



Global Diasporas reacting to the COVID-19 crisis

BEST PRACTICES FROM THE FIELD

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Cover photos:

Top: Nurse attending to patient's needs during Covid-19 / FatCamera

Middle: Woman wearing a face Mask / Anna Shvets

Bottom: Man holding food the kitchen / Canva Studio

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BEST PRACTICES FROM THE FIELD

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¹ References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of the United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

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BACKGROUND



Shopkeeper / © 2020 Odua Images.

On 11 March, the World Health Organization officially declared Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) a pandemic. Since the outbreak began, as of 11 November, more than 53 million cases and over 1.3 million deaths had been reported globally.

Confirmed cases have been reported in in over 200 countries and territories, with new cases of infection being reported on a daily basis. The impact of the current global pandemic is affecting every aspect of life from health, economies, and even basic social interactions. However, in spite of these challenges, diaspora communities are already mobilizing to help their families, friends, and communities most vulnerable to the impacts of the pandemic even while they themselves maybe facing challenging times and an uncertain future in their countries of destination.

The COVID-19 pandemic is an unprecedented phenomenon that has challenged governments, international organizations, and members of the civil society worldwide to respond cohesively and effectively.

Diasporas have been particularly active in the response of COVID-19 and the development of new initiatives to face the sanitary, social and economic challenges faced by their communities in both their home and host countries.

Since the beginning of the outbreak, diasporas have developed transnational responses to support global migrant communities. Within their communities, diasporas have been able to create innovative responses to support the victims of the pandemic and provide immediate solutions to contribute to the crisis response.

These initiatives showcase the capacity of diasporas to develop transnational interventions and their ability to respond to emergencies. However, in order to harness the potential of diasporas for responding to such crises, the international community must encourage a sustained dialogue between stakeholders.

By feeding the communication between diasporas, experts, governments, and the international community at the global level, it is possible to identify best practices and experiences responding to such global challenges.

SUMMARY

In response to this situation iDiaspora and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) organized three Global Diaspora Virtual Exchanges on COVID-19 Response with two main objectives: (1) to create a space for collaboration where diaspora groups from around the world could share their best practices responding to the Covid-19 crisis and (2) to showcase the work already done by diasporic groups and enhance the cooperation between policymakers, practitioners and stakeholders involved in mainstreaming of migrant communities into the coronavirus crisis.

The first virtual exchange took place on 22 April 2020 in English, the second one on 20 May in French and the third on 10 June in Spanish. The virtual discussions involved nearly 300 stakeholders. In addition to members of diaspora themselves the exchanges counted with the participation of policymakers, researchers, members of the global civil society interested in maximizing the potential of diasporas facing the pandemic worldwide.

The virtual exchanges brought together stakeholders from the African, Asian, European and Latin American diasporas, who were able to present the initiatives that they have developed to support their respective communities in different contexts. During the presentations, participants were able to identify the best practices organized by diaspora leaders from multiple countries and regions. Each meeting included a round of questions and answers through which attendees were able to share their experiences and ideas on how to better integrate migrant communities into the response of the pandemic.

Overall, the panellists recognized that transnational responses to the pandemic require a holistic approach including humanitarian initiatives, health and psychological assistance and administrative support related to repatriation. In addition, they highlighted the importance of enhancing the cooperation among local, national and international actors to design tailored and integral responses to the health crisis. Finally, they emphasized the predominant role of technology and digital communications in responding to this specific crisis, since mobility and social contact are restricted.

PARTICIPANTS OF THE GLOBAL EXCHANGES

GLOBAL EXCHANGE IN ENGLISH - 22 APRIL 2020

WELCOMING REMARKS

ANTÓNIO VITORINO



Director General for the IOM since October 2018, Mr Vitorino is a former European Commissioner for Justice and Home Affairs and former Minister of the Presidency and National Defence of Portugal. He has enjoyed a distinguished career in Portugal as a lawyer as well as in electoral politics, including serving in Parliament and as Minister for National Defence and Deputy Prime Minister within the government of António Guterres, now the United Nations' Secretary-General.

MODERATOR

KEMO CAMARA



Founder and CEO of Omek, a community-centric platform for the social and professional advancement of the African diaspora talents. He has also co-founded many businesses and non-profit organizations and played various leadership roles in community organizations. He has more than 15 years of professional experience in leadership and management working for multinational corporations including banks and manufacturing companies.

PANELLISTS

ADEL KAROUI



A businessperson based in Turin with over 30 year's professional experience in the hospitality industry and as a strategy consultant for over 20 years. His background includes a variety of projects with a wide range of major customers in Italy and other countries working on all aspects of hotel management and tourism, including analysis of financial information, business targets and marketing strategies.



DR. CHARLES SENESSIE

Founder and President of the UN ECOSOC accredited Afro- European Medical and Research Network that brings together health practitioners in the Diaspora to serve people all over sub-Saharan Africa. He is also CEO of Senessie Low-Income Countries Healthcare and Consultancy Services. He currently works as a physician for the Swiss Federal Government in the regulation of clinical trials locally and internationally.



MARK KOSMO

Chair of the Global Albanians Foundation as well as chair of the Massachusetts Albanian American Society since its founding in 2006 and CFO of the Mentor Group in Boston with experience working as an independent consultant and for the World Bank in Albania and Washington D.C. Mark is a member of the Board of Directors of GERMIN (an organization in Kosovo¹ promoting Albanian Diaspora engagement) and Action for Mothers and Children.



NILOUFAR RAHIM

Chair of KEIHAN foundation and active member of International Federation of Medical Students' Association and International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War. She has supported many projects to improve health care and higher education in Afghanistan. Born in Kabul in 1987, she left Afghanistan when she was two years old and arrived in the Netherlands at age ten, where she studied medicine at Leiden University and has since worked in the following fields: emergency health, paediatrics, gynaecology and as general practitioner.



PETER KWOK

Chair and Founder of the UK Federation of Chinese Professionals (UKFCP), a national community organization for global Chinese professionals in the country. He has previously shared advices with the Scottish Government, local councils, universities and SMEs on diaspora strategies and also at the World Overseas Professional Associations' Chairpersons Conference organized by the Chinese State Council.



SIHANA BEJTULLAHU

Co-Executive Director of GERMIN since March 2020. Ms Bejtullahu has a strong background in civil society organizations and, among others professional experiences, has been directly involved in programmes supporting education and innovation systems within youngsters in more than 24 Kosovo¹ communities. She is also an active human rights activist, with a particular interest in women and other vulnerable groups.



YOHANNES ASSEFA

Member of the Board of Directors of the Ethiopian Diaspora Trust Fund and an experienced business lawyer and international development professional with over 20 years of experience in the United States and Africa. He is the founder and Executive Director of the Ethiopian Diaspora Business Forum, the oldest operating Ethiopian Diaspora business association in the United States. Mr Assefa is also a member of the African Diaspora Network's Executive Council.

GLOBAL EXCHANGE IN FRENCH - 20 MAY 2020

WELCOMING REMARKS



AISSATA KANE

IOM's Senior Regional Adviser for sub-saharan Africa and CERF Advisory Group member, she brings her expertise on migration, human rights, economic and humanitarian fields, refugees, and health issues. During her 18 years of work experience with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in Brussels and in Geneva, Ambassador Kane had regular interactions with Geneva-based permanent missions, regional groups, donors community, think tanks, academia and civil society organizations. She has been granted by the Government of the Republic Islamic of Mauritania of the title of Ambassador-at-large in November 2015.

MODERATOR



KHADY SAKHO NIANG

President of the Africa-Europe Development Platform of Diaspora Organizations (ADEPT), former President of the Forum of International Solidarity Organizations for Migration (FORIM), Khady co-chaired the "Migration and Development" working group of the National Council for Development and International Solidarity (CNDSI), a framework for regular dialogue between the French government and development actors. Khady is an expert in "Migration and Development", a member of the GFMD Steering Committee and a member of several platforms such as the Pan-African Network for the Defense of Migrants' Rights and the "Gender in Action" platform.

PANELLISTS



CLEOPHAS ADRIEN DIOMA

President of the association Le Réseau and Italy Africa Business Week. Member of the National Council for Development Cooperation, he coordinates the Migration and Development Working Group of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For years he has been involved in intercultural communication and international cooperation, organizing intercultural projects, engaging in mediation, working as an educator, trainer and cultural mediator.



MOHAMED MALOUCHE

Founder and Board Chair of the largest Tunisian American diaspora organization – Tunisian American Young Professionals (TAYP). He is responsible for all public sector modernization programmes in Francophone Africa as a Partner at Deloitte Afrique. He provides economic counsel to government actions related to investment, innovation and entrepreneurship and supports entrepreneurship in Tunisia through building capacity and providing financial supports.



GILLES BAZAMBANZA

Co-founder of the Brussels-Africa Hub, a Brussels based organization that aims at fostering sustainable development in the African private sector. He is a Rwandan/Belgian citizen based in Brussels, working in the banking industry as IT and risk management consultant for over 12 years. He was elected President of the Rwandan Diaspora Association in Belgium.



BOLA BARDET

Founder and CEO of Susu, a start-up offering a digital health service enabling the African Diaspora to provide high-quality care to their relatives based in their home countries. Susu's services include preventive and follow-up health care, medical coverage at home and abroad, emergency health care, and payment for medication.



YÉRA DEMBELE

President of FEASO and Secretary-General of ADEPT, he brings his years of experience as an international consultant on migration and development issues. He is a Graduate Doctor in Management Sciences at the University of Paris IX - Dauphine. Previously he was a lecturer at the University of Paris X - Nanterre France in Migration and Development.

WELCOMING REMARKS

LAURA THOMPSON



Deputy Director General of the IOM since 2009, she was Ambassador and Permanent Representative, as well as Counsellor and First Secretary of Costa Rica to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva, and Cultural Attaché at the Costa Rican Delegation to UNESCO in Paris. She has held leadership responsibilities within humanitarian affairs in the main governing bodies, as president or vice-president of the governing bodies of IOM, UNHCR, the World Intellectual Property Organization, the International Labour Organization, among others. In addition to her diplomatic experience, she has worked as a Legal Officer for international organizations in Geneva, including the Security Council's United Nations Compensation Commission, experiences that equipped her with an in-depth understanding of the functioning of international organizations.

MODERATOR

JUAN CARLOS VILORIA DORIA



General Coordinator of Coalición por Venezuela, which brings together more than 60 civil society organizations in the Americas; and he is also Vice President of the Venezuelan Association in Barranquilla. In 2019, he was awarded the National Youth Talent Award 2019 by the First Lady of Colombia. He is a doctor with experience in editorial management of scientific journals in Health and author of several studies.

PANELLISTS

CARLOS GUEVARA



Associate Director of the UnidosUS Immigration Policy Project, a project that leads UnidosUS' efforts to advocate for effective and humane federal immigration policies that promote and defend family reunification, protect workers' rights, and support the integration of migrants. Prior to joining UnidosUS, Carlos worked in the administration of former President Barack Obama from 2014 to 2017 and previously provided legal advice to low-income migrants as an attorney for Catholic Charities. Carlos was born in Hermosillo, Mexico and grew up in San Antonio, Texas.



GHASSAN SALIBA ZEGHOND

President of the Catalonia-Lebanon Association, and previously, responsible for immigration at CCOO of Catalonia and president of the Information Centre for Foreign Workers, and also for the Pu i Solidaritat Foundation. He has been a member of the Association of Press Correspondents Foreigner in Spain, from the board of the ACSAR Foundation (Catalan Association of Solidarity with Asylees and Refugees), and the board of directors of the Catalan Association for Peace. Ghassan was born in Lebanon.



LEONARDO DE SIMONE

President of the Federation of Calabrian Associations of the Argentine Republic, which brings together more than 75 federated associations from all over the country. Leonardo is also an expert and consultant in migration and its governance and has the role of trainer in interculturality.



MATAR KANE

Treasurer of the Koop SF 34 organization in Bilbao, Spain. Matar is of Senegalese nationality and is involved in several of the organization's projects covering various issues and community initiatives including interventions in clothing, transportation, disinfection and of what is known as "Life kontainer".



PILIN LEÓN

Assistant Coordinator of the Coalición por Venezuela, she was Miss World 1981, TV presenter and model until 1995, when she founded Pilin León Producciones, a company dedicated to organizing corporate and medical conferences, with great success for more than 15 years. In 2009 she moved to Barranquilla, where she founded Venezolanos en Barranquilla, which is the founding organization of the Coalición por Venezuela, an international entity that brings together more than 60 civil human rights organizations in the Americas, with members in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela as well as in the diaspora. Pilin was born in Maracay, Aragua State, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela,



YIHONG JI WANG

Member of the Madrid Bar Association, he is the first lawyer from the Chinese community in continental Spain. He is a professor at the University of Madrid, at the National University of Sciences Political and Legal Studies of China, at Renmin University of China and Wenzhou University of China. He is also legal adviser to the National Federation of Chinese Emigrants and to several Chinese associations in Spain.



ASIER ANSORENA

He worked at AIESEC on youth empowerment and entrepreneurship issues in Jordan and Latin America. In 2009, he moved to Brazil to work with Instituto Banco Palmas, the first community bank in Brazil, where he developed Palmaslab, a research and innovation laboratory to empower communities through software development and research produced by young people. There, he participated in the creation of the E-dinheiro platform, the first Social n'Tech in Brazil, focused on financial inclusion. In 2016 he was selected as a member of the Mel-King Community in Economic Democracy at the MIT-Colab. In 2019 he joined Ashoka to develop a strategy for the inclusion of Diaspora networks in the community of 4,000 social entrepreneurs that Ashoka supports in more than 80 countries.

EXPERIENCES

DEPLOYMENT OF DIASPORA SKILLS

AFRICA PRESS EXPRESS AGENCY

COMMUNITY: AFRICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
AFRICA

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
AUSTRIA

The Africa Press Express Agency was created as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic to fight disinformation in social media by verifying information using journalistic methods. The agency is an initiative established by Radio Africa TV whose mission is to present the true image of Africa.

For more information: www.radioafrika.net/2020/05/01/africa-press-express-agency/?sfw=pass1603453324/.

AFRO-EUROPEAN MEDICAL AND RESEARCH
NETWORK

COMMUNITY: AFRICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN: SIERRA
LEONE, ZAMBIA, CAMEROON AND GHANA

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
EUROPE

The Afro-European Medical and Research Network (AEMRN) is a group of professionals from health and allied workers with a strong vision to improve the quality of life of people from sub-Saharan African countries. During the COVID-19 crisis, this group has been able to support their communities by developing synergies with local partners and with experts. Through these synergies, the organization has been able to support health care systems in Africa. In particular, AEMRN has implemented mobile clinics in collaboration with the Ministries of Health and Sanitation in Sierra Leone, Zambia, Cameroon and Ghana.

For more information: <https://aemrnetwork.ch/>.

ASSOCIAZIONE LE RESEAU

COMMUNITY: AFRICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
AFRICA

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
ITALY

Associazione Le Réseau is a space for reflections on Migration, Interculturality and International Cooperation. In response to the COVID-19 crisis, the association developed a set of practices and actions in coordination with African communities. The goal of this initiatives was to prevent the spread of the pandemic in the most disadvantaged communities. As a result, they created a hub of information to share pictures, links, diagrams, and ideas to identify best practices in response to the pandemic. The organization has recognized that the use of technology has been very important to raise awareness and to inform the diaspora about sanitary and security measures and to maintain social links online.

For more information: www.associazionelereseau.org/2020/07/08/covid-free/.

CASAC

COMMUNITY: AFRICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN: SENEGAL

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
SPAIN

The Coordinator of Senegalese Associations of the Canary Archipelago founded in 2012 is a nonprofit organization with 13 member associations. It aims to protect the rights and support the Senegalese diaspora in the Canary Islands. During the pandemic, they deployed a WhatsApp group to address the emergencies of the Senegalese community in the islands. They have organized multiple meetings to identify the necessities of the Senegalese diaspora and they have been able to develop humanitarian initiatives and provide psychological support via phone calls.

For more information:

[www.facebook.com/groups/303902059631857/?
hc_ref=ARTz04MBd5uLk2FEukZDuYv6D6dr97aZtBfLGzXuHOnrDd80nFtKuK5gDSSZyQtfcSE/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/303902059631857/?hc_ref=ARTz04MBd5uLk2FEukZDuYv6D6dr97aZtBfLGzXuHOnrDd80nFtKuK5gDSSZyQtfcSE/)

KOOP SF 34

COMMUNITY: AFRICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN: SENEGAL

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
SPAIN

The Koop SF 34 is a social-enterprise incubator aiming to enhance entrepreneurship and social development in sub-Saharan Africa. During COVID-19, the organization has made significant contributions in support of the migrant communities that were affected by the crisis. They have been able to create sewing workshops to make masks and coordinate the delivery of donations. In addition, they bought fumigators and carried out fumigation processes at more than 200 homes at no cost.

For more information: <http://koopsf34.org/index.html/>.

SUSU

COMMUNITY: AFRICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
CÔTE D'IVOIRE

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
FRANCE

Susu is a start-up offering family members of the African diaspora with digital health services, local and international insurance, and assistance. Susu aims to efficiently address the problem of limited access to health care in Africa through an inclusive approach. In response to COVID-19, Susu created a three steps response. First, they took preventive measures by sending messages about personal protective equipment (PPE) and hygienic practices to its networks. Second, they provided home delivery of hygiene kits. Third, they helped the members of the Africa diaspora to finance further health needs of their family members.

For more information: www.susu.fr/about-susu/.

CHURUN MERU ASSOCIATION

COMMUNITY:
LATIN AMERICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Since 2015, the Churun Meru Association organizes social and cultural initiatives for the Venezuelan diaspora living in the Dominican Republic. During the COVID-19 crisis, the organization has focused on disseminating information to prevent the spreading of the virus through special medical days.

For more information: <https://asochurunmerunpc.wixsite.com/website/>.

RUMIÑAHUI

COMMUNITY:
LATIN AMERICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN: ECUADOR

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
SPAIN

The Rumiñahui Association was founded in 1997 with the aim of protecting migrant populations and helping them in their integration processes in Spain. During the pandemic, the association has formed a group of 30 experts who provide psychological assistance to migrants in different cities of Spain and in particular women, who have been victims of gender violence.

For more information: www.ruminahui.org/.

VENEZOLANOS EN BARRANQUILLA

COMMUNITY:
LATIN AMERICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
COLOMBIA

Venezolanos en Barranquilla was created in 2009 with the purpose of fighting for the human rights of the members of the Venezuelan diaspora. During the pandemic, the organization has been involved in the implementation of employability and entrepreneurship programmes to assist Venezuelan families living abroad.

For more information: www.venezolanosenbarranquilla.org/.

VENEZOLANOS EN MÉXICO

COMMUNITY:
LATIN AMERICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
MEXICO

Venezuelans in Mexico in alliance with the Association of Venezuelan Professionals, Executives and Entrepreneurs in Mexico (AEVM), and with the support of volunteers, are developing the Campaign to Support the Migrant. On the one hand the campaign includes a fundraising initiative to support the most vulnerable members of the Venezuelan diasporas. On the other hand, the campaign aims to support Venezuelan entrepreneurs residing in Mexico through a social media campaign and the promotion of their products and services.

For more information: <http://apoyoalmigrante.org/>.

XMARKET

COMMUNITY:
LATIN AMERICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN: N/A

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
COLOMBIA

Xmarket has created a platform that allows the exchange of goods and services at the local level without using cash. This platform has been particularly valuable for migrants working in the informal sector.

CATALONIA-LEBANON ASSOCIATION

COMMUNITY: ASIAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN: LEBANON

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
SPAIN

The Catalonia-Lebanon Association was created in 1982 with the main objective to raise awareness of the political, social and cultural situation in Lebanon. In addition, it aims to promote solidarity and enhance transnational initiatives orchestrated from Spain. At the beginning of the outbreak, the organization focused on the creation and dissemination of information materials in Arabic to keep informed the Lebanese and other Arabic speaking communities in Spain.

For more information: <https://nonprofit.xarxanet.org/>.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF CHINESE EMIGRANTS
IN SPAIN

COMMUNITY: ASIAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN: CHINA

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
SPAIN

The National Federation of Chinese Emigrants in Spain has implemented initiatives to face the COVID-19 crisis including preventive measures in advance through providing masks and promoting their use as well as the practice of social distancing. In addition, the community assisted retailers who had to close their businesses early to avoid the spreading of the virus.

For more information: www.spain-china-foundation.org/es/especial-coronavirus/.

PAKISTAN DIASPORA HEALTH INITIATIVE

COMMUNITY: ASIAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
PAKISTAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
GLOBAL

The Pakistani Diaspora Health Initiative launched specific initiatives to complement the Government's response to the global pandemic. They aim to leverage both innovative and traditional solutions for precaution, prevention, and treatment to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 within the country. In particular, they developed a digital platform where Pakistani diaspora health community from all over the world can register and provide online consultations. In addition, they are organizing online training sessions to share knowledge between local and overseas health professionals on the latest, evidence-based COVID-19 practice guidelines through webinars.

For more information: <https://yaranewatan.gov.pk/covid-19/>.

SOCIETY OF THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE ARAB WORLD

COMMUNITY: ARAB

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
MIDDLE EAST

COUNTRY/ REGION OF DESTINATION:
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

SASTA was created in 2011 to mobilize and catalyse the engagement of scientists, professionals, NGO's, academic institutions and professional societies to advance higher education, science and research in Arab countries. During the pandemic, they have published a series of recommendations to inform the Arab population about the risks of the COVID-19 in the region. In addition, the organization has created a series of virtual meetings to connect Arab scientists around the work to collaborate in the response to the health crisis.

For more information: www.sastaworld.com/news-item/press-release/.

FEDERATION OF CALABRIAN
ASSOCIATIONS IN ARGENTINA

COMMUNITY: EUROPEAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN: ITALY

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
ARGENTINA

The Federation of Calabrian Associations of the Argentine Republic brings together more than 75 federated associations from all over the country. During the COVID-19, the Associations have developed specific initiatives to protect the members of its diaspora. First, they have created a psychosocial assistance network with more than 30 professionals who provide a telephone support and psychological orientation service. Second, they focused on sending medical supplies to the province of Chaco in northern Argentina. Third, they launched of an awareness campaign on the importance of donating blood.

For more information: www.facebook.com/federacioncalabresa/.

GERMIN

COMMUNITY: EUROPEAN

PLACE OF ORIGIN: KOSOVO¹

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
GLOBAL

GERMIN has fostered collaboration through projects between the Albanian diaspora communities and networks. As a result of COVID-19, the organization has launched the Global Albanian Health Professionals COVID-19 Response Team, a collaborative network of Albanians working in health care, public health and research and involved in the fight against COVID in all corners of the world.

For more information: <https://germin.org/>.

ITALIAN NATIONAL COORDINATION OF NEW GENERATIONS

COMMUNITY: EUROPEAN

COUNTRY/ REGION OF ORIGIN: GLOBAL

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
ITALY

The Italian National Coordination of New Generations is supporting migrant families with tutoring online sessions for their children. In addition, the organization is helping migrant communities by translating information about COVID-19 in videos and official leaflets.

For more information: <http://conngi.it/>.

TAPPING INTO DIASPORA PHILANTHROPY

ALBIDEYA ASSOCIATION

COMMUNITY: AFRICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN: TUNISIA

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
ITALY

During the COVID-19 outbreak, the Albideya Association organized initiatives to support the members of the Tunisian community living in Italy. In particular, they have been involved in delivering economic and housing assistance for students in need, provision of Internet connection services for students so they could maintain communication with their families, legal assistance in housing issues, access to psychological support and medical services.

For more information: www.facebook.com/albideya20/.

ASSOCIAZIONE SOPRA I PONTI

COMMUNITY: AFRICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
MOROCCO

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
ITALY

The Associazione Sopra I Ponti was founded in 1995 in Bologna with the purpose of promoting the social and cultural insertion of migrants in the city. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the organization is providing food to migrant families both in Italy and Morocco.

For more information: www.sopraiponti.it/.

ETHIOPIAN DIASPORA BUSINESS FORUM

COMMUNITY: AFRICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
ETHIOPIA

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The Ethiopian Diaspora Business Forum highlighted that the Ethiopian diaspora has raised USD 1,192,704.53 funds from over 25,000 donors to support front-line health-care workers.

For more information: www.ethiopiastrustfund.org/.

GUINEAN FOUNDATION OF ITALY

COMMUNITY: AFRICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN: GUINEA

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
ITALY

As a response to this pandemic, the Guinean Foundation of Italy has been collecting funds from diaspora communities, specifically Guineans living in Bologna and Ravenna to help the affected communities in Conakry.

For more information: www.facebook.com/pages/category/Nonprofit-Organization/Fondazione-Guineana-Ditalia-735724136624358/.

KOOP SF 34

COMMUNITY: AFRICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
SENEGAL

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
SPAIN

The Koop SF 34 bought four bicycles to give jobs to unemployed migrants who now deliver products and food.

For more information: <http://koopsf34.org/index.html>.

MAURITANIAN DIASPORA

COMMUNITY: AFRICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
MAURITANIA

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
SPAIN

Mauritanian community in Spain has provided support to facilitate communication between people in confinement and other members of the diaspora to exchange information and to carry out relief activities for people in Mauritania by sending them money and food.

RWANDAN DIASPORA ASSOCIATION IN BELGIUM

COMMUNITY: AFRICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
RWANDA

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
BELGIUM

The Rwandan Diaspora Association in Belgium has raised funds together with other members of the Rwandan diaspora in Europe to alleviate the crisis in their homeland. The Rwandan Government and its ministries have played a role in these transnational initiatives by ensuring that the received funds have been properly deployed.

For more information: www.facebook.com/Diasporarwandab/.

SUDAN DOCTORS UNION UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND

COMMUNITY: AFRICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
SUDAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND

The Sudan Doctors Union United Kingdom and Ireland has developed an online fundraising campaign to support Al-Fashir hospital, the main hospital in the Northern Darfur state, serving a population of approximately 3 million, of which 64,000 are internally displaced. The project consists of an Oxygen Generation Plant in addition to cylinders filling system with supplementary pipelines network with a total cost of £85,000.

For more information: www.sdu.org.uk/.

TETEZANA ONLUS

COMMUNITY: AFRICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
MADAGASCAR

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
ITALY

The association, Tetezana Onlus, was founded in 2006 with the aim of enhancing the collaboration between Madagascar and Italy. The association started to act from the beginning of the pandemic and raised funds using social media platforms. These funds were sent to Madagascar to help disadvantaged communities and vulnerable diaspora members in Italy. Families supported by the association benefited from food kits which include rice, dry beans, oil, sugar, salt, canned milk, candles and soap and of course protective masks.

For more information: www.tetezanaonlus.org/.

TUNISIAN AMERICAN YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

COMMUNITY: AFRICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
TUNISIA

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Tunisian American Young Professionals responded immediately to the crisis by raising funds for medical supplies for hospitals. Additionally, they set up kitchens to provide hygienic food to nurses. The group has also been able to provide financial and psychological support to the Tunisian community in the United States. The organization values transparency, thus they have developed a mobile application to track the needs of hospitals. The use of technology and its adaptation to the crisis has enabled the Tunisian diaspora to be accountable.

For more information: www.tayp.org/tayp-network-mobilized-in-the-fight-against-covid-19/.

ALIANZA VENCER

COMMUNITY:
LATIN AMERICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
COSTA RICA

Alianza Vencer, an organization aiming to help Venezuelans in Costa Rica has identified the most vulnerable people from the diaspora to provide them with specific help such as food or medicine. The organization has coordinated the delivery of 680 bags of food and more than 830 bags of medicine.

For more information: <http://alianzavencr.org/>

CHURUN MERU ASSOCIATION

COMMUNITY:
LATIN AMERICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA

COUNTRY OF DESTINATION:
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Since 2015, the Churun Meru Association organizes social and cultural initiatives for the Venezuelan diaspora living in the Dominican Republic. During the pandemic the Churun Meru Association created humanitarian initiatives to provide food aid, psychological and legal support to the Venezuelan community in the Dominican Republic.

For more information: <https://asochurunmerunpc.wixsite.com/website>.

GASKOV CLERGÉ FOUNDATION

COMMUNITY:
LATIN AMERICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN: HAITI

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The Gaskov Clergé Foundation is a philanthropic organization established to promote health, sports, education and sciences in both the United States and Haiti. They have developed a fundraising campaign to renovate and equip the first COVID care centre in Les Cayes. In addition, with these funds, they aim to produce standard reusable masks approved by the Minister of Health of Haiti. Finally, they have created a grant for small business and/or non-profit organizations in the south of Florida to support them economically during the pandemic.

For more information: www.gaskov.org/covid19-response.

RUMIÑAHUI

COMMUNITY:
LATIN AMERICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
ECUADOR

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
SPAIN

The Rumiñahui Association was founded in 1997 with the aim of protecting migrant populations and helping them in their integration processes in Spain. During the pandemic, the Rumiñahui Association has been able to donate 5,000 food kits to vulnerable people in Ecuador with the coordination with an organization in the United States.

For more information: www.ruminahui.org/.

KEIHAN FOUNDATION

COMMUNITY: ASIA

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
AFGHANISTAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
THE NETHERLANDS

KEIHAN Foundation has developed an important campaign to provide equipment for health staff who work specially in designated COVID-19 hospital in Afghanistan. They have implemented successful fundraising activities carried out for the provision of personal protective equipment to health practitioners in Afghanistan in close coordination with the local government. Specifically, through an online campaign they have managed to collect 11,500 euros and distributed 500 packages to five hospitals in the most vulnerable provinces in Afghanistan.

For more information: www.keihan.org/protect-afghan-health-workers-against-covid-19/.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF CHINESE MIGRANTS
IN SPAIN

COMMUNITY: ASIA

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN: CHINA

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
SPAIN

The National Federation of Chinese Migrants in Spain and the Chinese community in Spain have coordinated the donation and distribution of 270,000 masks for diaspora members, including students, and 5,000 protective suits for health and police centres. Moreover, they organized the purchase of natural medicines from China and the use of a mobile application for the delivery of food to the most vulnerable people.

For more information: www.spain-china-foundation.org/es/especial-coronavirus/.

WUHAN UNIVERSITY ALUMNI

COMMUNITY: ASIA

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN: CHINA

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
GLOBAL

The Wuhan University Alumni Association through its chapters in China and overseas helped by providing personal protective equipment early on in the crisis, raising 200 million RMB (approx. 30 million USD). They were able to act efficiently and utilize their network of medical professional alumni to get the equipment and distribute it where it was needed. By reaching out to a specific and specialized network, the alumni from Wuhan University were able to respond to the COVID-19 crisis efficiently.

For more information:

<http://admission.whu.edu.cn/en/?c=content&a=list&catid=80/>.

GERMIN

COMMUNITY: EUROPEAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
ALBANIA AND KOSOVO¹

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
GLOBAL

GERMIN implemented a fundraising campaign called “Besa për Kosova” in support of the families in need where help packages containing food and basic hygiene products are being provided.

For more information: <https://germin.org/>.

GLOBAL ALBANIANS FOUNDATION

COMMUNITY: EUROPEAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN: ALBANIA

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The Global Albanians Foundation has developed different donations campaigns specifically for women, children, people with disabilities and health care professionals. In addition, they have a campaign to create a Global Albanian Youth Movement. By considering the heterogeneity of its diaspora and its diversity in age, gender and interests the Foundation has been able to tailor their transnational initiatives and collect funds to support specific causes in their homeland.

For more information: www.globalalbanians.org/.

GALVANIZING SYNERGIES AND PARTNERSHIPS WITH RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS

GUINEAN FOUNDATION OF ITALY

COMMUNITY: AFRICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
GUINEA

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
ITALY

As a response to this pandemic, the Guinean Foundation of Italy is further working on partnering with other diaspora associations in Europe to respond to the crisis.

For more information: www.facebook.com/pages/category/Nonprofit-Organization/Fondazione-Guineana-Ditalia-735724136624358/.

RWANDAN DIASPORA ASSOCIATION IN BELGIUM

COMMUNITY: AFRICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
RWANDA

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
BELGIUM

The Rwandan Diaspora Association in Belgium rely on receiving testimonies from beneficiaries in order to ensure the accountability of their initiatives and build trust among the diaspora members.

For more information: www.facebook.com/Diasporarwandab/.

TETEZANA ONLUS

COMMUNITY: AFRICAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
MADAGASCAR

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
ITALY

The association, Tetezana Onlus, was founded in 2006 with the aim of enhancing the collaboration among Madagascar and Italy. The association Tetezana Onlus emphasized the relevance of collaborating with local associations in Madagascar to maintain the flow of remittances and to provide personal protective equipment to people in need.

For more information: www.tetezanaonlus.org/.

ALIANZA VENCER

COMMUNITY:
LATIN AMERICA

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA

COUNTRY OF DESTINATION:
COSTA RICA

Alianza Vencer has worked in close relation with the Venezuelan Embassy to provide personalized and group legal attention for all the members of the diaspora who have specific requirements, as well as psychosocial attention.

For more information: <http://alianzavencr.org/>.

FUNDACIÓN CONSULADO CÍVICO DE VENEZUELA

COMMUNITY:
LATIN AMERICA

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
CHILE

The Foundation has created relevant synergies with members of different diasporas to enhance social initiatives. For instance, in the United States, the Venezuelan and the Chilean diaspora have collaborated to create English and Spanish lessons. As a result, both communities are learning and creating new forms to exchange social capital.

For more information: www.facebook.com/ConsuladoCivico/.

MANOS VENEGUAYAS

COMMUNITY:
LATIN AMERICA

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA

COUNTRY OF DESTINATION: URUGUAY

Manos VeneGuayas in Uruguay has managed to articulate activities with national and international organizations. Specifically, the organization has been able to reach State organizations to transmit the educational, cultural, and employment necessities of the members of the Venezuelan community. The organization also participates regularly in the "R4V" platform to share knowledge and experiences in the field among the members of the Venezuelan diaspora.

For more information: www.facebook.com/manosveneguayas/.

VENEZUELAN UNION

COMMUNITY:
LATIN AMERICA

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
PERU

The Venezuelan Union in Peru is an organization interested in reinforcing mental health policies to support the Venezuelan diaspora. In addition, they value the importance of working with governments to ensure that migrants and refugees' access to medical health care free of charge.

For more information: www.facebook.com/unionveperu/.

FEDERATION OF CALABRIAN
ASSOCIATIONS IN ARGENTINA

COMMUNITY:
EUROPEAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN: ITALY

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
ARGENTINA

The Federation of Calabrian Associations of the Argentine Republic has invited several federations to make the headquarters of their associations available to local municipalities to be used as resting places by security forces and other essential personnel in the community.

For more information: www.facebook.com/federacioncalabresa/.

SOCIAL RESPONSES AND ADVOCACY EFFORTS TO PROTECT DIASPORAS

RUMIÑAHUI

COMMUNITY:
LATIN AMERICA

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
ECUADOR

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
SPAIN

The Rumiñahui Association was founded in 1997 with the aim of protecting migrant populations and helping them in their integration processes in Spain. The Rumiñahui Association has also developed initiatives to inform the migrant population about their rights and in particular about their rights to regularization. In addition, the organization assists migrant vulnerable populations in the process of enrolling in the minimum living income programme.

For more information: www.ruminahui.org/.

UNIDOSUS

COMMUNITY:
LATIN AMERICA

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
LATIN AMERICAN

COUNTRY(REGION OF DESTINATION:
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

UnidosUS is an organization that advocates for the promotion of humane and effective federal immigration policies that promote and defend family unification and support the integration of migrants. In the context of the pandemic, the organization has supported migrant communities in the United States by developing inclusion initiatives and by providing protection to migrant workers who have been defined as essential workers during the sanitary crisis. The organization has advocated for the inclusion of migrant populations in national health systems regardless of their immigration status that enable them to have access to social benefits in the current context.

For more information: www.unidosus.org/about-us/.

KEIHAN FOUNDATION

COMMUNITY: ASIAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN:
AFGHANISTAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
THE NETHERLANDS

The KEIHAN Foundation has devoted efforts in training female doctors in order to reduce gender prejudices and male domination within the medical community in Afghanistan.

For more information: www.keihan.org/protect-afghan-health-workers-against-covid-19/.

UK FEDERATION OF CHINESE PROFESSIONALS

COMMUNITY: ASIAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN: CHINA

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
UNITED KINGDOM

The UK Federation of Chinese Professionals (UKFCP), a national community organization for global Chinese professionals in the country. UKFCP exists for positive progression of a professional community that has economic and social importance to the long-term relations between the United Kingdom and East Asia. In response to COVID-19, the organization has developed initiatives aiming at combating hate crimes, prejudice and xenophobia against the Chinese community in the United Kingdom. Actions included: (1) prevention strategies such as disseminating key information regarding available support; (2) assistance for potential victims among students and the professional community and; (3) the establishment of a third-party reporting mechanism. The organization highlights the importance of preventing hate crimes and reassuring the most vulnerable populations.

For more information: www.ukfcp.com/.

HOSTLAND AND INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES SUPPORTING MIGRANT COMMUNITIES

ASSOCIATION INTEGRANDO

COMMUNITY: EUROPEAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN: SPAIN

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
SPAIN

The Association Integrando in Spain has developed different support services tapping on previous networks established by various migrant communities. For instance, they turned WhatsApp groups into support groups. In addition, they created a campaign called "Regularization Now" to help migrants get their documentation in order to access social services. They also supported migrants without access to the Internet to register to receive the minimum living income.

For more information: www.facebook.com/ASOCIACION-INTEGRANDO-178783992198783/.

CITIZEN'S FORUM FOR SOCIAL COHESION OF LLEIDA

COMMUNITY: EUROPEAN

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN: SPAIN

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
SPAIN

The Citizen's Forum for Social Cohesion in the city of Lleida in Catalonia mentioned some of the actions carried out by the organization: making masks and distributing them in the city council, as well as printing educational materials for children to learn math, Spanish, Catalan and English. Furthermore, the organization has collected more than 1,000 euros to purchase food and thermometers for the most vulnerable migrant families.

For more information: <https://benestarsocial.paeria.cat/serveis-socials-es/noticies/el-tinent-d2019alcalde-joan-gomez-es-reuneix-amb-els-representants-del-forum-ciutada-per-la-cohesio-social/>.

IOM COLOMBIA

COMMUNITY:
INTERNATIONAL

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN: N/A

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
COLOMBIA

IOM's mission in Colombia has been attending migrant and refugee populations through telephone hotlines called PRO Virtual, replacing the reference and orientation points that due to COVID-19 remain closed. Through this service, they have been able to maintain contact with the migrant communities and provide them guidance on migration issues, services from the international community and referrals to other organizations that provide support.

For more information: <https://colombia.iom.int/>.

IOM'S OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ENVOY FOR THE
RESPONSE TO THE VENEZUELAN SITUATION

COMMUNITY:
INTERNATIONAL

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN: N/A

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
PANAMA

IOM's Special Envoy's office carried out a study on Venezuelan organizations in the region and commented on the actions being taken by all organizations in response to COVID-19.

For more information: <https://panama.iom.int/>.

IOM'S WESTERN HEMISPHERE PROGRAMME ON
MIGRATION

COMMUNITY:
INTERNATIONAL

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN: N/A

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION:
GLOBAL

The Western Hemisphere Programme on Migration at IOM shared a specific initiative on conducting a survey aimed at migrants and potential Mesoamerican migrants in the region in order to learn about the socioeconomic impact of the pandemic among these communities.

For more information: www.iom.int/central-and-north-america-and-caribbean/.



World Map Connectivity © 2020 / Ktsimage.

BEST PRACTICES IDENTIFIED

DURING THE SESSION, THE PANELLISTS AND PARTICIPANTS IDENTIFIED THREE MAIN SETS OF GOOD PRACTICES:

CONNECTION: ENSURING THE ADEQUATE FLOW OF INFORMATION AND IDEAS AS WELL AS ACCESS TO GOODS, SERVICES AND OPPORTUNITIES.

- Create long-term sustainable networks with local actors, such as local authorities whether in the country of destination or in the country of origin, assists in being able to identify and respond to the needs on the ground so as to compliment the efforts of local actors and avoid imposing solutions from outside.
- Use new technology, such as social networks and webinar platforms, to enhance communication, locally and transnationally, in order to collaborate and to facilitate progress, reach and impact of interventions without physical presence in the country of origin.
- Create opportunities for communication that allow vulnerable population such as women to voice their needs and concerns.
- Mitigate the impact of the digital gap as administrative migration processes are increasingly digitalized and available exclusively online, acknowledging that many migrants only have a cell phone, and many administrative processes.

PARTNERSHIP: ENHANCING COOPERATION AND COORDINATION AMONG TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL ACTORS TO ENSURE RESPONSES ARE COMPLIMENTARY AND FOLLOW HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPLES.

- Trust building is fundamental as most diaspora communities left their country due to adverse circumstances. Every specific community and context is different so there is no one size fits all strategy for building trust, however, one important element to trust building is transparency throughout the implementation of interventions. One way of ensuring transparency is through use of technology.
- Include diaspora organizations in coordinating bodies and cooperation frameworks that recognize their roles as key actors with capacities, know-how and experience to implement emergency response and development initiatives while facilitating complimentary of interventions with the work of international organizations such as the UN or NGOs.



Woman in a video call with a Covid-19 Patient © 2020 / Edward Jenner.

SELF-EMPOWERMENT: EMPOWERING TRANSNATIONAL COMMUNITIES BY RECOGNIZING THAT THEY HAVE THEIR OWN VOICE AND CAPACITY TO FIGHT FOR THEIR OWN RIGHTS.

- Encourage ownership by acknowledging that each migrant community is capable of managing their own resources rather than depending on the actions of governments or other institutions.
- Facilitate and promote the insertion of professionals in their areas of expertise to enhance economic benefits in the host countries while paying attention to the economic sectors and industries that are being particularly impacted by the pandemic.
- Design interventions that have positive impacts beyond the diaspora or migrant communities themselves such as organizing volunteers to support activities that benefit the host community.
- Maintain a longer-term perspective even during emergency situations, organizations should take the time to get things done in a planned and systematic manner in spite of the fact that there will be pressure from many sides to get things done quickly and especially in terms of disbursing funds.
- Highlight the positive role of migrants and contributions for the economy, society, and culture in both the host and home countries. Communications is often overlooked but is key for raising awareness of the activities and garner broader support.



GENERAL PROPOSED FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS

The three main axes of action identified by the participants of the three exchanges are: communication, capacity- building and coordination.

Regarding communication, diasporas expressed the urgency to keep feeding the platforms and forums where diasporas coordinate common efforts. To achieve this, they emphasized the use of digital technologies and the need to hold meetings regularly.

Participants were interested in enhancing capacity- building among global diasporas. In particular, they expressed interest to develop on the one hand, a systematic framework to evaluate diaspora initiatives and on the other to create a database to share the best practices organized by sectors such as cooperation, health, enterprise, crowdfunding and advocacy. By sharing their experiences, skills, knowledge and best practices diasporas aim to learn from past experiences and improve their own initiatives. In addition, they emphasized the relevance of developing working groups on regional basis and on specific topics such as emergency relief, health care and fundraising.

Finally, the third main axis of action identified by the participants was the need to coordinate and keep creating synergies among the stakeholders involved in the response of COVID-19 including diaspora leaders, international organizations, local governments and national governments.



DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT IN THE ERA OF DIGITALIZATION

The initiatives and experiences shared by the participants demonstrate that during the pandemic, information and communications technologies were key elements to galvanize effective responses to protect global diasporas and their communities of origin and residence. In the unprecedented context of the pandemic with restricted mobility, diasporas used digital platforms to connect and organize initiatives to alleviate the immediate crisis.

At the beginning of the outbreak, diasporas used digital platforms to create informative campaigns and material tailored to their own communities to avoid the spread of the virus and to protect the most vulnerable people within their diasporas. Digital platforms were also very useful as a tool to collect funds. During the pandemic, diasporic leaders have used multiple digital platforms to develop fundraising campaigns to be able to distribute food, personal protective equipment and sanitary equipment.

In addition, with the use of technology, diasporas have been able to communicate efficiently and even reinforce their networks by building trust and accountability. Diasporas have adapted the technology to share information efficiently and improve their direct communication. As a result, diaspora members have been able to follow closely the impact of their donations and initiatives back in their home country.

Finally, digital platforms have enabled diasporas to communicate with other stakeholders involved in the response to the pandemic such as international organizations, governments and experts. In short, online forums have become hubs of information where diasporas can exchange their best practices and learn from the experiences of other migrant communities.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Diasporas have the capacity to engage in transnational initiatives to respond to the pandemic. Migrant communities have social capital, in-depth knowledge, and resources to initiate and sustain local responses in both their country of origin and their country of residence. If experiences and best practices are shared between diaspora communities and cross-community collaboration is fostered, then the effectiveness and impact of diaspora contributions can more easily reach their full potential.

These three virtual exchanges enhanced the dialogue among the stakeholders in host and home countries developing transnational responses to mitigate the multiple risks related to the COVID-19 crisis.

Migrant leaders, diasporas, experts, organizations, and government agents highlighted the relevance to develop initiatives to protect the most vulnerable migrant populations by prioritizing a holistic approach that considers the economic, social, and sanitary challenges that have arisen during the pandemic. The pandemic has affected countries all over the world and impacted the lives and well-being of transnational communities.

The impact and gravity of the pandemic varies across countries and over time, nevertheless, it is important to recognize that global exchanges and the analysis of good practices could enable the implementation of more coordinated and tailored responses.

iDiaspora worked as a digital platform that enabled the rapprochement of global diasporas from different regions and in different languages. Though these three exchanges, transnational communities were able to share their best practices and personal experiences on how they are responding to the COVID-19 pandemic from their countries of origin and their countries of residence.

By enabling this type of open spaces, diasporas have presented the challenges and opportunities that they have faced while creating initiatives to respond to the current health crisis. Through these dialogues they have showcased their potential as empowered agents with social and economic capacities to contribute to development initiatives at a global level.



iDIASPORA
CONNECT LEARN CONTRIBUTE
