

## DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Through IOM's [3E approach](#) – enable, engage and empower – diaspora communities can contribute directly to achieving a green transition, not only in the country of destination, but also in the origin country. IOM defines diasporas, who are also referred to as transnational communities, as migrants or descendants of migrants whose identity and sense of belonging have been shaped by their migration experience and background. Because of this, they maintain links with their homelands and to each other. Following the [Global Diaspora Summit](#), the [Dublin Declaration](#) presented a call for action to recognize diasporas as partners in addressing major global challenges, including climate change and other environmental crises. In the context of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) [13: Climate Action](#), [14: Life Below Water](#), and [15: Life on Land](#), collaboration with transnational communities will be essential to achieve a just and green transition.

Rooted in [GCM objective 19](#), the strong connection of transnational communities to their community and country of origin makes them an attractive opportunity to leverage their economic, human, social and cultural capital. Yet, the potential for the engagement of diaspora members as actors of change in the green transition, both in destination countries as well as origin, remains largely untapped. In response to this, the [iDiaspora](#) platform has already brought together over 85 businesses, more than 50 government agencies and 1560 individuals. By using this platform along with other tools and initiatives, a multi-stakeholder approach, that prioritizes youth, can be implemented where diaspora networks, skills and expertise are leveraged to deliver actions that mitigate the impacts of climate change in countries of origin and develop resilient and inclusive systems.

## DIASPORA CAPITAL FOR THE GREEN TRANSITION

There are four main ways in which diaspora communities can contribute to a just and green transition. First, the [economic capital](#) of diaspora members **encompasses the utilization of remittances and savings for green skill development, direct investments in sustainable business activities, philanthropy to support local solutions, ecotourism to incentivize green initiatives, and diaspora bonds to finance climate action.** The [human capital](#) of diaspora members can be leveraged through skills and knowledge transfer. An example is the ability of individuals to contribute to the development of strategic national climate documents such as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs).

## LEVERAGING DIASPORA FOR CLIMATE ACTION – IOM UK

The [Diaspora for Climate Action](#) (D4C) project aims to engage diaspora communities in the U.K. from Bangladesh, Ghana, Jamaica and Moldova in the area of climate action, and specifically for strategic climate change documents such as NDCs, NAPs and National Climate Change Adaptation Strategies. Opportunities and challenges will be assessed through collaboration with national and international experts, after which initiatives, guidance tools and coordination mechanisms will be developed to engage the diaspora in climate action in their origin country. As a part of the project, a communication strategy will be developed to ensure visibility, and a potential model for other countries to promote diaspora engagement in the area of climate action will be created.



A Gambian fashion designer who works in Berlin. Médine Tidou, iDiaspora photo contest 2022.

The [social capital](#) of transnational communities includes the political influence of diasporas, their networks, and the support for the most vulnerable diaspora members, including those most affected by adverse climate change impacts. **Through their social capital, diasporas can play a role in advocacy and raise awareness related to the green transition, along with developing policy frameworks for climate action.** The fourth diaspora capital is [cultural](#), where the transfer of values, perspectives and ideas can increase diversity and resilience. The integration of traditional ecological knowledge and sustainable practices is an example of how different cultural practices can enhance and diversify local green transition strategies.

## [DIASPORA STORY ON PILOTING SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION](#)

The Sulaymaniyah region in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) is heavily dependent on agriculture, while water is scarce and climate change will increase the periods of drought. One of the KRI diaspora members living in The Netherlands set up a pilot project to prepare the agriculture sector for the future.

Through knowledge and skill transfer, and a multi-stakeholder approach including the private sector, academia and local farmers, the human and cultural capital of the diaspora community was leveraged, leading ultimately to new partnerships and initiative across countries. [See the full story.](#)

## [PROMOTING DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT](#)

Maximizing these forms of diaspora engagement in the context of the green transition requires a multi-stakeholder approach that brings together governments, the private sector, academia, diaspora organizations and diaspora members. A mapping of the diaspora communities can be used to understand the available capital, based on which governments can develop effective and sectoral strategies to incentivize climate action, where communication to inform the diaspora about opportunities is essential to co-create localized solutions. Moreover, diasporas should be recognized as partners and transformative actors of



IOM is providing clean drinking water in response to extreme drought in Somalia © IOM/Claudia Rosel Barrios

change for development and climate action in efforts to accelerate climate change adaptation, mitigation and resilience building. Throughout these processes, IOM can play a role in connecting the involved stakeholders and provide overall capacity-building support, while also taking on the role as convener and facilitator for effective diaspora engagement.

As first, second or third generation migrants, youth form a strong link between their country of residence and their roots, which offers opportunities for climate action. Additionally, different sectors will experience different needs during a green transition. Agriculture, energy, heavy industry and construction will be among the most affected sectors, where technological developments will act as underlying trends that further change labour market needs but also provide innovative and important solutions to emerging challenges. Ensuring the diaspora engagement approach fits the needs of these sectors will be essential for an effective collaboration.

## [PLATFORMS FOR DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT](#)

[iDiaspora](#) is a global engagement and knowledge exchange hub for diaspora communities and those looking to engage with them. It provides comprehensive, regularly updated data and analyses relevant to diaspora communities, policy makers, NGO actors and showcases successful diaspora actions and partnerships. In addition, the 2022 [Global Diaspora Summit](#) resulted in the Dublin Declaration which acts as the future agenda of action for global diaspora engagement. In the near future, the [Global Diaspora Policy Alliance](#) (GDPA) will be launched to provide an inclusive ecosystem of collaboration between governments, academia, civil society and the private sector to prioritize diaspora engagement policymaking, which will be complementary to existing platforms such as iDiaspora.