

PRESS RELEASE

CIDO- Towards creating a Diaspora Engagement Toolkit



Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; September 15-17, 2016 – In a quest to effectively engage and mobilize African Diaspora to support socio-economic development on the continent, the Citizens and Diaspora Directorate (CIDO) and The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ) held a Diaspora toolkit workshop from 15–17 September 2016 at the African Union Commission’s headquarters.

The workshop brought together diaspora experts and academics drawn from North America, Europe, Asia and Australia in addition to Focal Points from the Diaspora Engagement Ministries/Directorates.

In his opening remarks, Ambassador Musifiky Mwanasali representing the Bureau of the Chairperson reiterated the importance of the diaspora referred to as the 6th region, as he recalled how the Constitutive Act of the African Union expressly declares that it shall “invite and encourage the full participation of the African Diaspora as an important part of our continent, in the building of the Continent and the African Union”. Ambassador Mwanasali also highlighted how such deliberations and considerations such as this workshop will provide a firm foundation for the advancement of the Diaspora engagement strategies.

In the same vein, Ambassador Jalel Chelba, Head of Civil Society division- CIDO, stressed that in order for African countries to fully leverage the growing globalising trend, it is essential that they design and

implement comprehensive diaspora strategies for engaging their global citizens and friends. For this reason, diaspora engagement is a strategic priority for the African Union and the Toolkit Project is designed to respond to a clear need to enhance the technical capacity of policymakers on the continent to develop and manage robust and well-researched strategies that can effectively harness the power of the diaspora.



The toolkit workshop comprised of panel discussion and working groups sessions and discussed three major areas: - (1) Identifying, Understanding the Diaspora, Engaging the Diaspora; (2) Capacity Building of diaspora policy makers; (3) Communication and Monitoring & Evaluation of diaspora strategies.

Participants during the workshop drew attention to the historic and contemporary trends of migration and accordingly the growing number of African Diaspora and their positive contributions to both the countries of destination and the African continent. China was cited as a new destination for African youth particularly for the available opportunities of growth in China.

The workshop concluded with a framework for the Toolkit in addition to various recommendation to help bridge the gap between Diaspora and Member states and ensure that diaspora are engaged in meaningful ways. Recommendations include the need for Member States to collectively generate more knowledge on diaspora needs and engagement; the importance of constructive and continuous dialogue to with the diaspora; the need to invest in effective national messaging and branding of homeland countries within the Diaspora community.

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