets and Enterprise Creation**

Although research on remittances has revealed much information, more analysis is needed on the effectiveness of transfer channels, remitting behavior, and the underlying social determinants guiding it. Different sending patterns between men and women,25 and the investment climate and social relations determining the productive use of financial transfers, need to be analyzed in more detail. Household surveys, such as the one conducted by IOM (2008) Moldova, are useful means to explore opportunities and tools of achieving investment and development objectives of a country with the support of financial contributions received from members of the diaspora. Factors such as access to the formal banking sector and financial products will be examined in order to design income-generating programs involving diaspora communities and countries of origin.
Access to financial services and transfer services to remit money home can empower migrants and encourage socioeconomic development. The constraints to financial services often include:

- Mistrust on the part of immigrants, which may be related to cultural factors
- A general lack of information on the services available
- Migrants may lack a bank account in the country of origin to which to send the money.

Supply-side factors include:

- Access barriers to money transfer services at banks
- The absence of electronic transaction facilities such as automated teller machines for the direct transfer of remittances
- The possibility that the remittances market is considered a marginal sector in supplies to immigrants (Frigeri and Ferro 2006).

Innovative financial products could support the development and establishment of small and medium enterprises, which in turn create job opportunities and generate income and possibly trade. Access to these funds and related services must reflect the needs and constraints of diaspora members, their families, and the home community members (Frigeri and Ferro 2006).

The initiative implemented by the Netherlands-based Internationalisation of Entrepreneurship (IntEnt) aims to link migrant entrepreneurship and development by encouraging the creation of small and medium enterprises by migrants living in the Netherlands. Over the past 11 years, IntEnt has provided financial backing to enable approximately 2,500 migrants to invest 14.5 million euros, leading to the creation of over 200 businesses and generating employment for almost 1,100 people. The principal lessons learned since the start of the program in 1996 include the relatively long time necessary to establish a business and to relocate to the country of origin, and the importance of social capital in the form of local business networks (IntEnt 2007).

To address the lack of support in identifying, managing, or developing entrepreneurial activities, IOM’s MIDA programs offer counseling and training to diaspora members, other interested business partners, and members of their communities of origin. As part of the efforts of the Government of Cape Verde to improve the investment climate in the country, the DIAS de Cabo Verde MIDA Project (DIASpora for DEvelopment of
Cape Verde), implemented by the Institute of the Communities of the Cape Verdean Ministry of Foreign Affairs and IOM, engages the public Agency for Entrepreneurial Development and Innovation (Agência para o Desenvolvimento Empresarial e Inovação) in Cape Verde to offer advice to diaspora members and their business partners from host and origin countries in the area of small and medium enterprise creation and management, and investment opportunities in strategic sectors.

During the MIDA project undertaken in Guinea, prior assessment of the local context demonstrated that the methods used in Europe and North America to stimulate the creation of microenterprises were less applicable to the rural project locations in Guinea. Based on these findings, qualified experts among the Guinean diaspora in the region of the Economic Community of West African States, instead of those living in Europe or North America, provided training to the women beneficiaries in the generation and management of microenterprises. Furthermore, the MIDA Guinea project was built in partnership with the microfinance institution Rural Credit of Guinea, which allowed participants to access small credits on more favorable terms than would be possible with other microcredit institutions. In November 2003, 56 microcredit loans were disbursed to the trainees to create or expand microenterprises. One year later, 55 microcredit loans had been reimbursed. At the end of the reimbursement period, three cooperatives were created by 50 initial beneficiaries. They were trained, in February 2005, to manage a revolving microcredit scheme. In July 2005, they welcomed 52 new members. This bank also offered support and counseling to the participants.

Tutoring and training in enterprise creation and management at specialized institutions in Ghana and Senegal are also a main feature of the MIDA Italy project. Under this project, about 30 small and medium enterprises initiated by diaspora members in their countries of origin in Western Africa received support and cofunding. The empowerment of migrant associations was the goal of this project, because their role in mobilizing support in host and home communities and in promoting productive investments of remittances, as well as building of partnerships and joint ventures, has been acknowledged. In terms of innovative practices concerning credit mechanisms for migrants and diaspora members, prepaid debit cards were developed under the Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals program, mentioned earlier. These cards function as secure money transfer facilities and thus improve financial services for migrants and their families.
Trade Promotion

Compared to foreigners, members of the diaspora have the advantage of better access to information on the investment climate and overall conditions in their country of origin. Their network of business contacts and knowledge of the market places them in a better position to develop trade relations between origin and destination countries (IOM 2005a). In addition, migrants tend to foster the so-called “nostalgia trade” of typical products of the home country that were not available beforehand or whose sales volume might increase with the number of diaspora members buying them for patriotic reasons.

In 2005, Modena province (one of nine provinces in the Emilia-Romagna region of Ghana), together with other local actors, supported the creation of an import/export cooperative—the GhanaCoop—managed by a group of migrant workers living in Modena. Part of their profits has been invested in development projects implemented in the Gomoa Simbrofo village with the purpose of creating jobs and reducing the high poverty rates (Gallina 2007).

Thanks to these commercial relations between Modena and Ghana, an import/export cooperative named “GhanaItal” was later created in Modena, and the “Migrants for GhanaAfrica” cooperative was founded in Gomoa Simbrofo, producing pineapples and fresh vegetables. Besides these productive activities, the Ghanaian community in Italy has raised funds for the electrification of their rural villages. The project is cofunded by Modena Municipality; IOM, through a program financed by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Ghanaians Association of Modena; a local bank (Emilbanca); the Arcadia cooperative; and the Emilia-Romagna regional confederation of farmers’ cooperatives.

A relevant economic aspect of the practice is the promotion of a low-cost remittance service offered to migrant workers by GhanaCoop. This service is also intended to raise contributions to cofund, together with other local actors, several social projects, such as Luce per il Ghana (Light for Ghana), completed in July 2006, with the construction of a solar plant in Gomoa Simbrofo to supply around 800 people with clean power (Ceschi and Stocchiero 2006). The economic impact of this project can be measured by the import/export flows, the remittances flows, and the number of jobs created locally (both in Gomoa Simbrofo and Modena). In addition, the project’s focus on organic pineapple farming has a positive impact on the environment.
In Italy, the social impact of the project can also be measured in terms of the perception of the migrant workers in Modena by the Italian community and by the perception of the Ghanaian workers of the Italian society (Gallina 2007:20). The project introduces some innovative elements that benefit both Italy and Ghana. GhanaCoop succeeded in inserting its own products in the Transfair (Fair Trade) channels, and in 2006 won the Ethics Award, given to the most innovative fair trade organizations. Since February 2006, typical Emilia-Romagna products have been introduced to the Ghanaian markets through the commercial links established with this project.

**Integrating Migration into Development Plans**

While the importance of migration for development is increasingly acknowledged, a structured, enabling policy environment is needed to ensure coherence and continuity of effort and, especially, the inclusion of a migration/diaspora platform in development and poverty alleviation strategies.

**Opportunities and the Way Forward**

Enhancing the positive linkages between migration and development requires coherence among potentially competing but cross-cutting policy agendas in the fields of development, health, labor, migration, security, and social welfare. Consistent and integrated policy approaches in the field of migration and development of national governments and regional and international organizations will increase the development potential of migration.

The MIDA framework aims to contribute to national, regional, and international coherence with regard to migration and development. On a national level, the MIDA framework will:

- Ensure the integration of migration into government development policies, such as national Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and national development plans
- Encourage interministerial efforts in both host countries and countries of origin, bringing together relevant ministries whose fields of responsibility directly or indirectly involve migration and/or development.
On a regional level, the MIDA framework will:

- Enhance South-South cooperation by engaging diaspora members resident in other African countries in contributing to the development of their country of origin
- Promote the sharing of skills and expertise on a regional level.

Finally, on an international level, the MIDA framework will:

- Contribute to the establishment of strategies allowing for greater international cooperation, not only between countries of origin and host countries, but also among the diaspora communities as well
- Support the creation of policies for maintenance of the legal status of the African migrants in host countries
- Contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

The African Union recognized members of the African diaspora as key players in its Strategic Plan for 2004–07. African regional economic communities are also directing their work toward strengthening ties between migration and development in Africa. Donor communities and a large range of multilateral organizations have confirmed their interest in the MIDA program and are working closely to reinforce the positive impact and image of diaspora in both countries of origin and host communities.

The African Union has adopted significant declarations and decisions targeting the involvement of the African diaspora, as follows:

- In 2001, the African Union endorsed the MIDA program during its 74th ordinary session of the Council of Ministers
- In 2002, the 25th Ordinary Session of the Labour and Social Affairs Commission in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, called upon African countries to include MIDA in their national planning processes and in their respective National Indicative Programmes
- In 2003, the African Ministers of Health called upon governments to use African health workers in the diaspora in a range of interventions aimed at harnessing their skills for the benefit of their countries of origin
- 2004 was declared the “Year for Development of Human Resources in Africa”
- In 2006, a common African position on Migration and Development was adopted, as was a Migration Policy Framework and the Joint Africa-EU Declaration on Migration and Development
In 2006, Article 21 of the African Youth Charter was adopted by the African Ministers of Youth, which states that all parties shall recognize the rights of young people to live anywhere in the world, and which generally encourages young people in the diaspora to engage themselves in development activities in their country of origin.

In 2007, the Executive Council endorsed the Decision on the Africa-EU Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development (Ex.Cl/Dec. 323 [X]) and called upon Member States to develop national plans of action, deploy resources, and report in 2008 on progress made.

All these decisions illustrate the good will and commitment of African governments to include the diaspora and migration in the continent’s policies and action plans. (See box 8.3 for examples of plans in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda.) However, the various stakeholders now

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**BOX 8.3**

**How the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda Include the Diaspora and Migration Communities in Country Policies and Action Plans**

In 2006, the Democratic Republic of Congo included the positive contribution of the expertise, knowledge, and human and financial resources of African experts to development facilitated through the MIDA project under pillar 5 of its poverty reduction strategy. This pillar describes the support of a decentralized implementation structure of the poverty alleviation plan and thus envisages the initiation of a national migration for development program. Certain activities carried out in the framework of MIDA Great Lakes in the Democratic Republic of Congo have also been inserted into the Country Assistance Framework and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (IOM 2008).

In the Rwandan Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS), to be implemented during 2008–12 (Republic of Rwanda 2007), MIDA, together with the Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals Program of the United Nations Development Programme,
need to work together to implement the decisions taken by policy makers in order for MIDA to achieve its objectives in a sustainable way. The way forward for MIDA consists of:

- Integrating MIDA into a broader development framework
- Strengthening partnerships with a large variety of interlocutors, notably, diaspora associations, the private sector, international agencies, research institutes, and recruitment agencies
- Systematically incorporating the gender dimension in all MIDA programs
- Reinforcing regional integration and cooperation for the mobilization of members of the diaspora.

BOX 8.3 (continued)

is mentioned as an ongoing activity under the umbrella of the “governance flagship programme.”

In Rwanda, the Ministry of Finance, in charge of the coordination and elaboration of the EDPRS, consulted with ministries and local authorities and the private sector. As a civil servant of the Ministry of Labour, the local MIDA coordinator has played an active role in the insertion of MIDA into the strategic plan of the Ministry. Since the Ministry of Labour is taking the lead in the “Capacity Building and Employment Promotion” sector within the EDPRS, its strategic plan, and especially the role of the diaspora, has been included within the EDPRS.

The general political support that the Government of Rwanda has given to the role of its diaspora in recent years should be recognized as an important driving factor for the inclusion of migration into the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers. Examples include the creation of a Directorate General within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in charge of diaspora, annual diaspora conferences in Rwanda, and regular meetings between the President of Rwanda and the diaspora residing abroad.

Conclusions

Diaspora members of developing countries can make valuable contributions to the development efforts of their countries of origin. To fully tap that potential, links between origin countries and diaspora members need to be developed, strengthened, or both. Building trust and fostering dialogue among diaspora members, governments, and other actors is crucial in this endeavor. Based on interactive exchanges, an environment conducive to the discussion of development actions among the key stakeholders can be created.

The MIDA operational framework provides comprehensive strategic approaches to mobilize diasporas for development. Sharing of human and financial capital through temporary and virtual return and transferring technology offer opportunities to reverse brain drain in developing countries by building critical capacity. By addressing the skills gaps as a consequence of high levels of emigration among certain professionals from developing countries, MIDA projects can facilitate the process of using the expertise, knowledge, and skills diaspora members have acquired and are willing to share with their communities of origin.

The specific characteristics of each country and region need to be carefully factored into any practical and policy approach regarding migration for development. In addition, gender concerns should be assessed and addressed in policies and programs to harness the development potential of diasporas.

Despite being important development agents, involving diaspora members in development efforts should be complemented by other strategies. Their involvement should be part of an overall human resources planning strategy that addresses skills gaps in key development sectors. Universities have a key role to play in this regard. Diaspora members can contribute to human capital formation through transferring skills to lecturers at higher education institutions and training of trainers in areas that face a manpower shortage.

Including migration in the formulation of development policy can help ensure coherent and sustainable outcomes in the long term. Therefore, a policy environment is needed that fosters including the human mobility dimension in development and poverty reduction strategies and that acknowledges and facilitates the role of diasporas in development. Currently, however, only a few countries mention diasporas and
migration in their development plans, and ways are needed to track this progress.

To assist in the process of using migration for development projects that foster diaspora contributions, governments can benefit from past experiences and insights gained from projects in various regions of the world, such as the MIDA programs and other projects based on this approach that are being implemented outside of Africa. Since these programs are linked to the priorities of the national development frameworks, their experiences can offer lessons learned and good practices on engaging diasporas in development initiatives of their countries of origin. The MIDA framework can also be extended to countries in other regions, such as Asia and Latin America, concerned with the emigration of professionals. The Migration for Development project in Latin America is one, for example, that is in its initial stages.

Notes

1. This chapter is based on Operationalizing Migration for Development Across Regions—The MIDA Experience and Beyond, International Organization for Migration 2009.

2. The authors would like to acknowledge the contribution of Meera Sethi, and to thank Gervais Appave, Christophe Franzetti, Paul Tacon, and Elizabeth Warn for their insightful comments on an earlier version of this chapter; and Ken Goenawan for his assistance.

3. In 2005, the following definition of African Diaspora was submitted to the Executive Council of the African Union for consideration by the African Union: “The African Diaspora consists of peoples of African origin living outside the continent, irrespective of their citizenship and nationality and who are willing to contribute to the development of the continent and the building of the African Union.”

4. RQN programs have been conducted in Latin America since 1974, and were expanded to Africa in 1983 and to Asia in 1989. The RQN program in Africa started with three pilot countries, Kenya, Somalia, and Zimbabwe, in 1983, and was later extended to Ghana, Uganda, and Zambia. Funded by the European Community, the resulting return of 550 nationals slightly exceeded the expected number of participants. A similar program entailing returns from the United States was implemented until 1989 and facilitated the return of 150 African experts over a three-year period (Ducasse-Rogier 2001; ICM 1987; IOM 2001). Drawing on its experience with RQN programs in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, and informed by evaluations of previous models, IOM organized a workshop in Libreville in April 2001, which provided a forum
for African countries to discuss and contribute to the development of a new
migration for development framework model (MIDA) adapted to changing
realities. In July 2001, the MIDA program was endorsed by the Organization
of African Unity (now the African Union) Council of Ministers in Lusaka in its
Decision 614, requesting IOM to encourage African countries to give migra-
tion issues greater priority in their development policy making.
5. Understood as the concept revolving around the positive contribution of
migration to development, in contradistinction to “migration and develop-
ment,” which includes the aspect of fostering economic and community devel-
opment in areas of high emigration pressure.
6. Information obtained via interview with Peter Schatzer, IOM Rome, January
16, 2009.
7. The United States Institute of Peace hosted a series of workshops, “Trans-
Atlantic Diaspora Dialogue,” October 16, 2009; “Leveraging International
Support to Build Peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo,” March 18, 2010;
and “Responsive and Accountable Leadership for a Peaceful and Prosperous
Congo: Voices of the Diaspora,” May 14, 2010, geared toward energizing
members of the Congolese diaspora to contribute more effectively to conflict
management and peace promotion in the Democratic Republic of Congo.
published_docs/Diaspora%20Dialogue.pdf.
9. Based on information obtained by Elizabeth Warn, Migration and Develop-
ment Focal Point, Labour and Facilitated Migration, IOM Headquarters
Geneva, Switzerland, via communication dated May 12, 2009.
10. The Diaspora Database, http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/pid/1810; and the
11. Each biography contains personal information and information on the educa-
tional background, professional experience, and the field in which each
woman can potentially contribute.
12. According to Helen Clark, United Nations Development Programme Adminis-
trator, “Development cannot be achieved if 50% of the population is excluded
from the opportunities it brings.”
13. The factors that shape the role of diasporas in technology transfer are related
to the broader set of factors that affect the forms and degree of engagement of
the diaspora with the source country.
14. In 2000, over 500 nurses—more than double the number of graduates that
year—left Ghana (Kingma 2007; Little and Buchan 2007). Thirteen percent
of Ghanaian nurses and midwives live in seven Organisation for Economic
Co-operation and Development countries (Canada, Denmark, Finland, Ireland,
Portugal, the United Kingdom, and the United States) (WHO 2006b).
15. The Global Forum on Migration and Development defines circular migration
as “the fluid movement of people between countries, including temporary or
more permanent movement which, when it occurs voluntarily and is linked
to the labor needs of countries of origin and destination, can be beneficial to
all involved.”
16. Information obtained via personal communication from Joost Van der Aalst, Chief of Mission, IOM the Netherlands; and Ralph Welcker, Manager, Migration and Development Department, IOM the Netherlands of May 14 and June 11, 2009.

17. For more information on the program, see http://www.iom-nederland.nl/dresource?type=pdf&objectid=iom:1414&versionid=&subobjectname=.


19. In the framework of the MIDA Great Lakes program, a doctor and member of the Congolese diaspora in Belgium has taught two courses in anaesthesiology and intensive care to over 700 students at the University of Lubumbashi, the Democratic Republic of Congo. The courses were prepared in close collaboration with the Université Libre de Bruxelles in Belgium. (Information provided by Tamara Keating, Great Lakes program coordinator, IOM Brussels, was used in this section.)

20. Information obtained via communication with Ralph Welcker, Manager Migration & Development Department, IOM The Hague, the Netherlands, May 14, 2009.

21. As stated in 2000 by Kofi Annan, former United Nations Secretary General, “the university must become a primary tool for Africa’s development in the new century. Universities can help develop African expertise; they can enhance the analysis of African problems; strengthen domestic institutions; serve as a model environment for the practice of good governance, conflict resolution and respect for human rights, and enable African academics to play an active part in the global community of scholars” (UNIS 2000). The New Partnership for Africa Development framework clearly specifies its “support of the immediate strengthening of the University system across Africa, including the creation of specialised universities where needed, building on available African teaching staff” (African Union 2001:30).

22. For more information, see: http://mida.belgium.iom.int/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=105&Itemid=111.

23. The construction of large houses for migrant workers in West Africa has spurred local economic activity through multiplier effects. In Mexico, the Sociedad Hipotecaria Federal, a government financial institution, provides long-term financing and partial mortgage insurance to Mexican mortgage providers that extend peso-denominated loans to emigrants for housing construction in Mexico. The scheme simultaneously encourages remittances and their productive use. Because of Africa’s inadequate financial infrastructure, similar schemes can be more challenging to launch there, but they can spur a sustained housing boom with positive spillovers on the real and financial sectors of the economy.

24. For more information on this program, see: www.dmade.org. Sixteen winners from seven European countries were awarded approximately 600,000 euro
for the completion of projects to be implemented in 11 Sub-Saharan African countries.

25. According to a study by AfroNeth, remittances have a gender dimension, since women among the African Diaspora send a far greater proportion of money back home than men. This is mainly for two reasons. First, women tend to have limited socializing activities outside the home due to cultural reasons and thus tend to save more than men. Second, African women in the Netherlands use a rotating credit system whereby a group of women collects money from each other that is then given as a lump sum to a single member each month (Mohamoud 2003).

26. As of the end of 2007, most migrants invested in Suriname (over 800), Ghana (over 450), Morocco (320), and the Netherlands Antilles (215). Of enterprises created, 85 percent are still in business three years on. See: http://www.ondernemenoverdegrens.nl/indexuk.htm.

27. To this end, IntEnt has created so-called “business clubs” of migrant entrepreneurs linked to existing small and medium enterprise networks (IntEnt 2007).

28. DIAS de Cabo Verde is a project promoted by the Instituto das Comunidades de Cabo Verde and cofinanced by the European Commission and the Portuguese Government. IOM is the implementing partner in the project targeting Cape Verdeans residing in Italy, the Netherlands, and Portugal. IOM organizes networking missions to Cape Verde for interested entrepreneurs of the Cape Verdean diaspora to establish or foster contacts with local actors and to assess the feasibility of the business idea to facilitate transnational partnerships by linking interest and facilities. (Based on information received via personal communication with Monica Goracci, Chief of Mission, and Marta Bronzin, Project Assistant, IOM Lisbon, Portugal, June 22, 2009.)


30. See IOM (2005a, 47) for more details. The MIDA Guinea project allows highly qualified expatriates from the Guinean diaspora to pass on the knowledge and know-how gained in destination countries to their fellow nationals at home.

31. Rural Credit of Guinea is present in remote and urban areas not covered by the classic banking system, enabling otherwise excluded rural and urban populations to access and benefit from their financial services. The reinforcement of the existing microfinance institutions was also in line with current Guinean national policies in this area.

32. Supported by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, one important outcome of the MIDA Italy project is the inclusion of the migration and development nexus in many local authorities’ cooperation and development policies, such as the policy adopted by the Milan municipality.
33. Information obtained via personal communication from Tana Anglana and Elisa Piraccini, IOM Mission with Regional Functions, Rome, June 18, 2009.
34. Information obtained via communication with Ralph Welcker, Manager Migration & Development Department, IOM The Hague, Netherlands, May 14, 2009.
35. Personal communication with Tana Anglana, MIDA Project Manager, February 22, 2007.
36. Aspects of migration and the MIDA framework have been incorporated into the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The MIDA framework has been incorporated into the Strategy Document of the Ministry of Labour and Public Service of Rwanda. The Government of Burundi has adopted a “Strategic Framework of Growth and the Right Against Poverty” (Cadre stratégique de lutte contre la pauvreté), which includes the role and importance of the diaspora for the development of the country.

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