



**ACP** OBSERVATORY ON MIGRATION  
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# SPOTLIGHT ON THE YOUNG AND SKILLED: *Exploring the potential contribution of Kenya's diasporas in the South*

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## Research Report

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## Foreword

This study by Bethuel Kinyanjui Kinuthia is the first of a series of publications by the ACP Observatory on Migration exploring the potential of Diasporas in the South to contribute to their home country's development. Four pilot countries (Haiti, Lesotho, Kenya and Nigeria) were involved in this pioneer research project, aimed at assessing and promoting the contribution of Diasporas living in the South not merely in terms of financial remittances but rather in terms of positive impact on human development in the country of origin.

Kenya suffers high levels of unemployment and underemployment majority of whom are the youth. This is projected to increase significantly by 2030. It is further established that projected unemployment is driven by not only high rates of graduate unemployment, but also high levels of *labor casualization* as well as high rates of labor migration from the informal sector. Consequently, the number of job seeking Kenyans likely to seek employment abroad would increase in line with the trend in unemployment and increase the diaspora. Notwithstanding this scenario, Kenya's migration regime continues to look at the diaspora from a purely 'sociolabour perspective' rather than an economic policy and trade perspective. As a result, it has remained limited in scope, focus and outlined a very limited role for the government in promoting diaspora engagement.

Consequently, the institutional framework for migration has remained weak. In order to increase the role of migration in the local economy, a number of reforms need to be undertaken in the short to medium term. Specifically, reforms are needed in three areas namely; legal and regulatory reform, institutional reform and migration reform. However, to be effective, these reforms need to be preceded by a shift in government policy orientation on Migration. With regard to multilateral and regional frameworks affecting Migration, Common Market for East and Southern Africa, East African Community and General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade still remain the multilateral framework governing Migration despite their shortfalls, and should be utilized in their current forms. Similarly, Kenya's commitments in regional trade agreements would increase pressure on Migration policies and further raise the necessity to strengthen migration infrastructure

The importance of the contribution of Diasporas has been fully acclaimed by the Government of Kenya within the Kenya Vision 2030, the country's development programme adopted in 2008 and it has been recognized in the

New Constitution promulgated in August 2010. However, as this study shows, there is limited formal engagement between the Government of Kenya and its members in the Diasporas in Africa. This publication therefore presents an opportunity to include this majority of our migrants abroad in our engagements.

Key recommendations aimed at enhancing the potential of Kenyan diasporas and at overcoming possible obstacles of cooperating with diasporas members are therefore explored in the study, which will certainly represent a road map for the implementation of programmes and policies giving diasporas a greater and active role in development to be implemented by the Government of Kenya in the forthcoming years.

Changing realities at the global level, with Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (the BRICS) rising in economic and political importance, are also likely to shape migration flows. It is therefore timely to look at Kenyan diaspora members in countries in the South and foster their long-overdue perspective in our development work at the national level.

I am grateful for the work that the ACP Observatory on Migration has been spearheading, enabling us to take this Southern perspective into account.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elijah O. Achoch', written over a horizontal line.

Mr. Elijah O. Achoch  
National Consultative Forum Chair  
Director – Transformative Leadership  
& Change Management  
Office of the Prime Minister  
Republic of Kenya

## **Abstract**

This study sought to explore the various ways through which the Government of Kenya can involve its diasporas in human development. Until recently, migration literature had concentrated on migration interactions between the developed and the developing countries, yet most of the migrants within the developing countries tend to migrate to other developing countries. This research contributes to this under researched literature, by examining the Kenyan case on how migrants within developing countries, especially within the Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) countries, can be involved in national development in Kenya.

The study used a novel approach where data was collected using online interviews of migrants abroad, as well as in-depth interviews of migrants, embassy officials and diaspora associations in developing countries. The study revealed that most of the migrants tend to be young and skilled workers. They also tend to be mainly employed in professions that use their skills. They have dependants at home and frequently send remittances to support them. In addition, migrants would like to be involved in national development mainly through skills transfer in sectors such as education, health care provision, infrastructure development and childcare. Most of them prefer taking part in programmes that do not exceed one year. However, financial constraints, political and social factors in Kenya could discourage them from active participation. The study also discusses the policy implications of these issues.



## **Acknowledgments**

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## **List of acronyms and abbreviations**

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| ACP    | African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States         |
| AU     | African Union  |
| FDI    | Foreign Direct Investment                              |
| GMOD   | Global Migrant Origin Database                         |
| GNI    | Gross National Income                                  |
| IOM    | International Organization for Migration               |
| K Sh.  | Kenyan schillings                                      |
| KEDASA | Kenyan Diasporas in South Africa                       |
| M-Pesa | Mobile Money Transfer                                  |
| NEPAD  | New Partnership for African Development                |
| NVK    | New Vision Kenya                                       |
| ODA    | Official Development Assistance                        |
| OECD   | Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| UNDP   | United National Development Programme                  |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children’s Fund                         |



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## **Executive summary**

The contribution of diasporas to national development of their host countries has recently received much attention in the migration literature. However, to date there is no single, coherent theory of international migration, but many fragments of theories which have developed in isolation, influenced by various disciplines. This study uses a human development approach, which views development in terms of enlarging people's choices. It puts people at the centre of all aspects of the development process thereby being considered holistic. Unlike many studies, this study focused on the South to South migration, where respondents were Kenyan diasporas in 10 African countries. Online and in-depth interviews were conducted for the Kenyan diasporas, embassy officials and diaspora associations within these countries. The study revealed important insights which can assist not only Kenyan policymakers to better engage the diasporas on matters of development but also the diasporas themselves and especially their associations, to organize better.

The main finding of this study is that there is limited formal engagement between the Government of Kenya and its members in the diaspora in Africa. The Government needs to know and understand its diaspora

in order to engage effectively with them. The study found that migration figures of Kenyans in the South are often understated. Based on the migrants' statistics held by the embassies and diaspora organizations, it may well be argued that for every one person registered with them, there are at least six others who are not. Therefore, if the government is to engage its members in the diasporas successfully, an important starting point would have to be the creation of an up to date database on migrants' profiles. In this regard, the Kenyan embassies abroad need to be diaspora focused and working with diaspora associations in order to account for most of the migrants in their countries.

The second most important finding is that Kenyan migrants to the South tend to be below fifty years of age and unmarried. Their main reasons for migration include the search of employment, business opportunities and the pursuit of further education. They make frequent visits to Kenya, at least once every two years and usually stay for a period not exceeding two months. They acquire jobs abroad that utilize their skills and do not earn much compared to similar jobs in developed countries. However, their remittances are still comparatively high. They

maintain contact with family and friends mainly via telephone and Internet-based communication. They own investments in Kenya and are interested in national development. For this group, the cost of remittances is still very high, and M-Pesa provides a good alternative to the formal avenues used, such as Western Union, MoneyGram and bank transfers which are considered very expensive. In addition, these migrants would be interested in skills transfer programs, which the government can initiate for better engagement. Such programs should not run for more than a year. Due to the low earnings (USD 10,000 per annum), the government ought to create investment opportunities within their reach of their diasporas. For example, in case of an infrastructure bond, the diasporas should be given a chance to invest in small denominations which they can afford.

Third, dual citizenship and voting rights are important avenues for diaspora engagement. The recent efforts of the inclusion of dual citizenship in the new constitution will

provide an important link between the diasporas and their home country as it conveys a sense of belonging. Voting rights provide the diasporas with an opportunity to make their voices heard through the election of candidates that can best articulate their concerns.

Fourth, the Diaspora Policy Framework will need to address the issues raised in the study. In addition, there is need to facilitate constructive debate on the diaspora within their countries, through the Kenyan embassies working with diaspora organizations, to give them a chance to articulate their wishes before the document is finalized and implemented. Finally, there is need to pursue policies that will lead to job creation at home, so that migrants can have more options to choose from. In addition, political instability, corruption and lack of accountability discourage migrants from returning and investing in Kenya.

## **Résumé analytique**

L'attention de plus en plus soutenue que l'on porte, dans la littérature sur la migration, à la contribution des diasporas au développement national du pays d'origine est un phénomène récent. Cependant, à ce jour, on ne dispose toujours pas d'une théorie globale et cohérente sur la migration internationale ; tout au plus trouve-t-on plusieurs fragments de théories qui ont été élaborés en vase clos et influencés par différentes disciplines. Cette étude aborde cette question sous l'angle du développement humain qui considère le développement comme une manière d'élargir les choix offerts aux individus. Il place la personne au centre de tous les aspects du processus de développement, c'est pourquoi on le qualifie de démarche holistique. Contrairement à d'autres études, celle-ci se concentre sur la migration Sud-Sud et les répondants appartiennent tous aux diasporas kenyanes réparties dans 10 pays africains. Des entretiens approfondis ont été menés en ligne avec ces diasporas, les représentants des ambassades et les organisations de la diaspora dans ces pays. L'étude a livré des renseignements importants qui pourront non seulement aider les décideurs politiques kenyans à intéresser davantage les diasporas aux questions de développement, mais aussi les diasporas et surtout leurs organisations, à mieux s'organiser.

La principale constatation de l'étude est que la coopération formelle entre le gouvernement kenyan et les diasporas en Afrique est restreinte. Le gouvernement devra donc s'efforcer de mieux connaître et comprendre ses diasporas afin de s'engager efficacement à leurs côtés. L'étude a observé que les chiffres dont on disposait en matière de migration des Kenyans dans le Sud étaient souvent sous-estimés. Sur base des statistiques sur les migrants réalisées par les ambassades et les organisations de la diaspora, on considère à présent que pour chaque personne enregistrée, au minimum six autres ne le sont pas. Le gouvernement doit donc créer une base de données relative au profil des migrants et la mettre à jour régulièrement s'il souhaite renforcer l'engagement des membres de ses diasporas. À cet égard, les ambassades kenyanes à l'étranger devront se concentrer davantage sur leur diaspora et collaborer avec les organisations de la diaspora afin de prendre en compte la plupart des migrants présents dans leur pays.

La deuxième constatation importante est que les migrants kenyans dans le Sud sont, pour la plupart, âgés de moins de cinquante ans et célibataires. Les causes principales de la migration citées sont la quête d'un emploi, la recherche d'opportunités commerciales et la poursuite

d'études. Ils se rendent fréquemment au Kenya (une fois tous les deux ans, au minimum) et, la plupart du temps, le séjour n'excède pas deux mois. À l'étranger, ils trouvent un emploi à la mesure de leurs compétences et le salaire qu'ils perçoivent n'est pas très élevé en comparaison avec celui d'un emploi équivalent dans les pays développés. Malgré tout, les envois de fonds effectués par ces migrants sont importants. Ils restent en contact avec leur famille et leurs amis surtout par le biais du téléphone et/ou de l'Internet. Ils ont réalisé des investissements au Kenya et s'intéressent au développement national. Pour ce groupe de personnes, le coût des transferts de fonds reste très élevé et le système M-Pesa est une bonne alternative aux canaux formels, comme Western Union, MoneyGram et les virements bancaires qui sont considérés comme très chers. Ces migrants affirment également que les programmes de transfert de compétences que le gouvernement pourrait mettre en œuvre pour favoriser l'engagement, pourraient bien les intéresser. Ils ne devraient toutefois pas dépasser une durée d'un an. Les revenus des membres de la diaspora interrogés étant faibles (10 000 dollars E.-U. par an), le gouvernement devra créer des possibilités d'investir qui soient à leur portée. S'il s'agit, par exemple, d'une obligation d'infrastructure, il convient de leur donner la chance d'investir

dans une valeur nominale peu élevée, à la hauteur de leurs moyens.

Troisièmement : la double citoyenneté et les droits de vote sont des leviers importants pour favoriser l'engagement de la diaspora. Les efforts récents visant à inclure la double citoyenneté dans la nouvelle constitution permettront de créer un lien étroit entre les diasporas et leur pays d'origine, ainsi qu'un sentiment d'appartenance au pays. Les droits de vote permettent aux diasporas de faire entendre leur voix par le biais de l'élection de candidats qui pourront exprimer leurs préoccupations.

Quatrièmement : le cadre politique en matière de diaspora (Diaspora Policy Framework) devra prendre en compte les problèmes soulevés par l'étude. Afin que les différentes diasporas puissent exprimer leurs aspirations avant que le document ne soit finalisé et mis en œuvre, on attend des ambassades kenyanes qu'elles collaborent avec les organisations de la diaspora dans les différents pays pour promouvoir un débat constructif. Enfin, il convient de poursuivre des politiques visant à créer des emplois dans le pays d'origine, de manière à ce que les migrants disposent d'un plus grand nombre d'options. C'est l'instabilité politique, la corruption et l'absence d'obligation de rendre des comptes qui découragent les migrants de rentrer au Kenya et d'y procéder à des investissements.

## **Resumo executivo**

A contribuição das diásporas para o desenvolvimento nacional dos países de destino recebeu recentemente a atenção da literatura relativa à migração. No entanto, até à data, não existe uma teoria única e coerente relativa à migração internacional, mas muitos fragmentos de teorias desenvolvidas isoladamente e influenciadas por várias disciplinas. Este estudo emprega uma abordagem de desenvolvimento humano, que analisa o desenvolvimento em termos de alargamento das escolhas das pessoas. As pessoas são colocadas no centro de todos os aspectos do processo de desenvolvimento, sendo assim consideradas de forma holística. Ao contrário de muitos estudos, este estudo focou-se na migração Sul-Sul, tendo sido inquiridos membros das diásporas quenianas em 10 países africanos. Realizaram-se entrevistas profundas para as diásporas quenianas, agentes de embaixadas e associações da diáspora nesses países. O estudo revelou conclusões importantes para ajudar os decisores políticos quenianos a melhor envolver as diásporas nas questões do desenvolvimento, e em questões relacionadas com as próprias diásporas, ajudando especialmente as respectivas associações a organizarem-se melhor.

As principais conclusões deste estudo apontam para a existência

de um envolvimento formal limitado entre o Governo do Quénia e os seus membros nas diásporas em África. O Governo precisa de saber e compreender as suas diásporas para se envolver efectivamente com as mesmas. O estudo determinou que os valores de migração de Quenianos no Sul costumam ser subestimados. Com base nas estatísticas de migração realizadas pelas embaixadas e organizações da diáspora, pode considerar-se que por cada pessoa registada, existem pelo menos seis pessoas não registadas. Assim, se o Governo envolver os seus membros nas diásporas com sucesso, um ponto de partida importante teria de ser a criação de uma base de dados actualizada sobre os perfis dos migrantes. Relativamente a este assunto, as embaixadas quenianas no estrangeiro têm de centrar-se na diáspora e trabalhar com associações da diáspora para ter em conta a maior parte dos migrantes nos seus países.

A segunda conclusão mais importante é o facto de os migrantes Quenianos no Sul terem tendência a ter menos de cinquenta anos de idade e não serem casados. As principais razões para a migração incluem a procura de emprego, oportunidades de negócios e ensino. Os migrantes visitam frequentemente o Quénia, pelo menos uma vez a cada dois anos, sendo que, geralmente, permanecem

durante um período não superior a dois meses. Nos empregos obtidos no estrangeiro, os migrantes utilizam as respectivas competências, sendo que não recebem um salário muito elevado em comparação com empregos semelhantes em países desenvolvidos. No entanto, as remessas continuam a ser elevadas. O contacto com familiares e amigos costuma ser mantido pelo telefone e pela internet. Os migrantes possuem investimentos no Quênia e estão interessados no desenvolvimento nacional. Para este grupo, o custo das remessas continua a ser bastante elevado, sendo que o M-Pesa constitui uma boa alternativa aos canais formais utilizados, tais como Western Union, MoneyGram e transferências bancárias, considerados muito dispendiosos. Para além disso, estes migrantes estariam interessados em programas de transferência de competências, que o Governo poderia iniciar para um melhor envolvimento. Tais programas não devem exceder o período de um ano. Devido aos rendimentos reduzidos dos membros da diáspora inquiridos (10.000 dólares E.U. por ano), o Governo deveria criar oportunidades de investimento ao seu alcance. Por exemplo, caso se trate de obrigações de infra-estrutura, as diásporas devem ter a oportunidade de investir

em pequenas denominações que possam suportar.

Em terceiro lugar, a dupla cidadania e o direito ao voto são elementos importantes para o envolvimento da diáspora. Os recentes esforços de inclusão da dupla cidadania na nova Constituição permitirão estabelecer uma ligação importante entre as diásporas e o país de origem, conferindo um sentimento de pertença. O direito ao voto oferece às diásporas a oportunidade de fazer ouvir a sua voz, através da eleição de candidatos capazes de melhor articular as suas preocupações.

Em quarto lugar, a Estrutura Política da Diáspora terá de abordar as questões levantadas no estudo. Para além disso, há a necessidade de facilitar o debate construtivo no seio da diáspora nos respectivos países, através das embaixadas quenianas a trabalhar com organizações da diáspora, para lhes dar a oportunidade de articular os seus desejos antes de o documento estar finalizado e implementado. Por fim, há a necessidade de formular políticas que conduzam à criação de emprego na origem, para que os migrantes disponham de mais opções. De referir que a instabilidade política, a corrupção e a falta de responsabilização desencorajam os migrantes a regressar e investir no Quênia.

## **I. Diasporas and development**

### **I.1 Introduction**

This study is part of the Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific Countries (ACP) research programme on diasporas conducted by ACP Observatory on Migration. Its overall aim is to assist ACP countries in engaging their diasporas in promoting human development<sup>1</sup>. In recent times, increased attention has been devoted to understanding the role diasporas can play in national development. In the past, departing migrants were thought to constitute a serious 'brain drain' and to contribute little to the development of their home countries. Globalization has enabled many to remain connected with their native countries while residing abroad, thus diminishing their loss of identity and economic separation from their countries of origin (Page and Plaza, 2006). Consequently, migration is now viewed as a resource or extension of the nation or state. A growing number of developing countries view diasporas as an antidote to the brain drain. States and international

institutions are increasingly paying more attention to the role of the diasporas in national development.

The overall objective of this study is to enhance understanding of the role of the Kenyan diaspora residing in the ACP or other developing countries, by promoting human development in Kenya and contributing to the development of related policies. This information is potentially very useful to policymakers in Kenya, who are currently exploring ways of engaging with the diasporas on matters of development. The study seeks to address several important questions such as those relating to the distribution of Kenyan diasporas in the South, the motivating factors for their migration and the forms of interactions with their country of origin at the household, community and national level.

The report is structured as follows: The next section contains a review of literature on the contribution of the diasporas in development and how they are related to human development in Kenya. This is followed by a description of the study methodology in Section Two, which also contains a global mapping of the Kenyan diaspora using both the World Bank Database on migration and the Global Migration Origin Database. The third section discusses the

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<sup>1</sup> Diasporas are people living outside their country of origin, irrespective of their citizenship and nationality, and who are willing to contribute to the development of their origin country and/ or community (ACP Research guide, 2011). It has been adapted from the Africa Union's definition of the African diaspora.

results of the survey the conclusion draws policy recommendations for future engagement with the Kenyan diaspora.

## **1.2 Diasporas and development: a literature review**

The human capabilities approach, associated with the Nobel Prize-winning economist Amartya Sen, frames our understanding of development and its relationship to migration. According to UNDP (2010:12), human development is the expansion of people's freedom to live long, healthy and creative lives; to advance other goals they have reason to value; and to engage actively in shaping development equitability and sustainability on a shared planet. People are both the beneficiaries and the drivers of human development, as individuals and groups. This approach emphasizes freedom, in terms of human choice (opportunities of freedom) and a participatory process (process freedoms). It therefore brings together the production and distribution of commodities and the expansion and use of human capabilities. It also focuses on choices of what people should have, be and do to be able to ensure their livelihood. Moreover, human development is concerned not only with basic needs satisfaction but also with human development as a

participatory and dynamic process. It applies equally to less developed and highly developed countries. Since the world's distribution of opportunities is extremely unequal, human movement has huge potential in improving human development. However, while mobility constitutes a key element of human freedom and one of the key valuable choices, people also move under constraints that can be severe, while the gains they reap from moving are also unequally distributed. Hence movement involves trade-offs for both movers and stayers and the understanding of those trade-offs is key to formulate appropriate policies (UNDP 2009: 8).

From a capabilities perspective, a certain minimum level of development is necessary for migration to occur in substantial numbers. People need certain freedoms and access to social and economic resources in order to be able to migrate. This relates to the intrinsic value of the freedom of moving and working. Thus, involuntary migration can also be perceived as a direct expression of lack of freedom. As a result, people who migrate under extreme constrained conditions, such as in the case of refuge migration, migrating will often be the 'least worse' option, which may involve a real decrease in wellbeing and capabilities from the pre-refugees'

situation (de Haas, 2010). Similarly, the issuance of scholarship to students (who are considered an important part of skilled labour) facilitates their movement globally, allowing them to capture welfare gains from mobility (William and Balaz, 2005). According to the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, about two thirds of skilled expatriates, especially those working in research and development, arrived in the host country as students and Africa has a much higher proportion of expatriate students than other part of the world (10%)<sup>2</sup>.

Migration has the potential of affecting the wellbeing of the migrants and their families, communities and the nations they belong to<sup>3</sup>. These welfare aspects are intrinsically developmental as long as they increase people's capacity to be more secure and live better lives that they can value. However, the diaspora involvement may have other unintended consequences at the household and community level

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2 [http://perso.limsi.fr/Individu/turner/DKN/Completed\\_research/IRD-plaquette\\_EN.pdf](http://perso.limsi.fr/Individu/turner/DKN/Completed_research/IRD-plaquette_EN.pdf).

3 The diaspora are migrants who maintain connections with their homeland. At the family and the community level, where the impact is thought to be the greatest (Newland and Patrick, 2004), the diaspora may lead to income and consumption smoothing of households, for example, through increased savings and assets accumulation and provision collateral for loans or improvements in access to health services and better nutrition (Chimhowu et al., 2005).

including dependence on remittances, which may leave the households vulnerable to changes in migration cycles and have negative effects on the families and children left behind. For example, in Jamaica, Mexico and Nicaragua, there is evidence that migration of household members may affect the psychological and social well-being of children and women. Family disintegration, challenges in parenting, adoption of risky behaviour by children and adolescents left without parental guidance as well as increased vulnerability to violence, abuse and exploitation are some of the manifestations observed as a result of migration (UNICEF 2007: 9).

Apart from the intrinsic and direct well-being potential of migration, it can also increase people's capabilities to improve their livelihoods and contribute to general economic growth and social change. According to Ratha et al. (2011), the diasporas can enhance ties between their destination and origin countries, which open up new opportunities for trade in addition to other benefits, such as creation of business networks. These initiatives have great influence within many countries. For example, an interesting initiative, the African Diaspora Summit, was organized by the Dutch-African Diaspora Organization AfroNeth in December 2003. AfroNeth and other similar diaspora organizations were strongly

influenced by the creation of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) whose focus is on Africa's self-reliance (Newland and Patrick, 2004).

The diasporas can also generate benefits to their home countries through their effects on foreign currency inflows, employment creation, human capital development and financial markets. According to Ratha et al. (2011), households receiving international remittances from OECD countries have been making productive investments in agricultural equipment, building houses and businesses, making land purchases and improving farm and other investments (36% in Burkina Faso, 55% in Kenya, 57% in Nigeria, 15% in Senegal and 20% in Uganda). However, diasporas support can also have negative effects, such as fluctuations of exchange rates and distortions in the property markets. They can also have effects internationally, for example through reducing inequalities among countries as remittances exceed official aid transfers in some regions. Yet, this may still promote dependence on unreliable resources of foreign exchange subject to cyclical fluctuations as well as becoming a potential source of money-laundering (Chimhowu et al. 2005). They may also be an important facilitator and source of research and innovation,

technology transfer and skill development.

Diasporas involvement in social and political activities may even have more profound, if indirect effects on the prospects of the poor. These effects, commonly referred to as social remittances, as defined by Levitt (1998) in terms of the ideas, behaviours, identities and social capital that diasporas bring to countries of origin, can affect attitudes toward human rights, women's rights, the value of education for girls and good governance, among other things. They can also play an important role in moderating conflict in their countries of origin by discouraging actions taken by insurgent groups or by withholding aid/support in response to such actions. Diaspora involvement in political change may also help to avert violent conflict by promoting and funding non-violent forms of opposition. For example, the anti-apartheid movement was organized by a strong network of South Africans abroad, which attracted international support. Moreover, some diasporas organizations and individuals seek no personal return on investment but rather pursue charitable enterprises. Such enterprises range from very small-scale, one-off efforts of community groups to more organized and durable efforts, from the donations of single individuals

to powerful networks of like-minded donors. Many associations also work on such initiatives, such as The Sierra Leone War Trust for Children, several Somalia Diaspora organizations in the UK and Indians residing abroad (Newland and Patrick, 2004).

Human migration over the years has resulted in the growth of the diasporas linked by social characteristics like ethnicity, language, religion and culture, which in recent times have relied on intercontinental networks for communication using a variety of mediasuchasInternetandtelephones. These developments in technology have provided important resources among migrants who use them to develop, maintain and recreate informal and formal transnational networks in both the physical and digital world, while reinforcing and maintaining their sense of individual and collective identity (Oiarzabal and Reips, 2012). The interactive components of the Internet have enabled the creation of cyber communities that connect dispersed communities and provide solidarity among members (Brinkerhoff, 2012). Ratha et al. (2011) have identified three types of diaspora networks. First are scientific and research and developmental personal networks which provide knowledge, mentoring expertise and finance. Second are the professional and business networks which tend to be regional or local

networks of skilled diaspora networks located within the large cities, such as the Ghana doctors and dentists associations in the UK and the Associations of Kenyan Professionals in Atlanta, Georgia. Lastly, there are global knowledge networks which are transnational networks linking global regions with the diasporas' origin countries. Diaspora members within these networks sometimes maintain residence in both their origin and destination countries. In other cases, migrants have a primary residence abroad but return to their origin countries yearly to support specific activities (Easterly and Nyarko, 2008). However, these developments tend to be concentrated in developed countries and little is known about the scope, scale, pattern and impact of African diaspora associations.

Globalization and the age of migration have also brought about a challenge to the notion of citizenship. These challenges have been understood through three domains: geographies, relationships and contents of citizenships (Koh, 2010). In the context of the diaspora, citizenship implies a sense of belonging, implicitly to at least two states, but the intensity of one's relations to both states may not be the same. Thus, it is the politics of simultaneity that is the fundamental characteristic of diaspora citizenship (Laguerre, 1997: 88). Ratha et al. (2011) have

noted that holding mutual or dual citizenship provides an important link between diasporas and their home countries. It can also improve both a diaspora's connection with its origin country and its integration into the destination country. In addition, citizenship and residency rights are important determinants of a diaspora's participation in trade, investment and technology transfer within its origin country and makes it easier to travel and own land. Mazzolari, (2007) has shown that immigrants from countries that allowed for dual citizenship in the 1990s and 2000s, such as Brazil, Columbia and other Latin American countries, have experienced a rise in earnings in the United States because they acquired legal status and thus have access to better jobs.

In sum, existing literature on diaspora and development focusing on the South is rather in its infancy. Most of the studies have concentrated on the African diaspora within the North rather than the South. Even in Kenya, a few studies, such as Kirigia et al. (2006) and Oyelere (2007), have focused on the effects of Kenyan diasporas in the North. This is consistent with Bakewell's (2009) observation that, "African diasporas within Africa are absent from the picture" of migration and development. This ignores the longstanding reality that South-South migration is numerically

more important than South-North migration and continues to grow in volume and economic importance (Crush, 2011a). The present study attempts to fill this gap.

### **1.3 Diaspora engagement policies**

Diaspora policies are defined as state institutions and practices that apply to the members of that state's society who reside outside its borders. These range from state-sponsored celebrations and awards for expatriates to bureaucratic units dedicated to the diaspora, to external voting rights and bilateral agreements on social security and pension transferability rights as well as mechanisms through which origin states attempt to extract finances, expertise and influence from their diasporas (Gamlen, 2008). Scholars have attempted to classify diaspora policies based on devices (economic, political and cultural) of sending states (Chander, 2006) and on instruments (legal, economic and political) that apply to emigrated citizens (Barry, 2006). Levitt and De la Dehesa (2003) distinguish between bureaucratic reforms, investment policies, political rights, state services abroad and symbiotic diaspora policies. Gamlen (2006) classifies diaspora policies according to how they contribute to expanding citizenship beyond

territorial borders, distinguishing two types, 'community building policies' aimed at cultivating or recognizing diaspora communities and the mechanisms aimed at extending membership and privileges as well as obligations to these diaspora communities.

Gamlen (2008) has observed that while the tools that countries can employ to engage the diasporas are common, it is the techniques to use them that remain underdeveloped. Relatively few countries see diaspora policy as a distinct issue area, and they do not deliberately pursue coherence between the different states mechanisms through which they impact on the diasporas. Most of what goes on is ad hoc and arbitrary and reflects the different interests and historical trajectories of different institutions. Consequently, when it comes to diaspora dimensions of policies and institutions, inefficient and unjust outcomes are the end result, because the thought, planning and oversight in the domestic context are overlooked in the context of diaspora policies. Thus, enhancing diaspora policies is in large part a matter of improving the coherence of what is already taking place in the area of state-diaspora relations, rather than doing something entirely new. Gamlen further argues that it is in the interests of migrant-sending countries to have good diaspora policies because they present

the sending state not only with policy imperatives (relevance and legitimacy) but also may offer unique opportunities (to further national interests). In addition, migrant sending states have an obligation to treat their diaspora fairly, which means ensuring that their inevitable impacts on diaspora are not arbitrary, exploitative and preferential. Furthermore, global governance of migration requires good governance in the state-diaspora relations.

In this regard, Ratha et al. (2011) have observed that in recent times both sending and receiving countries are beginning to implement policies to boost flows of financial resources, information and technology from diasporas. Several developing countries (such as China, India and several African countries) have set up agencies and initiatives to engage with their diasporas with varied success. Developed countries, too, have implemented initiatives to strengthen engagement with their diasporas. Some governments, such as France and Italy, among others, are working with developing country diaspora groups not only to promote the development of origin countries, but also to further the destination country's foreign policy objectives.

Some countries such as Brazil and Columbia, among others, have also introduced dual citizenship which has provided an important link between

diasporas and their home countries. Origin countries that allow dual citizenship also benefit because their migrants are then more willing to adopt the host country's citizenship, which can improve their earnings and thus their ability to send remittances and invest. Similarly, origin countries can strengthen the diaspora ties by allowing their citizens who reside abroad voting rights without returning home. Some countries give nationals abroad voting rights, and some even reserve a specific number of seats in parliament for diaspora representatives. Ratha et al. (2011) also note that a number of origin countries have introduced measures to encourage return by skilled migrants, the more successful efforts being in Asia. For example, the Taiwanese Hsinchu Industrial Park initiative has attracted more than 5,000 returning scientists. They also find evidence that African governments are reaching out to their diasporas. Some countries such as Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, Senegal and South Africa have launched initiatives to incorporate their diaspora communities as partners in development projects. These initiatives have taken various forms, ranging from the creation of dedicated ministries to deal with migrant communities to adding specific functions to ministries of foreign affairs. Most of these initiatives have focused on diasporas

residing in countries outside Africa, such as the OECD. Conferences and investment seminars, either at home or in major capital cities in OECD countries, target diasporas outside Africa.

Chikezie (2011) argues that that Africa should consider four principles when trying to engage the African diaspora in development: (a) be as inclusive as possible due to the diversity of the diaspora, their relationships and connection with home country and their degree of trust in the government; (b) promote development and results-oriented outcomes (e.g. enterprise development and job creation, health, education and infrastructure) when engaging the diaspora; (c) know and understand the diaspora in order to engage with them effectively; and (d) develop a strategy in addressing their needs, priorities and strengths while not exacerbating capacity constraints. However, while diasporas can contribute to development in host countries, this is not a panacea for African ills. The potential contribution of diasporas does not shift the responsibility for developing homegrown solutions, sound leadership, effective management and good governance as absolute cornerstones for development in the 21st. century.

## **I.4 Diasporas and development in Kenya**

The emigration of Kenyans abroad in large numbers is a relatively recent phenomenon (see table 1). While tens of thousands of non-citizen European and Asian residents left the country in the first two decades after independence in 1963, few Kenyans were able to migrate and live abroad due to costs and other factors. According to Ghai (2004: 2), the most important reason for this shift in migration patterns was the deterioration in Kenya's economic performance. While the first two decades after independence witnessed high economic and employment growth with new opportunities opening up for Kenyans in all sectors, the situation reversed over the past 25 years, especially in the 1990s with negative per capita income growth (for example, -4% in 1992) and worsening income inequality (51 GINI Index in 1992). These statistics are based on the World Bank's world development indicators 2012. Millions of Kenyans have suffered declining living standards. And even those with higher education and technical skills find it difficult to get remunerative employment opportunities. In addition, the rapid pace and intensity of globalization and a growing gap in living standards between Kenya and developed countries, as well as political

repression, spread of corruption and increase in personal insecurity have encouraged out-migration (Ghai 2004:2). In recent times, migration has also been a consequence of business opportunities especially within Kenya's neighbouring countries (Ngugi, 2012).

The bulk of Kenyan migrants are located within African countries and this is consistent with Crush's (2011a) observation that Africa itself is the most important destination for African migrants. According to the World Bank migration database, 91 per cent of the Kenyan migrants migrated to African countries in 1960. This share fell to 53.2 per cent in 1970 but gradually increased over the years to almost 99 per cent in 2000. Asia was the second most important destination, followed by Europe and the Americas. A similar pattern is reflected in the Global Migrant Origin Database (GMOD), where in the year 2007, 82 per cent of the Kenyan migrants went to African countries. Only a handful of Kenyan migrants went to the Caribbean, Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific. These statistics underscore the importance of South-South migration compared to South-North migration. According to the World Bank database, there was a significant reduction in the number of Kenyans who migrated to the rest of the world compared to other African countries.

| <b>Regions</b>                                    | <b>1960</b>   | <b>1970</b>    | <b>1980</b>    | <b>1990</b>    | <b>2000</b>    | <b>2007 (GMOD)</b> |
|---|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| <b>Africa</b>                                     | <b>54,245</b> | <b>84,506</b>  | <b>94,683</b>  | <b>104,773</b> | <b>538,128</b> | <b>876,695</b>     |
| Asia (including China, India and the Middle East) | 3,678         | 38,608         | 30,830         | 21,801         | 966            | 92,731             |
| Europe (including Eastern Europe)                 | 788           | 30,834         | 22,367         | 12,678         | 920            | 70,674             |
| Americas (including Latin America)                | 302           | 4,006          | 6,299          | 8,762          | 161            | 19,329             |
| Caribbean   | 35            | 163            | 768            | 1,431          | 21             | 2,496              |
| Australia and New Zealand                         | 216           | 427            | 226            | 0              | 6              | 849                |
| Pacific   | 11            | 25             | 12             | 0              | 0              | 262                |
| <b>Total</b>                                      | <b>59,275</b> | <b>158,569</b> | <b>155,185</b> | <b>149,445</b> | <b>540,202</b> | <b>1,063,036</b>   |

Source: *World Bank Migration Data (1960–2000) and Global Migrant Origin Database (2007)*.

Within Africa, Uganda and Tanzania account for the bulk of Kenyan migrants (table 2). This has been consistent over the years, although in the year 2000, there was an unusual increase in the number of migrants to these countries. This might be attributed to the liberalization of their economies in 2000. However, on the basis of the GMOD database, Tanzania appears to have become the most preferred destination by Kenyan migrants in the year 2007, followed by Uganda. This is perhaps due to the recent post-election violence, where some Kenyans sought refuge in these countries. Moreover, the two databases appear to differ in terms of the most preferred African

destination by Kenyan migrants. For example, the World Bank database has Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Mozambique and Nigeria as the nine most important destinations in their order, after Uganda and Tanzania. The GMOD database on the other hand identifies the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Burundi, Burkina Faso, Guinea, South Africa, Zambia and Nigeria as the most important destinations in their order, after Tanzania and Uganda. These inconsistencies may either suggest a shift in the pattern of Kenyan migrants in the last decade and/or problems associated with the datasets. These

| <b>Countries</b> | <b>1960</b>   | <b>1970</b>   | <b>1980</b>   | <b>1990</b>    | <b>2000</b>    | <b>2007 (GMOD)</b> |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Uganda           | 28,535        | 33,323        | 39,950        | 46,795         | 351,083        | 33,571             |
| Tanzania         | 17,062        | 39,074        | 38,473        | 37,313         | 61,151         | 123,410            |
| Sudan            | 2,286         | 312           | 1,936         | 3,714          | 48,296         | n.d                |
| Somalia          | 2,259         | 1,610         | 1,874         | 2,144          | 36,512         | n.d                |
| Ethiopia         | 871           | 4,634         | 6,026         | 7,493          | 20,332         | n.d                |
| Rwanda           | 643           | 512           | 953           | 1,431          | 4,634          | n.d                |
| Congo, Dem. Rep. | 572           | 477           | 860           | 1,275          | 4,108          | 7,005              |
| Burundi          | 551           | 534           | 867           | 1,226          | 3,973          | 2,743              |
| Mozambique       | 311           | n.d           | 329           | 691            | 2,253          | n.d                |
| Nigeria          | 235           | n.d           | 249           | 522            | 1,694          | 1,019              |
| Côte d'Ivoire    | 2             | n.d           | 2             | 4              | 14             | 4,147              |
| Ghana            | n.d           | n.d           | n.d           | n.d            | n.d            | 4,128              |
| South Africa     | n.d           | n.d           | 1             | 2              | 7              | 1,066              |
| Zambia           | 57            | n.d           | 61            | 127            | 415            | 1,035              |
| Burkina Faso     | 2             | n.d           | 2             | 4              | 14             | 2,006              |
| Guinea           | 6             | n.d           | 6             | 13             | 44             | 1,694              |
| Others           | 853           | 4,030         | 3,094         | 2,019          | 3,598          | 7,515              |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>54,245</b> | <b>84,506</b> | <b>94,683</b> | <b>104,773</b> | <b>538,128</b> | <b>189,339</b>     |

Source: World Bank Migration Data (1960-2000) and Global Migration Origin Database (2007).

NB: N.d. means no data.

concerns are also shared by Ratha et al. (2011) who highlight the challenge of estimating the size of the African diaspora due to incomplete datasets and differences in defining both migrants and diasporas.

There are several factors which can explain the migrations patterns of Kenyans observed in tables 1 and 2. First, in the 1960s, when Kenya acquired its independence from

Britain, a small number of Kenyans were able to travel abroad, often to the UK, in search of further education and training not readily available at home. Many of these early pioneers returned to Kenya and emerged as the elites in the struggle for independence and as leaders in crucial government and private sector management positions immediately after the British handed over power. During the period up to

1980 when there was an urgent need for qualified native professionals and other technocrats in diverse fields, young Kenyans were sent abroad for higher education, many of them on government financed scholarships with guaranteed government jobs upon the completion of their studies and return to the country. Top key destinations were the United States of America and the United Kingdom but after the cold war, other countries, among them Russia and India, emerged as alternative destinations for Kenyan students<sup>4</sup>.

A similar pattern was observed in the 1980s and 1990s, where excess demand for education in Kenya superseded the existing university facilities. This left many young Kenyans with no option but to travel abroad for further studies. Economic stagnation during this period was also an important contributor to outward migration from Kenya. In addition, political repression during President Moi's era forced many intellectuals who did not have close ties with the ruling party to go into exile, mainly in Europe. Economic hopelessness in the 1990s and political ethnic-based violence following the introduction of multiparty politics in 1992 were also responsible for a massive exodus of both skilled and non-skilled labour out of Kenya to other countries. Likewise,

economic woes in the last decade, as well as the post-election violence in 2007 was responsible for the outward migration to neighbouring countries and, in some cases, to other parts of the world (Ghai, 2004, Ngugi, 2012).

Alongside the recent increase in migration from Kenya has been a significant increase in remittances which have been on an upward trend since 1986. According to figure 1, formal remittances have increased significantly after 1990. Remittances are estimated to have doubled every 5 years since 1990, reaching approximately 6 per cent of GNI in 2010. They have exceeded ODA, Kenya's main source of capital flow, which experienced a downward trend after 1993 until 1999, before a gradual increase in the subsequent period. However, these values tend to be based on estimates and they reflect only remittances sent through formal channels.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, this surge might not be due to an increase in remittances but rather to better reporting by the Central Bank of Kenya.

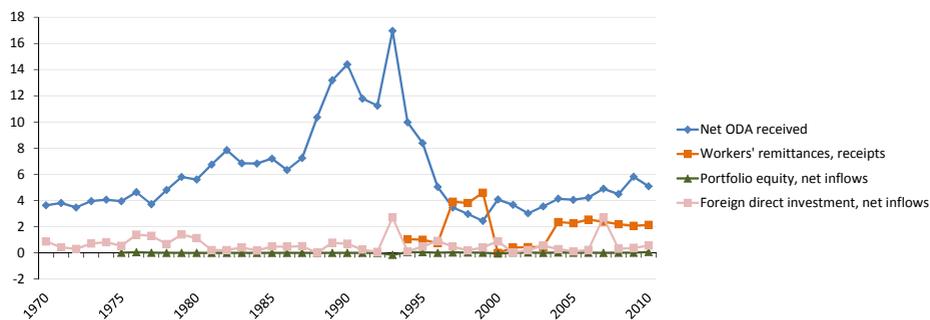
Recognizing the significant role played by the Kenyan diaspora in national development through remittances, the government established the

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4 <http://www.migrationinformation.org/feature/display.cfm?ID=150>.

5 The Central Bank of Kenya conducts a survey on remittance inflows every month through the formal channels that include commercial banks and other authorized international remittances service providers in Kenya.

**Figure 1: A comparison of FDI, ODA and remittances inflows in Kenya (1970–2010)**



Source: World Bank, WDI Database (2012).

International Jobs and Diasporas Office in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2007 to deal with all diaspora matters. In addition, Kenya ratified the amendment to the African Union Constitutive Act Article 3(q) that ‘invites and encourages the full participation of the African diaspora as an important part of our continent in the building of the African Union’. For the first time, the Kenyan diaspora has been recognized in documents such as the Kenyan Foreign Policy strategy that identifies diaspora diplomacy as one of the five key pillars of Kenya’s foreign policy.<sup>6</sup> Diaspora engagement has also been adopted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as one its primary strategic objectives.<sup>7</sup>

The importance of the diaspora has been recognized within the Kenya Vision 2030, where diaspora engagement is highlighted as one of the flagship projects under the social pillar<sup>8</sup>. In order for the diasporas to play their designated role, the government has recognized them in the New Constitution that was promulgated in August 2010. Dual citizenship and voting rights are new rights to be enjoyed by the Kenyan diaspora. In April 2011, The World Bank granted Kenya USD 500,000 to support its efforts of engaging its diaspora in development. The grant was aimed at assisting in the development of Kenya’s Diaspora Engagement Strategic Policy Framework and associated Action Plan. It will also assist the diaspora

6 Others include Economics, Peace, Environment and Cultural diplomacy.

7 This is according to the Embassy of the Republic of Kenya in Washington, D.C. Concept note on Identifying Opportunities for the Diaspora Under Vision 2030. <http://>

[kenyaembassy.com/pdfs/Concept%20paper.pdf](http://kenyaembassy.com/pdfs/Concept%20paper.pdf).

8 <http://www.vision2030.go.ke/index.php/pillars/project/Social/63>.

directorate with the development of its communication, outreach and information gathering capacity<sup>9</sup>. In 2011, the government developed a draft document which was circulated to interested stakeholders for discussion and feedback<sup>10</sup>. Among the key interventions proposed in the policy are curbing the high costs of remittances, improving consular services to address diasporas issues, using the diaspora to promote tourism, tapping into diasporas talent to mitigate the brain drain and designing a system for collection of data and building a profile of the diaspora.

In October 2011, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in conjunction with its mission in the United States (US) and in partnership with various stakeholders, organized the first Kenya Diaspora Conference. The general objective of the Conference was to inform, encourage and catalyse Kenyans in the diaspora to effectively contribute to Kenya's development, in particular, the implementation of Vision 2030.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, in the just concluded national elections in Kenya held on the 4th of March 2013,

more than 1000 diaspora within East Africa were allowed to take part in the voting exercise of the presidential elections.

While remittances are primarily private flows, the Government of Kenya has also adopted measures to tap directly into these foreign flows (Government of Kenya, 2010). These include encouraging the diasporas to invest in infrastructure bonds in the Kenya budget for the financial year 2011/2012. With this initiative, the government hoped to raise K sh. 119.5 billion (USD 1.46 billion) through borrowing. Out of this amount, K sh. 35.85 billion (approximately USD 500 million) was to be raised through infrastructural bonds to fund specific new and ongoing projects in the roads, energy and water sectors. According to the Central Bank of Kenya, this aggressive outreach to the diaspora to invest in government savings development and infrastructure bonds, in addition to improvements in data collection techniques and proper classification of remittances by some commercial bank, partly explains the surge in remittances since 2010<sup>12</sup>.

Apart from remittances, the Kenyan diaspora contributes to poverty reduction and philanthropic activities, such as financing political parties, providing intellectual expertise on

9 <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2011/04/19/world-bank-grant-to-mobilize-kenyas-diaspora>.

10 [www.kenyaembassy.com/pdfs/DraftDiasporaPolicyofKenya.pdf](http://www.kenyaembassy.com/pdfs/DraftDiasporaPolicyofKenya.pdf).

11 <http://kenyaembassy.com/pdfs/Abridged%20Report%20of%20the%20Kenya%20Diaspora%20Conference%202011.pdf>.

12 <http://www.centralbank.go.ke/index.php/news/237-aug-remittances>.

various aspects of development, support of food and disaster management programmes, drilling of bore holes and business meetings, among other important poverty alleviation activities (Kinuthia and Akinyoade, 2012).

The recent developments in information and communication technologies (ICT) in Kenya have resulted in a mobile phone based payment and money transfer system. This system commonly known as M-Pesa allows users to deposit money into an account stored on their cell phones, to send balances using short messages technology to other users (including sellers of goods and services) and to withdraw cash for daily use. While this technology was initially used to send remittances within the country (with approximately 70 per cent of Kenyans using this facility), it is now also being used to remit money internationally. This technology has been on trial in the United Kingdom and is hoped to be an important mechanism through which Kenyans in the diasporas will remit money at a minimal cost in the near future. Today, M-Pesa is the

world's most widely adopted mobile payments system. More than 50 per cent of the mobile phone payments in the world happen over M-Pesa<sup>13</sup>. In addition, the Kenyan migrants located in Kenya, Uganda, and even South Africa use mobile money transfer as one of the many alternatives to send remittances to and within Kenya.

In conclusion, attempts by the Kenyan Government to engage the diasporas in national development are still at the formative stage. This process can be hastened by more evidence on the link between migration and development, especially focusing on the diaspora. Most of the existing studies, such as Kirigia et al. (2006) and Oyelere (2007) among others, are rather outdated and are up on recent developments in the migration and development policy debate and are not on South-South migration. There is thus a pressing need to strengthen the relationship between researchers and policymakers for evidence-based policymaking. This report is a contribution to that important process.

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<sup>13</sup> See <http://www.christinacacioppo.com/blog/tag/mobile-payment/>.



## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1 Mapping the diaspora**

This study began by mapping those regions and countries which contain the highest concentration of Kenyans in the diaspora. The mapping exercise enabled us to conduct more focused research on the profile, development contribution and activities of the diaspora. The mapping exercise was conducted using data on estimates of migrants from the World Bank for the period 1960–2000 and the Global Migrant Origin database. Due to the small numbers of Kenyans within the Caribbean and Pacific, these two ACP regions were not considered any further. Within Africa, the mapping identified 10 major destination countries: the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Rwanda, South Sudan, South Africa, Côte d'Ivoire, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. The Kenyan Government has missions in all these countries, an important infrastructure through which Kenyans within these countries could be reached.

### **2.2 Online diaspora survey**

Apart from the global migrant stocks and the general idea of the diaspora distribution across countries, there was no sample population, nor was it possible to develop a sampling frame for individual interviews. This

study took advantage of the recent explosion of Internet use by members of the diaspora to conduct an online survey using SurveyMonkey. The online questionnaire was developed jointly by our and the Nigerian team, assisted by researchers from the ACP Observatory on Migration during a workshop held in Nairobi in May 2012<sup>14</sup>. Initially, each member of the research team made a list of names and email addresses of the people they knew in the selected countries as contained in table 3. They were contacted via email and invited to take part in the study hosted by SurveyMonkey. They were requested to pass on information about the survey to their friends and acquaintances. This method did not achieve many responses. Additional efforts to access Kenyan migrants through foreign missions through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Headquarters in Nairobi were not successful either due to the following reasons:

First, there was a delay in sending the questionnaires directly to the foreign missions. Second, within the missions, there was a general feeling that information on diaspora contacts is generally confidential. They preferred that such information

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<sup>14</sup> Dr Abel Chikanda was the main facilitator during the workshop.

| <b>Country of residence</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>%</b>   |
|-----------------------------|------------------|------------|
| Tanzania                    | 46               | 22.9       |
| South Africa                | 43               | 21.4       |
| Rwanda                      | 39               | 19.4       |
| Ghana                       | 14               | 7.0        |
| Botswana                    | 13               | 6.5        |
| Burundi                     | 10               | 5.0        |
| South Sudan                 | 8                | 4.0        |
| Uganda                      | 8                | 4.0        |
| Nigeria                     | 6                | 3.0        |
| Zimbabwe                    | 3                | 1.5        |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>202</b>       | <b>100</b> |

*Source: Author's compilation based on the online surveys.*

be accessed through the diaspora organizations. Third, there was too much bureaucracy at the missions. The officers in charge of diaspora affairs had to obtain clearance from the head of the mission which in some instances was not granted. Fourth, some missions, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, were difficult to access both through Internet and telephone while others failed to cooperate in spite of their promise to do so. Hence, there was generally unwillingness from the missions to take part in the study.

Fortunately, the Internet has opened up new opportunities to conduct research with members of the diaspora (Crush et al. 2011b). For this study, a multifaceted e-recruitment

strategy was developed using social media, diaspora websites and Kenyan embassy databases in South Africa and Tanzania as well as on-the-ground recruitment in both countries. Each identified member of the diaspora was sent a personalized message explaining the purpose of the survey and inviting participation through a link containing the questionnaire and to share it with their friends. In the three months from May to July 2012 a total of 202 completed questionnaires were received.

The respondents were based in many countries in Africa as well as other developing countries (table 3). Some Kenyan migrants based in China and the Caribbean even participated in the study. However,

most of the participants resided in either Tanzania (22.9%), South Africa (21.4%), or Rwanda (19.4%). The predominance of these destination countries can be attributed to several factors. First, there was the willingness of the Kenyan embassy officials in these countries to circulate the online questionnaires to resident Kenyans. Second, the officers in charge of diaspora affairs in the Kenyan embassies in South Africa and Tanzania facilitated contact with potential respondents. In Rwanda, efforts by the officer in charge of diaspora affairs in the Kenyan embassy (in collaboration with the Kenyan diaspora association in Rwanda) were largely responsible for the positive response. Third, the project's research assistants in South Africa and Tanzania helped to recruit more Kenyan migrants to take the online survey.

### **2.3 In-depth interviews**

A total of 54 in-depth interviews were conducted in Tanzania and South Africa. The participants of the in-depth interviews were selected based on their locality, age and occupation and willingness to take part in the study. Their contacts were obtained through the Kenyan embassies, diaspora associations and also through referrals by some of the participants. In Tanzania, the

interviews were conducted in Arusha and Dar es Salaam, while in South Africa, in-depth interviews were conducted in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Durban and Cape Town. These cities tend to have a high concentration of Kenyans and in some cases, like in South Africa, there are diaspora associations in each of these towns. Six Kenyan diaspora organizations were also interviewed, three in South Africa, and the others in South Sudan, Rwanda and Burundi. Tanzania was selected for the in-depth interviews because it is one of the preferred destinations for Kenyans due to not only its proximity but also its political stability. South Africa was selected for several reasons. First, it has one of the most advanced economies within the African continent and is a preferred destination for many Kenyan professionals. Second, the Kenyan diaspora within South Africa is more organized and actively engaged with the government of Kenya through the Kenyan Embassy in Pretoria.

### **2.4 Embassy questionnaire**

An embassy questionnaire was sent to Kenyan embassies in 10 African countries. A letter was written to the respective missions requesting them to take part in the study by the officer in charge of the Diasporas Desk at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs headquarters in Nairobi. The

questionnaire was sent directly to them via the diplomatic bag and a follow-up was made by phone. However, the response was poor with only two officers in charge of diaspora affairs in two countries responding. Even in instances where some officers were willing to take part, it appears that too much bureaucracy (or lack of interest) at the embassies made it difficult to obtain the required information.

### 3. Kenyan diaspora engagement

#### 3.1 Diaspora profile

This section provides an overview of the characteristics of the online survey respondents, differentiated by age, gender, marital status, education, employment status and earnings (see table 6). With regard to gender, most of the respondents were male (73%). The majority of the respondents were between the ages of 18-29 (43%), followed by those between ages 30-39 (26%) and 40-49 (18%). Only 2 per cent of the respondents were more than 60 years of age. This seems to suggest that migration is part of the livelihood strategy of younger Kenyans. However, the sample may be biased in that most Internet users tend to be younger and possibly male. The majority of the migrants in this study were single (unmarried)

persons (50%), compared to 42 per cent who were married. This seems to suggest that the majority of the migrants from Kenya are not only young but also unmarried. Fifty seven per cent of the respondents indicated that they had dependants either living with them or back in Kenya. The average number of dependants in Kenya was four, compared to only two in their destination country (table 4). This suggests that the culture of dependency in Kenya is still high and migrants are expected to support people back home. Of those 'married or with long term partners', about 80 per cent have Kenyan spouses. The remainder have partners from other African countries, Europe and other parts of the world (table 5).

| Number of dependants | Living with you | Living in Kenya | Living in another country |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
|                      | Frequency       | Frequency       | Frequency                 |
| One to three         | 38              | 58              | 8                         |
| Four to six          | 11              | 23              | -                         |
| More than six        | -               | 12              | -                         |
| Total                | 49              | 93              | 8                         |
| Mean                 | 1.97            | 4.12            | 0.65                      |

Source: Authors compilation based on the online survey.

| <b>Table 5: Nationality of spouse or long term partner</b> |                  |              |
|--|------------------|--------------|
| <b>Nationality</b>   | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>%</b>     |
| Kenyan   | 83               | 41.1         |
| African (Tanzanian, Burundian, Nigerian, Rwandese)         | 11               | 5.4          |
| Europeans (British, French, Swedish, Austrian, Dutch)      | 6                | 3.0          |
| Others (Australian, Japanese, Canadian)                    | 3                | 1.5          |
| Widow  | 1                | 0.5          |
| Not married  | 68               | 33.7         |
| No response  | 31               | 15.3         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>202</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |

Source: Authors compilation based on the online survey.

As shown in table 6, the respondents were also well-educated: 39 per cent possess a university (bachelor's) degree, 24 per cent have a master's degree and 17 per cent have a college/ diploma certificate. A significant proportion is employed (54%). A further 22 per cent are students, while 14 per cent are self-employed. Only a small proportion of the migrants are unemployed (7%) or retired (1%). Kenyans in the diaspora also possess a wide range of skills (table 7). The three main categories of employment of the respondents were engineers and IT experts (23%), accountants, auditors and financial experts (12%) and economists (9%). Other important skills include teaching, medicine, administration,

management and hoteliers. Most of the migrants were in occupations utilizing their skills (73%). Migrants who said they were not utilizing their skills (16%) possessed tourism, management and design-related skills (22%), followed by business, sales and marketing skills (16%).

In terms of average annual income, the majority (51%) earn less than USD 20,000. Many (34%) actually earn less than USD 10,000 per annum, but this average includes most of the students. At the same time, nearly 35 per cent earn more than USD 20,000 per annum and nearly 18 per cent earn more than USD 40,000 per annum, high salaries by most African standards.

| <b>Table 6: General characteristics of Kenyans in the diasporas</b> |  |                  |              |
|---|--|------------------|--------------|
|   |  | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>%</b>     |
| Gender  | Male   | 148              | 73.3         |
|   | Female                                       | 46               | 22.7         |
|   | No response                                  | 8                | 4.0          |
| <b>Total</b>  |  | <b>202</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |
| Age   | 18-29  | 87               | 43.1         |
|   | 30-39  | 53               | 26.2         |
|   | 40-49  | 37               | 18.3         |
|   | 50-59  | 15               | 7.4          |
|   | 60 years and above                           | 4                | 2.0          |
|   | No response                                  | 6                | 3.0          |
| <b>Total</b>  |  | <b>202</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |
| Marital status  | Single                                       | 100              | 49.5         |
|   | Married                                      | 85               | 42.1         |
|   | Widow  | 1                | 0.5          |
|   | Engaged                                      | 4                | 2.0          |
|   | Don't know                                   | 1                | 0.5          |
|   | No response                                  | 11               | 5.4          |
| <b>Total</b>  |  | <b>202</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |
| Dependants  | Yes  | 115              | 56.9         |
|   | No   | 77               | 38.1         |
|   | No response                                  | 10               | 5.0          |
| <b>Total</b>  |  | <b>202</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |
| Level of education  | Primary                                      | 2                | 1.0          |
|   | Secondary                                    | 5                | 2.5          |
|   | College (certificate/diploma)                | 34               | 16.8         |
|   | University (bachelor's degree)               | 79               | 39.0         |
|   | University (Master's degree)                 | 48               | 23.8         |
|   | University (PhD or doctorate degree)         | 19               | 9.4          |
|   | Others (CPA, students, post doctorate, etc.) | 7                | 3.5          |
|   | No response                                  | 8                | 4.0          |
| <b>Total</b>  |  | <b>202</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |

|                           |                                     |            |              |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Current employment status | Employed                            | 111        | 54.4         |
|                           | Self Employed                       | 29         | 14.2         |
|                           | Unemployed (seeking employment)     | 13         | 6.4          |
|                           | Unemployed (not seeking employment) | 1          | 0.5          |
|                           | Students                            | 45         | 22.1         |
|                           | Retired                             | 3          | 1.5          |
|                           | Others (Pastor, volunteer)          | 2          | 1.0          |
| <b>Total</b>              |                                     | <b>204</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

Source: Authors compilation based on the online survey.

| <b>Table 7: Diasporas professional expertise and remuneration</b> |  |                  |              |
|---|--|------------------|--------------|
|   |  | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>%</b>     |
| Professional expertise  | Hoteliers  | 7                | 3.5          |
|   | Account, audit and finance                                     | 24               | 11.9         |
|   | Administration and management                                  | 10               | 5.0          |
|   | Bankers  | 5                | 2.5          |
|   | Engineering (civil, IT, Telcom)                                | 47               | 23.3         |
|   | Development experts  | 3                | 1.5          |
|   | Medical expertise  | 7                | 3.5          |
|   | Economists   | 18               | 8.9          |
|   | Lecturers/professors/teachers                                  | 9                | 4.5          |
|   | Researchers  | 5                | 2.5          |
|   | Sales/marketing  | 6                | 3.0          |
|   | Others (business, journalism, scientists, town planning, etc.) | 33               | 16.3         |
|   | No response  | 28               | 13.9         |
| <b>Total</b>  |  | <b>202</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |
| Use of skills in current occupation                               | Yes  | 147              | 72.8         |
|   | No   | 32               | 15.8         |
|   | No response  | 23               | 11.4         |
| <b>Total</b>  |  | <b>179</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |

|  |   |            |              |
|--|---|------------|--------------|
| Current occupation when no skilled utilized      | Business, sales and marketing                         | 5          | 15.6         |
|  | Development finance and lawyers                       | 2          | 6.3          |
|  | Lecturer/teacher/program specialists                  | 3          | 9.4          |
|  | Tour guide, manager and graphic designer              | 7          | 21.9         |
|  | Others (students, retired, unemployed, barman, coach) | 15         | 46.9         |
| <b>Total</b>                                     |   | <b>32</b>  | <b>100.0</b> |
| Average annual household income from all sources | Less than USD 10,000                                  | 69         | 34.2         |
|  | USD 10,000-20,000                                     | 34         | 16.8         |
|  | USD 20,001-30,000                                     | 12         | 5.9          |
|  | USD 30,001-40,000                                     | 12         | 5.9          |
|  | USD 40,001-50,000                                     | 6          | 3.0          |
|  | USD 50,001-70,000                                     | 6          | 3.0          |
|  | USD 70,001-100,000                                    | 12         | 5.9          |
|  | More than USD 100,000                                 | 12         | 5.9          |
|  | No response   | 29         | 14.4         |
| <b>Total</b>                                     |   | <b>202</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

Source: Authors compilation based on the online survey.

### 3.2 Migration patterns

The overwhelming majority of the respondents were born in Kenya (table 8). Most have retained their Kenyan nationality although a few have now acquired dual citizenship, which has been recognized in Kenya since the enactment of the new constitution in 2010. Two thirds of the respondents left Kenya within the last five years while only 11 per cent left more than 10 years ago. This reflects the fact that there has been increased migration of young and qualified

people from Kenya in the last five years. One informant attributed this to the lack of opportunity in Kenya:

*Kenya needs to create more job opportunities. There are millions of Kenyans like me who are experts in different fields but you find us selling our skills to other nations where we can get paid other than sitting back home.*

Respondent No.31 Burundi  
26 June 2012

The most important reason given for migration was employment and business opportunities (46%). The

second most important reason was the pursuit of further education (30%). Other reasons included marriage, health, political factors and movement as a family. Some gave multiple reasons, such as migrating due to marriage and education. The results of the online survey were confirmed during the in-depth interviews where most said they were motivated to migrate for employment and education. For example:

*I migrated from Kenya during the Moi era when the economy was in the throes of collapse. I went to the US to pursue further education, where I later worked. I have also worked in South Africa and now I am currently working in Ghana.*

Respondent No.34 Ghana  
22 June 2012

*I was unemployed for two years post my undergraduate degree. I came to SA [South Africa] as a volunteer after failing to secure anything in Kenya. I travelled by road to SA. I studied for my MA, then PhD here. I have been employed for over five years at the university.*

Respondent No.40 South Africa  
19 June 2012

These observations are consistent with findings by Ghai (2004) and Ngugi (2007) who identify economic deterioration at home and existing business opportunities in

neighbouring countries as the main reason for migration from Kenya.

Additional reasons for migration given in the in-depth interviews included post-election violence, retrenchment and church ministry work. There were several reasons why the migrants decided to move specifically to Tanzania or South Africa. The most important reason was that they had received university admission and funding to pursue further studies in those countries (31%; table 9). Most of the students on scholarship were pursuing masters and doctoral studies. The second reason for migrating to those countries was increased employment and business opportunities (26%). Other important reasons included the existence of relatives, friends, cost considerations, nearness to Kenya and political stability especially in Tanzania. These findings support Williams and Balaz's (2006) view that students' flows are facilitated by access to scholarships, student exchange programs but also by market mechanisms, such as school fees and the cost of living. Fourteen of the 54 in-depth interviewees were onward migrants, with most having migrated from Botswana (36%), France (21%) and China (21%).

| <b>Table 8: Diaspora migration profile</b> |                                    |                  |              |
|--|------------------------------------|------------------|--------------|
|  |                                    | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>%</b>     |
| Country of birth                           | Kenya                              | 175              | 86.6         |
|  | South Africa                       | 2                | 1.0          |
|  | Burundi                            | 1                | 0.5          |
|  | Trinidad and Tobago                | 1                | 0.5          |
|  | No response                        | 23               | 11.4         |
| <b>Total</b>                               |                                    | <b>202</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |
| Current nationality                        | Kenya                              | 154              | 76.2         |
| Dual citizens                              | French, UK, Tanzania               | 4                | 2.0          |
| Other countries nationality                | Armenia, Canada                    | 2                | 1.0          |
|  | No response                        | 42               | 20.8         |
| <b>Total</b>                               |                                    | <b>202</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |
| Leaving Kenya                              | Less than 6 months ago             | 13               | 6.4          |
|  | 6-12 months ago                    | 18               | 8.9          |
|  | 1-2 years ago                      | 36               | 17.8         |
|  | 3-5 years ago                      | 46               | 22.7         |
|  | 6-10 years ago                     | 30               | 14.9         |
|  | More than 10 years ago             | 19               | 9.4          |
|  | Not applicable (not born in Kenya) | 10               | 5.0          |
|  | No response                        | 30               | 14.9         |
| <b>Total</b>                               |                                    | <b>202</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |
| Main reason for leaving Kenya              | Never lived in Kenya               | 2                | 1.0          |
|  | Education                          | 60               | 29.7         |
|  | Employment/business                | 92               | 45.5         |
|  | Moved with family                  | 5                | 2.5          |
|  | Marriage                           | 4                | 2.0          |
|  | Others: (i) family health          | 2                | 1.0          |
|  | (ii) political reasons             | 4                | 2.0          |
|  | No response                        | 33               | 16.3         |
| <b>Total</b>                               |                                    | <b>202</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |

Source: Authors compilation based on the online survey.

| <b>Table 9: Reasons for leaving Kenya (in-depth interviews)</b>                        |   |           |              |
|--|---|-----------|--------------|
|  |   | Frequency | %            |
| Reasons for leaving Kenya (multiple responses)   | Education   | 26        | 42.6         |
|  | Employment/business   | 21        | 34.4         |
|  | Moved with family   | 2         | 3.3          |
|  | Marriage  | 3         | 4.9          |
|  | Others (high cost of living, retrenchment, post-election violence, church ministry) | 9         | 14.8         |
| <b>Total</b>   |   | <b>61</b> | <b>100.0</b> |
| Why did you choose to migrate to either Tanzania or South Africa? (multiple responses) | Friends   | 2         | 3.4          |
|  | Employment/business opportunities   | 15        | 25.9         |
|  | Relatives/family  | 7         | 12.1         |
|  | Scholarships/education  | 18        | 31.0         |
|  | Cost considerations   | 5         | 8.6          |
|  | Peace and stability   | 6         | 10.3         |
|  | Nearness to Kenya   | 2         | 3.4          |
|  | Others: easy, ministry, exposure, visit   | 3         | 5.2          |
| <b>Total</b>   |   | <b>58</b> | <b>100.0</b> |
| Intermediate destinations  | USA   | 1         | 7.1          |
|  | China   | 3         | 21.4         |
|  | Botswana  | 5         | 35.7         |
|  | France  | 3         | 21.4         |
|  | Australia   | 2         | 14.3         |
| <b>Total</b>   |   | <b>14</b> | <b>100.0</b> |
| Legal Status<br>Tanzania   | Permit  | 16        | 66.7         |
|  | Irregular   | 8         | 33.3         |
| <b>Total</b>   |   | <b>24</b> | <b>100.0</b> |
| South Africa   | Permit  | 25        | 83.3         |
|  | Asylum  | 4         | 13.3         |
|  | Irregular   | 1         | 3.3          |
| <b>Total</b>   |   | <b>30</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

Source: Authors compilation based on the in-depth interviews.

The in-depth interviews found that the vast majority of Kenyan migrants in Tanzania and South Africa have legal status. In South Africa, there are also asylum-seekers and refugees from Kenya. Political refugees are still angry with the Kenyan government and only occasionally interact with embassies.

There are also economic migrants whose permits have expired and who are unable to renew them either because they are no longer engaged in activities pertaining to the permit or came in irregularly. Only one of the in-depth interviewees fell into this category. The actual numbers are hard to document, as the migrants do not interact with the Kenyan embassies at all, except in times of bereavement.

In both Tanzania and South Africa, some Kenyan migrants said they experienced discrimination from locals who perceive them as a threat when competing for jobs. For example two Kenyans in Cape Town said the following:

*Some of the local teachers feel threatened and discriminate against foreign teachers. I had also to do some re-training as the educational systems between Kenya and South Africa are quite different.*

Respondent No.6 Cape Town  
31 August 2012

*Discrimination is immense amongst the locals and the market during*

*winter is very poor and very bad for business.*

Respondent No.5 Cape Town  
31 August 2012

When a member of the diaspora association in South Sudan was asked about the level of discrimination of Kenyans in that country compared to other parts of Africa, the response was as follows:

*This is to an extent the same for South Sudan though xenophobic feeling against Kenyans is greater! The government which is normally the largest employer has a policy of not employing 'foreigners', unless they are short-term consultants. A number of Kenyans are employed by UN, international NGOs and private sector; for the latter there is also a restriction – I think 95 per cent of the staff is expected to be local, save for specialized skills.*

Respondent No.180 South Sudan  
23 May 2012

The Kenyan diaspora members maintain close ties with Kenya, making frequent visits home. As many as 34 per cent return more than once every six months (table 10). Just under a quarter manage to visit once a year and 8 per cent every two years. Nearly 10 per cent have not returned since migrating. There are a number of explanations for this including financial constraints and work commitments. Recent migrants also take time before returning home. One respondent highlighted the fear

of terrorist attacks as the main reason for not returning back to Kenya. Amongst the additional reasons given in the in-depth interviews was irregular status in Tanzania (work permit-related) and South Africa. They know that upon leaving the country, it would take a lot of time and effort to be granted new entry.

Migrants who regularly return to Kenya stay there for an average of one or two weeks (30%). Some stay for less than a week (16%), while others prefer staying longer, for one to two months (14%), or two to four weeks (9%). Thus the vast majority (70%) stay two months at most. Most return home to visit their families and friends (71%). However, some visit Kenya for business (8%) and others go to Kenya for holidays or tourism (10%). Crush (2011b) has underscored the importance of the tourism and nostalgia trade as a common form of engagement by the South African diaspora abroad which could be worth developing in the Kenyan case. A few of the migrants also visit Kenya to attend funerals, conferences and sporting activities.

Migrants maintain contact with friends and family in Kenya in several ways (figure 2). The most important means of communication is the telephone (including mobile; 46%). This is closely followed by Internet-based communication, such as email, Skype and Facebook (42%). Interestingly,

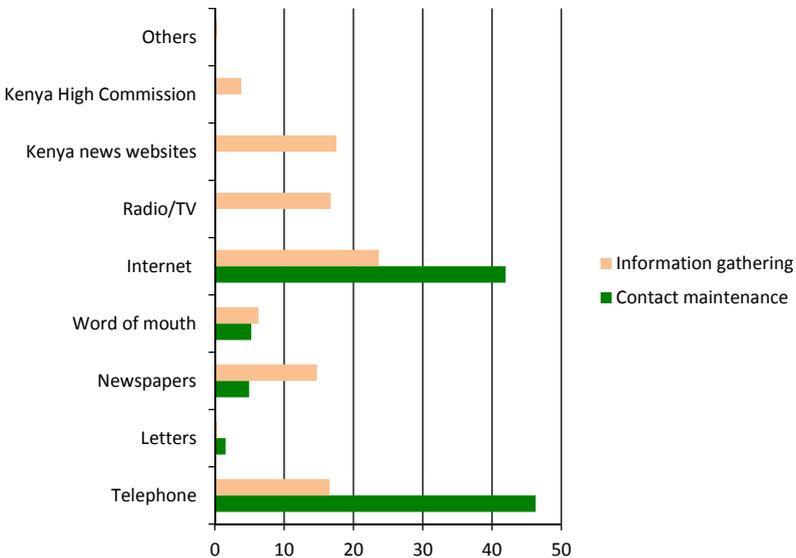
only 1.5 per cent of migrants rely on letters as a means of maintaining contact with family and friends. Figure 2 also contains information on the various means through which the diaspora get information on what is happening in Kenya in their absence. The Internet ranks first, followed by Kenyan news websites, radio/TV, telephone contacts and newspapers. Surprisingly, only 4 per cent of the migrants rely on the Kenyan embassies within their host countries to obtain information on news from back home. This is confirmed from the in-depth interviews, where most migrants said they rarely interact with the embassies other than when in need of consular services, such as passports and national identity cards. In addition, Kenyans in South Africa who live far away from the capital (for instance, in Cape Town or Durban) complain about delayed consular services from the Kenyan embassy in Pretoria.

| <b>Table 10: Diasporas movement profile</b>     |  |                  |              |
|---|--|------------------|--------------|
|   |  | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>%</b>     |
| Return to Kenya                                 | More than once every 6 months            | 68               | 33.6         |
|   | Once a year                              | 50               | 24.8         |
|   | Once every two years                     | 16               | 7.9          |
|   | Once every three years                   | 3                | 1.5          |
|   | Less than once every three years         | 3                | 1.5          |
|   | Haven't returned since migrating         | 19               | 9.4          |
|   | No response                              | 43               | 21.3         |
| <b>Total</b>                                    |  | <b>202</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |
| Reasons for not returning to Kenya              | Terrorism (Al-Shabab)                    | 1                | 5.3          |
|   | Busy working                             | 5                | 26.3         |
|   | Financial constraints (air ticket)       | 9                | 47.4         |
|   | New in the country                       | 1                | 5.3          |
|   | No response                              | 3                | 15.7         |
| <b>Total</b>                                    |  | <b>19</b>        | <b>100.0</b> |
| Average stay in Kenya per visit                 | Less than 1 week                         | 22               | 15.7         |
|   | 1-2 weeks                                | 42               | 30.0         |
|   | 2-4 weeks                                | 13               | 9.3          |
|   | 1-2 months                               | 20               | 14.3         |
|   | 3-6 months                               | 5                | 3.6          |
|   | More than 1 year                         | 3                | 2.1          |
|   | No response                              | 35               | 25           |
| <b>Total</b>                                    |  | <b>140</b>       | <b>100</b>   |
| Most important reason for recent visit to Kenya | Holiday/tourism                          | 14               | 10.0         |
|   | To visit friends and family              | 100              | 71.4         |
|   | Business                                 | 15               | 7.7          |
|   | Education                                | 5                | 3.6          |
|   | Other: Conference, sports, funeral, work | 6                | 4.3          |
| <b>Total</b>                                    |  | <b>140</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |

|                                     |                        |            |              |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Plan to return on a permanent basis | Yes                    | 137        | 67.8         |
|                                     | No                     | 19         | 9.4          |
|                                     | No response            | 46         | 22.8         |
| <b>Total</b>                        |                        | <b>202</b> | <b>100.0</b> |
| If yes, how soon?                   | In the next six months | 11         | 8.0          |
|                                     | In 6 months to 1 year  | 13         | 9.5          |
|                                     | In 1-2 years           | 28         | 20.4         |
|                                     | In 3-5 years           | 45         | 32.8         |
|                                     | In more than 5 years   | 14         | 10.2         |
|                                     | Not sure               | 26         | 19.0         |
| <b>Total</b>                        |                        | <b>137</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

Source: Authors compilation based on the online survey.

**Figure 2: Diasporas means of communication (in %)**



Source: Authors compilation based on the online survey.

### **3.3 Remittances**

The close ties between the Kenyan diaspora in Africa and their dependants in Kenya are reflected in the remitting behaviour of the survey respondents. Most of the respondents (62%) have sent remittances to Kenya (table 11). Remittances are mostly sent on a monthly basis (58%). Some remit quarterly (20%) while others remit whenever a need arises (13%). Only rarely do they remit annually (4%), weekly (3%) or bi-monthly (1%). On average, each migrant remits USD 4,045 annually or USD 178 per month. This is very high compared to other countries such as Botswana (USD 980) or Lesotho (USD 915; Pendleton et al., 2006). There are also a small number of large remitters: 6 per cent remit between USD 10,000 and 30,000 per annum and about 5% remit more than USD 30,000 per annum. The amounts remitted monthly range between a minimum of USD 50 and a maximum USD 5,000. Most of the remitters are either employed (38%) or self-employed (8%). In addition, a small proportion (4%) of students remits money from their savings, if on scholarship, or part-time jobs.

Most of the respondents use formal channels for remitting to Kenya. The most popular avenues are Western Union or MoneyGram (30%), while the least popular one is the post office. Migrants also prefer sending money through bank transfers, especially

when sending large sums of money. A number of migrants prefer to send remittances through their friends and family members (17%), while others use independent brokers (9%) or Internet-based transfer services (7%). The new mobile money transfer (M-Pesa) service is used by about 6 per cent of the migrants, mainly by those who live near Kenya, especially in Tanzania and Uganda where such services are increasingly becoming available. In these countries, M-Pesa ranks third after Western Union and bank transfers. An in-depth interview with Kenyans based in Cape Town revealed that there is only one Kenyan migrant running the M-Pesa service and he is usually overwhelmed by the demand. In addition, a restriction on the maximum amount that can be sent on a daily basis hinders the number of transactions that can be conducted. Finally, some migrants, especially students in South Africa, prefer remitting money using ATM cards. The recipient of the money in Kenya, usually a close family member such as a brother, sister or spouse, uses another ATM, authorized by the migrant, to withdraw money from the migrant's bank account in Kenya. A majority of migrants spend on average between USD 11-25 per transaction when sending remittances. A third spends less than USD 11 per transaction, while 22 per cent spend more than USD 25 per transaction.

| <b>Table 11: Diasporas remittances to Kenya</b> |                              |                  |              |
|---|------------------------------|------------------|--------------|
|   |                              | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>%</b>     |
| Ever sent remittances?                          | Yes                          | 125              | 61.9         |
|   | No                           | 29               | 13.9         |
|   | No response                  | 48               | 23.8         |
| <b>Total</b>                                    |                              | <b>202</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |
| Frequency of sending money (multiple responses) | Weekly                       | 4                | 3.1          |
|   | Monthly                      | 76               | 58.5         |
|   | Quarterly                    | 26               | 20.0         |
|   | Annually                     | 5                | 3.8          |
|   | Other (i) bi-monthly         | 2                | 1.5          |
|   | (ii) As and when need arises | 17               | 13.1         |
| <b>Total</b>                                    |                              | <b>130</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |
| Amount sent annually (USD)                      | Less than 5,000              | 26               | 12.9         |
|   | 5,000- 10,000                | 18               | 8.9          |
|   | 10,001-15,000                | 3                | 1.5          |
|   | 15,001-20,000                | 2                | 1.0          |
|   | 20,001-25,000                | 2                | 1.0          |
|   | 25,001-30,000                | 3                | 1.5          |
|   | More than 30,000             | 9                | 4.5          |
|   | Can't specify/varies         | 2                | 1.0          |
|   | No response/do not send      | 137              | 67.7         |
| <b>Total</b>                                    |                              | <b>202</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |
| Amount sent monthly (USD)                       | Less than 1,000              | 30               | 65.2         |
|   | 1,000-2,000                  | 8                | 17.4         |
|   | 2,001-3,000                  | 2                | 4.3          |
|   | 3,001-5,000                  | 3                | 6.5          |
|   | Can't specify/varies         | 3                | 6.5          |
| <b>Total</b>                                    |                              | <b>46</b>        | <b>100.0</b> |

|  |  |            |              |
|--|--|------------|--------------|
| Remittance by type of migrant                          | Employed   | 64         | 31.7         |
|  | Self-employed  | 16         | 7.9          |
|  | Students   | 8          | 4.0          |
|  | Unemployed, retired, volunteers                          | 14         | 6.9          |
|  | No response  | 100        | 49.5         |
| <b>Total</b>   |  | <b>202</b> | <b>100.0</b> |
| Means of fund remittance (multiple responses)          | Post office  | 1          | 0.5          |
|  | Bank transfers   | 55         | 27.9         |
|  | Western Union/MoneyGram                                  | 59         | 29.9         |
|  | Independent money brokers                                | 18         | 9.1          |
|  | Internet-based transfer services                         | 14         | 7.1          |
|  | Cash through friends and family                          | 34         | 17.3         |
|  | Others (i) mobile money transfer-M-Pesa                  | 12         | 6.1          |
|  | (ii) ATM cards   | 4          | 2.0          |
| <b>Total</b>   |  | <b>197</b> | <b>100.0</b> |
| Average cost to send remittances per transaction (USD) | No charge  | 3          | 2.4          |
|  | 1-5  | 20         | 16.3         |
|  | 6-10   | 18         | 14.6         |
|  | 11-25  | 51         | 41.5         |
|  | 26-50  | 18         | 14.6         |
|  | 51-100   | 7          | 5.7          |
|  | More than USD 100  | 2          | 1.6          |
|  | Others: between 10-12%, plus losses in the exchange rate | 4          | 3.3          |
| <b>Total</b>   |  | <b>123</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

Source: Authors compilation based on the online survey.

Table 12 shows that immediate and extended families are the main recipients of the remittances (67%). A significant proportion of the remittances go to parents (28%) who tend to be more trusted and needy, followed by extended family

members (15%), children (12%) and spouses (12%). Another 11 per cent remit to friends in Kenya. A few also send money to religious (4%) and community organizations (4%). This might lead to the assumption, consistent with many other studies

of remittances, that remittances are primarily used for the immediate survival needs of families. In fact, only 42 per cent said that they remit to support the financial needs of family and friends.

Taking the issue one step further, respondents were asked if their remittances contributed to development in Kenya and in what ways. The respondents clearly have a positive view on the contribution of their remittances to human development (table 12). Remittances are believed to contribute to education (24%), housing (15%), health care provision (14%) and child care (14%). They also contribute to the strengthening of religious organizations (10%), the development of community infrastructure (9%) and self-help groups (6%). However, very few respondents believe remittances contribute to agricultural development, the improvement of governance and democratization and the provision of start-up business capital to dependants (8%). In other words, remittances contribute to the improved well-being of families and communities in Kenya because they not only increase their economic status but also their capacity to be more secure and live the lives they have reason to value through

access to education and health care, the other two dimensions of the human development concept. Thus, migration results in increasing capabilities of migrants who in turn improve their own livelihoods as well as those of their family and communities. These findings are also confirmed through the in-depth interviews.

Almost a third (32%) of the respondents said they send goods to Kenya (table 13). Goods are sent less frequently than cash remittances. Only 4 per cent send goods on a monthly basis, 12 per cent send them occasionally and 11 per cent a few times a year. Household goods and appliances are the most commonly sent goods (30%), followed by books and education materials (18%), food stuffs (16.5%), such as fruits and rice, and equipment, such as computers, cameras and cell phones (15.6%). In addition, some migrants (19.3%) often send medicine and building materials to Kenya. Most of the goods sent are valued at less than USD 1,000 (11%). Some spend between USD 1,000 and 3,000 (6%), while others spend between USD 3,000 and 5,000 (2.5%) on the goods they send to Kenya. On average, the interviewed migrants spend USD 446.78 annually on goods sent to Kenya.

| <b>Table 12 : Use of remittances (multiple responses)</b> |   |                  |              |
|---|---|------------------|--------------|
|   |   | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>%</b>     |
| Remittances recipients                                    | Spouse  | 41               | 12.2         |
|   | Children/dependants                               | 42               | 12.5         |
|   | Parents   | 96               | 28.5         |
|   | Extended family members                           | 45               | 13.4         |
|   | Friends   | 37               | 11.0         |
|   | Religious organizations                           | 15               | 4.5          |
|   | Community organizations                           | 15               | 4.5          |
|   | Bank savings account                              | 36               | 10.7         |
|   | Others:<br>(i) Political/governance organizations | 1                | 0.3          |
|   | (ii) Workers, investments and mobile money        | 3                | 0.9          |
| <b>Total</b>  |   | <b>337</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |
| Reason for sending remittances                            | Financial support for family and friends          | 113              | 42.5         |
|   | Contributions for community development projects  | 30               | 11.3         |
|   | Personal investment                               | 61               | 22.9         |
|   | Debt service                                      | 13               | 4.9          |
|   | Personal obligations                              | 49               | 18.4         |
| <b>Total</b>  |   | <b>266</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |

|  |  |              |      |
|--|--|--------------|------|
| Contribution of remittances to development | Education  | 80           | 24.2 |
|  | Health care provision  | 48           | 14.5 |
|  | Community infrastructure development                             | 29           | 8.8  |
|  | Housing  | 51           | 15.4 |
|  | Religious organizations  | 32           | 9.7  |
|  | Self-help groups   | 19           | 5.7  |
|  | Childcare (health, education or otherwise)                       | 48           | 14.5 |
|  | Not sure   | 20           | 6.0  |
|  | Other areas of development:<br>i) Governance and democratization | 1            | 0.3  |
|  | ii) Business capital to dependants                               | 1            | 0.3  |
|  | iii) Agriculture development and land buying                     | 2            | 0.6  |
| <b>Total</b>                               | <b>331</b>   | <b>100.0</b> |      |

Source: Authors compilation based on the online survey.

Several problems are encountered when sending remittances in monetary or goods form. The major problem stems from the high cost involved in sending remittances (mentioned by 41%). This is exacerbated by the conversion rates due to currency fluctuations (38%). Other problems identified include loss of goods on their way to Kenya and

the time it takes for goods to reach the beneficiaries. Other problems mentioned in the in-depth interviews include corruption by customs officials, high taxation, scarcity of hard currency, especially in South Sudan, host country regulations and excess weight fees for goods at the airport.

| <b>Table 13: Goods sent to Kenya</b>      |  |                  |                |
|---|--|------------------|----------------|
|   |  | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>%</b>       |
| Frequency of sending goods                | Never sent goods to Kenya                                      | 71               | 35.1           |
|   | At least once a month  | 8                | 4.0            |
|   | A few times a year   | 22               | 10.9           |
|   | Once a year  | 8                | 4.0            |
|   | Occasionally (less than once a year)                           | 25               | 12.4           |
|   | No response  | 68               | 33.7           |
| <b>Total</b>                              |  | <b>202</b>       | <b>100.0</b>   |
| Goods send last year (multiple responses) | Household goods and appliances                                 | 33               | 30.3           |
|   | Food   | 18               | 16.5           |
|   | Books/educational materials                                    | 20               | 18.3           |
|   | Equipment (laptops, cell phones, cameras, farm tractors, etc.) | 17               | 15.6           |
|   | Others (building materials, medication, etc.)                  | 21               | 19.3           |
| <b>Total</b>                              |  | <b>109</b>       | <b>100.0</b>   |
| Approximate value of goods (USD)          | Less than 1,000  | 23               | 11.4           |
|   | 1,000-3,000  | 12               | 5.9            |
|   | 3,001-5,000  | 5                | 2.5            |
|   | More than 5,000  | 3                | 1.5            |
|   | Can't be specified   | 2                | 1.0            |
|   | No response  | 157              | 77.7           |
| <b>Total</b>                              |  | <b>202</b>       | <b>100.0</b>   |
| <b>Mean = 446.78; Std. dev = 4864.06</b>  |  | <b>Max=25000</b> | <b>Min= 50</b> |

|   |  |            |              |
|---|--|------------|--------------|
| Problems faced when remitting money and goods to Kenya (multiple responses) | High transaction costs of sending money/goods  | 63         | 40.6         |
|   | Method not reliable (sometimes goods get lost or stolen)   | 8          | 5.2          |
|   | Takes too long to reach the beneficiary in Kenya   | 7          | 4.5          |
|   | Currency fluctuation   | 59         | 38.1         |
|   | No problem faced   | 10         | 6.5          |
|   | Others (corruption, high tax, scarce hard currency, host regulations, excess weight at the airport, goes with them personally) | 8          | 5.2          |
| <b>Total</b>  |  | <b>155</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

Source: Authors compilation based on the online survey.

### 3.4 Diaspora investment

About two thirds of the migrants indicated that they had property, assets, or investments in Kenya (table 14). Furthermore, an overwhelming majority (92%) indicated that they were interested in making private investments in Kenya. There were many different sectors in Kenya which appealed to the respondents, including the commercial agricultural and horticulture sector (24%), financial services (14%), manufacturing (12%), tourism (12%) and supplies (11%). Some also indicated that they would be interested in real estate (11%), transport (9%) and mining (2%). Only a few were interested in education, business consultancy and ICT services, hotels and healthcare.

About 42 per cent of the respondents said they are interested in contributing or donating to development projects

in Kenya (table 15). Only 15 per cent said they had no interest. Education was mentioned most frequently, followed by healthcare provision, childcare and infrastructure development, all of them indicators of human development. A third of the respondents are willing to support development projects through religious organizations, non-government or women's associations and microfinance initiatives. Other projects that a few migrants are interested in supporting include civic education, sports, real estate, agriculture and tourism. The two most important types of support to these development projects are skills transfer (48%) and financial support (32%). However, some are willing to provide material assistance and political support.

| <b>Table 14: Diaspora investment in Kenya</b>                               |   |                  |              |
|---|---|------------------|--------------|
|   |   | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>%</b>     |
| Ownership of property/assets/private investments                            | Yes   | 98               | 48.5         |
|   | No  | 50               | 24.8         |
|   | No response                                 | 54               | 26.7         |
| <b>Total</b>  |   | <b>202</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |
| Interested in private investments   | Yes   | 135              | 66.8         |
|   | No  | 6                | 3.0          |
|   | Not sure                                    | 6                | 3.0          |
|   | No response                                 | 55               | 27.2         |
| <b>Total</b>  |   | <b>202</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |
| If yes, what type of investment is of interest to you? (multiple responses) | Manufacturing                               | 28               | 11.8         |
|   | Financial services                          | 33               | 13.9         |
|   | Agriculture/horticulture                    | 57               | 24.1         |
|   | Transport                                   | 20               | 8.4          |
|   | Mining                                      | 6                | 2.5          |
|   | Supplying                                   | 26               | 11.0         |
|   | Tourism                                     | 28               | 11.8         |
|   | Others:                                     |                  |              |
|   | (i) Real estate                             | 27               | 11.4         |
|   | (ii) Education                              | 4                | 1.7          |
|   | (iii) Business consultancy and ICT services | 3                | 1.3          |
|   | (iv) Hotels                                 | 3                | 1.3          |
|   | (v) Health care and networking              | 2                | 0.8          |
| <b>Total</b>  |   | <b>237</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |

Source: Authors compilation based on the online survey.

While many respondents are willing to support development projects in Kenya, about a third (36%) indicated that there existed barriers or restrictions that could stop them from contributing. The most important barrier identified was the lack of finances (44%). Work commitments (25%) and political or

legal circumstances (14%) were also identified as important barriers. Other barriers identified related the level of corruption, lack of accountability, improper use of tax payers' money, lack of a policy framework, unfavourable political and social climate and lack of information and contribution channels.

|  |  | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>%</b>     |
|--|--|------------------|--------------|
| Interested in contributing or donating to development projects | Yes  | 85               | 42.1         |
|  | No   | 31               | 15.3         |
|  | Not sure                                     | 31               | 15.3         |
|  | No response                                  | 55               | 27.3         |
| <b>Total</b>   |  | <b>202</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |
| Development projects of interest                               | Education                                    | 71               | 27.5         |
|  | Healthcare provision                         | 35               | 13.6         |
|  | Infrastructure development                   | 26               | 10.1         |
|  | Religious organizations                      | 27               | 10.5         |
|  | Women's associations                         | 18               | 7.0          |
|  | Non-governmental organizations               | 21               | 8.1          |
|  | Childcare                                    | 30               | 11.6         |
|  | Microfinance initiatives                     | 20               | 7.8          |
|  | Others                                       |                  |              |
|  | (i) Community development/civic education    | 2                | 0.8          |
|  | (ii) Tourism, hospitality and ideas exchange | 3                | 1.2          |
|  | (iii) Sports and real estate                 | 3                | 1.2          |
| (iv) Wildlife/environment and agriculture                      | 2  | 0.8              |              |
| <b>Total</b>   |  | <b>258</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |

|  |  |            |              |
|--|--|------------|--------------|
| Type of support  | Financial  | 63         | 32.0         |
|  | Material   | 26         | 13.2         |
|  | Skills transfer  | 95         | 48.2         |
|  | Political  | 11         | 5.6          |
|  | Others: Networking, strengthening civil society                | 2          | 1.0          |
| <b>Total</b>   |  | <b>197</b> | <b>100.0</b> |
| Barriers or restrictions that can prevent contribution to national development | Yes  | 72         | 35.6         |
|  | No   | 56         | 27.7         |
|  | Not sure   | 15         | 10.5         |
|  | No response  | 59         | 29.2         |
| <b>Total</b>   |  | <b>202</b> | <b>100.0</b> |
| Kind of barriers   | Financial constraints  | 41         | 43.6         |
|  | Work commitments   | 24         | 25.5         |
|  | Political/legal  | 13         | 13.8         |
|  | Others   | 6          | 6.4          |
|  | (i) Corruption   | 4          | 4.3          |
|  | (ii) Lack of accountability                                    | 1          | 1.1          |
|  | (iii) Lack of supporting policies, legislation and regulations | 2          | 2.1          |
|  | (iv) Lack of information and contribution channels             | 1          | 1.1          |
|  | (v) Political and social climate                               | 1          | 1.1          |
|  | (vi) Improper use of tax payers' money                         | 1          | 1.1          |
| (vii) Not sure   | 1  | 1.1        |              |
| <b>Total</b>   |  | <b>94</b>  | <b>100.0</b> |

Source: Authors compilation based on the online survey.

| <b>Table 16: Diaspora networks</b>                        |  |                  |              |
|---|--|------------------|--------------|
|   |  | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>%</b>     |
| Belong to a diaspora network (formal or informal)         | Yes  | 48               | 23.8         |
|   | No   | 25               | 12.4         |
|   | No response                                    | 129              | 63.8         |
| <b>Total</b>  |  | <b>202</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |
| If yes, type of diaspora network(s)                       | Academic                                       | 7                | 7.0          |
|   | Work-based                                     | 3                | 3.0          |
|   | Government                                     | 6                | 6.0          |
|   | Association of Kenyans in country of residence | 61               | 61.0         |
|   | Internet-based social networking groups        | 15               | 15.0         |
|   | Investment/business clubs                      | 7                | 7.0          |
|   | Others-religious based                         | 1                | 1.0          |
| <b>Total</b>  |  | <b>100</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |
| Information sharing among members of the diaspora network | Meetings                                       | 52               | 22.9         |
|   | Newsletter                                     | 7                | 3.1          |
|   | Word of mouth                                  | 33               | 14.5         |
|   | Internet-based communication                   | 95               | 41.9         |
|   | Embassy  | 39               | 17.2         |
|   | Telephone and sms                              | 1                | 0.4          |
| <b>Total</b>  |  | <b>227</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |
| Frequency of meetings                                     | Once every week                                | 5                | 5.2          |
|   | Once every fortnight (two weeks)               | 2                | 2.1          |
|   | Once a month                                   | 28               | 28.9         |
|   | Once every three months                        | 24               | 24.7         |
|   | Once every six months                          | 16               | 16.5         |
|   | Once a year                                    | 10               | 10.3         |
|   | Others (when necessary)                        | 12               | 12.4         |
| <b>Total</b>  |  | <b>97</b>        | <b>100.0</b> |

Source: Authors compilation based on the in-depth interviews.

### **3.5 Diaspora associations and networks**

Just under a third of the respondents belong to a formal or informal diaspora network (table 16). Nearly two thirds of the respondents did not answer this question, however, perhaps due to the fact that they do not exist in countries such as Tanzania. The most common type of diaspora networks that migrants are involved in are associations of Kenyans in their country of residence (61%). Some 15 per cent belong to the Internet-based social networking groups, while 7 per cent are members of academic associations or investment clubs. A few migrants also take part in work-based, government-based or even religious network groups.

Within the diaspora networks, information is shared among members mostly through Internet-based communication such as emails, Facebook and Skype (42%). Information is also shared in meetings (23%), through the embassy (17%) and by word of mouth (14%). Sometimes, newsletters and telephone calls or short messages (sms) are used in information sharing. Most of the diaspora associations meet once every month or once every three months. Around a quarter meet annually.

Table 17 contains information on selected Kenyan diaspora associations

in Africa. In the remainder of this section, we discuss two of the most vibrant diaspora associations. South Africa contains the highest number of Kenyan diaspora associations located in the four major cities of Pretoria, Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban. These are umbrella associations representing the various groups of Kenyans within each city. There are other smaller groups which tend to be independent, pursuing different interests.

Among the umbrella associations in South Africa, Kenyan Diasporas in South Africa (KEDASA) is the most advanced even though it only formed in 2011. It serves Kenyan migrants located mainly in Pretoria and Johannesburg, as well as the interests of many other small groups of Kenyan migrants located elsewhere. It has a constitution and, unlike the other groups in South Africa which are informal, it is in the process of registration. Its patron is the Kenyan Ambassador in South Africa. Apart from dealing with welfare issues, such as illnesses and deaths, its main concern is in matters of national interest, such as voting, investments and creating forums for networking for students studying in South Africa. Kenyan migrants pay a small fee (USD 5 monthly) to become full members. Recently, KEDASA has been very active, working with the Kenyan embassy in Pretoria in spearheading

efforts aimed at assisting migrants obtain national identity cards in anticipation of diaspora voting in Kenya's general elections in March 2013.

The most advanced Kenyan diaspora organization in Africa is the New Vision Kenya (NVK), which registered in Juba, South Sudan. It has a keen interest in governance and investment. Since its establishment in 2005, it has given rise to two fast growing global Kenya Diaspora organs: the Diaspora Investment Club and the Kenya Diaspora Alliance, which now has a membership of about 20 of the larger diaspora organizations globally, including Kenyans for Change, Kenya Community Abroad, NVK and Kenyans in the United Arab Emirates. NVK through the New Vision Investment Club, its investment arm, currently has 4 projects underway, including: i) a micro-finance scheme giving shareholders short-term, high interest loans for commercial purposes, ii) a taxi-fleet project in Juba (targeted 10 high-end, branded taxis; already 2 on the road and 2 ordered; each earns USD 300 weekly net), iii) reserved 5 per cent equity in Tangaza, a mobile telephone company targeting diaspora remittances and, iv) a housing project in Athi River with 30 two- and three-bedroom units targeted. Through KDN, this association has been able to contribute

to governance and democratization in Kenya by championing the cause of the diaspora. For example, it has filed several petitions within the Kenyan courts on four main issues relating to diaspora registration and voting, electronic voting, representation and diaspora constituencies and on technical issues relating to the recently approved dual citizenship in Kenya. It has also submitted in writing comments regarding the diaspora policy document to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kenya. In addition, KDN has an online forum where members of the diaspora meet to discuss the issues facing them.

However, despite these associations, a large part of the Kenyan diaspora remains unrepresented and unaccounted for. For example, whereas the embassy in South Africa has a database of about 5,800 Kenyan migrants and KEDESA about 2,000 migrants, the total number of Kenyans in South Africa is estimated at 30,000 people. NVK, on the other hand, has about 6,000 Kenyan migrants registered, whereas Kenyans in South Sudan are estimated to number about 80,000. In Tanzania, many Kenyan nationals are reluctant to register with the High Commission, and the diaspora associations generally fizzle out due to partisan interests and internal politics.

| Name of Association                  | Country                            | Membership |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------|
| Association of Kenyans               | Rwanda                             | 3,000      |
| New Vision Kenya                     | South Sudan                        | 6,000      |
| Kenya Diaspora ( KEDASA)             | Pretoria/Johannesburg-South Africa | 2,000      |
| Kenya and Friends Association (KEFA) | Durban                             | 1,500      |
| Kenya Community                      | Cape Town-South Africa             | 3,000      |
| Associations of Kenyans              | Burundi                            | 500        |

Source: *Diasporas association interviews.*

### 3.6 Return migration

As shown in table 18, most of the survey respondents intend to return to Kenya on a permanent basis (68%) but less than 20 per cent anticipate going back within the next year. As many as 44 per cent said it would only happen within 3-5 years or even later. Around 20 per cent were unsure when they would return. The main obstacle to returning earlier (mentioned by nearly 40%) included financial constraints. Most would prefer to have a good financial base prior to their return.

The second barrier is that some of the migrants have permanent jobs and are not willing to leave them, especially when there is no guarantee that they will find a good job in Kenya. This suggests the need for the Kenyan government to address unemployment concerns, which has been the main cause of

migration. Other important barriers include lack of proper health care, accommodation and child education as well as bad politics, legal issues and the high unemployment rate in Kenya. The main concern of these migrants is the fear of being worse off upon returning to Kenya. Others mentioned the security situation due to political unrest:

*Judging by the current political situation, tribal conflicts and Somali suicide bombers, Kenya is looking insecure. If these issues don't die out it may prove hard to resettle there in the near future. If there is a way to bring back the peaceful Kenya we know it would be to everyone's advantage.*

Respondent No.56 Ghana  
13 June 2012

| <b>Table 18: Return migration</b>           |  |                  |              |
|---|--|------------------|--------------|
|   |  | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>%</b>     |
| Intent to return permanently                | Yes  | 137              | 67.8         |
|   | No   | 19               | 9.4          |
|   | No response  | 46               | 22.8         |
| <b>Total</b>                                |  | <b>202</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |
| If yes, how soon?                           | In the next six months   | 11               | 8.0          |
|   | In 6 months to 1 year  | 13               | 9.5          |
|   | In 1-2 years   | 28               | 20.4         |
|   | In 3-5 years   | 45               | 32.8         |
|   | In more than 5 years   | 14               | 10.2         |
|   | Not sure   | 26               | 19.0         |
| <b>Total</b>                                |  | <b>137</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |
| Barriers to returning                       | Yes  | 62               | 30.7         |
|   | No   | 101              | 50.0         |
|   | Not sure   | 16               | 4.0          |
|   | No response  | 23               | 11.4         |
| <b>Total</b>                                |  | <b>202</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |
| If yes, what barriers                       | Financial constraints  | 27               | 37.5         |
|   | Work commitments   | 23               | 31.9         |
|   | Accommodation/housing  | 5                | 6.9          |
|   | Health care  | 5                | 6.9          |
|   | Political/legal  | 7                | 9.7          |
|   | Others: School/unemployment/insecurity/suitable education for children | 5                | 6.9          |
| <b>Total</b>                                |  | <b>72</b>        | <b>100.0</b> |
| Interested in a 'skill transfer programme?' | Yes  | 126              | 62.4         |
|   | No   | 19               | 9.4          |
|   | Not sure   | 14               | 6.9          |
|   | No response  | 43               | 21.3         |
| <b>Total</b>                                |  | <b>202</b>       | <b>100.0</b> |

|  |                    |            |              |
|--|--------------------|------------|--------------|
| If yes, time willing to spend in Kenya on a 'skills transfer' programme? | Less than 2 weeks  | 11         | 8.2          |
|  | 2 weeks to 1 month | 41         | 30.6         |
|  | 1 to 2 months      | 24         | 17.9         |
|  | 3-6 months         | 9          | 6.7          |
|  | 7-12 months        | 11         | 8.2          |
|  | More than a year   | 20         | 14.9         |
|  | Not sure           | 18         | 13.4         |
| <b>Total</b>   |                    | <b>134</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

Source: Authors compilation based on the online survey.

The in-depth interviews revealed that some migrants prefer to migrate to other countries in search of greener pastures rather than going back home. This is because moving has the potential to affect not only material well-being but also such things as bargaining power, self-respect and dignity.

The survey also asked if the respondents would be interested in returning to Kenya temporarily as part of a 'skills transfer' programme

(table 18). The majority were in favour of such a programme (62%). Only 12 per cent were not interested. Among those interested, most expressed their willingness to spend between two to four weeks on such a programme (31%). Some were even willing to spend a much longer period of between one and two months (18%), while others preferred more than a year (15%).



## **4. Conclusion**

This study has sought to analyse how the Kenyan government can better engage Kenyans living in the African diaspora in promotion and participation in national development. Previously, these efforts have been hampered by a general lack of research on migration in Kenya and the existence of poor quality data, a gap this study attempts to bridge. It employs the human development approach which views human capabilities as the substantive freedom of people to lead the lives they have reason to value. From a capabilities perspective, human migration is in itself a substantial freedom and has the potential to expand other human capabilities. The data used in this study was collected from both online surveys of Kenyan migrants in 10 African countries, and from in-depth interviews of migrants, embassy officials and diaspora associations in some of those countries.

The study revealed that most of the Kenyans in other developing countries are young and aged below 50. They are usually unmarried and their main reason for migration is economic. They migrate in search of employment and business opportunities or to pursue further education. They tend to have an average of four dependants at home

in Kenya and mostly send money to their parents, not their spouses and children. In addition, the majority of the migrants are skilled with bachelor's degrees in engineering, commerce, or economics. They tend to get jobs in foreign lands that make use of their skills. The jobs acquired in these developing countries do not pay very well compared to similar jobs in developed countries though remittances to Kenya are still high. Most of them retain their Kenyan citizenship, although some have partners with other nationalities.

Kenyan diaspora members in Africa make frequent visits to Kenya, at least once every two years. The frequency of their home visits is largely determined by financial constraints or prior work commitments. Those who regularly return to Kenya usually stay for a period that does not exceed two months. While some visit their family and friends, others travel back for business. Eventually most of the Kenyan diaspora respondents would want to return home for good. Nevertheless, financial constraints are a major impediment for those who wish to return to Kenya permanently. Those who do not wish to return home prefer to migrate to other countries in the face of dwindling prospects in their host countries. Kenyan diaspora members are also in

favour of a 'skills transfer programme' for which they would visit Kenya for a period of less than a year.

Remittances are an indispensable source of income for their dependants in Kenya. Most migrants remit finances on a monthly basis. The funds support their families, both immediate and extended and in some cases friends and their communities. Each year, migrants on average remit USD 4,045 yearly or USD 178 monthly. This money is remitted mainly through Western Union and MoneyGram. Large amounts of money are remitted through bank transfers. For those who migrate to neighbouring countries, M-Pesa is increasingly becoming a common means of remitting money to Kenya. For that purpose, the government needs to support efforts aimed at encouraging its usage transnationally, perhaps through introduction of incentives to the mobile service providers and by working with the various embassies in countries with large diaspora constituencies and mobile providers so as to assist in the sending of remittances. However, the recent introduction of the 10 per cent tax on mobile money transfer services may adversely affect the sending of remittances due to increased costs. Remittances are mainly used for family upkeep, payment of school fees, healthcare provision, such as buying medicine, and to address

urgent needs in the family. They are also used for personal investments and to meet the migrant's personal obligations. The cost of sending remittances is believed to be very high and the problem is further compounded by the exchange rate conversion.

Respondents believe that remittances contribute positively to human development through investment in education, housing, healthcare provision and child care. Most of the migrants do not send goods to Kenya and when they do, it is occasional or a few times a year. Household goods and appliances are the most common goods sent by migrants, followed by books and electronics.

The majority of the members of the diaspora have assets and/or investments in Kenya. In addition, they are interested in making more investments in sectors such as agriculture and horticulture, financial services, manufacturing, real estate, tourism and supplies. They are also interested in contributing their skills or finances to development projects in education, healthcare provision, childcare and infrastructure. However, lack of finances and political as well as legal factors in Kenya are likely to hinder their participation.

In their host countries, few migrants are active in various diaspora associations. Information

within these diaspora networks is shared through Internet-based communication, during meetings, through the embassy, or by word of mouth. Other than the need for consular services, the migrants do not associate themselves with the embassy. In some countries such as Tanzania, diaspora associations do not exist, so that the embassies in such countries can play an important role in facilitating the establishment of such associations. There clearly is a need for collaboration between the embassies and diaspora associations. This would provide a good avenue through which diasporas in various countries can be mobilized to take part in development, while at the same time improve the image of the embassies in those countries.

This report concludes by making the following recommendations:

-  There is an urgent need to increase efforts to collect up-to-date data on Kenyan diaspora members in the South. But statistics of Kenyan diaspora in the South are non-existent which makes it difficult to meaningfully engage with Kenyan migrants.
-  There is need for greater collaboration between the embassies and the diaspora associations. This will demystify the role of the embassies abroad and facilitate smooth flow of information, especially when it may affect Kenyans within those countries.
-  Kenyan embassies can spearhead the establishment of diaspora associations in countries where they do not exist. This will give Kenyans a platform where they can form their identity and develop a sense of belonging. There are many countries in the South where these associations are non-existent.
-  There is need to reduce the cost of sending remittances to Kenya and mobile money transfer services such as M-Pesa provide a great avenue for this. Cost-reduction will encourage more migrants to remit money which can be used for development.
-  The Kenyan government, in association with foreign embassies and diaspora associations, should facilitate 'skill development transfer programmes' to take advantage of enormous skills in their diasporas.
-  There is need to develop financial instruments that are within reach of the diasporas in the South, where most migrants are low income earners. For example most of the bonds issued recently are far beyond the reach of many in the diaspora.

 Dual citizenship and voting rights are important avenues for diaspora engagement. While dual citizenship has been recognized in the new Kenyan constitution, the requirements are still considered very prohibitive and the path to citizenship still complex. In addition, there is need to allow for greater participation of the diaspora in the general elections. The participation of the Kenyan

diaspora in the just concluded general elections is a move in the right direction.

 Job creation and improvement of the political and social environment are important incentives for returning migrants and will also stem the exodus from Kenya by young people who are frustrated because they cannot access decent employment.

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