



GLOBAL
DIASPORA

VIRTUAL EXCHANGES
on Communication to boost development

Impactful skills, effective strategies and innovative tools

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INSIGHTS AND REFLECTION PAPER

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Context

In 2023, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), iDiaspora, the Global Research Forum on Diaspora and Transnationalism (GRFDT), the Global Diaspora Confederation (GDC) and the Migration Youth and Children Platform (MYCP), partnered to organize three Global Diaspora Virtual Exchanges on communication to boost diaspora engagement for development. This was the third edition of these exchanges with remarkable results achieved in the past, including the publication of the report [Maximizing Diaspora Engagement in 2021](#) and [Global Diasporas reacting to the COVID-19 crisis in 2020](#).

The Global Diaspora Virtual Exchanges led by IOM and key partners was a unique space where diasporas share best practices at the global level and collaborate with each other to empower themselves and other diaspora leaders and organizations as development actors.

In response to the consultations held during the Global Diaspora Week 2022, organized by the Global Diaspora Confederation, diaspora organizations emphasized the need to keep supporting diaspora communities through fostering and boosting their capacities for development. As a result, the 2023 Global Exchanges focused on enhancing communication techniques, strategies and tools across the different phases of project management. By providing concrete strategies on how to enhance their communication skills, consider strategic techniques and implement new tools, stakeholders will be able to maximize the impact of their transnational initiatives.

General Objectives of the Global Diaspora Virtual Exchanges:

- Continue contributing to the self-mobilization and empowerment of diaspora by providing a space for sharing, coordination and collaboration between different diaspora communities around the world.
- Boost diaspora engagement for development by providing concrete advice and insights on how to enhance their diaspora communications skills, how to craft and implement strategic messages and how to use effective and new tools.
- Foster peer-learning among members of the diaspora from different generations through short workshops.
- Identify key lessons and best practices on the key topics self-identified by diasporas that will enable them to enhance their skills in strategic communication and learn how to use new digital technologies across the project cycle of their own initiatives.



When speaking to donors, as diasporas we should master the idea of our project and be prepared for questions. To pitch your project, you need to know its impact, the type of beneficiaries that you will be supporting and the concrete actions you will be doing.



Ouejdane Mejri, PhD - Pontes



THEME 1: Impactful Skills

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Diasporas often take the lead in creating initiatives, projects, and bringing ideas to life while fostering connections among themselves. However, effective communication can be hindered by cultural barriers, unclear goals, limited knowledge of suitable tools, and an incomplete understanding of the audience. By optimizing their communication strategies, diasporas can enhance relationships with donors, community members, and other key stakeholders throughout the project cycle. Project management phases, including monitoring, evaluation, and execution are crucial for organizing and ensuring the project's impact. Understanding how and what to communicate during each of these stages is essential for maximizing effectiveness. Diasporas can leverage their unique experiences to advance their projects, communicate outcomes, and engage with younger generations and emerging social media platforms.

1. Enhancing the unique characteristics of diasporas as effective communicators

- Diasporas possess a unique ability to captivate their audiences through personal stories and a sense of ownership, tapping into their individual identities. By leveraging this unique position for storytelling, diasporas can create empathy among their audiences.
- Diasporas can connect and empathize with others who share similar experiences. They can consider the diverse cultures, languages and lived experiences that exist within diaspora communities.
- Interpersonal skills, such as active listening and tailoring messages to suit the audience, along with maintaining a positive attitude, are skills that diasporas can cultivate to distinguish themselves in their communication.
- Recognizing the global nature of diasporas implies that they possess not only a global outlook but also a global network. Diasporas can leverage this network to exchange ideas, expand their outreach and establish valuable partnerships and support.

- Non-verbal communication naturally integrates body language into the process of communication. As a result, diasporas may choose to utilize non-verbal cues within a community of trust to convey openness and build trust in conversations.

2. Maximizing communication skills through project management

- The project cycle consists of four phases: initiation, planning, execution, monitoring and closure. Engaging with diasporas throughout all these phases is vital and brings significant benefits, not only due to the direct impact it can have on the project but also because of the multiplier effect associated with it. This engagement serves to empower communities and contribute to sustainable development. The project management cycle provides a predetermined method and organizational structure that facilitates various communication processes.
- It is important to acknowledge that not all projects come to a definitive conclusion but may instead transition into new phases or become sustainable. These subsequent phases allow diasporas to organize their ideas and propose alternative solutions that align more closely with their values and visions.
- Internal effective communication is crucial in the project management cycle as it ensures that team members are aware of challenges, time constraints, budget limitations, and the overall progress of the project. By communicating effectively, barriers can be identified and addressed promptly, leading to the preservation of vital resources and the prevention of unnecessary conflicts within the team.
- Effective external communication plays a vital role in facilitating prosperous collaborations, securing funding and raising awareness about the project.
- Diasporas can enhance their collaboration in projects by employing effective communication strategies, such as establishing trust, sharing knowledge, creating networks of peers and experts and prioritizing collaboration over competition.

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As members of diasporas, we can be unique communicators due to our experience in multiple cultures. Diasporas are diverse, and we possess the ability to understand, tolerate, and adapt to various groups of people. We can comprehend the culture and backgrounds of diverse groups and adapt accordingly.

Jessica Hamadziripi - Genesis Entrepreneurship Trust



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3. Adapting communication channels and strategies to the project and audience

- Communication channels are essential for ensuring that messages reach their intended targets. Different demographic backgrounds often utilize various communication mediums and digital platforms, including Facebook, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, and more, depending on their target audience and location. It is crucial for diasporas to tailor their content to effectively engage their specific audience and garner support. This can be achieved through targeted social media marketing strategies on these platforms. (See social media marketing platforms).
- It is important to recognize that certain audiences may choose not to use social media platforms due to limited access, lack of proficiency in digital tools, or inadequate internet infrastructure. As a result, diaspora organizations and leaders must employ traditional communication methods, such as email, phone calls, websites, in-person visits, and direct collaboration with other community leaders. To effectively engage with diasporas, it is important to understand the demographics of the groups, including factors such as age, profession, experience and gender, and tailor the communication approach accordingly.
- Having a website and online presence is crucial for diaspora organizations as it enhances credibility, especially when seeking funding. A website acts as a comprehensive overview of the organization, providing potential donors and collaborators with a clear understanding of its mission, programmes, operational regions, values and key personnel. This online presence establishes trust, legitimacy, and facilitates stakeholder assessment and support for the organization's initiatives.
- To maximize communication with youth, it is important to understand and integrate social media trends. Young diasporas have unique perspectives and opinions that may differ from more experienced diasporas. By incorporating youth visions and addressing their needs in messages and diaspora campaigns, greater inclusion and innovative ideas can be achieved. Additionally, creating youth-focused campaigns and promoting them on popular platforms like Instagram, TikTok, Facebook and YouTube can attract a large and engaged audience. These platforms are widely used by youth and provide opportunities to connect and engage with each other. Youth-oriented activities that are fun, such as games, food and sports, can bring people together and foster interaction.
- When engaging with donors and stakeholders, it is important to adopt a distinct approach. Their priorities may lie in accountability, experience, project type, and alignment with their values. To effectively reach them, a formal and targeted approach is necessary, supported by tangible results and data. Demonstrating conciseness and organizational skills while showcasing the project's expertise and knowledge is essential when seeking funding. Moreover, it is worth considering the potential for building synergies with external stakeholders, focusing on branding objectives and collaborative initiatives when funding is not an immediate option. This approach can still yield valuable outcomes and partnerships.

Conclusion

Diasporas possess unique skills derived from their diverse experiences and backgrounds, enabling them to excel as communicators. They have an innate understanding of limitations and opportunities based on their personal and shared experiences in the countries of residence and countries of origin. However, it is important to combine their experiences and backgrounds with other communication methods. Through testing methods diasporas can determine the most effective methods and platforms for communication. It is crucial to recognize that all methods have value but focusing on a selected few can lead to more meaningful engagement with partners and beneficiaries.

Furthermore, diasporas possess the capability to comprehend and adapt to diverse contexts. Although adaptation may require time and effort, equipping themselves with the essential tools and knowledge to effectively communicate with various stakeholders throughout the project cycle gives them a distinct advantage in achieving tangible impacts at an earlier stage.

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The most effective channels to communicate are the ones where your target audience lives. Before communicating think twice and analyse where you can find your target audience. You can be more effective by analysing the data and demographics.



Victoria Zagitova - Migration Youth and Children Platform

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The outcome of strategic communication should achieve the goals of the project, it should fulfill the mission and align with the mission. It should be tailored-made and consider all the stakeholders involved in the project.



Theresa R. Fianko - Digital Diaspora News



THEME 2: Effective Strategies

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Diasporas can develop and implement strategies to effectively achieve desired project or initiative outcomes. The project management cycle, mentioned earlier, provides a framework for dividing projects into phases, facilitating smoother implementation and organization. Diasporas can employ effective strategies, such as aligning communication with the project management cycle and goals and tailoring their approach accordingly. Additionally, building partnerships can further enhance the work of diaspora organizations and projects.

1. Adapting the communication strategies to each phase of the project cycle

- Engaging in the project management cycle involves internal and external communication, as well as having a clear vision and purpose for specific communication needs. For instance, during the execution phase, diasporas may need to communicate instructions to volunteers and all project stakeholders. The objective of such communication is to ensure clarity and establish efficient methodologies, thereby avoiding misunderstandings and setbacks.
- Strategically determining the key stakeholders to engage with during a project ensures long-term sustainability and success. If diasporas intend to cultivate ongoing relationships with these stakeholders for future projects, it becomes crucial to involve them in all phases of the project cycle. This inclusive approach helps them feel like integral members of the team, recognizing their importance in achieving project success.
- During the initiation and building stages of a project, the objectives and desired outcomes are typically defined. In the execution stage, the focus shifts to how information is communicated, when decisions are made, and how stakeholders are engaged through effective communication strategies. During the closeout phase, the project's successes and areas for improvement are often discussed and communicated. Diasporas can utilize these general guidelines to determine how each phase of the project management cycle can be effectively managed and communicated.

2. Aligning the messages and channels to the goals of the project across the HDPN

- Effective communication should not only align with the mission of the organization but also be easily understandable and accessible to individuals, regardless of their educational background.
- Recognizing that most communication expects a response from the receiver, the delivery needs to be tailored to the desired outcome and audience of a project. For instance, if a diaspora wishes to deliver an exciting message, the medium of delivery could be trivia or a game. However, if the message aims to gather support for an emergency response, it must convey urgency and provide accurate information that clearly addresses the who, what, where, when, how and why aspects.
- Diasporas, driven by their strong sense of belonging, engage uniquely in humanitarian and development contexts. The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 showcased their invaluable contributions as remittances remained steady despite the crisis. Migrants and transnational communities took a leading role in responding to the pandemic, providing essential services and sharing expertise through teleconsultations. Communication tools played a vital role in managing the crisis, compensating for the lack of physical contact. This demonstrated once again the significant benefits that societies derive from the involvement of diasporas.
- Diasporas are gaining recognition for their role as first responders in disaster situations. When the war in Ukraine erupted, the Ukrainian diaspora swiftly mobilized their networks, resources, and knowledge to aid their fellow compatriots affected by the conflict. The Ukrainian diaspora provided crucial support through communication assistance, financial aid, and in-kind contributions. Moreover, the use of remote support, technology, and the implementation of adaptive strategies facilitated a robust and rapid response, garnering support even from other diasporic groups and extending assistance on a wide scale.
- Fostering networks of diaspora is vital when responding to emergencies, as they are often the first to arrive and the last to leave in humanitarian crises. While government aid may deplete or face delays due to bureaucratic processes, diasporas are not bound by these constraints. When official support diminishes, diasporas remain steadfast, continuing their presence and helping.

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When you communicate your ideas effectively you can create fruitful partnerships. It can also help to avoid duplication of efforts because in the end we all have the same goal. Effective communication helps in the implementation, sustainability and partnerships of projects.

Vivian Nwakolobi-Ibeji - Global Diaspora Confederation



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3. Nurturing open communication for sustainable partnerships

- Partnerships play a crucial role in diaspora engagement as they provide access to resources, capacity-building and knowledge transfer. However, trust is fundamental for establishing enduring partnerships. Building trust can be achieved through fostering dialogue and acknowledging diaspora contributions at every stage of the process. Embracing and promoting horizontal communication, where all voices are heard and everyone is included, is a vital best practice in diaspora engagement for nurturing partnerships.
- Cultivating relationships with stakeholders is a powerful tool, as it not only enhances the availability of financial resources but also enables the formation of meaningful partnerships that facilitate problem-solving, the development of new initiatives, access to additional human capital, branding and marketing opportunities, and broader reach. Aligning with a reputable partner in the field holds the potential to attract donors, attention and philanthropic support more effortlessly.
- Three principles of communicating with partners and stakeholders include maintaining alignment throughout the process, seeking commonalities, and implementing active listening. When fostering communication, it is crucial to effectively convey the vision, purpose, and goals to investors and beneficiaries. Additionally, transparency about expectations is essential for building trust, and diasporas practice active listening and are willing to adjust their message if necessary. This does not imply blindly agreeing to everything, but rather being objective and finding solutions to address and overcome discrepancies that may arise.
- Embedded in communication for development is the importance of understanding culture through the engagement of diasporas and their communities in intercultural communication and language.

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Effective communication strategies rely on defining our goals and involving all the parties to the project. I would like to highlight three major principles of effective communication: understanding the language, understanding the culture and listening to the people

Jacklyne Achieng Kuhn - Kenian Women in Germany



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Conclusion

Diaspora brings forth distinctive approaches to engagement and response during emergencies and humanitarian situations, leveraging their expertise, networks and communication channels to act as first responders in times of crisis. Such impact can be further leveraged when diasporas have the safe space to close communication gaps and align strategies by coming together to combine their efforts in humanitarian assistance. Moreover, the establishment of partnerships and trust relies on open communication.

Building partnerships should be perceived as an ongoing learning process, necessitating adaptability and flexibility. In looking at effective strategies, those that will extend relations and connections between diaspora and various actors, critical points raised include the importance of using familiar and accessible monitoring tools (e.g. social media, traditional communication for the development in the countries of origin); importance of evaluation and adopting frameworks that focus on measuring results for sustainability; building trust and strengthening partnerships requires effective communication which needs to be well thought with target (e.g. donors, government, fellow diaspora); importance of messaging, choice of platforms (e.g. social media, etc.) and packaging as well as sharing of success stories and lessons learnt through national diaspora conferences, cultural heritage and national day events.



The power of the diaspora lies in its networks and capacity to share knowledge. A key strategy in communication is to remain curious and experimental.



Manuel Meneses - Diáspora2030mx



THEME 3: Innovative Tools

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

The use of digital tools is increasingly relevant for diaspora engagement, particularly because mobile phone and social media accessibility is growing in low-income countries and emerging economies. In fact, social media channels have become a primary source of information consumption for many users worldwide. Governments and official agencies also utilize social media platforms to disseminate updates and relevant information, aiming to establish faster connections with their communities. While the prevalence of social media and mobile phones offers advantages for diaspora communication, it also means that information can easily get lost amid the vast amount of content and algorithms. Specifically, more targeted efforts may be required to reach specific groups such as youth and women. It is important for diaspora groups to be mindful that older individuals in emerging economies may have limited digital literacy, necessitating alternative methods of communication. Moreover, diasporas must exercise caution when engaging in online spaces due to the risks of hate speech and online harassment.

1. Embracing digital technologies across the project cycle

- According to Gallup World Poll data from 2018, 83 per cent of adults in low-income countries owned a mobile phone. The use of mobile phones holds various benefits for individuals, such as staying connected with loved ones, finding employment, establishing businesses, and accessing financial and health services. Moreover, mobile phones and internet access are crucial for mobilizing diaspora groups and garnering support for project implementation. Communication through mobile phones is simplified, as instant messaging platforms like WhatsApp and Telegram enable the gathering of information and planning of activities more efficiently.
- Communication and collaboration platforms have become essential components of the modern workplace and project management. The COVID-19 pandemic unintentionally accelerated the shift to online work and expanded opportunities for remote employment. Diasporas have also embraced this change, with teams collaborating on projects across different countries and time zones. While email remains the primary platform for formal communication, teams now utilize text chat and video conferencing tools when face-to-face meetings are not feasible.

Consequently, the widespread adoption of management and communication software such as Trello, Monday.com, Teams, Zoom, Google Meet, Slack, Rocket.Chat, and others has become integral to team communication.

- Digital technologies and software enhance communication within teams, and diasporas can utilize tools that best suit their organizational needs. For instance, Google Meet does not require downloading any software and is free to use, which may remove barriers for some individuals.
- Technology has revolutionized various aspects of our lives, including fundraising, which was traditionally conducted in person. Diasporas can now leverage a range of online fundraising and crowdfunding platforms, such as Change.org, GoFundMe, PayPal, Kickstarter, among others, to secure funding for their projects and initiatives.
- Online tools can also play a crucial role in building communities. Utilizing these tools is essential as various demographic groups are present on specific social media platforms. For instance, communities may rely on WhatsApp or Telegram to stay informed about events and opportunities. Diasporas can leverage existing platforms where similar communities thrive to foster their own communities.
- Using tools like Net Promoter Score or other evaluation methods on social media can be beneficial for organizations and individuals, as it helps quantify the effectiveness of their social media efforts. It is crucial for diasporas to not only measure the results of their projects and initiatives but also to share these outcomes extensively through various social media platforms, including LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, Slack, and Twitter. Additionally, writing blogs and op-eds on platforms like iDiaspora.org, Medium, and online news publications can further amplify their message.
- Despite the benefits of embracing emerging technology, diasporas need to understand that the digital divide is a reality, not only in low-income countries but also in terms of gender roles. Therefore, diasporas may need to employ research methods to determine if the targeted population for their projects and initiatives faces limitations in accessing and using technology.

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In order for us to adapt to the new communication methods, we require constant learning, collaboration, and innovation. In this aspect, diaspora communities really need to be proactive identifying and leveraging new digital tools and platforms as they emerge.

Yasmina Benslimane - Gender Specialist at Migration Youth and Children Platform



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2. Cross-fertilization of knowledge and techniques

- Learning about which demographics interact on specific platforms is often achieved through surveys and studies. While there is a general belief that social media channels have targeted audiences, such as LinkedIn for career development, TikTok for youth engagement, and Facebook and Instagram for young adults, these preferences are constantly changing and adapting. It is important to avoid discrediting other platforms. Diasporas can stay updated on these shifting trends by utilizing data trends and analysis provided by reputable sources.
- Social media and networking sites can also serve as platforms for diasporas to connect with other diaspora organizations and groups across different regions and generations. The use of social media goes beyond promotion and branding, as it provides opportunities for personal and organizational networking, as well as staying up to date with the latest developments and diaspora events.
- Online learning platforms serve as central hubs for knowledge transfer, capacity development, skill acquisition, and access to new materials and training. They provide diasporas with the opportunity to engage more deeply with specific topics of interest. By leveraging these tools, diasporas can balance their lives, work and studies while continuing their learning journey in an accessible manner. One notable online platform available to diaspora groups is [iDiaspora.org](https://www.idiaspora.org), offering free and self-guided courses to help individuals learn more about diaspora-related topics.
- Young diasporas bring enormous talent and fresh perspectives to the conversation. They play a unique role in fostering diaspora engagement across different contexts, and their ability to address pressing issues in our world is truly remarkable. Young diasporas possess diverse backgrounds, stories and innovative thinking, enabling them to influence governments, decision makers and mobilize and empower their fellow young individuals. Their varied experiences make them valuable allies and strategic communicators in diaspora projects and initiatives. While experienced diaspora leaders often prioritize crisis response and problem-solving, young diasporas focus more on prevention, social inclusion, and the involvement of youth in all areas of development.

3. Amplifying the use of digital technologies in a safe, inclusive and empowering way

- Online spaces offer numerous professional and personal advantages, but they can also pose risks for individuals with intersectional identities. Diaspora communities can utilize features such as blocking, reporting, and unfollowing to ensure their online environments remain positive and free from harmful accounts.
- Being resilient and cautious online, much like in any other space, is crucial to keep in mind when engaging in online communication. Diaspora individuals can exercise caution in choosing the communities or platforms they engage with, in order to avoid potentially harmful online situations and protect themselves from hate speech and harassment.
- Social media is meant to create community. Often, when facing negative situations, diasporas can reach out to established communities for help and advice.

- Disinformation is widespread, making it crucial to be vigilant about the type and nature of the content being shared or viewed. Diasporas can utilize online tools, such as Google search, to fact-check information and leverage their influence to rectify misinformation. They can also encourage their communities to verify information with reputable sources and promote the importance of relying on accurate and reliable information.
- Gender divide and gender-based violence take many forms online. While technology has facilitated many things and is part of our daily lives, it has also facilitated a new form of gender-based violence, risking women's right to freedom of speech, mental health, and social well-being, according to UN-Women. The consequences of online gender violence can be devastating for women and girls in the diaspora, leading to fewer female voices represented in the public arena, including activists, human rights defenders, journalists and women in politics. Finding solutions to prevent online gender violence is not a straightforward task, but by seeking to protect and support one another and prioritizing prevention measures, we can reduce the harmful consequences.

Conclusion

Using digital tools for project engagement has become the preferred approach for many organizations to engage stakeholders and audiences. There are various digital tools that cater to different audiences and teams within diaspora organizations. Utilizing digital channels and online platforms provides an advantage for those with internet access. However, when diasporas deliver learning solutions and engage with their communities, they need to consider that not all groups will have appropriate access to digital technology. This requires them to seek alternative and traditional methods which include in-person training and capacity-building. In utilizing these tools, it is crucial for the diaspora to prioritize safety and to be cautious, especially given the current reliance on online platforms for interactions. When it comes to safety, this has an influence on diaspora individuals and on those engaged in the online space and the diaspora organization that manages it. Therefore, more training and awareness-building on managing safety issues for staff and partners of diaspora organizations could increase their organizations' brand image, reduce public relations risk and further develop community cohesion. Another consideration is data privacy which requires adjustment in tools and tailoring appropriate information to users.

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Digital tools are unique. They provide unprecedented opportunities for diasporas to overcome barriers when it comes to distance and cultural barriers. They are unique and essential for diaspora engagement because they provide a powerful platform to connect people.



Whitney Usoh - Nigerian Youths in the Netherlands

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General Conclusions: Boosting Communication for Development

The emphasis on the project management cycle was one of key focuses during the Global Diaspora Virtual Exchanges. Diaspora actors used this lens as a means to highlight the diverse communication methods employed across different phases of project management. The report attempts to compact the key messages in the form of tips shared on becoming effective and influential communicators.

Key tips for diaspora organizations to become effective and influential communicators

1. Communicating for Personal Branding

- Personal branding is the process of creating a brand identity for individuals or organizations, and the same principle applies to diasporas. When diaspora groups or organizations present themselves or their projects, the audience recognizes what they stand for, their values, the types of projects they work on, and the audiences they seek to engage.
- Personal branding also includes how diasporas are perceived in their communications skills. Those who use soft interpersonal skills such as being a good listener, being empathetic, kind, have teamwork skills, and even use non-verbal communication can set diasporas apart from other groups.
- Online personal communication is perhaps today the basis of most communication and interactions. Diasporas use online platforms on a daily basis either to stay in touch with family and friends, to make new connections, expand professional networks and to engage in their host communities. However, critical learning remains on online communication and its link to social norms that need adjustment to be a positive and stimulating environment when sharing relevant information and interacting as the brand and not as an individual.
- In the era of abundant online information, diaspora communities should prioritize staying authentic to their unique experiences, work, and stories. Instead of being swayed by the quantity of content, they should focus on quality and authenticity, knowing that these elements can have a lasting impact on maintaining their branding.

2. Communicating as an Organization

- Organizational communication entails the sharing of messages aligned with common goals, organizational climate, attitudes and values. Similarly, when diaspora leaders establish their organizations, they adopt a distinct set of organizational skills that sets them apart from other diaspora organizations.
- Diaspora organizations reap the benefits of global reach; however, it should be noted that not all audiences respond to outreach communications in the same manner. Global diaspora organizations can enhance their effectiveness by tailoring their outreach efforts to specific locations and targeted groups.
- Teamwork is vital, not only among diaspora communities but also among the teams assembled by diasporas to deliver projects, which could include a range of partners. Nurturing teams is just as crucial as crafting effective communications and managing the project cycle. While effective communication can foster appreciation and connection within teams, the lack of communication and transparency can hinder opportunities and progress.
- Diasporas can support one another and rely on expert knowledge to achieve their goals. Sharing knowledge and networks can facilitate greater development for diaspora organizations striving to establish themselves as agents of change, empowering their communities.

3. Communicating with Stakeholders

- There are various stakeholders that diaspora organizations may encounter, including donors, participants, other diasporas, migrants, civil society, academics, government and the private sector. To establish and maintain effective communication with these stakeholders, diaspora organizations can employ several techniques. These include targeted communication, nurturing relationships, meeting stakeholders' needs while staying true to their own essence, keeping stakeholders excited and engaged throughout the project cycle, and preparing reports or newsletters to showcase the achieved results and impacts.
- Advocacy is also a key impact for diaspora organizations that often requires a different approach to communicating with their own communities. Sometimes it could be early alert, another time it could be articulating key issues to influence and draw attention. This also requires specific sets of strategic communication and branding skills because the nature of the targeted stakeholders varies case by case.
- Donors play a crucial role as stakeholders for diaspora organizations involved in running projects and initiatives. Building and maintaining relationships with both existing and new donors are essential for the long-term sustainability of these organizations. Continual improvement in pitching efforts, such as customizing messages based on the demographics and temperament of donors, will lead to greater success. When pitching to donors, it is common to include components that highlight the qualifications and experience of the project leaders. Diaspora organizations can establish online presences to further demonstrate their suitability for managing specific projects.



- Diasporas are closely connected to multiple communities, both in their countries of origin and within their fellow diasporas in the host country. As a result, diasporas possess a deeper understanding of their respective cultures, approaches, and methods of engaging with donors and stakeholders. Approaching donors in the United States, for example, differs from approaching donors in an African country. Diasporas are more attuned to the unspoken social norms and hierarchical structures prevalent in their countries of origin, and leveraging this knowledge can help bridge gaps and foster closer relationships.
- Diasporas bring a unique perspective to various intersectional issues. It is important for governments, NGOs and education systems to develop a better understanding of the unique circumstances faced by diaspora communities and create resources and safe spaces for diasporas to engage with their host communities.
- Diasporas may encounter obstacles when trying to implement successful projects in their destination or host countries. These barriers may include distance, changes in laws and norms, limited official data on diasporas abroad, lack of access to banking services, bureaucratic regulations, corruption issues hindering resource mobilization and a lack of governmental support. Therefore, it is advisable for governments to enact legislation that facilitates diaspora operations and initiatives, while recognizing the positive contributions diasporas make to sustainable development across the four capitals (social, economic, cultural and human).

4. Communicating in General Terms

- During the exchanges, there was a common understanding that there is a wide range and diversity of communication skills that diasporas use in their engagement with governments, fellow diaspora actors and institutions in the country of origin. Diasporas have a resource pool to tap from in terms of communication skills that have an impact on fostering development. The challenge remains in leveraging on what works and cross-learning among diaspora actors as well as working closer (beyond capacity building and/or investment) with local partners. Technology is useful for scaling up and dissemination.
- Diaspora activities from intraregions (within Africa and Asia) are not as visible as diaspora in Global North - the collaboration among diaspora can be improved. The role of media was highlighted as critical for the visibility of all diaspora activities - both from countries of residence and origin.
- The sessions allowed diaspora to question the notion of diaspora as independent development actors or part of the development partners ecosystem. They emphasized the importance of sharing and leveraging on experiences and diversity of diaspora engagement using scenarios which indeed impacts the communication modalities. This is critical as good ideas can get lost in miscommunication.
- Diaspora made a resounding call centering communication for the youth and by the youth. It is critical that diaspora engagement shapes and adjusts to second and third generation diaspora as well as embracing the innovation useful for intergenerational engagement.

Annexes

Annex 1:

List of organizations and partners who participated in the 2023 Global Diaspora Virtual Exchanges:

Organization	Name
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	Monica GORACCI Elizabeth WARN Larisa LARA-GUERRERO Verónica URIBE-KESSLER Iman BERRY
Global Research Forum on Diaspora and Transnationalism (GRFDT)	Binod KHADRIA Paddy SIYANGA KNUDSEN
Global Diaspora Confederation (GDC)	Peter KWOK Maria DOLORES DELGADO Luiza SOARES Vivian NWAKOLOBI-IBEJI Kazeem OJOYE
Kenyan Women in Germany (KWIG)	Jacklyne ACHIENG KUHN
Granadilla Podcast	Ana Lucia GUTIÉRREZ
Genesis Entrepreneurship Trust (GET)	Jessica HAMADZIRIPI
Diáspora2030mx	Manuel MENESES-NAMIHIRA
Migration Youth and Children Platform (MYCP)	Natalia KOSSOWSKA Victoria ZAGITOVA Yasmina BENSLIMAN
PONTES	Ouejdane MEJRI
Digital Diaspora News	Thesesa R. FIANKO
Nigerian Youths in the Netherlands	Whitney USOH



Annex 2: Banners Virtual Exchanges

Global Diaspora Virtual Exchange Session 1

GLOBAL DIASPORA | VIRTUAL EXCHANGES on Communication to boost development

iDIASPORA CONNECT LEARN CONTRIBUTE

MYCP

GLOBAL DIASPORA CONFEDERATION

GRFDT

IOM UN MIGRATION

Impactful Skills
March 22, 2023 - 15:00 - 17:00 CET

Simultaneous interpretation in French, Spanish and English

Opening and Closing Remarks


Elizabeth Warn
Head of the Labour Mobility and Social Inclusion Division, IOM


Luiza Soares
Vice Chair Global Diaspora Confederation

Moderator


Ana Lucia Gutierrez Gonzalez
Founder Granadilla Podcast

Speakers


Dr Ouejdane Mejri
Migration for Development Unit Director


Dr. Jessica Hamadziripi
Director Genesis Entrepreneurship Trust GET


Victoria Zagitova
Youth Advocate and Communications Lead at MYCP

Global Diaspora Virtual Exchange Session 2

GLOBAL DIASPORA | VIRTUAL EXCHANGES on Communication to boost development

iDIASPORA CONNECT LEARN CONTRIBUTE

MYCP

GLOBAL DIASPORA CONFEDERATION

GRFDT

IOM UN MIGRATION

Effective Strategies
April 17, 2023 - 15:00 - 17:00 CET

Simultaneous interpretation in French, Spanish and English

Opening and Closing Remarks


Monica Goracci
Director of the Department of Migration Management IOM


Natalia Kossowska
European Regional Officer at MYCP

Moderator


Paddy Siyanga Knudsen
Co-Vicepresident GRFDT Forum

Speakers


Vivian Nwankolobi-Ibeji
Coordinator at the Global Diaspora Confederation


Jacklyne Achieng Kuhn
Co-founder of Kenyan Women in Germany (KWIG)


Theresa R. Fianko
Founder and Managing Editor of Diaspora Digital News

Global Diaspora Virtual Exchange Session 3

GLOBAL DIASPORA | VIRTUAL EXCHANGES on Communication to boost development

IDIASPORA CONNECT LEARN CONTRIBUTE

MYCP

GLOBAL DIASPORA CONFEDERATION

GRFDT

IOM UN MIGRATION

Innovative Tools

May 03, 2023 - 15:00 - 17:00 CET

Simultaneous interpretation in French, Spanish and English

Opening and Closing Remarks



Ugochi Daniels
Deputy Director General at IOM



Prof. Binod Khadria
President of GRFDT Forum

Co-Moderators



Maria D. Delgado Cartay
Secretary GDC



Kazeem Ojoye
Treasurer GDC

Speakers



Whitney Usuh
President at Nigerian Youths in the Netherlands



Yasmina Benslimane
Gender Specialist at Migration Youth & Children Platform



Manuel Meneses
Founder of Diáspora2030mx



Annex 3: Guiding questions for each session

Impactful Skills – 22 March 2023

- What are the key skills that a communicator needs to have when approaching donors and delivering a pitch?
- What skills and characteristics make diaspora communities unique communicators?
- Why are interpersonal skills relevant to deliver impactful messages?
- Which channels of communication are the most effective?

Effective Strategies – 17 April 2023

- Why is strategic communication relevant and how to define its success in the implementation of diaspora projects?
- What are the key techniques and considerations to beware when strategically communicate and in what situations one works more effectively on diaspora engagement than the others?
- How can diasporas and partners build engagement through sharing the impact of their activities?
- How can diasporas further align their goals with their communication strategy?

Innovative Tools – 3 May 2023

- Why are digital tools relevant for diaspora engagement and why are they unique?
- How can diasporas adapt to the fast evolution of communication tools and methods?
- Which tools are the most effective to communicate across generations?
- How to use specific tools to enhance diaspora engagement?



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