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Transnational Diaspora Networks, Integration and Development

Keynote Presentation

Gibril Faal

Chairman of African Foundation for Development (AFFORD) / Founder of RemitAid™

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Definitions and Terms

- Immigrants
- Migrants
- Expatriates
- New Citizens
- Trans-nationals
- Diasporans

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Diaspora Characteristics

- 'Scattered' and away from 'homeland'
- Permanence or semi-permanence in current home
- Sense of belonging to an external entity
- Hyphenated identities
- Duality between 'nationality' and 'nationhood'
- Complementary, competing and conflicting loyalties

Diasporas are different from circular or recent migrants and sometimes they identify more with indigenous citizens than with new migrants. In proposed typology, they may be seen as being part of the 21st century 'cosmopolitan Diaspora'.

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The African Diaspora

“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.” (AU 2005)

- ‘Primordial Diaspora’ – Genetic Memory
- ‘Prehistoric Diaspora’ – Anthropological Memory
- ‘Oriental Diaspora’ – Historical Memory
- ‘Atlantic Diaspora’ – Ancestral Memory
- ‘*Post-War Diaspora*’ – Parental Memory
- ‘**Post-Cold War Diaspora**’ – Natal Memory
- ‘*Cosmopolitan Diaspora*’ – National Memory

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Factors Influencing Diasporas' Interest in 'Origin' Countries

- Family and social connections in 'origin' countries
- Sense of belonging to a 'nation'
- Actual or potential citizenship of a 'state'
- Aspiration for 'active' return
- Possibility of 'passive' return

The passage of time and the shrinking of space (through better communications) tends to reduce the intensity of the above factors.

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Factors Influencing Diasporas' Interest in 'Host' Countries

- Motivation for success in order to help kith and kin
- Anxiety about wanting to improve perceptions of 'nation'
- Keenness to demonstrate loyalty to new home country
- Desire for upward mobility in new community
- Duty to make life easier for future generations

The above factors are also crucial in fostering integration in host countries.

Raising of families and socio-economic success in host country tend to intensify the above factors.

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Diaspora Contributions to 'New' and 'Origin' Countries

- Financial Payments
- Economic Ventures
- Skills & Aptitudes
- New Approaches & Outlooks
- Politico-Economic Advocacy
- Socio-Cultural Influence

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Practical Framework for Diaspora & International Development

Policy Approach

- Focus on those with national, natal and parental memory
- Reconcile factors that influence 'interest in both countries

Practical Activities

- Create technical vehicles for aggregating individual contributions
- Extract investment capital from consumptive contributions
- Create enduring & sustainable legacies from current contributions

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RemitAid™: Mitigating Imperfections and Improving Impact of Remittances

- Practical Diaspora-Public-Private engagement
- Use of standard tax incentive tools
- Simple operational framework
- Innovative pooling of tax rebates
- New 'independent' remittance development fund

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Benefits of Remittance Tax Relief

Increase in productive and regenerative uses of remittances

Increase in remittances used for developmental purposes

Increase in the use of formal channels for remittance flows

More funding for enterprise and business support services

Stimulate use of health insurance & other financial products

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Benefits of Remittance Tax Relief *(continued)*

Encourage wider use of collective remittances

Promote Diaspora engagement in public private partnerships

Create tax relief parity between remitters, donors & investors

Promote migrant integration and social inclusion

Increase awareness of Diaspora contribution to development

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THANK YOU

Gibril Faal FRSA, JP

gfaal@remitaid.org

gfaal@gkpartners.co.uk

www.remitaid.org

+ 44 (0)20 7785 6343

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