



GLOBAL DIASPORA SUMMIT 2022

PAVING THE WAY TO ACHIEVING OBJECTIVE 19 OF THE GLOBAL COMPACT FOR MIGRATION

Thematic Working Group No.4: Diaspora Cultural Capital

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Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



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Irish culture is a fundamental component of our identity and the common thread that binds together Ireland's diaspora. The Government recognises that supporting Irish culture internationally plays a key role in connecting Ireland with our diaspora (Global Ireland: Ireland's Diaspora Strategy, 2020 – 2025).

1. Introduction

Culture is the glue that connects diaspora with home. It retains a special purpose in that it creates the spaces where diasporas most regularly convene, connect, and communicate. Whilst that cultural glue has been long-lasting in determining diasporas engagement with home, cultural engagements are often assumed rather than explicitly embedded into global development agenda.

This is also true in terms of diaspora policies and strategies. With culture running at the heart of the communal and social aspects of diaspora, this technical working group is designed to increase the formal prominence of cultural capital in diaspora engagement given it is one of the key pathway engagements for sustainable diaspora engagement.

The cultural capital of diasporas, defined as “the acquisition and transfer of new values, perspectives, and ideas that enrich the diversity and resilience of societies,” opens important considerations of how diaspora engagement engages across cultures, identities, and values in both countries of origin and residence.¹ At the core of this is the importance of belonging in diaspora engagement.

The power of belonging is that it explores a theoretical and implementation subtlety that can enhance diaspora engagement. This lies in the subtle difference between the state and the nation with the state being determined by territorial boundaries but a sense of nationhood being a global notion of representing of what it means to be part of somewhere, especially through cultural affinity and expressions. This is the power of culture for diaspora engagement. It moves diasporas to feel a sense of belonging which can generate action.

The importance of this sense of nationhood is rooted in the multi-generational frames that shape contemporary definitions of diaspora. For example, IOM define diasporas as

migrants or descendants of migrants whose identity and sense of belonging, either real or symbolic, have been shaped by their migration experience and background. They maintain links with their homelands, and to each other, based on a shared sense of history, identity, or mutual experiences in the destination country.²

Diasporic culture operates between these differences across generations, the real or the symbolic, and occupies influence in the shared sense of history, identity, and mutual experiences in the destination country. Diaspora culture is a living, breathing manifestation of the communal shifting of a diaspora and its power is not just rooted to the linkages with home. It is activated in the country of residence and in this context, its impact has received little attention.

¹ This definition was provided by IOM to inform this background paper.

² IOM. (2019). Glossary on Migration. *International Migration Law*, No. 34. IOM. Geneva.

Culture will remain a primary entry point for diaspora engagement for the foreseeable future and by prioritizing the engagement of diaspora cultural capital, countries of origin and residence can reap significant rewards. This working group will assess specific themes related to diasporas' perceptions and practices related to identity and belonging to countries and communities of (ancestral) origin and residence such as language preservation or acquisition, cultural heritage, and participation in activities related to cultural identity such as national or religious celebrations.

2. Diaspora Cultural Capital for Countries of Origin

From the perspective of countries of origin, diaspora cultural capital can play an instrumental role in delivering sustainable systems of diaspora engagement. It often provides a consistent and reliable avenue for engagement with the diaspora. This has important knock-on effects in understanding the various roles cultural engagements of the diaspora can play in the more challenging areas of diaspora engagement such as diaspora data collection, diaspora policy development, and wider portfolio of engagements in areas such as social, human, and economic capital.

Given the consistent performance and reach of diaspora cultural capital as a connector and convenor of the diaspora, then it is integral for governments in countries of origin to embrace it as a key pillar of its diaspora diplomacy or portfolio of engagement activities. Whilst work is ongoing in this regard, it is only in the last decade or so that governments have begun to think strategically about the added value of such cultural engagements. This type of diaspora work is equally as important for countries with established engagement approaches and countries who are beginning to formulate strategic approaches to diaspora engagement.

Consequently, it is informative and instructive to explore how countries of origin can begin to strategically support the advancement of diaspora cultural capital. It is important to note too that the role of government in diaspora cultural engagements should be through an inclusive and supportive role that embraces the diverse cultural associations and affinities that are likely to be built across any diaspora. No one sense of belonging should carry more weight than another's and for countries with diasporas that have emerged from issues of conflict, political crisis, and such, this cultural sensitivity is paramount.

In advancing the importance of cultural capital through diaspora engagement for countries of origin, this background paper identifies four early phase engagement areas that can generate impact for diaspora engagement. The purpose of this paper is not to be exhaustive, and these areas are offered as a preliminary framework through which to shape discussions and outcomes in the working group.

2.1 Ancestry and Belonging

There have been transformative global shifts in recent times that has accelerated how individuals and communities around the world are considering the way in which they act, live, and work. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in seismic shifts across the cultural, economic, social, and political landscapes. Across this age of uncertainty, people have sought avenues to belong. This, of course, has led to some negative impacts with a rise of nativist and isolationist tendencies across many societies.

In challenging such movements, the multiple belongings that are wired within diasporas emerge as a global force for commonality. The desire to explore one's sense of belonging has also been accelerating across diasporas as they begin to explore the cultural threads that comprise their tapestry of identity.

This has resulted in the emergence of several creative tools to centralize belonging to the ways in which governments are thinking about diaspora engagement.

At a diplomatic and political level, countries of origin are embracing the ideas of diasporas as repositories of soft and smart power to advance diplomatic targets such as nation-branding. As Nye explains

What is soft power? It is the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies. When our policies are seen as legitimate in the eyes of others, our soft power is enhanced.³

Smart power is defined as people-to-people power.⁴ Connecting the soft and smart power potential of diasporas for development begins with cultural diplomacy. This begins with thinking strategically on how to cultivate belonging across the diaspora.

The approaches required here will be determined by the depth and breadth of definition that a country of origin uses to shape its diaspora engagement. With the inclusive definition provided by IOM earlier as a guiding principle, then different forms of engagements will be needed across the diaspora to meet the needs of each segment of your diaspora to explore their belonging with countries of origin.

For example, there may even be cultural sensitivities across first generation diaspora members in terms of those who emigrated recently and those who did decades ago. They may have different experiences or memories of home. Furthermore, later generation diaspora can often be more passionate about their connection to the ancestral home, and they create pathways to ensure they connect with their home. It is important to tailor diaspora programming, when appropriate, to respect cultural variety across the diaspora in areas such as age, gender, and interests of diaspora.

The aim must also be to find engagements of cultural commonality that can nurture collaboration within and across the diaspora (whether that be in a specific country of residence or across many countries of residence). One area of engagement that has proven impactful in working through these cultural nuances has been ancestral and genealogical engagements.

Case Study One – Ireland Reaching Out

Ireland Reaching Out (Ireland XO) is a volunteer-based, non-profit initiative which builds vibrant, lasting links between the global Irish diaspora and parishes of origin in Ireland. The programme is based on a simple idea – reverse genealogy. Instead of waiting for people of Irish descent to trace their roots, Ireland XO volunteers worldwide are networking with people of Irish descent in their local areas, helping to build bridges between the present and the past by connecting people with the home parishes of their ancestors.

Since its creation, it has built a membership base of over 140,000, delivered over 160,000 message board posts, and over 20,000 chronicles on people of Irish heritage⁵

³ J.S. Nye Jr. (2005). *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. Public Affairs.

⁴ Whilst there are varying definitional approaches to smart power, the frame of people-to-people power was advanced by H.R. Clinton at the Global Diaspora Forum in 2011. Please see, H.R. Clinton. (2011). Opening Remarks: Global Diaspora Forum. Washington D.C. (available at <https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/20092013clinton/rm/2011/05/163574.htm>).

⁵ For more information, please see <https://irelandxo.com/>.

2.2 Preservation of Language

Another fascinating potential through diaspora cultural capital is that it empowers governments in countries of origin to respond to the needs and concerns of their diasporas. A regular theme in this area across diasporas is the strengthening of cultural connections with countries of origin for the next generation of the diaspora. Addressing this issue can be done in many ways and one of the most prominent is through the preservation of language and other educational engagements. Traditional work in this area has seen countries of origin support diaspora community networks or organizations through the sharing of educational resources such as books or curriculum. More formal engagements have also emerged.

Case Study Two – Philippine Schools Overseas (PSO)

Philippine Schools Overseas (PSOs) are registered educational institutions operating outside the Philippines and implementing the basic education curriculum of the Department of Education (DepEd). PSOs are established to address the educational needs of children of Filipinos overseas, and eventually facilitate their reintegration into the Philippine educational system.

There is an Inter-Agency Committee (IAC) to serve as the policy making body and a forum for discussion and resolution of issues concerning the establishment, operation, and management of Philippine schools overseas or such type of schools or educational programs overseas. Institutions involved include the Department of Education (DepEd), the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), and the Commission on Filipinos Overseas.

The schools also provide a venue for the teaching and propagation of the Filipino culture and heritage among Filipino youth overseas and serve as a locus for Filipino community activity.⁶

Whilst it is important to continue such support, there is an opportunity also to begin to engage next-generation diaspora in the communicative spaces that they primarily function in. With younger generations operating more and more in the digital space, it will be increasingly important for governments in countries of origin to supplement traditional educational spaces with digital solutions to engage a new generation of digital diaspora audiences.

This challenge further emphasizes the importance of partnership in executing such innovation as collaborative approaches to this can unlock much needed technical and financial support that can result in high-quality education tools. Government can play a critical role through providing the imprimatur of government to endorse suitable platforms for engagement. A prime example of how governments can support such a process comes in StaEllinika.

Case Study Three – StaEllinika

StaEllinika is an initiative of the General Secretariat for Greeks Abroad and Public Diplomacy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs and the SNF Centre For Hellenic Studies at Simon Fraser University (SFU) with support by the Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF). Starting in the fall of 2020, Staellinika offered a full curriculum targeting beginner heritage learners in schools and individuals at home.

⁶ For more information, please see <http://www.cfo-pso.org.ph/>.

The StaEllinika platform offers learner profiles and performance visualization for learners, teachers and parents while also delivering engaging lesson materials, videos, quizzes, and rich interactive experiences.

StaEllinika can either complement existing curriculum or act as a stand-alone program for schools.

The developers have over 20+ years' experience in R&D in online language platforms and since its creation, it has 30,000+ users online, and 50+ original educational videos published.⁷

This case study exemplifies the importance of inter-institutional and cross-sectoral collaboration to produce effective solutions in engaging diaspora cultural capital. The promotion of diaspora cultural engagement can now be both digital and mobile with the advancement of applications that ensure continuous learning and community building across the diaspora. The impact of such cultural capital engagements then brings additional value through the smart power networks such engagements create.

A fascinating subset of such progress is that these cultural avenues are proving natural scalars of community audiences. When positioned in the light of how traditional data collection tools have often struggled to scale diaspora responsiveness to projects and mappings, then diaspora cultural capital emerges as arguably the most logical starting point in enhancing diaspora responsiveness. It is driving not just community development but community engagement at scale through cultural diplomacy

In terms of such tools, the imprimatur of government does carry significant weight in endorsing specific platforms for preservation of language or the promotion of culture as it can act as a screening process to ensure validity of content and service provider as well as safety of user experience. Given that such cultural engagements often focus on younger members of the diaspora, it is critical that the highest standards of compliance are built into such engagements in terms of data protection and platform security.

2.3 Promotion of Cultural Heritage

Beyond the focus on ancestry and language, diaspora engagement is witnessing a resurgence in the promotion of cultural heritage as individuals around the world seek stronger connections to belonging and purpose. In taking such engagements off-line, governments can develop different forms of engagement that can prioritize the promotion of cultural heritage. This cuts across many cultural sectors ranging from the arts, cuisine, music, sports, and others.

Case Study Four – Authentic Peruvian Cuisine Certification

The programme represents a process through which a standardization of accredited quality showcases Peruvian cuisine globally. The beneficiaries are both professionals working with Peruvian cuisine and the consumers. It helps to promote the consumption and profile of Peruvian cuisine globally through an accreditation of restaurants who meet certain criteria. It has resulted in more than 39 certifications of restaurants. Such a model could be extended to other sectors to promote Peruvian excellence around the world.⁸

Another well-established area of engagement has been the development of short-term cultural immersive programs for diaspora communities. These have historically been targeted towards diaspora youth and young professionals to nurture a sense of connection with countries of origin.

⁷ For more information, please see <https://www.staellinika.com/en/home>.

⁸ For more information, please see <https://www.cocinaperuana.pe/en/>.

Based on the pathways built by the early success of the Taglit-Birthright Programme in Israel, many other countries have sought to replicate such endeavours.⁹

For example, in Kosovo¹⁰, a leading diaspora non-profit, GERMIN, has recently announced the launch of the OriginAL initiative to build such a programme for global Albanians. It is being implemented in partnership with the Global Albanian Foundation which a diaspora organization based in the United States.¹¹ In terms of government supported engagements in this area, another strong example is Reconnect Hungary.

Case Study Five – Reconnect Hungary: Hungarian Birth right Programme

ReConnect Hungary is a unique cultural, educational, and social immersion program for young adults of Hungarian heritage. The programme is a public-private partnership supported by Hungarian American and Canadian organizations and the Government of Hungary.

The programme provides the gift of a peer-group heritage and cultural immersion trip to Hungary for Hungarian-North American young adults between the ages of 18 and 28 who want to strengthen their personal Hungarian identity through connection to the country, culture and heritage. It provides unmatched access to decision-makers and industry leaders in Hungary with participants able to see first-hand the trends, innovations and ingenuity driving the country today.

The wider work of Reconnect Hungary has also developed platforms to connect beyond this age group to engage emerging leaders through ReConnect Hungary 29+.¹²

The variety of activities required to build a holistic program of diaspora cultural engagement is clearly dependent on the ability to develop on-line and off-line experiential and educational networks. In terms of off-line networks and cultural engagements of diaspora, then governments in countries of origin can also explore some low-cost, impactful engagements through certain cultural sectors including cultural celebrations, promotion of cultural products for export promotion, and tourism. This can, in turn, open impact through areas such as nostalgic trade, and cultural heritage tourism to turn soft power into hard outcomes.

2.4 Calendars of Cultural Celebrations

Government can strengthen cultural commitment to the diaspora by ensuring that they provide symbolic acknowledgement of the importance of diaspora engagement in domestic and foreign policy. Whilst complex policy procedures are required to develop these in terms of economic, human, or social capital, cultural engagement provides a lighter process to communicate the significance of diaspora engagement for countries of origin.

For example, simple steps such as ensuring diaspora cultural outreach and celebrations are embedded as part of all official governmental itineraries for travel abroad can strengthen the connections between

⁹ For more information, please see <https://www.birthrightisrael.com/>.

¹⁰ References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

¹¹ For more information, please see <https://germin.org/save-the-date-original-launching-conference-december-11-2021/>.

¹² For more information, please see <https://www.reconnecthungary.org/the-programs/reconnect-hungary-hungarian-birthright-trip/19-trip-details> and <https://www.reconnecthungary.org/the-programs/119-reconnect-hungary>.

government and diaspora. Creating symbolic appointments in the diaspora to support the cultural sector and creative arts industry back home is also another sustainable engagement tool to celebrate the cultural influencers across your diaspora.

This can also open fascinating potentials to engage with industry leaders across the cultural and creative arts industry as such leaders are beginning to embrace diaspora engagement as a powerful way to articulate their commitments to global issues such as diversity, inclusivity and belonging. It is also signalling a growing appreciation by private actors of the robustness of diaspora communities as a consumer market with diaspora marketing growing more prominent. This is also amplified through the importance of regional senses of diasporic belonging with creative discussion and engagements emerging through the lens of Pan-Africanism, Pan-Asianism, and other collectivized senses of belonging.

Case Study Six – Netflix’s Golden

Golden is Netflix’s new social media channel dedicated to celebrating the pan-Asian diaspora. The aim of Golden is to give the Asian diaspora community a way to feel more connected to each other’s cultures and their own by celebrating Asian talent, storytelling and artistry on Netflix. The manager of Golden is a first-generation Chinese American leader.¹³

Many governments around the world are also beginning to allocate specific days for the celebration of their diasporas. For example, the Government of Georgia have a Day of the Diaspora.¹⁴ Ensuring that diasporas are acknowledged and celebrated are facets of a low-cost foreign policy approach towards diaspora engagement that can lead the way to more structured engagement areas in other sectors.

Finally, an important element for successful diaspora cultural engagement is to make sure it remains fun! Diaspora cultural capital is a natural way in which to ensure that the diaspora can contribute or engage culturally through enjoyable engagements. Diaspora communities often engage with countries of origin in their spare time, and it is important that engagements are enjoyable to ensure they engage continuously. Creative and fun engagements around cultural are important in this regard. and fun engagements around cultural are important in this regard.

Reconnect Hungary, for example, host a Reconnect Hungary Treasure Hunt which is an artisan competition and exhibition to celebrate Hungarian creativity and style.¹⁵ Entrants are sought in areas such as embroidery, folk costumes, furniture, paintings, carving, jewellery, and other cultural products. The IOM’s Moments in Migration photography competition for the Gambia, Guinea & Senegal diaspora communities in the UK is another example of embracing different cultural engagements in a creative and fun manner.

¹³ Lucie Zhang. (2022). Meet Golden, Our New Channel Celebrating the Asian Diaspora. *Netflix*, 25 January. (Available at <https://about.netflix.com/en/news/meet-golden-our-new-channel-celebrating-the-asian-diaspora>).

¹⁴ For more information, please see https://www.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=557&info_id=79469.

¹⁵ For more information, please see <https://reconnecthungary.org/treasure-hunt>.

2.5 Diaspora Cultural Capital Engagements: Institutional, Informational, and Implementation Considerations

It is clear from the examples showcased above that governments in countries of origin can play multiple roles across the engagement of diaspora cultural capital. In terms of building a structured approach to this, the paper provides some preliminary reflections on the institutional, informational, and implementation technicalities to nurture diaspora cultural capital engagements.

At the institutional level, the government can embrace a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach. The former will prioritize governmental collaboration across the key sectors that cultural engagements of the diaspora may naturally align towards such as creative industries, education, technology, tourism, and other sectors. The whole-of-society approach will ensure access to the necessary service delivery capacities to create meaningful and memorable cultural engagements of the diaspora.

The informational dynamics for cultural engagements of the diaspora are two-fold. Ensuring sufficient data on the organizational composition of the diaspora can smooth the delivery of cultural engagements of the diaspora. The other determining factor in terms of information is a multi-platform, multi-service outreach approach to engage across the different cultural expectations of the diaspora.

As collaborative service delivery has already been identified as an important implementation approach, additional implementation considerations include the importance of government endorsement of preferred service delivery and allocation of support or investment to promote diaspora cultural capital at home and abroad.

With these considerations in mind, the background paper can identify five preliminary reflections in terms of the technical development of diaspora cultural capital engagements by countries of origin.

1	Embed cultural diplomacy as a central pillar of diaspora engagement policies and strategies that both provide communal engagement points but also scope to tailor cultural engagements to different segments of the diaspora.
2	Establish a culture-centric collaborative institutional framework that links relevant government agencies with cultural agencies in local and diaspora markets.
3	Develop a clear communication, outreach, and marketing strategy to promote engagements of diaspora cultural capital.
4	Invest and support both digital (e.g., new technologies and social media) and off-line services to engage diaspora cultural capital.
5	Ensure active storytelling through diaspora cultural capital engagements to amplify the importance and impact of such engagements.

Figure 1 Overview of Preliminary Reflections for Countries of Origin in Engaging Diaspora Cultural Capital

3. Diaspora Cultural Capital for Countries of Residence

It is a reality for countries of residence that enhanced connectivity and the rise of international migration has resulted in policy and practical pressures to effectively embrace the multicultural composition of modern societies. Whilst it is a moral obligation, embracing the opportunities that engaging such communities will bring can also make concrete policy and reputational impacts for countries of residence.

A key portal through which to engage such communities is through the prism of diaspora cultural capital. By strategically developing instruments through which diaspora communities can safely communicate and celebrate their culture, countries of residence can reap benefits across areas such as social coherence, nation branding, and socio-economic prosperity. This background paper addresses three key areas of focus in this regard, namely integration and community development, affinity diaspora, and cross-cultural leadership.

3.1 Integration and Community Development

The importance of diaspora cultural capital in terms of integration and community development is rooted in its ability to build sustainable and values-led societies. In this light, it can drive forward impact on some of the key goals of the SDGs including Goal 11 on Sustainable Cities and Communities. In the face of rising nativism, diaspora cultural capital is an instrument of understanding and mutuality that can bring communities of difference together through the prism of culture.

This can also be particularly important in the context of local development where there are opportunities to create initiatives around twinning based on the presence of a strong diaspora in a specific locale. Countries of residence have a duty of care to the new communities who call their country home. By strategically investing in diaspora cultural engagements, they can support follow-up impacts in the strengthening of diaspora civil society organizations. This will help identify community gatekeepers that can enhance the integration of new communities with local populaces.

Case Study Seven – The Associazioni Migranti per il Co-sviluppo

The Associazioni Migranti per il Co-sviluppo – A.MI.CO. Training Course – supports the capacity development of migrants’ associations, with a special focus on the following subjects: development and project implementation, budgeting, creation and management of partnerships, external communication, monitoring and evaluation.

The key objectives are to strengthen associations of foreign citizens or new generations of Italians; enhance the planning, development, and implementation of international development cooperation activities; and share research tools for partnership and funds for international cooperation.

It provides capacity building, training, and support to migrants’ associations. The A.MI.CO. Award initiative provides an economic grant meant for the implementation of co-development initiatives promoted by migrants’ associations that participated in the A.MI.CO. Training Course.

Through the A.MI.CO. Programme, IOM has strengthened the role of migrants’ associations as natural transnational actors in the field of development cooperation, empowering more than 274 associations with connections to more than 60 countries around the world.¹⁶

3.2 Affinity Diaspora

Whilst work around integration, community development, and co-development provide pathways for countries of residence to provide moral and values-led policy designs, diaspora cultural capital also provides creative ways in which to create new affinities from and through diaspora communities in countries of residence. The advancement of such work is based on the importance of culture as a

¹⁶ For more information, please see <https://migration4development.org/en/projects/amico-migrant-associations-co-development>.

means of national public relations.

Culture has long been understood instrumentally and strategically as a form of diplomacy or national public relations, framed to promote the interests of the nation-state among foreign publics (Supporting Next Generation of the Irish Diaspora, DFAT, Ireland).

The concept of affinity diaspora is a relatively new idea in terms of diaspora engagement. It is focused on the importance of affinity to a sense of nationhood as explored at the beginning of this background paper. It is possible for countries of residence to utilize cultural engagements to nurture a sense of belonging in the diaspora communities who reside there and this transforms to a sense of affinity to the country of residence.

For example, the Government of Ireland in their most recent diaspora strategy work towards a concept of affinity diaspora through linking it with an idea of a reverse diaspora. In defining who constitutes the global Irish diaspora, the strategy states that the definition “embraces the reverse diaspora of people who have lived, studied or worked in Ireland before returning to their home countries as well as the affinity diaspora who hold a deep appreciation for our people, places and culture.”¹⁷

This can be a policy innovation in how diaspora engagement is framed. Historically it has been seen as the primary domain of countries of origin engaging their dispersed communities but in today’s connected landscape, this needs a more nuanced approach. It is also about understanding the entry point for countries of residence to engage with diaspora communities within their country. Cultural engagements can begin that journey.

The exciting potential here is that communities are now more open to embracing hyphenated identities and as diaspora communities develop across generations, these multiple identities strengthen. This produces a more conducive environment for countries of residence to scale such engagements. A leading innovator in this regard has been Omek which is embracing the bicultural identities of the African diaspora to create communities of purpose in countries of residence to serve both countries of origin and residence.

Case Study Eight – Omek

Omek is more than connecting African diaspora professionals — it is about creating a sense of belonging, purpose, and growth.

It is designed to make connection and collaboration simple for the African diaspora professional and their allies. Our vision is to create a strong network of empowered professionals who are meaningful contributors to the economy and culture. It has built a community-centric ecosystem dedicated to the social and professional advancement of the African diaspora which links digital tools such as an app with physical convenings and partnerships with brands, organizations, and public institutions. They have been one of few

¹⁷ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Ireland. (2020). *Global Ireland: Ireland’s Diaspora Strategy, 2020 – 2025*. Dublin.

diaspora organizations who have built meaningful collaboration with global brands such as Adidas, Google, Netflix, Nike, and others.

Its purpose is to be home of the global bicultural community.¹⁸

3.3 Cross-Cultural Leadership

Countries of residence can also access the leadership and networks that are bedded across diaspora communities by supporting their cultural advancement. Diaspora communities are natural access points to new ideas, networks, and ways of viewing the world. This can contribute to not just the development of countries of residence but various levels of leadership across countries of residence whether it be economic, social, or political leadership.

This brings important competitiveness in key centres of cross-cultural communities in countries of residence, as noted by the rising prominence of cities as key convenors of cultures and different talents. Engaging diaspora cultural capital in countries of residence not only enhances the richness of societies in key cities or regions but also provides resources for economic competitiveness of these locales in areas such as innovation. In the networked age where the connections between the local and global are shrinking, diaspora communities and their cultures are ways in which countries of residence can enhance their global attractiveness and influence.

By bringing diaspora and local leaders together through the promotion of cross-cultural leadership, then countries of residence can inspire established and emerging diaspora and local leaders to promote to the well-being of countries of residence. Aligning this work with the rising desire for purpose in leadership and the emergence of bicultural identities, this can be a strategic investment area for countries of residence.

Whilst there are large-scale cross-cultural leadership development programmes operating across the world, very few have centralized the idea of diaspora engagement as a primary focus. An important early mover in that regard has been Common Purpose who have developed a cross-cultural leadership programme for diaspora leaders.

Case Study Nine – Diaspora Dialogues

The Diaspora Dialogues, an inter-generational and inter-diaspora dialogue, are convened by Common Purpose and will take place over the coming years right across the world. Dialogues will be pop up in nature, taking place when diaspora leaders see the need and offer to host them. It is rooted in the belief that people from diaspora communities are uniquely qualified to help the world survive another great era of global migration without irreparable division.

It is in response to the fact that there is an increasing number of young people who are diaspora that want to work with confident, successful, diaspora leaders of all ages who manage to bridge worlds. Participants are leaders of all ages who are familiar with operating in multiple cultures and geographies, who connect global and local, having spent their lives with their feet in multiple places. Leaders who are natural interpreters, communicators, and bridge builders. Leaders who are uniquely valuable in a world that is becoming more fragmented. It is delivered through a dynamic and well tested process called

¹⁸ For more information, please see <https://myomek.com/>.

‘innoventure’ where the participants exchange ideas, strategies and inspiration. It is focused on thought leadership and practical action.¹⁹

3.4 Scoping Institutional, Information, and Institutional Considerations for Countries of Residence

Given the fact that the role of countries of residence in engaging diaspora cultural capital is in its early stages, it is only possible to scope out the early institutional, informational, and institutional technical components required for successful engagements of this type of diaspora capital. It is the planned outcome of this technical working group to help push forward concrete recommendations for an actionable long-term vision for engagement of diaspora cultural capital in countries of residence.

These considerations are aligned with the fact that countries of residence face different prospects and pressures in terms of how they can benefit from, coordinate, and manage effective engagement of diaspora cultural capital. The background paper offers five preliminary considerations for countries of residence to address the challenges and opportunities in engaging diaspora cultural capital.

1	Mainstream cultural engagements of diaspora as a principal commitment in the design and delivery of inclusive policy making for social progress and cohesion.
2	Create or support cultural events of diaspora organizations in countries of residence.
3	Create or support cross-cultural co-development opportunities between diaspora and local leaders in countries of destination including engagement of regional senses of diasporic belonging to support community development
4	Ensure active participation of diaspora cultural gatekeepers in sectoral development of key cultural industries such as the arts, gastronomy, sports, and creative industries.
5	Commit to recognition and celebration of diaspora cultural overachievers as part of a wider multi-platform communication strategy for engaging diaspora cultural capital.

Figure 2 Preliminary Reflections for Countries of Residence in Engaging Diaspora Cultural Capital

4. Building a Co-Created Future for Diaspora Cultural Capital

The background paper has worked through insights that reflect both current and future tools that be leveraged to engage diaspora cultural capital in countries of origin and residence. Across the discussion and case studies, the ambitions of the technical working group to develop an actionable long-term vision for diaspora engagement including diaspora cultural capital will require the involvement of a wide variety of actors.

Therefore, to develop and implement such a vision will require a co-created plan of action across these stakeholders. This brings important considerations for governments in countries of origin and residence to determine the optimal roles and responsibilities they can assume to support this vision. At a minimum, these roles and responsibilities are likely to include a commitment to the promotion of values-led policy through cultural engagements of diaspora and a commitment to work with external partners, such as diaspora organizations and the media, to promote cultural engagements of diaspora.

4.1 Delivering Action and Impact: Policy, Programs, and Partnership

In the context of co-creation, the background paper can provide a preliminary framework to operationalize these different roles and responsibilities for governments through policy, programmes,

¹⁹ For more information, please see <https://commonpurpose.org/leadership-programmes/diaspora-dialogues/>.

and partnership. By providing early recommendations upon which to explore additional findings through the technical working group, the paper can contribute to early scoping of potential outcomes from the GDS. These, again, can be a baseline for guidance in the technical working group.

Area	Recommendation	Responsible Actor(s)	Potential Outcomes for Action from GDS
Policy	Ensure development of culturally appropriate and sensitive policies in countries of origin and destination targeting diaspora engagement by ensuring culture is a key pillar of such policies.	Governments in Countries of origin and residence.	Commit to further recognition of diaspora culture as key pillar of local, regional, and global policy agendas on diaspora engagement.
Programmatic	Diaspora cultural capital engagements should embrace the varying senses of belonging and identity operating across the diaspora. They must be values-led and place utmost importance on ensuring diverse and inclusive engagements for all cultural needs in the diaspora.	Governments in Countries of origin and residence; Diaspora organizations; international development partners	Commit to investing in a portfolio diaspora cultural products and promotion activities.
Partnership	Governments are best positioned as facilitators of diaspora cultural capital and must commit to support of key partners in the design and delivery of cultural engagements of diaspora, including but not limited to, cultural, diaspora, and media organizations.	Governments in Countries of origin and residence; Diaspora organizations; international development partners	Commit to prioritizing multi-stakeholder representation in the governance of diaspora engagement.

Figure 3 Rationale Recommendations for Potential GDS Outcome Statements on Diaspora Cultural Capital

Policy Recommendation

The level of importance of cultural engagements for diaspora engagement requires a structured policy response to ensure it is elevated in terms of policy priorities. Quite often cultural engagements are assumed so it is imperative to ensure that diaspora cultural capital engagements are mainstreamed as a cross-cutting impact in all forms of diaspora engagement policies and strategies, either from the perspective of countries of origin or residence.

Therefore, this background paper provides the policy recommendation that governments ensure development of culturally appropriate and sensitive policies targeting diaspora engagement in countries of origin and destination by ensuring culture is a key pillar of such policies. This will help

governments to respond to growing expectations around accountable and values-led policy interventions from a multitude of stakeholders.

Programmatic Recommendation

It is well established in academic and applied literature on diaspora engagement that diaspora communities cannot be treated as homogenous entities. There is no one size fits all portfolio for the cultural engagement of diasporas. Therefore, there will be programmatic pressures to make sure that any cycle of cultural engagements remains respectful of the layered cultural affinities and interests across diaspora communities.

Therefore, this background paper provides the programmatic recommendation that diaspora cultural capital engagements should embrace the varying senses of belonging and identity operating across the diaspora. They must be values-led and place upmost importance on ensuring diverse and inclusive engagements for all cultural affinities in the diaspora. This will result in inclusive and respectful programmatic interventions for all. These outputs will then be able to allocate the correct service provider to meet any sensitivities in the diaspora; this results in the final recommendation in terms of partnership.

Partnership Recommendation

Engaging the diversity of culture across your diaspora may mean that governments at certain times may not be the optimal convenor or curator of such engagements. Additionally, the government can leverage external partners, such as media outlets, to scale such engagements. Therefore, the variety of actors involved in the production, dissemination, and reception of engagements for diaspora cultural capital pinpoints the necessity for a multi-stakeholder framework for such work.

Therefore, this background paper provides the programmatic recommendation that diaspora cultural capital engagements must commit to the support of key partners in the design and delivery of cultural engagements of diaspora, including but not limited to, cultural agencies, diaspora networks, and media organizations. This provides a light-in-touch approach for the government and positions them in an incubator and facilitator role.

5. Four Questions to Guide Thematic Working Group

In navigating through the complex roles and opportunities for countries of origin, countries of residence, and the optimal framework for engagement diaspora cultural capital, this technical working group can set some guiding questions to align with the expected outcomes from working group. This will be rooted in the outcome document of the GDS shaping important planning and monitoring of the GCM through the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF). The outcome document is envisioned as a Future Agenda Document to guide and shape global collaboration on diaspora engagement.

In alignment with efforts to reinforce implementation of the GCM through the IMRF, the Future Agenda Document of the GDS provides a timely opportunity to shape an inclusive global statement of a future agenda of action in diaspora engagement that can directly inform the IMRF and wider implementation of the GCM.²⁰ The Future Agenda Document, therefore, will aim to guide the process

²⁰ For more information on how the IMRF is supporting implementation of the GCM, please see <https://www.un.org/en/migration2022/> and <https://migrationnetwork.un.org/pledges>.

and prioritization of engagements to contribute to this global statement. Such a document can then serve as a first-step global framework for action on diaspora engagement to directly contribute to the further and future implementation of Objective 19 of the GCM by inspiring the active collaboration of all stakeholders across the ecosystem of diaspora engagement.

The guiding questions for each technical workshop at the GDS, therefore, have a collective responsibility to help shape actionable input to design such a global statement and framework for action in diaspora engagement directly aligned with Objective 19 of the GCM. Four guiding questions to initiate this are identified below. They are designed to address the policy, programmatic, and partnership steps to achieve the future agenda and to explore how to establish the GDS as the global convening to guide the process of achieving this vision.

- Policy: What can the Future Agenda Document recommend at a policy level to achieve global collaborative action on diaspora cultural capital?
- Programmatic: What can the Future Agenda Document recommend in terms of programmes for diaspora engagement for diaspora cultural capital?
- Partnership: Who are the key actors to partner with governments to increase impact in engagement of diaspora cultural capital and how can the Future Agenda Document support such partnerships?
- Process: How can the Future Agenda Document reaffirm the importance of the GDS as the global 'go-to' process to achieve this global collaborative action for diaspora engagement?

6. Expected Outcomes

Given the preliminary framing provided in this background document and the expertise of participants in engaging culturally with diasporas, the technical working group could consider the following in terms of shaping meaningful and measurable outcomes on diaspora engagement through cultural capital engagement. These have been shaped as direct outcomes from the working group and visionary outcomes from the working group.

Direct Outcomes

Peer-to-Peer Modules of Impact: The technical working group can serve as a purposeful peer-to-peer governmental exchange where modular designs of impact for engagement of diaspora cultural capital are developed. This can result in creation of post-working group dialogue collaborations to build legacies beyond the Global Diaspora Summit through government-to-government collaboration on such engagements.

Monitoring: Collaborative decisions can be drawn on how best to monitor and track impact to identify most suitable ways to develop culturally respectful diaspora engagement. A baseline for such monitoring can be extrapolated by sharing of existing practices as well as identification of key lessons learnt and insights on any failures experienced in this area of engagement.

Partnership Prospecting: A direct outcome can be partnership prospecting which can identify the key external supporters that can be instrumental for both governments of countries of origin and residence to deliver meaningful engagement of diaspora cultural capital. This can include civil society including cultural agencies, diaspora organizations, foundations, international partners, private sector, and others as identified by delegates at the technical working group.

Visionary Outcomes

Future Agenda for Diaspora Cultural Capital: This visionary outcome is to scope out the framing of a future agenda of action for engagement of diasporas through cultural capital. This can be rationalized through the direct outcomes above to set in place an achievable agenda to mainstream diaspora cultural capital as a pathway for positive contributions to both countries of origin and residence. Dynamics to be considered in this agenda will be increased policy focus on supporting diaspora through culture, strategic enhancement of engagements across cultural activities, creation of new applications to support diaspora cultural capital engagement, and scale or replicability of models of success already active in the market.

A Participatory Framework for the Future Agenda: This visionary outcome will unpack the complex layers of leadership and partnership required for success in engaging diasporas through culture to offer an overview of the stakeholders required to deliver the future agenda of action. This can serve as an inspirational ask of leadership across these different markets to centralize diaspora cultural engagements into their current and future portfolio of strategic activities. This will ensure that the Future Agenda Document will be an inclusive agenda with active ownership for all actors across the diaspora engagement ecosystem.

Conclusion

This short background paper is provided as a contextual scene-setter to the technical working group on diaspora cultural capital at the GDS. It provides explorative discussions with some baseline information and instruction to help guide the technical working group. With the expected outcomes of this working group, it is envisaged that the depth and range of expertise and experience from participants at the technical working group will advance these preliminary discussions to collaboratively outline a future agenda of action to ensure that diaspora cultural capital will bring mutual benefit for both countries of origin and residence.