

**The Role of Host Countries in
Diaspora-Driven Development:
Canadian Policy and Practice**

by

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ABSTRACT

Current research on diaspora and development has two major gaps: (1) inquiry focuses primarily on the potential of remittances and investment and overlooks the broader impacts of diaspora-driven development; and (2) the diaspora-development nexus is often considered a dyadic relationship of diaspora and their 'home' countries and overlooks the role of developed 'host' nations.

Diaspora-driven development occurs when transnational networks forged between their 'host' society and 'home' country/place of attachment, facilitate economic, knowledge, social, and political interchange.

Becoming diasporic means acquiring the agency (the awareness, commitment, and attachments to a wider community) to engage in development beyond the maintenance of familial ties and transmission of remittances. This agency requires attainment of a certain level of settlement, success, and fluency (in education, employment, integration, etc) in the host society. Various aspects of Canadian policy in regard to diasporic potential to positively impact both home and host countries are discussed.

Keywords: diaspora; development; immigration; multiculturalism; settlement; migration; Canadian policy; credentialism

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1: INTRODUCTION

The pull to return and belong; to change and yet remain the authentic self, is what most distinguishes us, the people of the diaspora, from those who refer to themselves as native born. In that tension is the quality that we of the diaspora have an uncanny recognition for; within ourselves and others who struggle with it. It is also a place of empowerment and agency, where we can claim both sides of the divide while maintaining a Janus perspective.
Juliane Okot Bitek, 2011

1.1 Overview

Academics, governments, aid agencies, and diaspora associations increasingly acknowledge that diaspora have the connection, desire, and potential/capacity to influence the development of their places of attachment, and that nurturing this is desirable. However, a comprehensive understanding of the means by which diaspora agency can be deployed and the broader endogenous and exogenous consequences of this engagement are as yet largely speculative.

Diaspora-driven development occurs when the transnational networks forged by diasporic individuals and groups between their 'host' country/place and their countries/place(s) of 'origin'/attachment facilitate economic, knowledge, social, and political interchange. These networks are underpinned by affective/sentimental, cognitive, symbolic, and ascriptive links. Current discourse on diaspora and development calls for deliberation on the role of migrant destination countries such as Canada and the international impact of what have traditionally been considered 'domestic' policies. In particular, scholars such as

Robinson stress that such policies – including those dealing with immigration, multiculturalism, settlement, and integration – appear to be formulated on “a linear and one-dimensional process that culminates in integration” rather than on current globalization dynamics that have transformed immigration into a “complex and non-linear process that transcends Canada’s national borders, but which includes integration within the Canadian State” (2005, p. 176). These policies have direct and indirect ramifications on diasporic agency in both their locations of settlement and attachment. This, in part, is because when immigrant communities have adequate access to services and employment, they are able to look beyond their basic needs and contribute to ‘host’ country development, trade, and diplomatic priorities on the local and international stage.

Within this context, this paper seeks to answer two main questions:

1. What is the potential for diasporas to contribute to the social, political, and intellectual capacity development of their countries of ‘origin’/attachment?
2. In what ways do ‘host’ country policies and practices help or hinder diasporic capacity and connection for development and how can diasporic capacity and potential be realized?

1.2 Research Objectives and Justification

There are two major objectives to this study:

1. Based on a survey of the relevant literatures, to articulate the ways in which diasporas can and do impact the economic, intellectual,

social, and political development of their countries of 'origin'/attachment and their 'host' countries; and to understand the policy, and institutional and societal structures in 'host' countries that help or hinder diaspora-driven development. The focus here is on Canada as a leading immigrant-receiving country;

2. Based on a literature survey and insights from two illustrative cases of Canadian-based diaspora originating in the global south – the Indian and Ethiopian – the second objective is to identify Canadian policies/structures most relevant to creating an enabling environment for diaspora-driven development, and the options/strategies that might be employed to better facilitate diaspora development work.

In considering the potential for diaspora to mobilize their will and capacity for development, current discourse and research has three remarkable gaps. Firstly, the diaspora and development discourse has so far been a broad discussion on the potential impacts. Most in-depth studies have tended to focus solely on the economic potential of remittances and diasporic direct investment. Thus, although diaspora can and do impact development, both positively and negatively, through the mobilization of knowledge, skills, finances, and political and diplomatic influence, little attention has been paid to the study of the non-financial impacts and wide-ranging latent potential of diaspora.

The second gap is in understanding what constitutes an enabling environment within host countries, particularly in terms of the conditions that

facilitate or impede formation of diasporic identity among immigrant groups, and ultimately help or hinder their transnational development-oriented activities. In the case of Canada, for example, while much has been written on various aspects of its long-standing multiculturalism policies, not much attention has been devoted specifically to examining the impacts of multiculturalism on Canadian-based diaspora as particular manifestations of immigrant communities.

Finally, the diaspora-development nexus is often posited to be a dyadic relationship between developing countries and their diaspora. What is generally acknowledged is that many developing countries should and do (to varying degrees) engage their diaspora in supporting development; correspondingly many diaspora have the desire, skills, and resources to do so. This paradigm does not fully reflect the triadic relationship between developing countries, diaspora, and their “host” (and usually developed) countries situated in a complex institutional and social context. Failure to consider all stakeholders and the multi-local environment within which they operate obscures the role of developed country governments and national (and international) institutions in creating the conditions to maximize the impact of diaspora-driven development.

1.3 Thesis

The central argument of the paper addresses the two main research questions. With respect to the first question -- the potential contributions of diaspora-led development -- the paper argues that diaspora have the networks, capacity, and will to contribute to development of their communities of attachment or origin in a variety of ways. Although most attention has been given

to the measurable economic potential, diasporic impacts are much broader and do not necessarily have immediately quantifiable outcomes. These non-financial impacts fall under three broad categories: (1) knowledge application through knowledge transfer, and 'brain circulation'; (2) social development through capacity development, philanthropy, and volunteerism in areas such as health and education improvement; and (3) political influence through political participation, cultural diplomacy, awareness raising, and influencing conflict.

In exploring actors and networks of diasporic development, the paper utilizes Ian Hacking's (1999) notion of "looping effects" -- feedback effects and flows of information and influence that modify both the subject and object of a network or relationship. Looping means that actors are in continuous negotiation with others about the meaning and significance of these distant development activities. Thus, the diasporic group that undertakes development activities outside Canada (in its place of attachment/origin) is altered in Canada by both the experience and consequences of the action (Busumtwi-Sam et al, 2010). Diasporic development networks can be economic, entrepreneurial, political, religious, aid/relief, kinship, etc. In addition, they vary in the degree of institutionalization -- i.e., they range from formal to informal associations -- and they also vary in their degree of 'embeddedness' in Canada -- i.e., the extent to which they reflect socio-cultural identities that are distinct and distinguishable from the 'host' society (Portes et al., 1993).

With respect to the second research question -- how Canadian policy facilitates or impedes diaspora-led development -- the project argues that

particularly in the context of doing development work, 'diaspora' is a condition attained when immigrants achieve a degree of success in a country of settlement in such areas as integration, education, and employment. Becoming diasporic in this context also requires that immigrants be allowed to express their culture to the extent that culture is important to their identity as a community. Thus, the project focuses on Canadian policy in the areas of immigration, settlement, and multiculturalism, and, where relevant to the development work of diaspora, includes policies and practices of citizenship, labour, education, and language.

The Canadian brand of multiculturalism purports to pave the way for the development of a plural and cosmopolitan society, which enables distinct communities to flourish while interacting and integrating with Canadian society as a whole. On the one hand, aspects of Canadian policy have indeed facilitated the emergence of diasporic groups; for example, Canada's accordance of dual citizenship allows immigrants to retain official connection to their countries of attachment, which paves the way for legitimizing transnational activity (Kymlicka, 2003). On the other hand, there are aspects of these policies that may not be facilitative. Here, the project builds on the ideas of Taylor (1994), who stresses the need to resist assimilation and argues that Canadian multicultural policy should seek to create the space for expression of identity "unshaped by a predefined social script" (p. 36). The Canadian form of liberal multiculturalism, which accords individual freedom – provided it is expressed within the constructs of Canadian society – lacks the accordance of equal worth of one group over another. What is missing is the recognition of the "equal value of different

cultures, that not only let them survive but acknowledge their worth” (Taylor, 1994, p. 64).

Canada is reliant upon immigration from developing countries to meet its labour demands. The ability of Canada to assist with the integration of the immigrants it accepts not only enables a more settled citizenry, but also offers opportunities for greater and more effective diaspora-driven transnational engagement. Greater cosmopolitanism and cultural fluency within Canadian institutions and structures would create the requisite competence in deepening foreign policy and engagement. Moreover, enhanced engagement of immigrants and diasporic communities would enable Canada to capitalize on the latter’s more nuanced understanding -- borne in many cases of firsthand experience, extensive networks, and conviction to contribute to Canadian internationalism -- and to have that engagement reflect the diversity and capacity of Canadian society as a whole.

Cohesive immigration and multicultural policies, settlement services, non-discriminatory employment policies and practices, and foreign credential recognition are crucial conditions for immigrants to become diasporic and for diaspora to maintain, enhance, and productively mobilize their networks. Creating the conditions for positive development influence by diaspora is in the interest of Canada, its diaspora communities, their countries of attachment, and global development. For Canada, with its global renown for internationalism and multiculturalism, incorporation of this potential in its foreign affairs may just be its comparative advantage.

1.4 Structure

A two-part literature review lays the foundation for an in-depth understanding of the scope of diaspora contributions to development and the current socio-political environment in Canada. The first section examines current literature on diaspora and development, and is organized into four basic development categories – economic, intellectual, social, and political. The second section summarizes the broad debates on Canadian policies of immigration, citizenship, settlement, and multiculturalism and includes those aspects of labour and education policies that relate to credential recognition and access to the labour market.

The next chapter comprises case studies of the Indian and the Ethiopian diaspora in Canada. These cases were chosen because of the differences in levels of settlement and establishment in Canada, the differences in development priorities of their respective home countries, and the varying types of engagement that their diaspora undertake. The Indian diaspora is primarily engaged in economic activity with India, but recognizes the need for greater focus of this economic input on social and political development. The Ethiopian diaspora, which is comparatively less wealthy and established in Canada, is more concerned with the circulation of skills and capacity building. The examination of these two cases will illustrate their respective activities and allow analysis of their motivations, capacities, aspirations, potential, and challenges.

Drawing on the two case studies, the Canadian policies that are most relevant to creating an enabling environment for diaspora-driven development

will be examined to understand how Canadian systems and structures impact their agency.

The final chapter of the paper will comprise the summative findings of the study including recommendations for Canadian policy and practice.

1.5 Defining Diaspora

The contemporary proliferation of diaspora studies is marked by an unresolved debate on the definition of the term itself both within and between disciplines. Current discourse on diaspora has two overarching flaws -- the term is often used as a euphemism for immigrant, ethnic/visible minority, or to denote a community of sojourners lacking in commitment to their “host” country.

Granted, while any or all of these characteristics may be reflected within a given diaspora they are not intrinsic to the understanding of the term. Diaspora are diverse, fluid, and contextualized by their very essence. It is their capacity to embody diversity and belong to two or more ‘worlds’ that gives them the empathy, cultural agility, and commitment to bring to bear on the development of their ‘origin’ countries.

Berns-McGown notes the increasing ubiquity of the term with particular reference to the Canadian context and contends that misuse or overuse of the term has the potential not only to entrench barriers to inclusion in society, but also to prevent full participation in the foreign policy process (2008). In addition, Brubaker cautions against the “universalization” of the term, which risks obfuscating what is useful to acknowledge, understand and explore (2005, p. 3).

Commonly cited definitions¹ favour the development of an inventory of characteristics. Safran's definition forms the foundation of this list. He states that in order for a group to be considered a diaspora, they must demonstrate six basic characteristics: 1) dispersal from an original "center" to two or more "peripheral" or foreign regions, 2) collective memory, vision, and myth of a homeland, 3) lack of acceptance in the host society that leads to alienation and insulation from the dominant culture, 4) regard of ancestral home as the true, ideal home to which they will return, 5) sense of responsibility for the wellbeing of the homeland, and 6) engagement with the homeland, personally or vicariously (1991, p. 83).

The list is a useful breakdown of diasporic phenomena, but the suggestion that it is complete, essential, and absolute imposes excessive similitude within and between diaspora. As Clifford states, "Even the 'pure' forms...are ambivalent, even embattled, over basic features. Moreover at different times in their history, societies may wax and wane in diasporism, depending on changing possibilities--obstacles, openings, antagonisms, and connections--in their host countries and transnationally" (1994, p. 306).

Imposing homogenizing criteria on a concept that has diversity of cultures, identities, and experiences at its core is limiting. Analyzing characteristics is too static a framework for a phenomenon that is dynamic and fluid, and any definition should make allowances for the constantly changing nature of the relationship with the host society, and in the identity of the diasporic community itself (Berns-

¹ For example, Kim Butler (2001) and Robin Cohen (1997) discuss and build upon William Safran's (1991) list of characteristics.

McGown, 2008, p. 6). Moreover, diaspora might be considered to be a category of practice “used to make claims, to formulate expectations...[and] to appeal to loyalties” (Brubaker, p. 12). These claims, expectations, and loyalties comprise the motivations and potential for diaspora to effect development.

While diaspora communities have a history of migration, not all migrants or immigrant communities can be considered diasporic as not all possess a sense of attachment to their community of origin, nor do they necessarily experience a sense of duality in their country of residence. This duality is not simply a matter of being an outsider (as all immigrants experience upon arrival), but it is about immigrants and their offspring developing and maintaining a diasporic ‘consciousness’ that underpins the sense of attachment to others in another location/’home’. Becoming diasporic means acquiring the agency (the awareness, commitment, and attachments to a wider community) to engage in development beyond the maintenance of familial ties and transmission of remittances. Becoming diasporic then is dependent upon immigrant communities attaining a certain level of settlement, success and fluency (in education, employment, integration, etc) in the host society.

New technologies that mark the contemporary globalization era, particularly in the area of communication and social media, are changing the face of diaspora communities and enhancing the persistence and robustness of transnational networks. Diaspora not only communicate with their countries of origin, but also with their counterparts in other countries, thus creating a strong network whereby they can share information and also maintain their culture (Abd-

El-Aziz et al, p. 10). These networks are also facilitated by advances in transportation, which enable the physical movement between home, host, and other diaspora communities.

Thus, a diaspora community can be considered to be a fluid, context-specific, and socially contingent community that is scattered and networked in multiple locations. Diaspora are often distinguishable from a dominant host culture and retain a sense of attachment and belonging to a remote location of 'origin'; essentially, they occupy a space in between their home and host locales and possess varying degrees of fluency to participate in both places. This paper focuses on diaspora communities with a history of migration from the global south and active transnational connections with their place of origin.

It should be noted that the very terms 'home' and 'host' in the diaspora discourse might be indicative of a presupposed lack of acceptance or commitment of diaspora to their destination, implying that only once they shed their diaspora identity will they be at home in their new country. This is neither the case, nor the intent of the usage in this study. The term 'home' denotes a place of original attachment, and the term 'host' denotes a place of arrival and separation from that home.

2: LITERATURE REVIEW: DIASPORA POTENTIAL FOR DEVELOPMENT

Diaspora, through their transnational networks, represent a substantial force in influencing the development of their country of origin, yet little research or analysis has been done to assess the full scope and effects of this engagement, either positive or negative.

Diasporic developmental impacts on place of origin can be broken down into four broad and overlapping categories of development: economic, intellectual, social, and political. A comprehensive and broad view of the myriad impacts lays the foundation for mapping the range and scope of diaspora activities. Furthermore, a review of academic literature on Canadian policies and practice that affect diaspora ability to engage their networks and conduct these activities will provide the context to envision an enabling Canadian environment.

2.1 Diasporic Impacts on Development

2.1.1 Economic Development: Remittances, Investment and Trade

Remittances and economic impacts in general have been the most studied area of diasporic impact on development. To date remittances and investments by the diaspora are the main source of funding for diaspora-led development.

In 2010, remittances are estimated to have reached US\$440 billion² while official Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) is estimated at US\$126 billion³. Newland et al (2004) contend that remittances have a clear impact on development, particularly in alleviating the plight of the poor to meet their basic needs. They note that countries with large remittance and diaspora-driven investment pools, such as China, India, the Philippines, and Mexico, are working to maximize on the impact of remittances and develop investment and open trade opportunities. But, they caution, unlike these emerging economies, the poorest countries do not have the capacity to take full advantage of the inflow of funds, even if there is an inevitable multiplier effect. Similarly, Abd-El-Aziz et al (2005) posit that remittances, unless they are formalized by the government, are by-and-large exchanged between individuals or families and thus only have an indirect impact on development of a nation. In addition, countries that receive large amounts of remittances sometimes experience an artificial rise in the value of their currency as demand rises, which can negatively impact development (Bose, 2008).

Foreign direct investment by diaspora is becoming a substantial economic driver, particularly in countries like China and India, which have more developed institutions through which to mobilize financial inflows (Wei et al, 2006). According to the World Bank, diaspora can facilitate investment between origin and 'host' countries through access to information on investment opportunities

² According to the World Bank's article *Remittances to Africa Resilient Despite Global Financial Crisis* at: <http://go.worldbank.org/QHU5O5E5P0>

³ According to the OECD at: http://www.oecd.org/document/41/0,3746,en_2825_495602_46195625_1_1_1_1,00.html

and knowledge about the potential risks/benefits (Plaza et al, 2011). “Productive investments” made through remittances enable the purchase or upgrading of equipment, businesses, farms, and land (Plaza et al, 2011, p. 11). In order to promote diaspora investments, particularly in times of economic strain, the World Bank recently proposed global expansion of the use of diaspora bonds issued by a country or “sub-sovereign entity” to raise financing from the diaspora (Ketkar et al, 2011, p. 127).

Where mechanisms exist, diaspora can deploy their networks to access market intelligence, connect business and investment opportunities, and transfer knowledge and technology (Brinkerhoff, 2008). Plaza et al (2011) describe two ways in which diaspora impact trade. The first is through “nostalgic trade” wherein migrants demonstrate a penchant for goods from their regions of origin and in some cases develop new markets for those goods. Secondly, transnational diaspora networks can “help to overcome information asymmetries and other market imperfections” (p. 8).

2.1.2 Knowledge Application: Skills Transfer and ‘Brain Circulation’

Much has been written about how migration from developing to developed countries contributes to both the brain drain and the loss of government investments in the education of their emigrants, although there is little consensus on how to quantify the financial loss and how to offset it. Clemens (2011) contends that while almost 50 per cent of African doctors were accredited outside their country of birth, their remittances far exceed the cost of their medical training. On the face of it this is a compelling counter-argument to ‘brain drain’,

but Clemens neglects to factor in the costs of pre-tertiary education or account for the loss in desperately needed medical services. In addition, even if these individuals did not have access to medical education, they would (as relatively educated and resourceful citizens) likely have been highly productive members of society; thus, their departure, regardless of ultimate profession, represents a loss to the national productivity.

Moving beyond the medical discussion, developing countries are working to create opportunities for the permanent return of, or temporary application of knowledge by, skilled professionals that have emigrated to developed countries. As an example, Newland et al (2004) document how countries such as Taiwan are actively engaged in attracting the reinvestment of knowledge capital from the diaspora through the establishment of a brain trust. Having suffered severe brain drain triggered by inadequate education systems, the government now tracks skilled Taiwanese in the diaspora in order to develop a multi-national network geared toward Taiwan's growth sectors that matches experience with need through posting of job opportunities.

Brinkerhoff expands the discussion of knowledge beyond the simple brain drain/circulation concept. "A total human capital approach accounts for tacit knowledge, including interpersonal skills and self-confidence... Beyond technical knowledge and skills, then, diaspora may contribute new understanding acquired in the destination country, cultural competencies and associated intermediary roles, and tacit knowledge that encompasses hybrid identities and transnational experience" (2008, p. 10). Essentially, the knowledge, language, and cultural

fluency that many diaspora possess have the potential to greatly facilitate the contextual adaptation and transfer of knowledge in transnational settings.

2.1.3 Social Development: Philanthropy and Volunteerism

Individuals in the diaspora employ their social systems and networks for development through a variety of means, including philanthropy and volunteerism. Social development can also occur through remittances and capacity building, but philanthropic and volunteer efforts of the diaspora almost exclusively focus on improving social structures such as in the areas of health and education.

While most scholars acknowledge that diaspora engagement in development is a conversation about development on both sides (at home and host locations), surprisingly, Merz et al employ a broad definition of non-institutional development as philanthropy or “private giving for public purposes” and include tangible and intangible contributions, as well as remittances and investments (2007, p. 3). Their definition of development as philanthropy is challenging in that it does not account for the difference between self-interested and more altruistic forms of giving, which the term philanthropy more commonly implies.

Brinkerhoff (2008), meanwhile, explains that philanthropic efforts by diaspora can be undertaken through diaspora-led collectives, faith-based organizations, and individually. However, some diaspora organizations evolve to become more formalized development organizations. Newland et al (2004)

include NGOs founded by the diaspora that seek no personal return on investment, as well as individual diaspora donations that can be deployed directly or through NGOs. They point out that philanthropy undertaken by the diaspora is contingent upon both the sentimental and the material capacity to give.

Volunteerism by the diaspora appears to be becoming increasingly organized and focussed on attracting skilled diaspora for short periods of input (Terrazas, 2010, p. 2). For example CUSO-VSO recently launched diaspora volunteer programs to promote social development and build institutions in Ethiopia, Guyana and Rwanda, and seeks to engage both diaspora individuals and organizations in the program⁴.

2.1.4 Political Influence: Diplomacy, Awareness-Raising, Conflict, and Political Participation

Among others, Newland et al (2004) recommend that destination countries formally recognize that diaspora can have an important role as honest brokers in international relations, particularly in times of crisis and conflict. In Canada, examples occurred during the crises in Sri Lanka (2004) and Haiti (2010) wherein diaspora Canadians lobbied the government to deploy emergency assistance after the tsunami and earthquake. Members of the diaspora, with their deep connections inside the affected communities, made impassioned and informed pleas to their fellow citizens and governments to contribute to the emergency response. Similarly, in the recent Egyptian revolution, members of the diaspora were commonly sought out by international media to provide insight and analysis

⁴ <http://www.cuso-vso.org/volunteer/diaspora/>

on the global implications of the situation given their intimate understanding of both internal and external contexts.

In the area of conflict, several scholars including Newland et al (2004) have written about the diasporic potential to contribute to conflict in both positive and negative ways. Funding from abroad can and often does help to finance and thus extend conflicts both within and across borders as was the case in Sri Lanka and Eritrea. They go on to explain that diaspora support that fuels and prolongs conflict includes funding, manpower, arms and transport, as well as skills such as technical expertise, fundraising, and financial management. They also point out that diaspora that are removed from the direct experience and danger of the conflict can become more steadfast in their positions and less willing to negotiate or compromise. While in the short-term this extension of conflict may be harmful, many diaspora argue that the ultimate outcome of diaspora involvement can have a positive long-term effect on development.

Diaspora can also moderate conflict as negotiators between warring factions or by engaging their host governments in informed and persuasive involvement in brokering peace agreements. Facilitated by a deep understanding of a conflict, an arms-length perspective on possible models for resolution gained through distance and access to information can be invaluable (Newland et al, 2004).

2.2 Stakeholders in Diaspora-driven Development

Governments, donors, and development agencies have been paying increasing attention to diaspora-driven development. Many development agencies have undertaken research and some even fund diaspora initiatives, but collaborative and concerted effort to develop policies and frameworks for true engagement of diaspora are in their infancy where they exist. Understanding the role of the major actors and stakeholders in diasporic development will shed light on their individual potential and also on opportunities for collaboration. However, acquiring this understanding is a complex exercise that often comprises differing opinions and interests within a diaspora and requires substantial engagement and trust building prior to becoming productive.

2.2.1 Diaspora Networks

According to Robinson (2005), transnational migrant networks are constructed around social (family/community), technical (trade, investment and knowledge/technology), and political (reform of conflict and political structure) ties. These networks enable diaspora to become key actors in a flexible and responsive alternative to established economic, political, social, and knowledge diffusion and development systems. These network systems serve two interdependent primary functions -- the “successful incorporation of network members into the host country” and “development of the network members’ homeland” (Robinson, 2005, p. vii).

While there is limited comprehensive data on diaspora in Canada, two reports⁵, authored by diasporic associations in Canada articulate the motivation and modalities by which diaspora can positively influence the development of their home countries, and highlight deficits in four major policy areas – immigration and settlement, multiculturalism, development, and international affairs. Analysis of these reports form the foundation of the case study section of this project and are elaborated upon in that section.

2.2.2 Developing Countries

Newland et al (2004) observe that while some origin country governments are indifferent or even hostile to their diaspora, many (such as Rwanda, Mexico, and Israel) are recognizing and encouraging an exchange with diaspora for development. They point out that diaspora strategies rely on nurturing patriotic sentiments, which might be facilitated by making dual nationality allowances to second and subsequent generations of diaspora communities. The authors present a variety of national strategies that have been tailored to the needs, potential, trends, and realities of specific countries and their diaspora. The strategies recognize that the impact diaspora will have is contingent upon their continued attachment to and sense of common identity with their country of origin, macro-economic policies that enable remittances and investment, and

⁵ These are: Building Bridges: A Case Study on the Role of the Indian Diaspora in Canada by Bhargava, K., Sharma, J.C., & Salehi, S. (2008), and Semantics Aside: the Role of the African Diaspora in Africa's Capacity Building (Case Study: Ethiopia), and Enabling Diaspora Engagement in Africa: Resources, Mechanisms and Gaps by African Higher Education and Development (2007).

economic and legal institutions that enable efficiency and security of monetary and other transactions.

In 2000, 89 countries allowed dual citizenship and innovative ways of engaging their diaspora. For example, Mexico has allotted a certain number of positions for elected diaspora representatives in state parliament (Brinkerhoff, 2008). In the case of Eritrea, most expatriates voluntarily remit 2% of their annual income to their country with “near universal compliance and minimal resentment” in exchange for their ability to participate in the political process, such as drafting and ratifying the new constitution (Newland et al, 2004, p. 9).

Sidel argues that rather than looking at states as either eager or suspicious beneficiaries of diaspora engagement, they should be assessed along a spectrum of supportive to restrictive state responses, and adds that states can be “at once supportive, rent-seeking or inquisitive, and restrictive or controlling depending on the specific policy question” (2007, p. 26). States respond positively to diaspora engagement by loosening controls and restrictions to this engagement. This often happens because of alliances, both within the diaspora and between the diaspora and non-diaspora intermediaries that pressure governments to put the necessary policies and mechanisms in place.

2.2.3 International Agencies and Donors

In order for diaspora to have a greater development impact, donors need to engage in “smart and careful programming, backed through country-specific understanding of Diaspora and the dynamics of their interaction with their

countries of origin” and the necessary diligence and investment to be able to maximize the impact (Newland et al, 2004, p. v). “A twin challenge for donors is to build capacity in diaspora organizations that originate among the poor to work with other groups in ways that will reach beyond the self-interest of more privileged communities” (Newland et al, 2004, p. 23). In addition, it is important to build capacity in diaspora communities to enable them to be more effective and/or scale up their development activities, both at a personal and institutional level.

International organizations, such as the African Union (AU) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) have articulated the benefits of and mechanisms for engaging diaspora in development. For example, the AU African Citizens Directorate and serves the African diaspora, which the AU calls the 6th region of Africa⁶.

Newland et al (2004) call for donors to first undertake research on the issue of diaspora and development. This research should also include the understanding of different diaspora and the internal dynamics. Meanwhile, Brinkerhoff notes that little programming is taking place, and what does exist is “research-oriented and exploratory, or focuses on remittances.” However, she points out that some newer initiatives are taking a more pragmatic approach – for example, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs has an official mechanism by which they consult diaspora on development issues (2008, p. vii).

⁶ www.africa-union.org/cido.htm

2.2.4 Developed Countries

Developed country governments have thus far primarily focused on immigration and multicultural policies that take into account their own national social cohesion and economic growth when considering diaspora populations; ironically, the failure to fully engage diaspora is in fact a failure to recognize a tremendous resource for economic growth and global relations.

Abd-El-Aziz et al (2004) present the cases of the Filipino and Sudanese communities in Manitoba to demonstrate that diaspora play a significant role in providing support, services, and networks for new immigrants, which in turn enable them to become better integrated and productive members of their new home. They also demonstrate how the Provincial government works with diaspora to enhance business opportunities between Canada and the Philippines. While this engagement between government and diasporic communities is commendable, the levels of engagement in Canada more broadly appear to lack depth in understanding all factions of a diaspora, innovation, long-term vision, and impact at the national level.

2.3 Canadian Policy and Practice

The need for coherence in Canadian policy and practice is articulated in a variety of papers and studies. Abd-El-Aziz et al (2004) outline the ways in which different diaspora groups are undertaking development and how they affect and are affected by the Canadian policy environment. Robinson (2005) has done considerable work in making the link between so-called domestic Canadian policies and their international implications when considering diasporic

transnationalism. For Canadian public policy-making, he advocates an “understanding of contemporary international migration as a transnational-network” which facilitates “successful economic and social incorporation of network members into the host country; and engagement in the economic development of network members’ homeland” (p. 214).

The challenge faced by Canadian government bodies is in identifying veritable representatives of a specific community and, to a lesser extent, safeguarding against vested interests. Here, a concerted effort to engage and understand diverse members of diasporic communities, would not only provide better information on values and interests, but also enable the building of trust and identification of key representatives with which to work⁷. Furthermore, Newland et al (2004) emphasize the importance of donor governments ensuring policy coherence across departments of government, including immigration, settlement, multiculturalism, overseas development, and international affairs. Community engagement done on behalf of the collective could assist in creating this coherence and understanding.

2.3.1 Immigration, Settlement and Multiculturalism

Canada is often heralded for its unique and successful pluralistic model of multiculturalism. Many claim that Canadian multiculturalism, which has branched out from the founding French and English cultures, is “an asset of enormous

⁷ Organizations such as The Mosaic Institute have already done much in this regard, particularly in conflict-torn countries. <http://www.mosaicinstitute.ca/index.html>

global value” (Aga Khan, 2010, p. 4). Indeed, multiculturalism is often lauded as a fundamental pillar of Canadian identity⁸.

Academic literature has been marked by a debate over the tensions in Canadian multiculturalism over diversity/difference, citizenship, and the assimilation and integration of immigrants. Adopting a liberal perspective with a focus on individuals, Kymlicka, for example, suggests that success in immigrant integration into Canadian society is based on “consensus on citizenship policy⁹” for five reasons: 1) there is a “modest” requirement to demonstrate basic understanding of Canadian language, history, and institutions; 2) there is no expectation of renunciation of one’s previous identity demonstrated, he contends, by the accordance of dual citizenship; 3) public resources are available to help immigrants meet the basic citizenship requirements laid out in number 1; 4) non-citizens are accorded civil rights, social benefits, and access to the labour market; and 5) the repudiation of ethnically discriminating immigration policies in the 1960s (2003, p. 197-198). Kymlicka goes on to propose that these requirements of citizenship are appreciated and even celebrated by new Canadians.

While these citizenship requirements have contributed to immigrant integration, others argue they do not go far enough. Adopting a communitarian perspective that focuses on groups, Taylor, for example, sees these citizenship requirements as homogenizing mechanisms designed to chart the course for ultimate assimilation into a Canadian culture and society founded on Anglo-

⁸ Many ethnic minorities would claim to have had experiences that contradict this view.

⁹ Although he does not explain who is involved in according this ‘consensus’.

Saxon, Judeo-Christian ideals. Furthermore, Taylor argues that the current attempt to protect and celebrate Canadian cultural diversity denies the dialogical process wherein individuals and groups can engage in an evolving exchange of cultures and values. Pursuing the ideal of equal treatment of all peoples, regardless of their history, means, and needs has led to what he calls the “politics of difference” where the “distinctness has been ignored, glossed over;” this lack of recognition of difference creates pressure to assimilate into a dominant culture (1994, p. 38). The Canadian tendency to be “difference blind,” creates an environment that does not dignify or accommodate difference as it seeks uniformity (p. 40). Hence, Taylor calls for ‘politics of recognition’ (1992) that embrace cultural differences beyond the token recognition of largely aesthetic, and politically/morally ‘neutral’ (i.e., non-offensive to dominant Canadian values and sensibilities) expressions of cultural identity. Bannerji (2000) takes this idea further by pointing out that the current discourse of diversity and multiculturalism assumes a flat structure that does not consider social hierarchies of broader concepts of culture, such as race, religion, and gender. This expanded understanding of culture goes beyond the confines of defining immigrant groups based on artefacts of culture such as food and dress is essential to multiculturalism.

Often immigrants and their offspring are accused of resisting the adoption of their host country’s culture. However, this seeming lack of willingness on the part of new Canadians requires analysis beyond the superficial noting of neighbourhoods built around ethnicity and the continued use of languages other

than French and English¹⁰. Alienation of immigrants creates barriers to integration. When they are constantly told they are outsiders, they remain outsiders for longer. Reitz et al state “inequalities arising from racial bias or discrimination may contribute to a sense of unfairness or injustice, which breeds resentment and alienation, and perhaps eventually a withdrawal of support for mainstream institutions” (2009, p.26). In addition, as Davies contends, “[i]n a world commonly depicted as constituted by a system of nation-states, diaspora stand out as one of the ‘awkward’ collective identities which are ‘neither here nor there’;” diasporic groups are assumed to resist assimilation and the associated suspicion serves to “further engender group cohesion and a sense of difference within the host society” (2000, p. 26).

An environment that enables and encourages diaspora to pursue and strengthen their own networks, whether in Canada or transnationally, would serve to recognize rather than gloss over the difference, build trust rather than alienate, and embrace community rather than promote ghettoization, and thus encourage the creation of two-way exchange of information and experience among and between diaspora communities and Canadian society as a whole. In turn, this multi-directional exchange could lead to greater integration of diaspora communities into Canadian society and structures, and facilitate the application of diaspora resources for the development of both Canada and their countries of attachment.

¹⁰ For a more in depth discussion on racial discrimination of minority immigrants, see: Reitz and Banerjee, “Racial Inequality, Social Cohesion, and Policy Issues in Canada.” In *Belonging? Diversity, Recognition and Shared Citizenship in Canada*, edited by Keith Banting, Thomas J. Courchene, and F. Leslie Seidle. Montreal: Institute for Research on Public Policy, 2007. Pp. 489-545. <http://www.utoronto.ca/ethnicstudies/ReitzBanerjeeRev.pdf>

2.4 Summary

Diaspora activities for development can be broken down into four main categories: (1) economic development through remittances, investment, and trade; (2) intellectual development through skills transfer, capacity building, and brain circulation; (3) social development through capacity building, volunteerism, and philanthropy; and (4) political development through diplomacy, awareness raising, transforming conflict, and political participation.

Diaspora mobilize their efforts to 'give back' to their locations of origin through a system of overlapping social, economic, intellectual, and political networks. Social networks operate on national, familial, community, and religious bonds and can be considered to be the foundation of diaspora networks. At a basic level, these social networks are primarily oriented to benefitting those in developing countries through social programs, family remittances, and community development projects. Economic networks are more likely to have benefit to both developed and developing country stakeholders as they focus on (profit motivated) investment and trade. Intellectual networks generally require at least a minimal level of institutional capacity to seek out, recognize, and mobilize exchange. Political networks can be broken into 'formal' state-sanctioned efforts to engage diaspora in the national political process, and 'informal' wherein diaspora support a particular group, primarily during conflict.

With the current trend of increasingly diverse immigration, primarily from the global south, Canada, as a global leader in multiculturalism, is at a crossroads in terms of needing to update its policies and practices to keep pace

with its changing demographic. With the advent of globalization and its technological advances, transnational communities are able to maintain close contact and thus continue to share ideological and personal values relatively unimpeded. In order to maximize the potential of these new realities, Canada needs to devise a way to integrate the needs and aspirations of its newer populations into the fabric of Canadian society as a whole.

Developing a clear and relevant strategy for engagement will require considerable investment in broad understanding of diaspora communities and the internal dynamics among the various government agencies that influence the development of diaspora in Canada and their efforts to contribute to their locations of attachment. As a starting point, the next section will examine the case studies of two rather different diasporic groups in Canada (the Ethiopian and Indian diaspora) in order to shed some light on some of the core issues that need to be addressed.

3: CASE STUDIES: ETHIOPIAN AND INDIAN DIASPORA IN CANADA

The issue of embracing diaspora in Canadian policy and practice is important. Canada has at its disposal a diverse population that if fully recognized and carefully mobilized has the potential to be contributors to Canada's success. However, the global economic downturn that began in 2008 presents an unprecedented risk of anti-immigrant expression borne of domestic protectionism of jobs and resources¹¹.

Canadians who are at liberty to maintain and express aspects of an alternate (non-mainstream) and traditional-yet-fluid (rather than assumed or imposed) identity have the potential to forge transnational networks that can benefit both Canadian society and Canadian international relations. The freedom to express identity and form community is what Taylor describes "social imaginary" whereby individuals imagine their social surroundings within groups who share a common understanding, common practices, and a widely held sense of legitimacy, and is the foundation of the development of a diasporic community (2007, p. 119).

¹¹ This is most often misplaced and fear-driven, and can lead to sometimes devastating acts such as was recently seen in Norway when Anders Breivik killed approximately 85 people as a result of his irrational fear of Muslims and other outsiders. In Canada, an article in the Globe and Mail newspaper on September 19, 2011 on the Ontario government proposal to offer employers a training tax credit for employing professional immigrants was greeted with overwhelmingly negative comments citing high unemployment for Canadians (<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/ontario-election/ontario-liberal-plan-to-aid-immigrant-employment-raises-question-of-fairness/article2170795/>).

It is useful to look comparatively at two rather different diasporic communities in Canada, both possessing a social imaginary that includes the commitment to engage, as Canadians, to improve the situation of their home nations. The Ethiopian and Indian diaspora in Canada differ in terms of their length of time in Canada, their relative establishment, their size, their access to resources, and their level of organization in Canada. In addition, there is disparity in the relative development of their home nations in terms of economy, security, institutions, and access to social services such as health and education. Both groups have established diasporic organizations that aim to increase interaction between Canada and their home countries, and have expressed the need to address Canadian policy deficits in creating a facilitating environment for their transnationalism. The figure below provides some comparative data on Ethiopia and India and their communities in Canada.

Table 1: Comparative Data on Ethiopian and Indian Emigration to Canada

	<i>Ethiopia</i>	<i>India</i>
Population 2010	84.97 M	1,170.94 M
International migrant stock (and as % of total pop.) 2010	0.55 M. (0.64 %)	5.44 M. (0.46 %)
Net migration 2010	-300,000	-1,000,000
Emigration rate % tertiary educated population 2000	9.8 %	4.3 %
Poverty ratio: % of pop. below US\$1.25 per day 2005	39.0 %	41.6 %
GDP per capita (current US\$) 2010	US \$ 349	US \$ 1,476
Remittances in current US\$ (and as % of GDP) 2009	261 M (0.92 %)	49,468 M (3.6 %)
Number of immigrants in Canada*	13,515	306,860
% of pop. in Canada with tertiary education*	32.5%	40.6%

All data from World Bank *World Development Indicators*, except * data from www.stats.oecd.org. Data downloaded July 30, 2011.

3.1 The Ethiopian Diaspora in Canada

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) *Human Development Report 2010* ranks Ethiopia at 157 out of 169 countries on the Human Development Index, well below the regional average. A recent history of civil unrest, repeated and devastating droughts and famines, and the secession of Eritrea in 1992, have all taken their toll on the country's economy and infrastructure, and have contributed to the departure of many Ethiopians seeking refuge and economic opportunities. The country has a duly prepared poverty reduction paper, which articulates the predictable focus on the MDGs, gender empowerment, and economic growth among its priorities. Development priorities include improving the transportation and communication, tourism, investment, and health sectors (Belai, 2007).

The data shown in Table 1 reveals that although Ethiopians living in OECD countries are generally highly skilled, there is relatively little economic return to Ethiopia in the form of remittances. This could be explained by a variety of social and economic factors; two of these influences warrant further exploration in the context of Canadian policy– the level of desire or connection to give back, and the means and infrastructure by which to do so.

Ethiopian migration to Canada began in the 1970s, and rose with the acceptance of refugees in the 1980s, many of who arrived via other African or

European countries. Many Ethiopian refugees struggle with post-traumatic stress, concern for their families, alienation, and survivor guilt¹²

The collective development efforts of the Ethiopian diaspora in Canada are most visibly handled by the Association for Higher Education and Development (AHEAD). According to their website¹³, AHEAD is a non-profit organization founded in 1999 by a group of nine Ethiopian-Canadians who donate their time expertise and resources to advance its objectives. The two main objectives of AHEAD are to explore, solicit, acquire and deliver educational materials and medical equipment that help advance education in Ethiopian universities and colleges, and to facilitate partnerships between Ethiopian and Canadian institutions in order to encourage the exchange of expertise and the mobilization of resources. In other words, AHEAD seeks to enhance and mobilize diaspora networks for the purpose of the social and intellectual development of Ethiopia. They do this through the development of knowledge networks and bursaries, and the donation of medical books and equipment. AHEAD also deploys volunteers in a variety of sectors (in partnership with CUSO-VSO), and conducts research on Ethiopian settlement and diaspora engagement in Canada.

In its 2007 report, AHEAD articulates its purpose as follows:

The purpose of [our activities] is not about the past. It is about the future. It is not about mistakes; it is about corrections. It is not about who is wrong and who is right. It is about lessons learned. It is not about failed duties, it is about paying back our country. It is not about brain drain, it is about reversing it. Our long-term objective is to coordinate and channel the resources, expertise and creativity of

¹² <http://multiculturalcanada.ca/Encyclopedia/>

¹³ <http://www.aheadonline.org/>

Ethiopians in the Diaspora toward development efforts in the motherland.

(Belai, 2007, foreword.)

The Ethiopian diaspora have an unquestionable desire and commitment to contribute to Ethiopian development but they encounter policy and program gaps in enabling them to do so. These gaps are articulated at three levels – institutional (national and international), African government, and the Canadian government (Belai, 2007).

The Ethiopian government has established an Ethiopian Expatriate Affairs General Directorate within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which connects the government and diaspora in order to increase the level of socio-economic involvement of the diaspora, safeguard the rights and privileges of Ethiopians abroad, and engage the diaspora in international image-building efforts. In addition, the Diaspora Coordinating Office in the Ministry of Capacity Building seeks to facilitate knowledge and financial transfers to Ethiopia (Belai, 2007, p. 37-38). The Ethiopian government has also mandated its overseas missions to engage diaspora; the Ethiopian Embassy in Toronto offers investment information and advice, capacity building, and information gathering on the diaspora in Canada.

The Ethiopian case study documents a deep commitment and effort by the Ethiopian diaspora to engage in the betterment of Ethiopia. This commitment appears to stem from a collectivist culture (that places high importance on family and community connections that help sustain the transnational networks) and

strong desire to fulfill the responsibilities and act according to these values (Belai, 2007). This points to a need for Ethiopians in Canada to develop the agency to carry out their work.

Canadian immigration, settlement, and labour policies and practices present barriers in several areas. Beyene (2000) identifies several gaps in settlement services available for newly arrived Ethiopians. These include the need for assistance with seeking employment in jobs that are commensurate with their experience, with accessing opportunities for skills upgrading, and with orientation and settlement needs such as finding accommodation and accessing social services. The study found that newly arrived Ethiopians experience barriers to settlement through racial and credential discrimination, and they feel that better government services, through Ethiopian representation in government bodies, better information services for new immigrants, and opportunities for networking between diaspora professionals would assist them in overcoming these hurdles to becoming productive Canadian citizens (Beyene, 2000). Paradoxically, new arrivals to Canada use existing services less than do the rest of the population, which the study speculates is due to incongruence between available services and need.

With regard to their desire to contribute to the development of Ethiopia, Belai suggests that provisions to support the utilization of immigrants' skills for development would allow immigrant professionals currently experiencing barriers to find adequate employment upon arrival in Canada to return to their home countries to work while continuing to qualify for citizenship (2007, p. 101-102).

The report recommends that measures be put in place so that diaspora undertaking international assignments can also be assured of continued job security and benefits in Canada. For example, posting of diasporic civil servants in their home countries would allow new immigrants to continue to qualify for citizenship and gain so-called 'Canadian experience' working for a Canadian government body, while fulfilling their responsibilities to their home countries and reducing demand for publicly-funded settlement services (Belai, p. 103).

The report calls for the formalization of mechanisms and funding by the Canadian government and universities through which diaspora can utilize their skills and knowledge to support international development efforts and offset the effects of brain drain (Belai, p. 104). Suggestions include the creation of a database of skills and associated funding for deployment of professionals such as scientists, running of pilot projects that bring the Canadian government and diaspora communities into partnership, university-led exchange programs, and volunteer placements.

The final recommendation related to multicultural, settlement, and immigration policy is the removal of "barriers to full participation of diaspora communities in Canadian professional life" (p. 107). The report cites barriers such as non-recognition of credentials and experience, racial and gender discrimination, and other "immigrant specific barriers to labour market entry or internal labour market mobility" (p. 107). The report reflects a common frustration that Canada's encouragement of skilled immigrants is not reflected in the rigid non-recognition of credentials upon arrival and states, "about 25% of university-

trained recent immigrants to Canada are employed in jobs that require a high school diploma or less” (p. 107). Here Belai commends Canada on establishing of the Canadian Agency for Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Credentials¹⁴, but questions the lack of activity by the agency thus far (p. 108).

As Belai suggests, while efforts and discussion have begun on some aspects, what is required is “genuine and full collaboration of all stakeholders” to support diaspora in working” in their countries of attachment (2007, p. iii).

3.2 The Indian Diaspora in Canada

India emerged from almost 100 years of British colonial rule in 1947 and, after China, is the world’s second most populous country with over 1.2 billion people. It is among the world’s ten largest economies, yet it has a large population living below the poverty line. The country is known for its religious and cultural diversity, which persist in its diaspora. In 2001, Statistics Canada reported over 713,330 who identified themselves as people of Indian origin (including second or third generation Canadians), and predictions are that Indians will be the largest visible minority in Canada by 2017 (Bhargava, Sharma, & Salehi, 2008, p. 15). The proportion of Indians in Canada with a university education is about twice the Canadian average, they have higher employment rates (64 per cent compared to 62 per cent of the general population), but their

¹⁴ A search for the website, led to a website that would not load. However, HRSDC has implemented a Foreign Credentials Recognition Program, which lists in its completed activities a variety of research projects, dialogues, database development on current credential requirements, and the development of tools and training for immigrants. There is no evidence of changes to credentials, and the last activity appears to have been completed in 2008.

income is 10 per cent lower than the national average (Bhargava et al, 2008, p. 15-16).

According to Bhargava et al despite the great diversity and origins of Indians in Canada, there is unity in a sense of Indian identity, which holds potential in mobilizing the diaspora and promoting cosmopolitanism in Canada and India. However, others¹⁵ have questioned the validity of an 'Indian diaspora' particularly because immigration out of India has been going on for centuries and many ethnic Indians are in fact twice or more removed from their Indian roots¹⁶. Bhargava et al (2008) place importance on the role of Canadian institutional support in both the development of Indian identity in Canada and in forging links with India. Given that many people of Indian ethnic origin have not arrived in Canada directly from India, this common identity might largely be based on ethnicity, but the diversity of language, religion, migration history and other factors make this link somewhat tenuous. For example, some people of Indian origin such as the Ismaili community, many of who arrived here after two generations in East Africa, feel at certain times an equal or greater sense of attachment to East Africa as they do to India. This demonstrates a diasporic identity that is dynamic, contingent, and context-specific; "the metaphor of hybridity captures the multiple, provisional, contingent and dynamic amalgams of diasporic identity" (Busumtwi-Sam et al, 2010).

¹⁵ For example, Stephen Vertovec has written extensively on South Asian diaspora communities and in his book *The Hindu Diaspora: Comparative Patterns* even questions the viability of a single Hindu diaspora.

¹⁶ For example, there are large populations of Indians in Fiji and eastern Africa, who now form a substantial portion of the so-called Indian diaspora in Canada. While many remain connected to their Indian roots through food, dress, social rituals, and religion, many have a distant understanding of India and its current realities.

Indo-Canadians make up 3 per cent of Canada's population and given their long-standing presence in Canada, Indian communities are well established and have the education, economic means, and social commitment to provide integration and settlement support to new Canadians. In addition, Bhargava et al (2008) state that although Indo-Canadians participate in the political arena, Canadian policy and politicians have inadequate understanding of their needs in Canada and their desire and potential to forge links with India.

The Government of India established a Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA)¹⁷, which grants the Indian diaspora certain rights through the Overseas Indian Certificate. These rights do not include political or citizenship rights. The MOIA provides services for knowledge and technology transfer, increasing investment and trade, improving health care, increasing diaspora understanding of India and its culture, establishing education collaborations, and some legal and financial assistance programs.

Despite the perceived inadequate policy and institutional support in promoting Indian settlement and transnational networks, the Indian diaspora in Canada contributes to India's development primarily through economic means (trade, investment, and remittances), and seeks to cultivate its knowledge and business networks for social development, particularly in promoting democracy, multiculturalism, and gender equality (Bhargava et al, 2008).

In the area of trade and investment, Canada has begun to recognize the economic potential of promoting trade with India and has held two government

¹⁷ <http://moia.gov.in/services.aspx?id1=24&idp=24&mainid=23>

missions accompanied by members of the Indian diaspora to India for this purpose. In June 2011, Canada, with the diaspora-led Canada-India Business Council, hosted the *Pravasi Bharatiya Divas* (Day of Overseas Indians) with the aim of increasing economic links with India through the diaspora¹⁸.

For knowledge exchange and intellectual development, the diaspora is active in bilateral institutions such as the *Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute*, which aims to promote “intellectual and cultural linkages through research, dialogue and exchange”¹⁹. However, Bhargava et al (2008) call for improved mechanisms to support educational linkages for the purposes of student recruitment and collaborative research. In this regard, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada recently held a meeting with Canadian universities and Indian government officials to discuss opportunities for collaboration, which signals Canada’s recognition of the potential benefit.

Specific recommendations to enhance Indian diaspora contributions to both India and Canada include policy changes for immigration, enhanced credential recognition mechanisms, improved integration policies and services in Canada, the encouragement of civic and political engagement of the Indian diaspora in Canada, support for bilateral institutions and collaborative research, and strengthening linkages with the Canadian diaspora in India. The survey of the Indian diaspora in Canada revealed that only 14 per cent of respondents felt that Canada was “very effective” in capitalizing on the potential of the diaspora (Bhargava et al, 2008).

¹⁸ http://www.international.gc.ca/media_commerce/comm/news-communiqués/2011/156.aspx

¹⁹ <http://www.sici.org/>

3.3 Comparing the Ethiopian and Indian Diaspora

The Ethiopian and Indian diaspora are different in several ways. Ethiopian immigration to Canada began in the last 30 years and Ethiopia is one of the poorer countries of the world. In contrast, Indian immigration to Canada began well over a century ago and India is considered one of the emerging global economic forces. It is worth noting that Indian immigration to Canada began around the same time as the arrival of many European communities after World War I. Yet, like other visible minority groups (such as the Chinese whose arrival predated that of the Indians), they are still often thought of as newcomers/outside and seen to be a threat to the Euro-centric culture of Canada. For example, Bhargava et al state that:

Canada has struck a delicate but largely successful balance between the French language and culture and the English, as well as between Catholicism and Protestantism. But with the opening of Canada to non-whites to serve its economic needs has [sic] created 'multiculturalism via biculturalism' which requires some degree of integration into either British or French culture (2008, p. 93.)

Over time and through subsequent generations, the Indian diaspora have attained participation in civil society and political institutions, achieved relatively high levels of employment and professional achievement, and amassed financial and institutional resources in Canada. The current focus on economic networks in engaging with India is likely an outcome of their relative success in Canada as well as the greater ability of institutions in India to absorb and benefit from these transnational connections. In contrast, years of armed conflict and absence of food security have left Ethiopia relatively under-developed. Emigration from Ethiopia has largely been a result of this insecurity and migrant communities are

disadvantaged by the additional characteristics that are common with refugees, such as trauma, poverty, and low education levels.

Despite the different immigration history and economic means, both the Indian and Ethiopian diaspora maintain an active desire to remain transnational and to contribute to the development of their communities of origin. Both groups highlight the need for more informed and nuanced immigration and settlement policies, better acknowledgement of the potential that the diaspora possess in forging bilateral relations with their respective countries, and greater resources to support collaborative ventures such as joint research. In the case of India, they call for the facilitation of bilateral private sector partnerships. For Ethiopia, in light of the less established economic institutions and opportunities, Ethiopians call for funding to support the capacity building of the diaspora so that they can do the work that they wish to do.

4: LINKING DIASPORA AND CANADIAN POLICY

The technological, communication, and transportation advances of the globalization era have given rise to more tangible and productive transnational networks that offer unprecedented facility for diaspora to carry out development. The success of diaspora-driven development is largely dependent on the policies and institutions that influence diaspora settlement and engagement in their country of residence. In other words, “a Diaspora’s capability to build bridges successfully between home and host country is directly proportional to the success and broadly perceived merits of its member’s contributions to the polity, economy, and society of the host country” (Bhargava et al, 2008, p. 19-20). In essence, success in the host country not only benefits the host country, but also leads to greater potential for return to the home country.

Many developing country governments seek to attract the human and financial resources available in their diaspora through the creation of offices to encourage collaboration through the development of economic, political, social, and knowledge networks. At the same time, many diaspora are working to enhance their rights in their countries of origin through dual citizenship, investment, and voting rights. The weaker link in the triadic relationship between diaspora, home, and host countries is developed immigrant-receiving countries such as Canada and their associated government departments, which have been particularly slow to create an environment that enables ongoing connection and

nurtures the hybridity of Canadian diasporic communities. As such, relevant policies lack coherence and reflect an outdated and incoherent view of immigration, integration, labour, overseas development, and international affairs.

4.1 Global Migration

According to the UN Population Division's statistics on *International Migrant Stock: 2008 Revision*, migrants make up approximately three per cent of the world's population. Migration to high-income countries has risen from 7.2 per cent in 1990 to a 10.3 per cent projection for 2010. International migration is predicted to involve greater complexity and ethnic diversity due to "new global political and economic dynamics, technological revolutions and social networks" (IOM, 2010, p. 3). A projected growth in the labour force and a stagnating labour market in developing countries, and a simultaneous shortage of labour due to an aging population and low birth rates in developed countries, will mean a continued rise in temporary and circular migration, and the loss of skilled workers from the developing world (IOM, 2010, p. 4).

National and international bodies are increasingly concerned with the relevance of migration to security, economic growth, cultural coherence, and development. "Migration is considered one of the defining global issues of the early twenty-first century, as more and more people are on the move today than at any other point in human history" (IOM, 2009, para. 1). A greater racial mix of migrants has given rise to a new level of paranoia and xenophobia (Poku et al, 2000, p. 2). Recently, this anti-immigrant sentiment has been exacerbated by the global economic downturn and associated fears of job insecurity in developed

nations. Moreover, the ever-increasing numbers of migrants, decreasing cultural homogeneity within nations, and hardier transnational networks have necessitated a new paradigm in protecting territorial boundaries and national identities that states such as Canada are grappling to define (Adamson, 2006, p. 175).

4.2 Immigration in Canada

In Canada, the Citizen and Immigration Canada (CIC) 2002 *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* categorizes permanent immigrants into three categories that align with its three main immigration objectives: reuniting families, contributing to economic development, and protecting refugees. Family class immigrants are sponsored by close relatives and serve to promote settlement of immigrants as family reunification enhances stability, a sense of belonging, and investment in the new host state. Economic immigrants are intended to contribute to Canada's economy through skills and investment and to fill a need in the national labour market. Finally, refugees are those that are admitted on humanitarian and compassionate grounds²⁰ (CIC, 2008, p. iii). CIC historical data shows that between 1860 and 1962, the majority of immigrants to Canada were of European descent. Except for the large intake of Hungarian refugees in 1956 and 1957, immigration during this period was primarily in the category of economic development and family reunification.

²⁰ It is, of course, possible for immigrants to fit under all three immigration objectives and be seeking refuge, reunification with their family, and economic prosperity.

Between 1988 and 2008, the percentage of the population classified as permanent resident immigrants was kept fairly steady at between 0.6 to 0.9 per cent. Over the same period, the ratio of categories of immigrants also remained fairly stable, with family immigrants hovering around the 25 to 30 per cent mark, economic immigrants rising from around 50 to around 60 per cent, and refugees remaining around the 10 per cent mark. There have been no notable changes since 2001, except for a slight increase in the number of “other immigrants,” who are those admitted under exceptional circumstances, including on humanitarian grounds (CIC, 2008).

For the most part developing country immigrants and diaspora are also visible minorities. While conflation of the two demographic groupings is obviously not absolute, there is, as has been articulated in the sections on defining diaspora and multiculturalism, substantial overlap in the issues and identification of these groups; thus understanding the dynamics and experience of visible minority immigrants in Canada is important to creating the necessary structures and systems to develop and deploy diasporic agency.

The Canadian immigration policy amendment in 1967 included a non-discrimination clause that removed barriers to immigration based on race and ethnicity. According to the *2006 Census analysis series* by Statistics Canada, in 2006, 16.2 per cent of Canada’s total population were visible minorities, which represents an increase of almost three per cent over five years. Over the period of 2001-2006, 75 per cent of immigrants to Canada were visible minorities and 30 per cent of visible minorities were Canadian-born. The median age of the

visible minority population was 33 years, 6 years below the Canadian average. Compared with national averages, a higher proportion of visible minorities are in the working age group and a much lower (almost half) proportion of visible minorities are over 65.

While the 1967 amendment changed the face of immigration to Canada, barriers to certain groups of people still exist. For example, the Canadian government is not represented in many developing countries, which creates barriers for citizens of those countries from seeking entry into Canada since they are required to undertake an international trip in order to process an application.

4.3 Multiculturalism in Canada

In 1988, Canada passed the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* for the “preservation and enhancement of multiculturalism in Canada” by guaranteeing “freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief, opinion, expression, peaceful assembly and association” (CIC, 1988, p. 1). Through the Act, the implementation of the Multiculturalism Policy is intended to promote exchange between diverse communities in Canada, support the integration of newcomers to Canada, and help reduce discriminatory barriers. It is also aimed at “encouraging the preservation, enhancement, sharing and evolving expression of the multicultural heritage of Canada” (CIC, 1988, p. 5). The *Annual Report on the Operation of the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, 2009-2010* states that in 2009 Canada awarded citizenship to over 156,000 people and granted permanent residency to over 250,000. It further reports that Canada is home to people from more than 200 ethnic origins, and predicts that by 2031, between 25 and 28 per

cent of Canada's population will be foreign born, between 29 and 32 per cent will belong to a visible minority group, and approximately 14 per cent will be "non-Christian" (CIC, 2010, p. 2). Perhaps predictably, given these trends in non-European immigration, in 2009, one of the new policy objectives for multiculturalism focuses on building a "socially cohesive society" (CIC, 2010, Part 1)²¹.

Numerous studies "reveal a distinct racial hierarchy in preferences for neighbours, co-workers, and potential spouses for sons and daughters. In the mainstream population, persons of European origin are still preferred to other racial groups and aboriginal Canadians" (Beck, Reitz, & Weiner, 2002, p. 3). Bannerji contends that the Canadian brand of multiculturalism designates European cultures as *real* culture, while others fall into the category of "multiculture," hyphenated culture or, "cultures of the peripheries" (2000, p. 555). Emphasizing a superficial conception of culture masks other forms of inequality and hierarchy in Canadian society, such as race, class and gender. That Canadians define themselves as exceptionally tolerant serves to make discriminating practices and systems less overt and thus harder to address (Beck et al, 2002).

²¹ The policy appears to be applied in ways that favour non-visible minorities and promotes broader political agendas. For example, the Ministry reports that in 2008 there was a 35% increase over 2007 in hate crimes. Of 1,036 reported crimes, 205 (or approximately 20 per cent) were against Blacks and a further 115 were targeting multiple races or ethnicities; in the same period, there were 165 crimes against "the Jewish faith." Despite the numbers, the Ministry continues to take a leadership role in combatting anti-Semitism, yet there is little evidence of similar initiatives to combat racial discrimination of visible minorities. (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2010).

4.4 Labour Markets and Education Policies

Fulfilling labour demands is one of the main reasons for permanent and temporary immigration to Canada. The CIC website reports that “every year, over 150,000 foreign workers enter Canada to...address skill shortages.”²² Permanent labour immigration includes categories for Skilled Workers and Professionals (those accepted on the basis of their education and work experience) and Canadian Experience Class (those who have recent Canadian experience through the temporary foreign workers program, or those who have just graduated in Canada). Both categories stipulate the need for language proficiency and the Canadian Experience Class requires familiarity with Canadian society.

Given the high levels of economic migration, a major factor in immigration settlement is the ability of immigrants and their descendents to realize their professional potential. Canada has an aging population and a low birth rate that are depleting its labour force. Given similar demographics in other developed countries, as well as factors of economic globalization, Canada must compete with other countries for a limited pool of workers. The importance of meeting Canada’s labour market needs through immigration was highlighted in the *2009 Fall Report of the Auditor General of Canada*, which calls for greater strategic planning for labour-based immigration, and better recognition of foreign credentials.

²² <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/work/index.asp>.

Labour migration into Canada has far from unanimous support. Approximately one in three Canadians believes that immigrants take jobs away from natives (The Economist, December 5 2009). The Fraser Institute argues that Canada's welfare system is under tremendous pressure because highly skilled immigrants have comparatively high unemployment rates (even over a decade after arrival in Canada), and earn comparatively less than non-immigrant Canadians (Grubel et al, 2011). According to this report, immigrants are more likely to make claims on the welfare system and contribute less in income taxes than their Canadian counterparts.

What the report fails to address is the reasons why immigrants find themselves under-employed or unemployed despite their capacity and desire to be gainfully and meaningfully productive. These reasons include Canada's challenges in recognizing the credentials of the professionals it imports, and unfair and discriminatory perceptions that many Canadians have about immigrants, which lead to inequitable hiring practices²³.

In essence, the real problem with credentialism in Canada is the racialized preference/bias in favour of credentials from certain countries and regions (European and other developed countries) over others (developing countries) that do not necessarily match the academic/professional standards of the accrediting institution/agency. As a result, non-European skilled immigrants experience considerable obstacles accessing the job market because of difficulty in accreditation. Galabuzi contends that the barriers stem from the racialized

²³ Interestingly, over 20 per cent of Canadians also believe that legal immigrants have no equal right to benefits (The Economist, December 5 2009).

failure of “governments, licensing bodies and other regulators, employer, educational institutions, and trade unions ...to devise appropriate policy and program responses to address the barriers (2006, p. 131). These deficits include a lack of information on the training standards of non-European countries and tools with which to assess credentials, inadequate bridging training and internships, and undue overemphasis on soft skills such as Canadian experience among other things. The problem is compounded by the absence of a uniform national standard in Canada because education and labour relations fall under the jurisdiction of provinces.

John Porter (1965) coined the concept of a ‘Vertical Mosaic’ based on his observations that although Canada is a ‘mosaic’ of different ethnic, language, regional and religious groupings, they are unequal in status and power. Porter’s analysis revealed three hierarchically arranged tiers in Canadian society in terms of income, education, health as well as in access to power and political influence. At the top were those of Anglo/French and other Western/Northern European origin; next came those of Eastern/Southern European origin; and at the bottom were the racialized minorities from developing countries and First Nations people. Since the original publication of Porter’s book in 1965, a number of studies have shown that this hierarchy has not changed much. For example, Lian and Matthews’ (1998) study showed that ‘visible minorities’ in Canada still have significantly lower incomes than other Canadians at all educational levels. They concluded that race is now the fundamental basis of income inequality in Canada.

According to Li (2008) although on average recent immigrants to Canada have attained higher education levels, they are essentially deemed of lower employment value. Several factors influence their inability to find employment commensurate with their education. These include increasing (non-European) racial diversity, less fluency in French and/or English, unrecognized foreign credentials, and a lack of European or North American experience (Li, 2008). Li's study found that visible minority immigrants earn up to \$18,000 a year less than immigrants of British origin (2008, p. 301). Similarly, Beck et al (2002) cite statistics that comparably skilled and educated minorities earn 20 to 25 per cent below their European-descent counterparts. Li contends that the common view that all foreign credentials of immigrants are devalued in Canada is incorrect; in fact, he found that while "credentials held by majority immigrant men and women earn a premium, the credential held by visible minority immigrants produce a deficit" (2008, p. 307).

As is the case in broader society, most workplace racism is covert due to strong public view about Canadian tolerance. Systemic discrimination, which is intentionally or unintentionally built into institutional policies, structures, and practices places the burden of proof on the victim of racism. It is made more difficult by attitudinal racism (conscious or sub-conscious discriminatory attitudes and culture), and the fact that acts of discrimination in an institutional setting are often hard to identify (Beck et al, 2002). "Systemic discrimination is a continuing phenomenon which has its roots deep in history and in societal attitudes. It cannot be isolated to a single action or statement. By its very nature, it extends

over time“ (*Public Service Alliance of Canada v. Canada Department of National Defense*, paras. 12-16, quoted in Beck et al, 2002, p. 8).

Thus it can be seen that rather than being exclusively or primarily caused by the reluctance or inability of immigrants to adapt to Canada and the Canadian workplace, immigrant and visible minority under-employment has much to do with the increase in non-European, visible minority populations, credential and ethnic discrimination, and other job market inequities.

4.5 Integration and Social Cohesion

Integration, as used in this context, simply refers to policies and programs that enable immigrants to settle and ‘fit into’ Canadian society. Integration is not the same as assimilation. Assimilation entails absorption into a dominant culture, as in the American ‘melting pot’ approach, but integration does not. In principle, integration into a truly multicultural society means ‘unity in diversity’ or ‘different but equal’ by allowing various groups to retain their distinctiveness while remaining essentially equal in status, rights, and privileges.

Bannerji (2000) contends that contrary to the superficial commitment to diversity, certain groups in Canada are racialized and thus excluded from the dominant community. Thus, demands for integration upon which Canada’s social cohesion rely are set according to terms and levels of “moral and cultural whiteness” (Bannerji, 2000, p. 551). Here again, Taylor’s ‘politics of recognition’ shed important light on the need for inclusion of all Canadians beyond the token commitment to diversity.

Visible minorities and non-mainstream cultural practices can often arouse culturally purist sentiments, particularly in times of fear and uncertainty as has been the case since 2001. This fear of 'foreigners' and the failure to address the underlying reasons why cultural melding seems so difficult is neither exclusive to Canada nor a contemporary issue. It is perhaps even a part of the human propensity to resist change, to form clans, and to develop tacitly understood social protocols that help societies bond and compete for resources. Canada is largely a nation of immigrants and with each wave of immigration has come anti-immigration sentiments based on the fear of loss of identity and compromise of values. Each wave has ultimately integrated even if the cultural norms have also had to evolve with the changing demographic²⁴. Currently, as noted in the reference to the 'vertical mosaic', Canadian diversity is founded on narrow conceptions of Judeo-Christian culture and ideals that are based on the historical European singularity of immigration. However, with the projected increasing racial diversity of Canada, this integration requires updated and relevant mechanisms to ensure stability and inclusivity. The effective management of these changes will help to dampen qualms about the changing face of Canada and its identity and prevent knee-jerk reactions to the change.

An example of spurious reactions to purported threats to Canadian identity is that of Canadian federal immigration Minister Jason Kenney's warning to immigrants that are unable to communicate in French or English that they would

²⁴ For example, the Canadian Orange Order in the 1800s worked to help with the settlement of new Protestant immigrants to Canada, but also fought to suppress Catholic newcomers. In addition, Canada has a history of internment of immigrant groups such as the Ukrainians after World War I and the Japanese in 1942.

be denied citizenship and that while immigrant identity is to be upheld as a priority, it cannot be at the expense of assuming the Canadian identity (CBC, July 2009). This alarming statement is threatening and contradictory in its claims to inclusivity albeit with conditions of conformity, and thus does little to engender trust and acceptance of minority communities. The rhetoric around the importance of assimilation and the implied reluctance of immigrants to conform not only obscures the complexity of the immigrant experience and the important role of majority-culture Canadians to participate in their integration, but it also diminishes newcomers' sense of belonging and acceptance, thus encouraging them to take refuge with their own compatriots. While immigrants and members of diaspora communities do have some responsibility – and indeed need – to integrate and function in Canadian society, the process by which this happens is neither instantaneous nor facilitated by ultimatums.

While the so-called modest requirement of familiarity with Canadian society and fluency in English or French might seem like a logical basis and little burden on a new immigrant wishing to make a life in Canada, contemporary migrant communities are transnational rather than settler in nature, and are often invested in the development of both Canada and their home country (Robinson, 2004). With the increase in temporary labour migration, which means large numbers of workers in Canada who do not (need to) speak either official language, and the potential to act on diasporic desire to work on behalf of Canada to spur global development, one might ask if these requirements and the resources that are dedicated to them are indeed essential. If the prioritization of

'learning to be Canadian' is an issue of engendering national social cohesion, one might do well to bear in mind that identity does not simply shift with the acquisition of a new language or cramming for an exam on Canadian history.

As an illustration of the long-term evolution of identity, Taylor (1994) articulates the importance of understanding the individual experience in shaping identity, which in turn influences the collective. He explains that individuals understand themselves through social interaction and expression in an environment of recognition and acceptance by broader society. This process of evolving identity is dialogical and life long. In Canada, until the influx of non-European immigration, "general recognition was built into the socially derived identity by virtue of the very fact that it was based on social categories that everyone took for granted" (Taylor, 1994, p. 34). However, because recognition is no longer rooted in existing social structures it has to rely upon exchange between host and newcomer, and thus can fail. For this reason, Canadian multicultural policy should seek to create the space for the expression of identity "unshaped by a predefined social script" (1994, p. 36).

One must not, however, discount the value of the repudiation of the race-based immigration laws, which have paved the way for the multicultural face of Canada. Although Taylor is correct to point out the dangers of 'difference blindness', if one looks at the evolution of multicultural and immigration policy in Canada, the vision impairment is evidence of movement along a continuum from a homogeneous populace toward true multiculturalism. Canada has (at least legislatively) moved from overt legitimized discrimination based on a perceived

racial and cultural superiority, to the removal of legal and rhetorical barriers that support this view. While difference blind policies may be assimilationist, they are an improvement over sanctioned discrimination and unfair treatment. Changing behaviour and perceptions, as I am sure Taylor would agree, is a slow process. Canada has laid a sound foundation but has a ways to go.

The ability of Canada to support diaspora in their aspirations enables social stability and national productivity, as well as more effective and secure participation in globalization. Policies and practices that reflect the needs and aspirations of all Canadians and empower them to become an integral part of civil society, rather than be seen as 'special interest' or 'multicultural/ethnic' groups would quite simply enable greater productivity and cohesion. Diasporas, with their capacity to function effectively in Canada and their place of attachment, can help develop the requisite competence to deepen Canada's foreign policy and engagement. In addition, more active engagement of immigrants and diasporic communities would enable Canada to capitalize on diasporic nuanced understanding of conflict, deep connections and conviction for global equality, and competence to help chart a viable course in Canada's international strategy and prosperity.

5: CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR DIASPORA-DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT

As demonstrated in the literature review, diasporic contributions to international development can be categorized into four basic typologies – economic, intellectual, social, and political. This occurs by mobilizing four overlapping, but not identical (economic, knowledge, social, and political) networks. In order to facilitate this transnationalism and global citizenship and to safeguard against the potential negative effects of diaspora-driven engagement, a review of Canadian policy and practice could have substantial benefit to Canada’s diasporic populations, their countries of origin, and Canada itself.

5.1.1 Economic Development: Remittances, Investment and Trade

Remittances, sent primarily through familial networks to supplement individual household incomes, are instrumental in alleviating poverty and can enable families to increase their savings or investments in their own enterprise as well as provide funding for social development (such as health and education) at the individual and community level (Plaza et al, 2011, p. 7-11). Remittances have historically been non-formal and personal in nature, but over the last two decades some developing country governments have established mechanisms to enable more structural impacts from diaspora remittances. As an example, *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino* (LINKAPIL) was established by the Government of the Philippines in 1989 to link Filipinos in the diaspora with development programs.

In addition, the recent World Bank proposal to issue diaspora bonds demonstrates an interest by bilateral and multilateral donors in harvesting the potential of financial transfers by diaspora to support their development goals. This trend raises questions of whether diaspora will be willing to invest in donor goals. In addition, it poses the additional risk that responsibility for development funding will be transferred from donors to diasporic communities and that the expectation of development agency will be transferred from institutions to individuals.

In the Canadian context, the 2008 Statistics Canada study, *Remittance Behaviours Among Recent Immigrants in Canada* by Houle et al, surveyed remittance patterns of immigrants that landed in Canada from 2000 to 2001 between two and four years after arrival²⁵. In it, they found positive correlations in three areas that might inform Canadian policy on remittances. Firstly, the incidence of remitting by country of origin ranged from 60 per cent (for Haiti and the Philippines) to 10 per cent (for industrialized countries such as France and the United Kingdom), indicating that “remittance behaviours are significantly associated with GDP per capita in the country of birth” (p. 22). Secondly, there was a correlation between category of immigration and amount remitted, with economic immigrants sending an average of \$3,000 and refugees sending an average of \$1,900 per year. Finally, they found that the amount remitted

²⁵ This data was obtained through a Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada, which surveyed approximately 12,000 immigrants. Approximately 12,000 immigrants were interviewed from April 2001 to March 2002, about six months after their arrival in Canada; approximately 9,300 of the same immigrants were re-located and interviewed in 2003, about two years after their arrival; and, about 7,700 of the same immigrants were re-located and interviewed a third time, about four years after their arrival.

increased as incomes rose; families with incomes of more than \$70,000 remitted around 45% more than the amount sent by families with incomes between \$25,000 and \$44,999 (2008, p. 20). The study noted the financial hardship experienced by new immigrants, who earn relatively lower incomes than Canadians as a whole, is further exacerbated by the cost of remittances (Houle et al, 2008, p. 19).

In the area of trade and investment, diasporas represent a market for goods from their countries of origin. In Canada, with increasing ethnic diversity of diaspora communities, there has been corresponding increase in availability of diverse food and clothing products, as well as restaurants catering to diaspora communities. These products and services increase awareness and appreciation of their cultures, food, and art within Canadian society at large. In addition, economic networks can help to link diaspora and non-diaspora investors and businesses to encourage more bilateral trade.

In 1994, the Liberal Government of Canada began *Team Canada* missions wherein business representatives, government officials, and members of the diaspora accompanied the Prime Minister on missions to promote trade and investment in emerging economies such as China (1994 and 2001), India (1996), and Brazil (1995 and 1998). The Conservative Government was much slower to realize the potential of these networks and only resumed trade missions about three years after assuming power in 2006.

5.1.2 Policy Implications of Economic Development

In order to facilitate transnational economic development, four policy issues come to light. Firstly, Canadian policies on settlement and labour market integrations have relevance beyond the need for immigrants to manage their lives in Canada and should take into consideration the broad aspirations of diaspora to have the means to contribute to their home countries. Secondly, the creation of financial mechanisms that facilitate remittances and reduce costs associated with international monetary transfers (including establishing favourable and stable exchange rates) would have considerable impact, both on immigrant communities and their home communities that they seek to support. Thirdly, continued engagement of transnational economic networks that would benefit Canada's international trade and support the livelihoods of diaspora in Canada and their communities abroad. Finally, efforts to formalize the application of remittances through development agencies such as CIDA should incorporate diaspora knowledge and networks in order to achieve buy-in, and should ensure that the burden of funding is not transferred to already struggling immigrant communities.

5.2 Knowledge Application: Skills Transfer and 'Brain Circulation'

Institutions and think tanks such as the World Bank are interested in finding ways to offset the net loss of educated migrants from developing countries through brain circulation programs. Efforts to do so span from informal efforts by individuals to contribute their skills and knowledge to their home

communities, to more institutionalized programs such as that undertaken by the Taiwanese government to match skills and need. At the institutional level, there is a role for diaspora organizations, development organizations, governments of both developed and developing countries, and universities. In Canada, institutions such as the government-funded International Development Research Council have undertaken discussions and research on diaspora and knowledge exchange with the Ethiopian diaspora Association for Higher Education and Development (AHEAD).

5.2.1 Policy Implications

Given that Canada has the potential and the aim to benefit from immigration and education policies that seek to capitalize on skilled immigration, there are opportunities to deploy these skills to benefit sending countries and transnational communities.

In this regard, there are three key policy considerations. Firstly, encouraging the deployment of new immigrants and members of the diaspora to field positions with Canadian organizations and agencies in their countries of origin would enable them to gain Canadian experience, be adequately employed, fulfil their wish to give back to their original homes, ease the settlement burden, and create more effective international missions. Secondly, there is an urgent need to address the lack of coherence between skilled immigration and credential recognition, which would allow immigrants to continue to evolve in their profession and utilize the financial and intellectual gains that result for the benefit of their home countries. Thirdly, universities and other educational institutions

should be encouraged to increase collaboration with countries that have higher diaspora representation in Canada; this might include more active knowledge networks through collaborative research, joint education programs, and exchange programs.

5.3 Social Development: Social Programs through Philanthropy

Diaspora-driven programs and efforts have social development outcomes in areas such as health, education, and community development through financial donations by individuals, religious organizations, and other NGOs, the establishment of diaspora organizations, and diaspora volunteerism. In Canada, organizations such as AHEAD and CUSO-VSO are actively engaging diasporas with the understanding that there is some added benefit to this approach.

Meanwhile, CIDA has begun to take more interest in diaspora potential, and has employed diaspora in Haiti and Sri Lanka with arguably limited success because of difficulties with the size and capacity of diaspora organizations and the fact that not all members of a diaspora speak with a single voice. One of the main cited constraints is that diaspora can sometimes have an ulterior motive that supplants that of the project or institution for which they are working.

5.3.1 Policy Implications

While it is not new for diaspora to engage in community development, professional service, and training through non-formal networks, Terrazas suggests that there are several policy implications that can enhance the impact of diaspora philanthropy and volunteerism, including more concerted

engagement by aid agencies and the inclusion of diaspora as stakeholders in policy formation (2010, p. 4).

Clearly articulated strategies and policies for including diaspora in the setting of ODA agendas and priorities would result in more nuanced country strategies and clearer understanding of the strategies to ensure accountability. As with other agencies and development actors that seek to engage the diaspora, it is important that the implementation of such strategies include a phase to build mutual trust and understanding to safeguard against potential risks, such as special interests and contributing to existing conflict between sub-groups of the diaspora.

While aid agencies such as CIDA appear to have an interest in diaspora programming, they plead limited resources to manage many small partners. Working through diaspora organizations, NGOs such as CUSO-VSO and universities, which are already engaged with these communities, would enable aid agencies to pilot diaspora programming and to apply success and lessons to the creation of a comprehensive diaspora strategy.

5.4 Political Influence: Diplomacy, Awareness-Raising, Conflict, and Political Participation

“Diasporas have long been entangled in ideological projects to reshape, resurrect, defend, or even enlarge homelands, ancestral or putative. Nationalist struggles and sectarian strife have lengthy histories of overseas assistance from departed sons and daughters” (Bose, 2008, p. 126). These diasporic influences

can have either a positive or a negative effect; indeed, more often than not the value of the impact itself is a matter of perception.

Diasporas can have political influence through government sanctioned political participation in elections, by lobbying host country governments to act, and by raising awareness of issues in their home countries through the media. Diasporas can also fund conflicts, or act as knowledgeable and credible negotiators in resolving conflicts. Often diaspora from non-democratic countries can be more effective in pursuing their specific agendas from outside the country than they are from within.

5.4.1 Policy Implications

The magnitude, complexity, and inherent risks in creating diaspora participation programs in the political realm should not be underestimated. However, the need to address inequities in minority representation in Canadian professional life and government, the potential for enhancement of informed policy and practice, and the risks associated with continued exclusion of diaspora far outweigh the challenges. As a starting point, Canadian government agencies should engage in a collaborative research exercise to gain better understanding of Canada's diaspora populations, their histories, their experience, and their aspirations. In the meantime, three main policy implications become apparent.

Firstly, it should be acknowledged that Canada's policy of allowing immigrants to retain dual citizenship is of great benefit in allowing diaspora to continue to hold political capital in their birth countries (although many global

south countries do not permit the same). Secondly, policies that facilitate the legitimate engagement of diaspora in awareness-raising, formal political participation, and informing negotiations and foreign relations would be of considerable benefit to Canada and its international policy goals. Thirdly, deploying diaspora Canadians to Foreign Service missions in regions where they have experience and existing networks could increase the effectiveness of Canada's international representation.

5.5 Conclusion

International migration numbers are at the highest levels ever. There is an increasing reliance by immigrant-receiving developed countries like Canada on attracting skilled migrants to meet their economic needs, and a burgeoning global interest in the capacity for diasporic communities to contribute to the development their home nations (IOM, 2010). Canada has achieved international renown for its apparent success in multiculturalism and capacity to celebrate its demographic diversity²⁶, but more critical views on Canadian immigration and multiculturalism are less complimentary²⁷. While Canadian multicultural policy has done much to pave the way for the development of a plural and cosmopolitan society, in practice many policies and perceptions are incongruous with current global dynamics and with other related policies (such as

²⁶ For example, see Aga Khan, Karim. (October 25, 2010). *LaFontaine-Baldwin Lecture*. Institute for Canadian Citizenship. Toronto, Canada.

²⁷ As an example, a January 2011 article on Al Jazeera describes popular reaction in Canada, fuelled by political agendas, to the arrival of Sri Lankan refugees by boat as a repeat of "irrational hysteria" generated by the arrival of boatloads of Sikhs, Jews, or Chinese after World War I. The article goes on to say that ignorance is "what defines Canada's immigration and refugee debate in the current climate." - <http://english.aljazeera.net/focus/2010/08/2010821185255831487.html>.

immigration). Canadian policy continues to favour the development of a Euro-centric culture and thus disadvantages the majority of current immigrants to Canada. To the extent that being in a diaspora is a condition that reflects the degree of success attained by immigrants then policies that hinder formation of diasporic consciousness, community ethics, and settlement on the part of immigrants amounts to a failure to maximize the potential for diaspora-driven development both at home and abroad.

Canadian liberal multiculturalism, which accords individual freedom – provided it is expressed within the constructs of Canadian society – lacks the recognition of equal value of one group over another, as is demonstrated by the insistence on adaptation to national languages, laws²⁸, and dress²⁹. What is missing is the recognition of the “equal value of different cultures, that not only let them survive but acknowledge their worth” (Taylor, 1994, p. 64).

Canada, as a self-described multicultural nation, should undertake a government-wide initiative that begins with attaining a clear understanding of the needs and dynamics of diaspora communities, the histories and tensions within and between diaspora groups, and the gaps in relevant policy coherence across government agencies. In addition, updating and amending current policies such as those dealing with immigration, settlement, multiculturalism, labour, education, and language, stands to create benefit for all three stakeholders in the diaspora

²⁸ Of note here is the recent public outcry about the recognition of Shari’ a law to handle family matters such as marital and child custody issues within the cultural and religious constructs of Muslims in Toronto. Shari’s law was presumed (incorrectly) to favour the repression of women, but more importantly, was seen as a threat to the broader Canadian society.

²⁹ As is demonstrated by current public controversy around the right for women to wear the niqab or other forms of head coverings.

and development triad – developing countries, diaspora populations, and Canada itself. Such an integrated and informed approach to understanding and realizing the potential of its diaspora will better equip Canada to retain its reputation as a global leader in creating a successful and pluralist multicultural society.

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