

# The image of Diaspora in development

A study on three Scandinavian development NGOs' collaboration with the  
Somali Diaspora



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# Abstract

Diasporas potential to spur development have in the recent decade been discovered in the development industry along with the proliferation of the migration and development nexus. An increasing amount of Diaspora programmes within migrant's host countries' development non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have been initiated. The Diaspora programmes in Denmark, Norway and Sweden NGOs let the Somali Diaspora become a part of the greater Development apparatus. In this qualitative study I investigate the case of Scandinavian NGOs engagement within the Somali Diaspora by asking what image of the Somali Diaspora and what development approach that has guided these programme. The study is based on key informant interviews, a participant observation and document material from the NGOs. Findings shows that the image is based on the idea of the Somali Diaspora possess a hybrid identity that can be a transmitter of knowledge about the need of development in both locations. The Somali are further portrayed as having a constant commitment and ability to improve the needs-based approach because of their culture capital. The Diaspora engagement in the programmes is portrayed as a unified group that can mobilise for change, which is strengthened through the facilitation of dialogue and the learning platforms. The recognition turn and the participatory and sustainable development approaches have guided the NGOs cooperation with the Somali Diaspora.

*Key words:* Diaspora, Development, Migration, Somalia, Non-governmental Organisation

Words: 9800

# List of Acronyms

NGO	Non-governmental organisation
DO	Diaspora organization
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
ODA	Official Development Assistance

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Migration and Development nexus and Diaspora programmes

Migration is an ever-increasing global phenomenon and financial remittance sent to developing countries is today double the amount of official development assistance (ODA). Migrants have increasingly been framed as “agents of development” that can contribute to their country of origin with both financial and social remittance - knowledge and skills. The migrants are here described as mediators, which can promote certain values and contribute with an important infusion of money into the local economy (Kent, 2006). In recent years the international and national governments aid agencies have caught interest in the Refugee Diaspora receding in the West, such as the Somali Diaspora, to engage in development programmes. The programmes are seen as potential drivers of development, where remittance and ODA together can be channelled into development projects (Horst, 2013).

Over the years, hundreds of Diaspora and host government’s programmes has been initiated across the Western world, to involve Diaspora communities. The French government’s were already in the 1970’s implementing development programmes together with Diasporas. The programmes were focused on repatriation of single migrant and at the time it was believed that by stimulating development, one would contain migration flows (Panizzon, 2011). However, as documented, migration often increases as development take-off (Raghuram, 2007)

Two major reasons can be mentioned as pivotal in the overall shift and increased interest of migrants within development studies. One simple answer is that the vast increase in scale of refugees and migrants in the 1990s that came from the developing countries to the west. The second reason is the World Bank *Global development finance* in 2003 that shed light on the massive growth of migrants’ remittance, which in numbers exceeded ODA and foreign direct investments in developing regions (Bakewell, 2009, p.1346-7). Scholars played a major role in making the financial contributions visible, which has been a primary force in the transformation of the migrant into an “agent of development” (Trotz & Mullings, 2013).

In the last decade, the migration and development nexus has become on the top of the agenda of International financial institutes, development agencies, and NGOs as many

scholars and international actors have been painting the picture of the mobile migrant entrepreneur. The proliferation of migration in development debates was spurred by the ideas of win-win-win scenario, where transnational circular migration can benefit migrants, the country of origin and country where the migrants reside. The key challenges for the development industry and development states are to facilitate and encourage the circular migration and to harness the migrant's potential, so that development in the place of origin could take place according to the model. The notion of the Diaspora has become at the core of this debate and the mobile migrant is seen as organised and committed to make a contribution to his or hers country of origin (Bakewell, 2009; Trotz & Mullings 2013; de Haas, 2006).

### 1.1.1 Definition of Diaspora and Diaspora engagement

The definition of the term Diaspora has been problematized in literature and contested. The current consensus in academia is that the term Diaspora means dispersion to two or more places, sustained orientation towards homeland and group boundary maintenance. In recent years, the Diaspora term has come to not only include forced migrants, but all kinds of migrants that are outside the state boundaries that engaging in the perceived homeland (Horst, 2013; Gamlen, 2011, p. 267).

Diasporas are seen more as a social function to mobilise the migrants for change. The claim of an existing shared origin and identity can be a powerful tool for mobilizing individuals (Horst, 2013, Kleist, 2008a). Diaspora is defined as a concept of political nature that are claimed and attributed by certain groups. The Somali Diaspora is rather a potential *global moral community* that can be mobilised in the name of the claimed shared origin (Werbner and Axel cited by Kleist, 2008a, p. 309). The concepts homogenise the group and are claimed to have this particular function as it described as rest on an essentialist notion of being a natural community (Smith and Anthias cited by Horst, 2013, p. 231). Furthermore, this implies that the Diaspora engagement is not necessary organically shaped by bottom-up activities (Horst, 2013/ Gamlen, 2011, p.267). Diaspora engagement can take place from a top-down perspective by for example aid agencies and government's wish to to spur engagement. In recent years, a great part of the Diaspora civil society has developed alongside the scholarly research on remittance contribution to the development (Gamlen, 2011, p.267; Mercer et al 2009).

### 1.1.2 Somalia and the Somali Diaspora

The Somalia Diaspora consists of 2 million people with the lion-share of the emigration taking place 1991 after the spread of the civil war and when the dictator Siyad Barres was overthrown. Today it is estimated that around 15 percent of all Somalis resides outside the country and the concept of Diaspora has been frequently used to define the group of Somali migrants (UNDP 2001/Kleist, 2008b, p.113; Ainte, 2015). The Somali Diaspora is together

contributing 1,3 billion dollars to their country of origin, compared to the 1 billion dollar in development aid and foremost humanitarian assistance to Somalia each year. The country is highly dependent on remittance, which comprise 50 percent of the countries GDP and 40 percent of the Somali population is dependent on remittances for daily survival (Forum Syd1, 2015; World Bank, 2015).

The Somalis in the new countries of residence are often seen as representatives of one ethnics group, but many Somalis believe that they constitute many clans (Haji-Abdi, 2014). The Somali population is often portrayed as homogenous group, but not only the clan-society is dividing the population the nomad and non-nomad life does so too. The nomads are representing the majority group that is relatively homogenous, but in the Southern parts of the, in the country agro-pastoral society a range of minority groups reside (Brinkemo, 2014, p.68). The country is also traditionally divided in the clan and regional affiliates. The Northern parts known as Somaliland region, are seeking independence and do to a great extent govern its own territories, whereas in southern Somalia, south of central Puntland is facing a precarious security situation (World Bank, 2015).

Today the country has a transitional national government and the county are struggling with the federal state running parallel to the society, political vacuum and the lack of government capacity (Ainte, 2015). The Diaspora's involvement in Somalia has been described as pivotal in order to get the country on its feet, through a range of transnational activities such as business, development projects and foremost by sending private remittance. Around 100 Somali Diaspora communities exist across the West, which actively engaged in thousands of civil associations. A small number of them are focusing on development and state building of Somalia (Haji-Abdi, 2014). In Somalia an office for Diaspora affairs is set up to provide information to the Diaspora willing to contribute to the country. The Diaspora is given certain rights in Somalia in order to enable investment and the government are using plentiful of strategies to harness and utilize the Diaspora's potentials (Ainte, 2015).

## 1.2 Purpose and research question

The Scandinavian development NGOs Diaspora programme is a rather new phenomenon that has not been much studied. Three Scandinavian Development NGOs: Forum Syd, Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and the Development Funds (Utviklingsfondet in Norway) are running Diaspora programmes that constitute the Scandinavian case. This qualitative study aims at filling a gap within existing research by looking into what image of the Somali Diaspora that have guided these programmes. The study intends to be a cumulative contribution to previous research on Diaspora programmes and the greater academic field on the Diasporas role in development.

The aim of the study is to get an improved understanding of how the image of the Somali Diaspora has become to be constituted in development projects and how that has affected the shape of the programmes. In addition to this, the study explores whether it is a coherent image that guides the initiatives and, moreover, how the initiatives relates to greater development approaches and the notion of Diaspora. To answer to the aim, the research questions are as following:

- What image of the Somali Diaspora shapes the Scandinavian development NGO's Diaspora programmes?
- What development approaches are the Scandinavian NGO's Diaspora programmes related to?

### 1.3 Delimitations

The study is delimited to the NGO's programmes and the image portrayed of the Somali Diaspora and how it has guided the cooperation with the Somali Diaspora. The thesis will not give a full account of each of the studied programme and all stakeholders involved. I have emphasised on key aspects of the image of the Somali Diaspora that make up the NGO's reasons for involving them in development cooperation. The aspects of the Somalia Diaspora researched are those reflected in the document material produced by the NGOs and the interviews with the NGOs representatives.

### 1.4 Disposition

In the following chapter I will describe the research design, methods and material used in the study, why I opted for these and how my analysis was conducted. In chapter three I will give an overview of previous research in the field of Diaspora role in development field as evolved. In chapter four, the theoretical framework will be outlined as guidance for my analysis and empirical material that will be presented in chapter five. In the final chapter, I will present the conclusions of the study.



## 2 Previous research

In this chapter, I will give an overview of the current academic literature in the emerging scholarly field of Diaspora and development. In the empirical based research on NGOs and states engaging with Diaspora a coherent view exist in that the recent interest involving Diaspora is because of their role as transnational actor, resource and culture broker. In addition to this, interest in Diasporas can be seen as part of the greater acknowledgement of minorities and their specific contribution. Diaspora engagement has in the literature been described as having responsible long-term commitment based on there moral bonds to a community. Criticism has evolved within the field that argue that a process of depolitising of the Diasporas is taking place, or a simply repacking of old ideas, where the West in still at the centre of the development industry.

Many scholars describe, the policy debate, about the Diaspora as a transnational link, the perfect strategic partner, which can function as development “brokers” and a resource that can be utilized (Bakewell, 2007; Mercer et al 2009; Njeinhaus &Broekhuis 2010; Turner & Kleist & 2013; Kleist 2008b). In these discussions by development actors, transnational linkages are seen as more progressive than locals and an ability to reap more fruitful outcomes. As noted by Newland (2003) the transnational network Diasporas have connection with is explained as the “most important development resources” associated with international migration. Interest in Diaspora can be understood as an ambition of creating a social field across territorial borders and the Diasporas can here strengthen desired transnational linkages (Mercer et al 2009 Njeinhaus &Broekhuis 2010).

The interest in Diaspora is part of the participatory turn in development and way of improving the bottom-up ambitions (Turner & Kleist, 2013, Njeinhaus &Broekhuis 2010). According to Bakewell (2007) remittance is striking the right chords of participant development and self-help approaches. Through engaging with the Diaspora, which is assumed to understand the culture and language, the development industry can become more demand driven and needs-based (Njeinhaus &Broekhuis 2010). The Diaspora is portrayed as giving added value into the programmes as they are local insiders and therefore more easily can adapt to local circumstances. Moreover, the engagement of Diaspora can be seen as step to decolonize development and to fulfil the aim of spurring the dialogue and equality between the North and the South (Mercer et al 2009; Njeinhaus &Broekhuis 2010).

In Kleist articles “In the name of the Diaspora”(2008b) and “Mobilising ‘the Diaspora’” (2008a) she argues that the Somali Diaspora’s new position within development industry can be seen as connected to what is known as the recognition turn that concerns recognition of marginalized communities and takes a stand for multiculturalism. The Somali Diaspora is

representing one of these collective entities that are in need of further recognition. Furthermore, Kleist means that the term of Diaspora reflects an idea of unification and a homogenous community, which can mobilise socially and politically (Kleist 2008b). The Diaspora is inherently a political position, when analysing the Diaspora there has been an ignorance of the power relations and stratifications within the group (Kleist 2008a). This I will elaborate on further in my theoretical framework.

A process of unification is taking place within the Somali Diaspora, where the message is “here we work together” and the need of unifying financial and political muscles is emphasised (Njeinhaus & Broekhuis 2010) (Kleist 2008b). Furthermore, it can be seen as a process where one learns how to identify with the Diaspora. This process has been explained as a self-identification process that has led to the mobilisation of the Somali Diaspora inspired by the shift in the discourse by the group-activist and leaders (Kleist 2008b).

Negative voices towards Diaspora within the development industry see them as partial and biased, only focused on their specific community and clan. Because of this Horst (2013) argues that there is a need in the development industry to repack the Diaspora into neutral aid workers through professionalization activities that can increase their legitimacy. Kleist (2008a) and Horst (2013) claims that the depoliticisation of the Somali Diaspora can partly be understood as away for them to take a stand against the conflicts and clan divide in their homeland. Politics for them has become closely associated with violence and crime. Both NGOs and Diaspora are now promoting technical imputes as political engagement are rejected and problematized. The message is; “We are not going to work with politics – we are going to work with relief” (Kleist 2008a).

Turner and Kleist (2013) discuss the moral sentiment that they see the Diaspora engagement rest on, with their privileged position comes responsibility, which will lead to a long-term commitment. Bhagwati (2003 in Trotz&Mullings 2013) explains this as a “web of rights and obligations of incorporating former citizens into the extended community”. Emotional attachment is here put forward as a major factor for the Diaspora engagement. Diaspora proliferation in the development industry originated in the awareness about migrants’ faithful infusion of money, remittance is seen as an evidence for their commitment and willingness of taking risk (Trotz&Mullings, 2013; Njeinhaus & Broekhuis, 2010).

Bakewell (2007) means that the ideas about Diaspora incorporation in development industry has moralistic overtones that are based on the ideas of migrants being seen as “brain wasters”, and their need of taking a moral responsibility by reversing the negatives effects of migration. It is a new way of creating a containment of migrants, a colonial concern over mobility, where the development will enable people to stay home. Mercer (et al 2009) are explaining that the interest policy makers have in describing the Diaspora as “agents of development” have to do with their keen interest to harness financial remittance to the Global South and steer it into their development work. Moralistic overtones exist in the explanation used when portraying migrant families as spending remittance on conspicuous consumption and the money ending up in the wrong pockets, the non- investors (Mercer et

al 2009). Mercer et al (2009) and Njeinhaus & Broekhuis (2010) argues that cooperation with Diaspora is promising something new, but the projects still are inline with a strict Western blue print. Issues concerning development interventions are centrally determined in the West, where the Diaspora resides. Proximity still matters in the new transnational Diaspora networks as West constitute the centre of these networks (Mercer et al 2009).

From the previous research in the field of Diaspora in development, I conclude that interest in the Diaspora have grown from an interest in transnational connections and in the cultural capital that the Diaspora are perceived to possess. The idea of bringing in Diasporas into development NGO's work is an extension of the participatory paradigm in development thinking and the recognition turn may have enhanced support for bringing in the Diaspora into established development NGOs work. Moreover, the Diaspora increasingly portrayed by others and themselves as a unified entity have enhanced the interest from the policy makers. The idea of the Diasporas in development has come to be resting on moral sentiments, obligation on the single migrants and their emotional bonds are argued to be reasons for their committed involvement. The critic toward making the Diaspora a tool for development is that it has moralistic overtones about what the Diaspora shall do and not do. Despite the idea of improving participation when determine the issues of concern for the development industry, it still takes place in the West.

## 3 Method and Material

In this chapter I will explain the methods I have chosen to use for investigating the case of Somalia Diaspora programme by Scandinavian NGOs. Furthermore, in this chapter, I will reflect upon the chosen data collection methods. Primary material used in analysis is presented in conjunction to the method used. Lastly, I will describe how my analysis was conducted in order to systematize my findings.

### 3.1 Research design

The study is a qualitative multiple-case study where each case were chosen for its representativeness, making up the case of Scandinavian development NGOs that are conducting Diaspora programmes. Case studies on representative case(s) are described by Bryman (2008, p.56) as useful to “epitomize a broader category of cases or provide a suitable context for certain research questions to be answered”.

I opted for a multiple-case study as each of the three studied programmes are representing different types of development focus and my purpose was to study the case of Scandinavian NGOs establishing Diaspora programmes. The multiple-cases design applied improves the ability to test theory, to compare concepts and reflect upon eventual contrasting findings (Bryman, 2008, p.60). Furthermore, a multiple case study can explore the similarities and difference in the Diaspora programmes and give an account of what images and understandings that shapes the programmes.

### 3.2 Data Collection

In order to do a multiple case study the data collection instruments needs to be reliable and to follow the same structure to enable comparison, by using for example an interview guide. The reason is that measuring needs to be the same so that comparisons are able to take place and categories can be settled (Bryman, 2008, p. 59). Investigating the three cases allowed for comparison of the programmes and by reflecting the empirical data through the lens of my theoretical framework concepts could evolve.

### 3.2.1 Key informant interviews

I decided to do key informant interviews to get the best possible picture of the programme. The key informants could give me essential data on the thoughts and reflections behind the implementation of the programmes. Three key informant interviews were carried out for this study. They were carried out with head of each studied programme. I Skype interviewed Alice Ennals Diaspora programme coordinator at The Development Fund (20150505), Oslo and face-to-face interviewed Mongio Heiduk, Diaspora programme coordinator at the DRC (20150508) in Copenhagen. The face-to-face interview with Saif Omar, Somali Diaspora programme advisor at Forum Syd (20150228) took place in conjunction with the participant observation in Malmö (see below 3.2.3) in a loud lobby environment where I took notes. Therefore I decided to conduct a second telephone interview with Omar (20150520). Each interview took between 30 – 50 minutes and gave me a deep insight of the programmes and the perception of the Somali Diasporas role in Development.

The in-depth interviews were semi-structured and were starting out with broad introducing questions for example “Can you please tell me how the programmes was initiated?” and follow-up questions for example “Can you elaborate more on this aspect? ”. In order to get fruitful empirical material from these interviews and to not lose sight of the research aim I needed to use probing and specifying questions as well as clarifying questions (Bryman, 2008, p. 444-446). Moreover, I had constructed an interview guide with main topics-general question and more direct question in order to make as good interviews as possible and follow a sequence of the questions (Punch, 2005, p. 175). In the end of each interview, they became like a dialogue where I introduced a subject and the informants and I spoke more freely around it. This part of the interviews enabled for more extensive information on the wider vision of the programmes and the role they saw the Diaspora organisation (DO) have in the development programme. I voice recorded the interview to make a full transcription of the interviews. I fully transcribed the interviews to capture the nuances of the answers given, how it was said and not just what was said (Bryman, 2008, p. 444, 451).

### 3.2.2 Document material

The document material collected was used to get an overview of the programmes, their vision and the overall purpose and goals of the programmes. In the document material one could see e.g. how the projects were represented to the public, what developments it aimed towards and how it engaged with the Diaspora. The documents were mainly downloaded from the website and sent to me via e-mail. Document gathered was programme descriptions, pilot phase evaluation and two editorials by the programme coordinators. The pilot phase evaluation gave me additional understanding of what thoughts around the Diaspora was reflected in the structure as well as the purpose of implementing and facilitating the full programmes.

From the Diaspora programme initiated by the DRC and financed by the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), I used the “The Diaspora programme in a nutshell” that is a short guide about the DRCs co-development programme is managed. In addition to this, website text as wells as a pilot phase evaluation was used for the analysis.

Material by Forum Syd, the Swedish International Development agencies (SIDA), umbrella organisation for non-governmental organisation, Somali Diaspora Programme, website material was used. Moreover, a folder that concerns Forum Syd’s work in Somalia and an editorial written by the Somali programme advisory in the web magazine *Omvärlden* were used for the analysis.

Material gathered and analysed from The Development fund and their Diaspora programme funded by Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), included website text about the programme, a report on a pilot phase evaluation as well as an editorial by Alice Ennals (2013) the Diaspora programme coordinator.

### 3.2.3 Participant observation

During the research I participated in a half-day presentation by Forum Syd’s Somali Diaspora programme advisors where representatives of DO’s were invited. The organisations had signed up for the event, as they were interested in finding out more about the programme and possibilities of funding and how to proceed with applications. The reason for my participant observation was to get a full understanding of the programme and to see how the advisors described the programme. My role as a participant was Bryman (2008, p. 410) described as complete observer, I was rather detached from the group dynamics that I observed. The meeting was mainly an initial opportunity for me to get a first understanding of the programme. I used as springboard for my study and to get hold of relevant information and informants.

### 3.2.4 Sampling

The Diaspora programmes in the NGO investigate were chosen based on that they are all grant makers to the Somali Diaspora in NGOs based in the Scandinavian countries of Sweden, Norway and Denmark. The sampling was purposive in order to find the interviewees, documents and reports I have used. All unites of analysis was selected in terms of the criteria of my research question and the material I used and interviewees were selected in order to give as representative picture of each investigated NGO. First I sampled the cases and than the people, document and observation I could possibly do. I sampled with the particular research goal in mind. I choose my studied material and interviewees with the aim of understanding the NGOs cooperation with Somali Diaspora (Bryman, 2008, p.414-415).

### 3.3 Data analysis

To analyse my data I used a thematic analysis, where I looked for reoccurring themes and aspects, as I was reading and re-reading the primary material. From there I organized my theoretical framework with the remerging themes in mind and I used the theoretical concepts, e.g. empowerment as a starting point when creating my categories (Bryman 2008, p. 555). I could connect the main themes found in the primary material with a number of theoretical concepts and theories in the secondary material. I created memos as I was going through the interview transcripts and document material and categories emerged that reflected certain aspects of the image of the Somali Diaspora, which had shaped the collaboration (Bryman, 2008, p. 547). Many themes and aspects were interconnecting and it was not possible to draw lines between them.

## 4 Theoretical framework

In my theoretical framework I have drawn upon a number of theoretical approaches in order to give a full understanding of the image of the Somali Diaspora that the NGOs describe and the development approach that has shaped the programme.

### 4.1 Diasporas in the development industry

In order to analyse the development NGO's approach and to enhance understanding of how they are taking on more stakeholders into the fabric of their projects and programmes. I have made use of a theoretical approach by Duffield (1996) as a potential explanation for the incorporation of the Diaspora communities into development industry. Furthermore, Turners & Kleist (2013) and Kleist (2008b) articles are also drawn upon as they brings up a number of key aspects concerning the notion of the Diaspora that has shaped the framing of the cooperation by the development industry.

Contemporary development agencies are informed what is known as a third-way approach that is focusing on participation and bottom-up development. The approach is embracing heterogeneity, equality, the idea of multiculturalism and aims at enhancing human rights and democratic process – through strengthening of civil society. The civil society becomes the ultimate partner that freely can pursue plural value, and constitute the legitimate actor in failed states (Duffield, 1996). Diaspora organisations (DOs) can according to this idea constitute the legitimate actor that can build civil society, represent the culture and voice the need of their country of origin. The Diaspora makes up an identity of hybridity that can act as brokers within and between cultures and societies (Turner & Kleist, 2013).

In the recognition turn is based on the idea that marginalised groups, communities, constitute a basis for demanding rights. Diasporas that experience of misrecognition and social struggles are marginalised political agents and minorities in need of recognition. The proliferation of Diaspora in the development agenda can be seen as a part of recognition turns and promotion of multiculturalism where identity politics and social struggles of particular communities is legitimatising aspect of development interventions (Kleist, 2008b).

The new communitarian development approach can be seen as a response to the failure of modernity and hierarchical development approach – instead an apologetic approach is taken and power is excluded from the calculation and culture is promoted as a pivotal factor (Duffield, 1996).



Duffield sees this cultural-functionalist project as the way in which development agencies approach protracted political crisis in the Global South. Moreover, there is no analysis of power and accountability, and therefore not targeted in development interventions. Instead responses are technocratic and apolitical towards political crisis. Division is seen, as natural and instability only as a break of ordered development were NGOs could restore the imbalance through short-term projects (Duffield, 1996).

Development agencies are interested in the meso-level through which they are aiming to strengthen local structures and reduce vulnerability. Strengthening of civil society is seen as key to solve democratic deficiency and to pursue plural values. By using indigenous partners and linking civil society to relief projects and technical support projects become more development oriented (Duffield, 1996).

## 4.2 Governing the Diaspora in development

To explain what assumptions about the Somali Diaspora that guides the NGO when deciding to implement the programmes I have referred to a number of articles with a governmentality framework. Focus is put on the on the issues that previous research about the governmentality frameworks have shed light on regarding migrants in development and the self-governing by individuals in a community.

According to this theoretical framework an organisation are to act upon the dynamics of the community to invent and instrument the allegiance between individual and the community. New ethical perceptions of the individual are guided by what is seen as unique, localized and specific ties. A new social agreement resting a moral sentiment connects the community (Rose, 1996). Responsibility is put on the individual level and are understood as a relation between the one's networks of personal concern and those places were allegiance of mutual obligation are of "natural" construct (Rose, 1996). The ways the Diasporas are governed are fitting with the neoliberal change in development industry that has made it individualised and depoliticised. The ideas of "self-governing" and "governing at a distance" in the discourse appeal to communitarian values. Thus, decentralisation of decision making to the civil society is used in order to create responsible individuals (Rose, 1996). Development organisations are relying on the Diaspora's self-governance, their organisation, categorising and their discipline on themselves to engage in their homeland. In line with these thoughts, the Diaspora should engage because of their assumed positioning, emotional bonds and responsibility (Turner & Kleist 2013).

The individual in the Diaspora here becomes a moral subject who is bonded to her community through obligations and responsibilities. Certain affinities are unifying the individual with her community, which can be strengthened through identification projects and partnership. Through the partnership a collective responsibility is taken for planning and

the governing partner is functioning as a facilitator and are diagnosing the initial problems. Local communities are portrayed as being able to be empowered by taking more responsibility and thereby help themselves. Civil society represents various communities in the neoliberal regimes and is shaped through professionalising processes, in which they become less autonomous and increasingly bureaucratic (Meade, 2012).

According with neoliberal governmentality, the migrant is seen as capable of making decisions to act for morally right for the community and to redistribute well (Raghuram, 2007). Focus is put on the personal responsibility to ameliorate risk and apply strategic thinking (Rose, 1996). The migration and development nexus depends on and therefore also fosters these moral sentiments and commitment to a collective group. Furthermore, the mix of economic rationalities and morality that shapes the migrants to act in a social appropriate way, which is to act in community interest and thereby they become agents of development (Raghuram, 2007). The individual migrants responsibilities are developed through numbers of informal networks, family and community ties to be an extended insurance mechanism (Duffield/Raghuram, 2007).

The current paradigm of sustainable development has shifted focus from the state to the individual in a community. Sustainable development thinking has shaped the idea that by strengthening capacities of individuals, empowering them, they can improve their own and their community's ability to be self-reliant. The development actor will concern communities' attitudes and behaviour in order to reduce vulnerability and poverty. Each community is seen as being composed by social entrepreneurs that through sustainable development approach can enable improvements on household and community level. The practice of sustainable development can make individuals into entrepreneurs of change. Migrants are described as they are maximizing their capital and redistributing equally across the community and are therefore recognized as the ultimate development actors (Duffield, 2006). Engaged migrants such as the Diaspora members are the embodiment of these lines of thought, filled with the potential to spur social capital, entrepreneurship and reduce poverty (Mercer et al 2009).

In the migration and development nexus, the Diaspora constitutes a group category for mobilization rather than a community. The migrants labelled as being Diaspora members are assumed to be "a natural and unproblematic 'organic' community of people without division or difference, dedicated to the same political project(s)" (Anthias/Horst, 2013). The concerns of the development industry lie in community cohesion through creating self-reliant individual, cultural categories and communities of unification. Establishing this universal picture of the Diaspora and describing diaspora as a unified group, generalisation and ignorance of differences can be used as a powerful tool for mobilise the Diaspora (Horst 2013; Kleist, 2008b). Diaspora is like the communities described by Walton-Roberts (2001/Raghuram, 2007) produced from above, by a few, as units of cohesion or common interest. By establishing the idea of unification, it is denying the struggles and dissonance within the communities (Raghuram, 2007).

## 5 Analysis

The analysis is divided in four sections representing the themes I extracted the transcripts and policy documents. The first theme I found was that of cultural broker and transnational actor that I connected to reasons for incorporating the Diaspora into the development industry (see 4.1) as a legitimatizing stakeholder. A second theme reflected in the analysed material was the recognizing of the Diaspora as a development actor and the attempt to find new models for development that I connected to the notion of the recognition turn (see 4.1).

A third theme that was an established idea among the development NGO's was what seen as a long-term moral commitment by the Diaspora members and their unique ties to the homeland. This theme I related with the self-governing by individuals in a community and the notion of Diaspora as moral agents of change (see 4.2). The last theme, empowerment of individual and self-help, I connected to the sustainable development approach presented in section 4.2.

### 5.1 Diaspora as cultural brokers

In the introduction of the Diaspora programmes, the first stated aspect was the comparative advantage and added value the Diaspora gave as a partner in development projects overall. An asset was created through Diaspora that with its dual-identity could function as a cultural broker in the new development collaborations (DRC 2015). The Diaspora is a resource for the NGOs since they possess a transnational citizenship, which is explained to be an asset for both locations (DRC 2014). By strengthening the broker role of Diaspora in both societies, they can function as an important transnational link (Omar 2015a). The Diaspora role is foremost held to be that of a transnational actor, explained to have "many transnational linkages" and mediator of particular knowledge that can spur development (Ephrem 2015).

Development work is becoming "better" through them as they know the language and culture (Ennals 2015). This knowledge- mediating role is not only at hand for the NGOs but also for each society that the Diaspora member is a member of. They fill knowledge gaps in both societies and can spread knowledge about development experience from one actor to another. Strengthening civil society has therefore become a mantra within the initiatives. By doing this they solve what they see as the issue with making the DO a legitimate partner in development (Omar & Ephrem 2015)(DRC 2014). Civil society is seen as the solution to fulfil needs in Somalia and Scandinavia where Diaspora can bridge societies together and

gather information in order to inform about the needs. Heiduk (2015) argues that, "...they play a big role in bridging societies, by not just being part of one civil society, by being part of one, two, three, even more civil societies and communities. Both by advocating their need, being position of very good knowledge and very good current information."

The Diaspora's hybrid identity, can mediate bottom-up development were Somali Diaspora represent their country of origin for the Scandinavia society. The Diaspora constitutes message senders from Somalia that inform about the situation in Somalia and the needs on the ground with the programmes they are enhancing this function as it is partly facilitated by it. The Diaspora is mediating a message in return on to the ground in the Somali societies that they are operating in. Omar (2015) means that they can function as accessors to areas and can improve the communication of the right-based approach. They can be a communicator of universal values, so that the target group can understand their rights and claim them. Omar advisor at Forum Syd explain it as follows: "The Diaspora can contribute with social and political values, when it comes to democracy, stability and get the economy going. I think the Somali Diaspora can observe so that the rights are met in Somalia" (Omar, 2015b).

Forum Syd's programme is working with a right-based approach, spreading plural values in Somalia, and working with difficult issues that requires a holistic approach, and where behavioural and attitude changes is necessary regarding issues such as Female Gender Mutilation (FGM). The Somali Diaspora is seen as a means to improve the forwarding of the message about important changes regarding FGM (Omar, 2015a). Ennals (2015) means "it is more legitimate if the Diaspora works with these issues like FGM and things that are in their culture".

Ennals means that through the access of a new set of technical skills in the Norway, they can improve the development programme by sending single migrants to Somaliland, who can use their capacities to change systems in a more contextualised manner since they know culture and languages (Ennals, 2015). The NGOs recognize the Diaspora as an insider that is more culturally aware and has self-experience of their hardship and therefore can act with a better understanding of the locals. Heiduk (2015) means that the Diaspora and the locals can meet on more equal terms as actors and partners, rather than having a clear-cut giver and recipient roles. Heiduk express as following:

"I think it has another ring to it, Diaspora who knows the local people and who have been living in the conflict...Diaspora implementing projects, is not just projects and there is a certain output. There is a symbolic value to it and there is a different feeling from the beneficiaries in taking help from the Diaspora"

The role of the DO is to assess the needs and the situation on the ground. They are seen as conscious and attentive to local needs and projects by including consultative and participatory aspects (DRC 2015). They (the DO) can define knowledge gaps, build relations and are able to match skill and needs through contact with local authorities (Omar,

2015). The Diaspora shall in all programmes make sure to collaborate on the ground and getting local government's approval. Interests and concerns shall come from the local community and participatory approach is seen pivotal in order to make development process inclusive. Forum Syd's programme is explicit about targeting marginalized communities with the purpose of empowerment (Forum Syd 2015a). Heiduk (2015) explain it as "by targeting the Diaspora one is targeting the benefiter". The DRC describes the value added as something essential to the Diaspora: "Diaspora knows the local communities thanks to the common origin that donors and beneficiary shares" (DRC2, 2015). Diaspora can better represent the target group and they possess the tools to make the process inclusive. The linkages to country of origin are portrayed as being absolute, Diaspora full commitment to the wider community - is in their nature of being.

The DO carry the responsibility for mediation of local needs to give better-informed responses. Thus, they are seen as more legitimate than other stakeholders, a less intrusive actor. Diaspora is seen as making the collaboration more levelled out in Somalia and the Diaspora can level the playing field between the actors involved in the development cooperation. The development cooperation attempts to decolonize the relations, and Diaspora will improve development by having a closer bonds to the community. Development work is here seen as becoming more democratic and inclusive as needs are voiced of those not yet heard. Diaspora is seen as standing equally with on leg in each country and representing their community and former homeland, and an embodiment of the development message. Their identity constitutes inside and outsider at the same time and this hybridity is celebrated as an asset for the development NGO. Regional hierarchies and power dynamic is not the challenge for the Diaspora to deal with, their role is to bridging the societies, be a representative of their cultural and inform about what needs to be developed in both societies.

## 5.2 Recognition turn and new models for development

The recognition turn that concerns marginalized groups rights and promotion of multiculturalism triggered ideas about a more inclusive development approach. In the recognition turn, hybridity is embraced and understanding promoted and equality is the goal. The Diasporas that are immigrants in the Scandinavian countries needs to be valued, and their voice needs to be heard in the debate. The Development fund express it as the new "we", the multicultural society enables diversity in development thinking and practice" (Development Fund 2015)(PRIO 2010). Heiduk means that "advocating for changing our own perceptions, systems and paradigms and ways of looking at things we need to make them (the donors, my note) understand that there is equally valuable ways at looking at things" (Heiduk, 2015).

Diasporas has the potential to broaden our understanding of how new models for development can look like and who can be a development actor. Heiduk is mentioning one of these new models of development that development industry has adapted: “Today the trend within the development goes to cash programming – where you do exactly what the Diaspora does; you give cash injection to individuals in order for them to take care of their own need”. The reflection shows how the Diaspora’s remittance has been acknowledged as an effective development tool in the sustainable development model.

Being acknowledged as strong civil society actor is not explicit goals for the programmes. However, the programmes are means for the Diaspora to be recognized as a stakeholder in development and in order for the Diaspora potential to be fully utilized by the NGOs. Diaspora in the host societies and among other actors needs to be seen as a legitimate recognised development actor (Ephrem 2015)(DRC 2014). The Development Fund argue that the Diaspora’s unconventional methods should be equally valued and being part of the diversity of development thinking and practice (PRIO 2010). Furthermore, the Diaspora’s work needs to be more recognized. Trust in small actors and in human beings needs to be increased among development donors (Development fund 2015). The involvement of Diaspora shall be seen as possibility to diversifying the understanding of what development is and how it can be done (Horst/PRIO 2010).

In the programme by DRC and the Development Fund, the role of Diaspora in development through facilitating the programmes is an acknowledgement of Diasporas engagement that can be seen as strong tool for inclusion in Scandinavian Society (PRIO 2010). Moreover, the collaboration has the ability to break down prejudices and change perceptions across and between civil society actors (Ennals 2013). Furthermore, the Development Fund argues that one should see them as an exclusive asset; through them one can access plenty of network, for example they can guide companies in the Somali market (Ennals 2015). NGOs mean that the Diaspora programmes here have an important role to play in facilitating this image changing process. By recognizing them as valuable actors in development, it may have effects on their integration, feeling of inclusion and their feeling of being a positive resources rather than a liability according to Heiduk (2015). The DRC means that by strengthening the Diaspora organisation they can advance the integration process for other Somalis in Denmark (DRC2 2015). The Development Fund emphasises this points by saying that the programme has “... a clear relevance to integration in the country of settlement, challenge the structural division within the Norwegian system”. Forum Syd are not lifting this as a concern for the programme, Omar (2015b) express it as following: “We see the Diaspora as a tool for reaching the change one wants to. The Diaspora themselves is not a goal for us. They have just liked other Swedish organisation, organised in voluntary organisations...”

There is a call for changing the ideas about who can “do development” to not only incorporate traditional donors and there is sense of wanting to try out a new model for development, a model that is more sensitized to local wants and needs. Moreover, a model that gives new potential to development, an injection of optimism that takes a further step

away from hierarchal development models and improves the contextual adaption of projects by making use of the Diaspora's cultural capital. Thus, the model is line with the third way approach where facilitation of dialogue is seen as an important part of making everyone's voice equally important.

In the programmes, the Somali Diaspora aims to build the local partner organisation from the ground up by transferring to the locals the human resources and understand of their rights and obligation. Building civil society is seen as the solution for the democratic deficiency existing in conflict zones. Technical support, inform on human rights are small steps in decreasing vulnerability and enable change. Political issues are not part of the mission for the NGOs and if the Somali Diaspora members have political affiliation these needs to be put aside in order for the collaboration to function (Heiduk 2015). Political affiliation needs to be left out, as they are believed to be a hindrance for equal development. Culture and geographical belongings, on the other hand, enable access and cultural understanding. Representing a single community is here seen legitimate and DOs do not need to have an overall arching plan for the region. Diaspora engagement it is naturally focused on areas where they come from (Development Fund 2015). According to Heiduk (2015), the Diaspora's engagement lies within their clan and geographical affiliations. Heiduk further explains it as: "If you tell them to do regional assessments as professional NGO then you are missing the Diaspora connection" (Heiduk 2015). Neutrality is important even though the message is clear from the programmes, the Somali Diaspora have, can and will make change socially as well as economically in their area of origin.

In Somalia much of the civil society is running parallel with that of the state, to build from below is the way to diminish the democratic deficiency (Ainte 2015). The programme describe the hindrance for that to happen is the aforementioned weak civil society, it needs to be stronger and change has to take place through a strong commitment by empowered individuals. The Somali Diaspora embodies that potential. A vision is for the Diaspora is that it becomes an even stronger civil society actor in both societies in order to better voice concerns of their members to the national governments and become partners in development. Recognizing the Somali Diaspora's role in development can stimulate the change of perception about the Diaspora in both places. The programmes aims at enable those who did not before have the ability to access funds as well as organisations with a weak capacity. Tailor-made programmes and building continuity in the relationship between the Scandinavian NGO and the Somali DO's and creating networks with others organisations, are part of the steps to enable development from below through having the right tools to do so.

Recognizing the Somali Diaspora and seeing them as legitimate development actors is important for the Scandinavian development NGO. Bring in Diaspora into existing development structure, requires a changed perception about who and how one can do development. Diaspora geographical allegiances should be recognized as an asset, but they should stay neutral politically. Finally, by strengthen Diaspora as civil society actor the integration process can be improved and development from below can take place.

### 5.3 Diaspora long-term commitment and unique ties

The Diaspora's feelings of moral commitment towards a specific place and seeing it as an act of plight to send remittance to the country of origin makes the Diaspora a self-sustainable development actor. Ennals (2015) means that "...they are constant, they will always be supporting their country. Their passionate commitment is the basis for the sustainability of their engagement, even if donors drop out the Diaspora will stay committed to their country of origin according to Heiduk (2015). The remittance is the proof of their commitment and accountability does not seem to be an issue as responsibility rest on community and family ties. The new social agreement is between the Diaspora member and his or hers' networks of concern that constitute an insurance mechanism for the community and can function as a safety lifeline. Individual Diaspora members can ameliorate the risk and redistribute for uneven development by voicing the needs of their own communities. The Diaspora is described as constituting a direct link that can mediate the message about the situation on the ground to the actors in the West. Heiduk (2015) describe it as: "...they are the first people communities call when they need assistance. First they have their inner mechanisms (for social security: my note) but then the Diaspora is the second one in response for them". Ephrem (2015) writes that the Diaspora is the only actor in some places that gives active and continues support. The overall image of the Diaspora in the programmes is that they are perceived as an important actor partly because of their willingness to contribute and their long-term commitment. The Diaspora is seen as the constant development actor, an actor that can and will carry personal responsibility. By tapping into the Diaspora *nature of* engagement and dedication - projects can become self-sustainable.

Portraying the Diaspora as possessing unique ties and personal networks to a specific location are making them into moral subjects of greater commitment. The commitment rest on the privilege they have, their ability to make an actual difference. Omar (2015a) describe it as following: "There is a feeling that one has to contribute, it is partly about ones identity, one wants to make a difference, it is a mix of political and private interests. It is also a privilege to be able to contribute in this way".

The Diaspora members are capable, willing and engaged, these characteristics make them a resource that the development NGOs can harness and strengthen in the right ways. Hence, they are looked upon with what Axel (/Horst, 2013) describe as a *global moral community*, their commitment goes beyond family and they can make possible an inclusive development if they "learn" how to do so. The learning process is an identification process where the Diaspora gets resources and capacities to organize. DRC describes it, as the programme wants to strengthen the role of Diaspora as a development actor. The programmes are reinforcing and stimulating commitment further by trying to include new stakeholders and areas of concern for the Diaspora. The development NGO's are fostering the ideas of the



essentialist nature of the migrant from the Global South who are strategically maximizing for the sake of the greater community.

A moral commitment is seen as the basis of the Diaspora engagement, by being the only actors with connections to the West in some places, they constitute the second safety lifeline. Through the programme the commitment of the Diaspora can be enhanced and their areas of concern can broaden and deepen.

## 5.4 Empowerment and self-reliance

To infuse aforementioned commitment and the feeling of responsibility by the Diaspora, local ownership is given to the Diaspora and the local actor (Omar, 2015b; DRC 2014; Ennals 2015). If the Diaspora is given local ownership responsibility and commitment, it is thought to become stronger and the Diaspora is perceived to value the project higher and therefore engage more to pull further resources into the projects. Resource gathered locally can create self-sustaining system on local level and spur more engagement and participation from other actors (DRC 2014). The DRC means that the supportive project component can be seen as tool that has a critical impact on the empowerment of both the DO and local population (DRC 2014).

The Diaspora programmes are fostering an idea of the empowered individual, the Diaspora member, who can mobilize for their own change. Through their engaged work, creation of linkages and increased dialogue, they can make people aware and mobilize their community of concern to become self-reliant (Forum Syd 2015b). These ideas are inline with those of sustainable development where self-reliant and empowered community members can voice need, behave right for change and lift themselves out of vulnerabilities and structural unfairness. Forum Syd work according to this line of thoughts, sustainability in the programme is built on the learning component. Omar (2015b) at Forum Syd explains the sustainability as follows: “we are not working to build a school and then the money runs out, instead we are organizing people so that they can themselves build a school”. Resources need to be sustainably applied in the projects otherwise they can create dependency. The Diaspora can help to lead communities to some degree into self-realisation as they can access right networks for change to be sustainable (DRC2).

In the programmes by DRC and the Development Fund, the Diaspora members are described as getting empowered through the learning process and get increased understanding of the programme components. The programme components, such as the capacity building, are aiming to give the Diaspora more professional’s status and increased capacity to manage projects. A future aspiration would be to professionalize the Diaspora, to become “real” partners in the collaboration. This goes along with the goal that DRC has to strengthen the Diaspora as development agents (Heiduk 2015) (DRC 2014). DRC explain it

as "... changing traditional dynamics towards professionalism can have a potential impact on stability of the organisations" (DRC2, 2015).

Mobilization on the ground is described by the development NGOs as an important role that the Diaspora can play. For the DRC, Diaspora can pool further resources on the ground and support institutions by transfer technically skills that are relevant and innovative compared to traditional ones (DRC 2014). Omar (2015b) advisor at Forum Syd means that the platforms for learning and dialogue can constitute ways for the Diaspora to learn new ways of organizing and to pool resources on the ground in order to find new solutions. For the Diaspora to transfer the *right* values to the ground or the *right* technical skills the Diaspora need capacity trainings on certain aspects of for example right-based approach and project assessments. In Forum Syd's programme the Diaspora is explained to have the ability to empower marginalized groups and build awareness over rights and duties (Forum Syd 2015b). The Diaspora member is represented in the programme as a social entrepreneur, of awareness making, skills transfer - they are embodying development and change.

The Scandinavian NGOs provide platforms and discussion groups to facilitate the dialogue. Facilitation of the meetings with the Diaspora can be part of a process of unification among the Diaspora members and to make mobilization for change unified. Trying to establish unification and creation of cohesion is not a stated aim of the collaborations. Stimulating a process of unification is taking place indirectly as people are gathered for what is described as a common cause. The programmes install a universal picture of the Somali Diaspora members as a single unity, a group that can unite and will mobilise for development in Somalia. This picture can create a self-fuelling affect, the Somalia Diaspora will organize more, and their development approach will be more inline with the Western blue print.

## 6 Conclusion

This study has shown how the Somali Diaspora is portrayed as a cultural broker with transnational linkages that can bridge the Global South and Global North. The benefit of cooperation with Diaspora is that development can become more sensitized towards culture and context. In the cooperation between the Scandinavian NGOs and the Somali Diaspora, the Diaspora is seen as giving added value to the programmes as mediators, because of their hybrid identity and cultural capital. The cooperation can be seen as an attempt to level the playing field in the development intervention and decolonize development.

The programmes are influenced by what is known as the recognition turn, where the Somali Diaspora is identified as a marginalized community in need of recognition in Scandinavia. Embracing diversity and multiculturalism of the Scandinavian society is part of the greater vision of the Development Fund and DRC's programmes and is thought to function as tool for improving the process of integration and breaking prejudices.

The Somali Diaspora is thought to be able to mediate the message about the need for development and spread plural values in both societies. The Diaspora can function as an extra safety lifeline for the local communities in Somalia and individually ameliorate for risks. By strengthening of Diaspora's civil society through the programmes it can stimulate their moral commitment and their ability to mobilize the greater community for change. Diaspora is described as possessing unique ties to Somalia, partly because of their clan or geographical affinities, where the Diaspora engage in development. Diaspora new way of "doing development" should be acknowledged and can constitute an effort to further step away from hierarchical models of development.

Somali Diaspora's true dedication is seen as a resource for the NGO and through the programmes they can strengthen the capacity of the DO so they can mobilize resources to make projects self-sustainable. The Diasporas here constitutes the empowered individuals and the sustainable development approach is described as empower marginalized communities so they have the ability to mobilize for changes. In the platforms for learning, the Diaspora will learn new ways of organizing and professionalize in order to manage projects. The platforms can enhance the idea of the Somali Diaspora that unites to mobilize for change, which have self-fuelling effect on their engagement.

I think the perception of the Scandinavian Somali Diaspora and the role they perceive themselves to have as actors in development is important to study further. Further qualitative study on how the Scandinavian Somali's see their role in development cooperation's in

place in Somalia could enhance policy makers understanding of Somali Diaspora's role in development.

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# Appendix

## Example of interview guide (the Development Fund)

- Why did the Development fund implement the Diaspora programme?
- Who (what organisation/group/person) took the initiative and how come?
- Where did the idea of the programme come about? Did you look at other similar projects?
- What is the ambition of the initiative? Purpose and goals?
- How come the programmes aim and goals be this way? Why are you focusing aspects of development (focus areas)?
- How are these “areas of development focus” decided?
- Why (is your organisation want to) engage with the Somali Diaspora?
- What role has the Somali Diaspora in the country of origin, as you perceive it?
- What role has the Diaspora in the programme/projects?
- How come?
- How is the Diaspora a resource for Norway? In PRIO they are described a strategic partner – in what ways are they?
- What criteria are you especially looking at for granting an application?
- What is your role do you have as an NGO in the collaboration? What role has NORAD and the Development fund as partnering stakeholders? How can you contribute?
- Who are accountable to whom in the projects? How is functioning on the ground? How are local stakeholders involved?
- Strengthening organisational capacity and trust building (through dialogue) are parts of the programmes – how are they important to the programme? How did you decide on this?
- How are the projects ensuring sustainable?
- What are the perceived future outcomes for the projects in the programme and the role of the (Somali)Diaspora?
- What are the main challenges to the Diaspora programme, as you see it?