



IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society.

As the leading international organization for migration, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to:

- Assist in meeting the operational challenges of migration,
- Advance understanding of migration issues,
- Encourage social and economic development through migration, and
- Uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

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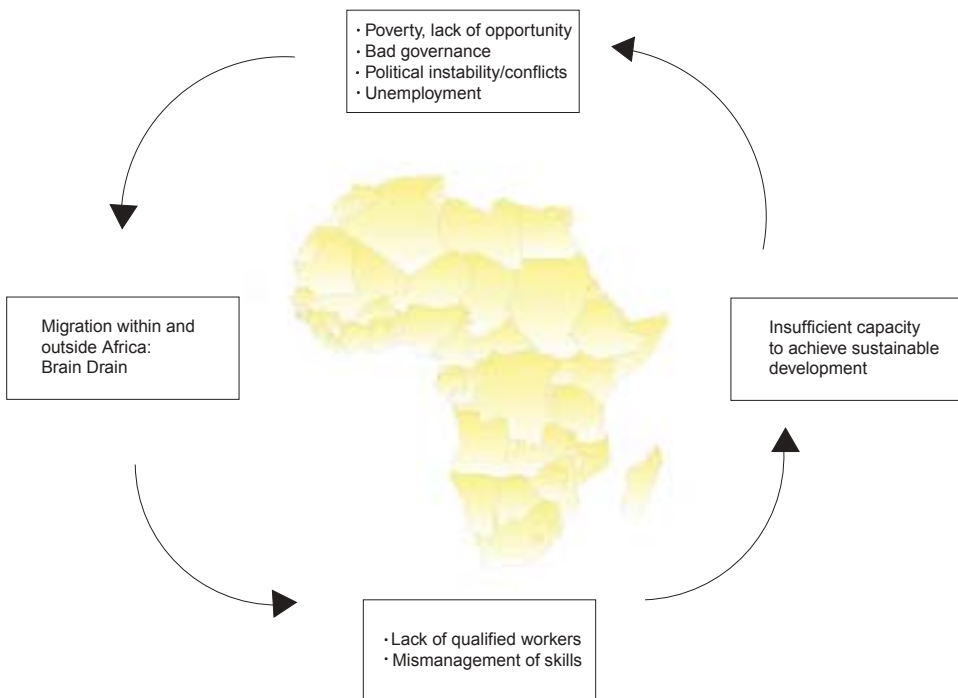
Illustration: from a painting by Vanessa Cuisinier  
Photos: IOM

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# MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Many parts of the African continent are currently affected by a shortage of qualified human resources, created in part by the large-scale departure of professionals and university graduates. Thousands of African professionals including medical doctors, nurses, accountants, engineers, managers and teachers leave their home country each year to pursue better prospects in other countries – both on and off the continent. While this movement may have some beneficial effects in certain locales, in many countries this “brain drain” is a handicap for sustainable development. This is particularly the case when it affects priority development sectors (e.g. health, education) in countries that have limited ability to attract and retain qualified workers. The outward movement of human resources can lead to the deterioration of basic social services, slow the development of the private sector and heighten the dependency of the African economies on costly foreign expertise.

## MAIN FACTORS IN THE "BRAIN-DRAIN" PROCESS



While brain drain is one of many factors contributing to under-development in parts of Africa, it is an important element that needs to be addressed through policies and sustained programmes that facilitate and harness the development potential of migrants.

## **MAXIMIZING THE DIASPORA'S CONTRIBUTION TO DEVELOPMENT: FROM BRAIN DRAIN TO BRAIN GAIN**

IOM has gained considerable experience designing and implementing programmes aimed at utilizing the skills and knowledge of qualified nationals around the world, including programmes in Latin America, Asia and Africa. These return and reintegration programmes are based on the principle that qualifications and experience acquired abroad by migrants can contribute to strengthening the human resource capacity of priority sectors for the socio-economic development of their country.

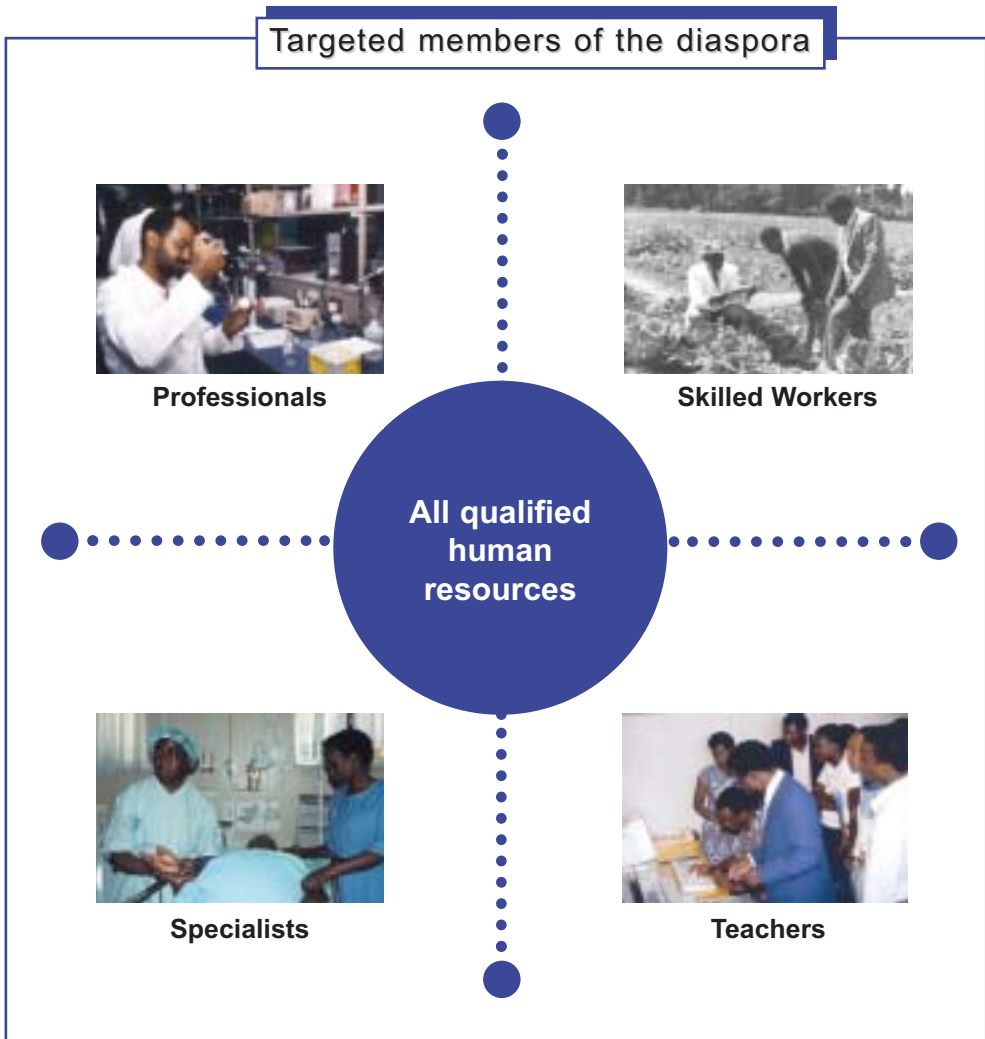
Within the context of the Lomé II, III & IV Conventions, IOM initiated in 1983 the Return and Reintegration of Qualified African Nationals programme (RQAN); through it over 2,000 highly skilled and experienced African nationals were assisted in their professional return and reintegration to 41 countries. 2,565 fellowship students were also assisted through other EC funded programmes. These professionals brought back their experiences mainly in the fields of management and administration, social and legal services (27%), sciences and public health, education (17%), physical and mathematical sciences, engineering (15%) and senior executive level personnel (11%), to address identified gaps in key socio-economic sectors of the countries of origin.

## **WHAT IS MIDA?**

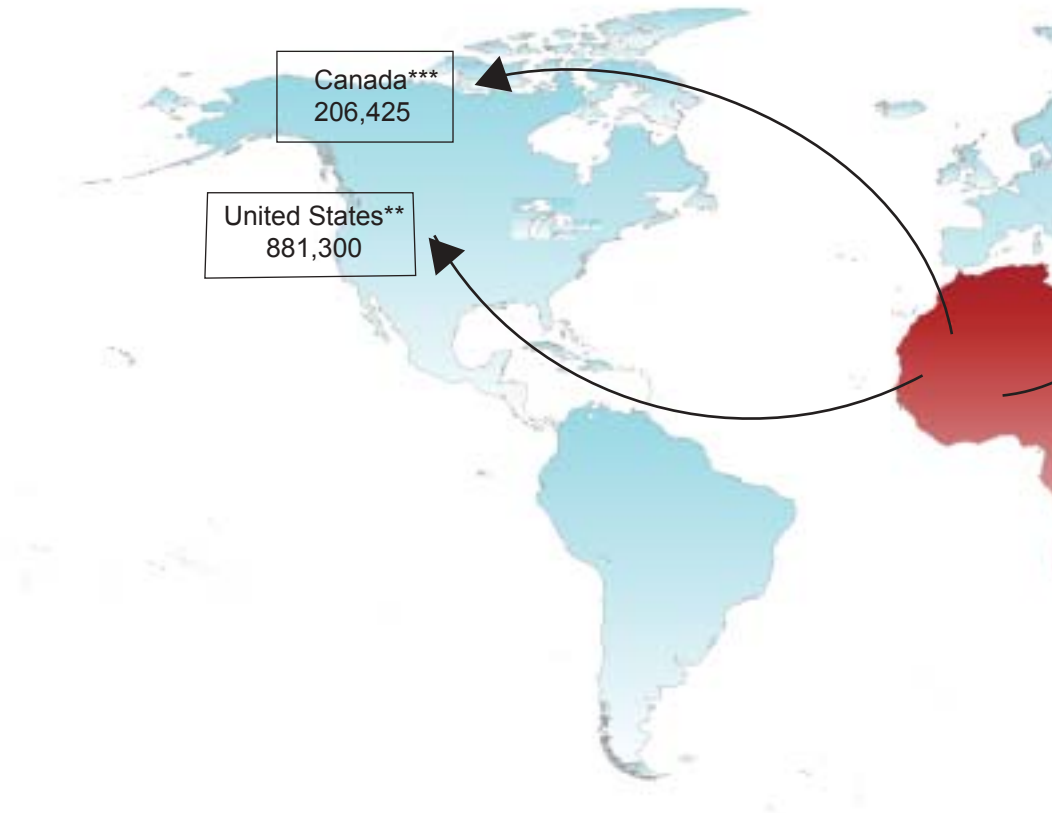
Based on the lessons learned from RQAN, in 2001 IOM launched a new programme: "Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA)" in Libreville, Gabon. MIDA is an institutional capacity-building programme that aims to develop the potential synergy between the profiles of African migrants and the demand from countries, by facilitating the transfer of vital skills and resources of the African diaspora to their countries of origin. MIDA is based on the notion of mobility of people and resources and, as such, offers options for reinvestment of human capital, including temporary, long-term or virtual return. Approaches are tailored to meet the needs of the origin country without jeopardizing migrants' legal status in their host countries or newly adopted home countries. Equipped with their competences, new ideas and expertise gained abroad, migrants can be a tremendous asset for the development of their countries of origin in different fields (education, social affairs, health and other priority areas). They bring a new vision, they represent forces for change.

# MIDA TARGETS

MIDA targets African professionals, entrepreneurs and experts in the diaspora, willing and able to contribute their skills, as well as financial and other resources to the development efforts of their countries of origin.



## Where are the African diasporas?

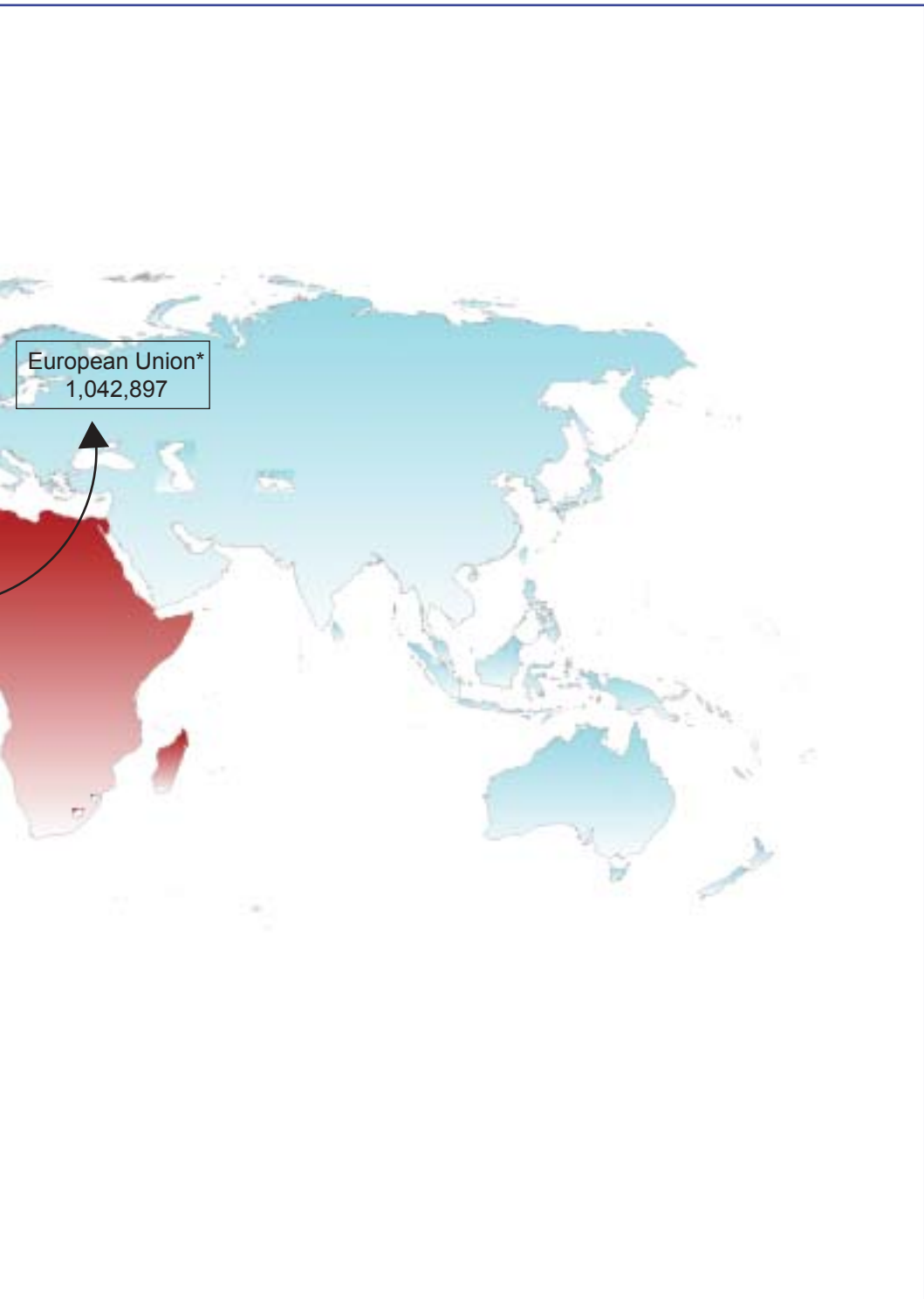


\*EU-11: Stock of non-national population from Sub-Saharan Africa as of 1 January 2000 (without Ireland, Luxembourg and Austria)

\*\*Immigrants from Africa in 2000

\*\*\*Stock of foreign-born population from Sub-Saharan Africa in 2001

Sources: Statistics Canada, Census 2001; US Census 2000; INS Statistical Yearbook 2003

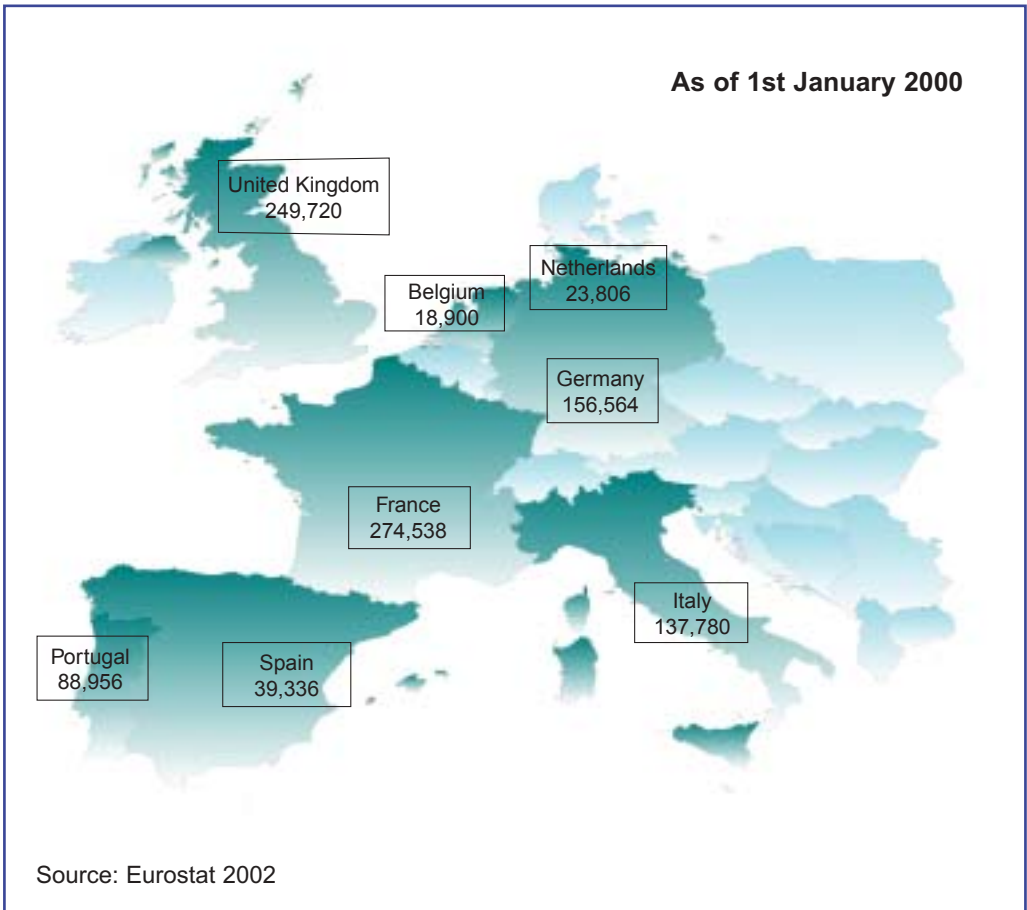


European Union\*  
1,042,897

The African diaspora in Europe is the result of successive migration waves associated first with labour shortage, and more recently with family reunion and formation, as well as refugee flows. The dominant foreign groups within each country reflect the sources from which labour has been recruited; particular historical links and bilateral relations with former colonies as well as ease of access (in terms of geography or policy).

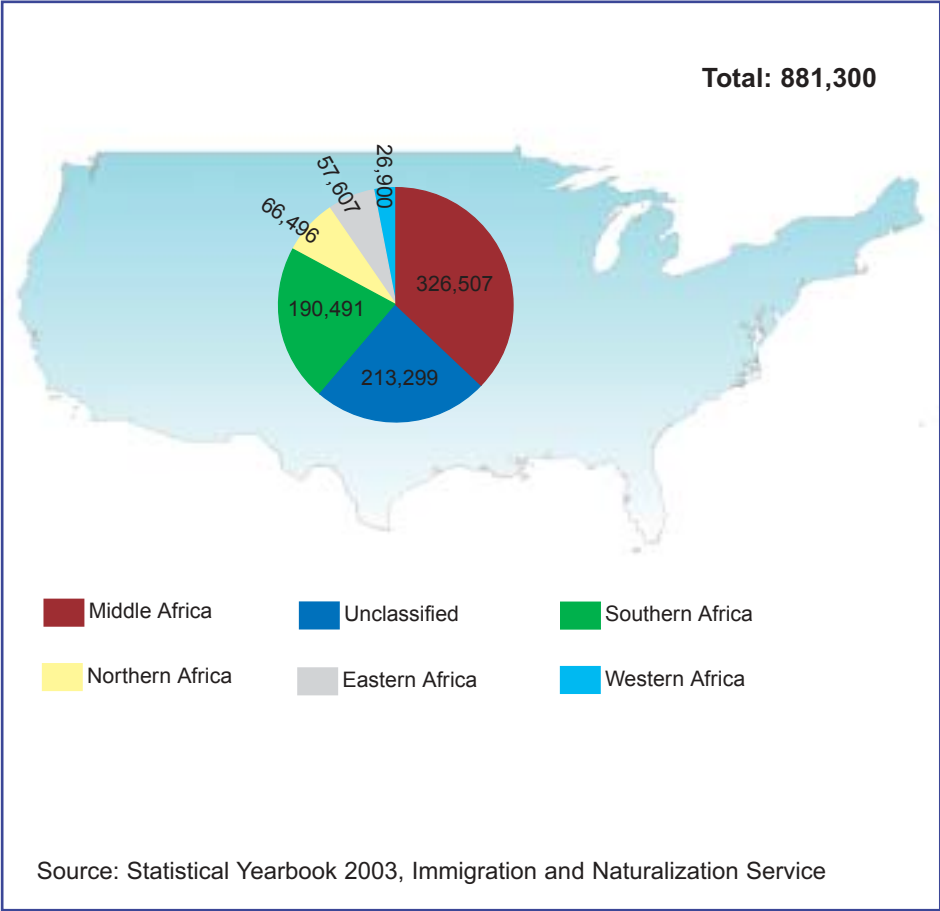
### Sub-Saharan African diasporas in Europe

As of 1st January 2000



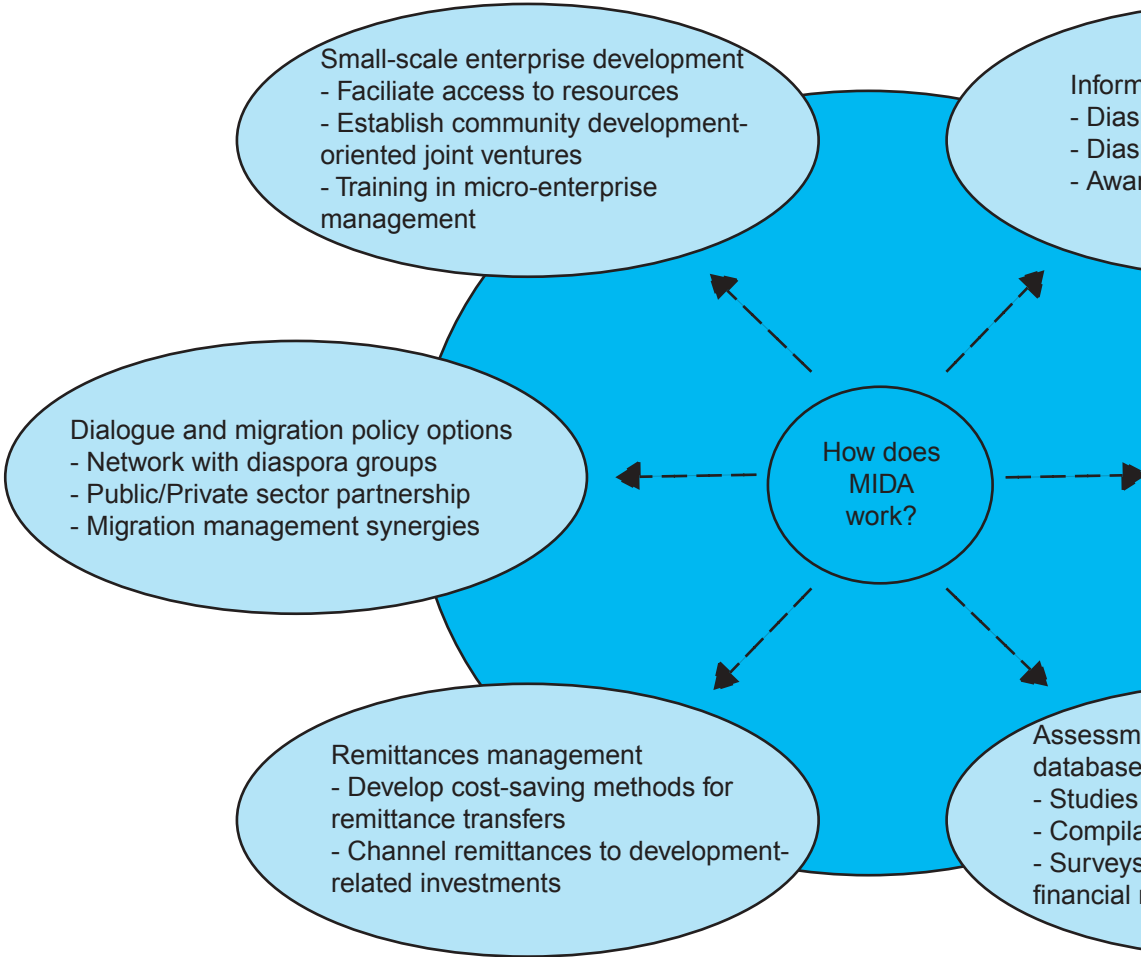
The number of people born in Africa and living in the United States has grown considerably in recent years. The United States Census 2000 counted 881,300 Africans, who comprise 2.8 per cent of the total foreign-born population of the country. More than half of them entered the US in the 1990s. West Africans make up the largest proportion of the African born, followed by those from Eastern, Northern, Southern and Middle Africa.

Distribution of Africans in the United States by region of origin



# HOW MIDA WORKS

IOM works with participating African countries, host countries and the diasporas to implement



ment activities in the following areas:

Information campaigns  
Diaspora-dedicated campaigns  
Diaspora website development  
Business-raising workshops

Skills transfer  
- Virtual/E-learning  
- Temporary  
- Sequenced  
- Long-term

Investment surveys and  
Development  
of country-specific needs  
Identification of investment opportunities  
Focus on diaspora skills and  
resources

## WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS OFFERED TO THE DIASPORA?

### Virtual/tele-work

One of the innovations in the MIDA programme is its use of the Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) to reduce the costs entailed by physical presence, while easing mobility and enhancing availability of skills. MIDA's priority option in this area is e-learning which promotes the use of new multimedia technologies and the internet to improve educational capacities by facilitating access to resources and services, as well as remote exchanges and collaboration.

### Short-term assignments

The mobility of expatriate African professionals between the host country and the country of origin is a factor crucial to the efficient transfer of skills and to capacity building in developing countries. The diaspora members will help create or complement teams and achieve the multiplier effect sought by MIDA. The length of the missions are determined on a case by case basis.

### Long-term return

Transfers of this nature occur after a voluntary decision by members of the diaspora to return permanently in their country so as to take part in its development.

# EXAMPLES OF ONGOING ACTIVITIES

## MOBILIZING ETHIOPIANS LIVING ABROAD FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ETHIOPIA

The website “Ethiopian diaspora.info”, funded by the Italian Government, is an information website that provides timely, relevant and accurate information to the Ethiopian community abroad. The website contains information on how to start a business, investment advice and announcements relevant to the diaspora. It also has an online “Questionnaire” that interested individuals can fill out and submit for the purpose of establishing a national database of Ethiopians living abroad. While safeguarding the confidentiality of the individual, the database will be used to assess the skills, financial and human resources available and will eventually be used to match them to the country’s needs. It will serve to encourage the diaspora’s active involvement in the socio-economic activities of the country, as well as to facilitate their participation towards the development efforts in Ethiopia.

## MANAGING MIGRATION OF SKILLED HEALTH PERSONNEL

In order to address the many urgent and future challenges posed in the health sector in Africa by the growing mobility of populations, IOM with the World Health Organization (WHO), launched the MIDA Health programme. As a first step, IOM and the WHO developed a database of health professionals in the diaspora, matching it with the specific needs of national health systems. The preliminary results of the survey were presented to the 46 African Ministers of Health during the 53rd WHO Regional Conference held in September 2003 in South Africa. Building on the lessons learned, IOM and WHO are currently working on extending this pilot phase to involve more countries, undertaking action-oriented research and advocating with governments to include human resource development on their national health agenda.

## E-LEARNING: A NEW OPTION FOR SKILLS TRANSFER

In 2003, the MIDA programme launched its pilot initiative in distance learning. While easing mobility requirements, the project facilitates the transfer of skills virtually, using Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to reach a wider audience in a traditional higher education setting. 700 second-year PhD students benefited from this project funded by the Belgian Government. The training courses are worked out in Belgo-Congolese twinning arrangements and are selected according to the course requirements of the University of Lubumbashi (UNILU) in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the availability of competences within the Congolese diaspora in the University de Libre de Bruxelles (ULB), Brussels. It links the diaspora and the educational institutions within countries as well as between countries and provides training and professional development in a cost effective way. It not only helps to build capacity, but also contributes to retaining trained professionals in their home country. Similar e-learning programmes will be extended this year to Rwanda and Burundi.

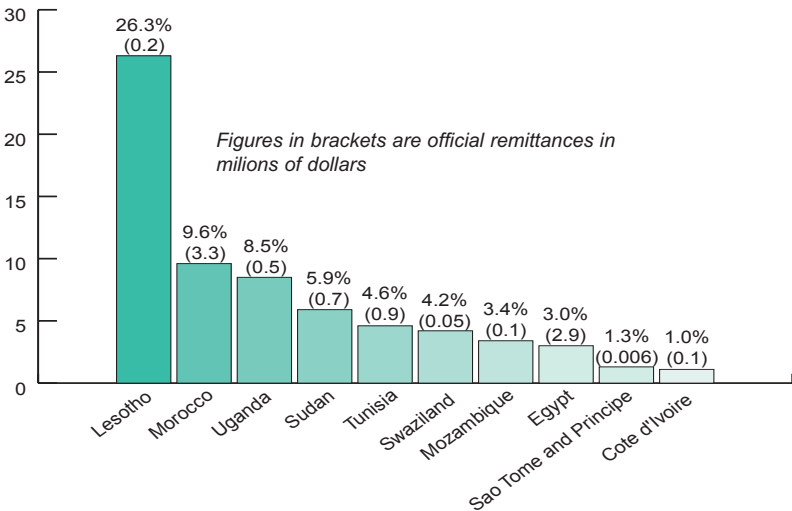
# THE ROLE OF REMITTANCES IN MIDA

Today in Africa migrant remittances constitute a very important source of foreign exchange, enabling a country to acquire vital imports or pay off external debts. Also remittances, if used effectively, represent the most direct link between migration and development in countries of origin. In 2002, migrant remittance receipts of developing countries stood at USD 88 billion, exceeding both ODA and private debt and equity flows. It is estimated that globally the value of remittances flowing through informal channels is three times higher than the official channels. At the household level it is generally agreed that remittances help to reduce poverty.

Although there may be exceptions, an important reason why migrants go abroad to work is to support their families back home and they would therefore send most or a part of their earnings home even in the absence of special inducements.

While recognizing above all that remittances are private and family funds, MIDA encourages the voluntary and efficient use of migrant remittances for development in countries of origin. These include initiatives that support cost saving and reliable remittance methods and help consolidate remittances into pools of development and investment capital. Within the framework of MIDA and in partnership with the financial sector, IOM has promoted the concept of an African Diaspora Remittance Fund. This Fund combines aspects of corporate finance, trade finance, investment fund management and poverty reduction to create a new financial product for the African diaspora and their families. In implementing this product, efficient transfers, attractive return on investment, and enhanced national development are the main objectives.

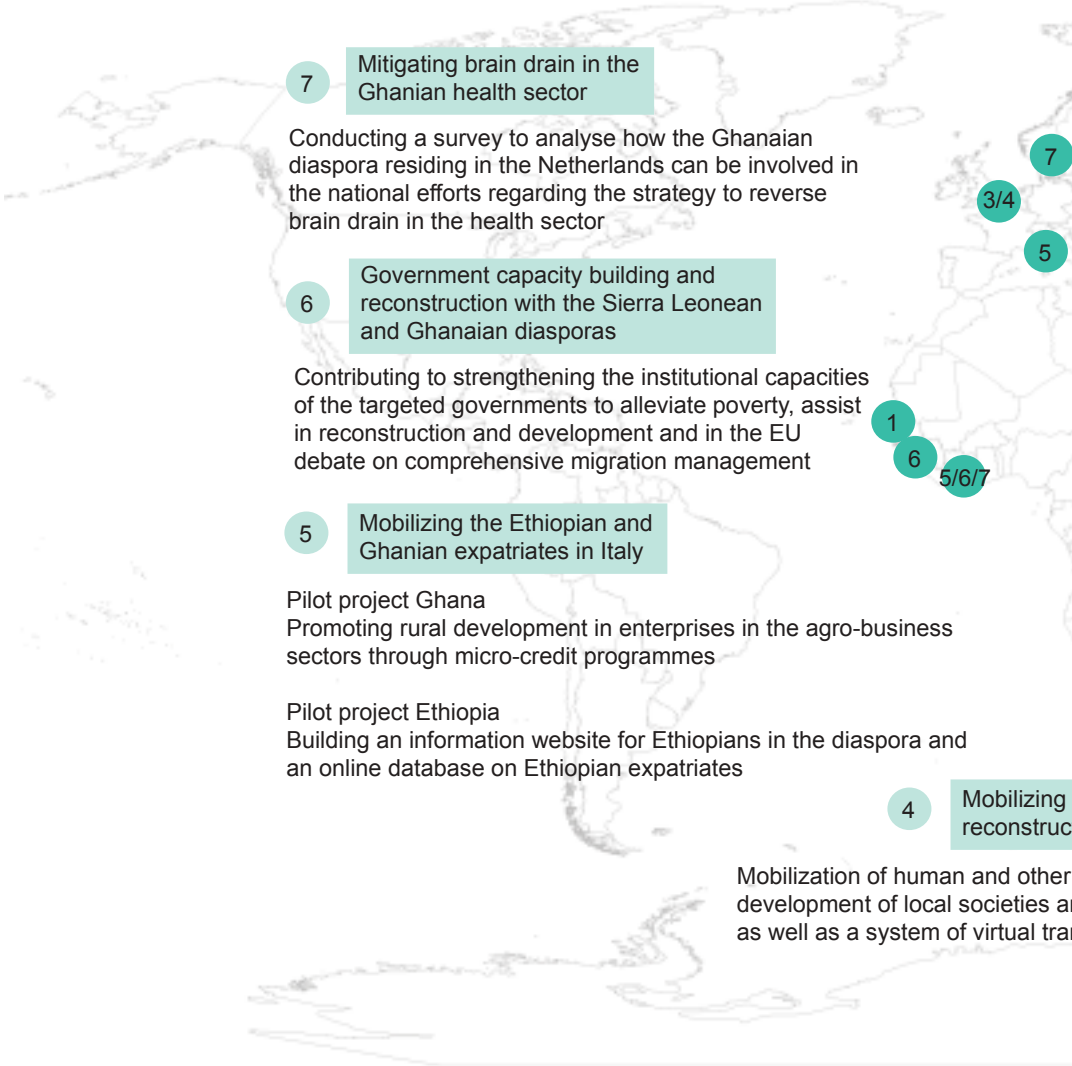
## TOP 10 AFRICAN COUNTRIES IN OFFICIAL REMITTANCES AS % OF GDP



Source: IMF 2002

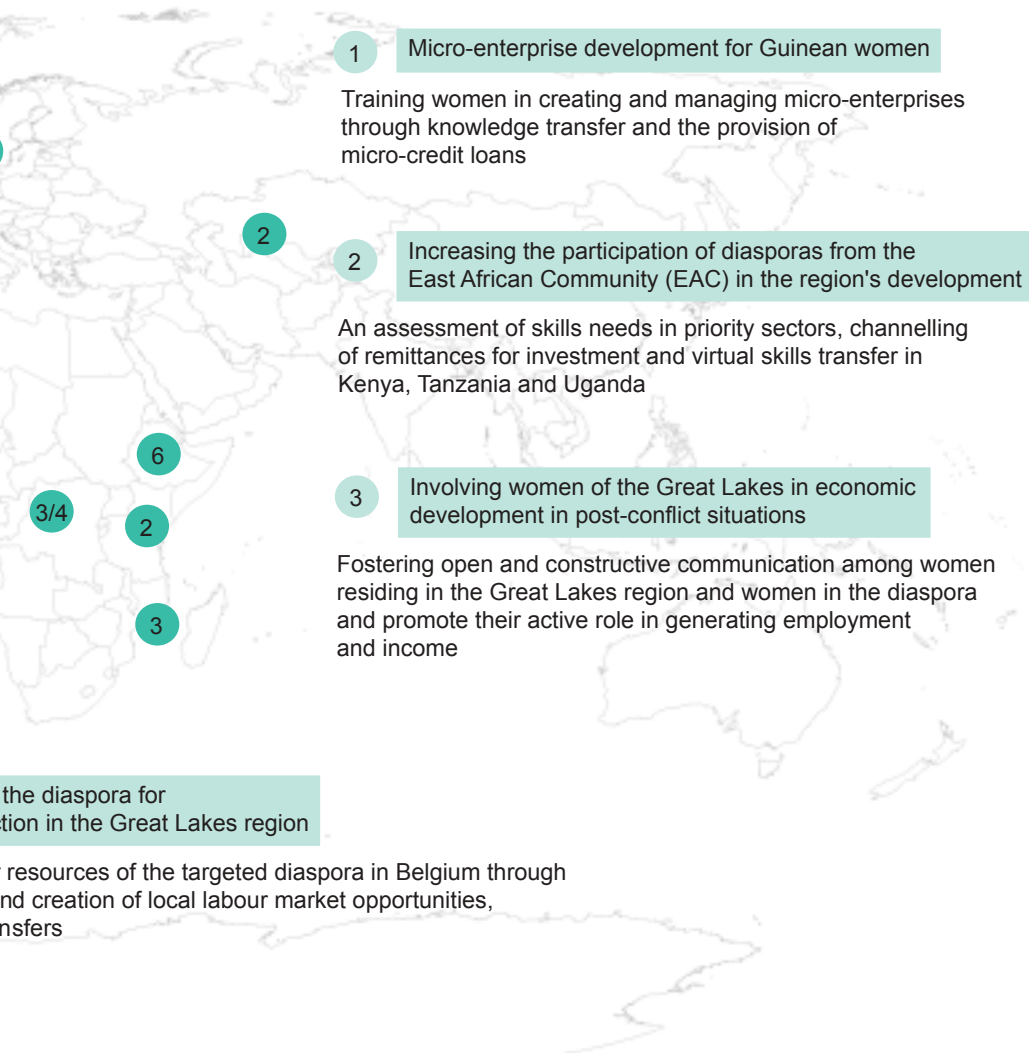
MIDA is a generic strategy which allows for flexibility. Various configurations are possible, national or a regional basis. IOM is also developing specific MIDA projects designed by sector

## On-going MIDA



according to the specific needs assessed. Projects can be developed and implemented on a  
or of activity (i.e. private sector or public health).

## DA projects in the world



# MIDA RESULTS

## IN AFRICAN COUNTRIES

- ✓ Strengthened government capacity to provide basic social services (i.e. education, health...)
- ✓ Improved partnerships and synergies among governments, cooperation agencies and the diaspora
- ✓ Transfer and utilization of skills of Africans in the diaspora
- ✓ Channelled remittances and increased investment
- ✓ Enhanced national human resources base and management of available resources
- ✓ Savings in national development programmes
- ✓ Improved migration management capacities
- ✓ South-South cooperation

## WITHIN THE DIASPORA

- ✓ Participation in the development process and national development planning efforts in home countries
- ✓ Implementation of productive development projects in cooperation with local communities
- ✓ Improved circulation of information on diaspora issues within associations and community groups
- ✓ Better dialogue with governments in countries of origin
- ✓ Better comprehension of the migratory phenomena and of its management

## IN HOST COUNTRIES

- ✓ Improved mobility of foreign qualified human resources needed to meet demands for additional workforce
- ✓ Introduction/improvement of national migration policies favouring the mobility of Africans in the diaspora, as well as their skills and resources
- ✓ Improved migration management
- ✓ Strengthened co-development partnerships between countries of origin, host countries and diasporas
- ✓ North-South technical cooperation

## CASE STUDY: MIDA'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE GREAT LAKES

### *For the local beneficiary institutions*

- ✓ Transferees contributed to the financial growth of their host institutions through cost-saving measures
- ✓ Employers expressed a high degree of satisfaction regarding the quality of service provided
- ✓ Savings realized through MIDA (the programme is cost free for the local institutions) helped employers address recurrent financial issues (i.e. hiring new professors and additional staff)
- ✓ Equipment such as computers and books provided to the transferees by the programme were subsequently donated to the institutions
- ✓ Students were able to graduate because, for the first time in years, the courses offered were completed
- ✓ Virtual links were established between students and transferees, including supervision of student theses
- ✓ Local NGOs were able to obtain funds from international donors through training in project planning provided by transferees

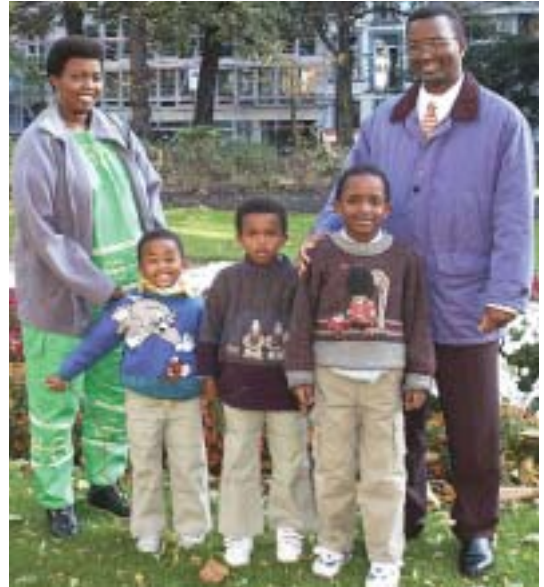
### *For the transferees*

- ✓ Satisfaction of knowing they have played a part in the development of their countries
- ✓ Several transferees opted for long-term returns after the initial MIDA experience



*“...When we left Burundi, we promised ourselves we would return to share the knowledge we acquired. One day, we heard that IOM had a programme that could help people like us...”*

Béatrice Nyonsaba, her husband Edouard Cishahayo and their three children are quietly sitting in an IOM office in Brussels. Six-and-a-half-year-old Shyler and his two sisters, Delicia and Princia, haven't seen their mother in two months.



“You know, all this would not have been possible without my husband's encouragement and IOM's moral and material support,” says Mrs. Nyonsaba. “When we decided years ago to leave Burundi to study in Belgium, we promised ourselves we would return to share the knowledge we acquired. But there were so many obstacles to our return, not to mention chronic insecurity. But one day, we heard that IOM had a programme that could help people like us.”

After her first meeting with IOM's MIDA coordinators, Mrs. Nyonsaba volunteered to return for two months to teach at the Institut des Sciences Agronomiques du Burundi, in Bujumbura, the capital. Mrs. Nyonsaba strongly believes the institute needs support. “This institute helps farmers to improve and diversify food production and conservation. It also helps improve the production of coffee and tea, which are very important for my country.”

Mrs. Nyonsaba studied mathematics and statistics before specializing in biology. Her expertise in biostatistics allowed the institute to improve data collection and analysis of ongoing research in agronomy. She is convinced that her physical presence and availability have heartened colleagues who sometimes feel the world has forgotten them. “They've all asked me to spread the word amongst the Burundian diaspora; to tell them they have to contribute to the development of the country.”

*“...MIDA allows me to do my bit for the Congolese educational system. In a way, it gives a meaning to all those years I have spent studying...”*

Professor Sam Yala is Congolese. Married and a father of two, he has spent part of the summer teaching electromechanical engineering at Kinshasa’s Polytechnic Institute. With a PhD and a job in a well-known financial institution, Professor Yala took the time to explain to his 6- and 4-year-old boys why he was leaving during the summer holidays.

“I told them I was going to teach in the Congo because children do not have teachers. Both of my boys, who love school, were shocked at the idea that children could be deprived of teachers. My wife and my family know that I am very concerned about what is happening in the Congo. By joining the MIDA programme, I am, in a way, teaching them about life.”

Professor Yala arrived in Belgium in 1986 and went back to Kinshasa for short periods of time in 1990 and in 1994. “Every time I went back, I was shocked by the poverty.

That motivated me. I want to contribute to improving teaching in Congo. MIDA allows me to do my bit for the Congolese educational system. In a way, it gives a meaning to all those years I have spent studying.”

Sixty students registered at the polytechnic were able to follow a 30-hour theoretical and practical course on electromechanical engineering. “My students were all

relieved to see that they had not been forgotten and abandoned by the outside world,” says Mr. Yala. “Today, it is crucial to invest in education and to anchor good governance in the country. It is only then that the Congolese diaspora will fully mobilize and invest long-term in the country.”



# INTEGRATING MIDA INTO DEVELOPMENT FRAME

Within the framework of MIDA, IOM is committed to strengthening the linkages between mig

## Global development frameworks

### UN Millenium Development Goals (MDGs)

IOM will contribute to the following MDG's by:

- Encouraging this process through dedicated remittance programmes (Goal 1).
- Supporting an active participation of women in a gender-balanced economic and social environment (Goal 3).
- Targeting migrant populations for prevention measures and health agents for positive change (Goal 6).
- Establishing partnerships with private/ public sector (Goal 8).

### Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD)

In the spirit of global partnership, IOM will promote human resource development in the framework of TICAD II in the following ways:

- Strengthen partnership in the area of human resource development
- Encourage South-South Cooperation as an instrument of sustainable development

## WORKS

migration and development by establishing partnerships at the global, regional and national levels.

### MIDA

### Regional development frameworks

#### African Union

IOM has advocated before the AU to promote migration issues. This led to the adoption of various decisions acknowledging the issue of brain drain in Africa and encouraging Member States to mobilize their diaspora for development. In 2001, in Lusaka, IOM was called upon to help African countries in facilitating the return of their qualified expatriate nationals and promote the MIDA (Decision 614, Lusaka, 2001)

#### AU/NEPAD

In the strategic paper "Human resource development initiative including reversing the brain drain", NEPAD has highlighted its priorities regarding the brain drain issue. For each of them, MIDA can efficiently contribute to achieve the following objectives:

- Reverse the brain drain and turn it into a "brain gain"
- Develop strategies for utilizing the skills of the diaspora
- Create the conditions to curb the brain drain and attract investment
- Establish a reliable database on the brain drain
- Develop networks to channel the repatriation of knowledge

#### United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)

UNECA and IOM created an online "Database of African Experts and the Diaspora" to provide information on African Experts both locally and in the diaspora

#### Regional Economic Commission (RECs)

IOM is working towards strengthening migration dialogue through RECs such as COMESA, ECOWAS, IGAD and SADC

## MIDA: THE WAY FORWARD

From 2001 to 2003, MIDA evolved from being a concept to that of a national/regional programme supported by many countries. MIDA does not claim to address all of the economic and social problems of the countries concerned, but it does contribute within a larger framework to bringing innovative measures to support their development. Indeed, it possesses the interesting specificity of linking the diasporas to their countries of origin and combines the reinforcement of local capacities with the utilization of know-how and resources of the migrants.

For the future, some lessons can already be drawn from the first implemented projects and partnerships:

- ✓ The beneficiary countries and regions must be involved from the very start of the process and throughout the implementation in order to integrate the complementary activities which are carried out in the countries of origin and host countries.
- ✓ MIDA projects must form synergies with national strategies for the reduction of poverty, and be perfectly articulated with priority needs in terms of reinforcement of capacities.
- ✓ The innovation constituted by e-learning must be promoted and implemented concurrently with the more traditional components implying physical transfers.
- ✓ Ideas on better use of remittances for local development must be translated into concrete projects drawing on IOM experience in Latin America and Asia while taking into account the specificities of the African continent and of its banking structures.
- ✓ Partnerships with local communities must be strengthened because of their flexibility and their capacity to mobilize energies in a logic of proximity with the host countries as well as with the countries of origin.

The way forward for MIDA consists in responding to the most pressing needs for development while integrating the idea that national expertise, even if expatriate, constitutes an inalienable part of national wealth and sustainable development.



IOM International Organization for Migration

For further information on MIDA, contact:

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

17 Route des Morillons

P.O. Box 71

CH-1211 Geneva 19

Switzerland.

Tel: + 41 22 717 91 11

Fax: + 41 22 798 61 50

E-mail: [hq@iom.int](mailto:hq@iom.int)

Internet: <http://www.iom.int>