

## Side Event Report

### Global Diaspora Summit

#### Mobilizing diaspora potential for boosting livelihood opportunities in agribusiness

##### SUMMARY

Diaspora play an important role in the socio-economic development of their countries of origin, but their specific contributions to the agribusiness sector are less well-known and their potential in this area remains under-tapped. Strengthening the enabling environment for diaspora engagement in agribusiness is key to maximizing diasporas' development impact for rural poverty reduction. At the same time, it is also crucial to empower diaspora agripreneurs and networks as agents of development and enhance their visibility as role models revitalizing and boosting livelihood opportunities in rural areas.

Building on results and lessons learnt from successful partnerships and project activities, FAO organized a side-event on diaspora engagement in agribusiness in collaboration with the Africa-Europe Diaspora Development Platform (ADEPT), FAO's partner in the area of diaspora and rural development.

The side-event provided a space to share knowledge and best practices about how to facilitate and maximize the impact of diaspora financial and non-financial contributions to the agri-food sector of countries of origin. Successful approaches were presented along with examples of concrete actions taken at country level.

The side-event lasted 1.5 hour and brought together a diverse panel with representatives from FAO, ADEPT, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uganda as well as successful African diaspora agripreneurs.

Following the opening remarks made by the **Director of FAO Liaison Office with the European Union and Belgium** and **ADEPT's Executive Director-Programmes**, the first session of the side-event focused on how to facilitate diaspora contributions to food security and rural development from different perspectives. **ADEPT's Policy, Advocacy and Partnership Officer** presented the Organization's structure and role as a platform for diaspora networks based in Europe as well as the successful partnership with FAO. FAO, through the **FAO-HQ Rural Migration Officer** and the **FAO-Representative of Uganda**, presented the case of the FAO project "Strengthening Capacity to Harness Positive Effects of Migration" in Uganda as successful example of how to maximize the potential of diaspora in agribusiness. Bringing together public and private sector stakeholders, the project has helped bring the diaspora voice into decision-making processes and enhance visibility of diaspora contributions to agribusiness development through the organization of the first Ugandan Diaspora Agri-food Investment Conference and Award and the setup the first Ugandan Diaspora Agribusiness Network (UDAN). In addition, the project has contributed to empowering diaspora as agents of development through the provision of tailored coaching in agribusiness



and the piloting of a diaspora-youth agripreneur matching programme to facilitate diaspora skills transfer into Ugandan youth agribusinesses. Finally, the **Second Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uganda** presented the successful collaboration with FAO that is providing technical and financial support to the formulation of the first National Diaspora Policy.

The second and last part of the side-event was dedicated to the experience, lessons learned and testimonies of successful diaspora agripreneurs. **Three African diaspora agripreneurs**, supported by FAO and ADEPT through different project activities, explained how they are supporting their counties of origin (Uganda and the Gambia) through different initiatives in the agri-food sector. All the speakers described the agribusiness and marketing skills acquired abroad, the agribusiness projects they implement in their countries of origin, employment opportunities they have generated through their business, as well as how they are supporting other migrants through mentorship.

Finally, the **Ambassador of Uganda in Belgium** closed the side-event by confirming the continuous support to the diaspora based in Belgium and the Netherlands and highlighting the importance of strengthening diaspora skills in modern farming, including through knowledge sharing with European farmers.

## **KEY TAKE-AWAY POINTS & ACTIONABLE ITEMS**

The side-event stimulated discussion (through the presentations and in the chat box) on a variety of areas associated with diaspora engagement in agribusiness. Speakers and participants outlined specific needs and concrete recommendations, including but not limited to: (i) the challenges diaspora face in investing in agribusiness back home; (ii) the need for different diaspora associations to come together into one network to strengthen the voice of the diaspora in policy dialogue and decision-making processes; (iii) the need to enhance diaspora skills, including agribusiness and legal skills, to strengthen their businesses and better contribute to the economic development of countries of origin; (iv) the importance of empowering diaspora organizations as development partners in projects design and implementation; and (v) the importance of strengthening collaboration between countries of origin and destinations in the area of diaspora skills development and knowledge sharing in modern farming.

Participants also highlighted the critical role played by FAO in showing the potential of the agricultural sector to boost diaspora investments back home as well as the need to enhance visibility of the successful experience of diaspora agripreneurs who invested back home.

Furthermore, participants stressed the importance of International Organizations working in partnership with diaspora networks to ensure sustainability of project activities in the area of diaspora and rural development.



GLOBAL  
DIASPORA  
SUMMIT  
DUBLIN 2022

CRUINIÚ MULLAIGH  
AN DIASPÓRA  
DHOMHANDA  
BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH 2022

## PARTICIPATION

83 participants

## NEXT STEPS

In the short-term, FAO will send a survey to the side-event diaspora participants to collect more suggestions and recommendations on how to improve technical support to assist diaspora in their agribusiness activities.

In the medium-term, FAO will tap into outcomes and lessons learned of the side-event to strengthen and expand its work on diaspora engagement in agribusiness. In particular, additional efforts will be made to collect and share best practices and results (including through the UN Network on Migration-Repository of Practices that showcases replicable practices that contribute to the achievement of GCM objectives), while also continuing to enhance visibility of successful diaspora agripreneurs who are contributing to the generation of employment opportunities in the agri-food sector.

Furthermore, based on the priorities highlighted by the Ugandan Ambassador in Belgium, FAO's project proposals on diaspora and rural development will integrate a component of diaspora skills development in modern farming, including through knowledge sharing with European farmers, ideally in collaboration with the Embassies of different countries of destination.

## SCREENSHOTS

