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Engaging the Diaspora: Prospects and Pitfalls

Janna Cisterino

Current international migration flows are quite remarkable. In 2011, the World Bank estimated that more than 215 million people, or approximately 3% of the world's population, lived outside their countries of birth.¹ There are three general types of sending states or countries that produce a significant number of emigrants: labor-exporting states, states that have gained independent statehood after a major outflow of their nationals, and states in conflict.² One of the major contributors to emigration trends in the current era is the expansion of capitalism. The real and growing demand for immigrant labor in industrialized countries has encouraged migration on a greater scale than in the past.³ Of course, other dynamics also play a role in current migration trends. There have long been linkages between emigrants and their home countries, but the scale, structure, and strength of these relationships has changed in recent years in significant ways. This paper will examine the logic behind sending states' engagement with their diasporas, the mechanisms that they employ in achieving this goal, as well as some of the potential drawbacks of engagement.

Globalization and new, improved technologies, such as in communication and travel, have altered the dynamics of transnationalism and emigrants' relationships with their sending states, making linkages between the diaspora and the homeland denser and more rapid.⁴ It is now far easier and cheaper for emigrants to call home, to visit their home countries, and to consume media produced in their home countries. These developments have strengthened the identification of emigrants with their sending states and cemented

their conception of themselves as a part of the political communities of their home countries. These transnational communities have challenged the traditional conception of national communities as defined by a common connection to some territory. As Kim Barry says, "Migration decouples citizenship and residence."⁵ Similarly, as Adamson argues, there is an "uneasy fit between the state as an administrative unit and the state as a spatially discrete homogenous political identity."⁶ Emigration disrupts the simplistic conception of the state and its nationals as a neat package bounded by the state's borders. Indeed, when emigration from a state is common, it can become a defining feature of the national experience. In the context of this paper, a diaspora will be defined as a social group of emigrants who have sustained a collective identity, maintained ties with a real or imagined homeland, and displayed an ability to address the needs of its members through organization and transnational links.⁷

Even in the context of transnational processes, politics often remains about local issues. In many cases, transnational politics is highly territorial in focus and goals, although its actors have been deterritorialized.⁸ In the past, emigrants' economic success and social status depended on their successful acculturation and integration into mainstream circles of society in their host country. However, these things now often rely upon emigrants' strong transnational links.⁹

¹ The World Bank, *Migration and Remittances Factbook 2011* (Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, 2011), ix.

² Eva Ostergaard-Nielsen, "International Migration and Sending Countries: Key Issues and Themes," in *International Migration and Sending Countries*, ed. Eva Ostergaard-Nielsen (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 6.

³ Alejandro Portes, Luis E. Guarnizo, and Patricia Landolt, "The Study of Transnationalism: Pitfalls and Promise of an Emergent Research Field," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 22 no. 2 (1999): 228.

⁴ Jose Itzigsohn, "Immigration and the Boundaries of Citizenship: The Institutions of Immigrants' Political Transnationalism," *International Migration Review* 34 no. 4 (2000): 1130.

⁵ Kim Barry, "Home and Away: The Construction of Citizenship in an Emigration Context," *New York University Law Review* 81 no. 11 (2006): 3.

⁶ Fiona Adamson and Madeleine Demetriou, "Remapping the Boundaries of 'State' and 'Identity': Incorporating Diasporas into IR Theorizing," *European Journal of International Relations* 13 (2007): 490.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 497.

⁸ Terrence Lyons and Peter Mandaville, "Global Migration and Transnational Politics: A Conceptual Framework," *George Mason University Project on Global Migration and Transnational Politics*, Working Paper no. 1 (2008): 6.

⁹ Portes and Guarnizo, "Emergent Research Field," 229.

The Diaspora and Economic Development

One of the reasons that sending states engage their diasporas is to obtain resources for economic development. However, there is serious disagreement about whether emigration is beneficial for a state's development. The negative perspective posits that emigration and the sending state's resultant reliance on workers' remittances results in dependency, instability, developmental distortion, and a resulting economic decline that is not worth the temporary economic gains.¹⁰ Remittances are viewed as a potentially instable, unpredictable source of revenue for the state. A reliance on emigrants and their contributions to the state for developmental purposes sends the state down a dangerous path to political instability and unpredictable social change without the necessary institutional adjustments. The influx of money ultimately changes the state in ways that it is unprepared to constructively cope with. The positive perspective views emigration and the financial inflows that stem from it as forces for political peace and positive social changes in families and gender roles.¹¹ Although contributions from emigrants are certainly not a quick-fix, they do provide an important source of revenue to bolster economic development.

Remittances

Remittances from emigrants are now the primary source of financial inflow for many sending countries.¹² Official estimates claim that the sum of remittances is greater than overall development aid worldwide. Unofficial estimates go even further, asserting that remittance flows may be twice as large as development aid.¹³ The large growth in remittances has sharply increased developing states' economic dependence on them in the past few decades. One of the reasons for the trend in the growth in remittances is the impact of neoliberal economic policies enacted by many new democracies in the developing world. These policies have contributed to the start or

continuation of labor migration and thus the rising importance of remittances as they grow relative to other types of financial inflows.¹⁴ Further, remittances have become the top source of foreign currency for many labor-exporting countries. Finally, trends in other forms of financial inflows to developing countries have made remittances even more significant. For example, capital market flows and foreign direct investment (FDI) have fallen in the past few years, but remittance inflows continue to grow.¹⁵

The economic effects of remittances are wide-ranging. In their most obvious function the remittances that family members in the sending state receive allow them to better meet their immediate consumption needs and improve their quality of life. The importance of this function of remittances is often belittled. Admittedly, improving the standard of life of individuals in the sending country through outside contributions is less desirable than doing so by generating internal economic growth, but it is still significant. The majority of remittances that are not spent on immediate consumptions needs such as food and clothing are spent on health care and education.¹⁶ A healthier and better-educated work force is better able to contribute to economic growth.

Remittances are also important on a broader macro-economic scale. First, remittances have multiplier effects on the economy of the sending state.¹⁷ This means that a given inflow of remittances will generate a greater increase in the receiving country's gross output than the amount of remittances. By spending remittances, families contribute to the growth of their countries' economies by providing income for others and creating jobs. When the remittances that families receive are greater than their current spending needs, they raise the national savings and provide funds for loans and investment, thus generating further economic growth. Further, as mentioned earlier, remittances are an important source of foreign exchange for sending countries. This

¹⁰ Charles B. Keely and Bao Nga Tran, "Remittances from Labor Migration: Evaluations, Performance, and Implications," *International Migration Review* 23 no. 3 (Autumn 1989): 501.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 500.

¹² Barry, "Home and Away," 7.

¹³ Ostergaard-Nielsen, "International Migration and Sending Countries," 15.

¹⁴ Jose Itzigsohn and Daniela Villacres, "Migrant Political Transnationalism and the Practice of Democracy: Dominican External Voting Rights and Salvadorean HTAs," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 31 no. 4 (2008): 667.

¹⁵ OECD, "International Migration Remittances and Their Role in Development," *International Migration Outlook* (2006): 240.

¹⁶ Keely and Tran, "Remittances from Labor Migration," 504.

¹⁷ Barry, "Home and Away," 7.

foreign currency can be used to finance the country's deficits, debts, and import costs.¹⁸ Finally, remittances can provide the resources for a transition to what would otherwise be unsustainable development.¹⁹ Again, remittances in themselves cannot solve development problems, but they do provide an economic boost and can serve as a bridge to sustainable development.

Those emigrants who send remittances to their home countries do so for a variety of reasons, including pure altruism, pure self-interest, informal agreements between these individuals and their families, and portfolio management decisions.²⁰ First and most obvious is pure altruism, or a desire to either improve one's family's standard of living or to better one's home country. A second motive is pure self-interest. One case of this is when emigrants want to inherit from their older family members in the home state and expect that sending remittances will ensure that by establishing goodwill. A second example is when emigrants send remittances to ensure that the property or assets that they have left behind in the sending country are properly cared for, sometimes because they expect to return to their home country in the future. Next, there are informal agreements between emigrants and their family members in their home countries. In this case, emigrants remit as a form of insurance against financial problems in their host state, but also as a form of family loan. These informal agreements blend aspects of both the pure altruism and pure self-interest models. Finally, a fourth motive of emigrants in sending remittances to their home countries involves portfolio management decisions. For example, saving in the home country may be more profitable for emigrants. The motives behind an individual emigrant's decision to remit will not fit neatly into one of these categories. Rather, they will likely include several aspects of each.

However, there are a number of disadvantages associated with the role that remittances play. First, as mentioned earlier, some analysts argue that remittances distort the economies of sending countries. They contend that remittances are rarely used to generate capital or create jobs. Instead, they are primarily expended on consumer goods. These consumer goods have a high import content and thus reduce the country's supply of foreign

exchange.²¹ Critics of the positive impact of remittances also argue that they are a potentially instable source of revenue. However, quantitative evidence does not support the notion that there is a steep and sudden decline in remittances after a reduction in migration.²² Rather, it has been found that remittances actually increase in the wake of such a reduction after a short interval of adaptation. There are a number of reasons for this. First, a decrease in the outflow of emigrants does not decrease the current number of emigrants who are living abroad and sending remittances home. Many of these individuals remain in their host countries when overall migration decreases. Next, even when overall official estimates of migration decrease, emigrants continue to leave, both legally and illegally. It has also been found that in many cases when entire families are reunited in host countries they continue to remit to their home country regardless. Finally, when a reduction in migration results in emigrants returning home, they often bring a lump sum of earnings with them. Another argument disputing the importance of remittances is that they do not alter the fundamental weaknesses of economies. Instead, they serve as a temporary fix that masks the true economic problems. Further, remittances have failed to narrow the North-South economic gap, although they have narrowed income disparities within sending countries.

There are also problems associated with remittance-sending infrastructure. Emigrants often perceive official remittance channels as corrupt, inefficient, and unreliable.²³ Admittedly, in many cases they are. However, although using formal channels is more expensive than using informal channels in many cases, there are lower risks associated with their use.²⁴ A further obstacle is the legal and institutional impediments that often stand in the way of emigrants utilizing formal channels, such as a lack of proper identity documents.²⁵ This is particularly a problem for illegal immigrants. Sending states can take a number of steps to improve the quality of official remittance-sending infrastructure and thus encourage emigrants to utilize these formal channels. First, states must expand access to these channels to compete with

¹⁸ Keely and Tran, "Remittances from Labor Migration," 514.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 503.

²⁰ OECD, "International Migration Remittances," 145.

²¹ Keely and Tran, "Remittances from Labor Migration," 502.

²² *Ibid.*, 507.

²³ Barry, "Home and Away," 10.

²⁴ OECD, "International Migration Remittances," 151.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 152.

more readily available informal remittance systems. Next, sending states should make efforts to reduce the transaction costs associated with these channels by combatting corruption and inefficiencies as these problems are one of the main reasons that emigrants do not utilize them. States should also refrain from interfering with private transfers by trying to force them through official channels or in to specific programs.²⁶ Coercion will only further discourage emigrants from using this infrastructure. Finally, states can try to assist emigrants whose lack of proper identity documents prevents them from using official channels. For example, Mexican consulates in the United States have begun to issue “matriculas” or identification cards for Mexican citizens living in the U.S.²⁷ However, such measures are not a full solution as matriculas are accepted by some banks for the purpose of establishing a bank account and sending remittances, but not by others.

Other Financial Contributions

Although remittances are by far the largest source of financial inflow from emigrants for sending countries, there are other important forms of financial contributions. Taxes are one other way in which sending states can extract resources from their diasporas. However, imposing a tax on the diaspora is problematic in many regards. First, states generally lack the enforcement power to coerce individuals who are not resident in their territory to pay taxes.²⁸ Additionally, many sending states do not have sufficient resources to pursue these taxes. One surprising example of the success of a tax on the diaspora is the case of Eritrea. The vast majority of the Eritrean diaspora paid a voluntary 2% income tax that was instituted after Eritrea gained its independence. This may be a function of Eritrea’s extension of dual citizenship to the diaspora and the role it accorded the diaspora in crafting the state’s constitution at independence.

Sending states can also provide incentives for emigrants to invest in their home countries. India is at the forefront of this strategy, giving select

members of its diaspora preferential treatment under investment and banking laws.²⁹ Foreign investment is an important source of foreign exchange and revenue for spurring economic growth in sending states. In addition, many sending states prefer to obtain funds from their diasporas rather than other foreign investors or international capital markets. The diaspora is often trusted more than other potential contributors by the sending state. A final important form of financial contributions is emigrants’ direct contributions for specific initiatives. Many local governments in sending states actively reach out to emigrants to obtain funding for local development projects.³⁰

Knowledge and Skill Contributions

Financial contributions are not the only way in which emigrants can assist their home countries. Contributions of human capital, such as skills and knowledge, are also important. The potential human capital contributions from diasporas are significant, especially in Africa.³¹ Such contributions are particularly salient in civil service reconstruction. The knowledge and skills of the diaspora can help to rebuild the state’s institutions, increase civil service capacity, and thus contribute to stability and peace. Diasporas are especially important in reconstruction because donors, whether individuals or other states, have short attention spans and will likely not commit to provide assistance for an extended period of time.

The motives of the diaspora in contributing human capital to their home countries are varied. One would assume that the less time an emigrant has spent away from his home country, the more likely he would be to assist in such efforts. However, it has been found that there is not necessarily a linear relationship between the time an emigrant spends away from his home country and his interest in it.³² Crises in the homeland are one important factor in sparking emigrants’ interest in and human capital contributions to their home

²⁶ Alan Gamlen, “Diaspora Engagement Policies: What are They, and What Kinds of States Use Them?,” *Centre on Migration, Policy, and Society*, Working Paper no. 32 (2006): 15.

²⁷ Susan Sachs, “New York, Citing Security, Rejects Mexican ID Cards,” *New York Times*, December 28, 2002.

²⁸ Barry, “Home and Away,” 10.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 11.

³⁰ Itzigsohn and Villacres, “Migrant Political Transnationalism,” 676.

³¹ Jennifer M. Brinkerhoff, “Exploring the Role of Diasporas in Rebuilding Governance in Post-Conflict Societies,” in *Africa’s Finances: The Contribution of Remittances*, New Castle upon Tyne, (UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), 242.

³² *Ibid.*, 243.

country. Emigrants' desire to express their identity is also a causal factor in this case, as was seen with other types of contributions. Finally, in a more pragmatic sense, emigrants often become involved in human capital transfers to maintain or acquire resources.³³

Knowledge transfers are especially pertinent in rebuilding governance in post-conflict societies. There are three dimensions to post-conflict reconstruction: a rehabilitative dimension oriented to the past, a resolute dimension oriented to the present, and a preventive dimension oriented to both the present and the future.³⁴ Good post-conflict governance needs to ensure effectiveness, legitimacy, and security. External actors, including diasporas, can influence reconstruction and prevent the reemergence of conflict by contributing resources, aiding in socialization, and providing political incentives for stability.

There are a number of specific programs that harness the human capital of emigrants to assist sending states. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) administers the Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN) program, which focuses on the role that emigrants' human capital can play in economic development in sending states.³⁵ Other related programs include the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) Return of Qualified African Nationals (RQAN) and Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) programs and the Afghanistan Expatriate Program (AEP) organized by the Afghan government and donors. These programs are designed to combat the brain drain in developing countries and gather the knowledge and skills necessary for development. There are a number of forms of knowledge exchange that these programs can focus on, including permanent and temporary emigrant return. However, a number of studies have found that permanent return programs are not very cost-effective and are thus less desirable to resource-strapped states. In addition, recruitment for programs that involve emigrants' return, whether temporary or permanent, is dependent on emigrants' secure legal status in their host states. An emigrant is unlikely to take part in a program that could endanger his chance of remaining in his host country.

There are a number of steps that sending states can take to increase emigrant participation in

³³ Ibid., 243-4.

³⁴ Ibid., 245.

³⁵ Gamlen, "Diaspora Engagement Policies," 16.

knowledge transfer program. First, states must be clear about the program's objectives, both to the emigrants and to themselves. This is essential to effectively plan recruitment strategies and develop participant selection criteria. Next, there should be clarity about the duration of the program and emphasis should be placed on the specific skills and credentials that will best contribute to the program's success. The incentives and compensation provided to emigrants should be targeted, have minimal visible perks, and be based on a market analysis.³⁶ The problems associated with excessive compensation will be discussed later. Next, the sending state and any international organization that it is working with should identify and utilize existing diaspora organizations and networks for recruitment and program support. Emigrants who participate in these groups are more likely to maintain interest in their home country and be willing to contribute human capital through knowledge transfer programs. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, these programs should be conducted under the authority of the sending state's government. Attempts to bypass the state by other actors, perhaps with good intentions, only serve to weaken the state's legitimacy and create governance problems in the future. Any other actors, such as international organizations, that are involved should not try to co-opt the sending state's authority.

Yet, there are a number of potential problems associated with knowledge transfer programs. As already mentioned, bypassing nascent or weak governments with NGOs, IGOs, and emigrants can undermine the governments' authority, and it can also drain local capacity and entail greater costs. Employing emigrants, even under the auspices of the government, can also be problematic. First, the repatriation of the diaspora can lead to the emergence of a new political elite and create or exacerbate political tensions. This elite is likely to be out of touch with their home country to some extent due to the time they have spent away. Further, it is hard to recruit members of the diaspora with appropriate skills for these projects. Those with talent are generally among the first to leave the country, and have often been away for a significant period of time. In addition, they are the most likely to successfully integrate into their receiving societies, and thus are less inclined to return even for short-term projects. Those who are recruited must often be offered compensation at

³⁶ Brinkerhoff, "Exploring the Role," 257.

international wage levels and may be resented by the less well-paid indigenous civil service.³⁷

Political Advocacy

Diasporas can also be influential in political advocacy on a number of issues. The motives of the diaspora in advocacy are generally quite similar to those for maintaining ties with the sending state in general. These motives include acquiring power and resources, assuaging guilt about leaving the sending state behind, maintaining a collective memory or myth of their home country, expressing an ethnic group consciousness, and keeping alive the expectation of return, among others. An important addition to the motives in the case of advocacy is a desire to improve bilateral relations between the emigrants' sending and receiving states. The most prominent examples of diaspora advocacy are the Israeli and Irish diasporas. The Israeli diaspora has been instrumental in lobbying their host governments to obtain support for Israel, and the Irish diaspora has been instrumental in fund-raising and mustering political support for a united, independent Ireland.³⁸

Effective diaspora advocacy hinges on a number of factors. First, the diaspora must have adequate resources and the means to use them.³⁹ In other words, they must have a supply of money and the organizations and mechanisms to use this money to achieve a desired political outcome. The sending state's support of a diaspora is crucial in establishing legitimacy for the group and assisting in the coordination of advocacy efforts. The target country's political system is also a factor. Democratic, liberal governments are far more open to emigrants' lobbying efforts than other types of governments. In recent years, democratization in many sending countries has opened a new avenue for diaspora political participation. New technologies that facilitate transnational politics are also being seized upon by both non-state political entrepreneurs and state elites who are using the organizational form of "diaspora" and diaspora mobilization as a means of generating material resources and political support.⁴⁰

³⁷ Ibid., 248-9.

³⁸ Ostergaard-Nielsen, "International Migration and Sending Countries," 18.

³⁹ Newland, "Voice After Exit," 2.

⁴⁰ Adamson and Demetriou, "Remapping the Boundaries," 491.

Diasporas are concerned about a number of issues and pressure different actors to achieve their desired political outcomes. First, diasporas care about their status in both their sending and host states. They would lobby both states on these issues. Their status is regulated in such matters as citizenship, migration status, voting rights, and their ability to participate in the socioeconomic lives of their sending towns or regions. A second area of diaspora interest is issues that affect their sending countries. This sector includes concerns such as human rights, good governance, and political participation in the homeland, both for themselves and for their fellow nationals. Finally, there are issues with bilateral impact, including trade policy, humanitarian relief, development policy, diplomatic recognition, and economic sanctions.⁴¹ The political character of the sending country shapes the issues that the diaspora focuses on. In countries where democracy is just emerging, emigrants usually focus on local politics and development. On the other hand, in countries where there is a high degree of political institutionalization and partisanship, emigrants are more likely to demand that they be allowed to participate in the political process.⁴²

Diaspora advocacy takes on a number of forms. Emigrants can function as lobbyists, putting direct pressure on a government to change its policies. Other forms of direct political participation include electoral participation and public demonstrations. Emigrants may also initiate lawsuits to elicit a change in government policy or conduct media campaigns to alter public opinion. Finally, emigrants can support political parties or causes through fund-raising.⁴³ Diasporas' interaction with political parties has taken on new forms in the age of transnational politics. The inclusion of political organization organized abroad in the democratic political system of the sending states is new and quite remarkable.⁴⁴ Most diaspora advocacy is directed toward either their sending or receiving countries. However, actors such as NGOs, international organizations, media, business, labor unions and churches are also targets of diaspora action.⁴⁵

However, as with every other aspect of diaspora engagement discussed thus far, there are

⁴¹ Leblang, "Harnessing the Diaspora," 8.

⁴² Itzigsohn, "Boundaries of Citizenship," 1146.

⁴³ Newland, "Voice After Exit," 7.

⁴⁴ Itzigsohn, "Boundaries of Citizenship," 1144.

⁴⁵ Newland, "Voice After Exit," 7.

potential drawbacks and difficulties associated with diaspora advocacy. First, there is the issue of political fragmentation within the diaspora and thus considerable difficulty in ascertaining who can legitimately speak for the diaspora. Mexico has addressed this problem through the Consultative Council of the Institute for Mexicans Abroad, which consists of elected leaders from diaspora communities.⁴⁶ With this institution, Mexico has been able to conduct relations with members of the diaspora who are at least somewhat representative of the diaspora's views. A second issue is when a diaspora's advocacy is undermining, not supporting, a sending state's position. One notable example of this is the case of Turkey and its Kurdish diaspora. The Kurdish diaspora has been largely antagonistic towards Turkey and has challenged the official conception of Turkish nationalism. In host countries across Europe, the Kurdish diaspora has been able to interact and build networks that bypass, challenge, and contest identity construction in Turkey.⁴⁷ Situations such as this pose serious problems for sending countries, as they do not have the authority or capacity to silence dissent abroad.

Dual Citizenship/Nationality and Voting Rights

One of the ways in which sending states can engage their diaspora populations is by extending voting rights or dual citizenship to these individuals. In this section, the extension of dual citizenship to the diaspora and allowances for external voting will be treated together. However, one should note the difference between the two. External voting simply refers to allowing citizens to cast votes outside the sending state. If a sending state does not allow dual citizenship, emigrants who have acquired the citizenship of their host country will not be able to participate. In addition, a sending state that allows dual citizenship may not have provisions for external voting. In this case, an emigrant who wants to vote in his sending country's elections must return home.

Although many states perceive the phenomenon of external voting as anomalous and politically unpalatable, it has in fact become quite common in recent years. Various sources provide slightly different data on external participation in elections, but all point to a growing voice for

⁴⁶ Ibid., 4.

⁴⁷ Adamson and Demetriou, "Remapping the Boundaries," 509.

emigrants in home country politics. Of the 144 countries on which data is available, 80% allowed emigrant participation in elections in some form.⁴⁸ According to David Leblang, 91 of 186 countries allow expatriates to vote, and 84 countries permit dual citizenship.⁴⁹ The most prevalent form of external voting is voting abroad for one's home district. This method comprises 61.8% of the sample of external voting in Collyer and Vathi's study.⁵⁰ It has also been found that democracies are more likely to extend these benefits to their diasporas than non-democracies. However, some non-democracies have also accorded their diasporas external voting rights. For example, emigrants were able to participate in the 2007 Moroccan elections.⁵¹

However, the concept of dual citizenship is convoluted. There are two common, and quite dissimilar, interpretations of this term.⁵² The first conception of dual citizenship is one that conforms to the everyday understanding of the term. In this conception, when a state extends dual citizenship to members of the diaspora this includes the full rights accorded to citizens resident in the state, including voting. However, there is another interpretation of the term. The extension of dual citizenship can also serve as a more symbolic gesture. When states adhere to this interpretation, emigrants are recognized as members of the national community, but they are not granted all of the rights and benefits of traditional citizenship, such as voting and holding office.⁵³ This restricted dual citizenship is sometimes termed dual nationality, though this is far from universal practice. One must be careful in distinguishing between those states who allow full political participation for non-resident citizens and those who do not as the term dual citizenship is used with a consistent meaning in neither academic nor policy publications.

Diasporas are interested in and feel entitled to dual citizenship for a number of reasons. On an emotional or psychological level, emigrants desire

⁴⁸ Michael Collyer and Zana Vathi, "Patterns of Extra-territorial Voting," *Sussex Centre for Migration Research Working Paper T22* (October 2007): 15.

⁴⁹ David Leblang, "Harnessing the Diaspora: The Political Economy of Dual Citizenship," *University of Virginia* (February 2010): 3.

⁵⁰ Collyer and Vathi, "Patterns of Extra-territorial Voting," 15.

⁵¹ Ibid., 5.

⁵² Barry, "Home and Away," 4.

⁵³ Ostergaard-Nielsen, "International Migration and Sending Countries," 19.

to conceive of themselves as parts of the state whose territory they have left behind. They want to be recognized and legitimated by their sending states' governments as being a part of their respective communities. Second, many emigrants believe that they still have a stake in their home countries. Improved communication and transportation technologies allow emigrants to remain in contact with family members in the sending state, to send remittances, to visit, to retain property and invest in the sending state, and to harbor hopes of returning one day. These linkages make emigrants feel that they are still an integral part of their home countries.⁵⁴ Finally, voting and other non-resident citizenship rights provide a way for emigrants to maintain and develop legitimate, state-sanctioned forms of political transnationalism.⁵⁵ Although they may not utilize them in every case, emigrants desire access to formal transnational channels. Again, this is a function of their desire for recognition, the need to be treated as legitimate actors.

The main interest for sending states in extending dual citizenship is the expectation that they will be able to expect more from their diasporas in return. Sending states hope that the extension of dual citizenship will cement emigrants' identification with their home countries and thus elicit increased contributions. They hope that according rights to emigrants will instill them with a sense of obligation. In addition, extending political rights may foster a sense of trust between the sending state and the diaspora. This is crucial in establishing and maintaining productive working relationships. These relationships can channel increased contributions, whether they be financial or of a different nature, to the sending state. The extension of dual citizenship may increase the financial inflow from emigrants, but can also make emigrants more likely to return home, a contribution of human capital.⁵⁶ Another rationale behind extending voting rights to the diaspora is specifically related to post-conflict societies. In countries where conflict has intentionally resulted in the expulsion of a particular ethnic or other social group, it is crucial that external voting be allowed. When this is not the case, the state

legitimizes ethnic cleansing.⁵⁷ If external voters are excluded, the electorate and thus the resulting elected government will be heavily biased towards the social group that conducted the ethnic cleansing. States must reject the idea that a segment of their population can be removed from political participation by the use of force and their expulsion from the state.

There is quantitative evidence that there is a positive and significant correlation between the extension of dual citizenship to emigrants and financial inflows into the sending state. Leblang's study estimates that India, which does not currently permit dual citizenship or external voting (except in very limited circumstances), would likely increase the remittances that it receives from its diaspora by between 2% and 2.5% if it extends dual citizenship.⁵⁸ Other forms of financial inflows are affected as well. For example, both the migrant stock (the number of emigrants from a particular sending state that a host state has) and dual citizenship have positive and statistically significant effects on the allocation of foreign economic assistance to the sending state. This also holds true with respect to the cross-border flow of portfolio investment.⁵⁹ It seems that many states recognize the financial benefits of extending dual citizenship to their diasporas, as when a state's national debt increases by 1%, the likelihood that it will extend dual citizenship to its diaspora increases by .15%.⁶⁰ Although the strength of this relationship is far from overwhelming, it demonstrates sending states' recognition of the role their diasporas' contributions can play in ensuring their financial well-being. However, in the case of the relationship between the extension of dual citizenship and emigrants' intention to return to their home states, only a marginal effect has been documented.⁶¹

There are a number of ways in which the voting process for the diaspora can be conducted. The easiest and least costly method as far as the sending state is concerned is to only allow emigrants to vote if they return in person to their home district. However, this imposes a heavy burden on emigrants who desire to vote. The second mode of participation is voting abroad for

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Collyer and Vathi, "Patterns of Extra-territorial Voting," 22.

⁵⁶ Leblang, "Harnessing the Diaspora," 4.

⁵⁷ Collyer and Vathi, "Patterns of Extra-territorial Voting," 8.

⁵⁸ Leblang, "Harnessing the Diaspora," 19.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 13-15.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 22.

one's home district. In this method, emigrants are able to vote in their host countries, whether at their countries' embassies or polling stations established specifically for the occasion, and have their votes counted as if they were still resident in their home district in the sending country. The final type of electoral participation is voting abroad for one's own dedicated representatives. Voting abroad for dedicated diaspora representatives has largely been a post-1995 development. A final distinction is that in some cases the diaspora is only allowed to participate in certain types of elections, such as legislative or presidential.

However, there are a number of concerns associated with the extension of dual citizenship or providing external voting to the diaspora. First, there is the principle of one man-one vote or the idea, in this context, that an individual should not be able to voice their opinion in elections in multiple countries and thus have more influence than others. When members of the diaspora are able to vote both in their host and home states, this principle is violated. Sending states do not confront this issue when they don't permit dual citizenship but allow external voting for their emigrants who have not acquired another citizenship. A second point of contention is whether the diaspora should be able to participate in the elections of a polity whose laws they are no longer subject to. The argument here is that individuals do not have the right to decide how others will be ruled when they will not have to deal with the consequences of their electoral decisions as well. A related issue is whether diasporas are too far out of touch with their sending states' politics to effectively and intelligently participate in elections. The time they have spent away from their home countries may make them ignorant of current concerns and needs.

Next, diaspora political participation can contribute to ethnic and religious tension in the sending state in some cases. For example, although India has not extended voting rights to its diaspora, it has encountered problems with Hindutva, or Hindu nationalist, organizations that contribute money to Hindu rightist parties in India and try to influence Indian politics in other ways. Hindutva ideology and organizations have become increasingly visible in many South Asian diaspora communities since the early 1990s.⁶² For example,

⁶² Catarina Kinnvall and Ted Svensson, "Hindu Nationalism, Diaspora Politics, and Nation-Building in India,"

the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (World Hindu Congress), a Hindu Indian diaspora organization, contributed to ethnic and religious violence in the 2002 Gujarat riots.⁶³ If voting rights were extended to the Indian diaspora, it is likely that Hindutva political parties would receive an electoral boost. In general, individuals who are not subject to the consequences of their electoral choices are more likely to engage in spiteful, destructive ethnic politics. The diaspora may have a romanticized conception of their homeland and may hold on to past grudges to maintain group solidarity. Alarming, Paul Collier has found that a country that has recently ended a conflict and has a large diaspora population is far more likely to fall into conflict again than a country that does not.⁶⁴ Finally, the extension of dual citizenship can provoke controversy in the host country.⁶⁵ It can exacerbate worries in the host state about the diaspora's loyalty. However, this proves less controversial when voting rights are not included in the model of dual nationality rather than dual citizenship. All of these concerns and others make dual citizenship far more controversial than other types of emigrant programs, such as cultural, social, or economic initiatives.⁶⁶

Diaspora Engagement Policy

In the past 5 years, diasporas' engagement with their sending countries has increased dramatically. This is a result of emigrants being better organized in their host countries, the development of new communication and transportation technologies, and sending states' recognition of the importance of engaging with their diasporas.⁶⁷ States enacting diaspora

Australian Journal of International Affairs 64 no. 3 (2010): 284.

⁶³ Kathleen Newland, "Voice After Exit: Diaspora Advocacy," *Migration Policy Institute* (2010): 16.

⁶⁴ Paul Collier, "Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and Their Implications for Policy," in *Leashing the Dogs of War: Conflict Management in a Divided World*, ed. Chester A. Crocker et. al. (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2007), 210.

⁶⁵ Barry, "Home and Away," 12.

⁶⁶ Collyer and Vathi, "Patterns of Extra-territorial Voting," 4.

⁶⁷ African Diaspora Policy Center "Building Institutional Cooperation Between the Diaspora and Homeland Governments in Africa: The Cases of Ghana, Nigeria, Germany, USA, and the UK," *African Diaspora Policy Centre Policy Brief* (June 2010): 3.

engagement policies come from all geo-political regions.⁶⁸ They are also of various development levels and have both civic and identity-based models of citizenship. Emigrant attitudes to their sending states are extremely varied and their levels of participation in transnational politics vary widely.⁶⁹ Sending states' policies toward their diasporas vary as well.

For the most part, sending states continue to conceive of their diasporas as primarily economic resources based on their contributions through remittances, investment, the consumption of the sending states' products, and their entrepreneurship.⁷⁰ Although only a tiny percentage of this financial inflow is sent directly to the government, sending states realize that it is beneficial nonetheless. States also try to promote the upward mobility of emigrants, perhaps out of pure altruism, but more likely to increase emigrants' income and increase the likelihood that they will contribute to their home countries. Emigrants who were driven out by conflict often don't have much to contribute to their home countries, but in some cases, such as with Bosnian and Eritrean refugees, these diasporas contribute a significant amount of money.⁷¹ Sending states also want to mobilize political support and control subversive political dissidence in the diaspora.⁷²

Many of the current relationships between emigrants and sending states are informal, ad hoc, and sporadic.⁷³ They are based primarily on individual and group interactions and directed specifically at the family, village, or local level. Many countries lack an official diaspora policy. This lack of official policies on emigrants hampers intensive and sustained cooperation between sending states and their diasporas, especially with regard to issues of development. Formal, institutionalized relationships at the national level between sending states and their diasporas would be beneficial in several ways. Such cooperation would lend emigrants credibility, give them a political voice, and increase their contributions to their sending countries.⁷⁴ Formal relationships would aid in the development of better diaspora and

development-related institutions as well. Additionally, sending states may be able to contain, manage and co-opt potentially dangerous groups, such as ethnic nationalist or separatist organizations, through engagement. For example, many Indian emigrants have engaged in long-distance nationalism, including fund-raising and charity for the homeland. Much of this money has been collected by Hindu nationalist organizations, often without the donors' knowledge.⁷⁵ Instead of ignoring the problem or trying to marginalize these groups, the Indian government should try to engage them and redirect the money in more beneficial directions.

Formal engagement can also be useful in linking diaspora organizations with other pertinent actors. In general, emigrant organizations are more helpful in development work when partnered with sub-national development actors, such as NGOs, local governments in the sending country, or the private sector.⁷⁶ In these situations, the interest and resources of emigrants can be shaped by the development experience of other actors who have more technical expertise in the area. Without proper guidance, diaspora organizations may direct their energies and resources in inefficient ways.

Alan Gamlen posits that there are three different types of relationships between sending states and their diasporas: relations of power, relationships of communication, and finalized activities.⁷⁷ Relations of power concern the relative control that these actors can exercise upon each other. For example, some states have the ability to exercise a great deal more influence on their diasporas than other states do. When states hold the upper hand in their power relationships with their diasporas, they are better able to structure their interactions in ways that benefit the state. In cases where diasporas exercise a considerable amount of power, perhaps more than their sending states, they are able to direct their relationship in ways that reflect their interests most effectively. However, the outcomes of both of these types of power relationships are dependent on states' and diasporas' perceptions of their interests. If these actors perceive their interests similarly, there will be only be small disparities in outcomes based on the power distribution. But, if their perceptions of their interests are widely divergent, power relationships are instrumental in determining

⁶⁸ Gamlen, "Diaspora Engagement Policies," 20.

⁶⁹ Barry, "Home and Away," 8.

⁷⁰ Leblang, "Harnessing the Diaspora," 2.

⁷¹ Ostergaard-Nielsen, "International Migration and Sending Countries," 8.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 4.

⁷³ ADPC, "Building Institutional Cooperation," 4.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁷⁵ Kinvall and Svensson, "Hindu Nationalism," 285-6.

⁷⁶ ADPC, "Building Institutional Cooperation," 7.

⁷⁷ Gamlen, "Diaspora Engagement Policies," 5.

outcomes. Relationships of communication are simply the channels that sending states and emigrants utilize to maintain contact with and knowledge of each other. Finalized activities include the extension of rights to and the extraction of resources from the diaspora. Although sending states may feel threatened by the extension of rights, this can prove to be a necessary component of transnational sovereignty in cases where the diaspora demands them.

Similarly, there are also three different types of diaspora engagement policy: capacity building, extending rights to the diaspora, and extracting resources from the diaspora.⁷⁸ Capacity building has two key components: fostering diaspora identification and solidarity with the homeland and crafting appropriate governmental structures to engage and effectively use the diaspora. To encourage emigrants to identify as part of the imagined community of their home country, sending states can invoke symbols, espouse a rhetoric of national solidarity, or try to influence expatriate-focused media to carry their message. States can also support institutions such as culture and language clubs in emigrants' host countries. The state's aim in this aspect of capacity building is to create a more homogenous, and thus more easily manageable diaspora population.⁷⁹

The development of effective governmental apparatuses to deal with the diaspora requires a number of additional actions after the diaspora's identification with the homeland has been solidified. The first step generally involves the collection of basic information on the diaspora, such as data on emigrant populations or existing diaspora organizations in various host countries. With these data in hand, states can assess the methods they can use to manipulate their diasporas. One effective way for states to co-opt and manage their diasporas is creating a transnational migration organization under the authority of the state and treating it as a consultative organization.⁸⁰ Representation of the diaspora in this manner may allay some of the concerns of the diaspora in whether the state is considering its interests. This approach holds promise for states that wish to forgo extending a more formal voice to their diasporas by granting them voting rights, which can entail a number of previously mentioned problems. The process of extending rights to the diaspora was

⁷⁸ Ibid., 5-6.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 7.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 8.

discussed earlier, as was the extraction of resources. Obtaining resources from the diaspora is a matter of persuading emigrants and convincing them that their interests include supporting their homelands.

Some of the specific ways that sending states can engage their diasporas have been discussed earlier. To begin a conversation with their emigrant populations, states can reach out to them through existing governmental structures such as embassies or consulates. Diaspora organizations such as hometown associations also provide a forum for states to engage these populations. Besides engaging emigrants through specific institutions, sending states can take steps to encourage the diaspora to harbor favorable perceptions of their homeland. For example, states can extend political rights, encourage financial contributions through rhetorical appeals and financial incentives, and assert emigrants' rights abroad. Advocacy by sending states for their diasporas may be especially helpful in convincing emigrants that their home states are supporting them and thus are worthy of reciprocal assistance.

Mexico

The successes and failures of sending countries in engaging their diasporas are instructive in which policies are most likely to be effective and useful for similar states. Mexico is a classic example of an emigration or sending state. Over the years, it has had a consistent and significant net outflow of people.⁸¹ The majority of Mexican emigrants reside in the United States. In 2000, Mexico's National Population Council estimated that approximately 8,173,689 Mexican-born individuals resided in the United States. Such a large emigrant population centered in one host country provides a concentrated and significant financial flow for Mexico. In 2001, the Bank of Mexico reported that Mexican emigrants in the United States remitted a total of US\$8.895B. In the same year, the Inter-American Development Bank estimated this flow of remittances at US\$9.23B.⁸² Remittances constitute the third largest source of

⁸¹ Barry, "Home and Away," 2.

⁸² Jesus Martinez-Saldana, "Los Olvidados Become Heroes: The Evolution of Mexico's Policies Towards Citizens Abroad," in *International Migration and Sending Countries: Perceptions, Policies, and Transnational Relations*, ed. Eva Ostergaard-Nielsen (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 33.

foreign capital for Mexico, falling behind only oil exports and foreign investment.

Mexico's relationship with its diaspora has not always been positive or supportive. In fact, there is a past tradition of neglect of and disdain for emigrants among Mexican government officials as well as intellectuals.⁸³ Mexican emigrants were often treated as traitors to their homeland and their identity, having abandoned both to pursue a new life abroad. However, this dynamic began to change during the 1980s. In this decade, Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari courted Mexican-American leaders and their organizations in search of political backing and financial contributions. From this point onward, Mexican emigrants and their organizations began to exert influence on both the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) and the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). In addition, the revolutionary left-wing Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) began to vie for emigrants' loyalty in 1994.⁸⁴

The increased influence of the diaspora on Mexican domestic politics emboldened emigrants to demand more representation and rights from the Mexican government. During the 1990s the Mexican government granted emigrants significant new political rights. In 1996 Mexico launched external voting for its citizens who resided abroad. Additionally, Mexico amended its constitution to permit the non-loss of Mexican nationality in the case of a Mexican acquiring a different citizenship.⁸⁵ These are two distinct developments and neither one is quite as beneficial for Mexican emigrants as one would first think.

First, the adoption of external voting did indeed allow for Mexicans abroad to cast their votes in the 2006 presidential elections by post.⁸⁶ Previously, Mexican citizens would have to return to their home district in Mexico to cast their ballots. The number of citizens who returned home to vote in the past was small but meaningful.⁸⁷ However, emigrants needed a special identification card to vote abroad. This card was issued only in Mexico, so emigrants would in fact have to return in order to

vote if they did not already possess this identification card.⁸⁸ It is estimated that 4.2 of the 11 million Mexicans abroad possessed one of these ID cards in 2006, but only 40,665 of these individuals registered to vote.⁸⁹ Second, the reform that allowed for dual nationality did not permit dual citizenship in the more permissive sense and its attendant voting rights. Rather, those Mexicans abroad who had acquired a different citizenship were allowed to regain Mexican nationality and a few accompanying rights, including certain benefits associated with land ownership and inheritance rights in Mexico. This was primarily a symbolic move that recognized these individuals as members of the Mexican national community.

These reforms were significant however and signaled a meaningful shift in the Mexican government's treatment of the diaspora. Mexican President Vicente Fox in particular recast the image of Mexican emigrants as a welcome and integral part of the Mexican community.⁹⁰ This recognition was a function of both emigrants' demands for rights and recognition as well as the government's acceptance of Mexico's increasing dependence on the diaspora's remittances, investments, and transfers of knowledge, skills, and technology. It will take several years to determine if the actions that Mexico has taken in recent years to draw its diaspora into the fold will substantially increase emigrants' contributions.

Nigeria

Nigeria is also a country that has a history of shunning its diaspora. The country has failed to see its emigrants as potential contributors to Nigeria and its development. Rather, it has characterized the diaspora, as well as internal migrants, as a sign of development failure, not a source of positive political and social change. Generally, the only connection between migration and development in Nigeria that has been acknowledged by the Nigerian government is the knowledge and skills that emigrants returning to Nigeria bring back with them.⁹¹ This negative perception of emigrants is

⁸³ Ibid., 44.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 47-8.

⁸⁵ Barry, "Home and Away," 12.

⁸⁶ "Voting from Abroad: The International IDEA Handbook," *International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance* (November 2009): 17 and 23.

⁸⁷ Barry, "Home and Away," 16.

⁸⁸ IDEA, 22.

⁸⁹ IDEA, 32.

⁹⁰ Martinez-Saldana, "Los Olvidados," 52.

⁹¹ Hein de Haas, "International Migration and National Development: Viewpoints and Policy Initiatives in Countries of Origin: The Case of Nigeria" *International Migration Institute: University of Oxford* (June 2006): 14.

largely a function of Nigeria's oil supply and its consequences. Emigration of the Nigerian elite has long been associated with the outflow of capital from Nigeria and the transfer of oil profits to overseas accounts.⁹² As a consequence, emigrants have been viewed as individuals removing wealth from the country rather than contributing to it. Beyond being economic leeches, emigrants have also been characterized as social deviants and traitors.

However, the emigration of individuals from lower socioeconomic classes of Nigerian society has in fact been financially beneficial for the state. Even human trafficking, a serious problem in Nigeria, has appreciably increased remittances.⁹³ Unfortunately, Nigeria has not yet pursued a migration or remittance-focused development strategy, most likely because it does not hold emigrants in high regard. Emigrants' contributions are no longer a resource that Nigeria can ignore, as countries with far fewer emigrants have begun to examine and implement policies to harness their diasporas' power. Nigeria must shift its current focus on migration prevention to a more realistic and useful orientation.

The framework for a transition to a more effective diaspora engagement strategy may have been laid in the late 1990s. Nigeria's 1999 transition to democracy may bode well for future policy related to emigrants. As mentioned earlier, democracies are more likely than non-democracies to extend political rights to their diasporas. From this fact, one can generalize that democracies are more likely to recognize and support their diasporas. This seems to be the way Nigerian emigrants felt at the inception of democracy, as they have been more willing to return to the country as well as contribute financially.

Since its transition to democracy, the Nigerian government has taken a number of steps to engage the diaspora. For example, a "Presidential dialogue with Nigerians abroad" was launched in 2002, and the government has established the Nigerian in the Diaspora Organization (NIDO) in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.⁹⁴ This organization's official mission is four-fold. First, it aims to increase the participation of the diaspora in Nigerian affairs. Second, it serves as a communication forum between the state and the diaspora. Third, it is intended to improve Nigeria's international image.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 17.

Finally, the organization is focused on building a network of Nigerians with professional skills and knowledge and making this data available to the Nigerian government, the private sector, and other actors who partner with Nigeria on development issues.

However, Nigeria's perception of migration as only being beneficial when emigrants return is still evident. The recently created Nigeria National Volunteer Service (NNVS) was crafted to reverse the effects of the brain drain.⁹⁵ This reflects the emphasis placed on the value of return migration. This program has only been able to achieve the temporary return of skilled emigrants in most cases. Nigeria has also been largely dismissive of remittances because it has focused instead on larger transfers of funds, generally linked to the oil industry. Oil revenues have made remittances less significant as a percentage of Nigeria's GDP.

To harness the power of its diaspora, Nigeria must revamp its anti-emigrant image and sustain efforts to communicate and create relationships with the diaspora. The government must address the exploitation of Nigerians abroad, which has become a considerable problem, especially with respect to human trafficking.⁹⁶ Advocacy for the human rights of emigrants will increase trust between the government and the diaspora. Beyond abandoning its anti-emigration stance, the Nigerian government should embrace more liberal migration policies. Many of its current policies are focused on restricting the free movement of individuals. Liberalizing migration policies may promote development, as individuals who are freely able to travel back and forth to a country are more likely to view the country favorably and contribute to it.⁹⁷ There are a number of other unfavorable structural conditions that need to be remedied. High crime rates, governmental corruption, an unfavorable investment environment, and general insecurity have discouraged emigrants from investing in or returning to Nigeria.⁹⁸

The Dominican Republic

The case of the Dominican Republic and its dealings with its diaspora reflect the dynamics of diaspora lobbying of the homeland, the institutionalization of democracy and competitive

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 21.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 24.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 23.

party politics, and the extension of political rights to the diaspora. Dominican emigrants have been pressuring their home government for recognition and political rights since the 1970s. However, until the mid-1990s the Dominican government largely ignored its diaspora beyond accepting the money that these individuals remitted. In 1994, the Dominican Constitution was amended to permit Dominican citizens resident abroad to acquire another citizenship without losing their Dominican one.⁹⁹ This was a step further than the Mexican government went in its non-loss of Mexican nationality reform.

The diaspora became even more entwined in Dominican politics in 1996, the year in which competitive multi-party elections were institutionalized in the DR. In 1996, Leonel Fernandez, who spent most of his childhood in New York as a legal permanent resident, was elected President, reflecting the growing influence of Dominican emigrants.¹⁰⁰ In 1997, the right to vote abroad was extended, but was not implemented until the 2004 presidential elections. Citizens resident abroad may vote in presidential elections and are only permitted to cast ballots in person from a select group of cities in five countries: the United States, Canada, Spain, Puerto Rico and Venezuela.¹⁰¹ The diaspora electorate is particularly significant in the case of the Dominican Republic, as the emigrant population eligible to vote represents approximately 25% of the 5 million voters registered in the country.¹⁰² In 2004, of the 52,431 Dominican citizens registered abroad, 35,042 cast ballots in the presidential election, showing an impressive turn-out rate of over 66%.¹⁰³ Although the turn-out for registered voters abroad was quite high, the vote abroad reflected only about 1% of the overall vote in this election. A conservative estimate would predict this number to be perhaps 10 times greater.¹⁰⁴ Perhaps Dominican emigrants simply wanted to be recognized by their home government and did not have a strong desire to actually participate in the DR's elections. Another possible explanation is the requirement that Dominican voters abroad possess an

⁹⁹ Itzigsohn and Villacres, "Migrant Political Transnationalism," 669.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 670.

¹⁰¹ IDEA, 17 and 24.

¹⁰² IDEA, 179.

¹⁰³ IDEA, 187.

¹⁰⁴ Itzigsohn and Villacres, "Migrant Political Transnationalism," 671.

identification document that is only available in the DR, similar to Mexico's requirement, discouraged many potential voters. Emigrants who were not fully committed to participating in the Dominican electoral process or ones whose economic means made a return trip burdensome were unlikely to obtain the ID card and participate in the election.

El Salvador

El Salvador demonstrates one of the other important aspects of diasporas' relationships with their sending countries: hometown associations and their contributions to development. The institutionalization of formal democracy in El Salvador was marked by the 1992 peace agreement between El Salvador's government and the rebel FMLN. The emergence of democracy sparked greater involvement and contributions from Salvadorian emigrants. The main form that this increased interaction took was in the form of hometown associations (HTAs). HTAs are groups in a host country that unite emigrants from the same village, town, or general region of a sending country. They often contribute to development projects and other initiatives in their home region.

One particularly instructive example of a Salvadorian HTA's involvement with its respective hometown that illustrates some of the problematic aspects of HTAs involves the town of Intipucá and the Fundación Unidos por Intipucá. Some observers think that the relationship between these two actors is a model of how diaspora groups can positively contribute to development. Others think that the Fundación's work in Intipucá exemplifies dependence, a lack of productivity, and the exacerbation of social ills.¹⁰⁵ A great deal of money from the Fundación has flowed into Intipucá. However, these resources have been almost entirely spent on projects that benefit the lower socioeconomic classes in El Salvador very little if any at all. The allocation of funds was decided by the Fundación's members at its headquarters in Washington, D.C. Members of the Fundación are relatively well-off, and their interests in Intipucá generally lay in the city center. Accordingly, virtually all of the Fundación's donations and projects have focused on the urban center. This has resulted in a rather glamorous, modern city center surrounded by dismal slums populated by desperately poor Salvadorians. In many ways, HTAs like the Fundación constitute a

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 679.

new elite, one that reinforces the existing social structure and contributes money in ways that serve its own interests. In the past, there have not been any legal or institutional measures in El Salvador to ensure equality or the representation of different interests in the construction of development projects funded by the diaspora.¹⁰⁶

Perhaps recognizing the problems associated with “development” projects that only function to serve elite interests, the government of El Salvador has taken steps in recent years to encourage diaspora groups to contribute in a more beneficial, balanced manner. Since 2003, the government has tried to harness Salvadorian HTAs’ interest, engagement, and contributions through the *Unidos por la Solidaridad* (United for Solidarity) program. *Unidos por la Solidaridad* is a transnational development program intended to coordinate the actions and resources of HTAs, local communities, and municipal and national governments on economic and social development projects in El Salvador.¹⁰⁷ The key component of the program is a contest in which municipal governments, in conjunction with HTAs, compete for government funds. The contest requires that each competitor develop an investment plan as well as outline a 5-year development agenda.

These measures may be beneficial in encouraging diaspora organizations to truly consider the impact of their intervention in their homelands. If the actions of organizations such as the *Fundación* exacerbated socioeconomic divisions simply through miscalculations or short-sightedness, then plans such as the Salvadorian government’s hold a great deal of promise. However, if a diaspora organization is actively and knowingly reinforcing elite interests, such measures are likely to be unsuccessful. In this case, the sending country’s government must decide whether this financial inflow is of greater significance than the problems that it creates. If the contributions are deemed to be more harmful than beneficial, the sending government should try to exclude the money. However, this poses a number of problems. The government must distinguish between harmful and beneficial resource inflows, as restricting foreign assistance in general will be detrimental.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 680.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 681.

Haiti

The case of the Haitian diaspora illustrates a number of dynamics involved in engaging the diaspora, including the role that emigrants can play in undermining the sending state’s government and functioning as a force for political support. When Haiti was under the leadership of President Duvalier, the government largely tried to sever the relationship between Haiti and Haitians abroad.¹⁰⁸ Many members of the diaspora saw themselves as a political alternative to his regime. Although they could have no direct effect on the Haitian political process because they could not vote, the diaspora did not support the Haitian government, voiced its discontent, and sought the ouster of Duvalier.

When Duvalier fell from power, it was generally a result of forces other than the Haitian diaspora’s influence or activities. However, the transition did bode well for the diaspora. The Haitian government began to reverse the anti-emigrant policies of the Duvalier regime and reintegrate the diaspora into the national community. The establishment of the “10th department,” or a 10th administrative district focused on the diaspora was intended to open a channel of communication and engagement between the government and Haitians abroad.¹⁰⁹ Although the government reached out to the diaspora to some extent, it did not extend political rights such as external voting or dual citizenship. Perhaps when democracy and multi-party, competitive elections are fully institutionalized in Haiti the diaspora will be accorded some political rights. The potential political contributions of the Haitian diaspora are evident. When President Aristide was in exile, emigrants provided him with both political and economic support.¹¹⁰ The diaspora can only become more influential as other actors recognize it as potential resource.

India

India is an interesting example of a sending country that, despite having a large and influential diaspora, has tried to exclude its emigrants from its political, social, and economic life. When India gained its independence in 1947, the Indian government’s, and many individual Indians’, stance was generally that those who had left the country

¹⁰⁸ Jose Itzigsohn, “Boundaries of Citizenship,” 1134.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 1135.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 1136.

had forfeit their rights as Indians and should try to integrate into their host countries as much as possible.¹¹¹ In addition, India's closed and staunchly independent model of development during its early years actively discouraged outside influence and involvement, including the potential contributions of the diaspora.¹¹² India was to be governed and recreated by true Indians alone, not those who had abandoned the country and not by other foreign actors.

During the 1960s and the 1970s, India experienced a large labor exodus, as many individuals relocated to find work in Middle Eastern and Gulf countries.¹¹³ However, this emigration was mostly temporary, as the host countries desired short-term labor assistance, not permanent immigration. The brain drain, in which Indian professionals and intellectuals have left the country, has been a separate phenomenon. Both flows could have been manipulated by the Indian government in favorable ways, drawing resources into the country for development, but the negative perception of emigrants proved to be a formidable barrier. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, India failed to open itself to migrant investment in any significant way, retaining its closed model of development.

At the end of 1990, India's supply of foreign capital was almost entirely depleted.¹¹⁴ This was a huge crisis for the government, and it began to reconsider its stance on foreign contributions. In a desperate move, India developed special concessions for emigrants who invested in the country, but the non-repatriation of capital was still the standard for these investments. By relying on its diaspora, India was able to avoid dependence on the IMF and its conditional loans. Although India granted some benefits to emigrants in this case, its actions to address the economic crisis still represent a missed opportunity to effectively engage the diaspora. Outside investors, including the diaspora, were viewed as a necessary evil and as economic predators. Once the economy recovered beyond the brink of collapse, economic liberalization stalled. The contributions of Indian emigrants, who were

perceived to be corrupted by their host countries, were ignored once again.

Since 1997, economic reforms have resumed, but FDI remains low. This is disappointing, as the Indian diaspora is rather wealthy, successful, and interested in Indian affairs. In recent years, the Indian government has developed a few initiatives that may signal a shift in attitudes toward the diaspora. For example, Person of Indian Origin (PIO) cards have been introduced.¹¹⁵ These cards are the equivalent of a 20-year visa and accord certain privileges to their bearers, including special treatment in buying property and investing in the country. External voting was allowed for the first time in 2004 by post or proxy, but only members of the armed services or civil servants deployed abroad were eligible.¹¹⁶ In addition, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) announced in 2002 that it would begin the process to grant dual citizenship to Indians resident abroad.¹¹⁷ The BJP likely made this move because it is an unabashedly Hindu nationalist organization and recognizes the potential political benefits of doing so, as the Indian diaspora has generally been quite supportive of such organizations. However, the constitutional changes necessary to institute dual citizenship have yet to be set in motion, and it is unlikely that they will be any time in the near future.

Eritrea

The relationship between Eritrea and its diaspora illustrates several important aspects of sending state-emigrant linkages, including the selflessness that emigrants can show in contributing to their homelands and the ways in which previously cozy relationships can sour. Linkages between Eritrea and its diaspora predate the establishment of Eritrea as an independent state. During Eritrea's struggle for independence, the diaspora was mobilized, especially by the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) to increase awareness of the conflict, provide political advocacy, and raise money for the war, relief operations, and welfare services.¹¹⁸ These

¹¹¹ Marie Lall, "Mother India's Forgotten Children," in *International Migration and Sending Countries*, ed. Eva Ostergaard-Nielsen (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 122.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 125.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 127.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 128.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 134.

¹¹⁶ IDEA, 239 and 19.

¹¹⁷ Lall, "Mother India," 121.

¹¹⁸ Khalid Koser, "Long-Distance Nationalism and the Responsible State: The Case of Eritrea," in *International Migration and Sending Countries*, ed. Eva Ostergaard-Nielsen (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 174.

contributions were vital in sustaining the independence movement.

Recognizing the importance of the diaspora, the Eritrean government opted for a broad definition of citizenship at independence that was not dependent on residence in Eritrea or an individual's status in his host country. In the 1993 Referendum for Independence, 84,370 votes were cast by Eritrean emigrants. For context, it is estimated that of a total 3 million Eritreans, 1 million are resident outside the state.¹¹⁹ The diaspora was also intimately involved in the creation of the Eritrean constitution. Although emigrants were able to vote in the referendum on independence, this seems to have been a one-shot deal, as they are no longer accorded external voting rights.¹²⁰ As mentioned earlier, shortly after it gained its independence Eritrea instituted a voluntary 2% tax on the diaspora that the majority of emigrants complied with.¹²¹ Eritrea's rapid social, economic, and political reform and concurrent economic development and democratization may bode well for emigrants in obtaining more political rights including external voting.

Eritrea called on its diaspora again during its 1998-2000 war with Ethiopia. The state took three main steps to establish deeper connections with emigrants.¹²² First, it reopened previously shuttered political office in host states to ascertain the demographics of the diaspora. Second, it revitalized the Eritrean Relief Association network. This organization operates under different names in different countries. For example, in the United States it is the Eritrean Development Fund. Third, it initiated an information campaign within the diaspora to spread awareness of Eritrea's needs in the war and the importance of emigrants' contributions.

Financial contributions from the diaspora have been especially important for Eritrea because the state is suspicious of foreign aid. During the war with Ethiopia, Eritrea added significant additional financial requests to the standing voluntary 2% tax. For example, in the United Kingdom Eritrea asked for an additional £1 per day as well as a £500 lump sum for 1999. The government also began issuing

bonds in 1999 and auctioning homes in Asmara, the capital, to the diaspora.¹²³

In recent years, Eritrea has become less enthusiastic about its diaspora. It has become concerned about emigrants' critiques of the government as well as the growing autonomous linkages between the diaspora and individuals in Eritrea. It has also been disappointed in the diaspora's limited success with political advocacy.¹²⁴ Eritrean emigrants have also developed negative perceptions of the state. Many emigrants are experiencing a growing disillusionment and a feeling of exploitation.¹²⁵ The excessive financial demands of the government have strained the relationship between emigrants and the state. There is overwhelming social pressure within diaspora communities to contribute generously to the state, with individuals often checking on each other to ensure that everyone is giving. This pressure, combined with emigrants' desire to contribute to their family members in Eritrea as well, has simply been too much for the diaspora to handle in many cases.

States face a number of limitations in efforts to increase their engagement with their diasporas. First, the ever broader dispersal of emigrants can strain resource-strapped states' abilities to effectively reach these populations.¹²⁶ Second, the principle of territorial sovereignty restricts states' power in dealing with their diasporas.¹²⁷ Although they may communicate and develop relationships with their emigrants, they generally do not wield any coercive power over these individuals. This can be especially problematic when the relationship between the sending state and its emigrants is antagonistic rather than synergistic. Although there are a number of issues associated with engaging and extracting resources from diaspora populations, the importance of doing so will likely grow in the future as migration flows continue to increase. Sending states must assess the resources they can potentially extract from their diasporas and plan their engagement strategies accordingly.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 172.

¹²⁰ ACE Project, "Comparative Review of Voting from Abroad," <http://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/va/comparative-review>

¹²¹ Koser, "Long-Distance Nationalism," 175.

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 176-7.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 178-9.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 180.

¹²⁶ Barry, "Home and Away," 6.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 6.

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