



CENTER FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT

USAID partners with diasporas to grow development impact.

DIASPORAS DRIVE DEVELOPMENT

Diaspora is a term of self-identification used by a community of people who live outside a shared country of origin, ancestry, or affinity, but maintain active connections with it. More than 62 million Americans – one-fifth of the country – are first or second-generation diasporans, making the United States home to more global diaspora members than any other country. With roots around the world, these communities are uniquely positioned to amplify and sustain global growth.

Diasporas are key players in sustainable development. The backbone of diaspora contributions to development come in the form of remittances – the financial resources sent back to their countries of origin. In 2015, diasporans invested \$440 billion in low- and middle-income countries through remittances. But diasporans offer much more to advance sustainable development. As diaspora populations grow in the U.S. and internationally, so does the scope of their contributions by transferring resources, knowledge, and ideas back to their home countries.

PARTNERING WITH DIASPORAS

Recognizing the critical role diasporans can play in addressing development challenges, USAID builds partnerships to leverage:

- **Entrepreneurship and Investment:** Diasporans have long been among the most influential thought leaders and idea pioneers worldwide.
- **Volunteerism and Post-Disaster Response:** Diasporans are often the first to volunteer in disaster-affected countries.
- **Business Networks and Market Linkages:** Diasporans use their unique insights to establish

entrepreneurial enterprises - bringing jobs, competition, innovation, and skills to their communities.

- **Mentorship and Skills Transfer:** Diaspora networks are reversing “brain drain” into a “brain gain” by transferring skills and knowledge between countries.

OUR DIASPORA PARTNERSHIPS

The U.S. Global Development Lab at USAID manages a portfolio of strategic partnerships with a diaspora focus.

The **International Diaspora Engagement Alliance (IdeA)**, a joint initiative with the U.S. Department of State, Calvert Foundation, and USAID, is a platform to foster dialogue and provide a voice for diaspora communities. Among its many activities, the IdeA partnership convenes the annual Global Diaspora Week, a week dedicated to diaspora communities and their contributions to global development.

Understanding the important role of diaspora entrepreneurs, USAID has facilitated a number of innovation marketplace competitions that promote sustainable economic growth. For example, USAID and Western Union partnered to create the **African Diaspora Marketplace**, a program focused on providing funding, mentorship, and technical assistance to growing diaspora-run businesses.

Other examples of USAID diaspora partnerships include:

- **MicroMentor**, a free, easy-to-use social network that connects entrepreneurs and volunteer mentors to solve problems and build businesses together.
- **The India Investment Initiative (III)** and **Raíces**, two investment platforms that empower Indian and Latin American diasporas to fund enterprises in their home countries while earning both a social and financial return.
- **Homestrings**, an online investment and social media platform that channels diaspora capital into equity for transformative investments in development.

GET INVOLVED

There are a number of ways to learn more about diaspora engagement at USAID and to get involved, including:

The **Global Innovation Exchange**, an online marketplace for innovations, funding, insights, resources, and conversations. Organizations and individuals can use the Exchange to connect with diaspora communities and USAID. Learn more at diaspora.globalinnovationexchange.org

The **Global Development Alliance (GDA)** is USAID’s premier model for public-private partnerships. USAID partners with the private sector to achieve development objectives and advance core business interests. Learn more at usaid.gov/gda

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