Global Best Practices in Diaspora Engagement: **Lessons for Armenia**

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Introduction

Governments around the world increasingly see their diasporas not as "lost talent", but as established assets. Notable success stories facilitating establishment of new sectors, emergency aid relief, academic partnerships and others are explored in this brief, extracting best practices and conditions for success in each.

This brief first tackles background of the issue, and then addresses the common policies and approaches employed by countries globally, and asks authorities to define concrete objectives in terms of expectations of the diaspora, and to consider the motivations and needs of the diaspora itself when considering and evaluating the effectiveness of a proposed initiative. It provides examples first of approaches identified by extensive literature and study of global diaspora engagement and demonstrates the forms which these approaches may take. Following a broad global analysis, it then moves to extract examples from other countries which may be of use in formulating a diaspora strategy for the Republic of Armenia.

Background

Two major shifts dominate discussions around development policies targeting diaspora: the opportunities afforded by the globalization of talent and knowledge networks, and the movement of these policies from being seen as purely the realm of developing States. Early diaspora engagement strategies focused on enticing emigrants home, believing physical return to be the only way to regain human capital. The first large-scale programmes from international organizations such as TOKTEN and MIDA focus on short-term, temporary, or virtual returns.[1] Increasingly, policymakers and scholars draw their focus to embracing the multiple identities of diasporas, reconceptualizing "brain drain" as "brain circulation" in recognition of a mutually beneficial relationship. The People's Republic of China, for example, shifted in 1990 from a "return and serve" model to a "serve" model, no longer seeing physical presence as a barrier to contributions (Biao, 2005). Mexico, Morocco and the Philippines also see the permanent or semi-permanent stay of labour abroad as economically valuable (Ragazzi, 2014, p. 76).

Diaspora outreach policies vary widely from country to country, as each as their own priority contributions from overseas populations. Some States may facilitate work arrangements for nationals abroad to alleviate domestic job markets (Philippines), others court investments and business linkages (India), while others seek the circulation of knowledge and skills gained abroad. Globally, diaspora mobilization projects have evolved away from philanthropic, one-sided initiatives towards collaborative partnerships with mutual benefit at their core (Larner, 2007, p. 335). Engagement should therefore be viewed through the lens of collaborative, inclusive partnerships wherever possible.

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[1] TOKTEN – Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals (UNDP initiated, now under UNV); MIDA – Migration for Development in Africa (IOM); RQN – Return of Qualified Nationals, IOM.

The Armenian Context

A long arc of the diaspora dispersal complicates development models focused around populations that may be better described as expatriate – those born in the country of origin and not their descendants per se. For this purpose, diaspora is understood as persons holding real or imagined connections to Armenia. Tangible connections may be economic, citizenship-based, rooted in property or familial ties, or intangible such as a cultural or ethnic links.

In evaluating the diversity of diaspora policy options for Armenia, one must note the significant breadth of diaspora situated abroad as second, third or fourth-generation descendants of migrants. While these groups are often thought to have more economic stability, relatively higher levels of education and more resources to contribute, the population of recent emigrants including those in the near abroad should not be overlooked as agents of development.

A study interviewing various diaspora communities in the United States of America found diaspora Armenians to have a significantly lower interest in contributing to FDI in their country of ancestry. Contrasted with diasporas in Cuba, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the Palestinian Territories, Armenians interviewed were found to belong to the "old" diaspora, with fewer ties and affinities to contemporary Armenia (Gillespie, 1999). Evidence suggests newer emigrants are more willing to take risks and have higher stakes in contributing to their country of origin. This is not to say the old diaspora are not worth pursuing in engagement strategies, but there should be a separation as the motivations and expectations from each group (new and old) will likely differ.

Developing Intent:
A Mutually Beneficial Relationship

Whether navigating a broad strategy, a targeted policy or a specific programme, States must first settle upon their intentions for engagement–and crucially–what they are able to provide in return. As the Government of Armenia seeks to strengthen the pan-Armenian identity, facilitate return of expatriates and diaspora, and tap into the development potential of this population, it should consider the benefits and incentives it can offer in return. Below, some common motivations and their modalities for consideration in formulating a strategy are considered.

There are multiple motivations for "tapping" into the potential of populations living abroad: in seeking financial aid to revive a sluggish economy; courting donations and encouraging philanthropy; extracting knowledge and skills obtained overseas; stimulating tourism and developing a country's "brand"; forging links in the private sector; engaging in informal diplomacy and building coalitions. While these examples provide ample opportunities for advancing the goals of the State, significant personal, professional and economic advantages are presented to the diaspora as well.

Along another vein, States may also seek to "embrace" or bring in those who have not maintained strong connections to their ancestral nation. These community-building approaches move to bring closer "the lost" and unengaged. Means of doing so are typically through cultural initiatives (such as community centres and events, festivals), and may be ideological or religious in nature, or may speak to patriotism of diasporas. They work to consolidate and strengthen a common identity and communality. Concretely, these types of initiatives can include identity cards or special status for diaspora members, (such as OCI, and OFW in Philippines) extending voting rights, representation, dual citizenship, or even welfare assistance.

Both "tapping" and "embracing" postures have merits, and many States use a combination of these.[2] Each should be reviewed and approached with some caution. Strategies which seek to tap into potential must avoid a one-sided, purely philanthropic relationship, instead working toward mutual benefit for diasporas and State. Strategies which embrace those who may be born abroad as second or third-generation diaspora have potential (in some cases) to be misconstrued as overreach by the government. This owes to the fact that embracing strategies extend borders virtually and physically, offering both rights and obligations to a State of which the person is not a citizen.

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[2]   A third category is often referenced here in Diaspora literature, that of "Governmentality" introduced by Alexandra Delano and Alan Gamlen. However, as it is largely theoretical in nature, we consider it out of the scope of this brief.

Modalities of Achieving State Goals through Diaspora

As described in Box 1, diaspora initiatives can contribute to a number of policy objectives aligned with country needs and strategies. These may involve financial capital, human capital, social capital and other contributions. These objectives and examples of their use are elaborated upon in more detail in the sections below.

Box 1: Policy Objectives

Common policy objectives

- Capturing diaspora **talent and skill**s (human capital);
- Attracting short-term targeted capital inflows;
- Fostering **long–term investment** through partnerships;
- **Developing capacity** (institutional and industrial);
- Cultivating community identity;
- Informal **diplomacy**;
- Developing **tourism** and other "nostalgia" industries

(See Aguinas and Newland, 2012; Naujoks, 2013; Delano and Gamlen, 2014)

Considering a broad range of literature on the nature of diaspora engagement policies and the State, global case studies and expert reviews, we must note the existing availability of several guides and handbooks to diaspora engagement available to governments. In particular, organizations such as the IOM, Migration Policy Institute, and others produce guides or "road maps" to developing and tailoring diaspora engagement strategies. This paper pulls from several of these guides which remain relevant today.

Best practices of government-led initiatives should be taken in context of a broader framework, encompassing research and mapping into diaspora capabilities, trust and

capacity-building of the diaspora, and division of responsibility among stakeholders, to name a few. At the outset of policy and project formation, Armenia must make use of firm priorities and objectives for the direction of engagement. These objectives should serve as the foundation of diaspora engagement policy. Many categories presented below intersect with one another and should not be considered an exhaustive menu of policy options.

Table 1:　　　　**Diaspora Initiative Typologies, Examples and Characteristics**

Objective	Involvement	Key Characteristics	Notable Examples
Knowledge and Skills Transfer	▪ Professional networks ▪ Skills-matching databases ▪ Coaching ▪ Virtual return for education or training purposes (distance learning) ▪ *Pro bono* capacity-building of individual initiatives ▪ Partnerships with private sector for return or training schemes ▪ Providing support to universities	▪ Includes competitive, desirable opportunities for professional engagement ▪ Identifies existing skills in the diaspora ▪ Fills knowledge/skills gaps in country of origin ▪ Invests in long-term development of human capital ▪ Networks and programmes can be broad, based by sector, locale, or institution ▪ Government can act as steward and "matchmaker" ▪ Largely diaspora-driven	Taiwan Province of the People's Republic of China Republic of Korea Scotland New Zealand Colombia China South Africa India
Investments	▪ Direct commercial enterprise investment ▪ Remittances ▪ Diaspora bonds ▪ FDI ▪ Opening new areas ▪ Creating business expansion opportunities	▪ Short-term infusions of capital and long-term investment ▪ Mitigates risk through knowledge of local language, culture, and institutions ▪ Uses knowledge and position of diaspora to expand opportunities and enterprises	Senegal Taiwan Province of the People's Republic of China Republic of Korea Mexico Israel
Philanthropy	▪ Hometown associations ▪ Foundations ▪ Online platforms (e.g. Kiva) ▪ Faith-based groups	▪ Can be an effective "entry-point" to more substantial interactions (Kingsley Aikins) ▪ Targeted to specific sectors or geographic locations ▪ Often used during or post-crisis situations to mobilize funds quickly ▪ Can be more effective and agile than non-diaspora philanthropy ▪ Government facilitates by helping to identify projects, reduce barriers to implementation ▪ Vulnerable to differing priorities in COO and within diaspora ▪ Require concrete, targeted objectives for success	Mexico Senegal Jamaica Honduras Ireland Philippines India
Community Identity	▪ Cultural centres ▪ University groups and associations ▪ Informal networks via Facebook or WhatsApp groups ▪ Festivals, holiday celebrations and conferences	▪ Provide networks for people to engage ▪ Can be facilitated by embassies/consulates or diaspora-driven ▪ Offer support to other diasporas and contribute to welfare of community ▪ Maintain cultural linkages	Bangladesh Ireland France United Kingdom

Objective	Involvement	Key Characteristics	Notable Examples
Tourism and Heritage, Nostalgia Industries	▪ Roots tourism ▪ Friends and family tourism ▪ Trade in nostalgia goods ▪ Specialty food items	▪ Emotion-driven ▪ Incentivizes diaspora to visit to reconnect with roots, in turn stimulating the industry and commerce ▪ Homecoming trips may include volunteering aspects or homestays to better understand life in country ▪ Trips from diaspora to visit family or friends in COO ▪ Offers low-cost entry point for friends of diaspora to experience the country ▪ Spending is often concentrated in communities and local economies, rather than tour operators	India Ireland Poland Israel Haiti

Source: Author's compilation, adapted from Kuznetsov, Naujoks, Delano and Gamlen, Aquinas and Newland.

Selected Case Studies

Building off the menu of options addressed in the previous section, and in consideration of the strengths of the diaspora, the following cases are chosen for further consideration in adaptation to the Armenian context. First, we look at knowledge and skills transfer as demonstrated by the Indian diaspora in Silicon Valley. Second, foreign direct investment as demonstrated by Chinese diasporas, and finally, the adaptation of hometown associations evidenced by Mexico's 3x1 program.

Knowledge and Skills Transfer	
Conditions for success and best practices: mutually beneficial opportunities for both parties; willingness to provide long-term coaching and support; adaptable and agile regulatory environment; active business support and investment from diaspora;	Initiative for coaching and mentorship; favourable government policies; gaps in home educational and vocational training systems are identified and deficiencies in home systems ameliorated.

Relevance for Armenia: India presents a compelling case for study to the Armenian context for several reasons. Like Armenia, it has a large, widely dispersed diaspora who may be established, educated and relatively affluent in industrialized countries. Like diaspora Armenians, persons of Indian origin (PIOs) have strong connections to the tech and engineering sectors in notoriously successful concentrations of innovation such as Silicon Valley. India also has a diverse migration history, with multiple waves over several centuries resulting in multiple generations who do not know the culture, languages, or institutions, and may have little affinity or real connection to the country. In fact, several case studies compare the successes in knowledge transfer of the Indian diaspora against that of Armenia (*See* Kuznetsov, 2006, p. 16).

Context: The Indian information technology and software boom throughout the 70s and 80s is a well-documented case study, with many States attempting to replicate its success. Not limited to the IT sector, Indian diaspora have also made significant efforts to align the medical and engineering fields back home to international standards. With many first-generation Indians attending schools in the United States for post-graduate study, a significant number remain to rise through the ranks of their respective careers after graduation.

This has helped to form a highly educated diaspora with strong connections to the country of origin. However, there has been significant cross-pollination with established emigrant communities and new expats:

> In the early 1980s, several small Indian companies came to Silicon Valley in search of low-end contract work in software development. Several executives of Indian origin were willing to help, but most found the Indian companies' work to be unsatisfactory and their development tools and computers inadequate... Indian companies could not meet, or sometimes even understand, United States' standards for quality and timeliness (Abhishek et. al, 2006, p. 80).

At this stage, executives and IT experts in the diaspora worked with newcomers on an ad hoc basis to work through imbalances in performance and quality standards. Indian diaspora rose to the top of IT companies and began lobbying their companies to consider moving operations and research and development to India.

While the massive growth in India's software and IT economy that followed also involved significant assistance from "first mover" investors, the capacity development provided by knowledge and skills transfer early in the cycle was instrumental in coaching the industry to its position on the global market. A number of situational factors precipitated the rise (indeed, similar to those found in many similar case studies) including an increased cost to conducting business in the United States, and an improvement in the attractiveness of the Indian economy and workforce (Abhishek et. al, 2006).

The following years saw the ripple effects of the extensive coaching and mentorship of diaspora to the nascent IT sector in India. Top companies opened branches in India (such as GE, IBM), investment began to flow, and many diasporas moved themselves to India to start their own firms and enterprises. Professional associations within diaspora communities abroad strengthened to maintain connectivity and the cycle of mentorship.

Lessons for Armenia: With Armenia's competitive advantage in its similar positioning in Silicon Valley start-ups and engineering companies, the high proliferation of math and science workers, and the nascent IT industry in Armenia itself, this is a case worth further investigation.

Early attempts at investing in the IT sector in India by diaspora fell through or were abandoned due to unfavourable regulatory conditions and poor capacity of domestic workers. Armenia also faces barriers in producing and training a workforce to keep up with knowledge-intensive industries. While (as in India) diaspora have helped to establish educational institutions in country, education abroad remains more desirable. Armenia should work with diaspora leaders in their fields to identify barriers to development of their sectors.
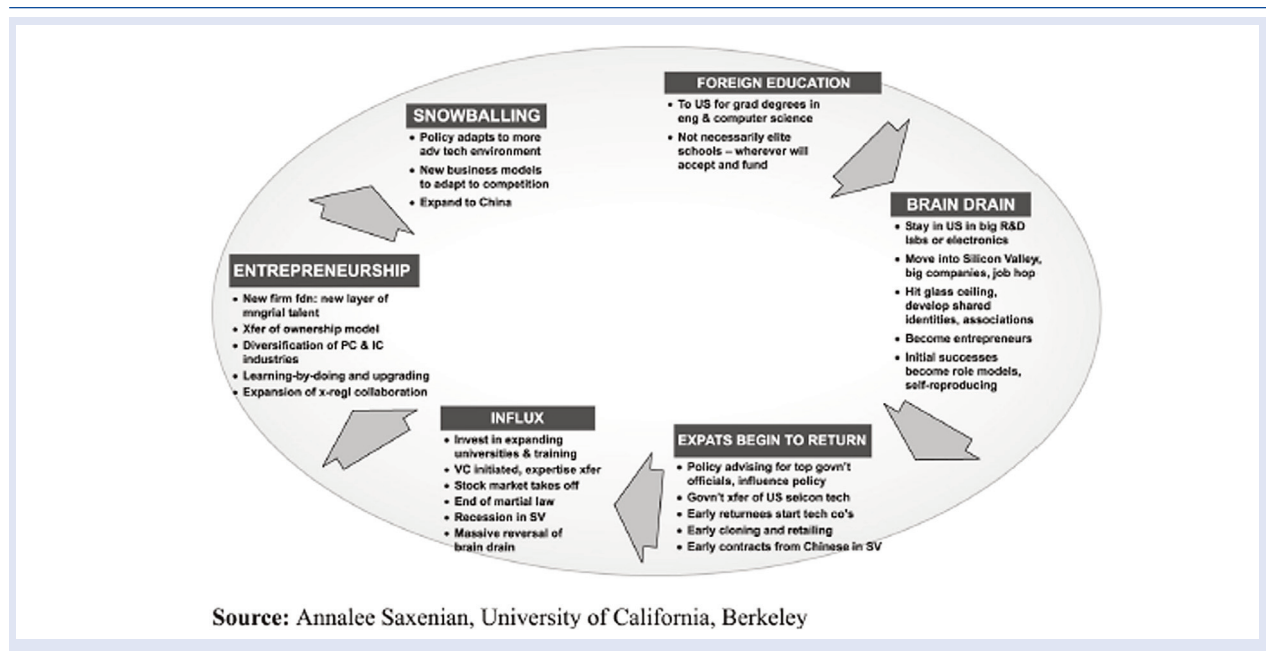
Conditions for success and best practices: experience in a highly successful incubator environment (such as Silicon Valley) and foreign education; sector identification by government followed by action from diaspora; availability and strength of a free-market; seed funding; matching contributions; coaching and mentorship from "first mover" diasporas to not only encourage but convince countries of origin investors of new opportunities; desire and willingness to relocate; assistance in relocation and business development, quality and strength of home country institutions and organizations

Relevance for Armenia: Like Taiwan Province of the People's Republic of China , Armenia has experienced a large outflow of knowledge workers and talent to more profitable endeavours abroad. Similar to the above example in knowledge and skills transfer, these established elites can play pivotal roles in bringing new financial concepts and enterprises to their country of origin. As the government seeks to attract these individuals to "repatriate" themselves and their capital to Armenia, the mentioned example of a "virtuous cycle" outlined by Saxenian and Kuznetsov provide a compelling example.

Context: Contrary to many other diaspora success stories, the mentioned example is often described as one first initiated and identified by the government, rather than a "piggy-back" venture on existing diaspora partnerships. As with the Indian diaspora, the people from Taiwan Province of the People's Republic of China community in California had achieved success by taking advantage of higher education in Western countries and subsequent job opportunities in their sectors.

Figure 1:   **The "Virtuous Cycle" of Knowledge Workers and Returnees**

FOREIGN EDUCATION
- To US for grad degrees in eng & computer science
- Not necessarily elite schools – wherever will accept and fund

SNOWBALLING
- Policy adapts to more adv tech environment
- New business models to adapt to competition
- Expand to China

BRAIN DRAIN
- Stay in US in big R&D labs or electronics
- Move into Silicon Valley, big companies, job hop
- Hit glass ceiling, develop shared identities, associations
- Become entrepreneurs
- Initial successes become role models, self-reproducing

ENTREPRENEURSHIP
- New firm fdn: new layer of mngrial talent
- Xfer of ownership model
- Diversification of PC & IC industries
- Learning-by-doing and upgrading
- Expansion of x-regl collaboration

INFLUX
- Invest in expanding universities & training
- VC initiated, expertise xfer
- Stock market takes off
- End of martial law
- Recession in SV
- Massive reversal of brain drain

EXPATS BEGIN TO RETURN
- Policy advising for top govn't officials, influence policy
- Govn't xfer of US selcon tech
- Early returnees start tech co's
- Early cloning and retailing
- Early contracts from Chinese in SV

Source: Annalee Saxenian, University of California, Berkeley

When the Taiwan Province of the People's Republic of China decided to promote venture capital industry in the 1980s, it had neither the capabilities, nor a blueprint to do so. Many were opposed to the idea because the concept

of venture capital was foreign to traditional practice of Taiwan Province of the People's Republic of China...Through a process of intense interactions with the Chinese Diaspora in Silicon Valley, new institutions such as Seed Fund (with an initial allocation of NT$800 million, later complemented by an additional 1.6 billion) provided matching capital contributions to private venture capital funds (Kuznetsov, 2008, p. 206).

The successful import of venture capitalism (VC) to Taiwan Province of the People's Republic of China was facilitated by several factors. First, it relied on the improving regulatory and business environment in Taiwan Province of the People's Republic of China. Diaspora began to see the opportunities available in beginning enterprises in their home countries and were pre-disposed to return. The identification and engagement of key stakeholders in the venture capital space by government led to the creation of venture funds in Taiwan Province of the People's Republic of China by diaspora. These overseas educated Chinese were invited to relocate to Taiwan Province of the People's Republic of China, and as they established successful ventures, used their networks to coax more investors to do the same. Institutions and seed capital sprung up to meet and support new businesses.

Lessons for Armenia: To recreate a virtuous cycle and emulate the "demonstration effect", government should broadcast widely to diaspora in key areas the reforms made and new opportunities for them in Armenia. Rather than focusing on "old" diaspora, who show less affinity for return, those in the near abroad such as the Russian Federation may be better suited to these return and investment initiatives, as they are more likely to speak the language, know the local context, and have a higher propensity for relocation.

Philanthropy and Hometown Associations
Conditions for success and best practices: Public-private partnership with emphasis on diaspora-led programming; heavy involvement of both diaspora and of the State, requiring resources and time investments from both parties;local buy-in for sustainability of initiatives, involvement and courtship of the private sector in matching funds; oversight and advice by independent actors (not invested emotionally) to align initiatives to national strategies and developmental priorities.

Relevance for Armenia: Given the high population of Armenians resident abroad engaged in circular migration and the considerable amounts remitted by emigrants, a comparison without the Mexican and South American cases would be incomplete. While margins for circular migrants to the Russian Federation are slim and the majority of remittances go towards household costs and consumables, hometown associations (or HTAs) can serve many purposes well suited to Armenia's needs, including building and strengthening common identity among diaspora and a pan-Armenian cause.

In addition, a parallel approach to HTAs might be implemented with older diasporas such as those in the United States and Western Europe. These groups belonging to the "old" diaspora have demonstrated high propensity for philanthropic activity, and often engage in fundraising efforts. While old diasporas may lack a "hometown" within contemporary Armenia or strong links to certain communities, Armenian schools, churches, NGOs and foundations served by the old diaspora might "adopt" hometowns and act as sponsors.

Context: Mexico maintains a steady stream of migration to the United States, often engaging in low-skilled labour. Centuries of migrations in this part of the world have formed strong migrant communities and networks, including HTAs. HTAs are private groups of migrants collectivizing based on a common town, city or region of origin, and are found throughout Columbian, Venezuelan, Honduran, Filipino, Pakistani and numerous other diasporas as well. The associations serve many purposes and have been described as micro-representative bodies, which in some cases can influence public policy back home. HTAs are often led by a steering committee or a board of advisors, and act as a tether between migrant communities and friends and family at home, facilitating knowledge and financial flows (Orozco and Rouse, 2007).

The *Tres por* Uno or 3x1 project in Mexico is touted as an example of harnessing remittances for targeted development purposes, while fuelling engagement and interest of migrant populations in current affairs of their countries of origin.

> The 3x1 Program incentivizes HTA contributions for community projects, referred to as collective remittances, by offering matching funds from federal, State, and municipal governments, creating a three-to-one match that gives the program its name. Common projects include building infrastructure such as roads, water, sewer, and electricity in migrants' hometowns, as well as educational, cultural, sports, and health projects (Malone and Durden, 2018, p. 141).

The key element of the 3x1 project is the strong public-private collaboration between migrant groups and the State, as well as the opportunity for other investors such as Western Union or Oxfam to match contributions. By maintaining an open line of communication, migrants put forth collective funds toward initiatives and improvements they would like to see in their hometowns, which are then implemented by local governments and implementing partners. The decentralization of risk in donating through a collective fund, combined with a multi-stakeholder approach has drawn considerable attention to this model by other governments. Moreover, the project has yielded tangible results in the form of local improvements totalling USD 1.5 billion MXN as of 2014 (Malone and Durden, 2018).

Orozco outlines some core elements of projects implemented via hometown associations in the below table:

Ownership	Correspondence	Sustainability	Replicability
Community members participate in decision-making; community members participate in implementation; and community members have control of project after completion.	Project meets basic needs; needs met are a development priority; and implementation occurs in association or coordination with other institutions.	Project enables development goals; does not constitute a burden or entail added costs; and has a long lifecycle.	Resources for the project are available in other communities; and institutional environment facilitating implementation is available in other communities.

Source: M. Orozco, 2005.

It should be noted the typical pitfalls of diaspora philanthropy certainly apply to HTAs, and if operationalized in the Armenian context, would require significant guidance toward productive initiatives which match both government, local, and diaspora priorities. Diaspora Armenia's philanthropic past should be heavily considered when selecting initiatives put forth by diaspora. As in the Filipino case of the Ayala Foundation, one CEO notes that "Many donors are still content with "band-aid" programmes which may be emotionally satisfying for them but do not result in permanent or systematic improvement" (Newland et al, 2010, p. 17). With the exception of several large and notable investments in infrastructure, SMEs and public spaces, philanthropy under the broader Armenian diaspora has largely come to fall under this umbrella definition of "band-aid aid" or feel-good initiatives.

Lessons for Armenia: Armenian Hometown Associations sprung up in the 20th century in the West, with one group organizing and fundraising to send supplies and packages to Armenian soldiers from their hometowns fighting in WWII. However, as groups integrated further in their new home countries and further waves of diaspora appeared, these types of groups have largely fallen out of fashion. This is not to say the associations do not exist in informal channels, such as Facebook, Viber, or WhatsApp groups among migrants to share information and resources, but they have not been fully operationalized or leveraged to their full development potential. Assessments of this project indicate the involvement of many stakeholders and groups in implementation is a key benchmark for success, and that as associations grow and mature, successes of the projects rise in turn (Orozco, 2005).

Common Elements of Successful Projects

Finally, having explored the common policies, approaches and modalities for diaspora engagement, and reviewing several which may be applicable in the Armenian context, countless anecdotal, broad-strokes advice exists from global initiatives. Broadly speaking, diaspora initiatives see success when:

they build off the intrinsic motivations of diaspora

"Most migrants are not concerned with collective diaspora identity" (Kuznetsov, 2008). A common misstep stakeholder make in marketing to diaspora is to rely heavily on nationalist sentiment and patriotism to drive participation. Diaspora are like other actors self interested, and initiatives which hold tangible benefits for the diasporan such as career advancement, valuable experiences, returns on investment, preferential interest rates or current accounts, will carry the most weight. Indeed, key successful networks such as the Kiwi Expats Association (KEA) rarely relies on cultural or nationalist messaging, stressing the economic and personal opportunities offered by participation in a global database and network of New Zealanders (Larner, 2007, p. 339).

the State serves as a responsive facilitator and reduces barriers to entry

Oftentimes the most impact a government can serve in diaspora initiatives is that of a steward or incubator. "The Irish approach to its diaspora is relatively successful, particularly with respect to business, because it is light and flexible in structure, gives ownership and freedom to its members, and is developmental without being muscular" (Ancien et al, 2009). Indeed, many large and well-known diaspora initiatives such as Birthright Israel (*Taglit*) or return of qualified nationals programmes apply a multi-stakeholder approach with government facilitation and cooperation at the core. However, countries such as Ireland, Scotland, Taiwan Province of the People's Republic of China , and Jamaica have seen strong benefits to a hands-off role, with government providing guidance, funding, or bureaucratic support in lieu of full ownership of a project. It is important for diaspora to hold the "ownership" over initiatives and contributions (Ionesco, 2006).

they build off of serendipitous ventures

As many lessons as policymakers may draw from the successes of other countries, some of the most impactful stories of diaspora involvement in development occur outside of institutions. The partnership of Foundation Chile and one high-impact diasporian individual nearly transformed the entire agricultural sector from the expertise and serendipitous intervention of one CEO (Kuznetsov et al, 2006). Likewise, "the role of Chinese and Korean diasporas in developing their respective countries' electronics industry was a post facto discovery by the governments involved, which then led to government-sponsored attempts to develop international technology partnerships that would capitalize on links between these countries and their highly skilled offshore citizens" (Larner 2007, p. 335). While governments should provide the environment, communication channels, and platforms for engagement (such as diaspora portals, conferences), and may identify priority areas where the diaspora may fill a gap, the majority of successful diaspora networks and initiatives emerge spontaneously without government intervention.

However, policies can encourage and facilitate diaspora projects. By identifying and reaching out to emerging networks, governments can provide guidance and resources to assist them in scaling.

Conclusion

There is no standardized approach to diaspora engagement, nor is the diaspora a reliable fix for all developmental needs of a State. The Armenian case demonstrates tremendous potential if harnessed into targeted endeavours which address the concerns and fears of diaspora as investors and contributors. The long arc of diaspora engagement with Armenia has begun to change course and has already moved to more equitable partnerships, leading the country to profit more heavily from the experiences and resources of its overseas population. In sum, the government must devise a roadmap inclusive of which sectors and areas it requires diaspora input, how it can create a mutually beneficial and profitable partnership, and work to facilitate, incubate and encourage those initiatives with a light hand. Following the successes (and failures) of other States set out above should help to provide guidance in driving an Armenian diaspora engagement strategy.

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