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Side Event Report

Global Diaspora Summit

Diaspora Engagement in Times of Crisis: Contributions and Coordination at the Intersection of Humanitarian Assistance and Development

SUMMARY

On Friday, April 1st, 2022, a one-hour virtual side event explored the role of diasporas in fostering peace, supporting crisis response, facilitating recovery, and accelerating sustainable development by presenting different initiatives and lessons learnt from crisis situations. Panelists shared their experiences of coordination in light of natural disasters and man-made crises as well as diaspora mobilization for socio economic recovery of local communities and promoting durable solutions for people on the move.

This side event was moderated by IOM and UNDP and included participation by panelists from the Haiti Civil Protection Agency, Haiti Renewal Alliance, Global Diaspora Confederation, and a member of the Ukrainian diaspora.

KEY TAKE-AWAY POINTS & ACTIONABLE ITEMS

Diaspora groups need to be integrated in national and regional coordination mechanisms: Diaspora groups can play an important role from the initial humanitarian relief response to longer term recovery and development efforts. To maximize the impact of different diaspora groups, coordination of activities of different partners and integrating all efforts into one consolidated strategy is essential. Specific



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examples of such coordination activities include creation of a Haitian Diaspora Emergency Response Unit and [One Diaspora](#) platform, developed in tandem with the [Framework for Diaspora Engagement in Humanitarian Assistance](#), which echoed Dr. Jerry Chandler's emphasis on the importance of coordination and multi-stakeholder partnerships between diaspora, humanitarian and development actors. Another example of such coordination is the [Ukrainian Global University](#) initiative which emerged in the first days of the war in Ukraine as a response to the need to coordinate the efforts of the global academic and research community to support students and scholars from Ukraine in finding research and study opportunities. Additionally, the Global Diaspora Confederation is engaging in advocacy actions to address the needs of diaspora organizations and people on the move, establishing at the same time alliances with strategic actors, as seen in their platform on [Ukraine response](#).

Diaspora groups could become quite important players in stimulating local community development:

Diasporas can be instrumental not only in delivering the initial humanitarian response, but also quite important partners for longer term interventions and development initiatives. Unlike other organizations which leave the countries after providing the initial response, diaspora groups can stay and provide further support in recovery efforts and local development projects. For example, while providing recovery support to Haiti, diaspora groups adopted a strategy of relying on local producers and including them as partners in the networks of vendors and suppliers. Such approach allowed diaspora groups to achieve greater impact at the local level and support local economic recovery in Haiti.

Crisis situations represent significant risks for brain drain and loss of educational opportunities for young people, but diaspora can help in addressing these risks.

To mitigate the risks of brain drain of the current situation in Ukraine when scholars and students are leaving, Ukrainian Global University works to create a platform. One of the goals of this platform is to keep the research and scholar community of Ukrainians united, to allow them to preserve intellectual connections with Ukraine which would then help to facilitate their return when the situation is stabilized. At the same time, current Ukrainian crisis has an enormous impact on the foreign students who studied in Ukraine and have lost their educational opportunities as a result of the war. At present, the world has opened the doors to the Ukrainians but not necessarily to the foreign students. Their needs remain unanswered, and diasporas need to support young foreign students with identifying the opportunities for continuing their studies.

PARTICIPANT LIST

40 participants connected.

NEXT STEPS

- From this joint side event, IOM and UNDP undertake the commitment to coordinate efforts to promote the engagement of diaspora organizations in times of crisis, by promoting joint proposals to be implemented in different contexts.
- Shared experiences will be promoted by both agencies, as a strategy to inspire and take the lead to adapt these strategies in other contexts.