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A Review of Nepali Diaspora and their Role in Nepal's Development and Lessons for Developing Countries

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A Review of Nepali Diaspora and Their Role in Nepal's Development and Lessons for Developing Countries

Abstract

United Nations data shows that the size of global diaspora had reached 281 million in 2020, and it continues to grow. Diasporas have contributed significantly to the development of their native lands through remittance, technology and knowledge transfer, philanthropy, and diplomacy. Many countries have designed policies to engage the diaspora more deeply by providing concessional citizenship and visa regimes, and attractive investment opportunities. Yet, there is room for improvement in policies and programs to enhance these prospects.

Since the 2010s, the size and expanse of Nepali diaspora has grown dramatically, the numbers perhaps reaching 800,000 in 2022 in the more developed parts of the world. In addition, at any time, there are 2-3 million temporary migrants from Nepal working in foreign countries outside of India. With the enhanced level of education and experience, and growing economic prowess, the Nepali diaspora is in a strong position to become a significant partner in Nepal's development efforts.

The diaspora's potential contribution to Nepal's development remains vastly underutilized for mainly two policy-related reasons. The Nepali government's supporting policies, regulations, and programs to effectively engage the diaspora are inadequate. The diaspora groups have not been able to fully assess and chart out their capacities, and create proper institutional, and policy mechanisms to mobilize their resources.

This paper reviews some examples of diaspora in development, and the current situation of the Nepali diaspora, and provide recommendations for improving the strategies, policies, and programs both for the diaspora, and the Nepali government and similar developing countries.

Keywords: Nepal, Nepali, diaspora, economic development, remittance, knowledge, policy, developing countries.

1. Introduction

According to the Merriam-Webster's Dictionary, diaspora is "a group of people who live outside the area in which they had lived for a long time or in which their ancestors lived". Most literature identifies the major characteristics of the diaspora as: dispersion, homeland orientation and boundary (identity maintenance). Thus, although the original word diaspora meant the dispersed Jews and Armenians, it is now a commonly used term for people who leave their ancestral lands and live somewhere else. In this paper, the word diaspora refers to those who have left their home country and settled outside for an extended period. This paper reviews examples of some diaspora groups and their role in the development of the country of origin, and assesses the status of the Nepali diaspora and discusses how they have become an important component of the national development equation in Nepal. It also

identifies some areas where the Nepal government, and the diaspora groups can craft policies to enhance their collaboration for supporting development in Nepal. It deals with questions like why the issue of diaspora is important, how it contributes to the native land, what barrier it faces to do so, what has the government of Nepal done to engage diaspora in national development, and how it could improve the working environment for diaspora for Nepal's development. After these discussions, this paper draws some lessons that are applicable for developing countries having similar socioeconomic and demographic conditions like that of Nepal.

As of 2020, a total of 281 million or 3.6 percent of the global population lived outside of their native lands (UN DESA, 2020), making the modern-day diaspora group a significant part of the global population. In total, the global diasporas remitted more than US \$706 billion in 2020 to the low- and middle-income countries, which is forecasted to reach US \$774 in 2022 (Ratha, et al., 2021, 52). Within South Asia, it grew from US \$75 billion in 2009 to \$140 billion in 2019, and with a forecast of US \$162 billion in 2022 (Ratha, et al., 2021, 52).

The Nepali diaspora sent US \$8.1 billion as remittances to Nepal in 2020, representing about 24% of Nepal Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (The World Bank, 2020b) (The World Bank, 2020a). The rapidly growing Nepali diaspora population is gradually becoming an important partner in Nepal's development. However, due to several factors, such as the shortcomings in Nepal government's policies and programs to facilitate diaspora's engagement in developmental activities within Nepal, the dearth of easily available organizational platforms and mechanisms in the diaspora groups to collaborate for Nepal's developmental efforts, its activities are limited. Thus, the full potential of Nepali diaspora's role in Nepal's development being remains unrealized.

This paper is structured as follow. First, it presents a conceptual framework how diaspora has evolved and functioned. Second, it answers questions like why diaspora is important, what can it contribute to the homeland, what barriers it faces, and what Nepal's government has done to help diaspora engage in country's development. Third, this paper focuses on the case study from Nepal related to diaspora's engagement. Fourth, it presents policy recommendations for Nepal and countries with similar socioeconomic conditions like that in Nepal. The references are presented at the end.

The author reviews relevant literature on diaspora and development and uses his own wide personal experiences of being a longtime diaspora member in North America to describe and analyze the formation of diasporic organizations, and role of diaspora in the development of their native lands.

2. How do Diasporas Contribute to Development?

Diasporas have regularly contributed financial resources to economic development in their native lands. They also contribute to philanthropic, technological, and cultural development in the countries of their origin. India with US \$87 billion in receipts was the top receiver of remittance globally in 2021. This remittance amounted to about 3 percent of the total GDP of India (Ratha, et al., 2021, 52).

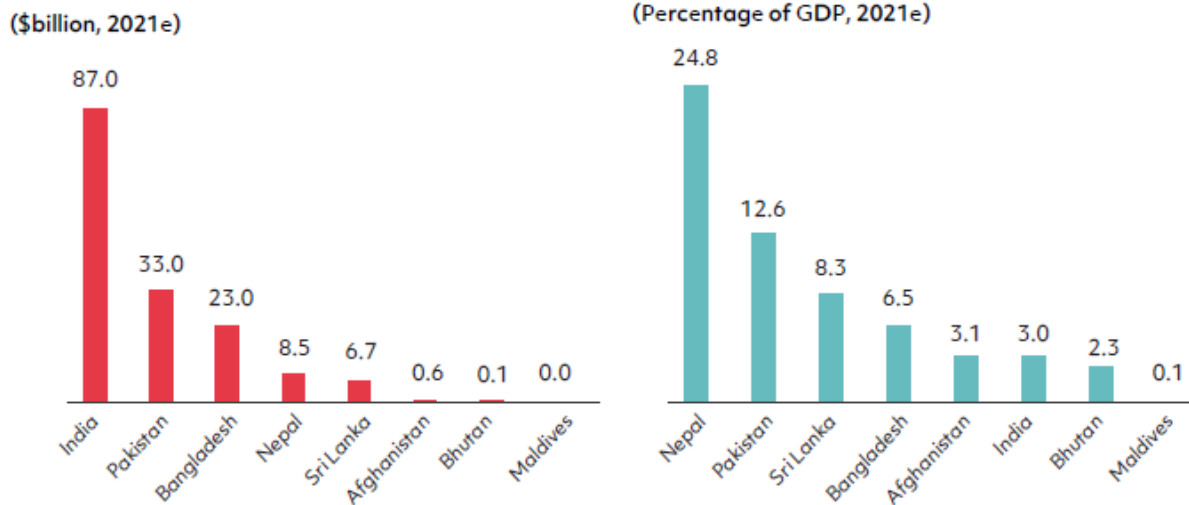


Fig. 1. Top recipients of remittance, and remittance as a portion of GDP in South Asian countries in 2021 (estimates). Source: (Ratha, et al., 2021, 52) available under Create Common License.

Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka were also among the top 50 global recipients of remittance incomes in 2021 (Ratha, et al., 2021, 52). The remittance inflows were a large part of financial inflows in South Asia, which were much larger than the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), and Overseas development Assistance (ODA) received by those countries. The report “Migration and Development Brief 35 by Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD)” states:

“In 2021 remittances were almost three times as large as FDI. Since 2008 the gap between remittances and all other financial flows combined has systematically widened in South Asia, making remittances the dominant source of foreign exchange for the region ... In 2021, for every \$1 of FDI, South Asia received \$2.9 of remittances. In the International Development Association (IDA) countries of South Asia, for every \$1 of ODA in 2020, the region received between \$9.2 and \$9.8 in remittances” (Ratha, et al., 2021, 52).

However, after the Covid-19 pandemic that began in 2019, the picture about remittance flows does not look healthy at least in the short run. For example, Nepal has already experienced a decrease of 5 percent in its remittance receipts in 2022 compared to 2021 (Online Khabar, 2022). As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, many host country governments have stopped or slowed down their work permit provisions to invite migrant workers. The migrant workers who could return to the countries where they work are also discouraged by the often complicated, expensive, and burdensome requirements of travel-related Covid-19 tests, and sometimes two-week long quarantine periods upon arrival at destination.

The United Nations related agencies, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, and the Summits of the Global Forum on Migration and Development have appreciated the contributions of diaspora for sustainable development in their native and host countries (United Nations, 2017, 1-2). About remittances, a UN brief affirms:

“More than three times larger than official development assistance (ODA), and more stable more stable than other forms of private capital flows, remittances have lifted millions of families out of poverty, contributing to the improvement of food security, education, health, well-being and housing for individual families. Over the last decade, the scope and impact of remittances on countries of origin of migrants have been significant....” (United Nations, 2017, 1-2)

Several countries have been working to create programs to attract their diaspora groups in development sectors. For example, the Indian government has lured back some prominent and high-expertise diaspora members from the US, Europe and elsewhere to serve in the top levels of the Indian Government, financial institutions, and academia. China has long recognized diaspora as an effective human resource for the country. Since the 1990s, China has developed more favorable policies, offering higher-ranking positions, more attractive salaries, and better benefits to those willing to return and even relaxing the policies of residential permit in China that are implemented for its citizens to control and manage their movements to the urban areas. As discussed below, Nepal has also several policies, regulations, programs, and projects to entice its growing diaspora members to participate in its developmental efforts.

3. Study of Diaspora in Development - Policy Implications

Diaspora groups have become an important component of the national development equations in their native countries. The potential role of diaspora in national development has become increasingly relevant and of immediate interest to national policy makers and many international development agencies. Literature reveals the direct contributions of diaspora in reducing poverty and transferring skills (Gevorkyan, 2021). The author believes that most native governments and many international donor agencies have not fully realized the potential of mobilizing the diaspora as readymade resources for development of their native countries. The existence of this ready resource has remained like a blind spot for many donor agencies and the developing countries for a long time. However, of late, the national governments and bi-lateral and multilateral donor community have begun to appreciate the diaspora groups as important agents for development.

An increasing number of international organizations and bi-lateral agencies have also instituted and firmly established policies promoting the role of diasporas as catalysts in the development of their native lands. Global institutions such as United Nations, World Bank, regional institutions such as the Asian Development Bank, African Development Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, academia, investment banks, and international businesses are increasingly recognizing the catalytic role of diaspora in the development of their native lands.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has recognized that diasporas can be leveraged in its international development projects. A brochure by the USAID states that “Diasporas represent a vast and diverse community that... hold the potential for transforming developing countries around the world” (USAID, 2021). The World Bank Vice President Otaviano Canuto in the Bank publication “Diaspora for Development in Africa” notes that “The diaspora of developing countries can be a potent force for development for their countries of origin, through remittances, but also, importantly, through promotion of trade, investments, research, innovation, and knowledge and technology transfers.” (Plaza & Ratha, 2011, xi)

Traditionally, diasporas groups have been recognized mostly for sending remittances to the native land. However, they can do much more by effectively facilitating trade and foreign direct investment (FDI), and helping in the establishment of business enterprises, diplomatic ties, and perhaps more importantly, by transferring knowledge, technology, and skills to the societies in their native lands. In consulting practices or business dealings in the native lands, the diaspora groups know the cultural norms and ground reality of their home countries far more than the outsiders. In addition, the diaspora groups have inherent and pre-existing personal networks inside the native land that can be linked with the development trends and technological advancements of foreign countries. These are crucial elements in making any development initiatives in the native lands successful. The diaspora members possess a first-hand experience of the social, cultural, and infrastructural circumstances both of the foreign lands and native lands, a critical knowledge element required to design and implement successful development programs. Most importantly, the diaspora group relish deep emotional reasons to give back to their homelands. This may be motivated by a combination of some guilt of leaving the country, and an altruistic inspiration to help one's own extended family, community members, and people. The diasporas know the native land closely, speak the language, and swiftly understand and connect culturally and the social nuances of the host communities.

3.1 Examples of Diaspora Groups Helping Native Lands

In 2021, countries receiving the highest amounts of remittance were India (US\$ 83 billion), China (US\$ 60 billion), Mexico (US\$ 43 billion), the Philippines (US\$ 35 billion), and Egypt (US\$ 30 billion) (Migration Data Portal, 2021).

India encourages its diaspora to utilize their economic power in the native country and offers concession on citizenship or voting rights to overseas Indians to encourage their support in technology, financial and knowledge arenas. India has long respected its diaspora as a major resource in the country's ambition to become a more prosperous nation and world power in several areas of science, technology, culture, and economy. The large Indian diaspora helps build India's connections to the global economy and technology through transnational network of professional services, and technology transfer from the scientists and academics who have settled in numerous countries.

An excellent example of the Indian diaspora's humanitarian work could be seen when the diaspora was quick to help India manage the impacts of Coronavirus by mobilizing its resources and sending money and equipment to several communities in India (Thanawala, 2021). The Indian diaspora supported several affected communities in India by offering remote medical consultation, medical supplies, and in-kind contributions. Technology leaders and entrepreneurs globally have connected with India to share knowledge, support startups and transfer technologies to the Indian counterparts in the areas of software, computer science, education, and engineering and medical sciences.

The Chinese Diaspora number in 2019 was estimated to be around 50 million (Statista.com, 2021). Diasporic Chinese have been contributing to help accumulate foreign currencies in the home banks in China. The group of countries consisting of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS) recommends that "BRICS economies should make every effort to increase the remittance inflows through reduced transaction costs and tax benefits in remittance-led investment or banks to bank deposits with competitive deposit rates for the diaspora" (Bindu, Shridharan, Swain, & Das, 2021). The

well-established Chinese communities outside China, sometimes called the “old diaspora” were key investors in technology, computing, and information technology sectors in China early on. For example, the diaspora groups from Taiwan were important agents of transferring information-related knowledge and technology from the Silicon Valley in the US to China (Lee, The new Chinese diaspora, 2017).

Especially, in the decade since 2010, many foreign educated Chinese students have returned to their homeland and played an active role in technology transfer, trade, and investment domestically, and helped in enhancing China’s role in the global economy. Foreign educated Chinese diaspora groups have contributed towards making China the number one exporter country in the world. In the words of John Lee, “Diaspora investment revitalised the Chinese private sector’s flagging ‘township and village’ enterprises, and underpinned a national balance of payments that allowed importation of capital goods to upgrade the wider economy.” (Lee, 2016)

China has accorded high priorities in utilizing the knowledge and skills of its returnee diaspora. The diaspora groups had a marked impact in the technological development of China as observed by Welch and Hao, “China’s quest to become an innovation society is strengthened in no small measure by the efforts and willingness of its substantial knowledge diaspora, especially in countries of migration such as the USA, Canada and Australia, ...” (Welch & Hao, 2015, 16). China is also helping several developing countries in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific, and it is projecting its image as an international donor while bringing traditional knowledge from various countries back to China.

Like the Chinese and Indian diasporas, the South Korean diaspora also has contributed significantly to the dramatic development of its native land. In the past, many South Koreans sought employment abroad, particularly in China, Japan, United States, Canada, and several countries in Europe and became visible members of diaspora. Before a large number of jobs were available in South Korea, Seoul’s government encouraged the Korean diaspora to largely assimilate into their overseas host societies and prosper there. Later, the same skilled Korean workforce abroad was able to transfer technologies to their home country and to help expand Korean businesses in foreign countries and vice-versa. Accordingly, South Korean industrial and financial firms not only have grown at home but also extended their operations abroad taking advantages of the contributions from the diaspora groups.

With the help of its diaspora, Korea has rapidly become an important and significant part of an increasingly integrated global economy. The Korean diaspora members have supported Korea’s development helping it to achieve one of the most dramatic rates in economic development in the modern world, and helping to create the country’s image as one of the Asian “tigers”. The spectacular economic growth has made Korea a rapidly industrializing, and urbanizing country, with a global reach. Koreans moving to other countries to gain skills, and their return to Korea has contributed to the dramatic development of Korea (Rizvi, 2021).

As Korea’s population has recently been shrinking, the country has pursued a policy of engaging its seven-million strong diaspora in its development and to supplement its shrinking domestic workforce. To motivate the diaspora groups to return, Korea offers its diaspora members a virtual extraterritorial citizenship through the Act on the Immigration and Legal Status of Overseas Koreans in 1999. The Act provided the Korean diaspora members the right to freely enter South Korea, establish and operate business, and own real property like a Korean Citizen but with some limitations (KLTC, 2016) (Song, 2014). The policy is yielding economic, political, and cultural benefits that stem from building loyalty to

the homeland. The government’s Overseas Koreans Foundation (OKF) is helping to maintain its diaspora Korean identity, enhancing, and expanding economic and political cooperation with them, and building networks to link them to one another and to Korean citizens at home (Song, 2014) through different mechanisms.

4. A Ladder of Diaspora’s Role in Development

Diaspora can contribute to the development of the native lands in various ways. They can send money, promote charitable giving, help support education of their friends and families back home, exchange technology, skills and knowledge and support policy and institutional changes back home.

As the diaspora group become better settled in the adopted lands and begin to enjoy financial, technological, knowledge, and social powers, they can gradually provide other types of support to their native lands such as in philanthropy, technology transfer, and policy reforms. As the number of knowledge workers in the diaspora population grows, their contributions may become even more impactful via collaboration in institution building. Figure 2 depicts a conceptual diagram of the hierarchy of diaspora’s impact on their native lands that shows progression from remittances on the base to institutional building on the top. The schema is based on the ideas in the book “How Can Talent Abroad Induce Development at Home” (Kuznetsov, 2013).

Stage of Diaspora	Capacities
Matured	Institution building
Advanced	Knowledge & Technology Transfer
Established	Investments
Establishing	Philanthropic Activities
Forming	Remittances

Figure 2. A ladder of diaspora’s contribution
 Source: Modified and redrawn by the author based on (Kuznetsov, 2013)

Overall, the potential contribution of the diaspora groups to help their native countries can include the following areas.

- Sending remittance to support families, and buttress national economy.
- Promoting international business and trade processes.
- Making individual business investments, and organizing collective business investments.
- Facilitating and organizing foreign direct investment (FDI).
- Returning diaspora creating start-up companies, businesses, and investing domestically.
- Supporting higher education programs, and improving the quality of education often by linking the domestic institutions of higher learning to the high-quality institutions in foreign lands

- Being catalytic agents for technology and knowledge transfer. For example, establishing and supporting in the enhancement of professional fields such as medical and engineering practices while emulating the best practices internationally, and establishing medical, engineering, academic, non-profit, and for-profit institutions
- Promoting and supporting tourism by making personal and family visits and by bringing friends and colleagues for tourism.
- Strengthening multilateral diplomatic ties. For example, improving diplomatic ties between countries like the Indian and Chinese diasporas are doing in Washington D. C.
- Organizing philanthropic work to improve the well-being of the Nepali people.

5. The Nepali Diaspora

5.1 Sub-groups and Population Size

A review of literature on the diaspora and the author's experience in the diaspora's developmental and charitable efforts in Nepal reveals that the diaspora's strength is increasing both in number and resource potential. Despite the relatively recent origin, the Nepali diaspora is rapidly evolving and growing. Today, Nepali settlers, migrant workers and students can be found all over the world. As the Nepali diaspora's capacity is rapidly evolving and gaining momentum, it can be called a diaspora in the making.

Based on their geographic distribution, the Nepali diaspora community can be divided into the following four well-defined groups.

1. A large number of Nepali move to India for seasonal, annual, and long-term menial labor jobs. The exact number of this group is often hard to establish because of the open border between Nepal and India. Often, no records are updated of such emigration and immigration because no visa is required for citizens of both Nepal and India. In addition, India has a significant number of Nepali speaking Indian citizens. The Nepalis work in India in military, civil, agricultural, households and many informal and formal sectors. According to the Census of India 2011, India has about 2.92 million Nepali speaking Indian citizens. In addition, every year, many Nepali students go to India to study mostly in private funding and some through public scholarships such as Colombo Plan or in Cultural Scholarships generally granted to political leaders. Discussion about this group is out of scope for this paper.
2. The second group is the temporary migrant workers group, estimated to be between 2-3 million in 2022, who primarily work in the countries in the Gulf region in the Middle East, and Southeast Asia such as Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei, and East Asia such as Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea. Nepal Association of Foreign Employment Agencies (NAFEA) estimated the total number of foreign migrant workers (outside India) to be around 3 million in 2020 (Mandal, 2020). The preliminary results from the 2021 Nepal census shows that 2.17 million Nepalis have left home and are living abroad (CBS Nepal, 2022). This number indicates the number of Nepali foreign migrant workers. This group works in the host countries often with 2–6-year contracts, and almost all of them (except some in Korea, Japan, Hong Kong, and Singapore) return to Nepal after the end of their work contract, while a few immigrate to countries in North America, Oceania, and Europe from there. The remittance they send to Nepal forms an important pillar of the Nepali economy. In this paper, we only briefly discuss the remittances and other

contributions made by this group to aid in Nepal’s development. Due to space limitation, this paper does not discuss the activities and capacities of this group at length.

Between 2011 to 2019, the annual migrant worker outflow from Nepal to countries outside India has varied from more than 236,000 to about 520,000 (Table 1). In 2020, Nepali migrant workers sent remittance equal to US \$8.1 billion, which is about 24% of Nepali’s GDP in that year (Table. 1). As a percentage of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), this amount is among the highest in the world. The Covid-19 pandemic has decreased the flow of the Nepali migrant labor to the host countries. However, as the employment opportunities at home remain limited, the number of people living to work in foreign countries is likely to accelerate again as the pandemic subsides.

Year	Migrant Workers Outflow (Numbers)	Year	Remittances Received in Nepal (US\$ Billion)	Remittances as a Percentage of GDP
2011/12	384,665	2011	4.22	19.5
2012/13	450,889	2012	4.80	22.1
2013/14	519,638	2013	5.56	25.2
2014/15	499,102	2014	5.89	25.9
2015/16	403,693	2015	6.73	27.63
2016/17	382,871	2016	6.61	27.0
2017/18	354,098	2017	6.93	23.9
2018/19	236,208	2018	8.29	25.0
-	-	2019	8.24	24.1
-	-	2020	8.11	24.1

Table 1. Trends in the issuance of outflow labor permits by the government of Nepal, and corresponding total amount of remittances received. (2010/11 to 2018/19; 2010-20).

Source: (Government of Nepal, 2020), (The World Bank, 2020a), and (The World Bank, 2020b)

3. The third group consists of the students who go to study overseas beyond India. This is a significant number that includes students in Australia, USA, New Zealand, Japan, Korea, UK, and other European countries. Some 59,676 Nepali students were in Australia in 2021 (Australian Government, 2021). Nepali students in Australia were the third largest group among the total international students in the country in 2021 (Australian Government, DESE, 2021). Similarly, according to the data from the US Embassy in Nepal, there were 13,229 Nepali students studying in the US in 2019 making them as 12th largest among all international students (US Embassy in Nepal, 2019). Many Nepalis students also attend universities in several other countries, such as the UK, Canada, Japan, and South Korea each year. Lately, a vast majority of these students attending universities in the US, Canada, Australia, Japan, and South Korea are ending up staying in the host country permanently and become a part of the fourth diaspora group discussed below.
4. The fourth group of the Nepali diaspora is the permanent settlers in the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, UK, and continental Europe. In addition, there is a significant permanent settlement of Nepali in Hong Kong, and a few other developed Asian countries such as Japan,

Singapore, Malaysia, and Korea. The total number of these settlers in 2022 is estimated by the author in Table 2 and Table 3, which shows the approximate breakdown of the number of Nepali livings in these regions.

The fourth group of diaspora members, often considered as the permanent diaspora, are the major focus of this discussion. We discuss their role in providing support for Nepal’s development financially, professionally, and through knowledge exchange. As these people have made the decision to permanently live and take the citizenship in the adopted countries, they consider themselves as the foreign citizens of Nepali origin. For this diaspora group, important issues include their emotional relationship with Nepal, the Nepali visa regime for them, and their ability to buy real property, conduct business, and live in Nepal when they may desire, to work in business or as volunteers upon retirement. Jagdish Bhagwati calls the retired diaspora members retiring to the native lands as “Grey Peace Corps of senior citizens” (Bhagwati, 2012). Many in this group also yearn to remain sentimentally connected with the countries of origin, give back when they can and wish to maintain a symbiotic relationship.

Country/Region	Est. Pop. of Permanent Nepali Diaspora Members (2022)	Remarks
North America (US and Canada)	250,000	A rapidly increasing population fueled by student arrivals, diversity visa (DV) lottery recipients, family-related chain immigration, and other groups (see breakdown in Table 2)
Oceania (Mainly Australia, New Zealand, Fiji)	150,000	Another Rapidly growing group which mainly starts as students while most end up settling permanently
Europe including the UK	250,000	A group consisting mainly of ex-Gurkhas, professionals, and other emigrants
East Asia (mainly Japan, Hong Kong, South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore)	150,000	Mainly consisting of individuals who began through work visa, as former British Gurkha members, and students who entered the job market and then settled.
Total (2022)	800,000	The total number is approximate, and speculative

Table 2. The breakdown of permanent Nepali diaspora population in the developed regions of the world.

[Estimates are by the author based on anecdotal information, news reports, and census information when available. Some numbers are slightly adjusted upwards for 2022 as the official data sources may not have fully captured the total population of the Nepali diaspora in these countries.]

Estimated Nepali Diaspora Population in North America				
Year	Estimated number of people of Nepali origin (PNO) in the US	Estimated number of PNO in Canada	Estimated number of PNO in North America	Notes
2000	9,000			
2010	59,000			
2015/16	140,000 (2015)	17,140 (2016)		Statistics Canada 2016 estimate
2019	198,000			Pew Research Center
2022	230,000 (est.)	20,000 (est.)	250,000 (est.)	Excludes people of Bhutani origin

Table 3. Estimated number of people of Nepali origin in North America (excluding Bhutani Nepalis) Source: (Pew Research Center, 2020), and Statistics Canada (Statistics Canada, 2016); 2022 population estimated by the author.

5.2 The Economic Muscle of the Nepali Diaspora

The economic power of the diaspora is significant and growing. The total annual income of the global Nepali diaspora (excluding from India) is perhaps, in the tune of US\$ 35 billion in 2022 (see the breakdown below estimated by the author).

- Total annual income of the North American (US and Canada) diaspora may be around US\$ 12 billion if we assume their (Table 3) incomes to be similar to the average North American income US\$ 50,000/yr.
- The total annual income of the other permanently settled diaspora in more developed regions (Table 2) (outside North America) with a total population of 550,000, assuming an average annual wage of US\$20,000 is perhaps, around US\$ 11 billion.
- Total annual income of the two and half million (average of 2 to 3 million) migrant workers assuming average wages of \$5,000/year is perhaps, around 12 billion.

This total amount of diaspora income is like the GDP of Nepal in 2019, which was around US\$ 34 billion according to the World Bank data (The World Bank, 2021).

In addition to the remittances sent to Nepal as discussed earlier, the diaspora groups in North America, Oceania, Europe, and east Asia send money to their families and relatives in Nepal both formally and informally. Many diaspora members use their financial prowess to be high spending tourists in Nepal,

support charitable programs in Nepal, and help their relatives gain expensive but high-quality education in Nepal and foreign educations.

On the downside, the situation of the Nepali migrant workers especially in the Gulf countries in the Middle East and Malaysia is laden with many problems, and human rights problems are reported to be rampant. For example, the migrant workers in the Gulf countries and Malaysia work long hours, are paid a fraction of the wages paid for the same work done by the citizens of those countries. The working conditions are often harsh, and unsafe, sometimes even resulting in death. According to the data from Nepal Foreign Employment Board, 7,467 Nepali migrant workers died in the foreign lands since 2011 (The Kathmandu Post, 2020). A significant number of Nepalis were also rescued by the Nepali Government during 2020-2021 from Kuwait, Turkey, and Japan as their services were no longer needed and they were stranded (Prasain, 2022).

5.3 How the Nepali Diaspora has Fared So Far?

Although the Nepali diaspora group is of more recent origin compared to the more well-established groups such as the Chinese, Indian, Korean, Armenian, Bangladeshis, Pakistani, Filipino, Mexican, and other older diaspora groups, it is swiftly rising. Some of the notable activities of Nepali diaspora are discussed below

The diaspora groups often organize fund raising events when needed to support disaster relief, and other charitable programs in Nepal. These groups also routinely convene national, international, and global conferences, workshops, and seminars to advance knowledge related to the development in various areas in Nepal. For example, as far back as in 1993, the Nepali diaspora group in Canada organized an international conference “Strategies for Economic Development in Nepal” in Toronto. Many professional associations in North America, Europe, Oceania, and East Asia organize annual or regular conferences to advance topics related to engineering, medicine, nursing, physical sciences, social sciences, and trades, often with a view to support the development of knowledge base related to development in Nepal. For example, several Nepali organizations collaborated to host an international conference on Diaspora’s Role in Higher Education in Nepal, Toronto, 2018 (Adhikari A. , Dahal, Sharma, & Gajurel, 2019). Another program on Diaspora’s Role in Nepal’s Development was held in Baltimore, 2019 (Adhikari, Dahal, & Khatiwada, 2019). Such conferences and workshops often result in the publication of proceedings, books, and papers, which provide records of useful intellectual, social, and technological capitals to develop future plans in Nepal.

The Nepali diaspora groups have carried out several important activities in their adopted lands to advance their professional, academic, cultural, diplomatic, and business interests. They have created and established local, regional, national, international, and global organizations that advance these objectives. For example, in the USA, the Association of Nepalis in the Americas (ANA), Association of Nepalese in Mid-West America (ANMA), and Nepalese Association in Southeast America (NASEA) are among the more than several hundred Nepali socio-cultural associations in the country. ANA and ANMA were established in 1983 when Nepali immigrants had just begun to trickle in the USA. Similarly, in the professional arena, the America Nepali Medical Foundation (AMNF), American Society of Nepalese Engineers (ASNEng), Association of Nepali Physicists in America (ANPA), Association of Nepalese Mathematicians in America (ANMA), Nepalese American Nurses Association (NANA), Association of Nepali Geographers (ANG), Association of Nepalese Agricultural Professional

of Americas (NAPA), Nepalese Forestry Group (NFG), and Canada Foundation for Nepal (CFFN) are among the dozens of professional associations established by the Nepali North American professionals, practitioners, academics, and trade groups to advance their professional interests. In addition, many diaspora members have helped establish Nepal-related centers of research and studies affiliated with this working organizations. Examples are the Nepal Study Center at the University of New Mexico, and Nepal Studies Initiative at the University of Washington. In addition, many diaspora members also serve Nepal in their country of residence as honorary consuls, trade representatives, tourism ambassadors, and in similar capacities.

Established in 2003, the Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA) is the largest global organizations of non-resident Nepali, and was later registered in Nepal in 2013 as a non-profit establishment. It was created with the purpose of “uniting and binding the Nepali Diaspora under one umbrella” (NRNA, 2021). The NRNA works through an International Coordination Council (ICC), and 85 National Coordination Councils (NCC) with over 110,000 registered members spread all over the world (NRNA, 2021). The NRNA holds a bi-annual global conferences and knowledge conventions in Nepal. It has hosted various events like fundraising for disaster relief, collective foreign investment programs, and development-related programs in Nepal.

The Nepali diaspora groups have created and implemented various knowledge and technology-transfer related activities to facilitate the engagement of diaspora in Nepal’s socio-economic and technological development. Among the examples are the establishment of Nepal Open University, which initially began as the Open University Nepal (OUN) initiative in 2009 led by the diaspora leaders in Canada, USA, and Australia, and supported by hundreds of diaspora leaders world-wide. The university was formally established in 2016 with an act of the Nepali parliament enabling people from remote areas and marginalized communities to have access to quality higher education. The proponents of the OUN had envisioned a world-class and high-quality university and wished to voluntarily lead it in the beginning years to create global networks and create high academic standards. However, in the newly established Nepal Open University, the Nepali Government in 2017 appointed the university leaders from its political party cadres to lead the academic institution, undermining its potential for academic excellence. The role of the initial proponents, and the diaspora has been non-existent in the operation of the university. Both the diaspora leaders and government of Nepal failed to fulfil the original vision of the OUN mission.

The core proponents of the OUN published the lessons learnt from the OUN project in a book chapter entitled “Open University of Nepal Initiative: Lessons learned from designing an institution of higher learning”. This is a part of the book “Higher Education in Nepal” edited by Krishna Bista, S. Sharma, and R. Raby (Dhakal, 2019, 167). The authors in the book chapter show their frustrations as below.

“A group of Nepali diaspora members, represented by the Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA), started a campaign in 2009 to establish the Open University of Nepal (OUN) in partnership with the government of Nepal. Their motivation was to develop a quality university for the masses by mobilizing local, diaspora, and international collaborators for producing and disseminating knowledge in the public domain. The university was subsequently established in 2017 but it drifted away from many of the original objectives. Most critically, it embraced distance education as its central function while setting aside the aspiration of producing and sharing knowledge under the public domain. As the original proponents of this mission, the

authors share their experiences and lessons learned so that other campaigners of similar institution building missions could benefit.” (Dhakal, 2019, 167)

The Nepal Policy Institute (NPI) established as a global institution by a group of forward-thinking diaspora members in 2019. Registered in the Hague, NPI is another excellent example of the diaspora effort to support Nepal in the policy arena. It was established as “an international think-tank and a knowledge-platform dedicated to the people-centered and sustainable development of Nepal and Nepali people, including diaspora Nepali” (NPI, 2021). To its credit, even in its short history, the NPI has already provided important policy input to the government of Nepal in many sectors including in the areas related to foreign employment, migrant worker welfare, census process, administration and policies related to the federal political structure, elimination of corruption, and assisting in the national planning issues and programs. The NPI convenes regular symposiums, meetings, and webinars, and publishes policy and research briefs in the policy arena. It also organizes young research scholars’ symposium and essay competition to motivate students from their undergraduate levels and awards scholarships to the winner candidates.

Notwithstanding the examples of successes and initiatives discussed above, the Nepali diaspora groups have often been unable to establish long-lasting and sustainable institutions and platforms that can put their capacities, improve their performances, and organize themselves in effective and efficient groups. This condition has been a hurdle for the Nepali diaspora to help in Nepal’s development more effectively like some of the more successful peer groups have done for their native lands.

5.4 Nepal Government’s Track-record in Engaging Diaspora in Development

Nepal government’s record in successfully mobilizing the diaspora in its development has been mixed at best. It has initiated several programs to engage the diaspora in its efforts for the socio-economic development of the country. The programs cover policies, regulatory mechanisms, and specific initiatives. However, the programs have often not met the stated objectives.

In the regulatory arena, the government’s Non-resident Nepali Act (NRN Act) amended in 2009 covers most benefits and responsibilities that non-resident Nepalis can enjoy in Nepal (Government of Nepal, MoHA, 2018). An important component of the Act is the provision of the Non-resident Nepal (NRN), and Persons of Nepali Origin (PNO) Identity (ID) Card, which can bestow several rights and privileges to the individual holding the card. The benefits for the cardholder include the right to live in Nepal with annual extension, visa-free entry, right to buy limited amount of land and property, privilege to start business, and work in the private sector in Nepal. The card holders can invest in businesses in Nepal and repatriate the profits in foreign currency after completing the required process. The identity card is valid for 10 years and confers many privileges similar to those enjoyed by foreign nationals in the US, Canada and Australia who hold permanent residency of the adopted country. However, the ID card program and logistics need some improvements in the area of benefits, application process, and logistics (Adhikari, et al., 2010).

Responding to the long-held demands by the diaspora groups, the 2015 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nepal included the aim to “to utilize knowledge, skill, technology and capital of the nonresident Nepalese in the national development”. It provided for a new type of citizenship meant for

the foreign citizens of Nepal origin, called Non-resident Nepali Citizenship, a form of non-territorial citizenship. The constitution includes the following provision in this regard.

“A person who has acquired citizenship of a foreign country and who resides in a country other than a country member of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation and who previously himself or herself or his/her father or mother, grandfather or grandmother was a citizen of Nepal by descent or by birth and who later acquired the citizenship of a foreign country may be granted non-resident citizenship of Nepal allowing him/her to enjoy the economic, social and cultural rights as provided for by the federal law.” (Constitute Project, 2015, 16)

The NRN Citizenship category was envisioned by the Government of Nepal to provide the citizenship holders to live in Nepal and work in private sectors but not for the government, and enjoy all cultural and social rights except political rights. However, even after seven years of the provision being enshrined in the constitution, the Nepali government has still not passed any laws to implement the citizenship provision which is already in the country’s constitution. The diaspora groups have been working with the government and stakeholders in Nepal to get the regulations enacted, but as of February 2022, the progress has remained frustratingly slow. While the Nepali leaders pay lip service to the need and benefit of NRN citizenship, especially when they visit diaspora groups abroad, the topic does not seem to command priority or importance for the Nepali political parties and its leaders.

The Nepali government has also occasionally brought about new initiatives to entice the diaspora groups to invest in Nepal, provide technical assistance to domestic business partners, and participate in the development-related activities in Nepal. One such initiative was the Brain Gain Center (BGC) that was established in 2019 as a “Unit at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that is created to recognize and foster contribution to Nepal’s social and economic progress by the many diaspora Nepali experts and professionals around the world” (MoFA, 2021). In Nepal, whenever a new party or coalition government follows a former government that was led by a different party, many initiatives such as the BGC become low priority to, or sometimes are even abandoned by, the new government. It appears that the BGC may also encounter a similar fate.

Because of the lack of a welcoming and easy-to-approach platform for the interested diaspora groups who wish to work and contribute their expertise in Nepal, the diaspora groups often seem to get frustrated to work in Nepal. From anecdotal evidence, the diaspora members also often encounter bureaucratic hurdles and red tape whenever they wish to create a program to support development programs, create new business, buy property, and conduct day-to-day affairs in Nepal.

6 What are the Barriers to Engaging the Diaspora in Nepal’s Development?

Individuals in a diaspora community may face a reverse cultural shock when they return to their native lands. In addition, ultra-nationalistic policies may create legal barriers against the returnees. The Covid-induced downturn in the employment in some countries in the Persian Gulf and East and Southeast Asia have forced many migrant workers from South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Africa to return to their homelands. However, some diaspora members are choosing to move to third countries when possible. Some diaspora community members are more resilient because educational background, linguistic prowess, and social and family connections abroad, and are able to find new places to start their careers.

Ultra-nationalist leaders in native countries can also create problems for the diaspora interested to return. For example, some political leaders in Nepal have campaigned against the diaspora Nepalis who have acquired citizenship or permanent residency of a foreign country. In addition, there is also some form of resentment against the members of diaspora who wish to return to the country of their origin and take institutional leadership in organizations. Citing the example of Nepal, Gaulee notes that, “While successful diaspora members abroad are frequently viewed by the public as models, they are sometimes and ironically viewed as rivals by their Nepali counterparts” (Gaulee, 2017, 9) Such resentments, and occasional outcry from the political leaders against the diaspora has angered many expatriate Nepalis and discouraged them to engage in the development of the native land. Sensitivity by the local leaders to the needs of the diaspora members, and respect for their sentiments and sincere wishes to be engaged in the developmental efforts in the native lands will help in attracting diaspora members in these efforts.

Several other factors have hindered the full utilization of diaspora resources in Nepal’s development. While we provided specific examples of the issues faced by both the diaspora groups and Nepal government in fully utilizing the potential of diaspora in development, different perceptions prevalent in each group have remained as barriers to fully engage the diaspora groups in development. Such perceptions are often rooted in individual and group psychology of the actors involved that often include apprehension, mistrust, fear, and misunderstanding.

Figure 3 illustrates a schema of the frequently differing perceptions about diaspora’s role that exist among diaspora groups and leaders, professionals, academics, and even general public in the native country. The negative perceptions, some of which are often unfounded, can result in the underutilization of diaspora resources in Nepal’s development.

Regular communication, meetings, and drafting of appropriate policies and their implementation can help in resolving such misunderstandings and perceptions.

Potential Area of Diaspora Engagement in Home Countries	Perceptions by Diaspora Groups	Perception by Leaders and Policy Makers in Native Country	Barriers
Remittances	Giving blood, sweat and tears to help families, society, and country in the native land	A welcome area. However, some bureaucrats try to extract rent from the migrant workers	Official banking transaction methods, blocking exploitation by the bureaucrats in the home countries.
Taking leadership in public institutions (professional, governmental, ono-profit organizations)	General interest to give back, use global best practices, and establish a personal new identity in the home country	Diaspora members “having the cake and eating it too”, competitive threat to the domestic leaders, academics, and professionals	Unresolved misunderstandings, misperceptions, and resentment

Business investment	Red tape, apparent jealousy and resentment by the locals, difficulties to repatriate funds in foreign currency	Diaspora members should be more charitable, and don't expect a similar environment in the native lands as prevalent in their adopted countries	Level of investment is less than what could potentially be made
Taking leadership or providing services in academic institutions	Expectation of academic freedom, and a flexible management role	A sense that the diaspora members are trying to impose inappropriate foreign modes of education	Barriers sometimes disappear, but inability of diaspora to take leadership roles in most cases
Philanthropy	Willingness to give back, seeking recognition, washing guilt of leaving a poor country behind, age-induced altruism	General acceptance, non-threatening gestures and welcome in most areas. Sometimes a perception of show-off, and condescending behavior	A successful collaboration in most cases.
Institution building, and policy reforms	A feeling of providing a high-level intellectual contribution, feeling of making a significant impact, a meaningful give back	Many seem to feel that the diaspora groups do not grasp the local sensitivities and lay-of-the-land	This approach has seen limited success in most developing countries
Leadership in professional areas	Confidence, a sense of having something important to offer	Occasional acceptance, but also some apprehension that the locals are being displaced	Limited success seen in some cases, needs improvement

Figure 3. Differing perceptions by diaspora and local community in the native lands. Author's illustration based on personal observations and experiences.

7 How can the Diaspora be Better Engaged in Development in Nepal?

As discussed above, the full potential of the diaspora's contribution to the development in Nepal remains unrealized. There are apparent deficiencies in the programs and policies of both diaspora groups and the native governments to fully support a more fruitful collaboration between the two groups.

Following are some recommendations to help in the mobilization of diaspora groups to support the development efforts more effectively in Nepal and similar developing countries.

1. Diaspora organizations should work to strengthen themselves by becoming financially and organizationally sustainable through innovative fund-raising, grants from external agencies and investment programs. These should be developed as institutions or foundations that are completely non-political, non-partisan, and non-sectarian, which are fully committed to enhancing the welfare and capacity of the diaspora groups.
2. Diaspora groups can be formed around professional and academic interests, providing various potential platforms for people with similar interests to freely associate and maximize their collective strengths.
3. Various diaspora groups should create and strengthen the existing database of their members who are available and interested to get involved in the development arena in Nepal. The database should include a full list of its membership expertise and should update such information regularly such as, bi-annually, to fully gauge their capacities in regular intervals.
4. Diaspora groups should engage with academia, professional associations, business and industry organizations and civil society in Nepal to explore potential collaboration and create common platforms for cooperation and collaboration. The host organizations in Nepal can provide suitable counterparts for any expert diaspora member who wants to work in Nepal.
5. Diaspora groups should work to create appropriate platforms, including website and physical offices, to improve communication between organizations, and to implement direct communication between sister organizations and government agencies in Nepal.
6. The Nepali government should work to establish research and mobilization services to support the aspirations of the diaspora groups. The diaspora often finds it difficult to operate in Nepal in the absence of easily accessible platforms and interface mechanisms in the policy arena. The Brain Gain Center established by the Government of Nepal in 2018 is dormant. This can be revived, or a similar permanent program can be established to provide a one-window platform for the Nepali diaspora to broach developmental and academic work in Nepal.
7. A dedicated Nepal government ministry like the earlier (2004-16) Indian Government's Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) can help formulate national policies related to the Nepali diaspora and provide an important contact point for the diaspora groups wishing to organize programs and projects in Nepal.
8. The Nepali government should take due note on the value of diaspora in their midst to help in its efforts to enhance international trade, business, economic diplomacy, investments, and bi-lateral and multi-lateral diplomatic efforts. The government should work to create appropriate policies, programs, and centers to facilitate the mutual relationship with the diaspora.
9. The Nepali government should formulate win-win programs where the diaspora's sentiments, emotions, intimate knowledge of the home turf and need for development converge with the domestic needs in infrastructure, community development, academia, and similar fields. The diaspora experts would perhaps make the best consultants, advisors, and partners in Nepal's agencies such as the National Planning Commission (NPC), Policy Research Institute (PRI), Nepal Academy of Science and Technology (NAST), universities and selected ministries related to Science and Technology, Agriculture, and Trade. It should consider utilizing the services of the expert diaspora members in projects and programs that may be funded by bi-lateral, multi-lateral and loan finances that the country secures.

10. The Nepal government should ask the international development agencies supporting Nepal's developmental efforts to include diaspora groups as important resources in their roster, and devise policies to encourage the involvement of diaspora in their programs. It should work with international development partners to promote diaspora's involvement as consultants, resource persons, advisors, and experts in all relevant collaborative projects and programs when desired.
11. The Nepali government should explore the possibility of allowing the diaspora Nepalis to have their representatives in Nepal's parliament. Similar programs exist in some twenty countries including in Italy, Senegal, Algeria, Colombia, and Portugal. Often called the overseas constituency, such program gives stakes to the diaspora in the developmental programs in the native land.
12. Diaspora, Nepal government, and other groups such as professional and academic institutions in Nepal should consider establishing institutions and foundations in-country and abroad for diaspora welfare and mobilization. Examples of such endeavors are, Overseas Korean Foundation (an agency of government of the Republic of Korea), Institute of Mexicans Abroad (the government of Mexico agency), the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) (an agency of the government of the Philippines), and Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the State Council (a government of China agency).
13. A collaborative diaspora infrastructure bond can also be established in Nepal, where the diaspora members can invest to fund the development of key infrastructure programs in roads, electricity, water supply and sanitation. The bond can bring attractive returns to the investors while providing easily accessible and low interest funds to develop national infrastructure in Nepal.
14. The Nepali government should enhance the profile and visibility of the Non-resident Nepali (NRN) day that is observed in the Nepali date Ashwin 25 (October) every year. The day should celebrate the diaspora achievements, and the government on that day should encourage interested diaspora members to return to Nepal. The Non-resident Indian (NRI) day celebrated on January 9 biannually is a good example of best practice of such celebration.

8 Policy Implications for Other Developing Countries

As discussed, the full potential of the diaspora's contribution to the development of many developing countries such as Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and several African countries remains unrealized. This is due to the lack of effective policies and programs in the government and diaspora.

The diaspora groups are in different stages of their own internal development. However, the groups can create institutions to help in mapping out their own resources and capacities and create networks to work in unison when required. The groups need to create appropriate policies and programs to prepare themselves for helping the native lands. On the individual level, it usually takes place once the person feels reasonably well-established professionally, businesswise, academically, and financially. The diaspora member is then ready to give back to the native land if s/he so desires.

Figure 4 shows some examples of best practices by the Indian, Chinese, Korean and Nepali diaspora groups.

Diaspora Group	Examples of Institutional and Organizational Mechanisms in Diaspora
Indian	Various Non-resident Indian (NRI) organizations spread around the world, often based on language and ethnicity, professional and geographical lines (e.g., American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin that represents more than 80,000 physicians), Indo-Canadian Business Chamber, Federation of Indian Associations in Great Britain, Indo-Australian Friendship Council Inc.
Chinese	Numerous trade, profession, and culture-related groups across the world (e.g., Chinese American Citizens Alliance, Organization of Chinese Americans, Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, CPAC (formerly Chinese Professionals Association of Canada), Association of Chinese Professionals (ACP) USA, Overseas Chinese Association for Institutional Research (OCAIR), Chinese Canadian National Council, etc.)
Korean	Korea Economic Institute of America, Council of Korean Americans, The Korea Society, Korean Canadian Cultural Association (KCCA), Korean Canadian Association of North Toronto, British Korean Society
Nepali	Hundreds of Nepali American/Canadian social organizations, Dozens of diaspora professional organizations worldwide, e.g., American Society of Nepali Engineers, America Nepal Medical Foundation, Non-resident Nepali (NRN) Association in US/Canada, Nepali American Nurses Association, Nepal Policy Institute, Nepal-Britain Society, Nepalese Doctors Association, UK, Nepalese Australian Association.

Figure 4. Examples of institutional and organizational systems in some diaspora groups. Author’s creation from experience, and from web searches

The governments in the native countries also need to create more diaspora-friendly policies to encourage and entice the diaspora groups to engage in the developmental efforts more actively in their home countries. The policies that can really help and encourage diaspora members to get more strongly connected to their native lands can include addressing diaspora groups interest such as rights to their ancestral real estate properties, ability to travel freely to their native country, ability to live in their home countries, conduct business, buy properties, and repatriate profits from their business activities from the country of current residency to their native country and vice-versa.

In addition, the diaspora groups wish to remain culturally and sentimentally connected to their native lands. The native governments can craft policies and programs to facilitate and support the diaspora aspirations.

Figure 5 illustrates examples of policies and programs instituted by some countries to support their diaspora’s interest in getting involved in the development of their native countries.

Country	Major Diaspora-related Policies/Programs in Native Countries
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India	Person of Indian Origin (PIO) Card, Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI), Non-resident Indian (NRI) Day, Dedicated cell for NRIs in the Ministry of External Affairs, NRI Day observed biannually on January 9 (it was celebrated annually from 2003-15), Life and medical insurance for NRIs, A dedicated web portal for NRI, Prime Minister’s Global Advisory Council of Overseas Indians, Indian Development Foundation of Overseas Indians.
China	Overseas Chinese Affairs Office (OCAO), All-China Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese (ACFROC), China is contemplating a “Chinese Card” similar to a residency card for overseas Chinese, The China Overseas Exchange Association (COEA), Waiver of the “Hukou (permits) system for diaspora members.
Korea	Overseas Korean Foundation (OKF), Several benefits to the Korean diaspora members substantially similar to Korean Citizens through the 1999 Overseas Koreans Act, Korean Government provides scholarships to diaspora Koreans wishing to study in Korea.
Nepal	Non-resident Nepali (NRN) citizenship available with limited rights, NRN Identity (ID) Card with many rights through the NRN Act of 2007 (Amended 2009) including visa free entry and right to do business in Nepal, NRN Day observance each year in October, A dedicated cell for NRNs within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government collaboration with diaspora in organizing global bi-annual general convention, and knowledge convention in Nepal.

Figure 5. An illustration of examples of diaspora-related governmental policies and programs.
 Author’s creation from experience, and from web searches

Developing countries and their diaspora can enhance their collaborations if both parties devise and implement policies and programs to further their cooperation. For example, the diaspora groups can continue to improve their organizational and leadership capacities by creating, improving, and strengthening diaspora organizations, professional associations, and appropriate platforms where interested members of the diaspora can come together for common causes and goals. As diaspora groups become better established, organizations with higher specialization can be formed to channel specific expertise towards internal and external goals. Governments, and public and private institutions in the native countries can create new and strengthen existing policies and programs related to attracting diaspora knowledge, resources, and interest in national development.

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