

Learning by doing



series drawing on research and capacity development projects

SOCIAL INCLUSION AND IDENTITY

Education and Vocational Training

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Context

Education in today's world extends far beyond the mere transmission of knowledge; it serves as a driver of social mobility, economic growth and the development of responsible global citizenship. In an increasingly interconnected and digitalized society, education systems are expected to equip individuals not only with professional competencies but also with practical skills through vocational training, fostering employability, intercultural awareness, and adaptability. Digital literacy, online platforms, AI tools, and open-access scientific resources are transforming how knowledge and skills are accessed and shared. Universities, research institutions, and vocational training centres play a central role in fostering innovation and generating solutions to global challenges such as climate change, inequality, and public health crises. Moreover, education is widely recognized as a tool for sustainable peace, as inclusive and high-quality learning helps build more resilient societies.

At the same time, global migration has reshaped education systems worldwide. Diaspora and migrant communities contribute through, inter alia, sharing expertise, reforming curricula, fostering international partnerships and funding schooling. Highly skilled migrants – including what is often referred to as the *scientific diaspora* – frequently pioneer transnational learning models and initiate online laboratories, mentorship networks, and peer-to-peer teaching across borders. In fragile and conflict-affected contexts, these mechanisms can help sustain access to education where institutions have weakened or collapsed, turning disruption into an opportunity for transformation. Realizing this potential, however, requires sustained support from international partners and institutional policy frameworks that enable diaspora engagement in education.

Seeking to maximise the potential of diaspora-enabled collaboration in education, the EU Global Diaspora Facility has designed, implemented, and tested innovative models of engagement, demonstrating the tangible impact of diaspora-led initiatives in the higher education sector. In this dossier, we reflect on lessons learned from EUDiF interventions and research, sharing practical inspiring approaches for future policymaking and programming. The analysis draws on projects in Ethiopia, Moldova, the Philippines, Guatemala, and Mexico, complemented by research on Ukraine, Afghanistan and Syria and focuses on human capital contributions from diaspora, rather than financial, with the exception of brief references in the section on peace-oriented education.



While diaspora communities often demonstrate strong motivation and commitment to contribute to education and vocational training across borders, their engagement can be constrained by structural and socio-political barriers, such as:

- ▶ **Limited funding and public investment** in education and research constrain joint projects and long-term academic partnerships.
- ▶ **Institutional scepticism**, where diaspora actors may be viewed as external to local systems and perceived as disconnected from local realities, or as competitors for influence and resources.
- ▶ **Inadequate infrastructure and modern laboratory facilities** reduce opportunities for international research collaborations and sustained engagement.
- ▶ **Administrative and mobility barriers**, including complex procedures, unclear collaboration frameworks, visa restrictions, and limited travel funding hinder regular exchange.
- ▶ **Safety risks and political constraints** in conflict-affected areas limit direct engagement and access to education facilities.
- ▶ **Brain-drain concerns** - migration of skilled individuals can weaken local capacity if knowledge-sharing or return mechanisms are lacking.
- ▶ **Lack of effective diaspora identification and mapping** limits countries' ability to strategically leverage global expertise and networks.

Scientific diaspora

Highly skilled nationals who live abroad and are engaged in scientific research, education, and technological development, maintaining a potential or actual connection with their country of origin.



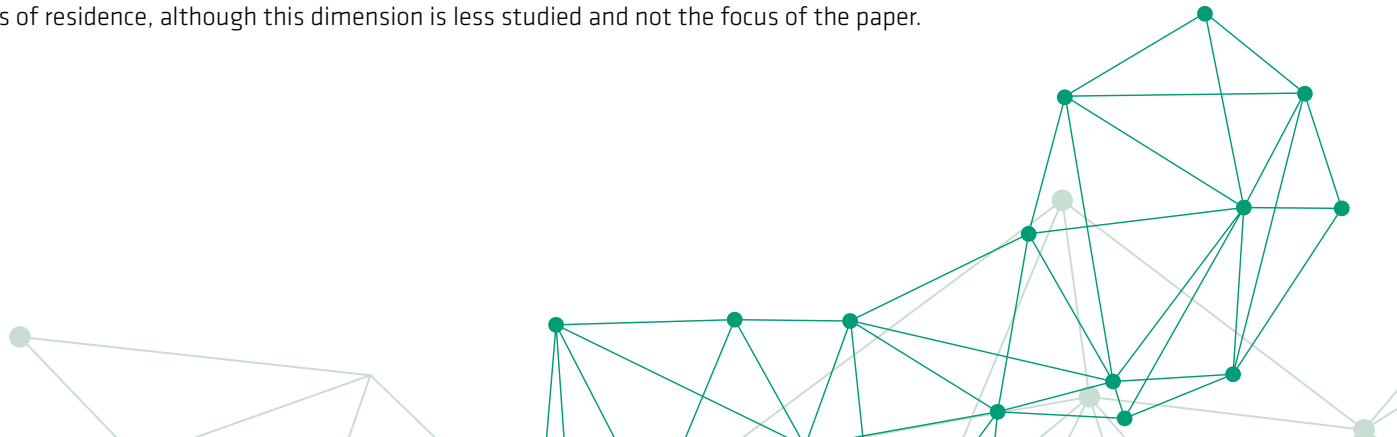
Opportunities

Diaspora networks and professionals have significant potential to enhance education and vocational training by facilitating the circulation of ideas and promoting lifelong learning for all. To support these efforts, stronger international cooperation, sustained investment and programming, recognition of brain circulation and targeted profiling are essential.

The EU supports brain circulation through various programs that encourage mobility and cross-border knowledge exchange, including with scientific diaspora. For instance, the European Commission promotes researcher mobility and science diplomacy through its Horizon Europe. Programs such as the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA), have supported over 150,000 researchers across borders in the last 30 years, while also encouraging skills exchange and diaspora science networks through [EURAXESS](#). Dedicated initiatives like MSCA4Ukraine specifically support researchers displaced by conflict, helping them continue their work and access training.

Homing in on diaspora collaboration in education, the EU Global Diaspora Facility has implemented several innovative models of engagement in education which have had tangible impact, as highlighted in this piece. Drawing on on EUDiF capacity development projects between 2019 and 2026, this paper explores how diaspora educators and scientists have contributed across five different countries and the factors behind their success. In Ethiopia and the Philippines, diaspora experts helped design innovative curricula, while in Moldova they profiled researchers and piloted structured mechanisms for engagement in higher education. In Guatemala and Mexico, they acted as brokers, enhancing research and fostering more collaborative science. In the same period, we have also observed how diaspora professionals also act decisively in crisis when motivated by a strong sense of responsibility. In such challenging settings they are often at the heart of transformative education initiatives, as observed in Ukraine, Afghanistan, and Syria.

These examples demonstrate the great and varied opportunity diaspora represent for the education sector in countries of heritage, an opportunity which is mirrored for the countries of residence, although this dimension is less studied and not the focus of the paper.



Financial capital

While this publication primarily focuses on the human capital contributions of diaspora communities, it is important to acknowledge the substantial impact diaspora financial capital has on education worldwide. Diasporas mobilize financial resources that directly support learning, schooling, and educational infrastructure. They do so in a variety of manners, ranging from remittances to charitable initiatives.

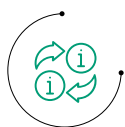
Key areas include:

- ▶ **Remittances for household education costs** - funds sent by relatives abroad to cover tuition fees, school supplies, and other educational expenses, enabling access to schooling that might otherwise be unaffordable. According to [a study of 122 countries between 1990-2015](#), a 10% increase in per capita remittances results in increases in enrolment at each level: 3.5% rise in pre-primary, 0.7% in secondary enrolment and 1.1% in tertiary.
- ▶ Funding schools and educational programs - diaspora organizations frequently establish scholarships, sponsor schools, and support teacher training programs. Examples include Nigerian diaspora associations funding STEM initiatives in local schools.
- ▶ Investing in educational infrastructure - support extends to classrooms, libraries, and digital learning centres. The Ethiopian diaspora, for example, has funded schools and community centres in underserved areas. In the EUDiF project referenced below, they contributed directly as fundraisers for internet access, laptops, and infrastructure upgrades.
- ▶ Supporting socially inclusive education - in post-conflict contexts, diaspora resources have been vital in promoting education initiatives that foster reconciliation and community cohesion, such as funding programs that integrate displaced youth or marginalized groups, as examples from Ethiopia and Afghanistan show.

For more, start with UNICEF's Office of Strategy and Evidence's [explainer on remittances and children](#).

Diaspora roles in education and vocational training

Through EUDiF's research and operational work we have observed seven roles diaspora often play in human capital transfer in higher education and vocational training, though more may exist. The first four roles are transversal across levels and fields of education with the first two also appearing in other sectors of diaspora engagement, such as investment, trade, climate action. More specific roles have been included in sub-topics of science and peace given their specificities and the high impact potential.



► Knowledge brokers

- Thanks to their “outside-insider” perspective diaspora can bring cutting-edge solutions; they can connect local institutions, educators and students with external knowledge, networks and resources, facilitating the flow of [scientific] knowledge and increasing access to funding opportunities and partnerships.

► [Page 15](#)



► Mentors

- Diaspora professionals can serve as connectors, expanding research networks, offering training to early-career researchers and youth, supervising students, and strengthening local scientific skills

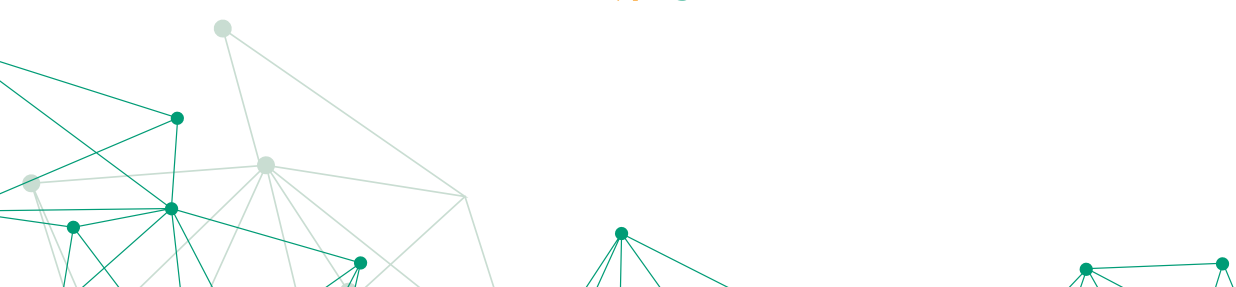
E.g. The Syrian Youth Empowerment (SYE) Initiative, supports students affected by the conflict through diaspora mentorship and scholarships for international universities. Since 2015 the program invested more than 40 mln. EUR in scholarships



► Curriculum reformers

- Drawing on their international experience, they design and upgrade curricula to make learning more relevant, interactive, inclusive and aligned with global standards

► [Page 17](#)





▶ Trainers for educator excellence

- Diaspora can provide vocational training to enhance the skills of teachers, administrators, and educators, introducing modern pedagogical methods, digital tools and proper infrastructure to enhance the quality of education and its competitiveness.

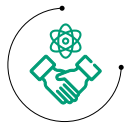
▶ Page 19



▶ Open science champions

- Diaspora networks and members can make science more accessible by promoting open data, preprints, collaborative platforms, and youth-led labs that highlight the impact of citizen science

E.g. AfricArXiv was established in 2018, with support from diaspora members, as a community led open-access preprint repository for African research, making findings accessible to a global audience and advancing research, open science, and innovation.



▶ Science diplomats

- The diaspora can advance national scientific interests abroad, contribute expert input to foreign policy (in countries of origin and countries of residence), and support science-informed dialogue to promote international research collaboration.

E.g. The Ukrainian Science Diaspora Initiative, created following the invasion of Ukraine by Russia, aims to capitalise on how global expertise supports Ukrainian scientific communities during the war, highlighting opportunities for reconstruction, scientific diplomacy, and collaboration with international research and business institutions.



▶ Agents for peace-oriented education

- Rooted in a strong sense of responsibility toward their home communities, displaced diaspora can be highly motivated to transform education in fragile and conflict-affected settings, by developing programs that promote peace, critical thinking, foster resilience, and help reshape conflict dynamics

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Diaspora roles in education and vocational training in action

Engaging Guatemalan Scientific and Professional Diaspora



In partnership with the **National Secretariat of Science and Technology SENACYT** and the **Academy of Science**

Summary

EUDiF helped strengthen inter-institutional collaboration capacities for engaging and integrating the Guatemalan Scientific and Professional Diaspora (GSPD) into national development strategies by improving coordination, policy formulation, and digital engagement mechanisms. The project brought together key public institutions, academic actors, and diaspora networks around a shared agenda. The project increased the visibility of the GSPD within national institutions, opened spaces for diaspora members to voice their perspectives and priorities, and fostered stronger connections among stakeholders who had not previously worked closely together. It also advanced practical foundations for longer-term engagement, including clearer institutional coordination, initial policy recommendations, and a shared vision for digital tools and international cooperation to support sustained collaboration with the GSPD.

Strands of work

1. Consultations with public institutions and drafting a policy brief
2. Workshops for public and academic institutions
3. Digital platform conceptualisation
4. Peer exchange with the Academy of Science of Costa Rica
5. Focus groups with diaspora communities

Role played



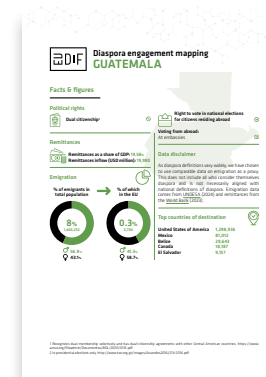
Knowledge brokers

▶ Page 15



Science diplomats

Read more about



Piloting diaspora mobilisation schemes in education and research in Moldova



In partnership with the **Bureau for Relations with Diaspora (BRD)** and the **Ministry of Education and Research (MER)**



Summary

EUDiF supported the Diaspora Bureau and the Ministry to design and pilot a diaspora knowledge-transfer scheme for the higher education and research sectors. This included mapping and profiling the highly skilled diaspora in the EU and providing practical guidelines for establishing a diaspora human-capital program in higher education. The project led to the creation of a dedicated *Diaspora co-working hub*, whose value lies in moving beyond sporadic engagement by establishing a structured, deployable pool of diaspora expertise. The model is state-owned, replicable and adaptable to other development sectors.

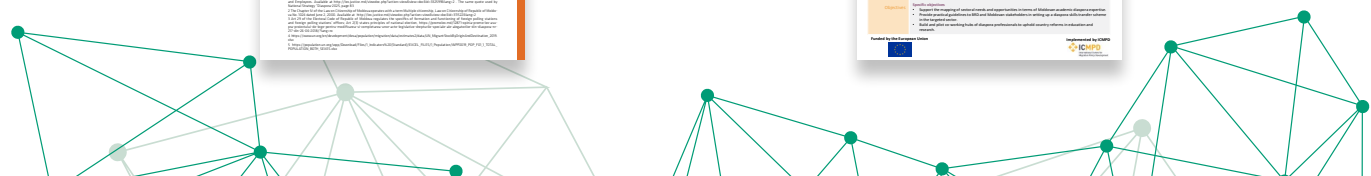
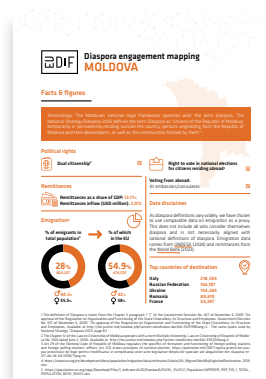
Strands of work

1. Assessment of sectoral needs for diaspora expertise and analysis of best practices for inspiration
2. Development of a roadmap for scoping a human capital transfer scheme in higher education
3. Focus groups with national stakeholders and diaspora in the EU
4. Creation and piloting the Diaspora Co-Working hub in higher education
5. Lessons learnt from the pilot experience

Roles played

Knowledge brokers Page 15

Read more about





Knowledge transfer on environmental sustainability and climate adaptation from the Filipino diaspora

In partnership with **Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Staff (PCSDS)** and **Palawan State University (PSU)**

Summary

With the support of three diaspora experts, EUDiF equipped local stakeholders with the tools and skills to strengthen their knowledge of environmental sustainability and climate adaptation to advance Palawan’s sustainable development agenda. This initiative provided PCSDS and PSU with a tailored higher education curriculum alongside training of trainers (teachers) on curriculum delivery and training for local government units securing climate adaptation funding and support for environmental initiatives.

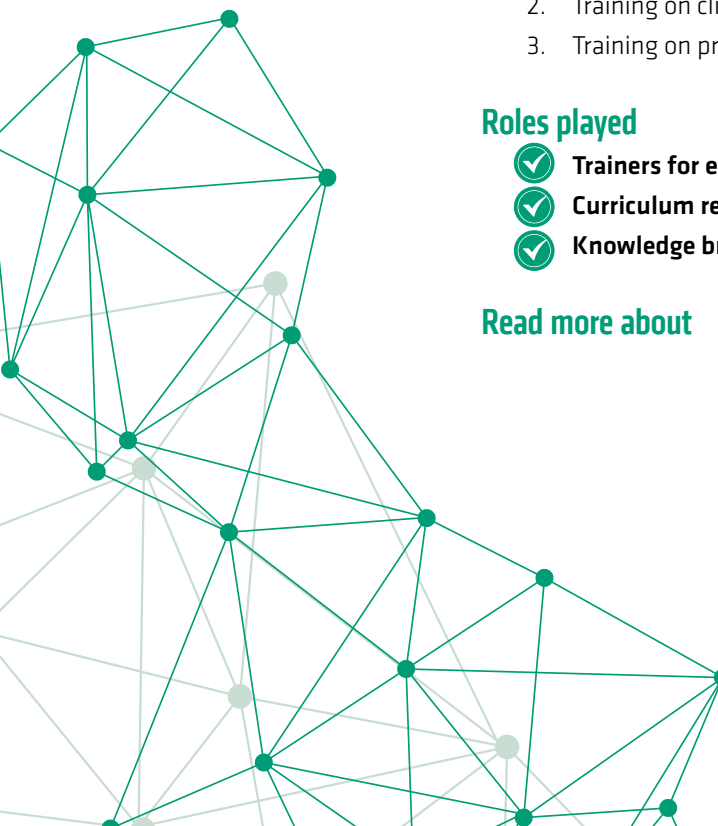
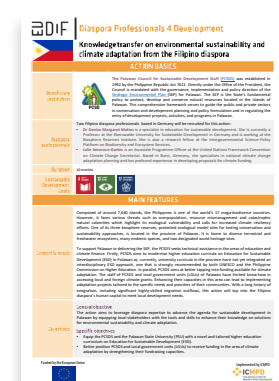
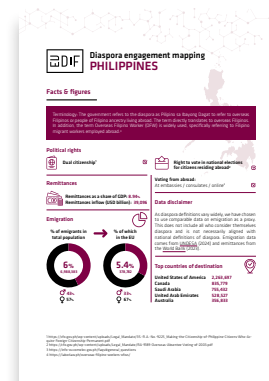
Strands of work

1. Development and ToT for the Curriculum on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).
2. Training on climate adaptation financing
3. Training on project cycle management for environment initiatives

Roles played

- Trainers for educator excellence [▶ Page 19](#)
- Curriculum reformers
- Knowledge brokers

Read more about



Transferring knowledge on climate change and circular economy from the Mexican diaspora



In partnership with the British chapter of the Mexican Talent Network – Red Global MX (RGMX-UK)

Summary

EUDiF partnered with RGMX-UK to leverage knowledge transfer for climate action in Mexico. The project aimed to establish a structured scheme facilitating the exchange and generation of expertise between scientific diaspora members and Mexico. The scheme was piloted in climate change and circular economy education, notably through the co-creation of a Toolkit for citizen climate action.

Strands of work

1. Strengthening RGMX-UK's member database through a needs assessment, development of an expansion methodology, and training for its implementation.
2. Organizing co-creation workshops with RGMX-UK members, Mexican diaspora academics, and local CSOs to translate knowledge into sustainable development outputs.
3. Developing a citizen climate action and circular economy toolkit through collaborative design.

Roles played

- Knowledge brokers Page 15
- Mentors

Read more about



What comes next?



Guatemala

The research-based policy brief consolidates evidence-driven recommendations, ensuring they inform both national policy and international discourse. Co-authored with diaspora experts and slated for peer-reviewed publication in 2026, the brief proposes a model of engagement that can be expanded and adapted to other regions or sectors, supporting scalable diaspora engagement strategies.



Moldova

The diaspora co-working hub model can be adapted for other development sectors, and the Bureau for Diaspora and the Ministry of Education have the tools and roadmap to further mobilize diaspora expertise. Building on this experience, diaspora professionals continue their collaboration with the Bureau, launching new initiatives such as the first education hackathon in the higher education landscape in 2025.



Philippines

The Education for Sustainable Development curriculum will be integrated further in educational institutions in Palawan, with ambition for replication in other provincial universities in the Philippines such as in Albay Biosphere Reserve and Puerto Galera Biosphere Reserve. The Diaspora professionals have stayed in touch to offer support and guidance and help starting new partnerships with international partners such as initiate a new project between the Palawan State University and Mongolia on wildlife consumption and trading.



Mexico

At the conclusion of the project in 2023, RGMX-UK in Mexico identified continued collaboration with local civil society as a key avenue to explore opportunities for the broader use of the toolkit. Discussions with RGMX partners at the time also considered the potential integration of the toolkit into school business curricula. In addition, efforts were envisaged to seek sponsorship and funding to sustain and expand the circular economy initiatives that formed the foundation for the toolkit's development.



Ethiopia

The curriculum piloted at Wollo University is set to be scaled-up nationally following the project in 2022. The diaspora is supporting its replication further to other African universities. Wollo university has leveraged the expertise of the diaspora team to secure additional research funding and establish partnerships with the Wageningen University in Netherlands for future collaboration. The top-performing Ethiopian student teams, part of the curriculum pilot, received additional funding and were nominated to participate in the [World Youth Innovation Lab 2026](#), enhancing their global competitiveness.

Diaspora as knowledge brokers

With their transnational perspective, members of the scientific and professional diaspora facilitate the exchange and application of knowledge and ideas among universities, research institutions, governments, and international scientific networks. Positioned across two knowledge systems they hold a unique position that enables them to promote partnerships, collaborative research, academic mobility, and training.

Beyond making individual collaborations, diaspora professionals help establish structured engagement mechanisms, such as specialised networks or institutional partnerships, and support local institutions in accessing international funding, research infrastructures, and global initiatives.

Creating platforms that formally empower diaspora contributions is essential to build sustainable, workable frameworks that maximize their work.

EUDiF projects in Guatemala, Mexico and Moldova demonstrate how diaspora brokering can be translated into practical collaboration initiatives. In all three cases, diaspora actors also incentivised and piloted structured schemes for knowledge transfer with the scientific diaspora:



Kleinsy Bonilla (Guatemala lead diaspora professional) facilitates consultation with GSPD in Europe

In **Guatemala**, diaspora experts facilitated consultation with the wider community of diaspora scientists and peer learning with other Latin American countries, demonstrating their ability to broker knowledge and force connections transnationally, at community and institutional level. The collaboration with national institutions strengthened the country's science and innovation ecosystem, with results documented in a policy brief intended to inform national policymaking as well as broader international discussions on diaspora engagement, mobility, and scientific collaboration.



Dissemination event in Mexico – Launch of the toolkit on circular economy



Diaspora experts on a fact-finding mission to Moldova

In **Mexico**, Red Global Mexico UK translated scientific knowledge on circular economy and climate change into educational resources for local communities. In collaboration with civil society organisations, the network co-created a Toolkit: List of Personal Actions for the Circular Economy, presenting 30 personal actions to encourage sustainable habits. Through workshops and toolkit development, diaspora members helped shape educational materials, promote sustainable development, and raise awareness of pressing environmental challenges.

When designing the roadmap for a structured engagement scheme and profiling the highly skilled diaspora, our survey found that 86% of Moldovan diaspora professionals are willing to engage, but stress the need for institutional mechanisms to support mentorship and knowledge transfer. With EUDiF support, a diaspora co-working hub for higher education was created, bringing together over 40 experts and facilitating partnerships and assignments, including one between ‘I. Creangă’ State Pedagogical University and a university in Bavaria on research collaboration.



Through this EUDiF project, we have identified that collective efforts are more effective. Until now, many collaborations and participations have occurred episodically, in isolation or without the systematisation and scale required to generate deeper impact in our country of origin. This project is making it possible for more voices from the diaspora to join.

- Dr Kleinsy Bonilla
Co-lead diaspora expert from Guatemala, based in Norway

Diaspora as curriculum reformers

Drawing on varied international experience, diaspora professionals often bring ideas for designing and upgrading educational programs in their countries of origin, making learning more qualitative, engaging and inclusive. They often do so through:

- ▶ Introducing interdisciplinary content, practical skills, and innovative approaches, helping education institutions modernize curricula and equip students with competencies that enhance employability.
- ▶ Incorporating new digital learning tools, including those that facilitate remote education, addressing barriers such as geographic isolation and resource scarcity.
- ▶ Promoting inclusive education programs, aimed at increasing participation of women or underrepresented groups.

When new programs and curricula are developed and launched, diaspora experts often continue their work and play a key role in training teachers to implement them. Their dual roles as curriculum reformers and trainers for teaching excellence (see next section) are complementary, helping to shape both *what* is taught and *how*. This was demonstrated in the EUDiF projects in **Ethiopia** and the **Philippines**, where diaspora experts helped design curricula in agri-food business, climate change, and environmental sustainability for local universities. In doing so, they advanced academic modernization while supporting broader sustainable development goals.

In **Ethiopia**, the diaspora team developed the country's first digital curriculum in agri-food business at Wollo University in Dessie. In doing so, they introduced the *Capstone approach*, whereby students apply their knowledge to real-world projects. As a result, during the curriculum pilot multidisciplinary student teams worked directly on local agri-initiatives. The pilot involved 85 students completing a daily writing bootcamp focused on sector-relevant skills in agri-food business and environmental informatics.

The diaspora team also supported the testing of the curriculum through the university's newly installed learning management system – Moodle – and organised feedback sessions with students and teachers. Beyond curriculum design, the diaspora professionals helped fundraise and equip the university with laptops and internet access, ensuring broader adoption.



The project continued to yield results following the intervention. With the curriculum expansion to other universities and top student teams participating in youth competitions in Europe and receiving additional funding for participation in world youth competitions. Moreover, building on the pilot and needs assessment, diaspora experts noted the underrepresentation of female participants. To address this gender gap in technical education, one of the diaspora professionals secured an EU-funded follow-up project, organizing a Summer School for Women in AI and Data Science.

In fragile contexts, curriculum innovation becomes even more critical, as education can be a key tool for post-crisis recovery. Despite the destruction of Wollo University facilities during the warfare in 2022, EUDiF diaspora experts involved in the project remained highly engaged, ensuring the continuation of curriculum piloting. They went beyond the project roles, engaging as fundraisers, facilitators and knowledge brokers to support the university's recovery.



Participation of Ethiopian trainees in the International Youth Food Lab



I managed to get Wollo University to participate in the Global Food Systems Challenge organised by the Netherlands Food Partnership and Wageningen University last year and this year. The challenge's purpose is to introduce action-oriented education, where BSc/MSc students are encouraged to form multidisciplinary teams and work on a project that is pressing in their locality for six months. Not only did Wollo University participate, but one of the two teams from university, led by one of our trainees during EUDiF project, ranked in the top five in 2024 and 2025. The fact that Wollo University qualified to participate is thanks to the EUDiF project.

- Professor Ayalew Kassahun
Wageningen University in Netherlands, Ethiopian Diaspora

This intervention illustrates how small-scale diaspora initiatives can catalyze greater engagement and generate ripple effects, as diaspora professionals rarely stop at a single project. Recognizing this sustained contribution and commitment is essential to maximize the potential value of diaspora initiatives.

Diaspora as trainers for educator excellence

Diaspora can provide professional development to enhance the skills of teachers, educators, and local staff. They can train educators on instructional quality, introduce digital teaching methods, provide mentoring, and invest in educational infrastructure and resources. By strengthening teaching practices and empowering educators, they help create more engaging, inclusive, and effective learning environments helping education sectors align with global best practices and build long-term institutional capacity.



In the **Philippines**, the diaspora team delivered in-person training to local universities and the Palawan Council, focusing on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and employing modern pedagogical approaches.

The leadership of a Filipino diasporan served as a strong incentive for teachers and practitioners, reflected in the high participation: over 800 teachers and students responded to a learning needs survey. Moreover, 20 teachers joined the training in Puerto Princesa to learn how to deliver the updated ESD curriculum.

To further strengthen capacities, EUDiF and the diaspora team organized project cycle management and financial sustainability trainings for local governments units. The project also fostered institutional collaboration, with diaspora taking the role of knowledge broker and facilitator.

One diaspora professional initiated a partnership between Palawan State University (PSU) and their German university, involving PSU teachers in a project mapping wildlife consumption and trade in Mongolia and the Philippines, focusing on the conservation of the Philippine pangolin. Another diaspora expert connected PCSDS with donors, inviting them to participate in training sessions.



There were real challenges for the people directly depending on Palawan's natural resources (which suffered degradation over the years) and this is what motivated and still motivates me to be part of this action: there is a lot of work to be done in Palawan and one effective way to reach a lot of people is through education.

- Professor Denise Matias

Filipina diaspora at Eberswalde University for Sustainable Development, Germany



Empowering diaspora professionals as visible leaders in education initiatives builds trust, strengthens access to networks, and boosts uptake. Sustained support from national institutions and local authorities can enhance outreach and increase the effectiveness of capacity-building programs, thus reducing local scepticism that diaspora are disconnected from on-the-ground realities.



Diaspora as agents for peace-oriented education

Fragile and conflict contexts are often characterised by the destruction of educational facilities, displacement and loss of students and teachers, weak public infrastructure, and fragile governance systems. These conditions limit access to quality education and deepen existing inequalities. In such crises, there is a growing need for creative responses, particularly where institutions have collapsed or lack the capacity to provide accessible education. As conflict, authoritarianism, displacement, and climate-related disruptions increasingly destabilize education systems worldwide, transnational and informal learning models are likely to become more widespread. At the same time, education remains a critical tool for conflict resolution and sustainable peace, often proving more effective in the long term than financial assistance alone.

In conflict-affected settings, diaspora communities frequently mobilize to respond to educational crises, often acting more swiftly and flexibly than international actors or donors. Moreover, diaspora often go beyond conventional roles. Effective contributions combine adaptive fundraising, advocacy, expertise, and training with a peace-oriented, conflict-sensitive approach. Operating in environments with heightened political and security risks requires flexibility, courage, and careful management.

The diaspora sense of responsibility often extends to both local and distant communities with the aim of fostering long-term social and political change. By translating global discourses—such as human rights, decolonial theory, and critical pedagogy—into local education, diaspora professionals can foster transformative, resilient learning, often challenging state narratives and mediating between international donors and local communities.



A few specific forms of engagement, going beyond the roles described in previous sections, are outlined below, with examples from **Ukraine, Afghanistan, and Syria**.

Rapid, flexible, and transnational learning

Diaspora groups often mobilise funding for school materials, support the rebuilding of schools, and invest in educational infrastructure, viewing schooling as a key mechanism to disrupt conflict reproduction.

In contexts where education systems have failed, they may also step in as teachers, trainers, or mentors proposing transnational and inclusive formats of learning.

In practice

Afghan diaspora educators launched initiatives such as the [Transnational Classroom for Women](#), mobilising international teachers and online platforms to continue providing higher education opportunities for Afghan women after universities were closed to them.

Diaspora women educators are often at the forefront of such initiatives. In Afghanistan, women both inside the country and across the diaspora have become key architects of a deterritorialized educational ecosystem¹, serving as brokers who connect knowledge and learning across borders.

One diaspora member started a school in Helmand Province that provided free education and followed the national curriculum for over 1,200 students.

Specialised reconstruction expertise

Diaspora professionals provide specialised knowledge on reconstruction strategies and educational practices, drawing on comparative experiences and lessons from other countries.

This can be through guidance and policy advice on building resilient education systems and facilitating mobility programs for those affected by crises.

In practice

In **Ukraine**, the diaspora helped create temporary academic placements, scholarships, and visiting researcher opportunities for students and scholars affected by the war starting with 2022. Also, Ukrainian diaspora academics support universities and education authorities by sharing expertise on digital learning, curriculum adaptation, and post-conflict education reform based on experiences from European institutions and countries.

The [GIZ snapshot collection on Scientific Ukrainian Diaspora](#) highlights 34 stories success stories for collaboration and interventions of this nature and the importance of giving visibility and recognition.

The [EU also encourages greater involvement of diaspora researchers and science attaches](#) to strengthen the role of science diplomacy in foreign policy and reconstruction especially in context of the wars and conflicts. Initiatives such as [MSCA4Ukraine](#) support displaced scientists, enabling them to continue research, drive innovation, and contribute to rebuilding education and research systems.

1 [“What I Believe Can Rescue That Nation”: Diaspora Working to Transform Education in Fragility and Conflict](#)

**Shaping conflict
transformation
narratives Education
for structural
transformation**

Exposure to host countries often reinforces diaspora belief that education can address the root causes of conflict. They promote curricula and initiatives that integrate peace education, foster critical thinking, tolerance, and social cohesion. In this way they treat education as a site of structural transformation, not neutral service provision.

In addition, they can build and advocate for coalitions for reform and ensure the reforms resonate locally.

In practice

Syrian diaspora educators and doctors have initiated International Humanitarian Relief platform since the war started, with education as one of their four priorities. This contributes to developing peace-education programs for refugee children in Turkey, Lebanon and neighbouring countries. They design curricula and activities that promote dialogue, empathy, conflict resolution supporting children affected by war in moving from trauma toward constructive engagement. Activities encourage self-expression, acceptance of differences, and cooperation, using creative exercises and group discussions as learning tools.



Learn more



Learning by doing: Climate action & environmental sustainability

This publication shares more on the role of diaspora in teaching excellence, curriculum development, and knowledge transfer in the fields of climate change and environmental sustainability based on EUDiF (phase I) projects in Mexico, the Philippines, and Ethiopia.

Learning by doing: Peacebuilding and post-crisis recovery

The roles of diasporas in peacebuilding and post-crisis recovery are explored based on responses during our collaborations with the Armenian General Benevolent Union Europe (AGBU Europe) in Armenia and Wollo University in Ethiopia. It also includes an examination of the Ukrainian diaspora to deepen our understanding of diaspora engagement in times of crisis.

Diaspora engagement in times of crisis

The 2021 case study provides analysis produced with Shabaka presents examples diaspora roles in crisis and conflict settings, based on research from Nepal, Nicaragua, Lebanon, Sudan, Ukraine and Zambia.

Lessons learnt from scoping a human capital transfer scheme in higher education for Moldova

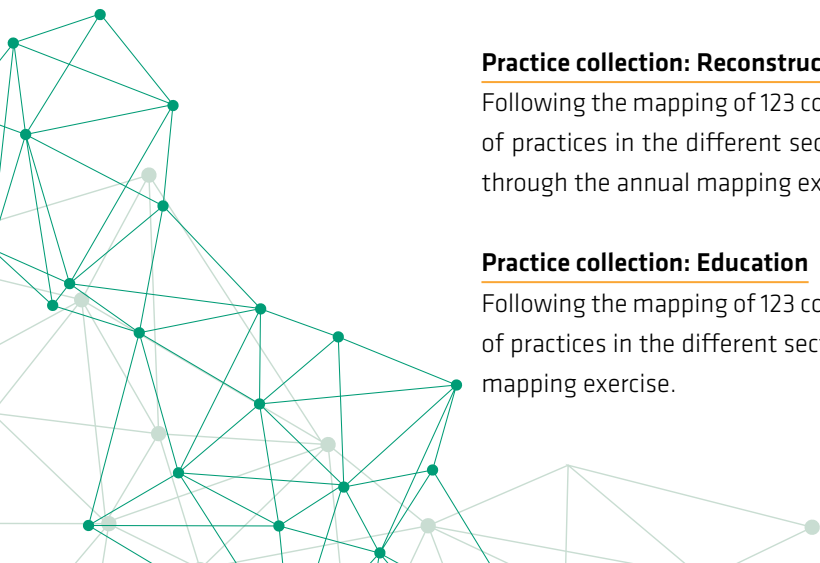
This document shares insights from the EUDiF support to the Bureau for Relations with Diaspora to develop a framework of engagement and pilot mobilisation mechanisms for highly skilled Moldovan diaspora active in the higher education.

Practice collection: Reconstruction and recovery

Following the mapping of 123 countries to explore policies, practices and trends in diaspora engagement around the world, EUDiF developed a database of practices in the different sectors of engagement. This collection is a compilation of initiatives related to reconstruction and recovery as gathered through the annual mapping exercise and additional desk research.

Practice collection: Education

Following the mapping of 123 countries to explore policies, practices and trends in diaspora engagement around the world, EUDiF developed a database of practices in the different sectors of engagement. This collection is a compilation of initiatives related to education as gathered through the annual mapping exercise.





7 Steps to Establishing a Sustainable Scientific Diaspora Network

The document outlines a practical, step-by-step framework for creating and sustaining scientific diaspora networks, highlighting how researchers abroad can collaborate, organize, and stay connected with their home countries. EURAXESS is a European Commission initiative that helps researchers with funding, careers, and international mobility.



EU needs diaspora researchers and science attachés involved in diplomacy

The paper highlights the role diaspora researchers and science attachés can play in EU science diplomacy and calls for stronger coordination and support to better leverage their expertise and international networks.



Frontiers | Editorial: Engaging scientific diasporas for development: Policy and practices

This article addresses the challenges faced by countries of origin to recognize, identify and map their scientific diaspora as a critical first step to later engage with for the development of their territories. Two of the co-authors, Kleinsy Bonilla and Luisa F. Echeverria-King, acted as experts on the EUDiF project in Guatemala.

“What I Believe Can Rescue That Nation”: Diaspora Working to Transform Education in Fragility and Conflict

The paper explores how diaspora researchers contribute to scientific development and education, particularly in conflict-affected settings, and highlights their motivations for engagement. It emphasizes their role in linking research systems across countries, drawing on examples from Afghanistan, Haiti, South Sudan, and Zimbabwe. Citation: Dryden-Peterson, Sarah and Celia Reddick (2019). “What I Believe Can Rescue That Nation”: Diaspora Working to Transform Education in Fragility and Conflict. *Comparative Education Review* 63, no. 2: 213-235.



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Hincu D., (2026) Diaspora engagement: education and vocational training. EUDiF Learning by doing publication, Brussels: ICMPD

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