

Diaspora return visits for knowledge transfer and capacity development

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DIASPORA RETURN VISITS FOR KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT:

A Case Study of IOM's Connecting
Diaspora for Development Project in
Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland

Charlotte Mueller

Diaspora Return Visits for Knowledge Transfer and Capacity Development:

A Case Study of IOM's Connecting Diaspora for Development
Project in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland

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**Diaspora Return Visits for Knowledge Transfer and Capacity
Development:**

**A Case Study of IOM's Connecting Diaspora for Development
Project in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland**

DISSERTATION

to obtain the degree of Doctor at Maastricht University,
on the authority of the Rector Magnificus, Prof. dr. Pamela Habibović,
in accordance with the decision of the Board of Deans,
to be defended in public on
Thursday, 15th of June 2023 at 13.00 hours

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

| | |
|--------|---|
| CD | Capacity Development |
| CD4D | Connecting Diaspora for Development |
| COCD | Contributions to Organisational Capacity Development |
| DRP | Diaspora Return Programme |
| ET | Ethiopia |
| EU | European Union |
| FGS | Federal Government of Somalia |
| FW | Fieldwork |
| GCM | Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration |
| GDI | Gender Development Index |
| GERD | Gross Domestic Expenditure on Research and Development |
| HCI | Human Capital Index |
| HDI | Human Development Index |
| IOM | International Organization for Migration |
| IT | Information Transmission |
| KC | Knowledge Creation |
| KT | Knowledge Transfer |
| MIDA | Migration for Development in Africa |
| NE | Neoclassical Economics |
| NELM | New Economics of Labour Migration |
| OCD | Organisational Capacity Development |
| R&D | Research and Development |
| RQA | Return of Qualified Afghans |
| RQAN | Return of Qualified African Nationals |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SL | Sierra Leone |
| SOL | Somaliland |
| TOKTEN | Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals |
| TRQN | Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation |
| VKT | Diaspora return visit for knowledge transfer and capacity development |



I INTRODUCTION

The extent to which migration, including return, contributes to or hinders development¹ in migrants' countries of origin has been subject to intense debate in policy and research, changing from optimism in the 1950s to the early 1970s, pessimism from 1970 to the early 1990s, neo-optimism from the 1990s to 2000s and neo-pessimism since the end of the 2000s (King, 2022). Despite the vast body of case studies on the return migration–development nexus produced in recent decades, empirical evidence remains inconsistent when it comes to return migration's impact on development, an issue that King (2022, p. 326) has highlighted recently:

Given the inconsistency of evidence, conclusions about return migration's contribution to development are hard to draw, beyond the obvious point that the effects are dependent on context – the development standards of the countries involved, the skill levels and other capital endowments of the returnees, their demographic profile and length of absence, their motivations both for the original migration and the return and the political and social receptiveness of the country of return to incoming migrants' development potential.

Furthering evidence on return migration's contributions to development beyond context-dependency therefore remains critical. This applies specifically for policy aspects of return migration and development that have not been theorised, such as diaspora return visits for knowledge transfer and capacity development (in what follows, as VKT) facilitated by short-term diaspora return programmes.

A popular policy tool, different forms of short-term diaspora return programmes have been used by host- and origin-country governments and international organisations to incentivise and manage VKTs.² Such programmes are a way to promote diaspora members' contribution to their country of origin (Brinkerhoff, 2006a) and have been developed as a result of optimistic interpretations of the return–development nexus. The renewed optimism in the 1990s to 2000s not only put an emphasis on migrants and diaspora members³ as actors for development but also led to changing perspectives of return, putting increased attention on temporary forms of return, circular movements and return visits (de Haas, 2006; Faist, 2008). Governments and international organisations developed an increased interest in fostering forms of development contributions by migrants and diaspora members that did not require permanent return (Faist, 2008; Meyer & Wattiaux, 2006). As a result, international organisations – whose return programmes had traditionally focused on permanent return⁴ – developed more flexible approaches over the last few decades (Brown, 2002; Meyer et al., 1997, 2001). While the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) started to operate 'Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals' (TOKTEN) already in 1977, short-term diaspora return programmes and projects of different scales operated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) since the 2000s include 'Migration for Development in Africa' (MIDA), Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals (TRQN) and 'Connecting Diaspora for Development' (CD4D) (Melde &

¹ In line with de Haas et al. (2019, p. 332), development throughout this thesis refers to Sen's (1999, p. 3) definition. Sen conceptualised development as a 'process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy', which implies access to social, cultural, human and economic capital.

² For the definitions of knowledge transfer and capacity development used in this thesis, see Chapter 3 (Section 3.3).

³ For the definition of diaspora members used in this thesis, see Chapter 3 (Section 3.2.2.)

⁴ See, for instance: 'Return of Qualified Afghans' (RQA) and 'Reintegration of Qualified African Nationals' (RQAN).

Ndiaye-Coïc, 2009).⁵ Thereby, these programmes aim to channel the potential attributed to diaspora members or migrants from developing countries in order to increase local expertise and contribute to capacity development in their countries of origin.

Despite their popularity, these return visits have not been sufficiently researched and theorised. Since VKTs – when managed through a diaspora return programme – are driven by optimistic assumptions, it is important to critically examine the premises that diaspora return programmes build on and understand under which conditions diaspora knowledge transfer takes place (Conway et al., 2012; Siar, 2014). Using data from VKTs conducted as part of the ‘Connecting Diaspora for Development’ (CD4D) project in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland, this thesis contributes to the literature on return migration and development by proposing a framework for knowledge transfer and capacity development in this context, theorising return visits for knowledge transfer as a distinct type of return visit and adding empirical evidence on them.

I.1 Aim of this thesis

The objective of this thesis is to deepen the understanding of diaspora members’ contributions to knowledge transfer and capacity development in their country of origin within the context of a short-term diaspora return programme. The primary research question guiding this thesis is:

How do diaspora members on return visits for knowledge transfer contribute to knowledge transfer and capacity development at host institutions in their countries of origin within the framework of a short-term diaspora return programme?

Following from the knowledge management literature and approaches to capacity development, the key elements of viewing knowledge transfer as a staged process and distinguishing between individual and organisational capacity development are essential in conceptualising knowledge transfer and capacity development. Along these lines, in this thesis, three processes are distinguished: *information transmission (IT)*, *knowledge creation (KC)* and *contributions to organisational capacity development (COCD)*. *IT* is the process whereby knowledge senders – in this thesis the diaspora members – share new information and insights with knowledge receivers, here the host-institution staff. *KC* is the process in which knowledge receivers process and utilise the transmitted information. These two processes together form the knowledge transfer process, with *IT* being the first stage and *KC* the second, with the second stage resulting in individual capacity development. The third process is *COCD*, which is defined as the process whereby the diaspora member makes contributions to the internal structure, policies, procedures and resources of the host institution in which the return visits take place. Nonetheless, the emphasis here is on the first two processes – *IT* and *KC*, with *COCD* being considered a complementary process as it is not directly linked to knowledge transfer. Since *COCD* refers to changes that the diaspora member initiates, *COCD* can take place without *IT* and *KC*, and vice versa. Yet, where it takes place without knowledge transfer *COCD* is not productive, further illustrated by the levels of capacity development below. On the other hand, it may enhance processes of knowledge transfer when combined with *IT* and *KC*. Distinguishing between these three processes enables the generation of an in-depth

⁵ It should be noted that these two approaches – support for permanent return and support of return visits - continue to be implemented simultaneously; see Melde & Ndiaye-Coïc (2009, pp. 158–163) for an annotated list of different ‘Return of Qualified Nationals’ projects operated between 1999 and 2008.

understanding of how diaspora members contribute to knowledge transfer and capacity development.

This then also allows us to determine the extent to which capacity development is achieved through return visits by distinguishing three levels of capacity development (high, medium and low). A placement will be considered to have *high capacity development* as long as IT and KC occur and which may be accompanied by COCD. Placements with *medium capacity development* are those with success in IT, which may be accompanied by success in COCD; and *low capacity development* – placements without success in the three processes or with success in COCD. Differentiating between these three levels of capacity development allows the examination of the three processes jointly as they build on each other – in the case of IT and KC – or complement each other in the case of COCD.

In addition, this thesis examines the factors enabling or inhibiting these three processes. Following on from the literature, it looks at which combination of factors between the diaspora member, the host-institution staff and the overall context together create optimal conditions for knowledge transfer and capacity development. For this reason, the framework examines three levels: *the individual level*, comprising the diaspora members and host-institution staff, *the group level*, which is knowledge transfer methods and knowledge features as well as relationships and interaction and *the contextual level*, consisting of the return modality and project characteristics, the host institutions and the countries of return. Each of these levels is examined for the three processes, as different factors, enablers and inhibitors play a role in each process. Therefore, the conceptualisation and examination of factors across all three processes constitute an approach not previously applied in the context of short-term diaspora return programmes.

Finally, the thesis also examines returnee stigma and the strategies which diaspora members, on return visits for knowledge transfer, employ to prevent or counteract returnee stigma. This latter emerged as one component which diaspora members need to overcome while on a return visit for knowledge transfer.

1.2 Relevance of this thesis

The research presented in this thesis is relevant to both academia and policy. With regards to academia, it makes three main contributions to the literature on return migration and development. First, it proposes a framework for knowledge transfer and capacity development in this context. As King (2022, p. 326) highlighted ‘[r]eturnees comprise both “successes” and “failures” but most are somewhere in between’ and ‘the criteria for “success” are not clear-cut’. While not referring only to returnees’ development contributions, this nonetheless underscores the need to conceptualise the contributions which returnees make, especially in the case of VKTs, which have received little research attention. Despite existing research on different aspects of, or related to, knowledge transfer and capacity development within the field of return and development, none of the existing studies offer a systematic framework. In addition, while knowledge transfer constitutes a staged process, this characteristic is not sufficiently accounted for in current conceptualisations of the concepts of knowledge transfer and capacity development in the context of return and development. This thesis, therefore, builds on existing studies to develop a conceptual framework for VKT and provides new evidence on this modality of knowledge transfer. The conceptual framework proposed in this thesis distinguishes three processes – *information transmission (IT)*, *knowledge creation (KC)* and *contributions to organisational capacity development (COCD)* – across three levels (individual, group and contextual). Distinguishing between these processes and levels reveals insights into diaspora members’ contributions to knowledge transfer and capacity development

that go beyond that accomplished by previous studies (Kuschminder, 2014a; Kuschminder et al., 2014). This includes providing additional evidence that VKT can lead to valuable contributions by increasing individual and organisational capacities and showing that capacity development is not at the most effective level, with *medium capacity development* being the most common outcome of placements. In addition, this study shows that *information transmission* is much more common than *contributions to organisational capacity development and knowledge creation*.

Second, with VKT, this thesis recognises a distinct type of return visit. While considerable research attention has been paid to other types of return visit – such as Visiting Friends and Relatives or VFR (see, for example, Asiedu, 2010; Duval, 2003; Mueller, 2015; Stephenson, 2002; Wagner, 2015) – there is limited research investigating return visits for knowledge transfer and research to date has not discussed these return visits as a separate category. Despite their closeness to and overlap with other types of return visit, specifically economic visits, VKTs are conceptually distinct from other types of return visit as they take place for knowledge transfer and capacity development. These visits can be facilitated by an international or a non-governmental organisation or actioned by the individuals themselves (Kuschminder, 2014a). Recognising this type of return visit as a separate category is important for the literature on return and development, as it has long been a popular tool among practitioners to promote return for development yet has not been theorised by academia.

Third, this thesis adds empirical evidence on these VKT to the literature on return and development. As stated at the beginning of this thesis, it becomes clear from the literature on return and development that the effects of return migration are context-dependent (King, 2022), yet leave a need to further understanding beyond this aspect. Ghosh (1996, p. 103) identified three conditions for benefits from return migration to materialise through skills transfer – that is, the relative productivity of returnees' skills compared to earlier learning in the country of origin, the usefulness of returnees' skills in the country of origin and the returnees' willingness and opportunity to use these skills. This thesis builds on a number of studies in the field of return and development that have started to examine the factors that influence knowledge transfer and capacity development (e.g. Ammassari, 2004; Kuschminder, 2014a; Kuschminder et al., 2014; Van Houte & Davids, 2014; Wang, 2014). They highlight aspects such as a trusting relationship between diaspora members and their local colleagues (Ammassari, 2004; Kuschminder, 2014a; Van Houte & Davids, 2014; Wang, 2014), the passion and motivation of participants (Kuschminder, 2014a), knowledge-receiver absorptive capacity (Kuschminder et al., 2014) and the knowledge transfer method (Kuschminder, 2014a; Kuschminder et al., 2014). This thesis provides a more nuanced understanding of these factors than previous studies have accomplished and provides new insights. It shows the varying degrees of importance which the three levels of enablers and inhibitors (individual, group, contextual) have for the three processes (IT, KC, COCD), sheds further light on factors previously discussed in the literature – confirming their importance for knowledge transfer and capacity development and determining their role for each of the three processes – and identifying factors not previously included. These latter vary between factors such as diaspora members' previous participation in a short-term diaspora return programme, diaspora members' disseminative capacity, the frequency of interaction between diaspora members and host-institution staff and the role of the complementarity of contributions to organisational capacity development to knowledge transfer.

In addition to its academic value, the research presented here also has clear social and policy relevance. Increasing the capacity of public organisations in developing countries is an important aspect of development. Knowledge has long been recognised as an important asset enabling companies to ensure competitiveness and innovation (Argote & Ingram, 2000; Bender & Fish, 2000; Davenport & Prusak, 2000; Joia & Lemos, 2010) and as a key driver of economic

growth (Fagerberg et al., 2010). It is, therefore, of particular importance for developing countries, many of which lack the capability for innovation, which is reflected in aspects such as journal publications, research and development (R&D) expenditure and patents (UNESCO, 2015). In 2013, high-income economies accounted for 69.3 per cent of the world's gross domestic expenditure on research and development (GERD), while the share was just 0.3 per cent for the world's least developed countries.⁶ Similarly, low-income countries only accounted for 1.3 per cent of global researchers and 0.6 per cent of global publications (UNESCO, 2015) and had the lowest human capital indices (World Bank, 2020a).⁷

The importance of knowledge for development is also reflected in the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals or SDGs (United Nations General Assembly, 2015). This is particularly addressed within Goal 4 – ('Quality Education') and its fourth target regarding the increase in youth and adults who have the relevant skills for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship – and Goal 9 ('Industries, Innovation and Infrastructure') and its target to support domestic technology development, research and innovation in developing countries. Furthermore, the potential of migrants to make positive contributions to sustainable development has been acknowledged in the SDGs⁸ and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration or GCM (United Nations General Assembly, 2015, 2019). Objective 19 of the GCM aims to '[c]reate conditions for migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development in all countries' (United Nations General Assembly, 2019) and also highlights the need for research on non-financial development contributions by diasporas, such as knowledge transfer; this thesis contributes to further research in this field.

Finally, this thesis derives its policy relevance from the popularity of short-term diaspora return programmes. The focus on short-term assignments was pioneered by the launch of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 'Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals' (TOKTEN)⁹ in 1977. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has operated several projects in sub-Saharan Africa under the umbrella of the 'Migration for Development in Africa' (MIDA)¹⁰ strategy since 2001, including 'MIDA Great Lakes'¹¹ (2001–2012), 'MIDA Ghana Health'¹² (2002–2012), 'MIDeTh Health'¹³ (2007–2011) and 'MIDA FINNSOM'¹⁴ (since 2008). In addition, IOM has operated both 'Temporary Return of

⁶ The share of world GERD for the African continent was 1.3 per cent and 0.8 per cent for sub-Saharan Africa (UNESCO, 2015).

⁷ The average Human Capital Index (HCI) lies at around 0.71 for high-income and 0.37 for low-income countries (World Bank, 2020a).

⁸ Note that the main focus of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is on the inclusion and protection of migrants and their rights – see also Mueller (2020) – not on their role as development actors (Appave & Sinha, 2017).

⁹ TOKTEN placed 5,000 volunteers in 49 developing countries between 1977 and 1997 (de Haas, 2006, p. 17).

¹⁰ MIDA centres around three strategic approaches: financial transfers, decentralised cooperation and physical and technical transfers (Melde & Ndiaye-Coïc, 2009).

¹¹ MIDA Great Lakes consisted of four phases (Phase I: 2001–2004, Phase II: 2005–2006, Phase III: 2006–2008 and Phase IV: 2008–2012) and was financed by the Belgian government (Melde & Ndiaye-Coïc, 2009). According to de Haas (2006, p. 20), 163 physical transfers took place during Phase I and another 80 during Phase II.

¹² MIDA Ghana Health consisted of an assessment phase (2002–2003) and two implementation phases (Phase II: 2005–2007; Phase III: 2008–2012). The project was financed by the Dutch government (Melde & Ndiaye-Coïc, 2009).

¹³ Four Ethiopian hospitals received medical equipment and their staff were trained in its use (Ndiaye et al., 2011).

¹⁴ As part of MIDA FINNSOM Health, by 2018 IOM had supported 115 participants and a further 58 participants for MIDA FINNSOM Health and Education by 2018 (IOM, 2018a).

Qualified Nationals’ (TRQN)¹⁵ (2006–2015) and ‘Connecting Diaspora for Development’ (CD4D)¹⁶ (since 2016), which also include countries outside the African continent. While IOM is, without doubt, the main organisation implementing these types of project, other organisations – for instance, the German Corporation for International Cooperation GmbH (GIZ) – also operate different return programmes.¹⁷

1.3 Case study

The short-term diaspora return programme ‘Connecting Diaspora for Development’ (CD4D),¹⁸ operated by IOM in The Netherlands, has been selected for a case study. As part of my PhD, I was engaged in the external evaluation of the CD4D project, for which I was leading the data collection and conducted fieldwork in the target countries. For the purpose of this thesis, I use data from CD4D placements during the first phase of the project from 2016 to 2019 in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland.¹⁹

This project has been chosen for the case study as it is one example of a short-term diaspora return programme carried out by an international organisation and because comprehensive data could be collected on this project as part of the evaluation I was involved in. The CD4D Project is the most recent short-term return project operated by IOM in the field of diaspora and development; IOM is the main international organisation implementing short-term and long-term return programmes. Therefore, the implementation of the CD4D Project builds on and is informed by experiences with previous programmes and projects. While each diaspora return programme is implemented in a specific way, CD4D shares key characteristics with other projects – the short time span of placements and the focus on diaspora members with education and work experience in a certain field of expertise – making it a suitable case study. While some projects allow diaspora members to apply regardless of their country of residence, CD4D is only open for diaspora members residing in the Netherlands (with some exceptions). The project requirements stipulate that all individuals should have Dutch/EU citizenship or at least a permanent residence permit in the Netherlands or another EU member state. Applicants also need to have education and work experience relevant to the position they are applying for. The term ‘diaspora members’ is used in a purposefully broad manner for this project, which is not in line with academic definitions, with diaspora members effectively mostly being migrants, not descendants of migrants (more on this in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.2. and Chapter 3, Section 3.2.2.). Within the project, diaspora members are referred to as ‘diaspora experts’, which not only strategically frames participants as diaspora members but also signals expertise-based authority.

¹⁵ TRQN was operated in three phases: TRQN I from 2006 to 2008 in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Sierra Leone and Sudan, TRQN II from 2008 to 2012 in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ethiopia, Georgia, Sierra Leone and Sudan and TRQN III from 2012 to 2015 in Afghanistan, Armenia, Cape Verde, Georgia, Ghana, Iraq, Morocco, Somalia and Sudan (Leith & Rivas, 2015; Melde & Ndiaye-Coïc, 2009).

¹⁶ See <https://www.connectingdiaspora.org/>.

¹⁷ GIZ operates a ‘returning experts’ programme (see <https://www.cimonline.de/en/html/returning-experts.html>) and a ‘diaspora experts’ programme (see <https://www.cimonline.de/en/html/diaspora-experts.html>).

¹⁸ More information about the project can be found here: <https://www.connectingdiaspora.org/>

¹⁹ Somaliland refers to the self-declared state of Somaliland, internationally considered an autonomous region of Somalia. Due to its status as a *de-facto* state, Somaliland will be referred to as a country throughout this thesis, even though acknowledging that it is not being recognised as such internationally.

The first phase of the project, which was funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, operated from mid-2016 to mid-2019 and included Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Ghana, Iraq, Morocco, Sierra Leone and Somalia. The project's second phase started in 2019 (2019–2022).²⁰ This thesis uses data from the first phase of the project; the second phase only started at the end of 2019. As part of the project, diaspora members conduct assignments at select public organisations within certain target sectors in their country of origin in a bid to contribute to knowledge transfer and capacity development. As a continuation of IOM's Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals (TRQN) Project (2006–2015), the programme links diaspora members with Dutch residency to institutions in their countries of origin. The change in the name of the project in 2016 was strategic in that organisers wanted to stress to locals that participants were not 'returning'. The idea of 'return' itself could be threatening to locals, who may perceive diaspora members as a threat to their jobs, not least due to the differential power position in the international and national job market.

The host institutions were selected by IOM and are mostly government ministries and higher education institutions. As CD4D follows a demand-driven approach, Terms of Reference for the assignments were developed jointly with the host institutions before being published on the IOM's website for diaspora members to apply. IOM then selected diaspora members based on their qualifications before the latter conducted placements, consisting of one or multiple assignments, at a host institution. Initial assignment lengths ranged from two weeks to three months, in some cases followed by one or two extensions of up to another three months, resulting in placements of between two weeks and about nine months. Unlike programmes that support the reintegration of returnees into the workforce by, for instance, providing a placement service and funding returnees' positions for a certain time, CD4D does not create jobs for participating diaspora members. What is referred to as placements throughout this thesis are temporary assignments through which diaspora members support host institutions in countries of origin over a limited time frame to build the host institutions' capacities in specific areas. All diaspora members participating in the first phase of CD4D received an allowance of 1,600 Euros per month to cover the cost of living, accommodation and local transport. In addition, IOM arranged and paid for the flights from and to the country of origin as well as the diaspora members' travel insurance. CD4D also had a budget for training material, amounting to 1,000 per host institution.

The first phase of CD4D supported a total of 104 diaspora members in the project countries, including 53 diaspora members in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland (see Table 1), which are the focus of this study. These three countries were chosen as the data were the most complete and reliable (see Chapter 4, Section 4.2.1. for more information). As Table 1 shows, the number of CD4D diaspora members, host institutions and assignments do not match, as diaspora members conducted multiple assignments at the same host institution. Each diaspora member generally conducted more than a single assignment, as the initial assignments were typically followed by one or more extensions.

²⁰ The target countries changed for the second phase due to donor interest.

Table 1. Diaspora members, host institutions and assignments of CD4D First Phase in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland

| Country | CD4D diaspora members | | Host institutions | | Assignments | |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------|------------------|
| | # | % ⁽¹⁾ | # | % ⁽¹⁾ | # | % ⁽¹⁾ |
| Ethiopia | 11 | 10.58 | 6 | 12.00 | 25 | 11.85 |
| Sierra Leone | 14 | 13.46 | 7 | 14.00 | 42 | 19.91 |
| Somaliland | 28 | 26.92 | 10 | 20.00 | 61 | 28.91 |
| Total | 53 | 50.96 | 23 | 46 | 128 | 60.67 |

Source: CD4D Project Data, provided by IOM the Netherlands.²¹

Note: ¹As a per cent of overall experts/host institutions/assignments as part of the first phase of CD4D.

Project participants were predominantly male – of all the participants, only about 22 per cent were female; yet, this differed by country. The share of female participants was the lowest in Sierra Leone, where only one participant was female. With regards to nationality, out of the 53 diaspora members who conducted assignments in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland, 46 were Dutch citizens. Out of the seven who were not Dutch citizens, five had nationalities from other European countries such as Belgium, France and the United Kingdom (UK), while two had the nationality of the country of origin, Ethiopia. Diaspora members generally returned to their country of origin on their European passports. IOM informed participants without citizenship about the Dutch government regulations for migration and naturalisation, according to which participants should not stay longer than six months in their country of origin and should be registered with a municipality for the duration of their assignment.

Since the vast majority of participants were Dutch citizens or citizens of another EU member state or the UK, no agreement with the Dutch government was reached to suspend penalties for breaks in the residence requirements to obtain citizenship and IOM reported not having faced any issues in this regard during the implementation of the project. Based on their residence or registration in the Netherlands, participants need to file tax declarations there. Obligations in the country of origin generally do not arise as Dutch law foresees tax payment only in one country to avoid double taxation. Since the amount paid by IOM is an allowance to support their stay in the country of origin, participants do not have to pay tax on this amount as the payment is excluded from tax obligations.

IOM provided diaspora members with pre-departure orientation. Mandatory pre-departure training was only introduced for the second phase of CD4D and was therefore not available for the diaspora members who are the focus of this study. Any interventions focus on selected public organisations within certain target sectors (see Table 2).

Table 2. Target sectors, by country

| Country | Target sectors |
|--------------|--------------------------------------|
| Ethiopia | Agriculture, Education |
| Sierra Leone | Education, Education/Health |
| Somaliland | Agriculture, Infrastructure, Justice |

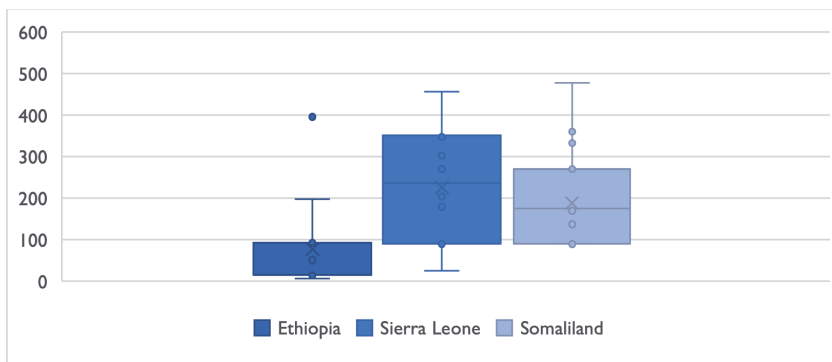
Source: CD4D Project Data, provided by IOM the Netherlands.

²¹ For one diaspora member, an assignment was planned but did not take place. The diaspora member and assignment have therefore not been included in this overview.

The host institutions were selected by IOM and were mostly ministries and higher-education institutions with, in some countries, also hospitals. The selection was made in close coordination with the Dutch embassies and the responsible ministries in the target countries.

Initial assignment lengths ranged from two weeks to three months, in some cases followed by one or two extensions of up to another three months. As Figure 1 shows, the average length of total participation of a diaspora member, the minimum number of days of participation and the range in length differ by country. In Ethiopia, placements were typically shorter than elsewhere. In Somaliland, all diaspora members conducted stays of at least 90 days, even though the average was around 188 days per participant, which is lower than in Sierra Leone. For all countries, the duration of the placements was defined by IOM the Netherlands. Differences in the average duration of placements can be attributed to the criteria which the IOM staff applied when defining the length of placements, with the main criteria being the needs of the host institutions, the country context and the availability of diaspora members. They also took the diaspora members' work and family situations into consideration. Shorter placements were mostly conducted by diaspora members who were employed in the Netherlands or another European country before participating in CD4D and who maintained this employment beyond CD4D participation. There was generally a gap between assignments which, on average, was about two months yet, depending on the placement, ranged from breaks of a few days to six months and, in two exceptional cases, also longer than that. These differences stemmed from the diaspora members' availability, host institution preferences and the time required for administrative procedures.

Figure 1. Total participation per diaspora experts (in days), by country



Source: Own elaboration with CD4D Project Data, provided by IOM the Netherlands.

Notes: The X marks the mean. The Median is indicated by a middle line, 25th and 75th are indicated by an outer box. The dots mark outliers.

1.4 Structure of this thesis and main results

This thesis is divided into eight chapters, apart from the introduction. **Chapter 2** provides the basis of this study by presenting a review of the literature on the return–development nexus, return migration, diaspora and knowledge transfer. **Chapter 3** then presents the conceptual framework of this thesis, which combines processes and factors. The framework encompasses three processes: first, *information transmission (IT)*, as part of which the knowledge sender, here the diaspora member, shares new information and insights with the knowledge receiver, here the host-institution staff; second, *knowledge creation (KC)*, with the knowledge receiver

processing and utilising the transmitted information; and, third, *contributions to organisational capacity development (COCD)*, conceptualised with the diaspora member making contributions to the internal structure, policies, procedures and resources of the host institution where the return visit takes place. With respect to factors, the framework comprises three levels: the *individual level*, that is, the diaspora members and host-institution staff; the *group level*, which is knowledge transfer methods and knowledge features as well as relationships and interaction; and the *contextual level*, consisting of the return modality and project characteristics, host institutions and countries of return. Each of these levels is examined for the three processes. Consequently, **Chapter 4** presents the methodology and case study after which **Chapter 5** provides an overview of the different groups of participants in this study (stakeholders, the host institution, host-institution staff and diaspora members).

Chapter 6 presents the results for perceived knowledge transfer and capacity development. The findings show that knowledge transfer takes place, as there is evidence of IT during most placements; yet the transfer is not at the most effective level, as KC is low. The chapter also demonstrates that COCD and knowledge transfer may happen simultaneously. Along these lines, this chapter shows that eight of the 33 placements examined have high capacity development, while 18 placements have medium capacity development and seven have low.

Chapter 7 further builds on the previous chapters by focusing on enablers and inhibitors of knowledge transfer and capacity development. In line with the framework, this chapter examines three levels: the *individual level*, comprising the diaspora members and host-institution staff; the *group level* which is knowledge transfer methods and knowledge features as well as relationships and interaction; and the *contextual level*, consisting of the return modality and project characteristics, host institutions and countries of return. Each of these levels is examined for the three processes, as different factors, enablers and inhibitors play a role in each process. The chapter shows that at the individual level, the diaspora members' motivations for return visits, previous participation in a diaspora return programme and expertise and the host-institution staff's motivation to learn from a diaspora member all affect IT. At the group level, the type of knowledge transfer method and the occurrence of interaction may enable or inhibit IT. The ease of the relationship between diaspora members and host-institution staff plays a role in the occurrence of interaction. At the contextual level, the placement terms of reference, the host institution's learning intent and the stipend which diaspora members receive all influence the occurrence of interaction and the diaspora members' motivations.

For KC, this chapter shows how the role of the diaspora members' disseminative capacity (individual level), the relevance of the information and insights shown to host-institution staff, the availability of practical exercises, the frequency of interaction (group level), the focus on knowledge transfer, the placement length and the availability of resources (contextual level) play a role. In addition, the diaspora members' familiarity with the country-of-origin context and with the host institution, their age and gender and the strategies they apply to prevent and counteract returnee stigma, do not directly play a role in KC but affect the ease of relationships between diaspora members and host-institution staff, thereby indirectly impacting on KC. Furthermore, the time which the host-institution staff have available and dedicate to KC is one of several factors influencing the frequency of interaction between diaspora members and host-institution staff, thereby indirectly affecting KC. The frequency of interaction is determined by several factors, which are the host-institution staff's motivation to learn from a diaspora member, their time for knowledge transfer and capacity development and the ease of relationships between diaspora members and host-institution staff. At the contextual level, returnee stigma determines the strategies which diaspora members employ to counteract or prevent it playing a role in the ease of the relationship.

With regards to COCD, the diaspora members' motivation for return visits, their expertise and their ability to mobilise resources, the complementarity to knowledge transfer and the necessity of organisational capacity were identified.

Chapter 8 explores returnee stigma in the context of VKTs. It examines the general stigmatisations that stakeholders perceive diaspora members to experience, diaspora members' actual experiences of stigmatisation and the strategies used by diaspora members to prevent and counteract it. The chapter shows that, despite their skills, education and voluntariness, diaspora members still experience and prepare for stigmatisation on their return. The findings show that stigma towards highly skilled returnees is rooted in the perceived inequalities between the home employees and the communities of origin in comparison to the returnees, which are underpinned by global inequalities in terms of citizenship and access to international mobility.

Chapter 9 is the conclusion of the study. It summarises the thesis and highlights its contributions to the literature. It also discusses the limitations of this study, directions for future research and implications for policy-making.



2

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Following on from the introduction, the first part of this chapter presents a review of the literature on the role of return in the context of migration and development debates, the contributions of highly skilled return migrants to knowledge transfer and capacity development in countries of origin and the role of diaspora members for origin-country development and knowledge transfer, as well as research on diaspora return programmes. This section shows how the narrative with regards to development potential has evolved over recent decades as the focus shifted from permanent return to circular movements and visits of diaspora members. This section also highlights existing research gaps, specifically in the context of VKTs.

The second section will provide clarity on the key concepts, discussing the conceptual evolution and contrasting existing definitions of the terms diaspora, return and return visits, knowledge transfer and capacity development. I therefore draw on literature in the field of migration studies, specifically in the areas of return and diaspora studies. In addition, the topic of knowledge transfer requires further expansion of the review of the literature, which is why, in this thesis, I also draw on the applied sciences by reviewing literature in the fields of business and knowledge management. In the third part of this chapter, I discuss existing evidence on enablers and inhibitors of knowledge transfer and capacity development.

2.2 Existing evidence, current debates and caveats

2.2.1 *The role of return in the context of migration and development debates*

In line with debates around the migration–development nexus, the role attributed to return migrants has evolved. Drawing on De Haas (2010, 2012), Faist (2008) and Gamlen (2014a), King (2022) distinguished four phases: optimism from the 1950s to the early 1970s, pessimism from 1970 to the early 1990s, neo-optimism from the 1990s to 2000s and neo-pessimism since the end of the 2000s. The first phase of optimism corresponds to what Faist (2008, p. 25) termed ‘Migration and Development – Remittances and Return’, which he described in the following way:

During the 1960s, public policy emphasised the ‘labour gaps’ in the North and ‘development’ in the South. The latter was supposed to result from financial remittances, return migration and the subsequent transfer of human capital (Kindleberger, 1967). This view clearly corresponded to overall economic modernisation concepts and to a belief that state capacity could shape economic growth. Moreover, it was congruent with the economic textbook mantra which suggests that emigration of surplus labour from underdeveloped areas leads to a new equilibrium between capital and labour (Lewis, 1954): if labour goes North, labour scarcities in the South then create an inflow of capital – and eventually economic development in the South (cf. Hamilton and Whaley, 1984).

In line with overall trends around the migration–development nexus, in the 1970s and 1980s, scholars attributed little to no development impact on return migrants (Gmelch, 1980; King, 1986). Gmelch’s (1980) review of the literature on the impact of return migration on the introduction of new skills, ideas and attitudes, amongst other contributions, identified that few

return migrants had acquired any relevant work experience; when migrants had acquired it, most were unable to apply it in the origin country. According to King (1986), improvements in human capital through return failed to appear in the vast majority of cases. Return migrants had acquired few skills abroad; if skills were acquired, they did not match the needs of the country of origin's labour market or else migrants lost the skills they had prior to emigration. In addition, more skilled migrants tended to remain in the country of destination while the less-skilled returned.²²

Next to these reviews, Cerase's (1974) typology of return, based on his research on Italians returning from the United States, should be highlighted. Cerase distinguished four types of return: 'return of failure', 'return of conservatism', 'return of innovation' and 'return of retirement'. 'Return of innovation' thus refers to the return of migrants who have acquired new skills in the host country, the application of which they consider to be more useful in their country of origin than in the host country (Cerese, 1974, pp. 252–253). Yet this type of return was seldom observed (Cassarino, 2004; King, 1986, 2000). According to Gmelch (1980), the lack of development impact identified by the vast majority of scholars in the 1970s and 1980s may, in part, be the result of a focus on unskilled migrants from rural areas who worked in unskilled or semi-skilled jobs in the country of destination which required little training.²³ King (2022, p. 320) rightly notes that '[Cerese's] framework remains influential and has been widely quoted, despite its obvious shortcomings'. He identified 'two main shortcomings for the Cerese model' (2022, p. 321):

The first is that it is deterministic, based on the length of time spent in the destination country. It assumes a one-dimensional linear relationship between time, the process of integration, the stages of return and the development effects. Second, it fails to unpack the integration process into its constituent elements; this is hardly surprising since research on the multifaceted nature of integration was in its infancy when Cerese published his research.

As King pointed out, more recent studies, such as de Haas et al. (2015), de Haas and Fokkema (2011) as well as Carling and Pettersen (2014), have addressed some of these shortcomings. Yet, as King (2022, p. 321) noted: '[...] there is no simple model or mechanism of return migration. Different groups return for different reasons, under different circumstances and exhibit different outcomes in terms of reintegration and impulses for development'.

In addition, more flexible forms of migration and return emerged. As King (2022, p. 319) pointed out, 'new forms of migration – including circular migration, seasonal worker migration and cross-border shuttling – and the ideological imprint of the new economics of migration created a renewed impetus for considering migration's developmental impact in a more positive light – *neo-optimism*'. In addition, '[...] other key concepts shaped migration and development thinking in the 1990s and 2000s. These included transnationalism (Glick Schiller et al., 1995; Vertovec, 1999), social remittances (Levitt, 1998) and co-development (Faist, 2008). All of them implied increased contact, including return, with the migrants' place of origin; [...]'. Thus, co-development and social remittances are particularly linked to return and knowledge transfer. Co-development may take different forms, but 'implies a broader scale collaboration between migrants, returnees and local populations in sending countries' (King, 2022, p. 320). Social remittances may occur during longer-term returns as well as return visits, even though they do not require return necessarily (King, 2022).

²² For a brief discussion of empirical evidence on return migration and development in the 1970s and 1980s, see King (2022, p. 323).

²³ This paragraph has been published in Mueller (2022).

In the early 2000s, the ‘pendulum’ swung again to more pessimistic views as scholars questioned the migration–development nexus as ‘too optimistic’ (Siar, 2014) and criticised some of the underlying assumptions of neo-optimism. Academic publications that have brought forward this more recent criticism include collections such as the edited books *Migration, Development and Transnationalization: A Critical Stance* (Glick Schiller & Faist, 2010) and *The Migration–Development Nexus: A Transnational Perspective* (Faist et al., 2011), the special issue ‘Migration and Development Buzz? Rethinking the Migration Development Nexus and Policies’ in *International Migration* (Brønden, 2012a) and the special issue of *Population, Space and Place*, ‘Migration, Development and the “Migration and Development Nexus”’ (Geiger & Pécoud, 2013a). Such criticism is also reflected in the *Routledge Handbook of Migration and Development* (Bastia & Skeldon, 2020), through contributions by Hein de Haas, Nina Glick Schiller and Parvati Raghuram, as well as some individual journal articles addressing this issue (for example Bakewell, 2008; Gamlen, 2014a; Raghuram, 2009; Sinatti & Horst, 2015; Skeldon, 2008). Nonetheless, it should be noted that a lot of positivity with regards to migrants’ contributions persisted in the international community in the mid-to-late 2000s, including the World Bank’s work on remittances (Kapur, 2004).

As highlighted in Gamlen’s (2014a) article ‘The new migration-and-development pessimism’, criticism centred around the dominance of neoliberalism and immigration control as part of a ‘hidden agenda’ by countries of destination in the Global North. Along these lines, scholars have argued that optimism around the migration–development nexus is part of a purposefully positive discourse, serving the political interests of countries of destination in the Global North and promoting a neoliberal agenda (Brønden, 2012b; Delgado Wise et al., 2013). International organisations such as the World Bank are also seen to have played a role in framing this narrative in line with their objectives (Vammen & Brønden, 2012). As Gamlen (2014a, p. 588) explained: ‘The point of the new pessimism is therefore not that migration-for-development enthusiasm is explicitly political, but rather that these dynamics implicitly frame optimistic arguments as common wisdom’. One of the issues highlighted by Gamlen (2014a) is the role of migration governance dynamics for neo-optimism in the 1990s and 2000s. Skeldon (2008), who Gamlen (2014a) draws on, as well as Geiger and Pécoud (2013b) have argued that the link between migration and development was strategically established to allow for a discussion of migration on a multilateral policy level. As Skeldon (2008, p. 4) put it:

If migration was to be considered at the multilateral level, however, it had to be linked with development. Developed countries saw immigration – whom and how many to admit within their borders – as a matter for state policy alone, with no interference from any outside power. Nevertheless, if the management of migration could be shown to promote development in some way, then a role for multilateral involvement could be justified. Migration itself was off the agenda, but migration linked to development was the backdoor way of discussing the issue of migration in the international arena.

In addition, for instance, Delgado Wise et al. (2013), Geiger and Pécoud (2013b) and Nyberg Sørensen (2012) have all highlighted that this discourse, which encourages contributions to countries of origin, stands in harsh contrast to how (im)migrants are portrayed in other contexts, being viewed as a threat to social welfare or national security.

Criticism has also addressed the notions of development embedded in the most recent optimistic turn of the migration–development nexus. As Bakewell (2008), Geiger and Pécoud (2013b) and Raghuram (2009) have pointed out, the underlying definitions of development were not being questioned within the framing of migration and development. As Geiger & Pécoud, (2013b, p. 371) contended, ‘debates on migration and development ignore past and

current debates in critical development studies'. Bakewell (2008, pp. 1349–1353) – in his article titled 'Keeping Them in Their Place[...]' identified three main issues with the way development was conceptualised as part of the migration–development nexus, as development continued to be based on what he termed a 'model of sedentary development', was focused on the nation-state and was dominated by 'paternalist paradigms'. In addition, perceptions of the applicability of skills are framed by the Global North. Åkesson and Baaz (2015, pp. 7–8) criticise the assumption that skills gained in Europe are 'universally applicable' and will be useful in the African context. In a similar vein, Page and Mercer (2018, p. 322) again criticised the colonial roots of the concept of development which they found to induce the notion that ideas flow predominantly in a unidirectional manner from the developed North to the less-developed South. As they argued:

For example, the Global North is often imagined as the location of more 'developed' values, such as being pro-democracy and gender equality. Diaspora communities, it is implied, absorb these values through a process of social osmosis from the locales in which they now live. The implicit hierarchy in development's reading of 'modernization' justifies a conception of diasporans remitting these more advanced values to their backward homelands through their transnational linkages.

Furthermore, a certain relationship between migration and development has been ascribed. De Haas (2012) highlighted the 'asymmetric relationship between development and migration'. The following quote by Delgado Wise et al. (2013, p. 433) illustrates the dominant narrative:

Conceptually, this involves a one-way flow between two variables: migration (seen as an independent variable) and development (seen as a dependent variable). This is a very limited approach. [...] The dominant discourse in the link between migration and development is based on four related practices: remittances for development, financial democratisation, changing power relations, and the formation of human capital.

Raghuram (2020, p. 44) criticised that '[b]inary thinking has dominated both migration and development literature and hence, the migration–development nexus literature, too'. Delgado Wise and Márquez Covarrubias (2009) proposed an 'alternative approach to the migration–development interrelation'.

Finally, a major criticism of the migration–development nexus has been the emphasis that has been put on migrants' agency while neglecting the role of structural conditions in countries of origin, which has been emphasised by several scholars in the field of migration studies (see: de Haas, 2012; Nyberg Sørensen, 2012; Skeldon, 2008). As de Haas (2020, p. 28) contends, '[b]oth migration optimists and pessimists tend to ascribe too much transformational potential to migration'. Thereby, the origin-country governments were seen as responsible for creating an environment that would allow contributions by returnees (de Haas, 2012). As Skeldon (2008, p. 13) argued:

The assumption that the return of some of the highly skilled to Ghana, Chad, or Burkina Faso will automatically bring development is again assigning a primacy to migrant agency that seems totally misplaced. The underlying structures need first to be in place in order for the agency of migrants to function. Where the structures are non-existent or weakly developed, the return of the highly skilled is likely to be

ineffective. Development drives migration, not the other way round, although, clearly, migration can support development.

Åkesson and Baaz (2015) contended that structural conditions in the country of origin constitute a challenge to returnee knowledge transfer and that African returnees might not acquire new skills in Europe due to labour-market discrimination and the dominance of low-skilled jobs.

In addition, de Haas (2012), drawing on existing empirical evidence, highlighted the context-dependency of development impacts of migration. Skeldon (2008, p. 13) also emphasised the inter-generational nature of diasporas, ‘including descendants – first, second, or later generations of children of migrants who may see their migration as a return, short- or long-term, to their ancestral home’, as well as their diversity ‘in terms of skills and education as well as origins and political persuasion’. Johnson and Sedaca (2004, p. 64) identified that success factors of diaspora-development projects were similar to those of other development projects, arguing that ‘[r]ather than developing new or innovative projects targeting diaspora groups, efforts could focus on ways to employ the diaspora as another avenue through which development can be facilitated – while promoting the same development tools that have seen positive results in other conventional development programs’.

While not all of the above criticism is specific to the return–development nexus, as reference is made to the migration–development nexus more generally, it is largely applicable to VKTs. Taking this criticism into account is of particular importance in this case since short-term diaspora return programmes are driven by an optimistic interpretation of the migration–development nexus. The optimistic framing of return visits and the contributions of diaspora members in this context may result in expectations with regards to the development contributions of diaspora members that may not necessarily be realistic. In addition, return visits that are supported by a short-term diaspora return programme financed by a host country government in the Global North, are undoubtedly framed by positive assumptions regarding the skills and knowledge which diaspora members can transfer to their country of origin. The portrayal of diaspora members as ‘experts’, as is the case for the short-term diaspora return programme examined for the purpose of this thesis, demonstrates that diaspora members are expected to have skills and knowledge that make them experts within the country-of-origin context. This also reveals the importance of examining the conditions under which knowledge transfer and capacity development take place.

2.2.2 Contributions of highly skilled return migrants to knowledge transfer and capacity development in countries of origin

King (2022) divided the vast empirical evidence on return migration and development into regional focus areas, spanning different decades. Apart from research in Southern Europe in the 1970s to 1980s, as discussed above, King noted the Caribbean and sub-Saharan Africa as areas where empirical research on return and development has concentrated. As noted previously, studies in the 1970s to 1980s focused on un- or low-skilled migrants. More-recent studies in the fields of migration and, increasingly, business studies have focused on the return of highly skilled migrants. These studies showed that returnees had gained knowledge that was useful in their country of origin and demonstrated evidence of returnee contributions to knowledge transfer (Amassari, 2004; Klagge & Klein-Hitpaß, 2010; Liu et al., 2015; Tung & Lazarova, 2006; Wang, 2014). Within the field of migration, two studies should be highlighted. In her research on highly skilled return migrants to Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana, Amassari (2004) found that returnees gained additional educational qualifications and, in the case of Ghanaians, also professional experience abroad which allowed them to transfer

organisational and managerial knowledge upon return. Klagge and Klein-Hitpaß (2010), in their study on highly skilled return migration and knowledge-based development in Poland, found that returnees transferred tacit, managerial knowledge to local companies, such as knowledge about human-resource management, project management and international cooperation.²⁴

Within the field of business studies, Tung and Lazarova (2006) explored the experiences of ‘ex-host-country nationals’ (returnees and descendants of emigrants). While the authors do not examine knowledge transfer as such, they provide insights into the challenges which returnees face in the workplace upon return, showing the difficulties they encountered in applying the knowledge they had gained in their country of origin. Wang’s (2014) empirical study, using data from J-1 visa-holders who returned to their country of origin after their exchange visit to the United States, is one of the few to examine factors of success of returnee knowledge transfer. While not focusing on returnees but on highly skilled migrants, Liu et al. (2015, p. 67) examined the role of highly skilled migrants in inter-firm international knowledge transfer, showing how highly skilled migrants ‘[p]ossessed with bilingual and bicultural competence, [they] act as a bridge between the sources and recipients of knowledge and facilitate the process of inter-firm IKT [international knowledge transfer]’.

2.2.3 The role of diaspora members for origin-country development and knowledge transfer

Driven by neo-optimism in the migration development debate around the turn of the 21st century, policy approaches towards the potential development contributions of migrants changed in the 1990s and increased interest emerged in fostering forms of development contribution by migrants that did not require permanent return (Faist, 2008; Meyer & Wattiaux, 2006). Instead of the above-mentioned ‘return option’, destination-country governments, as well as international organisations, started pursuing what has been referred to as the ‘diaspora option’,²⁵ emphasising the positive contributions which highly skilled migrants and diaspora members can make to their countries of origin. Thus, ‘[h]ighly skilled expatriates are seen as a pool of potentially useful human resources for the country of origin to tap into; the challenge is to mobilise these brains’ (Brown, 2002, p. 170). Instead of permanent return, what has been referred to as the ‘diaspora option’ put the focus on the connections that highly skilled migrants or diaspora members maintain between the countries of origin and destination, which allows the circulation of knowledge and skills (Meyer, 2001). It thus acknowledges that individuals may not necessarily be interested in returning to their country of origin on a permanent basis (Meyer & Wattiaux, 2006). The ‘diaspora option’ was therefore seen as an ‘option very much distinct – though complementary from the return option’ (Meyer, 2007, p. 6).

Along these lines, in his 2014 article, Gamlen (2014b, p. S182) put the focus on diaspora institutions, defined as ‘formal state offices dedicated to emigrants and their descendants’. As he demonstrates, diaspora institutions have risen in popularity, with a particularly steep rise in countries establishing these offices since the 2000s. Gamlen attributes this rise to migration optimists’ efforts to include migration and development on the international as well as the nation state’s agenda, including ‘the core policy agenda of the International Organization for Migration (see IOM, 2005)’ (Gamlen, 2014b, p. S200). This seems relevant for this study as the CD4D project can be regarded as an extended output of this neo-optimistically framed agenda.

²⁴ This paragraph has been published in Mueller (2022).

²⁵ This has been discussed in a number of publications by Jean-Baptiste Meyer and others (see: Brown, 2002; Faist, 2008; Meyer, 2001, 2007; Meyer & Brown, 1999; Meyer & Wattiaux, 2006).

A modality of diaspora knowledge transfer that received particular attention as a result of this shift to renewed optimism was diaspora knowledge networks or scientific diasporas. Apart from diaspora knowledge networks, other terms that have been used to describe this phenomenon include *expatriate knowledge networks*, *intellectual diaspora networks*, *scientific diaspora* and *knowledge networks abroad* (as summarised by Kuschminder, 2014a, p. 193; Meyer & Wattiaux, 2006, p. 4). As reflected throughout this section, much of the literature referred to expatriates (see, for instance, Barré et al., 2003; Brown, 2002; Meyer, 2007), yet their characteristics match those of individuals who are nowadays included as diaspora members in policy applications of the term (see Section 2.3.2.). The emphasis was on the highly skilled, nonetheless.

Diaspora knowledge networks, defined by Meyer (2007, p. 3) as ‘associations of highly skilled expatriates willing to contribute to the development of their origin countries’, emerged in the 1990s and were extensively researched in the early 2000s. Leclerc and Meyer (2007) identified seven studies of diaspora knowledge networks, conducted between 1999 and 2006, that provided a systematic analysis of existing networks at the time of each study. In addition, numerous case studies were conducted on countries such as Afghanistan, Argentina, China, Colombia and India, among others.²⁶ Brown (2002, p. 172), in a study of around 40 expatriate knowledge networks, described the objectives of the networks as follows:

These networks aim to establish and foster communication and exchanges between members living abroad and to link them to their counterparts in their country of origin. The educational, social, cultural and professional advancement of their members is also high on the priority list of the different networks. These are closely related to the main objective of all diaspora networks, which is the economic, political and social development of the countries of origin.

Kapur (2001, p. 273), addressing the role of diaspora in the context of technology transfer, noted that ‘diasporic networks act as reputational intermediaries and as credibility enhancing mechanisms that may be particularly important in economic sectors where knowledge, especially *ex ante* knowledge of quality, is tacit’.

Diaspora knowledge networks may differ in their level of formality, ranging from informal networks to formal programmes (Biao, 2005). Kuschminder (2014a, p. 193) contends that ‘[t]hese networks are generally built from the bottom up and emerge from the initiatives of the diaspora themselves’, thereby distinguishing diaspora knowledge networks from states’ engagement with the diaspora in the area of knowledge transfer. This is in line with Barré et al.’s (2003, p. 17) definition of scientific and technical diasporas as ‘*self-organised groups* of expatriate researchers and engineers working for the development of their country or region of origin, primarily in the fields of science, technology and higher education’ (translated; emphasis added). Yet, scholars (see, for instance, Barré et al., 2003; Brown, 2002; Gamlen, 2014b; Leclerc & Meyer, 2007) have highlighted the involvement of governments and international organisations in the development of diaspora knowledge networks. Biao (2005, p. 29) identified ‘three main types of government initiatives for promoting knowledge exchange through diaspora networks, namely policies, concrete programs, and official websites’. Along these lines, Meyer and Brown (1999, pp. 12–13) also identified the UNDP’s TOKTEN as an expatriate knowledge network.

Brown (2002, p. 171) further acknowledged that diaspora knowledge networks depend on ‘some institutional support’. Drawing on the two theoretical approaches which he calls ‘tapping’ and ‘embracing’, Gamlen proposed the approach of ‘diaspora governance’ to explain

²⁶ See Meyer (2007, p. 3) for a list of case studies.

the rise in diaspora institutions. What Gamlen (2014b, pp. S186) describes as ‘tapping of diaspora resources’ is essentially the approach that gained popularity with neo-optimistic trends, putting an emphasis on migrants and diaspora members as senders of remittances and potential transferers of skills. Thus, the role ascribed to diaspora institutions is to support and accelerate diaspora networks, among others. As Meyer and Brown (1999, p. 12) stated concerning governments tapping into diaspora knowledge networks:

A crucial advantage of the diaspora option is that it does not rely on a prior infrastructural massive investment, as it consists in capitalising on already existing resources. It is thus at hand for any country which is willing to make the social, political, organizational and technical effort to mobilise such a diaspora. A promising perspective in such a strategy is that, through the expatriates, the country may have access not only to their individual embodied knowledge but also to the socio-professional networks in which they are inserted overseas. It is quite an extensive version of a connectivity approach. This is what is at stake in such initiatives around the world today [...].

Within diaspora knowledge networks, knowledge transfer may take place in a number of ways. Meyer et al. (2001, p. 319) identified the following modalities:

...transfer of technology; exchange of students; joint research projects; computer-mediated activities; giving access to data, information, funding or any resources lacking in the home country; provision of business opportunities; holding of training sessions or consulting advice in specialised cutting-edge areas.

Meyer et al. (2001) furthermore argued that diaspora networks revolutionised knowledge transfer in so far as they broke with the hierarchical system of ‘brain drain’ taking place from less-developed to more-developed countries by introducing a less-centred approach.

While closely related to the topic of this thesis, studies on diaspora knowledge networks – due to the nature of these networks – focus on knowledge transfer or capacity development as a macro- or meso-level process between diasporas as an organised group and countries of origin, which is different to the way in which knowledge transfer takes place as part of VKTs, where it constitutes a micro-level process between diaspora members and individuals at a host institution.

2.2.4 *Research on diaspora return programmes*

In line with the emphasis on the short-term mobilities and temporary movements of highly skilled individuals, over the last decades, international organisations have increasingly operated short-term return programmes. Through these programmes, international organisations have specifically promoted the temporary modality of return as a way to channel the potential attributed to migrants from developing countries and to increase local expertise in their country of origin. These programmes are being implemented in parallel to the ongoing implementation of programmes focused on permanent return (Melde & Ndiaye-Coïc, 2009), showing the simultaneity of both the ‘return option’ and the ‘diaspora option’.

A few studies have examined such programmes. Shindo (2012) discussed the role of MIDA Great Lakes in Rwanda. Despite the focus of the programme on financial transfers, decentralised cooperation and physical and technical transfers (Melde & Ndiaye-Coïc, 2009), the article does not discuss diaspora knowledge transfer. Instead, Shindo hypothesised that the programme was having a ‘hidden effect’ on post-conflict reconstruction as diaspora members

participating in the programme were expressing their political opinions in a clandestine manner. No empirical evidence is provided. As Shindo (2012, p. 1698) put it:

The programme certainly does not encourage Rwandans to engage in any political activities. MIDA GL's primary purpose is to facilitate the transfer to Rwanda of knowledge and skills acquired by Rwandan diasporas. At the same time, however, conducted in a country where political space is limited, MIDA GL brings about a subsidiary effect: diasporas may increase the multiplicity of voices available in the political space. Different voices from those officially endorsed can be expressed not necessarily in an open fashion, but at least in a quiet and discreet manner. Consequently, the limited political space in Rwanda can be kept open to a certain degree through the constant flow of diaspora populations into Rwanda and through the possibilities that they increase the variety of voices available in the country. Therefore, though not intended, MIDA GL has this powerful supplementary effect on the political space in Rwanda.

In contrast to Shindo's study which provided no insights into knowledge transfer as part of a diaspora return programme, two other studies did provide insights into this aspect. In a study commissioned by the Centre for International Migration and Development (CIM), Kuschminder et al. (2014) examined the knowledge transfer resulting from two-year placements of returning experts as part of the 'Migration for Development' programme. Evidence for the occurrence of knowledge transfer was found, yet not always 'at optimal levels' (Kuschminder et al., 2014, p. 24). In her case study on knowledge transfer and capacity building through the Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals (TRQN) project in Afghanistan, Kuschminder (2014a) highlighted that returnees made concrete contributions to individual and organisational capacity development.

2.3 Key concepts: conceptual evolution and key considerations

2.3.1 *Return and return visits*

The conceptualisation of return has evolved from a permanent end-stage to one element of a continuous migration cycle, now also including more short-term mobilities. Return can essentially be understood as the movement of international migrants back to their country of origin, yet scholars disagree on the key characteristics of return such as the duration of the stay abroad, the possibility of its reoccurrence and 'the precise location of the return' (King & Kuschminder, 2022, p. 3). Accordingly, different definitions and categorisations of return migration have been proposed. Earlier definitions (see: Bovenkerk, 1974; Gmelch, 1980) put the emphasis on 'migration as a one-time event' (King & Kuschminder, 2022, p. 3), in the case of Bovenkerk and resettlement, in the case of Gmelch, reflecting a formerly common understanding of return migration as a permanent end-stage that excludes more temporary forms of return. This permanent notion of return has been reflected in two of the migration theories that provide views on and interpretations of return migration, the New Economics of Labour Migration (NELM) and structuralism. Cassarino (2004), in his article 'Theorising return migration: The conceptual approach to return migrants revisited', provided a critical and comprehensive overview of these theories which, as King and Kuschminder (2022, p. 5) rightly state, 'remains the key statement on theorising return migration' to this day.

Neoclassical Economics (NE) theory views return migration as the result of individual cost-benefit analysis. According to NE, migrants aim to permanently settle in the country of

destination, even if this implies prolonged separation from family. A migrant only returns when failing to maximise earnings in the country of destination. Return is therefore the result of a 'failed migration experience'. Integration becomes a key goal to increase productivity. Other factors such as human capital and the migrant's social attachment are taken into account only to the extent to which they increase earnings. Human capital is acquired to increase potential earnings in the destination country. As a result, education acquired in the destination country, in particular, is expected to be useless in the country of origin. Similarly, migrants – according to NE – aim for family reunification in the destination country and the maintenance of ties with the country of origin would be cost-inefficient in the long run (Cassarino, 2004).

Another economic theory, the New Economics of Labour Migration (NELM), views migration as a temporary household strategy of risk diversification. Therefore, return is anticipated and takes place as a result of migrants achieving their earnings target. In addition to goal achievement, the attachment to home and household also motivates return. This means that migrants with a higher income or whose spouses also migrated are expected to return sooner, as they will more quickly achieve the household's earnings target. At the same time, the higher the share of the migrant's household members in the country of origin compared to those in the country of destination, the higher the incentive to return and *vice versa*. As within NE, integration is also a key objective with NELM, yet for different reasons. Under NELM, integration is desired, as it is assumed to help migrants to achieve their earnings target. For the same reason, migrants may also aspire to obtain further skills or training (Cassarino, 2004).

Like NELM, structuralism views return as a permanent end-stage. While the structural approach also emphasises the role of economic resources, its main focus concerning return decision-making lies in the role of contextual factors in the country of origin. While return, according to structuralists, is also, in part, motivated by the migrants' attachment to home and household, structuralist approaches assume that the migrants' perspective is influenced by nostalgia and that they cannot adequately judge the conditions in their country of origin due to a lack of information, which means that their return decision is based on a misconception of structures in the country of origin (Cassarino, 2004).

Cerese's (1974) typology of return, based on his research on Italians returning from the United States, distinguishes four types: *return of failure*, *return of conservatism*, *return of retirement* and *return of innovation*. According to Cerese, a *return of failure* takes place because migrants fail to integrate into the society of the country of destination. A *return of conservatism*, like NELM, assumes that migration took place to acquire land, hence return takes place as soon as sufficient capital has been accumulated. The *return of retirement* is the return of pensioners to a house or land which they acquired in their country of origin. Finally and probably the most relevant for this study, a *return of innovation* refers to that of migrants who return having acquired new skills in the host country which they perceive to be of greater use in the country of origin than in the host country (Cerese, 1974).

Bovenkerk (1974), and later Gmelch (1980) and King et al. (1983), framed another return typology that connects a migrant's intentions before migration with the actual migration outcome. It offers a more nuanced version of the commonly used distinction of the intention of migration between permanent and temporary. The typology developed by Bovenkerk, Gmelch and King consists of four categories (Ammassari & Black, 2001, p. 21):

- (1) intended temporary migration with return,
- (2) intended temporary migration without return,
- (3) intended permanent migration with return, and
- (4) intended permanent migration without return.

In the 1990s, transnational approaches emerged. In contrast to economic theories and structuralism, transnationalism challenges the notion of return as a permanent end-stage, as advocated by NELM and structuralists (Cassarino, 2004). Return is viewed as an element of a continuous migration cycle, which may be followed by re-migration or may take the form of circular, ongoing, back-and-forth movement, including return visits (Ammassari & Black, 2001; Carling & Erdal, 2014; Cassarino, 2004; Conway et al., 2009; de Bree et al., 2010; Duval, 2003, 2004; Li et al., 2018; Marcu, 2014; Mason, 2004). Central to transnationalism is the idea that migrants maintain ties in the form of ‘regular and sustained social contacts over time across national borders’ (Portes et al., 1999, p. 219). This may include ‘economic, political, sociocultural, and familial connections’ (Tan et al., 2018, p. 3). Modern communication technology, as well as return visits, allows migrants to maintain these social ties (Carling & Erdal, 2014; Conway et al., 2009; de Haas & Fokkema, 2011; Duval, 2003, 2004; Mason, 2004). In addition to these actual ties, there is a symbolic element to transnationalism as a transnational sense of belonging – also referred to as transnational identities, affiliation or attachment – which plays a central role (Tan et al., 2018). Instead of attachment to either the country of destination or the country of origin, transnational migrants’ identities are framed by a simultaneous attachment to multiple locations (Vertovec, 2001), leading to ‘double or hybrid identities’ (Cassarino, 2004, p. 265). Therefore, belonging constitutes a somewhat fluid concept that may change with location and time (Ragab, 2020). For instance, return visits allow migrants to experience and evaluate the degree of attachment to their countries of origin and destination (Carling & Erdal, 2014; King et al., 2013; Mason, 2004; Oeppen, 2013). They may increase or confirm feelings of belonging although they may also have the opposite effect.

As a result of such ties and attachments, migrants may engage in transnational activities. Transnational practices include economic activities (e.g., remittances, small businesses), political (e.g., hometown community groups, homeland politics, external voting) and socio-cultural activities (marriage alliances, religious activity, media and commodity consumption) and can have different levels of institutionalisation (Mügge, 2016; Tan et al., 2018; Vertovec, 2001). In addition, the intention to return to their country of origin may motivate migrants to engage in transnational practices (Carling & Erdal, 2014).

Carling and Pettersen’s (2014) analysis of return migration intentions, which used an integration–transnationalism matrix where integration was operationalised as the attachment to the country of residence and transnationalism as the attachment to the country of origin, shows that return intentions are shaped by the ‘relative strength’ of the two dimensions. As can be expected, individuals who are strongly attached to their country of origin and who have a weak attachment to their country of residence are the most likely to intend to return. According to Cassarino (2004, p. 264), ‘return takes place once enough resources, whether financial or informational, have been gathered and when conditions at home are viewed as being favourable enough’. Due to transnational ties and transnational activities, such as remittance-sending, transnationalism regards migrants as prepared for return, which contrasts with the unpreparedness of returnees which is dominant in structuralism (Cassarino, 2004). In addition, the ties and transnational engagement allow migrants to return temporarily (Bilgili & Siegel, 2017).

In line with transnational approaches to return, diaspora return should be regarded as a ‘continuous, ongoing transnational process’ (Tsuda, 2019, p.7). Thus, return can take a variety of forms, including temporary and seasonal movements, short-term visits, longer-term stays or return on a permanent basis (Galipo, 2018; King, 2000; Olsson & King, 2008; Tsuda, 2019). Tsuda (2019, pp. 4–5) distinguishes two types of diasporic return: *Ethnic return migration*, referring to the return of migrants’ descendants and *return migration* as the return of first- or 1.5-generation migrants. A characteristic that is specific for diaspora return, especially for ethnic return migration, is the symbolic notion of home and the desire to return. At the same

time, upon return, the country of origin may no longer be considered ‘home’ by the returnee. Ethnic return migrants have never actually been to the country of origin before, while other returnees, especially after longer periods of absence, may no longer be familiar with the country of origin (Hasselberg, 2018; Olsson & King, 2008).

The fifth, and last, theory of return migration discussed by Cassarino (2004) is the cross-border social network theory. As the term suggests, the theory puts social networks in the foreground, which allow the mobilisation of resources before return and information about the return environment. It also depicts ‘returnees as being bearers of tangible and intangible resources’ (Cassarino, 2004, p. 265).

To account for the high heterogeneity of return migrants with regards to migration experiences, length of stay abroad, patterns of resource mobilisation, legal status, motivations and projects, Cassarino (2004) proposed a revisited concept of return migrants centred around the concepts of resource mobilisation and the returnee’s preparedness. He argued ‘that the propensity of migrants to become actors of change and development at home depends on the extent to which they have provided for the preparation of their return’ (Cassarino, 2004, p. 271). Thus, resource mobilisation refers to tangible as well as intangible resources and social capital. Cassarino defined a returnee’s preparedness as a willingness and a readiness to return. Additional factors are the circumstances in the country of origin and the country of destination. Cassarino’s framework of a returnee’s level of preparedness distinguishes between pre-return conditions (status, motivation, resource mobilisation, length of stay) and post-return conditions (reintegration process), grouping types of migrants into three categories:

- (1) High level of preparedness
- (2) Low level of preparedness
- (3) Level of preparedness not existent.

King (2000, p. 8) proposed an alternative definition of ‘return migration [...] as the process whereby people return to their country or place of origin after a significant period in another country or region’. In addition, using the length of time spent in the home country as a criterion, King (2000) distinguished between *occasional returns*, *seasonal returns*, *temporary returns* and *permanent returnees*. Contrary to Gmelch’s definition, King’s interpretation of return is more diverse and only implies resettlement for the last group, the permanent returnees. Yet King establishes another criterion – by stipulating that return migration takes place ‘after a significant period of time in another region or country’, he emphasises the time that an individual has spent outside the country, though without specifying the length of this time (Ammassari, 2009; Kuschminder, 2014b). Nevertheless, as Miah (2022, p. 96) contended, King’s definition may be regarded as some of the ‘earliest thoughts on return visits’, a form of short-term return mobility which emerged with the mobilities turn in the 2000s.

Baldassar’s (2001) book *Visits Home* is widely regarded as a pioneer in the field of return visits (Marschall, 2017; Miah, 2022). Over the past 20 years, increased research in the fields of migration and tourism has been carried out in an attempt to further our understanding of return visits – sojourns that migrants undertake to their country of origin. In contrast to return, which is frequently conceptualised as permanent, return visits are limited in their timeframe, after which migrants return to the country where they reside (Duval, 2004; Miah, 2022; Oeppen, 2013). Despite variations with regards to their exact length, return visits are typically stays of a few weeks or months (see, for example, Mason, 2004).²⁷ Yet, in contrast to traditional tourism, return visits are inherently transnational as, on the one hand, they are motivated by the

²⁷ Return visits in Mason’s (2004, p. 423) study lasted ‘between two weeks to several months’. Oeppen (2013) conceptualised return visits as temporary stays of less than one year.

social ties migrants have in their country of origin and, on the other, they allow migrants to maintain these social ties (Carling & Erdal, 2014; Conway et al., 2009; Duval, 2003, 2004; Mason, 2004). For instance, Mason (2004, p. 427) found that visiting ‘facilitated the cultivation and demonstration of active kinship networks that were able to work across long distances. Visiting was a highly symbolic element in the process of keeping in touch and knowing one’s kin’. Return migration and return visits can relate to each other in three ways. First, return visits can be regarded as an aspect of return migration as they constitute a form of return mobility to the country of origin. Second, return visits may supplant return migration if this latter is understood as a more permanent return. Third, return visits can be a pre-stage of subsequent longer-term return (Carling & Erdal, 2014; King & Lulle, 2015; Lulle, 2014; Miah, 2022).

Migrants may undertake return visits for a variety of reasons. Table 3 summarises the existing typologies defined by the different scholars. Drawing on earlier typologies of return visits, Miah (2022) proposes an eight-fold typology that distinguishes between routine visits, ritual visits, care visits, roots visits, rights visits, pre-return visits, economic visits and leisure visits. Baldassar et al. (2007) distinguished between care visits, duty and ritual visits, routine visits, special visits and tourist visits. Bolognani (2014)’s study on second-generation British Pakistanis’ visits to Pakistan identified five types of visit: roots visits, holiday visits, health visits, family visits and business visits. Janta et al. (2015) differentiated five visit purposes: social relationships, the provision of care, affirmations of identities and roots, maintenance of territorial rights and leisure tourism.

Table 3. Typologies of return visits

| Scholar(s) | Types of visit |
|-------------------------|--|
| Baldassar et al. (2007) | Care visits, duty and ritual visits, routine visits, special visits and tourist visits |
| Bolognani (2014) | Roots visits, holiday visits, health visits, family visits and business visits |
| Janta et al. (2015) | Social relationships, the provision of care, affirmations of identities and roots, maintenance of territorial rights and leisure tourism |
| Miah (2021) | Routine visits, ritual visits, care visits, roots visits, rights visits, pre-return visits, economic visits and leisure visits |

Source: Own elaboration based on Miah’s (2022) discussion of typologies of return visits.

Return visits are also closely connected to discussions around feelings of ‘belonging’, ‘identity formation’ and the idea of ‘home’ (Carling & Erdal, 2014; Duval, 2003; King et al., 2013; Marschall, 2017; Mason, 2004; Oeppen, 2013). The symbolic notion of home and the desire to (or myth of) return are characteristic of diasporas (Marschall, 2017; Oeppen, 2013). Return visits allow diaspora members or migrants to experience and evaluate the degree of attachment to their countries of origin and destination (Carling & Erdal, 2014; King et al., 2013; Mason, 2004; Oeppen, 2013). They may increase or confirm feelings of belonging. For instance, Mason (2004, p. 427) found that, in addition to the maintenance of social ties, return visits ‘helped to confirm a sense of belonging or affinity in relation to Pakistan, even though for many England was home’. At the same time, a return visit might have the opposite effect, as migrants or diaspora members may realise, during a return visit, that they no longer belong; this may be the case, in particular, for ethnic return migrants or migrants returning after long periods of absence. Such processes of identity formation and negotiation may pose challenges for return visitors (Mason, 2004; Oeppen, 2013). The experience of the return visit may spark

a desire for a more permanent return; at the same time, specifically repeated return visits provide an opportunity to test what it would be like to return on a more permanent basis (Baldassar, 2001; Barnes, 2001; Carling & Erdal, 2014; Conway et al., 2009; Oeppen, 2013). Barnes (2001, p. 408) argues that ‘a return visit to the country of origin serves as a “reality check” against the tendency to idealize the homeland and to assume that the society will have remained static during one’s absence’.

2.3.2 *Diaspora*

The term diaspora originates from the Greek verb ‘*diaspeiro*’ meaning ‘scattered’ (Dufoix, 2008). The term and its application have had significant modifications over time: it has been subject to controversial debate and various conceptualisations, leading to differences in the classical versus the modern usage of the term. Cohen (2008) divided the development of diaspora studies into four phases (‘prototypical diaspora’, ‘the expanded concept of diaspora’, ‘social constructionist critiques of diaspora’ and ‘consolidation phase’). His division into phases is useful not only for the evolution of the field of study but also for the term diaspora itself. Cohen’s first phase, which he termed the ‘prototypical diaspora’, describes the classical use of the term diaspora. The definition of the term was rooted in the Jewish diaspora as the ‘paradigmatic case’ (Brubaker, 2005, p. 2) or even equivalent of diaspora (Sheffer, 2003, p. 9) and was only applied to a few other selected examples of ‘classical diaspora’, such as the Armenian and Greek in addition to the Jewish (Brubaker, 2005; Cohen, 2008; Lacroix, 2018; Tölölyan, 1996). Other cases such as the African, Irish and Palestinian diasporas were also included in the category of the ‘classical, victim diaspora’ since the 1960s and 1970s (Cohen, 2008). In contrast to other scholars, Dufoix (2008) claims that the Chinese were one of four groups (along with Jews, people of African origin and Palestinians) for whom the term diaspora was used before the mid-1980s. The common features of these classical diasporas were ‘forced and traumatic dispersion’, ‘homeland orientation’, and ‘strict boundary maintenance’ (Quinsaat, 2018, p. 47).

During the second phase, which Cohen (2008, p. 4) refers to as ‘the expanded concept of diaspora’, the term was applied to other groups beyond the traditional diasporas and scholars specified key features and subtypes. With regards to key features, Safran’s (1991, pp. 83–84) expanded definition refers to the diaspora as ‘expatriate minority communities’ for whom dispersal, collective memory and myths about the homeland, a perceived impossibility to fully integrate into the destination country, a not necessarily realistic desire to return, a commitment and perceived obligation to contribute to the homeland as well as ‘ethnocommunal consciousness or solidarity’ are all characteristic. In response to Safran’s definition, Clifford (1994) pointed out that, even though Safran’s definition takes the Jewish diaspora as the ideal, several aspects of his definition do not necessarily apply to it. Cohen (1996, p. 515) agreed with the main features of Safran’s diaspora definition, ‘accept[ing] three of his features, amend[ing] two [...]’. He also added four additional features, leading to his list of ‘common features of diaspora’ (Cohen, 2008, p. 17) – see Table 4. One additional element is the inclusion of ‘groups that disperse for colonial or voluntarist reasons’ (Cohen, 2008, p. 6), thereby broadening the diaspora concept. Cohen also puts more emphasis on the positive aspects of a ‘diasporic identity’ – that is, increased creativity or potential innovation. Another aspect is that Cohen defines diaspora collective identity and solidarity as transnational – that is, that ‘solidarity with co-ethnic members in other countries’ (Cohen, 2008, p. 7) exists. Lastly, using the term ‘deterritorialised diaspora’ Cohen disconnects from territory, stating that the term ‘can be used to describe transnational bonds of co-responsibility even where historically exclusive territorial claims are not strongly articulated’ (2008, pp. 7–8). Yet, both Cohen and Safran coincide in that no diaspora group can fulfil all the features they identified.

Table 4. Common features of a diaspora

1. Dispersal from an original homeland, often traumatically, to two or more foreign regions.
2. Alternatively or additionally, the expansion from a homeland in search of work, in pursuit of trade or to further colonial ambitions.
3. A collective memory and myth about the homeland, including its location, history, suffering and achievements.
4. An idealisation of the real or imagined ancestral home and a collective commitment to its maintenance, restoration, safety and prosperity, even to its creation.
5. The frequent development of a return movement to the homeland that gains collective approbation even if many in the group are satisfied with only a vicarious relationship or intermittent visits to the homeland.
6. A strong ethnic group consciousness sustained over a long time and based on a sense of distinctiveness, a common history, the transmission of a common cultural and religious heritage and the belief in a common fate.
7. A troubled relationship with host societies, suggesting a lack of acceptance or the possibility that another calamity might befall the group.
8. A sense of empathy and co-responsibility with co-ethnic members in other countries of settlement even where home has become more vestigial.
9. The possibility of a distinctive creative, enriching life in host countries with a tolerance for pluralism.

Source: Cohen (2008, p.17).

Cohen distinguished a third stage of diaspora studies, namely a phase of the ‘diaspora craze’ since the mid-1990s. Dufoix (2008, p. 2) also described the expansion of the term and the resulting debate in the following way:

In this way, ‘diaspora’ has become a term that refers to any phenomenon of dispersion from a place; the organization of an ethnic, national, or religious community in one or more countries; a population spread over more than one territory; the places of dispersion; any nonterritorial space where exchanges take place, and so on. For some people, this flexibility is a sign of migration’s diversity. For others, it is a betrayal of the word’s meaning.

The concept of home thus became a concept of self-definition by each individual, ranging from the place of origin to a virtual network to ‘a matrix of known experiences and intimate social relations’ (Cohen, 2008, p. 10). To describe the wide-spreading application of the term diaspora, Brubaker (2005) introduced the term the “‘diaspora’ diaspora’ in order to highlight that the concept of diaspora in itself had become dispersed as it was being applied to ‘essentially any and every nameable population category that is to some extent dispersed in space’ (Brubaker, 2005, p.3). He saw this as problematic insofar as, by extending its application in such a broad manner, the concept lost its initial distinctive character. An additional aspect that Tölölyan (1996, p. 5) criticised was the relationship with the nation-state.

It may be that this inadvertent discursive complicity between diasporists, the transnational project of disabling the nation and its state is occluded by the fact that, on the one hand, transnationals appear tolerant of phenomena and concepts dear to most diasporists, like heterogeneity and mobility, while, on the other hand, they often seem nation-friendly, at least where the industrialized north is concerned.

In response to its widespread and increasingly all-encompassing usage and in an attempt to regain the distinctiveness of the concept, some scholars put new emphasis on what they considered to be key features of diaspora (Brubaker, 2005; Cohen, 2008; Safran, 2004; Tölölyan, 1996). Cohen (2008) refers to this stage of diaspora studies – which he situates timewise as since the 2000s – as the consolidation phase. Brubaker (2005, pp. 5–6) identified three key features: ‘dispersion in space’, ‘homeland orientation’ and ‘boundary-maintenance’. Following Brubaker (2005), dispersion referred to any type of scattering, forced or not, within or across state borders. As the author acknowledged, ‘[a]lthough dispersion is widely accepted as a criterion of diaspora, it is not universally accepted’ (Brubaker, 2005, p. 5). By contrast, Brubaker found the second criterion, ‘homeland orientation’, to be receiving increasingly less attention from scholars at that time, while he identified that ‘boundary-maintenance is an indispensable criterion of diaspora’ (Brubaker, 2005, p. 6).

Sheffer (2003), on the other hand, advocated for the use of the term ‘ethno-national diaspora’, arguing that the addition of ‘ethno-national’ allowed it to be distinguished from other groups at this point referred to as diaspora and put emphasis on the ‘common ethnic and national traits’ arising from the fact that diasporas are ‘participants in nations’ (Sheffer, 2003, p. 11).

The criticism regarding the wide expansion of the term diaspora also spurred scholars to take another perspective on it. As Tölölyan (1996) argued, diasporas are not just individuals living outside their homeland; to qualify as a diaspora, a sense of collective community and active involvement with the homeland is required. Following his discussion of three key features of diaspora, Brubaker (2005, p. 12) argued that diaspora should be viewed as a ‘category of practice’:

[W]e should think of diaspora in the first instance as a category of practice, and only then ask whether, and how, it can fruitfully be used as a category of analysis. As a category of practice, ‘diaspora’ is used to make claims, to articulate projects, to formulate expectations, to mobilize energies, to appeal to loyalties. It is often a category with a strong normative charge. It does not so much describe the world as seek to remake it.

Along the same lines, Sökefeld (2006) defined ‘diasporas as *imagined transnational communities*, as imaginations of community that unite segments of people that live in territorially separated locations’ (Sökefeld, 2006, p. 267). This view contrasts with previous approaches that focused on diasporas ‘form[ing] as a result of migration, but rather emerge through an active process of mobilisation, new conceptualisations are shifting the focus from transnational communities to transnational practices’ (Ragab, 2020, p. 25).

The way in which the term is utilised in policy stands in stark contrast to its traditional use in the academic literature (Newland & Patrick, 2004). Policymakers and practitioners may define diasporas simply as ‘people who have migrated and their descendants who maintain a connection to their homeland’ (Plaza and Ratha, 2011). Countries of origin do not necessarily refer to their nationals abroad as diasporas but use terms such as nationals abroad, permanent immigrants, a citizen of (X) origin living abroad, non-residents of (X) origin, persons of (X) origin, expatriates and transnational citizens (Ionescu, 2006). One advantage of such approaches may be that they make it easier to estimate the size of the population; an issue which becomes more complicated with more-traditional and less-inclusive definitions (Brubaker, 2005). The changes in the relationship between nation-states and their diasporas also attributed new meaning to the term. As Gamlen (2014b, p. S184) asserted:

Government officials in origin countries are increasingly re-claiming and re-defining ‘their’ diasporas, fostering friendly cross-border networks and countering transnational communities of dissidents and detractors. In the 1990s, it was said that diasporas were no longer victims of the nation-state but had instead become its challengers (Cohen, 1996). In the 21st century, states are rising to meet this challenge.

The academic usage of the term and the way it is applied by policymakers and practitioners differ in a number of aspects. A key difference lies in the extent to which migrants are considered to form part of diasporas. While the academic conceptualisation focuses on the descendants of migrants, thereby excluding migrants as such, policy discourse not only includes migrants but also considers them to ‘form the primary group of “diasporas” with whom they attempt to engage’ (Page & Mercer, 2018, p. 320). Newland and Patrick (2004, p. 1) argue that the term ‘does, however, imply a settled community, rather than a group of temporary migrants with the intention and ability to return to their country of origin’. However, the term is being used ‘to include migrants who have left their countries only temporarily (though perhaps long-term)’ (Newland, 2010, p. 3).

Thus, the definition in policy is much more subject to self-identification (Ionescu, 2006; Turner & Kleist, 2013). As Page and Mercer (2018, p. 320) point out, ‘any individual can be enrolled as long as they are (or can be encouraged to be) sympathetic to the development of their ancestral homeland’. As this quote suggests, the broadness of the definition in policy is strategic in so far as it allows a broad group of individuals to identify as diaspora and, therefore, to engage.

Another difference is the connotation attributed to the term. While the term has commonly been assigned a negative connotation in academia – due to its traditional use for forms of tragic dispersion – it is used in a very positive manner in policy, as both policymakers and the governments of countries of origin put emphasis on the opportunities arising from diaspora engagement, thus aiming to encourage diaspora contributions (Newland and Patrick, 2004). Turner and Kleist (2013, p. 195) also speak of a ‘self-fuelling diaspora effect’ as diaspora groups ‘[...] stage themselves – and are staged by others – as agents of change’. The authors argue that this not only ‘facilitates identification’ but also ‘makes it a more attractive position to claim. The diaspora position signals agency, authenticity, responsibility and resources and it might be conducive to getting access to funding or other advantages’ (Turner & Kleist, 2013, p. 195).

Within the CD4D project, the concept of ‘diaspora’ is used, as diaspora members are referred to as ‘diaspora experts’. In the most recent version of IOM *Glossary on Migration*, a diaspora is defined as ‘[m]igrants or descendants of migrants whose identity and sense of belonging, either real or symbolic, have been shaped by their migration experience and background. They maintain links with their homelands, and to each other, based on a shared sense of history, identity, or mutual experiences in the destination country’ (IOM, 2019, p. 49). This definition essentially summarises the core characteristics which IOM ascribes to project participants as part of CD4D (Goris et al., 2021), even though, in practice, anyone who fulfils the project requirements can apply. The way the term diaspora is used in the project reflects all the characteristics of policy applications. Migrants are included as diaspora members and – in practice – even make up the vast majority of participants. The usage of the term is also purposefully positive, stressing the contributions that diaspora members are expected to make to the country of origin and their connectedness and familiarity with the same. The use of the term allows individuals who self-identify as diaspora members to participate, while not excluding those who do not, thereby allowing IOM to target a broad range of individuals.

2.3.3 Knowledge transfer and capacity development

Within the fields of knowledge and business management, rich academic and grey literature exists on the concepts of knowledge and knowledge transfer, covering different areas such as intra- and inter-organisational, intra-industry and university-to-industry knowledge transfer.²⁸ Studies of migrant or diaspora knowledge transfer in the field of migration studies draw on the definitions from this field (see, for instance, Kuschminder, 2014a).

Knowledge is commonly defined as ‘individual knowledge’.²⁹ It emerges from the individual as everyone creates their own knowledge. This means that, even though individuals A and B gain their knowledge from the same source of information, the knowledge which they will possess differs. This is the case because an individual, when obtaining new knowledge, is influenced by their existing stock of knowledge and background, personal experience, belief and values (Bender & Fish, 2000; Court, 1997; Davenport & Prusak, 2000; Fahey & Prusak, 1998; Glazer, 1998; Joia & Lemos, 2010). Due to its individual character, knowledge always remains intrinsically linked to the individual (Fahey & Prusak, 1998) and knowledge creation requires human action (Joia & Lemos, 2010).

Knowledge is most commonly divided into explicit and tacit knowledge, a distinction first made by Polanyi (1966) and adapted by the majority of scholars in the field ever since.³⁰ While explicit knowledge can be codified and easily transferred, tacit knowledge is more complex, personal and context-dependent, which makes transfer more difficult.³¹ Nonetheless, Polanyi (1966) also argued that ‘all knowledge has a tacit and explicit component’, showing the difficulty of making a clear-cut distinction between types of knowledge. While the distinction between explicit and tacit knowledge is the most commonly applied typology, a few scholars have proposed alternative distinctions (see Table 5).

²⁸ See, for instance, Bafaneli & Setibi, 2015; Bender & Fish, 2000; Boh & Xu, 2013; Chiang et al., 2005; Darr et al., 1995; Easterby-Smith et al., 2008; Joia & Lemos, 2010; Neupane, 2015; Okechukwu Agwu & Luke, 2015; Pérez-Nordtvedt et al., 2008; Rossi & Rosli, 2015.

²⁹ Building on the definition of knowledge as centred on the individual, some scholars focus on the concept of organisational knowledge, referring to knowledge in an organisation. Nonaka (1994) conceptualised the creation of organisational knowledge as a process which begins at the individual level – a view that other scholars agree with (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008; Liyanage et al., 2009).

³⁰ See, for instance, Davenport & Prusak, 2000; Fahey & Prusak, 1998; Goh, 2002; Inkpen, 1998; Joia & Lemos, 2010; King et al., 2009; Kuschminder et al., 2014; Levin & Cross, 2004.

³¹ Accordingly, knowledge transfer methods can also be divided into explicit and tacit methods of knowledge transfer. See Langley and Kuschminder (2016, pp. 5–6) for a comprehensive list of explicit and tacit knowledge transfer methods.

Table 5. Types of knowledge

| Scholars | Type of knowledge |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Polanyi (1966) | Explicit and tacit |
| Blackler (1995) | Embrained, embodied, encultured, embedded, encoded |
| Brown (2002) | About technology, about attributes |
| Ammassari (2004) | Specialised technical expertise, organisational and managerial competence, communication skills, a sense of professional responsibility, other skills |
| Klagge and Klein-Hitpaß (2010) | Technical, managerial and communication skills |
| Siar (2012, 2014) | Hard, soft |

Source: Own elaboration.

Blackler (1995, pp. 1023–1025) divided knowledge into five types:

- (1) *embrained knowledge*, defined as ‘knowledge that is dependent on conceptual skills and cognitive abilities’;
- (2) *embodied knowledge*, which ‘is action oriented and is likely to be only partly explicit’;
- (3) *encultured knowledge*, which ‘refers to the process of achieving shared understandings’;
- (4) *embedded knowledge*, which ‘is knowledge which resides in systemic routines’; and
- (5) *encoded knowledge*, which ‘is information conveyed by signs and symbol’.

Brown (2002, p. 168) distinguished between ‘knowledge about technology or technical knowledge and knowledge about attributes, i.e. knowledge about products, processes and institutions’. Ammassari (2004) divided the knowledge and skills of return migrants into five categories: specialised technical expertise, organisational and managerial competence, communication skills, a sense of professional responsibility and other skills. Klagge and Klein-Hitpaß (2010), partly following Ammassari’s (2004) categorisation, distinguished between technical knowledge, managerial knowledge and communication skills. Siar (2012, 2014) proposed a distinction between hard and soft knowledge, arguing that ‘[a] discussion of knowledge transfer in the context of development would be incomplete if soft knowledge would be neglected because scientific, technological, and economic knowledge are not the only types of knowledge that drive development’ (Siar, 2014, p. 303). Hard knowledge includes ‘mainstream scientific, technological and economic knowledge’ (Siar, 2012, p. 164). Soft knowledge refers to ‘cultural and social transfers’, which are ‘less tangible and less quantifiable’ and are ‘mostly learned through experience, have a subjective quality, and are more culture- or location-specific than mainstream scientific knowledge’ (Siar, 2012, p. 164).

While the concepts of knowledge and information are closely related, the lines between the concepts are blurred and there is no agreement on a common distinction (Bender & Fish, 2000; Davenport & Prusak, 2000; Wang & Noe, 2010). Nonaka (1994, p. 15) defined information as ‘a flow of messages, while knowledge is created and organised by the very flow of information, anchored on the commitment and beliefs of its holder’, thereby emphasising the element of human action which distinguishes knowledge from information. Bender & Fish (2000) visualised the relationship between data, information, knowledge and expertise as a pyramid-of-knowledge hierarchy, which could be regarded as a combined framework. Therefore, the data constitute the base which, through ‘adding meaning, understanding, relevance and purpose’ (Bender & Fish, 2000, p. 126), can become information. Information

is then transformed into knowledge ‘[t]hrough personal application, values and beliefs’ (Bender & Fish, 2000, p. 126). Scholars who have explicitly made a distinction between them emphasise the action required and the application as the distinctive characteristics (Bender & Fish, 2000; Nonaka, 1994).

Within the migration literature, knowledge transfer is mainly discussed in two ways – social remittances and diaspora knowledge networks. Social remittances refer to knowledge that is transferred by a migrant or a group of migrants to individuals, organisations or groups in the country of origin. More specifically, Levitt (1998) distinguished three types of social remittance: normative structures, systems of practice on an individual and organisational level and social capital. Characteristic of this type of knowledge transfer is that some type of personal connection exists among the actors involved, as well as its circular nature (Levitt & Lamba-Nieves, 2011). Concerning diaspora knowledge networks, knowledge transfer generally refers to a broader process of circulation of ideas and knowledge between the diaspora and the country of origin (Meyer, 2001). Biao (2005) – who used the term ‘knowledge exchange’ – defined it as ‘the process whereby the expertise or information is channelled to institutes or individuals who originally do not possess them’. While not explicitly discussed by Biao (2005), the term knowledge exchange may be used to emphasise the circularity of knowledge, while transfer suggests unidirectional flows.

Considering a broader range of literature from different fields and disciplines, knowledge transfer can be defined as a process between an individual or a group of individuals,³² consisting of multiple stages and which involves an individual acquiring and applying new knowledge (Argote & Ingram, 2000; Bender & Fish, 2000; Liyanage et al., 2009; Major & Cordey-Hayes, 2000). Therefore, knowledge transfer is central to capacity development (UNDP, 2010). The acquisition of knowledge and its application are also key elements of models of organisational knowledge transfer (see Table 6 for examples).

Table 6. Knowledge transfer models

| Scholars | No. ¹ | Type of stage |
|-------------------------------|------------------|--|
| Gilbert & Cordey-Hayes (1996) | 4 | Acquisition, Communication, Application, Assimilation |
| Szulanski (2000) | 4 | Initiation, Implementation, Ramp-Up, Integration |
| Parent et al. (2007) | 4 | Discovery, Diffusion, Application, Renewal |
| Liyanage et al. (2009) | 5 | Awareness, Acquisition, Transformation, Association, Application |

Source: Own elaboration.

Note: ¹This indicates the number of stages or nodes of each model.

Node models, process models, as well as combined frameworks which include both nodes and processes, have been used to conceptualise the knowledge transfer process. Liyanage et al. (2009) and Major and Cordey-Hayes (2000) reviewed models by several researchers and found the different models to be very much alike in a number of aspects. Node models, which describe the knowledge transfer process through a series of distinct, consecutive steps, coincide in the first three nodes, which are ‘data’, ‘information’ and ‘knowledge’ (Liyanage et al., 2009; Major & Cordey-Hayes, 2000). Characteristic of this process is that it involves the transformation of data and information into knowledge, culminating in the creation of expertise

³² While knowledge transfer may also take the form of inter-organisational or university-to-industry knowledge transfer, the focus in this thesis is on the individual.

or wisdom (Bender & Fish, 2000; Liyanage et al., 2009; Major & Cordey-Hayes, 2000). These interrelated concepts are central to the discussion and analysis of knowledge transfer.

Similarly, process models – which describe the knowledge transfer process through a series of distinct, consecutive steps, even though focused mostly on organisational knowledge – share main elements such as the acquisition of knowledge and its application (see, for example, Gilbert and Cordey-Hayes, 1996; Liyanage et al., 2009; Parent et al., 2007; Szulanski, 2000). Szulanski (1996, 2000, 2003) conceptualised the transfer of best practice as a four-stage process ('Initiation', 'Implementation', 'Ramp-up' and 'Integration'). Knowledge flow takes place during the second stage ('Implementation'). It is preceded by a phase of demand and supply identification within the organisation that leads to the 'decision to transfer' ('Initiation'). The third stage ('Ramp-up') is when the transferred knowledge is being used by the recipient unit. In the final phase ('Integration') the '[u]se of the transferred knowledge becomes routinized' (Szulanski, 1996, p. 29).

Capacity development is a core goal of diaspora return programmes. The term 'capacity development' has been used to refer to a process as well as an outcome (McEvoy et al., 2016). Three levels or dimensions of capacity development can be distinguished: the 'individual level', the 'organisational level' and the 'enabling environment' or 'systems-level' (Kühl, 2009; McEvoy et al., 2016; Olsen, 2006; UNDP, 2009, 2010; Zamfir, 2017). The individual level refers to a person's knowledge and skills (McEvoy et al., 2016; UNDP, 2009), comparable to the previously discussed individual knowledge. Individual capacity development is therefore closely linked to knowledge transfer, as this latter is the process through which individuals gain new knowledge and skills (UNDP, 2010).

Nonetheless, in its multi-dimensional character, the concept of capacity development goes beyond the acquisition of skills by individuals (McEvoy et al., 2016). Kaplan (1999, 2000) proposed an analytical framework for capacity development consisting of seven attributes (context and conceptual framework, vision, strategy, culture, structure, skills and material resources). Attributes thus build on each other in a hierarchical order (Datta et al., 2012). The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) conceptualised the organisational level of capacity development as 'the internal structures, policies and procedures that determine an organisation's effectiveness' (UNDP, 2009, p. 11). In turn, the enabling environment was defined as 'the broad social system within which people and organisations function. It includes all the rules, laws, policies, power relations and social norms that govern civic engagement' (2009, p. 11). Scholars and practitioners agree that the different attributes or levels of capacity development are interconnected (Datta et al., 2012; Kaplan, 1999, 2000; McEvoy et al., 2016; UNDP, 2009, 2010).

The increased criticism of development assistance approaches over at least the last five decades has led international organisations to focus, since the 1990s, on capacity building and development (Kühl, 2009). Thus, capacity development is understood as an 'endogenous process' (Kühl, 2009, p. 552), meaning that the process is owned by developing countries and merely supported by international organisations.³³ In addition, there has been a shift by international organisations towards the use of the term 'capacity development' instead of 'capacity building' in an attempt to recognise already existing capacities. The UNDP (2009, p. 54) has adopted a clear distinction between capacity building and capacity development, defining the former as '[a] process that supports only the initial stages of building or creating capacities and assumes that there are no existing capacities to start from'. Yet, in practice, the terms capacity building and capacity development are still often being used interchangeably.

³³ In addition to the process, the term 'capacity development' has also been used to refer to an outcome (McEvoy et al., 2016).

2.4 Enablers and inhibitors of knowledge transfer and capacity development

This section focuses on the factors that enable and inhibit knowledge transfer and capacity development. It builds on the literature review conducted by Langley and Kuschminder (2016). Bovenkerk's review (1974, pp. 45–49) identified several factors that may determine whether returnees become 'innovators', including the number of returnees, the concentration of returnees in time, the time duration which a returnee has spent abroad, social class, differences between the countries or regions of immigration and emigration, the nature of the training or skills acquired and the mode of return. Cerase (1974) found that existing power relations and economic conditions inhibited returnees from becoming 'innovators'. Ghosh (1996, p. 103) identified three conditions for benefits from return migration to materialise through skills transfer: 'first, that migrants return home with new skills that are more productive than those which they would have learned at home: second, the skills from abroad are useful to the needs of the home country: and third, returnees must have the willingness and the opportunity to use the skills on return' (King, 2022, p. 326).

More-recent studies have shed light on factors that are at play specifically for returnee knowledge transfer. Ammassari (2004, p. 142) examined three aspects: whether returnees 'had gained some specific knowledge, ideas, work skills and experience overseas', 'whether what they learnt was "potentially useful" in the origin country context' and 'the relevance and application of skills and experience'. Kuschminder (2014a) provided insights into knowledge transfer and capacity building as part of TRQN 2. As part of her study, she identified four key aspects 'that appear to contribute to the success of the project [and] include: (1) it is demand-driven, (2) it recruits and provides assignments to highly qualified participants, (3) participants have strong commitment and motivation, and (4) the project terms of reference focus on training components' (Kuschminder, 2014a, p. 204). At the same time, the study identified assignment length as the main constraint.

Kuschminder et al. (2014) compared what they identified as 'high-transfer' individuals with individuals who were not 'high-transfer'. Demographic characteristics such as level of education, status and characteristics of occupation in the country of origin (in that case Germany) or the length of stay in the assignment country did not matter. The same was the case for whether returnees conducted their placement at an organisation they had previously worked at or whether they received support in finding their placement. On the other hand, the study identified several factors that enabled knowledge transfer success. First, the stage of the placement, finding that high transfer particularly took place within the first six months of a placement. Second, the frequency of contact with professionals in Germany, with at least monthly contact with former colleagues or other professional contacts in Germany makes high transfer more likely. Third, the reason for return, showing that the majority of 'high-transfer' individuals primarily returned for knowledge transfer and, fourth, membership in an academic or professional network.

The study also examined several barriers to knowledge transfer. Those examined in Kuschminder et al.'s survey (and interviews) were: language barriers, cultural barriers, mistrust from a colleague, nepotism, frequent staff turnover, negative attitude toward change from a colleague, an unsupportive working culture, workplace bureaucracy, a lack of equipment required to perform a task, a lack of experience and the capacity of a colleague (Kuschminder et al., 2014, pp. 20–23). While it does not directly relate these barriers to the outcome of 'high transfer', the study provides several important insights into the role of these aspects within the context of returnee knowledge transfer. Returnees' lack of seniority meant that they were generally unable to transfer knowledge to more senior colleagues. Furthermore, where colleagues' experiences or expertise were similar to the returnee's or there were no colleagues to work with, this inhibited knowledge transfer. Some returnees also showed a 'lack of

motivation to go the extra mile' (Kuschminder et al., 2014, p. 21). Other barriers included a '[c]lash of different attitudes to work', '[l]ow IT proficiency among colleagues' and a '[l]ack of equipment and financial constraints' (2014, p. 21).

Brinkerhoff (2006b, pp. 14–21) discussed 'factors conducive to diaspora knowledge transfer and exchange': (1) '[t]he origins of transferable knowledge', (2) 'opportunity structures/context', (3) 'motivation to act'. With regards to 'the origins of transferable knowledge', she reviewed different definitions of the term highly skilled and, drawing on Meyer and Brown (1999) and Meyer (2001) among others, discussed the importance of considering more tacit knowledge that could be transferred and which is not necessarily reflected through a diaspora member's academic qualifications or job level. In addition, Brinkerhoff highlighted the role of intermediary organisations that facilitate networks and information technology that allows connection with the country of origin in enabling diaspora knowledge transfer. As a second aspect, 'opportunity structures specific to knowledge transfer/exchange refer to homeland and host country characteristics, including the opportunities migrants find in host countries to further enhance their skills and knowledge' (Brinkerhoff, 2006b, p. 18). She thus highlighted the role of policy frameworks incentivising diaspora knowledge transfer. Finally, under 'motivation to act', she discussed the role which policies as well as individual motivations may play.

Siar (2014, p. 304) examined three main groups of factors 'that affect the production of diasporic knowledge transfer': diaspora, host country and home country factors. Wang (2014) examined how skilled return migrants transfer knowledge about organisational practices from abroad to their countries of origin using a dataset of 4,183 former J-1 visa-holders from 81 countries. The author identified two factors as central to knowledge transfer success: the returnee's 'embeddedness' in the country of origin and destination and the knowledge receiver's positive attitude towards the returnee. The study also highlights the fact that returnees may experience general as well as returnee-specific xenophobic attitudes. Similarly, as part of their study on voluntary returnees in Afghanistan, Van Houte and Davids (2014) identified that mistrust towards returnees and foreigners impeded change.

It becomes clear that existing studies consider a broad spectrum of factors, from the individual characteristics of diaspora members or returnees and the people they work with, to more institutional and structural factors. This is also the case in the field of business and knowledge management. Existing literature in the former offers rich discussion and empirical evidence of factors that both enable and inhibit knowledge transfer. Here, rich academic and grey literature exists, covering different areas such as intra- and inter-organisational, intra-industry and university-to-industry knowledge transfer (Bafaneli & Setibi, 2015; Bender & Fish, 2000; Boh & Xu, 2013; Chiang et al., 2005; Darr et al., 1995; Easterby-Smith et al., 2008; Joia & Lemos, 2010; Neupane, 2015; Okechukwu Agwu & Luke, 2015; Pérez-Nordtvedt et al., 2008; Rossi & Rosli, 2015). Naturally, there is a strong focus on private sector institutions, with few studies putting an explicit focus on knowledge transfer to public institutions other than universities. For the African region, the case study by Boakye (2015) of two hospitals in Ghana – Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital and Ejisu Government Hospital – should be mentioned. What can also be observed is that many studies within the field of knowledge transfer focus on a particular knowledge transfer method, such as mentoring (Ismail et al., 2009; Mundia & Iravo, 2014; Neupane, 2015; Ofobruku & Nwakoby, 2015; Okechukwu Agwu & Luke, 2015) or on-the-job training (Bafaneli & Setibi, 2015; Cho, 2009).

Scholars in the field of business and knowledge management have proposed conceptual models and frameworks to capture knowledge transfer and capacity development, mostly at an organisational level (see Table 7). Similar to the literature in the field of migration studies, these frameworks include the individual-level characteristics of the main individual or organisational entities involved in the knowledge transfer process, such as the knowledge

recipient (Goh, 2002), transferor- and transferee-related unique factors (Narteh, 2008) or knowledge sender and knowledge receiver (Liu et al., 2020). They also include group-level factors such as trust, rust, cultural alignment, openness to diversity (Boh & Xu, 2013) as well as characteristics of the context (Liu et al., 2020). A particular feature of Szulanski's conceptual model of 'stickiness' is the differentiation between four stages (initiation, implementation, ramp-up and integration) and the examination of factors at all four stages of the knowledge transfer process.

In what follows, I discuss the enablers and inhibitors of knowledge transfer and capacity across three levels which build the basis for the conceptual framework of this thesis. At an individual level, this includes characteristics of the knowledge sender – here the diaspora members – and the knowledge receivers, here the host-institution staff. With regards to the group level, the review focuses on the knowledge transfer method and knowledge features as well as the relationship and interaction between knowledge sender and knowledge receiver. At the contextual level, return modality and project characteristics, the organisational environment – here the host institution – and the national environment, that is, the countries of return, are considered.

Table 7. Elements of conceptual models and frameworks from the business and knowledge management literature

| Scholars | Conceptual models/frameworks |
|------------------------|--|
| Szulanski (2000) | Initiation stickiness, Implementation stickiness, Ramp-up stickiness, Integration stickiness |
| Lane et al. (2001) | Ability to understand external knowledge, ability to assimilate external knowledge, ability to apply external knowledge |
| Goh (2002) | Support structures, knowledge recipient, types of knowledge |
| Levin & Cross (2004) | Tie strength, competence-based and benevolence-based trust |
| Brachos et al. (2007) | Organisational context (social interaction, trust, motivation, learning orientation, management support) |
| Narteh (2008) | Knowledge source, transferor-related unique factors, transferee-related unique factors, relationship factors, transfer process |
| Liyanage et al. (2009) | Source, receiver, influence factors (intrinsic and extrinsic) |
| Boh & Xu (2013) | Trust, Cultural alignment – Individualism, Cultural alignment – Power distance, Openness to diversity |
| Liu et al. (2020) | Knowledge sender, knowledge receiver, knowledge features, knowledge transfer context |

Source: Own elaboration.

2.4.1 The individual level

Diaspora members and host-institution staff are the main individual actors in the knowledge transfer process. The characteristics, experiences and knowledge they bring into this encounter influence what they ultimately take away from it.

Diaspora members

Kuschminder's (2014a) research on the return programme 'Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals' (TRQN) in Afghanistan demonstrated that a key element of success in the programme was the passion and motivation of the participants. Along the same lines, Kuschminder et al.'s (2014, p. 21) study identified that the lack of motivation of the returnee to 'go the extra mile' may constitute a barrier to knowledge transfer. As they showed:

Some of the REs saw their position as a stepping-stone only and consequently were not very invested in going the extra mile for the organisation. In some cases, the job was not one that the RE had really wanted to do but a post that, confronted with limited possibilities, they had taken up upon their return as a way of gaining general work experience. [...] A lack of motivation could also be observed among some REs at the end of their tenure, given the few prospects for staying in the organisation. [...] It appears that the degree to which an RE invests in building the capacity of the organisation and challenging the status quo depends greatly on their possibility to stay in the organisation and developing their career there.

Numerous studies in the field of business and knowledge management have investigated the role of motivation for knowledge transfer. Knowledge sharing generally takes place on a voluntary basis and may be intrinsically or extrinsically motivated. Outside of this context, too, motivation has been discussed as important for knowledge sharing (Argote et al., 2003; Brachos et al., 2007; Osterloh & Frey, 2000; Swift et al., 2010). Reward systems, such as promotion, bonuses or job security, are commonly used to motivate employees extrinsically and are frequently discussed in the literature, even though the impact of rewards on extrinsic motivation is disputed (Al-Alawi et al., 2007; Bender & Fish, 2000; Carvalho de Almeida et al., 2016; Goh, 2002; Joia & Lemos, 2010; Narteh, 2008; Riege, 2005; Sié & Yakhlef, 2009; Sun & Scott, 2005; Szulanski, 1996; Wang & Noe, 2010). Some scholars have emphasised the importance of intrinsic over extrinsic motivation, particularly for tacit knowledge transfer (e.g. Baldé et al., 2018; Carvalho de Almeida et al., 2016; Martin et al., 2009; Osterloh & Frey, 2000). Swift et al. (2010) argued that an individual's motivation to share knowledge depends on his or her goal orientation and distinguished between four types: 'Learning-prove', 'Learning-avoid', 'Performance-prove', 'Performance-avoid'. Thus, the authors argued that the extent of knowledge sharing is the highest for individuals with a learning-prove orientation and the lowest for individuals with a performance-avoid orientation. The authors furthermore argued that the type of knowledge shared also depends on the individual's goal orientation: individuals of all goal orientations share explicit public knowledge, while only individuals with a learning-prove orientation share tacit, private knowledge. Evidence from Sié and Yakhlef's (2009) case study on passion and expertise knowledge transfer in the oil industry suggests that the passion that enabled them to become an expert also motivates them to share their knowledge. Besides, experts seem to see sharing as a return on the time and effort which they invested to acquire their expertise as well as a proof of expertise, hence 'sharing is the social practice of expertise' (Sié & Yakhlef, 2009, p. 182). As Langley and Kuschminder (2016, p. 7) note, '[i]n the case of CD4D passion most likely expands beyond their expertise to [a] passion for the country of origin and being able to contribute to development and change in the country'.

The motivations for VKTs are best conceptualised from the theoretical frame of transnational or diaspora engagement, as the decision to conduct these visits essentially constitutes a decision to engage in the country of origin. Existing research offers insights into diaspora motivations for engagement more generally by discussing the role of altruistic

motivations such as emotional attachment, duty and family as well as non-altruistic motivations (Brinkerhoff, 2012; Chikezie, 2011; Nielsen & Riddle, 2009; Nkongolo-Bakenda & Chrysostome, 2013; Siar, 2014); it also provides some – even though limited – understanding of motivations to engage in knowledge transfer in particular. Brinkerhoff (2006b, p. 20–21) highlighted the role of incentives created through policies as well as the desire to express homeland identity. As she contended:

Incentives range from the very simple, such as exemption from import tariffs on capital goods, duty-free shopping bonuses, and free passport issuance (Gamlen, 2005) to the more subtle social and moral legitimization that government and the homeland society can provide. Much of the motivation to mobilize will derive from the diaspora itself – from individuals’ own inclination to reinforce and express their homeland identity, and from the supportive diaspora communities and identities they co-create. For some, these identity motives will coexist with other motives, often including profit.

In addition, Brinkerhoff (2006b, p. 21) highlighted that ‘home- and hostland governments, international and intergovernmental organizations, other donors, multinational corporations, professional associations, NGOs, and other community organizations can play important roles in framing issues in a compelling way that inspires diaspora contributions and enhances diaspora members’ sense of efficacy and meaning of their potential contributions’.

According to Siar (2014), engagement is driven by diaspora members’ cultural and emotional attachment to their country of origin, resulting in altruistic motivations. Along the same lines, Kuschminder (2014a) emphasised the role of altruistic motivations for participants of the return programme ‘Temporary Return for Qualified Nationals 2 (TRQN 2)’. At the same time, she found that some programmes paid high salaries while others only paid stipends, which arguably resulted in different motivations for participation. High salaries created a financial incentive for participants, while ‘[t]he low financial compensation (when compared to an employment salary in the Netherlands) of the TRQN 2 arguably ensured that those who participated were doing so for non-economic motivations (Kuschminder, 2014a, p. 204).

It is generally accepted that diaspora motivations for engagement in their country of origin are multi-layered and complex. The review that follows focuses on the motivations relevant to VKTs and makes a distinction between altruistic and non-altruistic motivations. In what follows, I also show how these motivations compare, contrast and expand the insights which typologies of return visits offer into the motivations of migrants.

Altruistic motivation has been recognised as a key factor for different types of diaspora engagement (see, for example, Chikezie, 2011; Nielsen & Riddle, 2009; Nkongolo-Bakenda & Chrysostome, 2013; Siar, 2014) Altruistic motivations include emotional attachment, homeland duty and obligations towards family.

First, diaspora members’ altruistic motivations may be driven by their emotional attachment or belonging to their country of origin (Brinkerhoff, 2012). While this goes for different forms of diaspora engagement, Siar (2014, p. 305) identifies ‘[c]ultural and sentimental links’ as ‘the primary motivating factor for the diaspora to engage in knowledge transfer to the country of origin’. For diasporas, ‘an attachment to the place of origin is often taken for granted’ (Ragab, 2020, p. 129) and the symbolic notion of home and the desire to (or myth of) return are characteristic of diasporas (Marschall, 2017; Oeppen, 2013). As a result of these ties and attachments, diaspora members may engage in transnational activities. As a result, diaspora engagement policies – as well as diaspora return programmes – appeal to this ‘national solidarity’ and invite diaspora members ‘to a larger national (often development goal)’ (Kapur, 2001, p. 276). The sense of attachment may differ across generations and

according to where diaspora members grew up (Li et al., 2018). The emotional attachment also plays a central role in return visits as these are driven by the ties to the country of origin and allow migrants to experience and evaluate the degree of attachment to countries of origin and destination (Carling & Erdal, 2014; King et al., 2013; Mason, 2004; Oeppen, 2013).

Second, diaspora members' altruistic motivations may be driven by 'cultural obligations and expected behaviour *vis-à-vis* both the homeland and the host-land' (Brinkerhoff, 2012, p. 78). This sense of responsibility or duty towards the 'homeland' has been identified as a motivating factor for different types of diaspora engagement, such as remittances, investment, philanthropy or technology transfer (Brinkerhoff, 2012; Kapur, 2001; Mohamed & Abdul-Talib, 2020). As studies on diaspora investment have shown, this sentiment leads diaspora members to invest in their country of origin even when non-diaspora members would not do so due to the high risks to investment or low return on investment (Mohamed & Abdul-Talib, 2020). Brinkerhoff (2012, p. 78) suggests that these obligations towards the country of origin 'are first and foremost rooted in family relations and responsibilities'. In the same way, Lacroix (2014, p. 663) argues that remittances – here referring to a rather broad range of practices, including, for instance, the building of a house in the country of origin – 'are communicative acts to meet expectations of observers', i.e. family and community members, 'both in terms of material and symbolic expectations'.

The role of moral obligations towards family and community has also been recognised in existing typologies of return visits. Two types of return visit within Miah's (2022) typology centre around these obligations. On the one hand, migrants may return for so-called 'ritual visits'. As Miah (2022, p. 99) explains:

[r]itual visits require migrants to attend and participate in key life-cycle events or family rituals such as childbirths, weddings, funerals and special anniversaries. Unwritten rules of kinship mean that the home-country society, culture, relatives and friends expect their migrant counterparts to be present in such rituals, wherever this is possible. Migrants are also morally obliged to fulfil their duty by being physically present to take part in these events.

On the other hand, 'care visits' allow migrants to fulfil their care obligations toward family members (Miah, 2022).

Despite the dominance of altruistic motivations, existing research suggests that diaspora members may also have uncharitable reasons for engagement. This includes financial interests or resources motivating, for instance, diaspora investment (Brinkerhoff, 2012; Chikezie, 2011; Nielsen & Riddle, 2009) but also expand to other factors such as preparation for the possibility of return, professional development and emotional satisfaction (Mohamed & Abdul-Talib, 2020; Siar, 2014). Siar (2014, pp. 305–306) referred to these non-altruistic motivations as 'self-seeking', pointing out that '[a]lbeit self-seeking, these motivations can benefit the home country as they can entice migrants to engage in knowledge transfer'.

With regards to financial interests, Nielsen and Riddle (2009, p. 437) identified 'the expectation of [...] financial returns' as one of three investment motivations. For instance, Hammond et al. (2011, p. 36) identified the case of the Somali diaspora: 'While they may be motivated in part by a desire to stimulate development and to help the country, they are also keen to derive some financial return on their investment'. While diaspora members may be expected to participate in diaspora return programmes for altruistic reasons, there are different motivations within these programmes. Kuschminder (2014a) found that some programmes paid high salaries while others only paid stipends, which arguably resulted in different motivations for participation. As Johnson and Sedaca (2004) pointed out, the voluntary nature of diaspora return programmes may make it difficult to recruit the most qualified individuals

of the diaspora, who may have other, financially more attractive, opportunities. Migrants' financial or economic interests in the country of origin are also – in part – reflected in what Miah (2022) terms 'economic visits'. Yet, Miah's conceptualisation of economic visits goes beyond investment by including monetary or in-kind donations, i.e., non-financial interests.

Second, diaspora members' financial interests may be closely linked to their intention to return, just as individuals who plan to return to their country of origin may use engagement to make provisions for their return (Chikezie, 2011; Mohamed & Abdul-Talib, 2020). The intention to return to their country of origin may motivate migrants to engage in transnational practices, including return visits (Carling & Erdal, 2014). Miah categorised this type of visit as 'pre-return'. Return visits are a way to test the 'desire to return' (Baldassar, 2001). As Conway et al. (2009) point out, repeated return visits allow migrants to assess the conditions for return. The experience of the return visit may spark a desire for a more permanent return; at the same time, specifically repeated return visits provide an opportunity to test what it would be like to return on a more permanent basis (Baldassar, 2001; Barnes, 2001; Carling & Erdal, 2014; Conway et al., 2009; Oeppen, 2013). Barnes (2001, p. 408) argues that 'a return visit to the country of origin serves as a "reality check" against the tendency to idealize the homeland and to assume that the society will have remained static during one's absence'. VKTs allow diaspora members to gain insights into the professional working environment in their country of origin, offering them a perspective that they do not receive during other types of return visit (except for economic visits).

Third, beyond financial interests, one instance that Siar (2014) provided of a self-seeking motivation was the desire for professional development; she gives the example of an associate professor who participated in a return scientist programme to boost his research and publications. This motivation may be specific to VKTs and, accordingly, has received scant attention in existing research. Fourth, non-altruistic motivations may be driven by a desire for emotional satisfaction. For instance, diaspora investment 'may be motivated [...] by the expectation of some type of emotional return' (Nielsen & Riddle, 2009, p. 439). Related to this, engagement may take the form of 'exit transnationalism', particularly when experiencing discrimination in the country of destination (Lacroix, 2014), also resulting in the active expression of identity (Brinkerhoff, 2008). While financial interests are in some way represented in economic visits, the remaining non-altruistic motivations discussed here are not represented in typologies of return visits. The distinction between altruistic and non-altruistic motivations will therefore guide my analysis of contribution visits.

Brinkerhoff (2006b) suggests that motivations may depend on individual characteristics – for instance, an individual's age and professional development may determine their motivation to contribute to the country of origin, finding older diaspora members with higher professional development to be more motivated to engage. Motivations may also differ between first- and second-generation immigrants and depend on the diaspora's relationship with the country-of-origin government (Brinkerhoff, 2012).

In the field of business and knowledge management, a few scholars have also examined the ability of the knowledge sender to transfer the knowledge, commonly discussed as a disseminative capacity (Aquino & de Castro, 2017; Argote & Ingram, 2000; Minbaeva & Michailova, 2004; Mu et al., 2010; Narteh, 2008).³⁴ Tang et al. (2010, p. 1587) define knowledge disseminative capacity as 'the ability of knowledge holders to efficiently, effectively, and convincingly frame knowledge in a way that other people can understand accurately and put their learning into practice'. Depending on the author, the concept is defined more narrowly or more broadly, including the sender's willingness to transfer or the availability of resources (Aquino & de Castro, 2017; Minbaeva & Michailova, 2004). Nonetheless, a

³⁴ Narteh (2008) uses the term 'teaching capacity', which seems very similar to disseminative capacity.

central aspect of disseminative capacity is without doubt the ability to communicate clearly and effectively. Without necessarily discussing disseminative capacity, the importance of verbal as well as written communication skills for knowledge transfer has also been emphasised by other researchers (Ackers, 2015; Riege, 2005). Disseminative capacity is particularly important for the transfer of tacit knowledge (Minbaeva & Michailova, 2004). As Narteh (2008, p. 82) highlights, ‘the more experienced the transferors become in knowledge transfer, the easier it will be for them to transfer knowledge to other contexts because of the learning curve effect’.

In addition to motivation, Kuschminder et al. (2014) identified a number of additional sender characteristics that were important in the project examined by this study. This includes age and professional experience, time on assignment and membership in an academic network. Individuals who were young and recent graduates were less likely to successfully transfer knowledge than their older and more-experienced peers; individuals who recently took up their current position or who were members of a professional network were also more likely to be ‘high-transfer’.

Host-institution staff

Kuschminder et al. (2014) highlighted the role of the ‘composition of the team’, referring, among other things, to colleagues’ international experience and skills level. The authors found that colleagues’ international experience reduced the added value of the returning expert for the organisation, leading to low capacity development. As the authors stated (p.21):

In some cases there was not a lot for the RE [=returning expert] to challenge in the status quo since all other (or many) colleagues also had international experience and held themselves to similar standards of productivity, efficiency and punctuality. These were often high-capacity organisations in the first place, so the RE did not necessarily introduce a new working attitude, skill set, or level of expertise. It was also common in these types of organisations that knowledge was frequently shared between the team members and that creative and autonomous work was promoted or even expected.

Scholars in the field of business and knowledge management, on the other hand, have focused much research attention on the role of absorptive capacity for knowledge transfer. Absorptive capacity³⁵ refers to the skills that an organisation possesses to efficiently use new knowledge from outside it. This includes ‘basic skills or even a shared language but may also include knowledge of the most recent scientific or technological developments in a given field’ (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990, p. 128). While absorptive capacity is primarily discussed at the organisational level, Narteh (2008) argued that the absorptive capacity of an organisation essentially depends on the individual absorptive capacity of those who are its members. Knowledge receivers may differ in their absorptive capacity and a lack of it may inhibit knowledge transfer (Aquino & de Castro, 2017; Goh, 2002; Kuschminder et al., 2014; Narteh, 2008). Szulanski (1996) identified the recipient’s lack of absorptive capacity as one of three main barriers to the intra-firm transfer of best practices. Kuschminder et al. (2014) found a lack of experience and the low capacity of an expert’s colleagues to be two of the most frequently reported barriers to successful knowledge transfer.

³⁵ In addition to absorptive capacity, some authors have discussed retentive capacity as a separate concept (see, for example, Goh, 2002; Szulanski, 1996), referring to the capacity of an organisation to institutionalise transferred knowledge.

Successful knowledge transfer requires the knowledge receiver to be open to new ideas (Sun & Scott, 2005; Szulanski, 2000). In the context of this research, staff members' openness to working with diaspora members on VKTs may be shaped by their previous experiences with them as well as by their international experience (Kuschminder et al., 2014). A staff member's open-mindedness may also be defined by corporate culture (Boh & Xu, 2013).

2.4.2 *The group level*

At the group level, this section reviews the role of knowledge transfer methods and knowledge features as well as the relationship and interaction between them.

Knowledge transfer methods and knowledge features

Relatively little attention has been paid to the role of the nature of knowledge and the method of knowledge transfer adopted. Narteh (2008) included both factors in his theoretical model. With regards to the nature of knowledge, Narteh distinguished between technical and managerial knowledge, considering them to be similar to explicit and tacit knowledge. Thereby, the transfer of explicit or technical knowledge is expected to be easier than that of tacit or managerial knowledge due to the higher complexity of the latter. Goh (2002) and Narteh (2008) emphasised the importance of ensuring that the knowledge transfer methods are suitable for the knowledge to be transferred. In a study commissioned by the Centre for International Migration and Development (CIM), Kuschminder et al. (2014) examined the knowledge transfer resulting from the two-year placements of returnees as part of the 'Migration for Development' programme. In another study, Kuschminder (2014a) studied knowledge transfer and capacity-building for the Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals to Afghanistan Programme. Both studies found that tacit knowledge transfer, such as learning by example, mentoring and teamwork, was more common and effective than explicit knowledge transfer, which included formal training and sharing resources and materials with colleagues.³⁶ This included informal training, learning by example and sharing new ideas. Yet, differences exist depending on the type of host institution. Kuschminder et al. (2014) showed that formal training was more commonly used as a knowledge transfer method in academia.

Relationship and interaction

One aspect which has received attention in more-recent studies is the influence of the relationship between the diaspora members or returnees and their non-migrant colleagues on the knowledge transfer process (Ammassari, 2004; Van Houte & Davids, 2014; Wang, 2014). Returnees may encounter mistrust from locals as well as a fear that returning diaspora members may take away local jobs or be a threat to local values (Galipo, 2018; Gmelch, 1980; Hammond, 2015). In addition, returnees might experience general, as well as returnee-specific, xenophobic attitudes (Wang, 2014). As part of their study on voluntary returnees in Afghanistan, Van Houte and Davids (2014) found that mistrust towards returnees and foreigners impeded change. In his study on inter-organisational knowledge transfer, Wang (2014) identified a returnee's 'embeddedness' in the country of origin and of destination, as well as the knowledge receiver's positive attitude towards the returnee, as the main factors for successful knowledge transfer.

³⁶ According to Kuschminder (2014a), explicit knowledge transfer mostly took place through the end results of assignments.

Knowledge transfer requires interaction between two individuals or groups of individuals – the knowledge sender and the knowledge receiver. In addition to individual factors, scholars have identified characteristics of the relationship between the knowledge sender and the knowledge receiver that either enable or inhibit knowledge transfer. The role of mutual trust has also been extensively studied. Since the quality of the relationship between the two parties influences the extent as well as the efficiency of the transfer (Lane et al., 2001), a trusting relationship has been identified as crucial for successful knowledge transfer (Aquino & de Castro, 2017; Boh & Xu, 2013; Brachos et al., 2007; Foos et al., 2006; Goh, 2002; Joia & Lemos, 2010; Kuschminder et al., 2014; Levin & Cross, 2004; Narteh, 2008; Riege, 2005; Sun & Scott, 2005; Szulanski, 1996). The role of trust has been particularly emphasised in the transfer of tacit knowledge (Foos et al., 2006; Joia & Lemos, 2010). A relationship of trust allows the admission of knowledge gaps and the voicing of disagreement and ensures cooperation (Goh, 2002; Joia & Lemos, 2010; Riege, 2005; Sun & Scott, 2005). Trust also vouches for the accuracy of the knowledge transferred as it creates the assumption that the sender's 'knowledge is accurate and credible due to the information source' (Riege, 2005, p. 25).

Establishing trust – or what Liu et al. (2015) call a quality relationship – takes time and is context-bound (Joia & Lemos, 2010; Klagge & Klein-Hitpaß, 2010; Narteh, 2008; Nonaka, 1994). Trust is established through frequent and long-term interaction 'based on shared objectives, interests and experiences and is facilitated by institutional proximity' (Klagge & Klein-Hitpaß, 2010, p. 1637). Ackers' (2015) study on the contribution of volunteer stays to North–South Healthcare Partnerships showed the role of repeat stays in building trust. Drawing on Riege (2005) and Sun and Scott (2005), Langley and Kuschminder (2016) hypothesised that cultural differences and a lack of shared values may create mistrust. In the case of diaspora members on return visits, the diaspora position may evoke trust as well as mistrust. As Chapter 8 of this thesis shows, diaspora members who conduct VKTs also experience returnee stigma, the most common result of which was being perceived as a threat to locals' jobs.

A trusting relationship between diaspora members on return visits and their local colleagues is essential for successful knowledge transfer and change (Ammassari, 2004; Kuschminder, 2014a; Van Houte & Davids, 2014; Wang, 2014). The attitude of the non-migrant population towards returning diaspora members may be 'welcoming but also ambivalent or hostile' (Shuval, 2000, p. 47). As Turner and Kleist (2013, p. 195) note, diaspora members might benefit from the 'self-fuelling diaspora effect' and a diaspora position that 'signals agency, authenticity, responsibility and resources and [it] might be conducive to getting access to funding or other advantages'. On the other hand, diaspora members and returnees may encounter mistrust from locals, who perceive them as a threat to their jobs or local values (Galipo, 2018; Gmelch, 1980; Hammond, 2015). Finally, returnees might experience general or returnee-specific xenophobic attitudes (Wang, 2014).³⁷

Negative attitudes that have a discrediting effect on returnees are prevalent in different types of return migration. In Bosnia, refugee returnees were called *pobjeclice*, meaning 'those who ran away scared for no reason', creating a negative stigmatisation of cowardice (Stefansson, 2004: 58). Similarly, Oeppen (2009) found that skilled Afghans returning to Afghanistan from the United States were referred to as 'dog-washers' – stigmatising them as having performed low-skilled and degrading work. Schuster and Majidi (2015) have demonstrated the stigmas associated with deportation in Afghanistan, creating vulnerability and exclusion. Deportees also experience gendered stigmas, as demonstrated by Golash-Boza (2014) in Jamaica, where male deportees become dependent on remittances from the United

³⁷ This paragraph, as well as the following three paragraphs, have been published in Mueller and Kuschminder (2022).

States and cannot meet societal expectations of fulfilling the role of breadwinner. Finally, Kuschminder (2017) has found that female returnees in Ethiopia, from their student-migration experiences, have also faced several gender-based stigmas upon return wherein their educational achievements are disrespected because of their gender. These negative attitudes or stigmas have a demoralising effect on various groups of return migrants, including skilled, student and refugee returnees and deportees.

Less research has been conducted on the returnee stigmas confronting highly skilled returnees who discuss the challenges of reintegrating or being 'able to fit back in' upon return (Ammassari, 2009). Kuschminder (2017) found that skilled female return migrants to Ethiopia frequently discussed having to change their behaviour in order to be accepted by locals. This strategy was used both to combat returnee stigmas and to create relationships with the locals. This process can be considered one of vernacularising: 'Vernacularizers take the ideas and practices of one group and present them in terms that another group will accept' (Levitt & Merry, 2009, p. 446). This process is considered vital for translating international ideas into local culture, a process closely associated with knowledge-transfer practices that seek to bring new ideas and ways of working into local host institutions. Finally, in some cases, returnees have expected to experience negative stigmas from family and society which, in the end, do not materialise. Wong (2013) found that some women returning to Ghana expected negative stigmatisation due to divorce but, instead, were supported and embraced by their families for their independent decisions. Stigmas can also be attached to highly skilled returnees wherein there is the expectation by locals that returnees will bring wealth, resources and expertise to the country but this expectation is not met. This, therefore, places added pressure on to the returnee to perform, be successful and benefit the country. When the above-mentioned culture clashes occur, this can place a strain on the returnee when trying to cope with this type of stigma (Ammassari, 2009).

A concept that is closely related to mutual trust is that of tie-strength. Tie-strength 'characterizes the closeness and interaction frequency of a relationship between two parties' (Levin & Cross, 2004, p. 1478). Riege (2005, p. 23) identified a 'lack of contact time and interaction between knowledge sources and recipients' as a potential individual barrier to sharing knowledge. As Langley and Kuschminder (2016) identified, it has been argued that strong ties may motivate individuals to transfer knowledge (see Levin & Cross, 2004; Reagans & McEvily, 2003; Szulanski, 1996). Strong ties between knowledge sender and knowledge receiver have been identified as particularly enabling the transfer of complex and private knowledge (Narteh, 2008; Sié & Yakhlef, 2009).

The extent to which the cultural values of the knowledge receiver and the knowledge sender align may influence the success of knowledge transfer (Buckley et al., 2005; Chen et al., 2010; Ford & Chan, 2003; Kuschminder et al., 2014; Lucas, 2006; Narteh, 2008; Sun & Scott, 2005; Wang, 2014). Culture may refer to national as well as organisational or corporate culture (Boh & Xu, 2013; Riege, 2005). Thus, organisational culture should be regarded as contingent on national culture (Ford & Chan, 2003). Studies focusing on national culture have shown the effect that it can have on knowledge transfer (see, for example, Chen et al., 2010; Ford & Chan, 2003; Lucas, 2006; Narteh, 2008; Wilkesmann et al., 2009). Differences in national culture may affect the effectiveness of communication – for instance through language barriers – and thereby inhibit knowledge transfer. Cultural differences may also affect what is regarded as knowledge and how knowledge is interpreted (Ford & Chan, 2003; Liu et al., 2015; Narteh, 2008; Riege, 2005). National culture may also determine whether employees take the initiative to engage in knowledge transfer or expect to be instructed by a supervisor (Wilkesmann et al., 2009).

Hofstede (1983) identified four dimensions of national culture: individualism versus collectivism, large or small power distance, strong or weak uncertainty avoidance and

masculinity versus femininity. These dimensions have been used in studies on the role of culture in knowledge transfer (see, for example, Chen et al., 2010; Ford & Chan, 2003; Lucas, 2006). For instance, Chen et al.'s (2010) study on the impact of national cultures on structured knowledge transfer identified that differences in individualism/collectivism, power distance and uncertainty avoidance between sender and receiver negatively affected knowledge transfer success. In contrast, Boh and Xu's (2013) article found that the national cultural alignment of local employees with that of their headquarters was not statistically significant for the ease of knowledge transfer between the parent cooperation and overseas subsidiaries. Yet, they did find that 'the extent to which individuals are open to diversity is significantly and positively associated with the extent of knowledge transfer from the HQ' (Boh & Xu, 2013, p. 38).

An aspect of the operational advantage attributed to diaspora members is that they are expected to merge values as well as cultural knowledge from two contexts and therefore to easily adapt, interact and communicate in both (Brinkerhoff, 2016; Lowell & Gerova, 2004). Brinkerhoff (2016) discusses this familiarity with national culture as an in-between advantage. Even though not in the context of diaspora members, Liu et al. (2015), drawing on a variety of authors, have discussed this ability as that of bilingual-biculturals. Wang (2014, p. 35) found that 'being more embedded in their host and home countries increases returnees' probability of successfully transferring knowledge back to organisations in their home countries'. At the same time, Kuschminder et al. (2014, p. 21) showed that some returning experts experienced a 'clash of different attitudes to work'.

Several authors in the field of business and knowledge management have highlighted the importance of a common language shared by the transferor and the transferee for the knowledge transfer process (Buckley et al., 2005; Davenport & Prusak, 2000; Joia & Lemos, 2010; Liu et al., 2015; Swift et al., 2010).³⁸ Here, language goes beyond that used to communicate, as a common language 'extend[s] to a shared understanding of the terminology and jargon used by professionals in a specialised field' (Langley & Kuschminder, 2016, p. 7). Language skills are another aspect of the operational advantage that is being attributed to diaspora members over foreign experts (Brinkerhoff, 2016).³⁹ Here, Kuschminder et al.'s (2014) research on the experiences of returning experts from Germany showed little relevance to language barriers and that language was the lowest identified out of a total of 11 barriers.

2.4.3 The contextual level

For the contextual level, this section examines the role that the literature has attributed to return modality and project characteristics, the host institutions and the countries of return.

Return modality and project characteristics

For TRQN in Afghanistan, Kuschminder (2014a, p. 204) identified that the four '[k]ey aspects that appear to contribute to the success of the project include: (1) it is demand-driven, (2) it recruits and provides assignments to highly qualified participants, (3) participants have strong commitment and motivation and (4) the project terms of reference focus on training components'. At the same time, the study identified assignment length as the main constraint. For the Returning Experts (RE) component of the CIM 'Migration for Development' programme, Kuschminder et al. found that the equipment allowance that returning experts received was key to the success of the returning expert's position, as it allowed them to counteract the lack of organisational resources and equipment.

³⁸ Cohen and Levinthal (1990) and Szulanski (1996) considered this an aspect of absorptive capacity.

³⁹ However, Terrazas (2010) notes that language skills and cultural knowledge vary and are less apparent among second- or third-generation migrants.

Host institutions

The context or environment of an organisation may be more or less favourable for knowledge transfer. Langley and Kuschminder (2016) identified several aspects of the organisational culture that influence knowledge transfer: a safe psychological environment, trust, a source of power within an organisation, the structure of an organisation, time, organisational resources and employee rewards. These factors determine whether members of an organisation feel comfortable and are able or are encouraged to transfer knowledge. The structure of an organisation determines the ease with which employees can identify and contact colleagues or superiors who have the knowledge which they would like to gain. Strong hierarchies or high-power distance, therefore, make knowledge transfer less likely as they reduce accessibility, as does an environment that prioritises individual performance (Goh, 2002; Husted & Michailova, 2002; Joia & Lemos, 2010; Riege, 2005; Rivera-Vazquez et al., 2009; Swift et al., 2010). Resources such as physical space and equipment may also be necessary for knowledge transfer (Goh, 2002; Kuschminder et al., 2014; Riege, 2005; Sun & Scott, 2005). In addition, the transfer of knowledge requires time (Bjorvatn & Wald, 2020; Pérez-Nordtvedt et al., 2008; Reagans & McEvily, 2003; Szulanski, 2000; Szulanski et al., 2016). Bjorvatn and Wald (2020), using a sample of 285 project teams to study knowledge transfer in teams, found that time pressure was negatively associated with knowledge transfer effectiveness. Riege's (2005, p. 23) review of potential individual barriers lists a 'general lack of time to share knowledge, and time to identify colleagues in need of specific knowledge'. The transfer of tacit knowledge – for example, through coaching or mentoring – is also time-intensive (Joia & Lemos, 2010).

An organisation's management commitment to knowledge sharing might directly or indirectly encourage or discourage knowledge transfer. For instance, the management might promote a collaborative environment or provide incentives for knowledge sharing, such as employee rewards (Brachos et al., 2007; Goh, 2002; Riege, 2005; Rivera-Vazquez et al., 2009; Sun & Scott, 2005). Along these lines, scholars have emphasised the role that an organisation's motivation to learn may also play (Brachos et al., 2007; Narteh, 2008; Szulanski, 2000; Tsang, 2002). This motivation is commonly referred to as learning intent (Narteh, 2008; Szulanski, 2000; Tsang, 2002). In the case of international joint ventures, Tsang (2002) defined learning intent as the 'level of desire and will of the parent with respect to learning from the joint venturing experience' (p. 839). Focusing on learning intent at the organisational level, it has been argued that '[l]earning intent implies that the partner must value knowledge acquisition as a major goal or objective for the formation of the alliance' (Narteh, 2008, p. 82). An essential element is also that an organisation communicates its learning intent to its employees. Narteh (2008) argues that organisations in developing countries are likely to have a high learning intent when collaborating with organisations in more-developed countries as they hope to overcome deficiencies in technology, knowledge and financial resources.

Countries of return

Finally, also the environment of the country of origin in which the knowledge transfer takes place has been identified as an influencing factor. Drawing on Uphoff's (1989, 2005) typology of power resources, Brinkerhoff (2006b) identified two components of a 'supportive context' for diaspora knowledge transfer, namely government policies and the attitude of the origin country society. First, Brinkerhoff (2006b, p. 19) highlighted the importance of 'government policies that enable diaspora economic opportunities, reward and publicize diaspora knowledge contributions, facilitate information exchange, and legitimate knowledge transfer/exchange projects'. As a second factor, Brinkerhoff (2006b) identified the origin country society as one

aspect of opportunity structures that determine knowledge transfer by diaspora members. Thereby, it is relevant whether the society ‘welcomes diaspora contributions, perceiving them as legitimate and valuable’ (Brinkerhoff, 2006b, p. 19). Also, an origin country society may or may not ‘criticize diaspora members for not returning; and confers prestige on participating diaspora members’ (Brinkerhoff, 2006b, p. 19). The second component is particularly relevant to this study.

A similar but wider concept is that of home-country receptivity, defined by Nevinskaitė (2016, p. 138) as ‘the willingness and the ability of a country to accept and assimilate knowledge and skills contributions from its diaspora’. Besides ‘available policies and initiatives; it also includes other factors such as the quality of institutions and bureaucracy, relationships of trust, attitudes towards and acts of appreciation of the diaspora on the part of government, and welcoming attitudes towards diaspora contributions in wider society’ (Nevinskaitė, 2016, p. 138). Even though they were born in the country to which they are returning, returnees are frequently regarded as foreigners. Wang (2014) described two main reasons for xenophobic attitudes towards returning experts. Thus, xenophobia refers to ‘the fear of or resistance to foreigners’ (Wang, 2014, p. 10). First, returnees might face xenophobic attitudes due to the fact that external knowledge and resources are perceived as a threat by the local population. Second, ‘xenophobia can be returnee-specific – that is, returnees are penalized for being not only foreigners but also turncoats’ (Wang, 2014, p. 10). Such attitudes can undermine a returning expert's impact in the workplace. In his study on inter-organisational knowledge transfer, Wang (2014) tested the hypothesis that returnees experience less knowledge transfer success in more-xenophobic home countries than in less-xenophobic ones. While he found that returning experts are less successful at KT in more-xenophobic countries, he also saw that the benefits of home-country embeddedness decreased in more-xenophobic countries. Accordingly, embeddedness in the host country may be used by the returnee to counteract this effect in more-xenophobic countries.

2.5 Implications and conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the literature related to VKTs. The first part of this chapter discussed the role of return in the context of migration and development debates, the contributions of highly skilled return migrants to knowledge transfer and the role of diaspora members in origin-country development and knowledge transfer. It also reviewed existing evidence specifically for diaspora return programmes. The literature review shows that the extent to which return migrants or diaspora members are expected to make development contributions has changed, with shifts in the broader migration and development debates. The literature review also showed that evidence of the contributions of highly skilled return migrants exists. Furthermore, it shows that diaspora knowledge networks provide insights into diaspora knowledge transfer that are relevant to this study. At the same time, the literature review shows the need to examine the contributions, enablers and inhibitors for the case of VKTs.

This chapter then reviewed the key concepts of this thesis, return visits, diaspora, knowledge transfer and capacity development. The conceptualisations used throughout this thesis draw on this literature review and are presented in the next chapter. Drawing on the literature review, knowledge transfer is conceptualised as a staged process of information transmission and knowledge creation. In addition, it is necessary to examine organisational capacity development in addition to individual capacity development; in this thesis I examined the process contributions to organisational capacity development.

The third part of this chapter focused on existing evidence on the enablers and inhibitors of knowledge transfer. At an individual level, this includes the diaspora member and host-

institution staff. The literature review showed that factors that may enable knowledge transfer with regards to the diaspora member include him or her being intrinsically motivated and passionate, willing to 'go the extra mile', having expertise in a certain area or field and being able to transfer knowledge to the host-institution staff. Diaspora members who were older and have professional experience, are in the initial stages of their assignment and those who are members of a professional network are also expected to be more successful concerning knowledge transfer, based on the existing literature. With regards to host-institution staff, identified enablers of knowledge transfer are host-institution staff who are able to absorb the knowledge which the diaspora member transfers and are willing to learn or be open to new ideas from the diaspora member.

At the group level, the knowledge transfer method and knowledge features as well as the relationship and interaction between diaspora members and host-institution staff were identified as dimensions that influence knowledge transfer. For the knowledge transfer method, the literature review highlighted the importance of ensuring the suitability of the methods for the knowledge to be transferred. It also showed that tacit knowledge transfer can be expected to be more effective, while explicit knowledge transfer may be more common in academia. With regards to the relationship and interaction, factors that may enable knowledge transfer include the diaspora member and host-institution staff trusting each other, strong ties that motivate knowledge transfer and diaspora member and host-institution staff sharing a common language. The literature review also showed the importance of the alignment of the cultural values of diaspora members and host-institution staff and the ability of the diaspora member to adapt to the country's context. It became clear that diaspora members on return visits may experience xenophobic attitudes which may be more general as well as returnee-specific.

On a contextual level, three dimensions will be distinguished: return modality and project characteristics, host institution and countries of return. The host institution's structure and its learning intent may enable or inhibit knowledge transfer. An organisational structure with low hierarchies and low power distance is beneficial for knowledge transfer and capacity development. High learning intent means that management is committed to knowledge sharing and actively promotes a collaborative environment among its employees. In addition, sufficient time is necessary for knowledge transfer and capacity development. With regards to project characteristics, assignment length and the payment which diaspora members receive are expected to enable or inhibit knowledge transfer. Based on this literature review, I developed the framework for knowledge transfer and capacity development during return visits used in this thesis, which is presented in the next chapter.



3

3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT DURING DIASPORA RETURN VISITS

3.1 Introduction

This thesis proposes a framework for knowledge transfer and capacity development during diaspora return visits which will be presented in this chapter. This is important because, despite the popularity of diaspora return programmes, there has been little academic effort to understand how knowledge transfer and capacity development take place in this specific context. Therefore, this framework sets the basis for furthering this understanding. It builds on the existing literature, an overview of which has been provided in the previous chapter. While the existing literature has discussed many different aspects of diaspora return visits, knowledge transfer and capacity development, the value of the framework presented here lies in its combining of these different aspects into one overarching framework. While the framework was drafted based on the literature review, it was then further developed through an inductive approach to the data, allowing it to redefine the framework further.

The framework combines processes and factors. The framework encompasses three processes: first, *information transmission (IT)*, as part of which the knowledge sender, here the diaspora member, shares new information and insights with the knowledge receiver, here the host-institution staff; second, *knowledge creation (KC)*, with the knowledge receiver processing and utilising the transmitted information; and, third, *contributions to organisational capacity development (COCD)*, conceptualised as the diaspora member making contributions to the internal structure, policies, procedures and resources of the host institution where the return visit takes place.

With respect to factors, the framework comprises three levels: the *individual level*, that is, the diaspora members and host-institution staff, the *group level* – knowledge transfer methods and knowledge features as well as relationship and interaction – and the *context*, consisting of return modality and project characteristics, host institutions and countries of return. Each of these levels is examined for the three processes, as different enablers and inhibitors play a role in each process. For IT, the framework includes the diaspora members' motivation for return visits, prior participation in a short-term diaspora return programme and expertise and the host-institution staff's motivation to learn from a diaspora member, the type of knowledge transfer method, the occurrence of interaction, the ease of relationship between diaspora members and host-institution staff, the placement terms of references, the stipend which diaspora members receive and the host institution learning intent and returnee stigma. For KC, the framework considers the diaspora members' disseminative capacity, their familiarity with the country-of-origin context and with the host institution, their age and gender, their strategies to prevent and counteract returnee stigma, the time which host-institution staff have for knowledge transfer and capacity development, the relevance of information and insights to host-institution staff, the availability of practical exercises, the relevance of diaspora members' activities to staff's work, the frequency of interaction and ease of the relationship between diaspora members and host-institution staff, the placements' focus on knowledge transfer, the placement length, the host institution's learning intent, its availability of resources and returnee stigma. For contributions to organisational capacity development, the framework takes into account the diaspora members' motivations for return visits, their expertise, their ability to mobilise resources, the complementarity of contributions to knowledge transfer and the host institutions' need for contributions to organisational capacity development. In addition, a few other factors are considered: the diaspora members' level of education and

employment status, the host-institution staff's absorptive capacity, the type of organisation and the organisational structure.

Following this introduction, the next section shows how return visits and diaspora members are conceptualised throughout this thesis. The third section of this chapter presents the processes for knowledge transfer and capacity development, while the factors for it are presented in the fourth section.

3.2 Key concepts: return visits for knowledge transfer and diaspora members

This section discusses how return visits and diaspora members are defined in this thesis.

3.2.1 Return visits for knowledge transfer and capacity development

The return visits constitute the immediate space within which knowledge transfer is supposed to take place. Katie Kuschminder and I introduced the term 'return visits for knowledge transfer' in the theoretical introduction to our article on returnee stigma (see Mueller & Kuschminder, 2022).⁴⁰ This type of return visit is conceptually distinct from other types of return visit as they take place for knowledge transfer and capacity development. VKTs can be facilitated by an international organisation or through a non-governmental organisation. They can also be actioned by the individuals themselves (Kuschminder, 2014a). They can overlap with economic visits in that the individual may receive a stipend or salary for such a visit; however, we argue here for a conceptual distinction of visits for knowledge transfer, acknowledging that they can overlap with other categories.

VKTs share key characteristics with other types of return visit. While the exact length of return visits may vary, a key characteristic of both return visits in general and VKTs in particular is their limited timeframe and temporary nature (Duval, 2004; Miah, 2022). What distinguishes return visits from tourism is the attachment which return visitors have to their destination, as migrants make return visits 'to either their external homeland or another location in which significant social ties exist' (Duval, 2004, p. 51).

Since return visits allow migrants to maintain these social ties in their country of origin (Conway et al., 2009; Duval, 2004), scholars have emphasised the transnational character of return visits. Duval (2004, p. 54) conceptualised the return visit as 'a transnational exercise through which multiple social fields are linked'. This is also the case for VKTs, as diaspora members who conduct them maintain transnational ties to their ancestral country of origin. Many of these diaspora members had engaged in a previous return visit prior to that for knowledge-transfer purposes, thus reflecting that most of them maintain contact with family and friends in their country of origin. Therefore, these return visits form part of a broader transnational process of diasporic return, which can take various forms, including short-term visits as well as longer-term returns (Galipo, 2018; King, 2000; Olsson & King, 2008; Tsuda, 2019).

Finally, return visits are a way to test the 'desire to return' (Baldassar, 2001). As Conway *et al.* (2009) point out, repeated return visits allow migrants to assess the conditions for return. VKTs allow diaspora members to gain insights into the professional working environment in their country of origin, offering them a perspective that they do not receive during other types of return visit (with the exception of economic ones). Even though return for knowledge transfer is mostly pursued by highly skilled diaspora members, such visits differ from professional mobility, where factors such as monetary incentives and opportunities for career

⁴⁰ The following paragraphs have been published as a part of the article.

advancement are at the forefront in the latter case (Mahroum, 2000). In contrast, VKTs are generally viewed as rooted in an altruistic motivation to contribute something to the country of origin (Kuschminder, 2014a). Nonetheless, monetary factors and opportunities for career advancement can still play a role, as this thesis demonstrates (see Chapter 5).

3.2.2 *Diaspora members*

The term diaspora members is used in this thesis to refer to individuals conducting a return visit to their country of origin. As demonstrated by the discussion in Section 2.3.2., the application and use of the term ‘diaspora’ within the CD4D programme is recognised as being a ‘policy application’ of the term and not reflective of the term’s historical and academic evolution. A decision was made to use the term ‘diaspora’ nonetheless, recognising it as a policy category, in order to be consistent with the programme and its application. The weaknesses of this approach are recognised, as this policy application of the term not only includes migrants but also puts emphasis on migrants, not their descendants, which stands in stark contrast to academic definitions. In addition, since it is a policy application, the term is used in a purposefully positive way as part of the CD4D project and implies assumptions centred around the ‘diaspora advantage’, as diaspora members are expected to be familiar with their country of origin’s language and culture. In addition, whether or not participants in this study identify as diaspora members depends on the individual; however, the interviews showed that the vast majority do identify as such.

3.3 Processes for knowledge transfer and capacity development

The first part of the conceptual framework is visualised in Figure 2. It comprises three processes: *Information transmission (IT)*, *knowledge creation (KC)* and *contributions to organisational capacity development (COCD)*.

IT is defined as the process of the knowledge senders – that is, the diaspora members – sharing new information and insights with the knowledge receivers – here, the host-institution staff, using explicit or tacit knowledge transfer methods. Thus, IT is the first stage of knowledge transfer and is necessary for any subsequent KC.

KC – defined as the process whereby the knowledge receivers process and utilise the transmitted information, for instance by applying a new technique in their work – is examined as the second stage of the knowledge transfer process. This second stage then results in individual capacity development. The process of host-institution staff processing and utilising the transmitted information to facilitate new knowledge creation should be initiated as part of the return visit. Yet, while the process of IT needs to take place entirely within the timeframe of the return visit, KC may take place during as well as after the actual visit as it refers to a process of the knowledge receiver within their host institution. For this reason, the process has been visualised as crossing from the space of return visits to the space of host institutions in Figure 2.

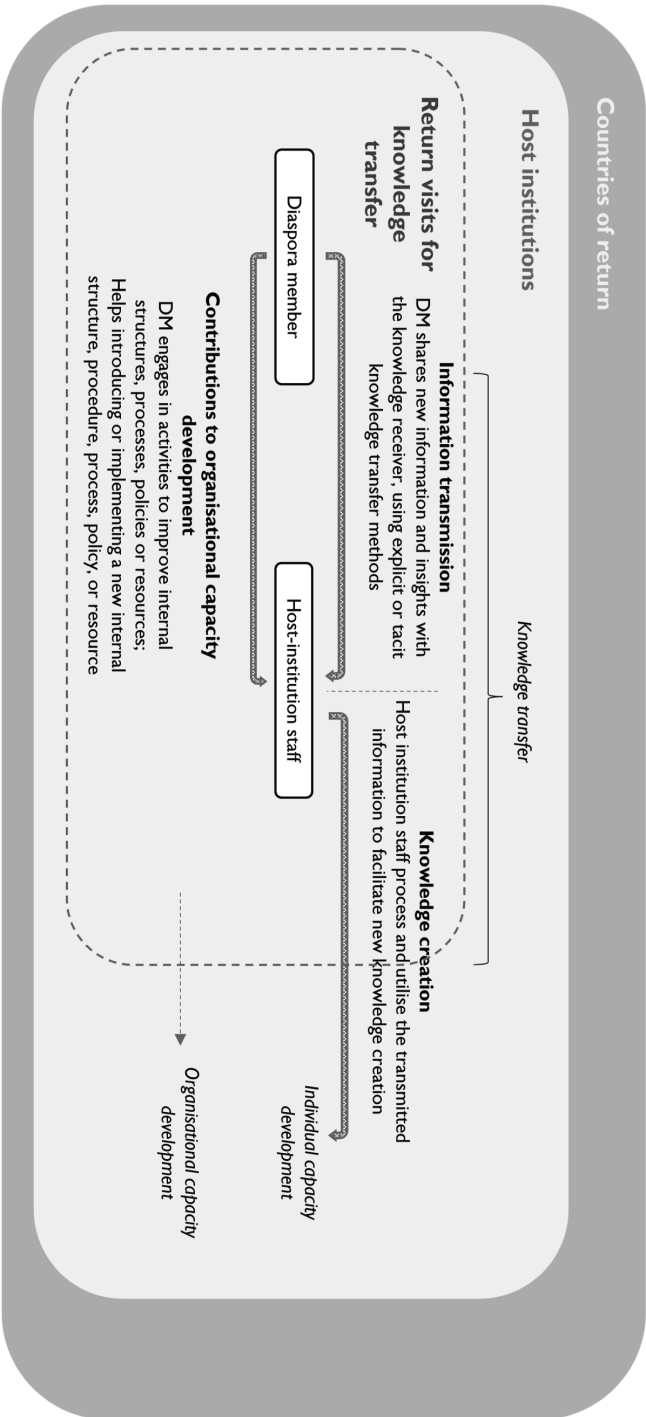


Figure 2. Visualisation of the conceptual framework, Part I – Processes

Source: Own elaboration.

Whilst acknowledging the difficulty of distinguishing between knowledge and information and operationalising and measuring these concepts, both information and knowledge should be regarded as part of the knowledge transfer process. Drawing on the existing literature, I conceptualise information as being any new ideas, insights or techniques transferred from the knowledge sender to the knowledge receiver. Knowledge is conceptualised as that which the receiver creates for him- or herself from the information. In contrast to the concept of social remittances, which emphasises the circularity of knowledge (Levitt, 1998; Levitt & Lamba-Nieves, 2011), knowledge transfer will only be analysed in a unidirectional manner in this thesis, as a transfer from the diaspora member to colleagues at the host institution is the direction of transfer defined by the diaspora return programme. Yet it should be emphasised that, in practice, knowledge transfer constitutes a multidirectional process, including in this case.⁴¹

The third process examined as part of this study, *contributions to organisational capacity development*, is conceptualised as the process whereby the diaspora member make contributions to the internal structure, policies, procedures and resources of the host institution where the return visit takes place. As the literature review has demonstrated that capacity development goes beyond individual-level knowledge transfer, organisational capacity development is also considered in the framework. Since actual organisational capacity development requires changes at the organisational level beyond the sphere of control of the diaspora member and the frame of return visits, I focus here on the contributions which the diaspora member makes to organisational capacity development, abbreviated as COCD. I acknowledge that this constitutes a limitation as it does not account for whether actual OCD occurred in the end. Drawing on the literature review, contributions to organisational capacity development are defined as contributions to the internal structure, policies, procedures and resources of the host institution. While not included in most conceptualisations of organisational capacity development, drawing on Kaplan (1999, 2000), this study also considers contributions to resources or materials – for example, computers or other equipment – to be an aspect of COCD. This seems important since this research shows that the majority of host institutions in this study face a lack of resources or materials, an aspect that placements respond to through the contributions to resources and materials.

In contrast to individual capacity development, COCD is not directly linked to knowledge transfer. It is considered a complementary process to the knowledge transfer processes of *information transmission* and *knowledge creation*. Nonetheless, it seems essential to consider COCD, as it is a core goal of VKTs, the aim of which is to increase the host institutions' capacities.

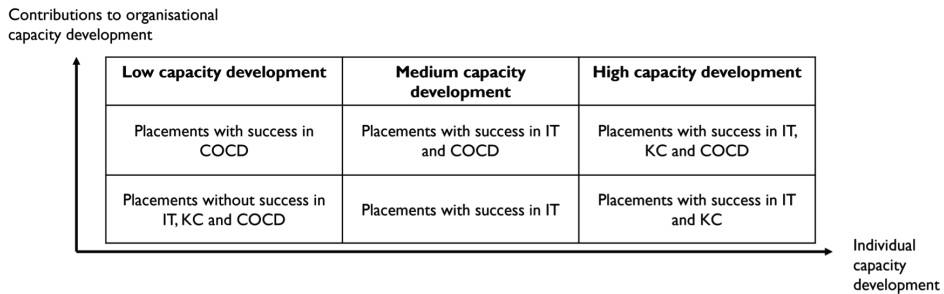
Drawing on Kuschminder et al.'s (2014) concept of 'high transfer', I distinguish three levels of capacity development:

1. *High capacity development*, i.e. placements with success in information transmission and knowledge creation that may be accompanied by success in contributions to organisational capacity development;
2. *Medium capacity development* – placements with success in information transmission, which may be accompanied by success in contributions to organisational capacity development; and
3. *Low capacity development* or placements without success in the three processes or with success only in contributions to capacity development (see Figure 3).

⁴¹ See also Mueller (2020).

This means that, for *high capacity development*, both *information transmission* and *knowledge creation* need to take place. *Contributions to organisational capacity development* may accompany *information transmission* and *knowledge creation* since it is considered a complementary process. The relationship of these processes is further visualised in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Visualisation of the conceptual framework, Part 2 – Levels of capacity development



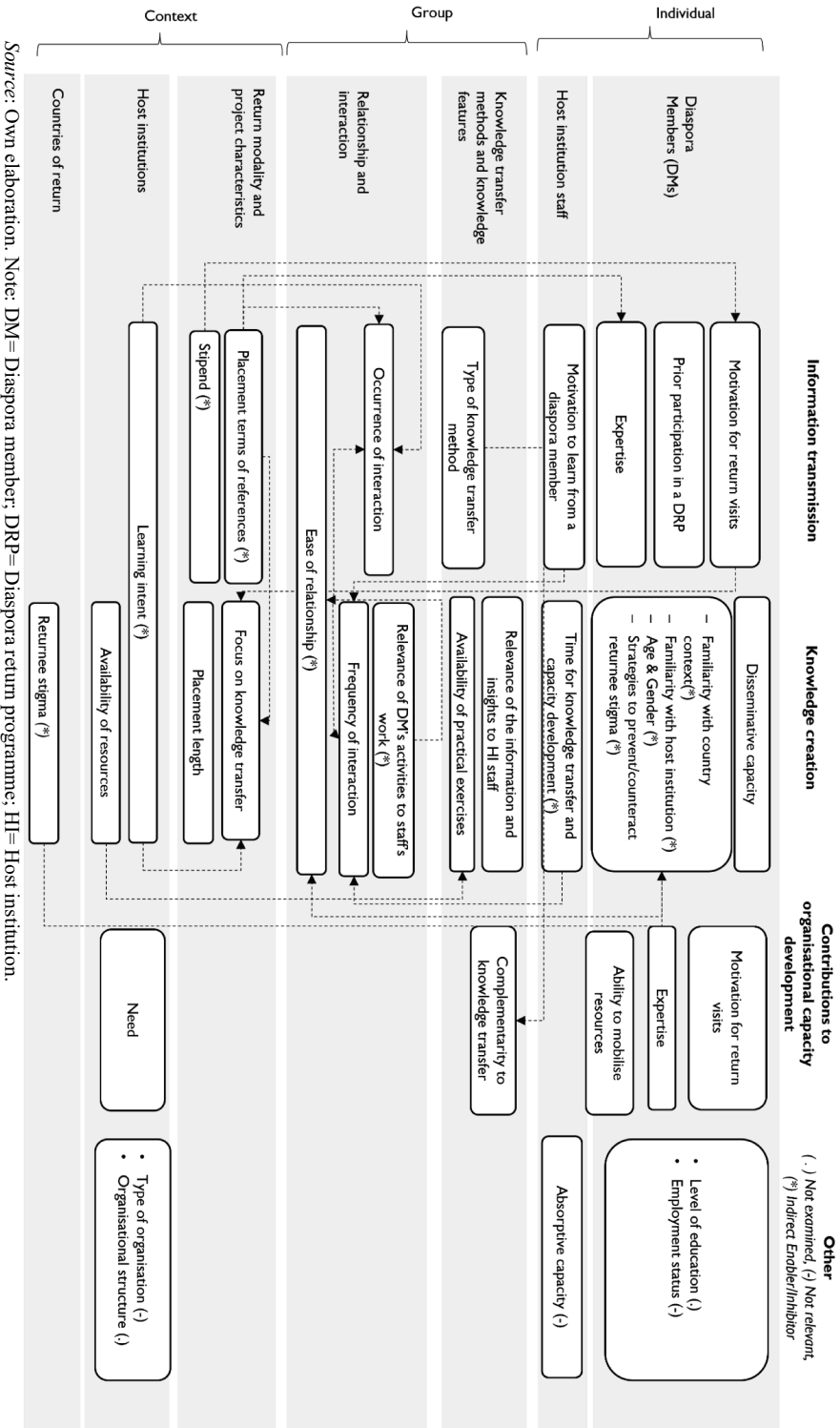
Source: Own elaboration.

Note: For the operationalisation of these three processes and levels of capacity development, see Chapter 4. COCD= Contributions to organisational capacity development; IT= Information transmission; KC= Knowledge creation.

3.4 Enablers and inhibitors of knowledge transfer and capacity development

Distinguishing between three processes for knowledge transfer and capacity development allows examination of how each of these processes takes place and determines the enablers and inhibitors for each process. This is important as it allows for a more nuanced and detailed picture. Thereby, this approach also means that enablers and inhibitors can be analysed for all three processes. This approach has been chosen drawing on Szulanski’s conceptual model of ‘stickiness’ in the organisational knowledge transfer processes, which showed the importance of examining enablers and inhibitors at all stages of the process of knowledge transfer and capacity development. Drawing on the review in Chapter 2, the framework includes factors that enable *information transmission*, *knowledge creation* and *contributions to organisational capacity development* across three levels, *individual*, *group* and *context*. The factors are visualised in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Visualisation of the conceptual framework, Part 3 – Enablers and inhibitors



Source: Own elaboration. Note: DM= Diapora member; DRP= Diapora return programme; HI= Host institution.

3.4.1 The individual level

The three processes – *information transmission*, *knowledge creation* and *contributions to organisational capacity development* – require the interaction of two main groups of actors, the diaspora members and the host-institution staff, who each bring their specific characteristics and behaviours to this interaction. Therefore, at the individual level, the framework considers the diaspora members' and the host-institution staff's characteristics. The diaspora members' motivation for return visits affects IT and COCD, while their disseminative capacity is relevant for KC. The diaspora members' prior participation in a diaspora return programme influences IT, while the diaspora members' expertise plays a role in both IT and COCD. In addition, the diaspora members' familiarity with the country-of-origin context and with the host institution, their age and gender and the strategies which they apply to prevent and counteract returnee stigma, do not directly play a role in *knowledge creation* but they affect the ease of relationships between diaspora members and host-institution staff, thereby indirectly impacting on KC. The employment status was not identified as relevant. The diaspora members' level of education was not examined. Nonetheless, both aspects have been included in the conceptual framework as they were identified in the literature review and therefore seem important for it.

For host-institution staff, the motivation to learn from a diaspora member enables or inhibits IT. In addition, the time which host-institution staff have available and dedicate to KC is one of several factors influencing the frequency of interaction between diaspora members and host-institution staff, thereby indirectly affecting KC. The framework also includes the host-institution staff's absorptive capacity even though this is not identified as relevant in this study.

3.4.2 The group level

Since interaction between these two groups is required, the conceptual framework considers factors that enable and inhibit IT, KC and COCD at the group level. This includes knowledge transfer methods and knowledge features as well as the relationship and interaction between diaspora members and host-institution staff. With regards to knowledge transfer methods and knowledge features, the type of method used affects IT. The relevance of the information and insights into host-institution staff and the availability of practical exercises play a role in KC. For COCD, the complementarity of the former to knowledge transfer influences this process.

Concerning the relationship and interaction between diaspora members and host-institution staff, the occurrence of interaction is necessary for IT, while the frequency of interaction impacts on KC. Another group-level factor is the ease of the relationship between diaspora members and host-institution staff, which affects IT and KC indirectly as it impacts on whether and how frequently diaspora members and host-institution staff interact. In addition, the relevance of the diaspora member's activities to staff work influences the frequency of interaction between them.

3.4.3 The contextual level

The processes of IT, KC and COCD take place within three main spaces, here referred to as context. First, they are facilitated through VKTs, supported by a short-term diaspora return programme. The return modality and project characteristics set the frame for how the placements take place. The placement terms of reference and the stipend provided to diaspora members indirectly influence IT, as the terms of reference determine the diaspora members' expertise, the occurrence of interaction and the focus on knowledge transfer, while the stipend

may influence the diaspora members' motivations for return visits. The focus on knowledge transfer and placement length both play a role in KC.

Second, the return visits take place in selected host institutions. While diaspora members mostly worked with one specific department, host institution characteristics enable both KC and COCD. The host institutions' learning intent and the availability of resources for knowledge transfer to apply knowledge gained both play a role in KC, while the necessity of organisational capacity determines COCD. The type of organisation was not identified as relevant and the organisational structure could not be examined; both have been included in the framework, nonetheless.

While the focus of this thesis is on the individual level of capacity development and the contributions which the diaspora members make to organisational capacity development, elements of the enabling or structural environment are considered to the extent possible, as they interact and influence the individual and organisational levels. For this reason, the countries of return have been included in the conceptual framework as the third and widest space in which the return visits take place. Returnee stigma determines the strategies that the diaspora members may employ to prevent and counteract the same.

3.5 Implications and conclusion

This chapter has presented the conceptual framework of this thesis, which distinguishes three processes of knowledge transfer and capacity development:

1. *Information transmission*, as the process whereby the diaspora member shares new information and insights with the host-institution staff, using explicit or tacit knowledge transfer methods;
2. *Knowledge creation*, as the process whereby the host-institution staff process and utilise the transmitted information, for instance by applying a new technique in their work; and
3. *Contributions to organisational capacity development*, as the process whereby the diaspora member makes contributions to the internal structure, policies, procedures and resources of the host institution where the return visit takes place.

Thus, the processes of *information transmission* and *knowledge creation* together form the knowledge transfer process, with *information transmission* being the first stage and *knowledge creation* the second, with the second stage resulting in individual capacity development. Distinguishing between these three processes of *information transmission*, *knowledge creation* and *contributions to organisational capacity development* allow the generation of an in-depth understanding of how diaspora members contribute to knowledge transfer and capacity development. With this, my thesis expands on existing studies that do not make a distinction. Therefore, it builds on work by Szulanski, who distinguished stickiness across stages.

While three processes are distinguished, the emphasis here is on the first two processes – *information transmission* and *knowledge creation* – with *contributions to organisational capacity development* being considered as a complementary process. Therefore, a placement will be considered to have *high capacity development* if it shows success in information transmission and knowledge creation, which may be accompanied by success in contributions to organisational capacity development. Along the same lines, placements will be referred to as having *medium capacity development* if they show success in information transmission, which may be accompanied by success in contributions to organisational capacity development. Placements with *low capacity development* are those without success in the three

processes or with success only in contributions to capacity development. In this way, this thesis furthers Kuschminder et al.'s (2014) approach of 'high transfer'.

The enablers and inhibitors of knowledge transfer and capacity development will be examined at three levels:

1. The *individual level*, including the diaspora members' and host-institution staff's characteristics;
2. The *group level* – that is, knowledge transfer methods and knowledge features and the relationship and interaction between diaspora members and host-institution staff; and
3. The *contextual level*, encompassing the return modality and project characteristics, host institutions and the countries of return.

Thus, the added value of this thesis is that it proposes a conceptual framework that integrates factors that have been discussed across different strands of the literature into one single framework, allowing us to examine this broad set of factors for the case of VKTs and identifying the role of these factors as well as any additional factors at play.

The image features a minimalist, abstract design. On the left side, there is a vertical stack of overlapping geometric shapes: a dark grey semi-circle at the top, a light grey semi-circle below it, a solid black horizontal bar, another light grey semi-circle, and a dark grey semi-circle at the bottom. A light grey circle is positioned to the right of the black bar, partially overlapping the light grey semi-circle below it. The background is a light grey gradient. On the right side, a large, bold, white number '4' is centered vertically.

4

4 METHODOLOGY AND CASE STUDY

4.1 Introduction

This thesis uses data from the ‘Connecting Diaspora for Development’ (CD4D) Project in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland. A qualitative approach was used and data were collected through interviews with diaspora members participating in the project and host-institution staff as well as stakeholders. These data were complemented with data from pre- and post-assignment questionnaires with diaspora members as well as project data from IOM. For data analysis, a mixed approach was used. The first part of this chapter provides details on the research design, the different types of data collected, the methods used, the limitations, the ethical considerations and the positionality. The second part of this chapter provides an overview of the methods of analysis used. The third part gives insights into the case study, providing an overview of the Ethiopian, Sierra Leonean and Somali(lander) diaspora, how they emerged and their main characteristics, especially diaspora members living in the Netherlands, as well as existing diaspora engagement.

4.2 Data

4.2.1 Research design

The data used for this thesis were collected as part of the evaluation of the first phase of CD4D for which the UNU-MERIT/Maastricht University was contracted from 2016 to 2019. The data were collected with diaspora members participating in the project, host-institution staff as well as stakeholders. Stakeholders were representatives of national institutions responsible for diaspora affairs, international organisations and non-governmental organisations working with diasporas directly or indirectly. An overview of my study participants is provided in Chapter 5.

The limitations of the data collected as part of the CD4D evaluation affected the research design of this thesis. The initial research design entailed a mixed-methods approach, using interviews and surveys. A qualitative approach was finally chosen, as the data collected through the surveys did not allow for a mixed-methods approach. At the same time, the interviews yielded in-depth insights, which is the reason why this approach was expanded as soon as it became clear that the interviews yielded better-quality data than the surveys.

Interviews with diaspora members mostly took place in the Netherlands, after they had completed one or multiple assignments. A few diaspora-member interviews also took place during the third round of fieldwork, as diaspora members were still in the country of return. Interviews with host-institution staff were conducted during three rounds of fieldwork in the countries of return. Baseline fieldwork, which served to identify the host institution's motivations and expectations, was completed between November 2016 and March 2017. Two rounds of interviews on the experience of host institutions with the return visits were then conducted in 2018 and 2019 (see FWII and FWIII in Table 8). Stakeholder interviews were included during the third round of fieldwork. A total of 278 interviews were conducted.

Table 8. Overview of total interviews, by country

| Country | Host-institution staff | | | Diaspora members | Stakeholders | Total |
|--------------|------------------------|-------|--------|------------------|--------------|-------|
| | FW I | FW II | FW III | | | |
| Ethiopia | 26 | 8 | 21 | 9 | 6 | 69 |
| Sierra Leone | 32 | 31 | 31 | 9 | 9 | 112 |
| Somaliland | 24 | 15 | 25 | 26 | 6 | 96 |
| Total | 82 | 54 | 77 | 44 ⁴² | 21 | 278 |

Source: Own elaboration.

Note: FW = fieldwork.

In addition to the interviews, diaspora members were sent a baseline questionnaire before the start of their first assignment, a post-assignment survey after the end of each assignment and a one-year survey 12 months after their last CD4D assignment.⁴³ The post-assignment questionnaire had a response rate of approximately 50 per cent, which constitutes an important limitation. Nonetheless, while the response rates for the participant post-assignment survey were low, data collected through the questionnaire have been used to complement the data from the diaspora-member interviews. The participant baseline survey was used in addition to the diaspora-member interviews as socio-demographic data on diaspora members were collected through the survey.

While data for the evaluation were collected in all project countries of the first phase (Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Ghana, Iraq, Sierra Leone and Somalia), Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland were chosen for a case study as the data were the most complete and reliable, allowing for data triangulation. As Ghana was phased out as a CD4D target country in 2017, only two rounds of data collection were conducted there. In contrast, Iraq was only added as a CD4D target country in 2019 for a duration of six months. Therefore, only one round of fieldwork was conducted. Data collection in Afghanistan was affected by the country's deteriorating security situation. While I was able to conduct the baseline interviews in Afghanistan at the host institutions, I conducted all interviews at the IOM compound during the second round of fieldwork. This was also the case for most of the interviews during the third round of fieldwork, where respondents were asked to come to the IOM compound; I also only visited each host institution for one interview with the most senior person. While this approach was necessary for security reasons, it limited the number of respondents, as going to the IOM compound required additional time and effort by the respondents. No fieldwork was conducted in the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) as it was decided at the start of the evaluation that this would involve too high risks and costs. By contrast, in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland, data could be collected through three rounds of fieldwork, allowing follow-ups with host-institution staff over the course of the project, enabling detailed insights into the processes of information transmission, knowledge creation and contributions to organisational capacity development, matching host-institution staff and diaspora-member data and collecting additional data from stakeholders. Around 60 per cent of all assignments took place in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland (diaspora members could conduct more than

⁴² Through data cleaning, five interviews with diaspora members were excluded from the analysis. This was mostly when a diaspora member who had just started their first assignment was interviewed. This happened particularly for diaspora members who conducted assignments in Somaliland and who were interviewed during my third visit. As, during that visit, all diaspora members who were, at that moment, in Hargeisa were invited for an interview, this also included those who had just started their first assignment.

⁴³ As many diaspora members conducted repeated assignments, the one-year survey could only be sent to a very few participants.

one assignment), resulting in about 50 per cent of all participants from the programme being in these three countries.

Table 9 shows how the data were used throughout the different chapters of this thesis. The data from the interviews with diaspora members were used throughout Chapters 4 to 8. The interviews with host-institution staff from the second and third periods of fieldwork were also used in these chapters, apart from Chapter 8. For the analysis of knowledge transfer and capacity development and its enablers (see Chapters 6 and 7), the analysis focused on the diaspora-member and host-institution staff interviews that could be matched, corresponding to a total of 33 placements (29 diaspora members and 74 host-institution staff). Thus, a placement is defined as the entire time span that a diaspora member has spent at one host institution. For Chapter 5, host-institution staff data from the baseline visit as well as from interviews that could not be matched were also used. The same was done for diaspora members (Chapters 5 and 8). Stakeholder interviews were used for the case study section in this chapter (see Section 4.4), the overview of stakeholders in Chapter 5 (see Section 5.2) and for the analysis in Chapter 8. Data from the diaspora-member baseline and post-assignment questionnaires as well as basic data on placements from the IOM were used to complement the data from the interviews.

Table 9. Data per chapter

| | Main data (Interviews) | | | Complementary data | | |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|------------------|--|--|------------------|
| | Stakeholders (N=21) | Host-institution staff | Diaspora members | Diaspora member baseline questionnaire | Diaspora member post-assignment questionnaire (N=25) | IOM project data |
| Chapter 1 (Section 1.3): Case study | No | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| Chapter 4 (Section 4.4): Case study | Yes | No | No | No | No | No |
| Chapter 5: Participant overview | Yes | Yes | Yes (N=35) | Yes | No | No |
| Chapter 6: Perceived knowledge transfer and capacity development | No | Yes | Yes (N=29) | No | Yes | No |
| Chapter 7: Enablers and inhibitors of knowledge transfer and capacity development | Yes | Yes | Yes (N= 29) | No | Yes | No |
| Chapter 8: Strategies to deal with returnee stigmas | Yes | No | Yes (N=35) | No | No | No |

Source: Own elaboration

Note: ¹ Post-assignment questionnaires were completed per assignment.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ N=25 here means that data from at least one post-assignment questionnaire were available for 25 of the 29 diaspora members who were interviewed. Diaspora members were asked to complete a questionnaire after each assignment. Depending on the diaspora member, they completed the questionnaire for all or only for some of their assignments. The duration of an assignment was defined by the IOM. If diaspora members conducted multiple assignments at one host institution, this is referred to as one placement in this thesis as, generally, all consequent assignments were undertaken to continue the first assignment.

4.2.2 Data collection instruments

I conducted all interviews included in this thesis myself. Being the sole data collector allowed me to ensure consistency. In addition, I was able to adjust and rephrase questions after the first few interviews if I saw that certain wording was not working. The final versions of all interview guides and questionnaires can be found in Appendix 1 to 5. Whenever the respondents agreed, I recorded the interview with a voice recorder. In a few cases, respondents preferred not to be recorded, in which case notes were taken. Transcriptions were completed with the help of research assistants. Where necessary, transcriptions were translated into English with the help of native speakers. Research assistants were interns at UNU-MERIT/Maastricht University. Translators were recruited through the online platform Upwork. All research assistants and translators agreed to non-disclosure and data protection. For further considerations regarding this process see Section 4.2.3. The main characteristics of data collection for each instrument will be discussed in detail in the following sections and a participant overview will be provided in Chapter 5.

- *Interviews with diaspora members*

I interviewed diaspora members after they had finished one or multiple assignments. The interviews generally took place in person in a public space in the city in the Netherlands where the diaspora member lived. Where in-person interviews were not possible, the conversation took place via Skype or by phone. A few interviews with diaspora members were also conducted in the assignment countries, as participants were still in the country during the visit of the researcher. No IOM staff member was present during the interviews with diaspora members. The interviews took place on a voluntary basis and not all diaspora members were available. Diaspora members were asked to indicate whether they wanted the interview to be conducted in a language other than English prior to the interview – most wanted to conduct the interview in English. Two diaspora members preferred to speak Somali and one Dutch; an interpreter accompanied the interviewer for these conversations. I designed the semi-structured interview guide prior to the first interview; it further evolved throughout the interview process and the most recent version is included in Appendix 1. The interview guide focused on the following themes: (1) motivation and pre-assignment experiences concerning return visits and knowledge transfer, (2) general assignment information, (3) the institutional environment and institution's work culture, (3) knowledge transfer, (4) change, (5) the participant's personal development and (6) CD4D programme feedback.

A total of 53 diaspora members conducted placements in the three countries (Ethiopia: 11, Sierra Leone: 14, Somaliland: 28). Forty of the 53 diaspora members were interviewed (Ethiopia: 8 respondents, 73 per cent response rate; Sierra Leone: 9 respondents, 64 per cent response rate, Somaliland: 23 respondents, 82 per cent response rate). Five interviews with respondents in Somaliland have been excluded from the analysis due to a lack of full information as they consisted of brief conversations and were not voice-recorded.

- *Interviews with host-institution staff*

Interviews with staff members took place in the assignment countries. I visited Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland three times each for data collection. The first visit served as a baseline visit and data collected during it are used to provide the necessary context (see Chapter 5) as this enabled me to understand the host institution's strengths, challenges, expectations and context for knowledge transfer. The second and third visits shed light on the staff's perceptions

of the diaspora members' contributions to knowledge transfer and capacity development, the interaction with staff and feedback on the CD4D project more generally.

The interviews took place on a voluntary basis and not all potential respondents were available. Local IOM staff coordinated all the meetings in advance of each visit. In Ethiopia and Somaliland, an IOM staff member was present during every interview, acting as a translator whenever necessary. In Sierra Leone, the IOM staff member accompanied me to the host institutions during the first and second phases of fieldwork to facilitate the introduction; as I conducted the interviews in English in Sierra Leone, the IOM staff member was not present.

The interview guides used for the semi-structured institutional interviews were developed before each round of data collection and were developed further throughout the interview process. For the first visit, which served as a baseline, a baseline interview guide was developed (see Appendix 4.1). The interview guide developed for the second visit was designed to capture the knowledge transfer process, knowledge transferred, changes in the host institutions and the main barriers to these processes. As the term 'knowledge transfer' might be abstract and essentially constitutes a learning process from the receiver's perspective, questions were phrased in a way that would make it easier for respondents to talk about knowledge transfer. For instance, for host-institution staff, the questions included: 'Did you learn anything from the diaspora member?'; 'What did you learn from the diaspora member?'; 'How did you learn this?'; 'How does this impact on your work today?'; 'How do you currently apply this in your work?'. All three interview guides are included in Appendix 4.

The interview guide from the second visit in 2018 was used as a basis for those used for the third and final visit in 2019, yet a number of changes were made to it for the final visit. First, separate manager and colleague⁴⁵ interview guides were developed for the third visit. Initially, it was planned to only interview managers, as the perceptions of colleagues were to be covered through colleague surveys, hence the interview guide for the second visit was designed accordingly. Yet, major challenges were experienced with the colleague survey, leading to low response rates. Due to these challenges and the necessity to re-design the questionnaire, the data collected from the survey could not be used for this thesis. At the same time, the interviews conducted during the second visit showed that face-to-face interaction through in-person interviews provided rich insights into the respondents' experiences and seemed to be the preferred way of interaction for most respondents. For this reason, separate manager and colleague interview guides were developed for the third visit. Adjusting the interview questions to the respondent's role – that is, a manager or a colleague – allowed for a more nuanced way of interviewing about each group's experiences. Thus, the questions for managers focused on the overall picture and on what had been reported to them by colleagues working directly with the diaspora member or what they had observed in their managerial role, while the questions for colleagues focused on their personal experiences while working with the diaspora member.

Secondly, before the third visit, I reviewed the interview guide from the second visit and adjusted questions for the third visit based on the experiences during the previous visit. I added a number of questions to cover aspects not covered previously in the interviews, also considering that this was the third and final visit and that most placements had been or were about to be finalised. Table 10 provides an overview of the questions I added to the manager interview guide (compared to the version used during the second visit).

⁴⁵ Managers refers to members of the host-institution leadership who were involved in CD4D, while the term colleagues refers to the staff who directly worked with the diaspora member, i.e. the knowledge receivers.

Table 10. Questions added to the *Manager Interview Guide Year 2*

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Introductory questions | Q1: To start more in general, I would like to know what have been the organisation's biggest changes over the last two years? Q2: What are the current challenges facing your organisation? |
| CD4D, knowledge transfer and change | Q1: From your perspective, was the programme beneficial for your organisation? Why? Why not? Q2: What were the successes of the programme? Q7a: Did the CD4D diaspora experts understand how your organisation works? Q8: Did you notice differences between the expert(s)? Was one more beneficial than others? Why? Q9: Did activities conducted and changes implemented by the CD4D diaspora expert(s) at your organisation meet your expectations? Why? Why not? Did these meet what was outlined initially in the Theory of Change? Q10: Are the changes still in place? Do you plan for them to continue in the future? How do you plan to do so? |
| Interaction diaspora expert–staff | Q5a: Probe: At other organisations, we have seen that staff did not trust the CD4D diaspora experts and was hesitant to work with them/provide them the information needed. This was because the diaspora expert(s) were perceived as a threat and staff thought that they would take away their jobs. Or they generally do not trust diaspora members. Did you experience any of this at your organisation? |
| Socio-demographic questions | |

Source: Own elaboration

I also rephrased the following questions for the manager interview guide (see Table 11). For questions marked with an asterisk (*), rephrasing constituted minor adjustments in the way the question was worded to make them easier for respondents to understand. For the questions without an asterisk, the main objective of the rephrasing was to glean information not obtained during the interviews as part of the second visit.

Table 11. Questions rephrased for the *Manager Interview Guide Year 2*

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| CD4D, knowledge transfer and change | Q3*: What sector-specific skills did the CD4D-Participant transfer to staff at your institution (e.g. new surgical technique, a new management practice, etc.)? | Q3: What skills or knowledge did the CD4D diaspora experts transfer to staff at your organisation? |
| | Q4*: What do you think are the three greatest changes in your organisation over the past year? [...] What do you think are the three biggest impacts [...] | Q5: Have there been any changes [...]? How have the CD4D diaspora experts contributed [...]? Q6: What do you think are the three biggest impacts [...]? [...] How did the experts work differently? [...] |
| | Q3 (Interaction): How did you perceive the participant's expertise with regards to sector-specific skills needed at your institution? | Q7: (Did the CD4D diaspora experts have the required expertise?) Probe: At other organisations, staff reported that the diaspora expert did not have the required expertise. Did you experience any of this at your organisation? |
| Interaction staff– | Q1*: How did you generally experience the interaction between the CD4D- | Q1: What was reported to you about the interaction between CD4D diaspora |

| | | |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| diaspora expert | participant(s) and staff at your institution? | expert(s) and staff from your institution? |
| | Q1b*: Did your staff trust the CD4D-participant(s)? | Q5: Do you think staff at your organisation trusted the CD4D diaspora experts? |
| | From Q1b: Did this vary with different participants? | To Q6 to Q9: Did all CD4D diaspora experts work with the same staff members? Was there coordination[...]? Do you think it was beneficial for your organisation to have multiple CD4D diaspora experts? [...]? |
| CD4D-Programme as a whole | <p>Q1: How satisfied are you regarding the knowledge transferred and activities conducted?</p> <p>Q2: In how far did these activities and achievements match your expectations (expressed in ToR)?</p> <p>Q3: In how far has/have the activities conducted by CD4D-Participants met the institutional needs?</p> <p>Q4: In how far does the CD4D-Programme as a whole up until now fulfil your expectations? Why? Why not? With regards to the time it took to fill the placement? With regards to the number of participants so far?</p> | <p>To Q1–3; Q1: How satisfied are you with the CD4D-Programme as a whole?</p> <p>Q2: From your perspective, was the participation [...] beneficial [...]?</p> <p>Q3: [...] challenges with regards to the implementation of the CD4D programme?</p> |

Source: Own elaboration

I also took out a number of questions. Table 12 overviews the questions from the interview guide from the second visit that were not included in the manager interview guide for the third visit. Three questions were taken out completely and are not included in the manager nor the colleague interview guide since they did not seem relevant for the final visit. These questions are marked here with an asterisk (*). The remaining questions listed in Table 12 were not included in the manager interview guide but were included in their original format or a reformulated version in the colleague interview guide. This was done since these questions seemed more relevant to ask the staff who had directly worked with the diaspora member.

Table 12. Questions from Year 1 not included in *Manager Interview Guide Year 2*

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Introductory questions | <p>Q1: How many assignments were completed at your institution? In which departments were the assignments completed?</p> <p>Q2: What were the participant(s)' main roles and tasks? What types of activities did the CD4D Participant(s) conduct at your institution? How many people did the CD4D-Participant work with on a regular basis? Who were these people? What are their roles? Were you in contact with the CD4D-Participant(s) before the start of the assignment? Did you directly work with (one of) the CD4D-Participant(s), e.g. as supervisor?</p> |
| Knowledge Transfer | Q5*: Were there any changes in the access that staff in your institution has to mentoring/coaching, training or workshops or sector-specific events since last year? |

| | |
|---|--|
| Interaction | <p>Q1c: How did you experience the communication between the CD4D-Participant(s) and staff? (working language, sector-specific language/terminology)</p> <p>Q1d: Did you notice any cultural differences?</p> <p>Q1e: Are you still in contact with the CD4D-Participant?/Do you know if staff members are still in contact with the CD4D-Participant?</p> <p>Q2: How did you perceive the participants' motivation to transfer knowledge and to contribute to change at your institution?</p> |
| CD4D Programme Feedback | Q4:* What are you expectations for the coming year with regards to the CD4D-Programme? |
| Foreigners & returnees in the institution | Q1*: To wrap up, I would like to ask you some questions about the number of people working in your organisation, foreigners and returnees working at your institution [...]. |

Source: Own elaboration

Table 13 overviews the questions that were added to the colleague interview guide.

Table 13. Questions added to the *Colleague Interview Guide Year 2*

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Introductory questions | Q1: To start, could you tell me a bit about your current role here in this organisation? |
| CD4D, knowledge transfer and change | Q2: Do you currently apply what you learnt from the CD4D diaspora expert in your work? How does this impact your work today? [...] |
| Interaction staff–diaspora expert | <p>Q2: Would you say that working with the diaspora expert was beneficial for you? [...]</p> <p>Q6: Based on your experience working with the CD4D diaspora expert(s), do you have any suggestions for improvement of the CD4D-Programme?</p> <p>Q7: Based on your experience working with the CD4D diaspora expert(s), would you again want to work with a diaspora expert if an opportunity arose in the future?</p> |

Socio-demographic questions

Source: Own elaboration

As Table 14 shows, many questions were rephrased for the colleague interview guide, since it seemed important that they matched the role of the respondent as a colleague.

Table 14. Questions rephrased for the *Colleague Interview Guide Year 2*

| | | |
|------------------------|--|--|
| Introductory questions | <p>Q1: How many assignments were completed at your institution? In which departments were the assignments completed?</p> <p>Q2: What were the participant(s)' main role and tasks? What types of activities did the CD4D Participant(s) conduct at your institution? How many people did the CD4D-Participant work with on a regular basis? Who were these people? What are their roles? Were you in contact</p> | <p>Q2: Your organisation has received "X" CD4D diaspora experts who conducted "X" assignments. Could you tell me a bit about the role of the CD4D diaspora expert(s) here at your organisation?</p> <p>Q3: Who of the CD4D diaspora expert(s) did you work with? Q4: How did you work together with (Mr./Ms. X)?</p> |
|------------------------|--|--|

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| | with the CD4D-Participant(s) before the start of the assignment? Did you directly work with (one of) the CD4D-Participant(s), e.g. as supervisor? | |
| Knowledge transfer | <p>Q3: What sector-specific skills did the CD4D-Participant transfer to staff at your institution (e.g. new surgical technique, a new management practice, etc.)?</p> <p>Q3a: How did the CD4D-Participant transfer these skills/knowledge? (Try to get examples on all of these) [...]</p> | <p>Q1: Did you learn something from working with (Mr./Ms. X)?</p> <p>Q1a: What did you learn from working with (Mr./Ms. X)? [...]</p> <p>Q1b: Why did you learn this?</p> <p>Q1c: How did you learn this? [...]</p> |
| Interaction staff–diaspora expert | Q1: How did you generally experience the interaction between the CD4D-Participant(s) and staff at your institution? | Q1: How did you experience working with (Mr./Ms. X)? (Probe for examples) |
| | Q1a: How would you generally describe the relationship between the CD4D-Participant(s) and the staff? Can you give some examples? | <p>Q1a: How close do you feel your working relationship was with the diaspora expert?</p> <p>Q1b: How comfortable did you feel in sharing ideas with the diaspora expert?</p> |
| | Q1a: Did you hear of any challenges that staff had when working with the CD4D-Participant? Did this vary with different participants? | Q3: Did you experience any challenges in working with the diaspora expert? |
| | Q1b: Did your staff trust the CD4D-Participant(s)? Did this vary with different participants? | Q3a: At other organisations, we have seen that staff did not trust the CD4D diaspora experts and was hesitant to work with them/provide them the information needed. This was because the diaspora expert(s) were perceived as a threat and staff thought that they would take away their jobs. Or they generally do not trust diaspora members. Did you experience any of this at your organisation? |
| | Q1c: How did you experience the communication between the CD4D-Participant(s) and staff? (working language, sector-specific language/terminology) | Q2c: At other organisations, we have seen that the diaspora experts were fluent in the local language(s). Communication was therefore very smooth and easy. Was this also the case for you when you were working with the CD4D diaspora expert(s)? Probe for examples |
| | Q1d: Did you notice any cultural differences? | Q2b: At other organisations, staff reported that the diaspora expert did not respect local culture/way of life |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| | | or local knowledge and expertise. Did you experience any of this at your organisation? |
| | Q1e: Are you still in contact with the CD4D-Participant?/Do you know if staff members are still in contact with the CD4D-Participant? | Q5: Are you currently still in contact with the CD4D diaspora experts? a. What do you discuss? b. Are you still working on a joint project? c. Has he/she come back to visit? |
| | Q1 (CD4D Programme Feedback): How satisfied are you regarding the knowledge transferred and activities conducted? Q2 (CD4D Programme Feedback): In how far did these activities and achievements match your expectations (expressed in ToR)? | Q1d: Overall, how satisfied are you with how working with the CD4D diaspora expert(s) went? Did this meet your expectations? Why? Why not? |

Source: Own elaboration

Finally, a number of questions were taken out (see Table 15).

Table 15. Questions from Year 1 not included in *Manager Interview Guide Year 2*

| | |
|---|---|
| Knowledge Transfer | Q4: What do you think are the three greatest changes in your organisation over the past year? o How have the CD4D-Participants contributed to these changes? What do you think are the three biggest impacts participant X had on your organisation? Q5: Where there any changes in the access that staff in your institution has to mentoring/coaching, training or workshops or sector-specific events since last year? |
| Interaction | Q2: How did you perceive the participants' motivation to transfer knowledge and to contribute to change at your institution? |
| CD4D Programme Feedback | Q3: In how far has/have the activities conducted by CD4D-Participants met the institutional needs? Q4: In how far does the CD4D-Programme as a whole up until now fulfil your expectations? a. Why? Why not? b. With regards to the time it took to fill the placement? c. With regards to the number of participants so far? Q5: What are your expectations for the coming year with regards to the CD4D-Programme? |
| Foreigners & returnees in the institution | Q1: To wrap up, I would like to ask you some questions about the number of people working in your organisation and foreigners and returnees working at your institution. |

Source: Own elaboration

- *Stakeholder interviews*

Finally, I carried out stakeholder conversations with representatives at national institutions responsible for diaspora affairs, international organisations and non-governmental organisations working with diasporas directly or indirectly. These interviews provided an alternative information source and allowed me to gain insight into diaspora engagement – and into knowledge transfer in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland more generally – and to understand the structural environment for diaspora engagement and policies.

These stakeholder interviews were less structured than the interviews with diaspora members and host-institution staff. I frequently adjusted questions based on the stakeholder's role, as I interviewed experts at organisations that work directly with diaspora members (such as the national diaspora agencies) as well as others who worked with diaspora members more indirectly. I identified organisations through a desk review. I then asked the local IOM offices in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland for recommendations. The IOM offices played a crucial role in establishing contact with many of the experts I interviewed. I also applied snowball sampling, which yielded additional contacts. In Ethiopia and Sierra Leone, nine stakeholder conversations took place; in Somaliland, six stakeholders were interviewed. The interview guide can be found in Appendix 5.

- *Diaspora member pre-assignment questionnaire*

All diaspora members participating in CD4D were asked to complete a pre-assignment questionnaire prior to their first assignment. The online questionnaire was sent to diaspora members via email and was administered by me. The pre-assignment questionnaire was structured in seven sections: (1) Introductory questions, (2) Demographic information, (3) CD4D assignment information, (4) Engagement, (5) Knowledge transfer behaviours, (6) New ideas, skills and processes and (7) Concluding questions. The complete questionnaire can be found in Appendix 2. The survey contained questions about individual attributes (e.g., gender, country of birth, citizenship, country of residence, the share of diaspora member's lifetime spent in the Netherlands or other European country and in the country of origin, employment status and education). In addition, the questionnaire served to collect information on aspects related to integration and transnationalism, such as the location in which the diaspora member planned to live after the return visit and to where they planned to retire, together with the diaspora member's frequency of communication with the closest family member or friend in the country of origin.

- *Diaspora member post-assignment questionnaire*

In addition to the pre-assignment questionnaire, I sent a post-assignment questionnaire to all diaspora members participating in CD4D after the end of every assignment. The questionnaire was structured in five sections: (1) CD4D assignment information, (2) Motivation and future plans, (3) Knowledge transfer methods and barriers and activities performed, (4) Sector specific-skills and organisational support for KT and (5) Concluding questions. The questionnaire can be found in Appendix 3.

4.2.3 *Ethical considerations, methodological limitations and positionality*

As described above, the interviews took place on a voluntary basis and not all potential respondents were available. Diaspora members on return visits as well as host-institution staff from more-successful placements might be more willing to participate in an interview than

respondents for less-successful ones, which might skew the results towards the former. In addition, for the analysis of knowledge transfer and capacity development during 33 placements, diaspora member data for whom no host-institution staff data were available had to be excluded and *vice versa*. While these steps were necessary for data triangulation, they may further skew the results towards more successful placements. Furthermore, the qualitative approach for this study was chosen as it allowed me to obtain in-depth information. At the same time, the qualitative approach did not allow for the establishment of causal relationships for enablers and inhibitors of knowledge transfer and capacity development. The results were triangulated by comparing and contrasting diaspora member and staff perspectives.

For the implementation of this research, translations and the support of the local IOM offices were essential. Local IOM staff coordinated all meetings in advance of each fieldwork visit. Thus, they generally informed one staff member – who acted as the ‘institutional focal point’ for CD4D – about the visit who, in turn, informed their co-workers. IOM also provided general information about the purpose of my visit. In Ethiopia and Somaliland, a local IOM staff member accompanied me to all interviews with host-institution staff and served as a translator. In Sierra Leone, a local staff member accompanied me to each institution, facilitating the introduction but not being present during the interviews. While, sometimes, the IOM staff member only translated a few phrases for clarification, some conversations took place entirely with an IOM staff member acting as interpreter. This was particularly the case in Somaliland. For these interviews, a translator who transcribed and translated the parts spoken in Somali into English was then hired.

Working in a non-English-speaking context and with interpreters and translators may have several ethical and methodological implications (Gawlewicz, 2020; Temple & Young, 2004; Wong & Poon, 2010). Working with an interpreter may affect the research participant, the communication process and the translation (Gawlewicz, 2020). While IOM staff members are not professional interpreters, they are native speakers of the local languages and work in both the native language and English on a daily basis. In addition, they are familiar with the vocabulary in the field of migration and development. Their cultural competence, working both in their country's context and in an international environment, allowed them to flag up and adequately translate certain cultural connotations and metaphors.

In the case of this research, IOM staff acting as interpreters played a ‘double’ role as, while they acted as interpreters, they continued to represent the organisation. While the presence of local IOM staff members was essential for communication, as only a few respondents in Ethiopia and Somaliland spoke English, this potentially introduced a bias, as interviewees may speak less openly when a staff member of the implementing organisation is present. Yet, from what I observed, the staff also voiced critical opinions in the presence of IOM staff. However, having an IOM representative present changed the dynamics of the conversation insofar as the IOM staff members had an in-depth understanding of the interventions before the interview and were able to make inferences that I was not able to make. This meant that they sometimes made comments that provided additional detail. For this reason, we also agreed that they would not ask questions on their own initiative, in order to avoid asking leading questions unintentionally. In practice, as the IOM staff members gained familiarity with the interview questions over time, they would sometimes directly ask a follow-up question on their own initiative; while I could not prevent this from happening, I generally intervened by asking them to translate for me what they had asked the respondent. This way I was able to see whether the questions they had asked and the way they had asked them were in line with the research. Where necessary, I asked them to rephrase or re-ask a question.

The translation of interviews may also be subject to a number of challenges and limitations (Gawlewicz, 2020; Temple & Young, 2004; Wong & Poon, 2010). As translators were hired *ad-hoc*, they could not be trained or consulted in a specific way although they

received detailed written instructions from me before they were hired. As the interviews had been conducted with an interpreter, the parts spoken in the native language and those spoken in English were also transcribed before both were combined into the transcript. This enabled me to compare the translation of the interpreter and the translation of the translator.

All respondents provided verbal consent, which was recorded at the beginning of the interview. The decision for respondents to provide just verbal consent was taken not only because my respondents do not constitute a vulnerable group but also in order not to add additional administrative burden on them. Even though IOM staff members had informed them about the purpose of the research – in many cases with a formal letter by UNU-MERIT/Maastricht University – I was careful to explain the purpose of the study again before each interview, informing respondents again that participation in the interview was on a purely voluntary basis.

Finally, pseudonyms have been used throughout the thesis to protect the anonymity of the respondents. I chose pseudonyms based on lists of common names from each country of origin. Names were chosen at random and any meanings associated with the names are not intentional.

In qualitative research, the researcher's positionality affects the research design, data collection in the field and interpretation of the findings. As a white female European of German nationality, born and raised in Germany, my position was that of an outsider throughout the research process – and specifically during data collection. This was the case for all three groups of respondents: stakeholders, host institutions, host-institution staff in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland and the diaspora members on return visits from the Netherlands to the three countries. Even though I considered myself to be a migrant in the Netherlands at the time of this study, my experience as a European student migrant from a neighbouring country who always considered her stay to be temporary while pursuing her Master's and PhD, was very different from the diaspora members I interviewed for this study in terms of, *inter alia*, their countries of origin, reasons for migration, stay in the Netherlands and relationship to their country of origin. My visits to Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, and Somaliland were the first in these countries, meaning that my repeat visits allowed me to gain some familiarity with them and influenced the way I interpreted the findings.

While I generally presented myself in my role as a researcher, I noticed that my personal characteristics did play a role in different ways during data collection. Both host-institution staff, as well as diaspora members, would generally assume that I was Dutch but would occasionally pick up on my nationality. For diaspora members, I had the impression that being a woman allowed me to explore some of the gender-specific experiences faced by female diaspora members, specifically experiences of gendered returnee stigma. I also noticed during the interviews where no IOM staff member was directly present that the role of UNU-MERIT/Maastricht University with regards to CD4D was sometimes not clear to respondents, some of whom, at the host institutions, seemed to think that I also worked for IOM when I met with them. In addition to explaining my role and the role of UNU-MERIT/Maastricht University at the beginning of each interview, I made sure to explain my role again during the interview in case the respondent made references that suggested that they thought I worked for the implementing organisation.

4.3 Data analysis

After the transcription of the interviews with the help of research assistants, I coded them all using the qualitative analysis software NVivo.

4.3.1 *Thematic analysis*

Data analysis for this thesis generally followed the principles of thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 79) defined this as a ‘method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data’. Thematic analysis should be understood as an iterative process consisting of different phases. Braun and Clarke (2006) distinguished six phases: (1) Familiarising oneself with one’s data, (2) Generating initial codes, (3) Searching for themes, (4) Reviewing themes, (5) Defining and naming themes and (6) Producing the report. This approach was followed for this thesis. Both inductive and deductive approaches may be used for thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Following an inductive approach, themes are driven by the data; by contrast, a pre-existing coding frame based on existing theory is used for deductive coding (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) combined deductive and inductive coding for a hybrid or mixed approach, which is a strategy that I also used in this thesis. This strategy was applied as the deductive coding allowed the examination of themes based on the literature and the inductive codes enabled the exploration of emerging sub-themes within these themes, guided by the data.

Table 16 provides a summary of the approaches to coding for each chapter, showing the dominance of a mixed approach. Only for the analysis of returnee stigma and strategies (see Chapter 8) was an inductive approach used. For perceived knowledge transfer and capacity development, the methodology (presented in the following section) was used for analysis. The first stage of coding for this was conducted in NVivo. The data were then transferred to Microsoft Excel where each observation was assigned a value for each of the three dimensions. This process is further elaborated on in the next section. For the analysis of enablers and inhibitors (see Chapter 7), during the first stage, the data were coded for enablers and inhibitors using a deductive approach. This meant that the data were grouped into themes based on the literature review. Inductive coding was then used to identify further factors. Within each theme, inductive coding was used to identify whether a certain factor was observed during the placement and which role it played. The codes were then grouped according to the outcome that the placements they corresponded to had achieved (high, medium, low). To identify enablers and inhibitors of knowledge transfer and capacity development, placements were compared across levels of capacity development.

Table 16. Method of data analysis by chapter

| | First stage | | Second stage | |
|-----------|--|---|---|---|
| | Method | Codes | Method | Codes |
| Chapter 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deductive coding of respondent characteristic • Deductive coding for altruistic and non-altruistic motivations • Inductive coding for host institution context | e.g. Demographics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age • Nationality • Country where respondent grew up • International experience • Level of education e.g. Motivations for visits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Altruistic • Non-altruistic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further deductive coding • Inductive coding for additional codes | e.g. Altruistic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional attachment • Fulfil perceived obligations towards country of origin • Awareness for necessity • Expand previous engagement in or with country of origin |
| Chapter 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deductive coding for KT and contributions to changes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occurrence of KT • How activity led to KT • Knowledge transferred and gained • Occurrence of changes • Type of contribution or change | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value assignment using the methodology | N/A |
| Chapter 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deductive coding for enablers and inhibitors | e.g. Sender characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • motivation to share • aspects related to absorptive capacity • age • gender | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grouping of codes according to the outcome of placements (unsuccessful, medium success, successful) • Inductive coding within each theme and success level plus for additional codes | e.g. Information behaviour and learning intent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HI staff willing to learn from DE • Resistance or lack of motivation • Not mentioned e.g. Relevance |
| Chapter 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inductive coding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common returnee stigma in countries of origin • DM's awareness of stigma • DM's actual experiences • DM's strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inductive coding | e.g. counteractive strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stigma at HI & Adapt • Stigma at HI & Address • General stigma & Adapt • General stigma & address |

Source: Own elaboration.

Note: DM stands for diaspora member, HI for Host Institution, KT for knowledge transfer, N/A for Not Applicable.

4.3.2 Operationalisation of knowledge transfer and capacity development

As discussed in Chapter 3, three processes are examined: Information transmission (IT), knowledge creation (KC) and contributions to organisational capacity development (COCD).

Measurement of constructs

Approaches to measuring capacity development commonly include logical framework analysis ('logframe'), logic model and results frameworks (McEvoy et al., 2016). Approaches to measuring knowledge transfer centre around the knowledge sender and the knowledge receiver. One approach is to measure changes in the receiver's knowledge by asking them to self-report changes in their knowledge (Argote & Ingram, 2000). Challenges with this approach arise specifically with tacit knowledge, which is more difficult to articulate and might not be measured in this way (Argote & Ingram, 2000; Easterby-Smith et al., 2008). In addition, in the case of organisational knowledge, this method of measurement might not be able to capture the knowledge of an organisation sufficiently due to its focus on the individual (Argote & Ingram, 2000). Another approach is to measure 'changes in performance' – see Argote & Ingram (2000, pp. 151–152), who argue that '[p]erformance-based measurement approaches are better suited to capture tacit knowledge than approaches that attempt to measure the knowledge more directly'. However, the challenge is to control for factors, other than knowledge transfer, which might influence performance (Argote & Ingram, 2000; Easterby-Smith et al., 2008).

A third way to estimate knowledge transfer is to measure the behaviours that knowledge senders self-report. Kuschminder et al. (2014) examined the contributions and barriers to knowledge transfer as part of the 'Migration for Development' programme. While the authors also interviewed their colleagues and supervisors, knowledge transfer was mainly analysed through returning experts' self-reported knowledge transfer based on a questionnaire. Individuals were identified 'as "high-transfer" if they answered "very often" in four or more categories of knowledge transfer' (Kuschminder et al., 2014, p. 16). While most studies focus on either the sender or the receiver perspective, a few studies have combined the two. For instance, Szulanski (1996, p. 32) collected data by sending survey questionnaires to both the knowledge sender and the knowledge receiver, as well as to a third party 'to obtain a balanced perspective'. The same method was applied by Szulanski (2000) and Szulanski et al. (2016). As Szulanski et al. (2016) pointed out, including the different perspectives is an attempt to avoid common method bias. More recent examples of studies which collected data from senders and receivers are those by Kuschminder (2014a) and Kuschminder et al. (2014). Kuschminder (2014a) conducted interviews with programme participants, host institutions, the colleagues of participants and key stakeholders. In a similar way, Kuschminder et al. (2014) collected data through a survey and interviews with knowledge senders, as well as interviews with colleagues and supervisors. Despite these authors collecting data from senders and receivers, it is unclear how these two studies methodologically combined the different perspectives of senders and receivers to measure knowledge transfer success.

Acknowledging the limitations of existing approaches to measuring knowledge transfer, I apply a mixed approach, measuring both self-reported changes in knowledge and in behaviours. Therefore, two dimensions were defined for each of the processes COCD, IT and KC (see Table 17). First, the 'perceived behaviours' dimension, which refers to the extent of the efforts which the diaspora member had made to COCD, IT or KC, according to the respondents. Thus, this dimension focuses on reported behaviours as an indication of the *intention* to achieve a certain result rather than the result itself. Second is the 'perceived results' dimension, which refers to the direct results of the activity.

In addition, this study not only relies on the self-reports of the knowledge senders – here the diaspora members – but also combines sender and receiver perspectives. Since the data were collected through qualitative interviews, all three processes measured in this chapter constitute individual perceptions. This approach was previously applied by Kuschminder (2014a). COCD and IT are measured from the sender and receiver perspectives, while KC is measured from the receiver perspective only, as knowledge senders have little-to-no insight into this stage of the process. While combining the perspectives of senders and receivers as key actors seems important from a theoretical perspective, matching individual perceptions per placement also serves as a method of data triangulation. Diaspora members, in particular, might have an incentive to over-report their contributions. They may either hope to receive another assignment within the programme or want to see their time spent as meaningful and want others to value their skills and contributions. Even though it is less likely, host-institution staff might also have the incentive to over-report contributions in the hope that their institution will be selected for future interventions. One-sided over-reporting can be addressed by combining perspectives.

The methodology to measure the three processes was drawn up based on the literature and further refined based on the data. To quantify the qualitative interview data, I assigned a numerical value to each qualitative observation in a way similar to the methods of calibration used to transform data into fuzzy sets. Following this approach seems appropriate, as the fuzzy set methodology has been used, in particular, to address degree-vagueness (Verkuilen, 2005), an issue that can also be observed for knowledge transfer and capacity development. A fuzzy set is characterised by qualitative boundaries or poles which define the endpoints of the set and ‘continuous variation between these two poles’ (Verkuilen, 2005, p. 466). The membership values indicate the degree of membership in a set. Membership in a fuzzy set conventionally ranges between 0 [fully out] and 1 [fully in], where 0 indicates no membership and 1 indicates full membership (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012; Verkuilen, 2005; Verkuilen et al., 2020).

This chapter uses a four-value fuzzy set (i.e. using the values: [0] = ‘fully out’, [0.33] = ‘more out than in’, [0.67] = ‘more in than out’ and [1] = ‘fully in’), as suggested by Basurto and Speer (2012) and Ragin (2008). Basurto and Speer (2012), as well as Legewie (2017), have offered a step-by-step approach to calibrating qualitative data as fuzzy sets. Their approaches are in line with what scholars have highlighted as important aspects of the process of membership assignment, such as a precise definition of concepts, transparency and the use of assignment rules (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012; Verkuilen, 2005; Verkuilen et al., 2020). The approach in this chapter draws on their guidance. The method has been chosen as it has been developed specifically for the calibration of qualitative data.

Drawing on Basurto and Speer (2012) and Legewie (2017), the criteria were defined for assigning the values (0, 0.33, 0.67, 1) for each process (see Table 17). Defining these qualitative criteria ensured that values were assigned in a consistent manner. A value of ‘1’ was assigned in the following contexts:

- to the first dimension of COCD, *perceived behaviours*, when respondents reported that they or the diaspora member engaged in activities to improve internal structures, processes, policies or resources;
- to the dimension *perceived results of COCD* when the respondent reported that a new internal structure, procedure, process, policy or resource was introduced/implemented by the diaspora member;
- for *perceived behaviours of IT* when the respondent reported that s/he and/or the diaspora member engaged in activities for knowledge transfer to staff and the respondent described how this took place by mentioning explicit or tacit knowledge transfer methods;

- for *perceived results of IT* when the respondent reported that staff gained new information or insights and described what this information was;
- for *perceived behaviours of KC* when the respondent reported that staff applied knowledge in their work and how they did so; and
- for *perceived results of KC* when the respondent reported that the new knowledge had increased the knowledge receivers' ability to perform their tasks.

Across all processes and dimensions, the value '1' constituted the ideal scenario, with the behaviour or results fully being perceived, while the value of '0' was assigned for complete absence of the behaviour or result. The values of '0.67' and '0.33' constitute intermediate outcomes. The value '0.67' was generally assigned when behaviours or results were clearly reported, yet were in some way restricted. The value '0.33' was assigned when a behaviour or result was reported to have occurred, yet no detail on how they occurred was provided. Interpreting this ambiguity as low behaviour or results and assigning the value of '0.33' underlines the assumption that, if a certain behaviour or result occurred, respondents would provide details of how they occurred. If they did not or were not able to, it is unclear to what extent the behaviour or result really did occur. Since both diaspora members and host-institution staff may have an incentive to over-report behaviours and results, this avoids the overinterpretation of unclear behaviours or results.

Table 17. Operationalisation of COCD, IT and KC

| | 0 <i>[Fully out]</i> | 0.33 <i>[More out than in]</i> | 0.67 <i>[More in than out]</i> | 1 <i>[Fully in]</i> |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| | Value | | | |
| Contributions to organisational capacity development (COCD) | | | | |
| Perceived behaviours | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DM did not engage in any activities to improve internal structures, processes, policies or resources or does not mention any. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DM engaged in a few activities to improve internal structures, processes, policies or resources; not clear how. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DM engaged in some activities to improve internal structures, processes, policies or resources. Activities were one-off or <i>ad-hoc</i>; the focus was on other activities in which they/the diaspora member engaged. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DM engaged in activities to improve internal structures, processes, policies or resources. |
| Perceived results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DM did not contribute to the improvement of internal structures, processes, policies or resources or does not mention any contributions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DM made some contributions to the improvement of internal structures, processes, policies or resources; not clear what or unfinished draft stage. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DM finished a draft of a new internal structure, policy procedure, process, policy or resource. Implementation has not started or is limited. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new internal structure, procedure, process, policy or resource was introduced/ implemented by the diaspora member. Respondent uses words such as <i>really changed</i>, <i>contributed greatly</i>, <i>big change</i>. |
| Information transmission (IT) | | | | |
| Perceived behaviours | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DM did not engage in any activities for knowledge transfer to staff or does not mention any. Respondent uses words such as <i>no time</i>, <i>diaspora member/I engaged in /other activities</i>, e.g. <i>teaching students/</i>. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DM engaged in a few activities for knowledge transfer to staff; not clear how. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DM engaged in some activities for knowledge transfer to staff. Respondent describes how knowledge transfer took place by mentioning explicit or tacit knowledge transfer methods. Activities were one-off or <i>ad-hoc</i>; the focus was on other activities in which they/diaspora member engaged. Respondent uses words such as <i>from time to time</i>, <i>some</i>. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DM engaged in activities for knowledge transfer to staff. Respondent describes how knowledge transfer took place by mentioning explicit or tacit knowledge transfer methods. |

| Knowledge creation (KC) | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Perceived results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No effect on the knowledge receivers' ability to perform their tasks. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some effect on knowledge receivers' ability to perform their tasks; not clear how. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited effect on knowledge receivers' ability to perform their tasks. |
| Perceived behaviours | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge is not being applied or does not mention that knowledge is being applied. • Or there are too many constraints mentioned by the respondent that inhibit knowledge application for the most part [mentions inhibitors]. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some knowledge is being applied, yet it is not clear how. • Or there are too many constraints mentioned by the respondent that inhibit knowledge application for the most part [mentions inhibitors]. | <p>Knowledge receiver applies knowledge to some extent; Knowledge receiver has made attempts to apply knowledge but cannot/does not fully apply new knowledge in their work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondent uses words such as 'only', [mentions inhibitors]. |
| Perceived results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff did not gain any new information or insights. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff gained some new information or insights; not clear what. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff gained some new information or insights. • Respondent describes what information/insights staff gained. • Respondent mentions that information gained is limited. • Respondent uses words such as <i>some but not enough, something</i>. |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff gained new information or insights. • Respondent describes what information/insights staff gained. • Respondent uses words such as 'learned a lot, 'learned so many things', 'the training really was effective', 'fill our gap'. |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff apply new knowledge in their work. • Describes how staff apply knowledge in their work. • 'a lot', 'many' |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New knowledge has increased staff's ability to perform their tasks. |

Source: Own elaboration.
 Note: DM= Diaspora member.

Interview coding and value assignment

My analysis used the data from host-institution staff interviews during the second and third round of data collection. Thirty-three responses from these interviews were excluded as a result of data cleaning. There were three main reasons for the exclusion. First, the host institution had not received any diaspora members at the time of the interview. An interview was conducted for evaluation purposes yet was not of value for this research as it did not contain any information about knowledge transfer. This was the case for interviews with 12 host-institution staff members. Second, only a brief conversation took place which was not recorded, as was the case for eight host-institution staff members and five diaspora members. Third, during the interview, it became clear that the respondent did not work directly with any of the CD4D diaspora members and had little or no information regarding the project and the diaspora member's work (10 host-institution staff members). Three respondents were excluded for other reasons. In addition, as the aim was to match the data from host-institution staff and those for diaspora members on a placement level,⁴⁶ any responses from the former for which no diaspora-member data were available had to be excluded and *vice versa*. Therefore, a total of 33 placements could be examined. The number of placements (33) is higher than the number of diaspora members (29) as some of the latter conducted assignments at more than one host institution; these were then regarded as different placements. Some host-institution respondents had worked with more than one diaspora member. As the framework's aim is to provide information at the placement level, the information provided by the respondent was then disaggregated by placement. The number of host-institution staff responses available per placement ranged from one to eight per placement.

As described earlier, after transcription I coded all the interviews using the qualitative analysis software NVivo. During this first stage, codes centred around the respondents' perception of whether or not an activity led to knowledge transfer, how they perceived it to have led to knowledge transfer and what new information and insights they perceived staff to have gained from it. In the same manner, another set of codes captured whether a respondent indicated that the activities that the diaspora member engaged in led to changes – including changes in the colleague's individual behaviour as well as at an organisational level. Data for this part of the analysis were then transferred to Microsoft Excel for further analysis. Each observation was assigned a value for each dimension. Process values were then assigned based on the dimension values. In most cases, both dimensions – *perceived behaviours* and *perceived results* – were assigned the same membership value. In cases where the dimensions had different values, the lower one was assigned as a component value. For instance, if *IT Perceived behaviours* had a score of 1 and *IT Perceived results* a value of 0.67, the overall value assigned for IT was 0.67. This decision was taken to avoid the overinterpretation of contributions. As diaspora members as well as host-institution staff may have had an incentive to overstate contributions rather than to understate them, this more conservative approach seemed appropriate. The assigned values were then reviewed by examining all responses which had been given the same score for a component to ensure that the responses were comparable.

⁴⁶ A placement is defined as the entire time span that a diaspora member spent at one host institution (see also Chapter 3).

Table 18. Overview of interview sources for each component

| Component | Interview source | |
|-----------|------------------|------------------------|
| | Diaspora member | Host-institution staff |
| COCD | X | X |
| IT | X | X |
| KC | | X |

Source: Own elaboration.

Threshold for success

Following work on multi-dimensional poverty and well-being indices (Alkire & Foster, 2011a, 2011b; Siegel & Waidler, 2012; Vanore et al., 2018; Waidler et al., 2018), a threshold for success was defined. While no direct relationship exists between these indices and this research, these indices have been used as an orientation as they combine different dimensions in a systematic manner on a development topic. For the processes COCD and IT, a placement was considered successful if at least one host-institution staff member’s value was higher than or equal to 0.67 (‘more in than out’) and the diaspora member’s value was higher than or equal to 0.67. This meant that the diaspora member and one or more host-institution staff members agreed that at least some IT or COCD took place. The value 0.67 was chosen as a cut-off as it had been defined as the value given to observations that are ‘more in than out’. The decision was taken to consider a placement as successful from the receiver’s perspective if one staff member reported a value equal to or higher than 0.67 – instead of taking, for instance, a minimum share of respondents – as outcomes are measured here as individuals’ perceptions. This also seems important since not all respondents were necessarily the direct target of the knowledge transfer and capacity development, in which case taking a share instead of a minimum of one respondent would bias the results.

With this approach, the knowledge sender and the knowledge receiver were given equal weight. This decision was made as both perspectives should be regarded as equally relevant and to avoid one-sided over-reporting. For the component KC, only the component host-institution staff value was taken, as knowledge senders have limited insights into this process.

Methodological limitations

The methodology chosen is subject to a number of limitations. First, responses were aggregated by placement and success in a process was determined at the placement level, using the threshold discussed above. While this was done to match knowledge-receiver and -sender data, this approach does not show the differences that exist within a placement. This means that, within some placements, there were respondents who did not consider the placement to have been successful while others did. These nuances are nonetheless discussed in the analysis. Aggregation also meant that some observations had to be excluded since no matching diaspora-member or host-institution staff data were available, which reduced the sample size. Second, the quantification of qualitative data is a subjective process that relies on the judgment of the researcher (Basurto and Speer, 2012). To minimise arbitrariness, the methodology to measure IT, KC, and COCD was developed based on the literature review. In addition, all the steps taken have been described in detail, following approaches for the calibration of qualitative data as fuzzy sets by Basurto and Speer (2012) as well as Legewie (2017). In addition, a rubric was developed that details the operationalisation of the three processes (see Table 17).

4.4 Case study⁴⁷

This section provides context for the three case-study countries. It also provides information for the Netherlands, where appropriate, as the main country of residence of the diaspora members of this case study. It starts with a general country context for Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland, focusing on key human development and economic indicators. Since VKTs constitute a form of development contribution, these indicators serve to situate the return visits within the broader context in which they take place. After this, a brief overview of the main sectors of the host institutions (public sector, higher education and research) will be provided, in order to put their characteristics – and particularly the capacity gaps which they face – into a broader sectorial context. This section then moves on to discuss the emigration contexts, diaspora population and existing diaspora engagement. These sub-sections are relevant for my study as they allow me to place the experiences of the diaspora members in relation to their countries' histories of emigration and the characteristics of their respective diasporas. The discussion of existing diaspora engagement situates the return visits that are the focus of this study in relation to previous engagement, both in and outside diaspora return programmes.

4.4.1 General country context

Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland are among the least-developed countries in the world. Ethiopia ranked 173rd and Sierra Leone 182nd out of 189 on the Human Development Index (HDI) in 2019 (UNDP, 2020). While the UNDP does not provide HDI data for Somalia or Somaliland, data from the Global Data Lab (2021) suggest an HDI for Somalia of 0.356 for 2018, which is lower than the official HDI values for Ethiopia and Sierra Leone. In contrast, the Netherlands rank 8th on the HDI for the same year (UNDP, 2020; see also Table 19). Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somalia share common challenges such as high levels of poverty and high age dependency ratios. In Sierra Leone, more than half of the population were considered poor according to national poverty lines in 2018, while the figure was 23.5 per cent for Ethiopia in 2015⁴⁸ (World Bank, 2021a). The UNDP (2020) reported the multidimensional poverty headcount for Sierra Leone at 57.9 per cent of the population in 2017. For Ethiopia, headcounts for multidimensional poverty were much higher, with 83.5 per cent of the population considered multidimensionally poor in 2016 (UNDP, 2020). Estimates for Somaliland suggest that 29 per cent of the urban population and 38 per cent of the rural population were living in poverty in 2013 (World Bank, 2014). With between 40 and 46 per cent of the population being below 15 years of age (World Bank, 2021b), the population is very young in all three countries, resulting in an age dependency ratio⁴⁹ of around 78 per cent in the case of Ethiopia and Sierra Leone and 97 per cent for Somalia (UNDP, 2020). By contrast, in the Netherlands, only 16 per cent of the population were below 15 years of age, while 20 per cent of the population were aged 65 years and above (World Bank, 2021b).

Nonetheless, with average annual GDP growth of 9.4 per cent between 2010/11 and 2019/20, Ethiopia is the fastest growing economy in the region (World Bank, 2021c). In Sierra Leone, the Ebola outbreak in 2014 created an additional challenge to the country's post-conflict recovery after the civil war; Sierra Leone continues to struggle with high levels of youth unemployment, corruption and weak governance (World Bank, 2019). While Somalia

⁴⁷ This section draws on background research by Laura Rahmeier in 2016 who elaborated country reports for Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somalia for internal use as well as an unpublished draft brief on the Somaliland diaspora and their engagement which I prepared together with Francesca Celenta.

⁴⁸ The most recent figure available.

⁴⁹ This is the dependency ratio for people of young age (0–14 years) per 100 people aged 15–64 for 2019 (see Table 7. Population trends, UNDP 2020).

continues to experience instability and violent conflict, Somaliland has managed to gain relative peace and stability and has established functioning public institutions, acting as a *de-facto* state, despite the lack of international recognition (Ali, 2014; Galipo, 2018; Hersi, 2018).

Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somalia show low levels of gender equality. Ethiopia scored rank 125 on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index for 2019 and Sierra Leone ranked 155. Somalia was not included in the ranking but has a female labour-force participation rate of 21.8 per cent. This is lower than in Sierra Leone (57.3 per cent) and Ethiopia (73.4 per cent). In contrast, the Netherlands ranks fourth on the index (UNDP, 2020; see also Table 19).

In all three countries of return, war and conflict were the major drivers of emigration, causing refugee outflows to neighbouring countries and Europe. While the greatest share of the Ethiopian and Sierra Leonean diasporas resides in the United States, the Somalilander diaspora is more dispersed throughout Africa, Europe and North America (see Chapter 4.4.4.). Comparing Hofstede's cultural dimensions for the Netherlands, Ethiopia and Sierra Leone shows that the former ranks lower in power distance and masculinity than Ethiopia and Sierra Leone while ranking higher in individualism. The values for uncertainty avoidance across the three countries are quite similar (Hofstede Insights, 2021; see also Table 19).⁵⁰ These factors are important as they most probably translate to behaviour in the workplace and previous studies (see, for example, Chen et al., 2010; Ford & Chan, 2003; Lucas, 2006) have shown that they may enable or inhibit knowledge transfer (see Chapter 2.4.2.). While disputed, these rankings do give some indication of the differences to which diaspora members might be exposed. The following table summarises the key indicators.

⁵⁰ No data for Somalia/Somaliland are available.

Table 19. Country context

| Indicator | Year | Ethiopia | Sierra Leone | Somalia | Netherlands |
|---|-----------|----------------------|----------------------|--|-------------------------|
| GDP per capita | 2019 | 855.8 ⁽¹⁾ | 521.8 ⁽¹⁾ | 419.4 ⁽¹⁾ | 52,476.3 ⁽¹⁾ |
| <i>In current US\$. Higher number signals higher achievement</i> | | | | (Somaliland 2014 estimate: 347) ⁽²⁾ | |
| Population ages | | | | | |
| 0–14 | 2019 | 40 ⁽³⁾ | 41 ⁽³⁾ | 46 ⁽³⁾ | 16 ⁽³⁾ |
| 15–64 | 2019 | 56 ⁽⁴⁾ | 56 ⁽⁴⁾ | 51 ⁽⁴⁾ | 65 ⁽⁴⁾ |
| 65 and above | 2019 | 4 ⁽⁵⁾ | 3 ⁽⁵⁾ | 3 ⁽⁵⁾ | 20 ⁽⁵⁾ |
| Age dependency ratio | | | | | |
| <i>Per 100 people ages 15–64.</i> | | | | | |
| Young age (0–14) | 2019 | 71.8 ⁽⁶⁾ | 72.3 ⁽⁶⁾ | 91.4 ⁽⁶⁾ | 24.6 ⁽⁶⁾ |
| Old age (65 and older) | 2019 | 6.3 ⁽⁶⁾ | 5.2 ⁽⁶⁾ | 5.7 ⁽⁶⁾ | 30.4 ⁽⁶⁾ |
| Human Development Index (HDI) | | | | | |
| <i>Composite index of: life expectancy, education and income: 0 to 1, higher number signals higher achievement. Ranking of 189 countries</i> | 2019 | 0.485 ⁽⁶⁾ | 0.452 ⁽⁶⁾ | 0.356 ⁽⁷⁾ | 0.944 ⁽⁶⁾ |
| | | Ranking: 173 | Ranking: 182 | | Ranking: 8 |
| Gender Development Index (GDI) | | | | | |
| <i>Composite index of: health, education and command over economic resources: 0 to 1, higher number signals higher achievement. Ranking of 189 countries</i> | 2019 | 0.837 ⁽⁴⁾ | 0.884 ⁽⁶⁾ | – | 0.966 ⁽⁶⁾ |
| | | Ranking: 173 | Ranking: 182 | | Ranking: 8 |
| Multidimensional Poverty Index | | | | | |
| <i>Composite index of health, nutrition and standard of living: Percentage of the population that is multidimensionally poor adjusted by the intensity of the deprivations, as calculated by the UNDP; higher number signals higher deprivation</i> | 2008–2019 | 0.489 ⁽⁶⁾ | 0.297 ⁽⁶⁾ | – | – |

| | | | | | | |
|---|------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---|----------------------|
| Gender Inequality Index | | | | | | |
| <i>Composite index of reproductive health, empowerment and labour market: 1 to 0, lower number signals higher achievement. Ranking of 162 countries.</i> | 2019 | 0.517 ⁽⁶⁾ | 0.644 ⁽⁶⁾ | – | – | 0.043 ⁽⁶⁾ |
| | | Ranking: 125 | Ranking: 155 | | | Ranking: 4 |
| Human Capital Index (HCI) | | | | | | |
| <i>Composite index of: survival, school and health. 0 to 1, higher number signals higher achievement.</i> | 2020 | 0.38 ⁽⁸⁾ | 0.36 ⁽⁸⁾ | – | – | – |
| Failed State Index | | | | | | |
| <i>0 (sustainable) to 120 (alert/failed); ranking among 178 countries.</i> | 2019 | 94.2 ⁽⁹⁾ | 86.8 ⁽⁹⁾ | 112.3 ⁽⁹⁾ | – | – |
| | | Ranking: 23 | Ranking: 39 | Ranking: 2 | | |
| Power distance index (PDI) | | | | | | |
| <i>Degree to which the less-powerful members of society accept and expect that power is distributed unequally; 0 to 100, high numbers signals high power distance.</i> | 2021 | 70 ⁽¹⁰⁾ | 70 ⁽¹⁰⁾ | – | – | 38 ⁽¹⁰⁾ |
| Individualism versus collectivism (IDV) | | | | | | |
| <i>Orientation towards individualism or collectivism in society: 0 to 100, high numbers signal individualism, low numbers collectivism.</i> | 2021 | 20 ⁽¹⁰⁾ | 20 ⁽¹⁰⁾ | – | – | 80 ⁽¹⁰⁾ |
| Masculinity versus femininity (MAS) | | | | | | |
| <i>Preference for 'masculinity' (achievement, heroism, assertiveness etc.) or 'femininity' (cooperation, modesty, care, quality of life) in society: 0 to 100, high numbers signal 'masculinity', low numbers 'femininity'.</i> | 2021 | 65 ⁽¹⁰⁾ | 40 ⁽¹⁰⁾ | – | – | 14 ⁽¹⁰⁾ |
| Uncertainty avoidance index (UAI) | | | | | | |
| <i>Degree to which the members of a society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty or ambiguity: 0 to 100, high numbers signal higher uncertainty avoidance.</i> | 2021 | 55 ⁽¹⁰⁾ | 50 ⁽¹⁰⁾ | – | – | 53 ⁽¹⁰⁾ |

Sources: Own elaboration; ¹World Bank (2021d); ²World Bank (2014); ³World Bank (2021b); ⁴World Bank (2021e); ⁵World Bank (2021f); ⁶UNDP (2020); ⁷Global Data Lab (2021); ⁸World Bank (2020d); ⁹Fund for Peace (2020); ¹⁰Hofstede Insights (2021).

4.4.2 *The public, higher-education and research sectors in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland*⁵¹

Host institutions in this study can be located within the public, higher-education and research sectors. In Ethiopia, host institutions were ministries, higher-education institutions and research institutes. In Sierra Leone, all organisations except one were higher-education institutions while, in Somaliland, all organisations were governmental ministries. This section provides a brief overview of the sectors of focus for each country.

The higher-education sector in Ethiopia has experienced rapid expansion over the last two decades thanks to government reforms. Government expenditure on education rose from 14.9 per cent of total government expenditure in 2000 to about 24 per cent in 2018, peaking at 30.54 per cent in 2012 (World Bank, 2021g). In the same year, government spending on tertiary education amounted to almost 47 per cent of expenditure on education (World Bank, 2020b). In 2017, 46 public universities and 130 private higher-education institutions were operating in Ethiopia; despite the high share of private institutions, these relatively small institutions only account for around 14 per cent of enrollment (Tamrat & Teferra, 2020). In Ethiopia, gross domestic expenditure on research and development (GERD) rose from 0.24 per cent of GDP in 2009 to 0.61 per cent of GDP in 2013, making Ethiopia one of the countries with the highest GERD growth rate. At the same time, female researchers made up only 13 per cent of researchers in Ethiopia (UNESCO, 2015).

In Sierra Leone, higher-education institutions are struggling to meet the considerable demand for higher education in the country. Higher education has a long tradition in Sierra Leone. Fourah Bay College, now part of the University of Sierra Leone in Freetown, is the oldest higher-education institution in West Africa (World Bank, 2013). The progress of Sierra Leone's higher education system since the country's independence in 1961 was affected negatively by one-party politics and structural adjustment programmes in the 1980s. Yet, the most significant negative impact was caused by the civil war, when higher-education institutions became the target of attacks. Since the end of the war in 2001, Sierra Leone's higher-education sector has been restored and re-organised. With the University of Sierra Leone and Njala University, there are currently two public universities in Sierra Leone. In addition, another 30 higher and tertiary institutions were operating in Sierra Leone in 2011, including one private university, three polytechnics (three public), three teacher-training or education colleges (two public, one private), four theological schools or colleges (four private) and 11 technical and professional colleges or institutes (one public, 10 private) (World Bank, 2013, 2017).

The higher-education sector in Sierra Leone has seen a sharp increase in enrolments and there continues to be a high demand for higher education in the country. Despite these positive developments, the quality of teaching staff presents a major challenge for higher-education institutions in Sierra Leone. The recruitment of sufficiently qualified staff is difficult for institutions. Only two per cent of full-time academic staff at the 10 core institutions in 2009/2010 were professors or associate professors. Sixty-three per cent held a Master's degree or higher (World Bank, 2013, 2017).

While Somaliland has managed to gain political stability and establish functioning public institutions since it declared independence, its population is very young, higher education has only emerged recently and the self-declared state lacks human capital in several areas (Ali, 2014, 2016; BBC, 2017). The majority of educational institutions were damaged or destroyed during the war (Ali, 2014). Somaliland's first university was only established in 1998, making access to university education a relatively recent possibility for many Somalilanders. While the

⁵¹ The majority of this section has been published in Mueller (2020).

Somaliland higher-education sector has grown rapidly within the last decade and demand for university education is high, the lack of human capital remains a major challenge for the state (Ali, 2016). As a management staff member at one of the host institutions stated, this issue is related to the fact that many Somalilanders have gaps in their primary- and secondary-level education, even though they might be pursuing graduate education.

Despite its lack of international recognition, Somaliland has managed to establish functioning public institutions since its declaration of independence in 1991 (Hersi, 2018; Kaplan, 2008). Somaliland also counts on a Civil Service Commission to train civil servants (Hersi, 2018). Nonetheless, staff lack the necessary skills and experience (Kaplan, 2008; Muse Duale, 2014). This, in part, can be attributed to a lack of access to higher education, which only emerged recently, as well as gaps in primary and secondary education (see also Mueller, 2020). In addition, in Somaliland, the lack of international recognition means that the government does not receive any direct international financial assistance (Musa & Horst, 2019). Similarly, all CD4D host institutions in Somaliland mentioned the lack of experts, capacity, experience and training on sector-specific skills such as Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), plant protection, marketing, logistics or engineering as one of the main challenges. In a presentation at the 7th High Level Aid Coordination Forum in 2014, the Chairman of the Somaliland Civil Service Commission stated that ‘Somaliland’s civil servants [can be] characterized mostly as: overstaff[ed], over aged staff, unskilled, inexperienced, poorly equipped, poorly resourced, and suffer from low morale arising, amongst other, from poor remuneration and terms and conditions of service’ (Muse Duale, 2014, p. 2)

A study conducted in 2004 assessing the training needs of the Somaliland Civil Service already identified the need to introduce job descriptions for all positions, including a definition of minimum qualifications, the right-sizing of staff and the establishment of a performance monitoring system, amongst other measures (Bicker, 2004). A World Bank (WB) assessment of the Somaliland Civil Service Reform Project also highlighted a lack of complete personnel records; with only 30 per cent of civil servants at the WB target ministries having verified and completed personnel records of satisfactory quality in the central HR personnel database (World Bank, 2016b).

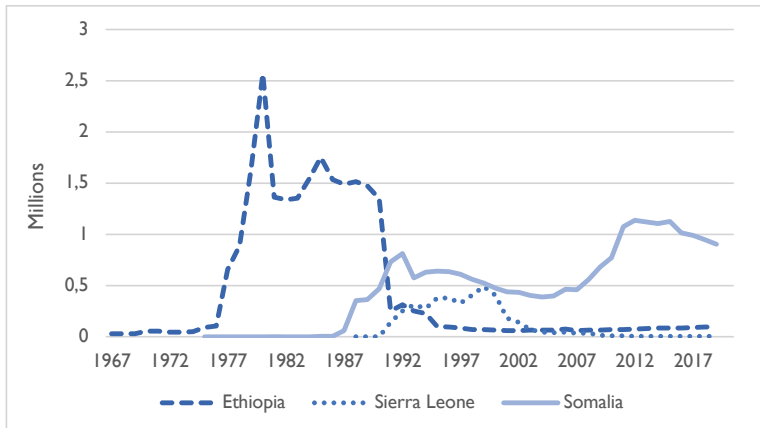
4.4.3 *Emigration contexts*

A common feature of the Ethiopian, Sierra Leonean and Somali diaspora is that a large part of their emigration took place as a result of war and conflict. Prior to 1974, emigration from and return to Ethiopia was an issue of the country’s elite who left for educational purposes. The instalment of the Marxist military Derg regime in 1974 and the border dispute between Ethiopia and Somalia (1977–1978), also referred to as the ‘Ogaden War’, combined with the famine in the mid-1980s, caused major refugee flows and leading to a rapid increase in the Ethiopian refugee population, which reached its peak with more than 2.5 million worldwide in 1980 (see Figure 5). Between 1982 and 1991, this was then followed by individuals who were reuniting with family members who had fled the country (Adugna, 2021; Fransen & Kuschminder, 2009; Kuschminder & Siegel, 2015).

In Sierra Leone, the civil war from 1991 to 2002 caused major refugee flows as well as internal displacement (Musa Conteh, 2018). Approximately 4.5 million people were displaced as a result of the war (Skran, 2008). Sierra Leone’s refugee population rose to 142,614 in 1991 and attained 490,047 in 1999 (see Figure 5). In Somalia, the outbreak of the civil war in 1988 caused many Somalis to flee, either to neighbouring countries or to Europe and North America (Hansen, 2004; Kusow & Bjork, 2007; Sørensen, 2004). Nonetheless, emigration from Somalia had already occurred before this. Hansen (2004) distinguished three phases prior to the refugee movements caused by the civil war in the 1980s: first, ‘a tradition of labour migration’,

second, migration to the Middle East and Gulf countries for work since the 1960s and, third, migration for the purpose of education in the 1970s. Yet, the emigration trends relevant to this case study were mainly caused by conflict.

Figure 5. Refugee population by country or territory of origin, 1967–2019



Source: Own elaboration; World Bank (2021h)

Refugee flows from Ethiopia ceased when the Derg regime fell and the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Party (EPRDP) gained power in 1991 (Kuschminder & Siegel, 2015). This also resulted in a sudden decrease in the refugee population worldwide (see Figure 5), including refugee returns from neighbouring countries (Adugna, 2021). Since 1991, migration from Ethiopia has taken the form of mixed migration (Kuschminder & Siegel, 2015). Other events, such as 'political repression and ethnic violence in the early 1990s and 2000s, the border dispute with Eritrea from 1998 to 2000, and post-election violence in 2005, continued to cause refugee flows after 1991' (Adugna, 2021, paragraph 13), yet in much lower dimensions. On the other hand, economic factors started to drive migration from Ethiopia. In addition to economic factors, ethnic tensions and droughts motivated migration (Adugna, 2021; Marchand et al., 2017; Ogahara & Kuschminder, 2019). More recently, the civil war in the Tigray region since November 2020 has caused new refugee flows and major internal displacement (Adugna, 2021).

In Sierra Leone, refugee flows ceased with the end of the civil war in 2002, after which Sierra Leoneans started to return to their country of origin. In 2008, six years after the end of the civil war, the UNHCR issued an official recommendation to states to end refugee status for Sierra Leoneans (Pagonis, 2008). Nonetheless, not all Sierra Leoneans returned voluntarily as some of the neighbouring countries, such as Guinea, removed Sierra Leonean refugees in 2000 and 2001 (Manby, 2015). More recently, Sierra Leone has experienced high rates of skilled emigration, especially in the health sector, with the OECD calculating the expatriation rate to OECD countries at 71.3 per cent for doctors and 82.4 per cent for nurses in 2010 (OECD, 2015).

Somaliland declared its independence on 18 May 1991 (Galipo, 2018), resulting in massive returns of refugees who had been residing in Ethiopia and Djibouti (Hansen, 2004), including refugees not originally from Somaliland who relocated there (Fagioli-Ndlovu, 2015). While refugee flows from Somalia have continued due to ongoing conflict, violence and political instability, the situation is more stable in Somaliland, which has resulted in

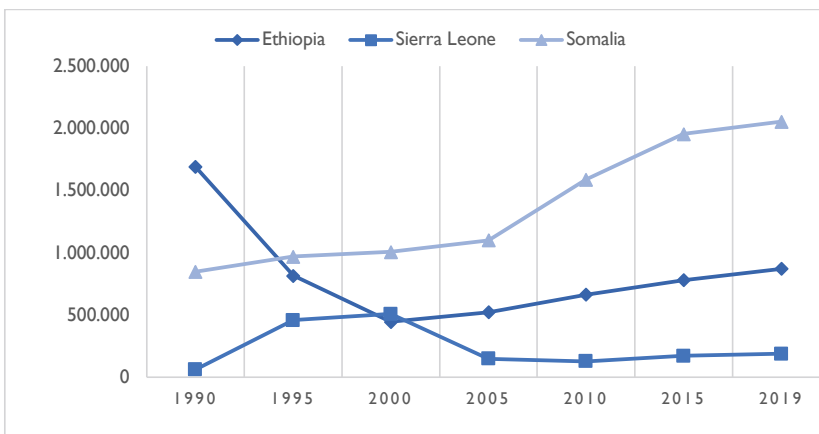
reduced emigration and has encouraged migrants residing in Europe and North America to return (Galipo, 2018; Hersi, 2018, p. 19; Marchand et al., 2017).

4.4.4 Diaspora population

Global outlook

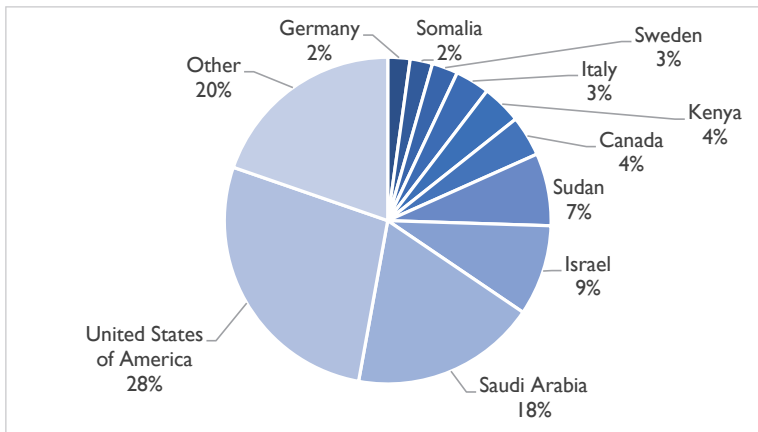
The exact size of diaspora populations is difficult to determine and largely depends on the definition of diaspora being used – that is, whether migrants are also considered part of the diaspora and how many generations of descendants are being included. Data on migrant stocks are commonly used to provide an orientation. The international migrant stock data published by the Population Division of the United Nations’ Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) are based on national statistics, mostly obtained from population censuses and complemented with data from population registers and nationally representative surveys.

Figure 6. Total migrant stock at mid-year by origin, 1990–2019



Source: Own elaboration; UNDESA (2019)

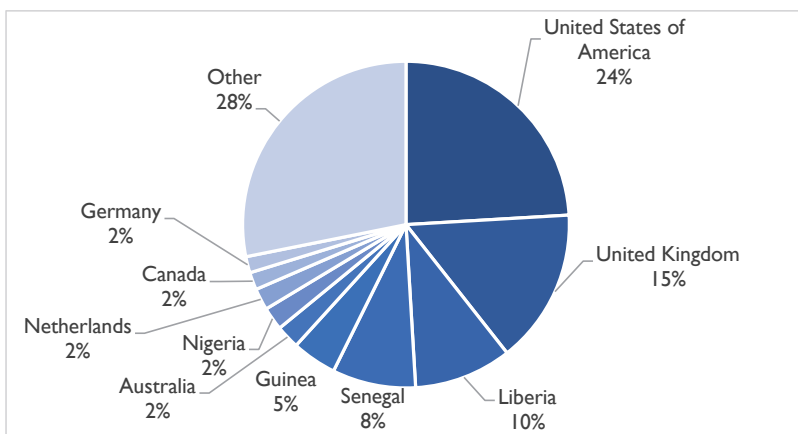
The UNDESA statistics (UNDESA, 2019) report the total stock of Ethiopian migrants at 871,747 in mid-2019. Yet, estimates suggest that the size of the Ethiopian diaspora is much larger. Kuschminder and Siegel (2010) provided an estimate of 1–2 million people. In a recent mapping of the Ethiopian diaspora in the United States, the authors estimated the global size of the Ethiopian diaspora to be over 3 million (IOM, 2018b), yet it is unclear on which statistics these estimates are based. According to UNDESA data, almost a third of Ethiopian migrants were living in the United States of America (239,186). Other popular countries of residence among Ethiopians include Saudi Arabia (160,192), Israel (78,258) and Sudan (62,565) (UNDESA, 2019).

Figure 7. Total stock of Ethiopian migrants by country of residence, 2019

Source: Own elaboration; UNDESA (2019).

In 2015/16, 425,000 emigrants born in Ethiopia resided in OECD countries, compared to 166,000 in 2000/01 and 308,100 in 2010/11 (d'Aiglepieerre et al., 2020, p. 37; OECD, 2015, p. 396). As of 2015/16, about 27 per cent of Ethiopian emigrants residing in OECD countries were poorly educated, while 31.7 per cent of them were highly educated. The OECD reported a total emigration rate of Ethiopians to OECD countries of 0.7 per cent. For highly educated emigrants, the emigration rate was much higher at 14 per cent (d'Aiglepieerre et al., 2020, p. 37). With regards to the labour-market situation of persons born in Ethiopia and living in OECD countries, 66.2 per cent (71.8 for men, 60.9 for women) were employed according to OECD data from 2010/11. The unemployment rate was 11 per cent. The employment rate was higher for highly educated Ethiopians (79.2 per cent). Yet only 24 per cent of employed Ethiopians were working in highly skilled occupations, of whom 12.4 were health professionals and 12.4 were teaching professionals. Close to 65 per cent of Ethiopians in OECD countries were occupied in medium-skilled jobs, while 12.6 per cent held down a low-skilled occupation. Nearly half of the highly educated Ethiopians in OECD countries worked in low-and medium-skilled jobs (OECD, 2015, p. 397).

In line with the difference in the size of the population between the two countries, the Sierra Leonean diaspora is much smaller than the Ethiopian diaspora. The total stock was reported to be 187,102 in 2019 (UNDESA, 2019). The five countries with the highest stock of Sierra Leonean migrants in 2019 were the United States (45,031), the United Kingdom (28,656), Liberia (18,099), Senegal (15,463) and Guinea (8,288). Nonetheless, the Sierra Leonean diaspora was estimated to be around 336,000 people in 2016, with emigration being estimated at 5.4 per cent of the country's population (Musa Conteh, 2018).

Figure 8. Total stock of Sierra Leonean migrants by country of residence, 2019

Source: Own elaboration; UNDESA (2019).

According to OECD data, 83,000 Sierra Leoneans were living in OECD countries by 2015/2016, compared to 40,000 in 2000/01. The emigration rate for Sierra Leoneans to OECD countries was 1.9 per cent and 19.5 for highly educated individuals in 2015/16 (d'Aiglepieire et al., 2020, p. 39). Drawing on 2010/11 data, the emigration rate of the highly educated was 44.9 per cent higher for women compared to 26 per cent for men, while the total emigration rate showed no difference based on gender. Of those Sierra Leoneans living in OECD countries in 2015/16, 37.6 per cent were highly educated. The share of low-educated Sierra Leoneans was 21.8 per cent for the same period (d'Aiglepieire et al., 2020, p. 39). About 80 per cent of the Sierra Leoneans living in OECD countries in 2010/2011 were between 25 and 64 years old. As to their labour-market situation, 67.9 per cent of those living in OECD countries in 2010/2011 were employed (69.6 per cent for men, 64.3 for women). In total, over half of all Sierra Leoneans in OECD countries were employed in medium-skilled jobs and about 10 per cent occupied low-skilled positions (OECD, 2015).

Estimating the size of the diaspora becomes even more difficult in the case of Somaliland, as no separate statistics for the country are available. UNDESA (2019) estimated the Somali migrant stock worldwide at 2,054,377 in mid-2019. For Somaliland, estimations suggest a diaspora population of approximately 600,000 people, mostly located in Western Europe, North America, the Middle East, Africa (mainly neighbouring countries such as Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya and Yemen) and Australia (World Bank, 2015; Somaliland Diaspora Agency Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation, Republic of Somaliland, 2019). For all three countries, only a small share of their migrant population resides in the Netherlands (Ethiopia: 1.9 per cent, Sierra Leone: 2.1 per cent, Somalia: 1.3 per cent).⁵²

In 2015/2016, 357,000 emigrants born in Somalia were residing in OECD countries, almost three times the size of the Somali emigrant population in 2000/01 (125,000). Compared to Ethiopians and Sierra Leoneans, Somali emigrants have, at 50.6 per cent, a much higher share of low-educated emigrants. Highly educated emigrants made up 17.2 per cent of the Somali emigrants residing in the OECD in 2015/2016 (d'Aiglepieire et al., 2020, p. 39). Somalia ranked thirteenth among the top 15 countries in terms of its emigration rate of high-

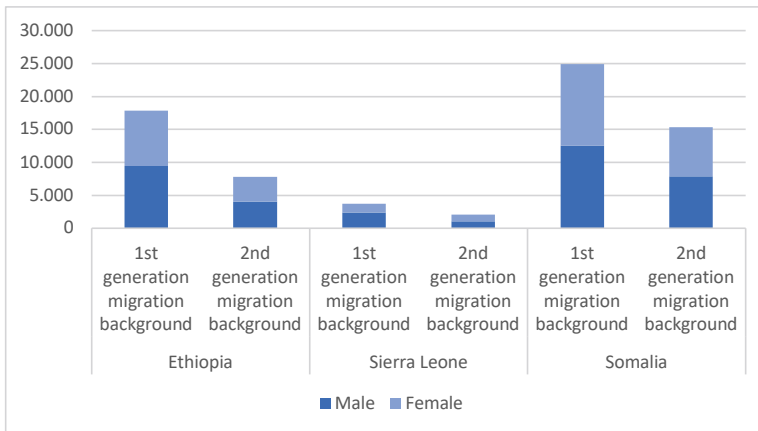
⁵² Calculated by the author based on UNDESA data.

skilled migrants in 2015/16 – about 30 per cent. The OECD data also show an increase in the emigration rate of the highly skilled from Somalia by 10.4 (d'Aiglepieire et al., 2020, p. 27).

The diaspora in the Netherlands

In 2020, 25,642 people of Ethiopian migration background⁵³ were registered in the Netherlands with 40,251 individuals with Somali backgrounds residing there in the same year. The figure for Sierra Leoneans was much smaller at 5,755 (CBS, 2021). The share of individuals with a second-generation migration background was between 31 and 38 per cent (Ethiopia: 30.53 Sierra Leone: 36.06, Somalia: 38.01 per cent; calculated by the author based on CBS data). The population with a Sierra Leonean background had a slightly higher share of males than the population of Ethiopian or Somali migration background (Ethiopia: 52.51 per cent, Sierra Leone: 59.41 and Somalia: 50.67; calculated by the author based on CBS data).

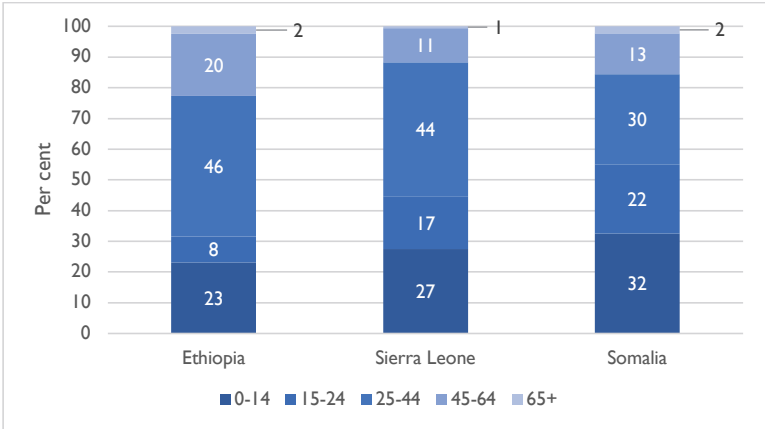
Figure 9. Population with a migration background from Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somalia in the Netherlands by generation and gender



Source: Own elaboration; CBS (2021)

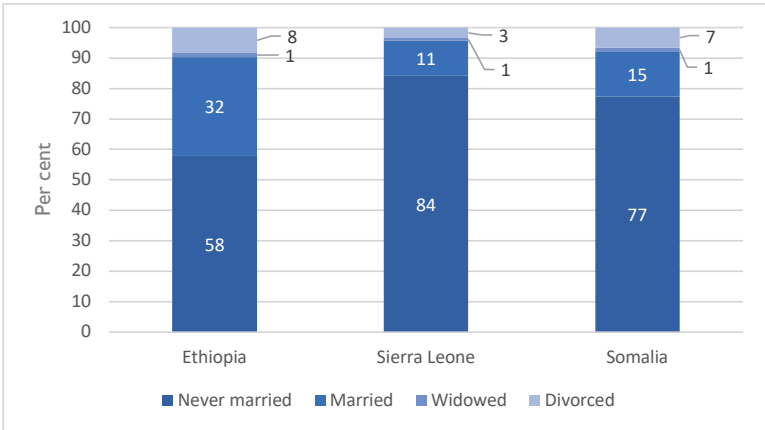
⁵³ CBS defines a migration background as '[t]he country with which a person has the closest ties, based on his/her parents' country of birth or his/her own country of birth. The background of a first-generation migrant is defined as his or her country of birth; that of a second-generation migrant is defined as his or her mother's country of birth, unless the mother's country of birth is the Netherlands. In that case, the migration background is defined as the father's country of birth. The group with a second-generation migration background may also be divided into those with one parent born abroad and those with two parents born abroad' (CBS, 2022).

Figure 10. Age of population with migration background from Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somalia in the Netherlands



Source: Own elaboration; CBS (2021)

Figure 11. Marital status of the population with a migration background from Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somalia in the Netherlands



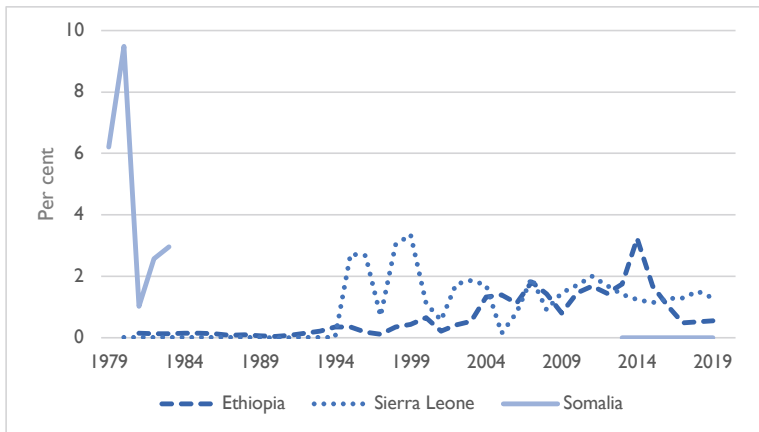
Source: Own elaboration; CBS (2021)

4.4.5 Existing diaspora engagement for development in the country of origin

The Ethiopian, Sierra Leonean and Somali(lander) diaspora engage with their countries of origin in a number of ways. This section discusses diaspora engagement for the three case-study countries, focusing on their engagement globally and not specifically for the Netherlands.

Forms of engagement

Figure 12 displays the personal remittances which Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somalia received as a percentage of GDP between 1979 and 2019.

Figure 12. Personal remittances received (% of GDP), 1979–2019

Source: Own elaboration; World Bank (2021i)

In Ethiopia, personal remittances received as a percentage of GDP reached a peak of 3.23 per cent in 2014. In 2019, remittances made up 0.55 per cent of Ethiopia's GDP (see Figure 12). Diaspora investment projects also increased in the 2000s (Ogahara & Kuschminder, 2019, p. 15). With regards to diaspora knowledge transfer in Ethiopia, one stakeholder reported that much of it was taking place to Ethiopia, yet not in a structured manner. Other respondents generally referred back to IOM as the main actor in this field in Ethiopia. In addition to CD4D, in the past IOM supported a number of other projects related to diaspora knowledge transfer in Ethiopia, including Migration for Development in Ethiopia (MIDeTh) as part of which four Ethiopian hospitals received medical equipment and their staff were trained in its use (Ndiaye et al., 2011) and TRQN II, where Ethiopia was added as one of two new target countries for the second phase (Melde & Ndiaye-Coïc, 2009). In addition, as part of the MIDA Italy, an online database of diaspora professionals was created (IOM, 2004). Accordingly, the stakeholder interviews identified a few formal initiatives for diaspora knowledge transfer in Ethiopia. The German Corporation for International Cooperation GmbH (GIZ) has been running their 'returning experts' and 'diaspora experts' programme in Ethiopia. The organisation VSO ran a diaspora programme for some years in Ethiopia together with the Canadian University Service Overseas (CUSO) (see Table 20), yet the programme was phased out, mainly due to a lack of government support. At the time of this research, the Alliance for Brain Gain and Innovative Development (ABIDE) had signed Memoranda of Understanding with several local institutions, including the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Science and Technology, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa Science and Technology University, Bahir Dar University, Gondar University, Jima University, Mekelle University, St Mary University and the Ethiopian Diaspora Association.

For Sierra Leone, personal remittances received as a percentage of GDP reached their highest point in 1999 at 3.36 per cent. The share then dropped to 0.57 per cent in 2001, one year before the end civil war finally ended. In 2019, personal remittances amounted to 1.29 per cent of Sierra Leone's GDP (see Figure 12). With regards to diaspora investment, a survey conducted by the World Bank with 600 diaspora members as part of their 'Sierra Leone Diaspora Investment and Trade Study' showed that 40 per cent of study participants had invested in Sierra Leone, education being identified as the sector in which Sierra Leonean diaspora members were the most interested in investing (World Bank, 2016a). As my

stakeholder interviews showed, opening a business in Sierra Leone was associated with lengthy and opaque administrative procedures.

The Sierra Leonean diaspora played an important role in the Ebola response. While their response to the outbreak took time to emerge, medical professionals within the Sierra Leonean diaspora quickly engaged in providing medical expertise and organising donations (Rubyan-Ling, 2019), with those residing in North America founding the Sierra Leone Action (SLA) in 2014 in an attempt to contribute medical solutions and support in light of the crisis. Other diaspora organisations also formed or reunited as a result of the crisis (Chikezie, 2015). This mobilisation has been shown to have triggered more engagement by the diaspora more generally (Rubyan-Ling, 2019).

Remittances are fundamental to sustaining Somaliland's economy and individual livelihoods. Yet, as remittances are sent through informal channels, accurate data on the volume of money transfers are hard to obtain. A World Bank report estimated the total value of remittances at US\$500–\$900 million annually, corresponding to 35 to 70 per cent of GDP (World Bank, 2015, p. xvi). In the first six months of 2020, Somaliland received US\$527.1 million in remittances (Somaliland Ministry of Finance Development, 2020) – the biggest cash flows arriving from the United Kingdom and the United States of America. According to a survey carried out in Somaliland in 2012, 40 per cent of families received monthly remittances, which can represent 40 to 80 per cent of the total household income (World Bank, 2015).

Relative peace and stability have attracted private-sector investment from the diaspora (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development & World Bank, 2012; Republic of Somaliland & Ministry of Planning, 2017). The report 'Doing Business in Hargeisa 2012' estimated that 80 per cent of the initial funding for small and medium-sized companies in 2008 came from the diaspora (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development & World Bank, 2012, p. 1). By contributing to a range of sectors, including telecommunications, education, health and the hospitality industry, the diaspora contributes to development, employment creation and innovation, at the same time attracting other business investors from Ethiopia and southern Somalia (Menkhaus, 2006; Republic of Somaliland & Ministry of Planning, 2017).

However, a lack of international recognition restricts the government's possibilities to foster investment and therefore public service provision, as Somaliland cannot apply for World Bank loans and the absence of formal banks complicates the relationship with foreign investors (Adan, 2017; Nelson-Nuñez & Cyr, 2019). For these reasons, investment from the diaspora plays a crucial role in filling these gaps. The absence of financial intermediation also means that business investors have to rely mostly on their own funds to expand their businesses. The Somaliland diaspora has proven to be an alternative way to receive credit despite the lack of commercial banks (Adan, 2017; International Bank for Reconstruction and Development & World Bank, 2012; World Bank, 2015).

Many high-level political positions in Somaliland are occupied by diaspora members. This share increased, in particular, during the presidency of Ahmed Mohamed Mohamoud from 2010 to 2017, rising from 3.8 per cent of diaspora representatives in state institutions in 2001 to 31.8 per cent in May/June 2011 (Ismail, 2011, p. 35). The Somaliland diaspora also makes great contributions to political parties and helps to finance political campaigns. In addition, it has been actively engaged in nation-building efforts and working for the international recognition of Somaliland (Galipo, 2018; Wilcock, 2020). Yet, the diaspora's involvement in Somaliland politics has not been without controversy, as locals have voiced criticism concerning the influence it has over Somaliland politics as well as the preference of diaspora members over locals for political positions (Abdile & Pirkkalainen, 2011).

A large percentage of Somalilanders returning from Western Europe have become involved in development-related and capacity-building projects. The Somaliland diaspora plays an important role in civil society, mobilising resources to raise awareness about human rights issues, healthcare provision and the position of women in society, among others (Hansen, 2004). Apart from the different MIDA projects which IOM has operated in Somaliland in recent decades, a few other initiatives can be identified in the area of diaspora knowledge transfer and capacity building. Table 20 summarises diaspora projects related to knowledge transfer and capacity development in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland.

Table 20. Overview of diaspora knowledge transfer and capacity development projects in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland

| Years of operation | Name of project | Operated by | Case-study countries |
|--------------------|--|--|------------------------------|
| 1977–1997 | TOKTEN ⁽¹⁾ | UNDP | Ethiopia, Somalia/Somaliland |
| 2000–2001 | Research and Skills Bank Development for Linking Qualified Somaliland Nationals Residing in Nordic and EU Countries with Manpower Needs in Somaliland ⁽²⁾ | IOM Finland | Somalia/Somaliland |
| 2006–2008 | Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals (TRQN) I ⁽²⁾ | IOM the Netherlands | Sierra Leone |
| 2006–N/A | Volunteer Health Corps (VHC) ⁽¹⁾ | American International Health Alliance HIV/AIDS Twinning Center in cooperation with the Network of Ethiopian Professionals in the Diaspora (NEPID) | Ethiopia |
| 2006–2007 | MIDA Italy – Pilot Project Ethiopia ⁽³⁾ | IOM | Ethiopia |
| 2007–N/A | Diaspora Volunteer Program ⁽¹⁾ | Canadian University Service Overseas (CUSO), Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) Canada | Ethiopia |
| 2007–2011 | Migration for Development in Ethiopia (MIDEth) ⁽²⁾ | IOM Ethiopia | Ethiopia |
| Since 2008 | MIDA FINNSOM ⁽⁴⁾ | IOM Finland | Somalia/Somaliland |
| 2008–N/A | DFID–VSO Diaspora Volunteering Programme (DVP) ⁽⁵⁾ | DFID, Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) | Sierra Leone |
| 2008–2011 | Diaspora Project: Delivering Results and Accelerating Public Sector Reform with Diaspora Resources and Expert from the South ⁽⁶⁾ | UNDP, Government of Sierra Leone | Sierra Leone |

| | | | |
|--------------|--|--|--|
| 2008–2012 | Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals (TRQN) II ⁽²⁾ | IOM the Netherlands | Ethiopia, Sierra Leone |
| 2008–2010 | MIDA Somalia–Migrant Women for Development in Africa ⁽²⁾ | IOM Italy | Somalia |
| 2009 | QUESTS–MIDA ⁽⁷⁾ | Somali authorities, UNDP Somalia, IOM | Somalia |
| 2010–2015 | Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals (TRQN III) ⁽⁸⁾ | IOM | Somalia |
| 2010–ongoing | Worldwide Somali Students and Professionals (WSSP) ⁽⁹⁾ | University College London Somali Society | Somalia/Somaliland |
| 2012–2020 | Somali Diaspora Programme ⁽¹⁰⁾ | ForumCiv with support from Sida | Somalia/Somaliland |
| 2016–2020 | Swedish–Somali Business Programme (SSBP) ⁽¹⁰⁾ | Formic | Somalia/Somaliland |
| 2016–2019 | Connecting Diaspora for Development (CD4D), Phase 1 | IOM | Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Somalia/Somaliland |
| 2017–2019 | Strengthening Sierra Leonean National Health Care Capacity through Diaspora Engagement ⁽¹¹⁾ | IOM | Sierra Leone |
| 2019–ongoing | Connecting Diaspora for Development (CD4D), Phase II | IOM | Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Somalia/Somaliland |

Sources: Own elaboration with support from Laura Rahmeier and Francesca Celenta; ¹Terrazas (2010); ²Melde & Ndiaye-Coïc (2009); ³IOM (2004); ⁴Reyes & Van Treeck (2009); ⁵Talbot (2011); ⁶McLoughlin & Momoh (2011); ⁷IOM (2012); ⁸Leith & Rivas (2015); ⁹Worldwide Somali Students & Professionals (n.d.); ¹⁰ForumCiv (n.d.); ¹¹Reliefweb (2019)

Diaspora engagement policies and institutional arrangements for diaspora affairs

Since the early 2000s, the Ethiopian government has put in place a set of policies for diaspora engagement. After the creation of the General Directorate of Ethiopian Expatriate Affairs (EEA), a new directive was passed to allow the diaspora to hold a foreign currency account in Ethiopia in order to foster diaspora investment in the country. In 2006, the EEA also postulated a directive for the regulation of remittance transfers which, for instance, aimed to reduce transfer costs. The first diaspora bond – the Millennium Bond – was issued in 2008. The government also introduced a few benefits for diaspora members upon their return to Ethiopia, such as duty-free imports and the provision of urban land free of charge. While the Ethiopian government does not allow its diaspora to hold dual citizenship, the EEA introduced, in 2002, the Ethiopian Origin Identity Card, also referred to as the ‘Yellow Card’, for people of Ethiopian origin who hold foreign citizenship (Fransen & Kuschminder, 2009; Kuschminder & Siegel, 2010).

At the beginning of his term, in 2018, the Ethiopian Prime Minister, Abiy Ahmed, put new emphasis on engaging the diaspora and harnessing its economic and development potential. He conducted a diaspora outreach campaign, visiting major places where the Ethiopian diaspora resides (Krippahl, 2018) and created the Ethiopian Diaspora Trust Fund (EDTF) to mobilise funds ‘to finance people-focused social and economic development projects’ (EDTF, 2019). While the EEA had been operating as an institution for diaspora affairs since 2002 (Kuschminder & Siegel, 2010), a new institution was launched in March 2019. With the Ethiopian Diaspora Agency, the Ethiopian government aims to create ‘an enabling

environment for the Diaspora to maximize knowledge and skills transfer and promote trade and investment’ (Embassy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia London, UK, 2019).

Sierra Leone has an Office of Diaspora Affairs. It was created in 2008 ‘within the Presidency in order to strengthen the engagement of the diaspora – mainly in the UK and the US – in the economic and social development of the country’ (Devillard et al., 2015, p. 299). At the time of my data collection, the Office of Diaspora Affairs did not have any online presence. The stakeholder interviews, as well as a review of existing reports, also did not show any recent policies to foster diaspora engagement or projects, apart from projects operated by international organisations, such as IOM’s CD4D. Even though the Sierra Leonean government has not adopted or drafted any comprehensive migration policy, migration – and diaspora engagement in particular – are part of its national development strategies (Devillard et al., 2015).

The current national development plan (‘Sierra Leone’s Medium-Term National Development Plan 2019–2023’) includes a few key policy actions related to diaspora engagement, such as the ‘Recruit[ment] of specialists through the introduction of attractive schemes for Sierra Leonean specialists in the diaspora and partnerships with international agencies’ (p. 53 of the Plan), the establishment of a diaspora bond (p. 180 of the Plan) and the promotion of diaspora investment. As the plan states: ‘Consider measures such as the creation of a one-stop shop for diaspora investment, the creation of diaspora bank accounts, and the relaxation of capital controls for diaspora businesses, to promote commercial investment by the diaspora in Sierra Leone’ (Government of Sierra Leone, 2019, p. 181). While diaspora bonds had already been mentioned in the 2013–2018 national development plan, no concrete actions could be identified (Devillard et al., 2015; Government of Sierra Leone, n.d.). The Sierra Leone Citizenship (Amendment) Act, passed in 2006, enables Sierra Leonean diaspora members to hold dual citizenship. According to the country’s constitution, individuals who hold the nationality of another country are not allowed to run in presidential or parliamentary elections. Yet, the dual citizenship rule was ignored until the election in 2018, when it became a topic (Jakwa, 2018).

The Somaliland Diaspora Agency was established on 26 August 2010 (Decree no. JSL/M/DM/249/0133/08210) and re-established in 2016. In 2020, the entity was functioning as the Diaspora Department as part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The agency’s recent achievements include the drafting of a Somaliland Diaspora Engagement Policy, and respective Strategic Plan (2018–2021) and the development of a diaspora service guide and country guide and other information material for diaspora members. A conference was planned for 2020 to create a dialogue about the diaspora policy and to give the diaspora a chance to contribute to the discussion about this next event to policy-makers; the potential launch of diaspora policy in 2021.

The diaspora is listed as one of seven priority areas of the Somaliland National Vision 2030 economic agenda. The National Development Plan II (2017–2021) highlights the need to involve the diaspora in several core areas. At the same time, Somaliland does not have a national diaspora policy (Republic of Somaliland & Ministry of Planning, 2017). The Somaliland Citizenship Law No.22/2002 (Article 2) allows Somalilanders to hold dual nationality (Somaliland Diaspora Agency, 2018). Somaliland citizenship can be acquired by anyone who is a descendant of a male Somalilander upon their first return to the country. According to Article 8 of the Somaliland Citizenship Law, any female Somaliland citizen who marries someone who is not a Somaliland citizen or who has renounced his Somaliland citizenship and acquired another, will lose her Somaliland citizenship.

The Somaliland Diaspora Department has initiated a diaspora trust fund, which aims at two pillars – investment and philanthropy. The second pillar intends to provide an alternative to individual remittance-sending by funding charity, philanthropy and national emergency relief

(Abdi, 2020). The National Development Plan also states that diaspora communities should be organised ‘to support efforts to achieve recognition’ (Republic of Somaliland & Ministry of Planning, 2017, p. 146) and be involved in order to increase the number of bilateral and multilateral agreements. The National Development Plan II stipulated that diaspora investment should be increased from 4 per cent in 2016 to 10 per cent by 2021. Planned interventions included the creation of a ‘sound and friendly business environment for the diaspora investment interventions’, the creation of ‘programmes for bringing diaspora expertise and the young generation back home’ and to establish a diaspora trust fund (Republic of Somaliland & Ministry of Planning, 2017, p. 53). The first pillar of the diaspora trust fund is planned to focus on diaspora investment. This stream will allow the diaspora to ‘invest [in] a joint venture that is professionally supported from start to end by high profile consultancy firms’ (Abdi, 2020, p. 16). The fund yet has to be launched.

While Somaliland law provides for general tax exemptions (Somaliland Customs Law No. 73, 2016), there are no specific incentives for diaspora members. Yet the Somaliland Diaspora Department is planning to introduce investment incentives (Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation, 2020). As diaspora investors encounter difficulties accessing financial services, they depend on personal savings and/or borrowed money (Ministry of Trade and Investment, n.d.; World Bank, 2015). Diaspora members are also often recognised as one of the main victims of land conflict (Observatory of Conflict and Violence Prevention, 2014) while the current legal framework seems insufficient ‘to arbitrate business conflicts’ (Republic of Somaliland & Ministry of Planning, 2017, p. 47).

Table 21. Overview of diaspora engagement policies and institutional arrangements for diaspora affairs

| | Ethiopia | Sierra Leone | Somaliland |
|--|--|---|---|
| Civil and social rights | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No dual nationality • Ethiopian Origin Identity Cards (2004) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dual nationality • (Officially) no access to political positions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dual nationality |
| Institutions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Directorate of Ethiopian Expatriate Affairs (EEA) (2002) • Ethiopian Diaspora Agency (2019) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of Diaspora Affairs (2008) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Somaliland Diaspora Agency (2010; 2016) |
| Harnessing diaspora for development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Millennium Bond (2008) • Ethiopian Diaspora Trust Fund (2018) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diaspora bond (planned) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diaspora Trust Fund (planned) • Diaspora Engagement Policy & Strategic Plan (drafted) |
| Incentives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duty-free import of personal and household items upon return to Ethiopia; lifted in 2006 • Investment and import incentives • Foreign currency bank accounts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No specific incentives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General tax exemptions (Somaliland Customs Law No. 73, 2016), no specific incentives for the diaspora |

Source: Own elaboration; Stakeholder interviews; Complemented by sources as indicated throughout the text

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of data collection methods, limitations, ethical considerations and methods of analysis. This study followed a qualitative approach, which provided in-depth insights into the motivations of diaspora members, the contributions to knowledge transfer and capacity development, the enablers and inhibitors of successful knowledge transfer and the experiences of returnee stigma. The data were collected through interviews with diaspora members, host-institution staff and stakeholders and were complemented with data from diaspora member pre- and post-assignment questionnaires and project information from IOM. This chapter has also presented the operationalisation of the three processes of IT, KC and COCD. Each process was operationalised through two dimensions – behaviours and results – for which values were assigned for diaspora-member and host-institution staff data, which were consequently matched for the 33 placements on which this part of the analysis focuses. The fact that data had to be excluded and that interviewees from less-successful placements may be less likely to participate in an interview is an important limitation. For the implementation of this research, translations and the support of local IOM offices were essential. At the same time, having IOM staff members act as interpreters did sometimes change the dynamics of the conversation.

In addition, this chapter has provided insight into the case study. The CD4D project was chosen, as it is one example of a diaspora return programme carried out by an international organisation for which comprehensive data could be collected as part of the evaluation. The chapter also provided an overview of the Ethiopian, Sierra Leonean and Somali(lander) diasporas, how they emerged and their main characteristics, specifically diaspora members living in the Netherlands. It showed that, in all three contexts, emigration was, to a great extent, driven by war and conflict. All three diasporas are engaging with their country of origin in multiple ways, including sending remittances and making investments, among others.



5

5 PARTICIPANT OVERVIEW: CHARACTERISTICS AND MOTIVATIONS

5.1 Introduction

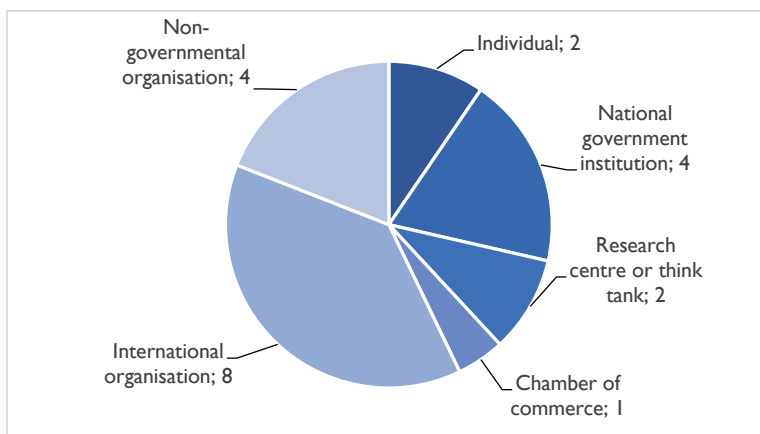
This chapter provides an overview of the participants of my study. It summarises the main institutional and individual characteristics of the different groups of participants: stakeholders, host institutions, host-institution staff in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland and diaspora members on return visits from the Netherlands to Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland. Thus, this chapter provides a basis for Chapters 6 to 8, as the characteristics of the participants serve as a background to the analysis presented in them.

The first part of this chapter provides an overview of the stakeholders interviewed for this study. Consequently, the second part of this chapter presents the main characteristics of host institutions in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland, as well as the host-institution context for knowledge transfer and capacity development. The following section focuses on the staff working at these host institutions who were interviewed for this study, after which diaspora members are discussed. For diaspora members, this chapter presents not only their main individual characteristics but also their relationship with the country of origin as well as their motivation to participate in VKTs. As for Chapters 6 and 7, the analysis here focuses on the placement level and the main characteristics of placements are briefly introduced in Section 5.6, drawing on the overview presented in the preceding sections. The final section presents the implications of and conclusions to this chapter.

5.2 Stakeholders

For this study, a total of 21 stakeholders – that is, representatives of organisations in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland working with diasporas directly or indirectly – were interviewed (six in Ethiopia, nine in Sierra Leone and six in Somaliland). As Figure 13 shows, stakeholders covered a range of organisations. In all three countries, I met with a representative of the diaspora agency as the main national entity for diaspora affairs. In the case of Sierra Leone, a meeting at another national government institution also took place. Eight of the stakeholder conversations were with representatives of international organisations – that is, multi-laterals such as the African Development Bank (AFDB), the IOM⁵⁴ and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as well as bilateral development agencies or charities (GIZ, USAID, VSO). Four stakeholders from non-governmental organisations were interviewed: the Alliance for Brain-gain and Innovative Development (ABIDE), an Ethiopian non-profit linking Ethiopians abroad to institutions in Ethiopia; PUM Netherlands senior experts in Sierra Leone; and Holland House Hargeisa in Somaliland.

⁵⁴ Here, an IOM staff member was interviewed about the IOM's work in the field of diaspora in Sierra Leone beyond CD4D. In all countries, I spoke to the project focal points during each visit. These conversations are not listed here as stakeholder conversations.

Figure 13. Stakeholders, by type of organisation (n = 21)

Source: Own elaboration.

In addition to providing insights with regards to diaspora engagement more generally, several of the stakeholders were involved in specific programmes and initiatives to foster diaspora knowledge transfer.

In Ethiopia, this included the Alliance for Brain-gain and Innovative Development (ABIDE), the German Corporation for International Cooperation GmbH (GIZ) and VSO. ABIDE has been working since 2007 to promote the engagement of diaspora professionals for the country's development. For this, they have signed Memoranda of Understanding with several ministries and universities.

GIZ has been active in two components called 'returning experts' and 'diaspora experts' as part of the 'Migration and Diaspora' programme by the Center for International Migration and Diaspora (CIM), a cooperation between the German Employment Agency and GIZ since 2011 and 2016, respectively. While the 'returning experts' component supports Ethiopians who return from Germany to Ethiopia to reintegrate into the labour market by helping them to find a job and funding the position for two years, the 'diaspora experts' component supports more temporary stays. 'Diaspora experts' are individuals living and working in Germany, who go to work in a host institution in Ethiopia for a short period of time – between three weeks minimum to a maximum of six months. Both returning and diaspora experts receive pre-departure training in Germany, an aspect that the representative highlighted as crucial to prepare for their return or stay due to the fast-changing environment in Ethiopia, resulting in people who have been abroad even only for a few months being unfamiliar with many things upon their return to Ethiopia. The organisation VSO also ran a diaspora programme for some years in Ethiopia together with the Canadian University Service Overseas (CUSO).

In Sierra Leone, IOM was operating the 'Strengthening Sierra Leonean National Health Care Capacity through Diaspora Engagement' under its Migration and Development for Africa (MIDA) programme. In addition, VSO used to run a diaspora volunteering programme in Sierra Leone that matched the Sierra Leonean diaspora living in the UK with local volunteers, yet the programme was suspended during the Ebola outbreak. In Somaliland, the diaspora agency was conducting a survey of diaspora engagement in public institutions in Hargeisa and Holland House Hargeisa was aiming to provide guidance for diaspora entrepreneurs/start-ups.

5.3 Host institutions

As part of CD4D, diaspora members are placed at host institutions within the target countries where they conduct their placement. The host institutions, therefore, constitute the immediate context in which knowledge transfer is supposed to take place. The environment which the host institutions provide plays a role in IT, KC and COCD. This section provides insight into the host institutions' environment. This study focuses on a total of 22 organisations in the three countries (six in Ethiopia, five in Sierra Leone and six in Somaliland). As Table 22 shows, almost half of the organisations included in this study are government ministries or departments. Ten organisations are higher-education institutions and two are research institutes. This sample proportionally reflects the types of institution in the overall project. As described in Section 1.3., host institutions were chosen by IOM. While, in Sierra Leone, the majority of CD4D host institutions were higher-education institutions, all the host institutions in Somaliland were ministries. In Ethiopia, CD4D host institutions were either ministries, higher-education institutions or research institutes. Despite these differences in organisation types, there are some commonalities across countries, especially concerning the challenges which host institutions face.

Table 22. Host institutions, by type of organisation

| | Ethiopia | Sierra Leone | Somaliland | Total |
|------------------------------|----------|--------------|------------|-------|
| Higher-education institution | 3 | 7 | – | 10 |
| Ministry | 2 | 1 | 7 | 10 |
| Research institute | 2 | – | – | 2 |
| Total | 7 | 8 | 7 | 22 |

Source: Own elaboration based on interview data.

The host institutions played an active role in determining which knowledge gaps they would like to see addressed as part of the programme. The lack of qualified staff was evident at the host institutions selected for this case study. The managers described challenges concerning staff quality and quantity. With regards to the former, low levels of staff experience were described as a major challenge at higher-education institutions in Ethiopia and Sierra Leone. While higher-education institutions require lecturers with a PhD, most of their staff are junior and their education levels do not go beyond a Master's degree. Lema (Manager, Placement 3, Ethiopia) said:

We don't have skilled human power. Most of our researchers are juniors. [...] We have 15 years of research strategy. [...] So, to achieve this strategy, the first issue [to address is] the human resource in terms of number and capacity. We have a few researchers and then these few researchers are juniors. When you think about research it requires skill and knowledge, so we also have a limitation on the number of quality researchers. And other facilities as well, we don't have laboratories. We don't have a lab technician at full capacity.

In addition to the qualifications required for a particular role, several host institutions showed a clear lack of expert knowledge in areas such as Human Resources (HR). The assignments within the HR departments showed not only that the host institutions lack an HR

policy but also that ministries do not have clear job descriptions and criteria as a basis for recruitment. Nor do they have clearly defined tasks per position, employee work time and attendance tracking systems, employee records or forms for sick leave or maternity leave. Additionally, at one of the ministries selected for this case study, the HR department was only established in 2018 and another ministry was also only established as a separate institution in the same year.

As also expressed by the above quote, understaffing is another challenge which many of the host institutions were facing, either due to difficulties in recruiting specialised staff with a Master's degree or higher, budget constraints or the turnover of staff.

In Sierra Leone and Somaliland, the change in administration as a result of the elections meant that all occupants of high-level management positions at public institutions changed. For CD4D, this meant a lack of information about the project and, in some cases, a managerial change in objectives concerning CD4D.

Staff at higher-education institutions reported a lack of space. The physical space available to the institutions has turned out to be insufficient considering the number of students they are receiving, obliging institutions to rent additional facilities and to resort to giving lectures outside or in overcrowded classrooms. As David (Manager, Sierra Leone)⁵⁵ admitted:

Space is a problem. [...] the population of students is expanding tremendously. We have about 7,000 students now. So, our space, classroom space, is a big problem. So, our classes are large. And also, space also for lecturers to be able to have time, to have privacy. Council with their students. That's a big problem. So, right now we are renting at five different facilities. To allocate to the needs of our students. And that's costing us a lot of money. So, before you could see the out there. We're putting up a seven-storey building which will help us take care of these facilities.

The interviews conducted during the first visit also serve to understand the organisational environment for knowledge transfer. In organisations across all three countries, work is commonly conducted through regular – daily or weekly – staff meetings, at a unit or department level, monthly meetings of heads of department and quarterly or annual meetings at other levels. Even though knowledge transfer is not the primary purpose of these meetings, they were frequently mentioned by respondents across countries when asked for methods of knowledge transfer that are common in their organisation, showing that staff perceived them as a common method for knowledge transfer. Additionally, teamwork was frequently mentioned in all three countries. Teamwork in Ethiopia, in particular, seems to be culture-driven and to come naturally. In the ministries in Ethiopia and Somaliland, teamwork was reported to be a fixed component of the daily workload, with staff members working together in units or case teams.

In all three countries, the majority of respondents were not familiar with the term 'mentoring'. In some organisations – for instance, in some of the higher-education institutions in Sierra Leone – mentoring takes place informally. There were a few cases where respondents were very engaged in knowledge transfer activities and especially mentoring. This seemed to be driven by personal motivation, not by organisational measures. For example, one respondent at a higher-education institution in Sierra Leone seemed to be very familiar with and engaged in knowledge-transfer methods. He had already retired before he was recruited for his current position. Therefore, he stressed that he is only remaining in this role until he has passed on his knowledge to somebody who can then do his job. During the interview, he handed out a two-

⁵⁵ This response does not correspond to any of the 33 placements examined, which is why no placement number has been assigned here.

page guideline which he had developed for more junior staff – showing them how to move forward in their career – and he told me that he gives this guideline to his mentees. This demonstrates a form of explicit knowledge transfer that he has developed as a formal reference tool for his junior staff and mentees. This level of knowledge transfer was a strong exception to the norm.

Training was generally one of the tasks which respondents expected diaspora members to engage in. At some institutions, in all three countries, host-institution staff had access to training at the time of the baseline visit. The topics of the training in place included project proposals, result-based management or research proposals. In many cases, the training was conducted by or in cooperation with international organisations such as the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank or GIZ. Overall, most institutions were not able to offer their staff the possibility to attend external training. In the institutions where this *was* possible, this was mostly through international donors or cooperation with foreign governments. Some institutions in Ethiopia reported having Training of Trainer (ToT)-Programmes or on-the-job training. This was not the case for host institutions in Sierra Leone and Somaliland. Yet, also in Ethiopia, staff reported that these training programmes were not accessible for all staff, as they target new staff or staff at certain locations, such as the provinces. In addition, conferences were frequently mentioned as a way of sharing ideas by respondents at the interviewed host institutions.

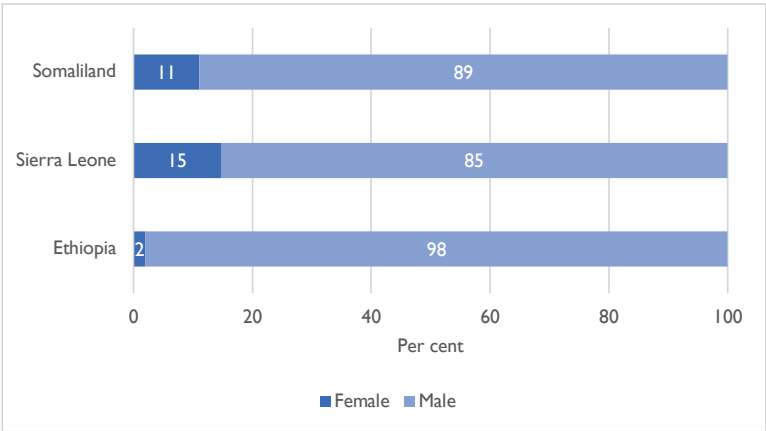
The majority of respondents were also not familiar with the term ‘networking’. The use of technology for the transfer of knowledge seems to depend not only on the country and the resources available but on each respondent. While the majority of knowledge transfer happens face to face, respondents also mentioned social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, WhatsApp, YouTube), emails, phones and smartphones, websites, PowerPoint/projectors and network sharing as means which they currently use to share ideas with other colleagues. Nonetheless, respondents frequently reported a lack of technology for knowledge sharing, especially the lack of a stable internet connection at the institution. At the time of the interviews, none of the organisations had policies for knowledge transfer or knowledge management in place.

5.4 Host-institution staff

Knowledge transfer – in the context of a diaspora return programme such as CD4D – takes place through the interaction of two main groups of actors – the diaspora members and the host-institution staff. For a host institution to benefit from CD4D, its staff needs to gain knowledge from the diaspora member which increases their ability to perform their tasks. Through these increases in individual knowledge, host institutions ultimately increase their organisational knowledge. Depending on the placement, between one and eight host-institution staff members who were involved in the placement, either as managers or colleagues, were interviewed. In addition, further host-institution staff were interviewed during the baseline visit. Through 213 interviews at three different points in time, a total of 175 host-institution staff respondents were interviewed. The analysis of knowledge transfer and capacity development in the following two chapters focuses on 33 placements, comprising 74 host-institution staff. This section provides an overview of the latter’s main characteristics. The vast majority of respondents were male (see Figure 14). The share of female interviewees was the lowest in Ethiopia, with only one female respondent. In Sierra Leone and Somaliland, the share of female respondents was slightly higher (15 and 11 per cent, respectively). The low share of

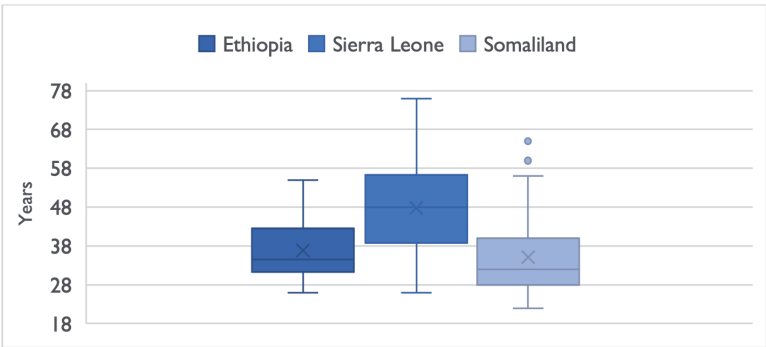
female respondents is not necessarily surprising, as all these countries score relatively poorly on gender equality (see Table 19, Chapter 4, Section 4.4.).

Figure 14. Gender of host-institution staff respondents, by country



Source: Own elaboration based on interview data.
Notes: Percentages were calculated as valid percentages. Gender was not recorded for 4 respondents.

Figure 15. Age of host-institution staff respondents, by country



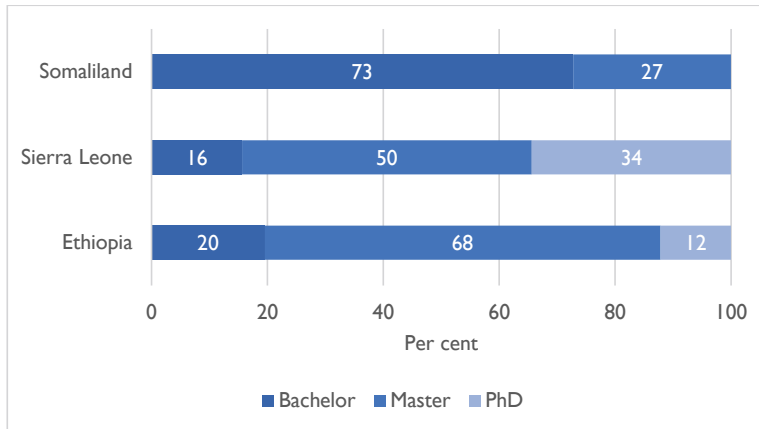
Source: Own elaboration based on interview data.
Notes: 26 missing values. The X marks the mean. Median indicated by middle line, 25th and 75th indicated by outer box. The dots mark outliers.

The average age of my respondents was 41 years old. However, as Figure 15 shows, this varies by country. Respondents working in Sierra Leonean institutions were, on average, the oldest, with a mean age of about 48 years, compared to a mean age of 37 for respondents in Ethiopia and 35 in Somaliland. This age discrepancy is partially explained by the education levels.

Overall, a Master’s degree is the level of education the most frequently obtained by respondents from all three countries (48 per cent). Thirty-four per cent of respondents for whom the education level was available held a Bachelor’s degree and 18 per cent had obtained a PhD. None of the respondents had a degree lower than a BA. A comparison across countries shows some differences with regards to the level of education of respondents (see Figure 16), with

levels being the highest in Sierra Leone and the lowest in Somaliland. In Sierra Leone, 34 per cent of respondents had obtained a PhD. In Ethiopia, this was the case for 12 per cent of respondents while, in Somaliland, none of the respondents held a Doctoral degree. This difference might be attributed to the fact that the majority of host institutions in Sierra Leone are universities.

Figure 16. Level of education of host-institution staff respondents, by country



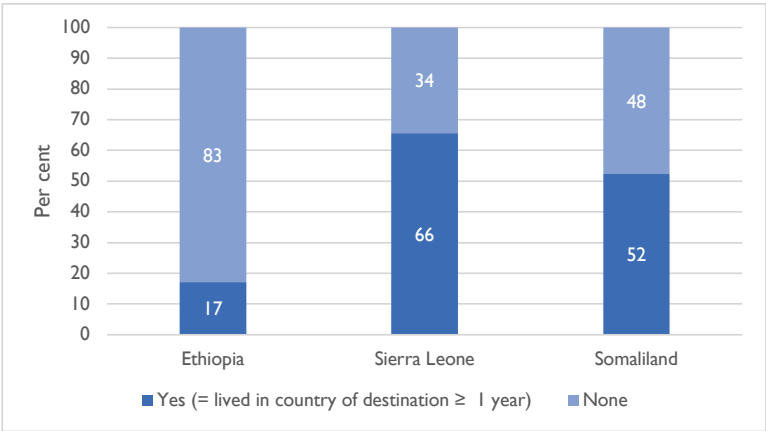
Source: Own elaboration based on interview data.

Notes: Percentages were calculated as valid percentages; 26 missing values.

Host-institution staff respondents are generally citizens of the respective case-study country. In a very few cases – three in Sierra Leone – respondents hold dual nationality. Forty-eight per cent of host-institution staff, for whom information on their migration experience was available, have migration experience, here defined as having lived in the country of destination for at least one year. As Figure 17 shows, the extent to which staff have migration experience varies by country. While, in Sierra Leone, around 65 per cent had lived abroad for at least a year, only 17 per cent of respondents in Ethiopia had any migration experience. In Somaliland, over half of all respondents had migration experience.

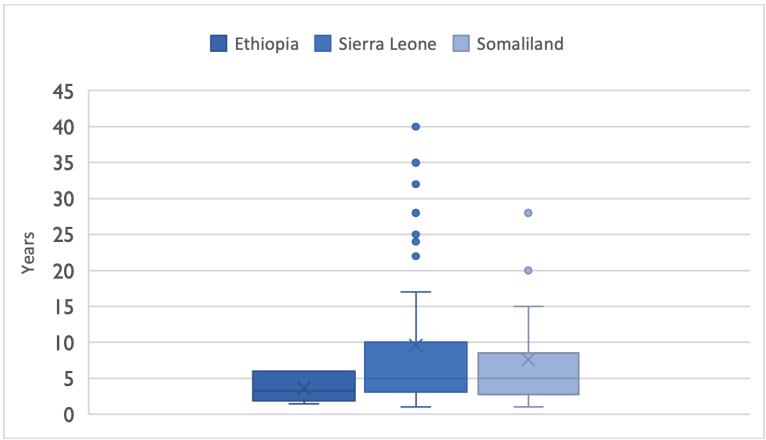
The most common reason for migration is to pursue higher education. The migration duration of respondents differed by country. Ethiopian respondents had an average migration duration of around three and a half years, as they had mostly emigrated to pursue higher education and then returned. This was different in Sierra Leone and Somaliland, where the average migration duration was 9.5 years for Sierra Leone and around 7.5 years in the case of Somaliland.

Figure 17. Host-institution staff’s migration experiences, by country



Source: Own elaboration based on interview data.
 Notes: Percentages were calculated as valid percentages; 30 missing values.

Figure 18. Migration duration of host-institution staff with migration experience (≥1 year), by country



Source: Own elaboration based on interview data.
 Notes: 2 missing values for Somaliland. The X marks the mean. Median indicated by middle line, 25th and 75th indicated by outer box. The dots mark outliers.

5.5 Diaspora members

After the host-institution staff, the diaspora members are the second group of actors in the knowledge transfer and capacity development processes. Being recruited to conduct short-term placements at the host institutions, they take the role of knowledge senders. This section summarises the main characteristics of diaspora members on return visits, their relationship with the country of origin and their motivation for return visits.

5.5.1 Main individual characteristics

Diaspora members were predominantly male; of those interviewed for this study, only six were female, which is in line with the overall rather low rate of female participants within the CD4D project. The share of female diaspora members was somewhat higher in Somaliland, with four female participants. This imbalance may be explained by a focus on certain sectors and qualifications.

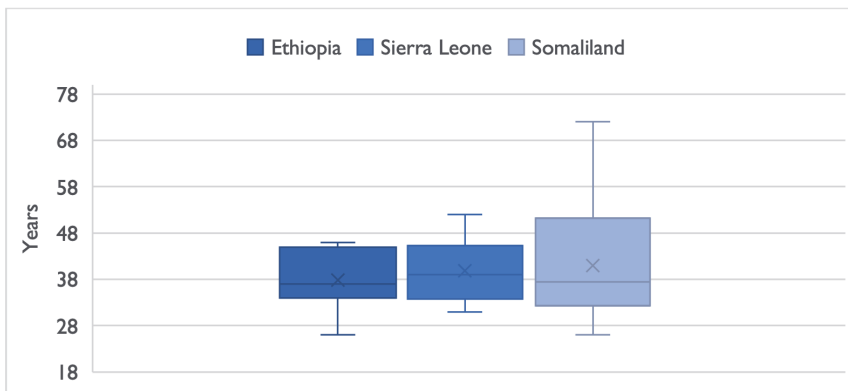
Table 23. Gender of diaspora members, by country

| Gender | Country | | | Total |
|--------|----------|--------------|------------|-------|
| | Ethiopia | Sierra Leone | Somaliland | |
| Female | 2 | – | 4 | 6 |
| Male | 6 | 9 | 14 | 29 |
| Total | 8 | 9 | 18 | 35 |

Source: Own elaboration.

The respondents were, on average, 40 years old at the start of their first assignment, with their ages ranging between 26 and 72. As Figure 19 shows, the age range was wider in Somaliland than in the other two countries. In Somaliland, the youngest diaspora member was 26 years old while the oldest was aged 72.

Figure 19. Age of diaspora members, by country



Source: Own elaboration based on participant baseline survey data

Notes: The X marks the mean. Median indicated by middle line, 25th and 75th indicated by outer box. The dots mark outliers; 6 missing values.

As diaspora members are selected based on their skills, the majority are highly educated and have at least a Master's degree. Some differences with regards to education levels could be observed across the countries. In Ethiopia, five of the eight diaspora members had completed a PhD. In comparison, none of the diaspora members from Sierra Leone and only one respondent from Somaliland had a PhD. In Somaliland, education levels were generally more mixed; it was also the only case where the highest level of education of diaspora members was technical or vocational training. Some of these differences could be explained by the differences in host institutions, as those in Ethiopia and Sierra Leone were mostly higher-

education or research institutions, while host institutions in Somaliland were ministries. Another reason may be the differences in education levels among the diasporas more generally.

Table 24. Level of education of diaspora members, by country

| | Country | | | Total |
|---------------------------------------|----------|--------------|------------|-------|
| | Ethiopia | Sierra Leone | Somaliland | |
| Technical or vocational qualification | – | – | 1 | 1 |
| Bachelor's degree | – | 1 | 6 | 7 |
| Master's degree | 3 | 8 | 6 | 17 |
| PhD | 5 | – | 1 | 6 |
| Total | 8 | 9 | 14 | 31 |

Source: Own elaboration based on diaspora member baseline questionnaire data; completed from interviews where available; 4 missing values.

Diaspora members had generally obtained their education, at least their highest degree, in the Netherlands or another European country.⁵⁶

Table 25. Employment status prior to the participation in CD4D, by country

| | Country | | | Total |
|--|----------|--------------|------------|-------|
| | Ethiopia | Sierra Leone | Somaliland | |
| Employed | 6 | 5 | 9 | 20 |
| Unemployed | 2 | 4 | 8 | 14 |
| Not participating in the labour market | – | – | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 8 | 9 | 18 | 35 |

Source: Own elaboration based on participant baseline questionnaire data; completed from interviews where available.

Twenty of the 35 diaspora members were employed before participating in CD4D; however, notably, about 40 per cent were not. Of these 15 diaspora members, only one was not participating in the labour market,⁵⁷ while 14 were unemployed. Eleven of the diaspora members who were unemployed indicated previously having been employed in their area of expertise in the Netherlands or another European country. With regards to the level of seniority for the diaspora members who were employed prior to their return visit, Table 26 shows their level of seniority for those for whom this information was available, showing that about half held a mid-level position.

⁵⁶ For six respondents, this information was not available.

⁵⁷ As per the answer categories of the questionnaire, the respondent indicated 'No, unemployed and not currently looking for work'.

Table 26. Level of seniority of employed diaspora members prior to the participation in CD4D, by country

| | Country | | | Total |
|------------------|----------|--------------|------------|-------|
| | Ethiopia | Sierra Leone | Somaliland | |
| Junior | | 1 | | 1 |
| Mid-level | 4 | 2 | 2 | 8 |
| Lower management | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Upper management | 1 | | 1 | 2 |
| Total | 5 | 4 | 5 | 14 |

Source: Own elaboration based on participant baseline questionnaire data; completed from interviews where available; 6 missing values.

Apart from two diaspora members, all had been born in the case-study country.⁵⁸ One diaspora member was born in the Netherlands, one answered ‘Other’. Eight of the diaspora members for whom this information was available were less than 15 years old at the time of migration, with two being as young as 2 and 3 years old. Another nine diaspora members were between 15 and 24 years old at the time of migration and 10 were 25 years or older. The diaspora members had spent, on average, at least half of their lifetime in the Netherlands.

5.5.2 Relationship with the country of origin

The aim of CD4D is to support diaspora members living in the Netherlands in conducting VKTs in their country of origin: to a certain extent, diaspora members living in another European country can also participate (see Chapter 1, Section 1.3). Therefore, diaspora members generally lived in the Netherlands or another European country before the return visit. This was the case for all diaspora members from Ethiopia and Sierra Leone. Yet, in Somaliland, IOM made an exception and also allowed diaspora members who were already living in the country to participate. As Table 27 shows, eight diaspora members from Somaliland were living there before participating in CD4D. Depending on the diaspora member, they had moved to Somaliland between several years and just a few months before participating. In addition, three diaspora members in Somaliland were living and working in the country directly prior to CD4D; they indicated that they were both residing in the Netherlands (or another European country) and Somaliland – as they described it: ‘to be coming in and out’ of Somaliland or ‘to be going back and forth’. While not return visitors as such, these diaspora members use the modality offered by the diaspora return programme as if it was a job opportunity (see also Section 5.5.3.)

⁵⁸ For one respondent, this information was not available.

Table 27. Country of residence prior to diaspora members' participation in CD4D, by country

| | Country | | | Total |
|--|----------|--------------|------------|-----------|
| | Ethiopia | Sierra Leone | Somaliland | |
| Netherlands or other European country | 8 | 9 | 7 | 24 |
| • Netherlands | 7 | 4 | 6 | 17 |
| • Another European country | 1 | 5 | 1 | 7 |
| Netherlands (or other European country) and assignment country | – | – | 3 | 3 |
| Assignment country | – | – | 8 | 8 |
| Total | 8 | 9 | 18 | 35 |

Source: Own elaboration based on participant baseline questionnaire data; completed from interviews where available.

The 24 diaspora members who lived in the Netherlands or another European country prior to participating in CD4D had engaged with their country of origin either through return visits or diaspora engagement or both.

Table 28. Return visits and diaspora engagement prior to CD4D

| | Country | | | Total |
|---------------------|----------|--------------|------------|-----------|
| | Ethiopia | Sierra Leone | Somaliland | |
| Return visits | 8 | 7 | 3 | 18 |
| Diaspora engagement | – | – | 1 | 1 |
| Both | – | 2 | 3 | 5 |
| Total | 8 | 9 | 7 | 24 |

Source: Own elaboration based on interviews.

Out of the diaspora members who had previously conducted return visits, nine had previously participated in a temporary return programme, mainly TRQN, prior to CD4D. In Somaliland, only one diaspora member had previous experience of participating while, in Ethiopia, this was the case for two of them. In contrast, in Sierra Leone, six out of nine diaspora members had previously participated in a temporary return programme, showing that Sierra Leoneans were more experienced with participation in these programmes. Another form of return that some diaspora members engaged in was visits to family and friends, with 13 diaspora members reporting spending vacations in the country of origin for that purpose. Some diaspora members indicated that they visited friends and family every year, while others visited less frequently. As one diaspora member from Sierra Leone said: 'I used to come on vacation. I am originally from Sierra Leone, so I used to come; my parents are here. I used to come, I can say, since 2005, I used to come every year'. One diaspora member from Ethiopia indicated that he visited the country every year to take care of his mother, showing an example of what could be referred to as a care visit. Other, less frequent, purposes for visits were business or other work-related activities and, in one case, charity work.

With regards to diaspora engagement, five diaspora members reported some form of engagement prior to CD4D. Of these, three engaged in charity work for the assignment country

from Europe and one was involved in business activities in his country of origin. Three diaspora members reported that they were active members of a diaspora organisation. The forms of engagement and visits overlap, with some diaspora members engaging in multiple types of visit and engagement.

For the 27 diaspora members who completed the baseline questionnaire, information on their communication with the host institution prior to the CD4D project is available. This shows that, out of the 27, nine had previously been in contact with the host institution while the majority had not. Four of these diaspora members had previously participated in TRQN. Diaspora members were also asked whether they had family in their country of origin. Only one respondent did not have any family there. Eleven diaspora members reported being in touch with their closest friend or family member in the country of origin every week – two even daily. The remaining diaspora members were communicating less frequently, with 10 indicating that they were usually in contact every month and two several times a year (see Table 29).

Table 29: Frequency of communication with the closest friend or family member, by country

| | Country | | | Total |
|----------------------|----------|--------------|------------|-----------|
| | Ethiopia | Sierra Leone | Somaliland | |
| Daily | – | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Every week | 4 | 4 | 3 | 11 |
| Every month | 2 | 2 | 6 | 10 |
| Several times a year | – | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| NA | 1 | – | 1 | 2 |
| Total | 7 | 8 | 12 | 27 |

Source: Own elaboration based on participant baseline questionnaire data.

Notes: NA = Not available.

In line with the assumption that participation in CD4D constitutes a short-term visit after which diaspora members return to the Netherlands, over two-thirds of the diaspora members planned to live in the Netherlands after participating in CD4D. Nonetheless, two diaspora members from Ethiopia and five from Somaliland indicated that they planned to live in their respective countries of origin. With regards to retirement, 17 diaspora members indicated that they planned to retire in their country of origin.

Table 30. Country in which diaspora members planned to live after CD4D and where they plan to retire, by country

| | Plans to live | | | | Plans to retire | | | |
|---|---------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| | Country | | | Total | Country | | | Total |
| | ET | SL | SOL | | ET | SL | SOL | |
| The Netherlands (or other European country) | 5 | 7 | 6 | 18 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| Assignment country | 2 | – | 5 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 8 | 17 |
| Other | – | 1 | – | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 5 |
| NA | – | – | 1 | 1 | – | – | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 7 | 8 | 12 | 27 | 7 | 8 | 12 | 27 |

Source: Own elaboration based on participant baseline questionnaire data.

Notes: ET = Ethiopia; SL = Sierra Leone; SOL = Somaliland; NA = Not available.

When asked to which country they feel more connected, 18 diaspora members indicated feeling connected to both the Netherlands or another European country where they resided *and* their country of origin. Seven diaspora members reported that they felt more connected to their country of origin, while two felt more connected to the Netherlands or another European country.⁵⁹

All in all, this section shows that many of the diaspora members were transnational in the way in which they interacted with the country of origin prior to the return visit for knowledge transfer, their maintenance of contact with family and friends and the connectedness they feel with their country of origin.

5.5.3 *The motivation of diaspora members with regards to return visits for knowledge transfer*

Diaspora members participate in the CD4D project voluntarily. Existing evidence suggests that their motivation for engaging in knowledge transfer may either enable or inhibit its success. For this reason, this section examines the motivations of diaspora members on return visits. Their participation was driven by both altruistic and non-altruistic motivations. Fifteen of the diaspora members interviewed articulated solely altruistic motivations, eight reported purely non-altruistic motivations for participation and 10 reported a mix of both altruistic and non-altruistic motivations (see Table 31). Motivations were unclear for two respondents.

Table 31. Motivation of diaspora members, by country

| Motivation | Country | | | Total |
|----------------|----------|--------------|------------|-----------|
| | Ethiopia | Sierra Leone | Somaliland | |
| Altruistic | 4 | 5 | 6 | 15 |
| Mixed | 2 | 4 | 4 | 10 |
| Non-altruistic | 1 | – | 7 | 8 |
| NA | 1 | – | 1 | 2 |
| Total | 8 | 9 | 18 | 35 |

Source: Own elaboration.
 Note: NA = Not available.

In what follows, I discuss the drivers of these motivations, building on factors identified in the literature such as the role of emotional attachment, duty and family for altruistic motivations and financial interests, return intentions, professional development and emotional satisfaction for non-altruistic motivations.

Altruistic motivations

A key motivation was the diaspora members’ emotional attachment to their country of origin, as mentioned by 14 of the 15 diaspora members with altruistic motivations. Diaspora members may be inclined to demonstrate that their motivations for participation are in line with the main project objectives and therefore emphasise their desire to contribute to the development of their country of origin. While this may have influenced some of the diaspora members’ responses,

⁵⁹ This information was not available or was unclear for eight diaspora members.

many clearly articulated how the ties and obligations they maintain with and how they perceive their country of origin drive their engagement. This was the case for almost all of the diaspora members who were driven by altruistic motivations. Diaspora members expressed that their main motivation to participate was to ‘help’, ‘contribute’ or ‘give back’. In addition, how they referred to Ethiopia, Sierra Leone or Somaliland, respectively, as ‘my homeland’, ‘my home country’, ‘my country’, ‘my mother country’ or ‘my birth country’ illustrates their close attachment to the country.

For a number of diaspora members, this sense of belonging created an obligation to contribute to their country of origin. As one respondent who had previously also participated in TRQN said: ‘I have to give back. I owe that to Sierra Leone. And that is always motivating to me’. While the existing literature shows that feelings of obligation often stem from connections to family (Brinkerhoff, 2012; Kapur, 2001; Mohamed & Abdul-Talib, 2020), this was not the case here. Only one diaspora member explicitly mentioned how expectations from family members had motivated his previous engagement in his country of origin, yet not his participation in a diaspora return programme as such. The absence of an explicit link between diaspora members’ duty to the family may be because VKTs are taking place in the professional sphere; nonetheless, most respondents indicated that they regularly visited family or friends in their country of origin prior to participating in CD4D.

In contrast, a few diaspora members spoke of how this feeling of obligation arose from their educational achievements in the Netherlands or another European country. In Europe, the diaspora members had been able to attain a – as one diaspora member put it – ‘good educational background’. It became clear that they perceived this as a privilege that they had been able to obtain through emigration and therefore felt obliged to give some of their skills and knowledge back to their country of origin, which they perceived to lack such capacity. For instance, Bekele (see Case 2), who had tried to organise a similar project on his own before he participated in CD4D, said that having had the opportunity to obtain a higher education had instilled in him ‘a feeling of guilt’ and left him with a desire to contribute to development in his country of origin.

As the previous section showed, the diaspora members who lived in the Netherlands or another European country before participating in CD4D had engaged with their country of origin either through return visits or forms of diaspora engagement. Out of the 13 diaspora members with altruistic motivations, five had participated in a diaspora return programme before participating in CD4D. They took part in CD4D’s predecessor project TRQN and their participation in CD4D needs to be viewed in light of this. Three of them clearly articulated how their previous participation was one of the motivating factors for their participation in CD4D. Because they perceived their first participation in TRQN as rewarding, they aspire to continue participating in other programmes. The impact that they perceived themselves to have made on their country of origin is a key factor that also motivates them to continue to participate in a diaspora return programme.

Not all previous engagement with the country of origin beyond visits of family and friends was facilitated by a diaspora return programme. For five diaspora members, expanding their previous – independent - engagement in or with their country of origin through CD4D was a motivating factor. This included two diaspora members who were active members of a diaspora organisation – one of whom had also been on visits to the country of origin for charity work – one diaspora member who had been involved in business activities in the country of origin and two other diaspora members. Participating in VKTs allowed them to contribute to their country of origin in an area other than that in which they had already been previously engaged. This was also the case for Yusuuf.

Case 1: Yusuuf, Somaliland (altruistic motivations)⁶⁰

Yusuuf was in his early 30s at the start of this placement. He was 10 years old when he arrived in the Netherlands, where he was living prior to his placement. He holds a Master's degree which he obtained in the Netherlands and was employed prior to participating in CD4D. Some years ago, he set up a small business with family members in his country of origin. When he heard about the CD4D project, he found that it was in line with his existing intentions to contribute to his country of origin. His previous engagement there had made him aware of the capacity gaps that exist in the country and motivated him to direct his engagement further towards non-monetary contributions that strengthen local capacities and knowledge. As he explained:

[...] I noticed that there are people who are willing to work and just need the support or don't have the knowledge and which is, for me, for me it's quite basic you know, to help people, to support people. I've been in there, like, since I finished my study. I've been working as a consultant, so for me it's normal and then from there on I thought, well, there are people who are really willing to work and to start their own businesses but they need the support and maybe a little knowledge, why not help them, and yeah, it really was an eye-opener, you know, when you go there and you see it working then from there on I thought 'Wow, this is something I can do more often in the region'. And basically, that's how it went.

Two diaspora members had tried to organise a similar project on their own before they participated in CD4D and had contacted organisations in their country of origin. Yet, they encountered difficulties with this – e.g., contacting the host institutions was difficult. They then decided to participate in CD4D as the project provided the means and an environment for engagement. Bekele was one of these respondents.

Case 2: Bekele, Placement 7, Ethiopia (altruistic motivations)

Bekele also holds a Master's degree which he obtained in the Netherlands. The 34-year-old was employed in the Netherlands before going on the return visit. At this point he had been living in the Netherlands for seven years, having immigrated in his late 20s. Prior to CD4D, Bekele had returned to his country of origin mainly to visit family or friends. As he wanted to contribute to development there, he tried to contact universities for potential collaboration within his field of expertise – which is a relatively new field in Ethiopia. He offered to give a lecture or support a university in setting up a laboratory. Yet, this turned out to be quite challenging and he was not able to arrange any collaboration. Communication was the main issue. As he said:

[I] tried to reach them, but getting a reply was quite difficult, so literally, I wrote to more than 10 universities and I had a reply from two and then after a one-off reply, they also – I lost the communication. It was very hard to communicate. Yeah, so that was what I tried privately.

⁶⁰ No placement number as placement was not included in the analysis of 33 placements due to a lack of host-institution staff data.

He then heard from a friend that IOM The Netherlands was looking for diaspora experts to participate in the CD4D project. It turned out that what CD4D was facilitating was very similar to what he had been trying to achieve on his own. Yet, from his perspective, the CD4D project had two key advantages: ‘It is more formalised and also makes it easy for me, so the communication barriers are overcome’.

Bekele’s example illustrates how CD4D allows diaspora members to fulfil their plans of contributing to capacity development in their country of origin, a contribution that they had already initiated on their own yet had not been able to put into practice. Bekele reflected on his experience with CD4D in the following way:

Yes, certainly I want to do it. I definitely want to do it...I mean I'm doing it privately, I also want to do it, so if it comes through an organisation even if it facilitates more, it makes it easy, I want to do it, but I really want to also evaluate what I'm going to do because, when I go, I really also go in a time, my holiday time, so it's not like you go for it – interrupted. So yeah, I want to do it, I'm really happy to do, but I would be happy if I have the chance when these projects are established to have my view on them.

Non-altruistic motivations

Eight diaspora members posited purely non-altruistic motivations. Apart from two diaspora members,⁶¹ these motivations were driven by their interest in CD4D as a (temporary) job opportunity. Even though the stipends provided by IOM may not be competitive compared to a Dutch salary, longer assignments or repeat participation may be particularly attractive for otherwise unemployed individuals. This may especially be the case for diaspora members who were residing in the country of origin before CD4D, as individuals residing in the Netherlands may be able to apply for unemployment benefits. Indeed, five of the six diaspora members were residing in the assignment country prior to CD4D.

Case 3: Fathia, Placement 22, Somaliland (non-altruistic motivations)

Fathia, who is among the youngest diaspora members, holds a Bachelor’s degree and was unemployed prior to CD4D. Receiving a job opportunity was also a key motivation for Fathia who was residing in Somaliland before she participated in CD4D. As she admitted: ‘I moved randomly, I didn't really have a plan, but I knew I wanted to stay for a year’. She saw the CD4D project as an opportunity to work in a field related to her expertise in their country of origin. Participating in the CD4D project interested her as this meant that she could work at a public institution and within her field of expertise. Another key advantage she saw – compared to jobs in her field of expertise in her country of origin – was that she would have an apolitical role. At the same time, payment and contract duration played a key role for her:

That was another attractive thing because it was like a three-month contract, and it was in three-month instalments, instead of a very long commitment because I was not sure if I was going to stay longer than I am. I am currently staying for quite a while. That was [an advantage], I guess, in the beginning.

⁶¹ One diaspora member was motivated by the opportunity for professional development, another by the emotional satisfaction brought by CD4D.

As the quote illustrates, Fathia, at least initially, saw an advantage in the way the programme is organised with monthly stipends and short-term assignments.

Mixed motivations

The previous two sections showed that altruistic motivations were driven by diaspora members' emotional attachment to the country of origin, resulting in a desire to contribute to it, a sense of duty towards it and a desire to expand on previous engagement in or with it. Non-altruistic motivations mostly constituted a search for a job opportunity. In addition, to these purely altruistic or non-altruistic motivations, 10 diaspora members reported a mix of both. Thus, altruism was generally presented as the main motivation, while non-altruistic motivation seemed to be an additional one.

One diaspora member, Saidu (Placement 15, Sierra Leone), described the dichotomy between the importance of monetary aspects and more altruistic motivations in the following way:

[...] when I look at what I am transferring to my country of origin, it is more than the money. [...] sometimes we have to look at the money, somehow to motivate us, money is one part of a motivator for a human being and it also helps you to meet or to buy your domestic needs, you know. But in your country of origin, I always ask myself the question: 'What have I done to my country of origin?', because the foundation of my education that I am now proud of today, started there. And in terms of nation-building, if the country is a developing nation, and I have been educated abroad, I need to pay back, I need to contribute back [to my country of origin].

The altruism shown by diaspora members with mixed motivations was the same as the motivations presented by diaspora members with purely altruistic motivations. Nine of the 10 diaspora members articulated that an emotional attachment to the country of origin motivated their engagement. The desire to fulfil perceived obligations towards the country of origin and to expand on previous engagements were each mentioned as a motivation by four diaspora members.

Three non-altruistic motivations could be identified for diaspora members with mixed motivations. First, the motivation to satisfy emotional needs. Participating in CD4D allows participants to spend time in their country of origin in a way that gives them personal satisfaction as it allows them to apply the knowledge gained through education in the Netherlands in their field of expertise and in a context that they feel connected to.

As another diaspora member, Alemu (Placements 3, 4 and 5, Ethiopia), said:

I feel good. It satisfies me. I mean, it was my dream at the first, how to help my country, my people but, thanks to the CD4D project, this opportunity gave me this chance at least, we can do a little bit. Of course, the country is large and there are a lot of things that still have to be done. Many, many areas in the country. But as an individual and expert, I am very happy to get this opportunity and to transfer this knowledge to my home country.

Two diaspora members also explained that they feel that they can be helpful and make an impact in their country of origin, something they do not feel they can do in the Netherlands. This was also the case for Joseph.

Case 4: Joseph, Placement 14, Sierra Leone (mixed motivations)

As is the norm for diaspora members participating in CD4D, Joseph obtained his highest degree in the Netherlands. After finishing his studies, he started to work there. After a year in his job, he discovered that he was not comfortable in this position: '[...] I did not find it interesting. And [I experienced] discrimination and I was not comfortable at all at work'. At about the same time, Joseph heard about TRQN, which led him to resign from his job in order to participate in the project. From his viewpoint, TRQN presented an opportunity to apply the knowledge gained through his education in the Netherlands in a field that he is passionate about and in a context to which he feels connected. While he did not consider the stipend attractive, the fact that his expertise was needed convinced him to participate. After taking part in TRQN for about three years, Joseph 'decided to do some freelance work, until [this] CD4D came up':

I had not completed what I wanted to complete in Sierra Leone. CD4D was an opportunity for me to go and take back to my people, help improve good governance, help improve human rights situations, help improve the lives of people, social-economic lives of people, so that is why I participated [in CD4D]. [...] So, when CD4D came again and I decided, no matter how little the money was, I said 'I think I did a good job under TRQN'.

He described his considerations for deciding to participate in the following way:

And the money was very low, but the motivation was that we are going back to bring something for people, for your people. I was educated, I went to university here in [the Netherlands], I had a degree and I think they did not need it here. And so, there was not a position for what I was doing. I did my best, studied and had a degree, but I do not think they really needed it, so when I had this opportunity, no matter how low the money was, I decided to go because there they need it, they need my expertise, they need something from you.

Secondly, a few respondents voiced professional development goals or career opportunities as part of their motivation to participate in VKTs via CD4D. Their responses showed that – with the diaspora return visit for knowledge transfer – they were hoping to gain additional professional experience or enhance their career prospects. For instance, one diaspora member explained how participation constituted an opportunity for her to gain experience in a thematic area in which she was interested in working. Another diaspora member reported that – as part of this motivation – he saw the return visit as an opportunity 'to link me with what is going on in the country'.

Finally, for two diaspora members with mixed motivations, a non-altruistic motivation was that the return visits constituted a job opportunity.

5.6 Placements

The analysis of knowledge transfer and capacity development (see Chapters 6 and 7) draws on the experiences of 74 staff members and 29 diaspora members across 33 placements at 17 host institutions. As Table 32 shows, 15 of the placements examined were at higher-education institutions and the same number were at ministries. Three placements took place at a research institute in Ethiopia.

Table 32. Type of organisation during placements, by country

| Type of organisation | Country | | | Total |
|------------------------------|----------|--------------|------------|-----------|
| | Ethiopia | Sierra Leone | Somaliland | |
| Higher-education institution | 3 | 12 | – | 15 |
| Ministry | 3 | – | 12 | 15 |
| Research institute | 3 | – | – | 3 |
| Total | 9 | 12 | 12 | 33 |

Source: Own elaboration based on interview data.

The number of host-institution staff responses available ranged from one to eight per placement. Table 33 shows the team size of placements by country according to the host-institution staff respondents who were interviewed. Yet, it should be noted that the actual number of staff with whom diaspora members worked was often higher, especially in cases where formal training was provided with the diaspora member as part of their return visit.

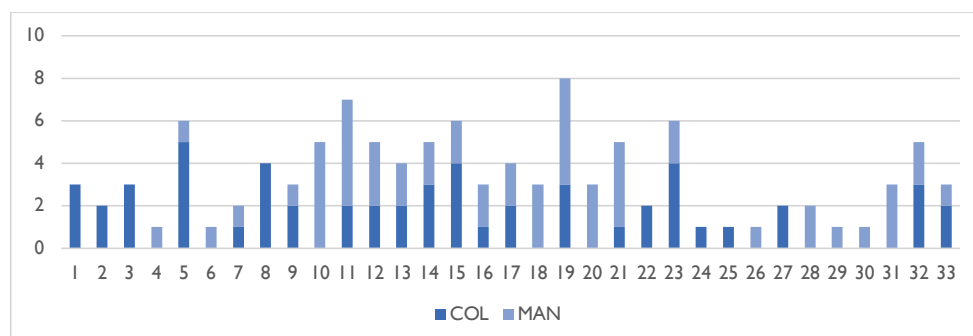
Table 33. Team size during placements, by country

| Team size (respondents) | Country | | | Total |
|-------------------------|----------|--------------|------------|-----------|
| | Ethiopia | Sierra Leone | Somaliland | |
| 1 | 2 | – | 5 | 7 |
| 2 to 3 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 13 |
| 4 to 5 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 8 |
| 6 to 8 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 5 |
| Total | 9 | 12 | 12 | 33 |

Source: Own elaboration based on interview data.

Note: Team refers to respondents who were interviewed.

Host-institution staff were grouped according to their role within a placement. ‘Manager’ refers to members of the host-institution leadership who were involved in CD4D, while the term ‘colleague’ refers to the staff who directly worked with the diaspora member, i.e., the knowledge receivers. Figure 20 visualises the composition of the team by placement.

Figure 20. Composition of the team and role of host-institution staff, by placement

Source: Own elaboration based on interview data.

Notes: Individuals who were both managers and colleagues are displayed here as colleagues.
COL=Colleague, MAN = Manager.

In line with the gender distribution of host-institution staff (see Section 5.4), during 27 of the 33 placements diaspora members mainly worked with males (see Table 34). For six of the 33 placements, diaspora members were female. The two placements where the gender of the team was female were both conducted by male diaspora members.

Table 34. Gender of the team during placements, by country

| Gender | Country | | | Total |
|--------|----------|--------------|------------|-------|
| | Ethiopia | Sierra Leone | Somaliland | |
| F | 1 | – | 1 | 2 |
| F/M | – | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| M | 8 | 10 | 9 | 27 |
| Total | 9 | 12 | 12 | 33 |

Source: Own elaboration based on interview data.

Notes: Team refers to respondents who were interviewed. F=Female, M=Male.

5.7 Implications and conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of the main organisational and individual characteristics of the four different groups of participants in this study, which focuses on stakeholders, host institutions and host-institution staff in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland and the diaspora members on return visits in these three countries. Several of the stakeholders were involved in specific programmes and initiatives to foster diaspora knowledge transfer, allowing insights into existing modalities in the three case-study countries.

Where the host institutions are concerned, the chapter has shown that the majority are higher-education institutions and ministries. Host institutions – across countries – face common challenges such as a gap in qualified staff and a lack of resources. The institutions show some familiarity with knowledge transfer – particularly formal training – yet do not have knowledge transfer policies. This is important since the literature in the field of business and knowledge management highlights the role of the context or environment of an organisation, which may be more or less favourable for knowledge transfer (see Chapter 2). As implied by Goh (2002), Kuschminder et al. (2014), Riege (2005) and Sun & Scott (2005), the lack of resources at the host institution can be expected to inhibit knowledge transfer. The same goes for the lack of capacity, which was identified as another inhibitor (Aquino & de Castro, 2017; Goh, 2002; Kuschminder et al., 2014; Narteh, 2008). To what extent these and other characteristics of the host institution context play a role for *high capacity development* as part of this case study will be analysed in Chapter 7.

Host-institution staff and diaspora members are similar – mostly male with an average age of around 40 years. Almost half of host-institution staff have lived in another country for at least a year. With regards to diaspora members, the chapter showed that many are transnational in their activities and attachment.

This chapter has also explored the motivations of diaspora members, dividing these into three groups: altruistic, non-altruistic and mixed motivations. Fifteen of the 35 diaspora members voiced purely altruistic motivations, while eight articulated purely non-altruistic

ones. Ten diaspora members had mixed motivations. Altruistic motivations were very much driven by diaspora members' emotional attachment, resulting in a desire to contribute to their country of origin. This is in line with previous studies that have highlighted the role of diaspora members' emotional attachment to the country of origin as a motivating factor for engagement (see, for example, Brinkerhoff, 2012; Siar, 2014). Furthermore, the analysis showed that some diaspora members perceived contributing to their country of origin to be a duty or obligation, which is also in line with previous research (see Brinkerhoff, 2012; Kapur, 2001; Mohamed & Abdul-Talib, 2020). An additional altruistic motivation was the desire to expand on previous engagement.

The analysis did not find feelings of obligation to be rooted in family connections. This finding contradicted what Brinkerhoff (2012), Kapur (2001) and Mohamed & Abdul-Talib (2020) found related to the drivers of diaspora members' altruistic motivations. It also stands in contrast to Miah (2022), who highlighted two types of return visit – ritual visits and care visits – centring around obligations towards family and community. This chapter has shown that, in some cases, a feeling of obligation resulted from the fact that emigration had allowed them to achieve a high level of education. This finding may be particular to this context, as diaspora members are selected based on their skills and generally have high levels of education.

While a desire to return to the country of origin was identified as a potential motivation for VKTs in the literature review, the topic found little mention in the interviews conducted for this study. Only two respondents mentioned that they eventually wanted to return to their country of origin, yet this did not seem to be what motivated their participation. A possible explanation for this is that VKTs allow diaspora members to contribute to their country of origin without having to decide to move there permanently.

Non-altruistic motivations included a search for a job, professional development and emotional satisfaction. The findings confirmed what Kuschminder (2014a) found related to the financial incentives of stipends paid to participants of diaspora return programmes. Compared to an employment salary in the Netherlands, the stipend paid to CD4D participants was not enough to create a financial incentive. Nonetheless, the analysis showed that, for diaspora members who were already living in the country of origin prior to their participation in CD4D, participation in it constituted a job opportunity. Thus, participation in a diaspora return programme becomes a post-return strategy for (temporary) employment. Drawing on Kuschminder (2014a), whose research showed the importance of altruistic motivations, this group of diaspora members can be expected to contribute to lower levels of knowledge transfer than those with altruistic motivations. Chapter 7 will examine the extent to which these motivations influence KC, IT and COCD.

In addition, this chapter has shown that 10 diaspora members reported mixed motivations – that is, a mix of altruistic and non-altruistic motivations. In line with previous research, altruistic motivations were presented as the main motivation, while non-altruistic motivation seemed to be an additional one.

The participant overview provided in this chapter will serve as the basis for the chapters to follow. The next chapter (Chapter 6) examines the extent to which knowledge transfer and capacity development occur as part of the return visits.

An abstract graphic design featuring a large, stylized number '6' in white. The '6' is positioned on the right side of the frame. To its left, there is a vertical stack of overlapping geometric shapes: a dark grey semi-circle at the top, a light grey semi-circle below it, a solid black horizontal bar, and another light grey semi-circle at the bottom. A light grey circle is centered horizontally between the black bar and the bottom semi-circle. The background is a light grey gradient with faint, larger-scale circular patterns.

6 PERCEIVED KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to understand the extent to which knowledge transfer and capacity development occur as part of the return visits. It presents the results which were examined using the methodology to measure knowledge transfer and capacity development which I introduced in Chapter 4. This is important as it allows us to understand the extent to which diaspora members contribute to knowledge transfer and capacity development as part of their return visits. Understanding these contributions across the three processes of *information transmission (IT)*, *knowledge creation (KC)* and *contributions to organisational capacity development (COCD)* furthermore creates the necessary evidence to analyse the processes' enablers and inhibitors.

The first part of this chapter presents the results of the application of the framework on the data by discussing the results for each of the three processes. The general picture emerging from the analysis is that there is evidence of IT, KC and COCD, although to different extents. IT is much more common than COCD and KC. The second part of this chapter presents the three levels of capacity development: *high*, *medium* and *low*. It shows that the majority of placements lead to medium capacity development. The implications of these findings are discussed in the final section of this chapter.

6.2 Results of information transmission, knowledge creation and contributions to organisational capacity development

In line with the conceptual framework, the methodology to measure knowledge transfer – presented in Chapter 4 – operationalises three processes: information transmission (IT), knowledge creation (KC) and contributions to organisational capacity development (COCD). The framework served to match diaspora members' and host-institution staff's perspectives. The results are available for 33 placements, comprising 29 diaspora members and 74 host-institution staff. Numerical values were assigned to all responses across the three processes, using the methodology detailed in Chapter 4. As discussed, each process was measured through two dimensions – *perceived behaviours and perceived results*. In cases where the dimensions had different values, the lower one was assigned as a process value. The process value is displayed in the third column of each table (see, for instance, Table 35, while columns one and two show the values for the two dimensions based on which the process value was created. Tables 34 to 36 present the data for diaspora members by placement as, in some cases, they conducted multiple placements with different results. Disaggregating the results per placement therefore allowed me to capture the diaspora member's perspective for each placement. The total number of placements examined here is 33, corresponding to the 29 diaspora members. In several cases, host-institution staff members were also involved in more than one placement. As between one and eight host-institution staff members were interviewed per placement, the data are presented here at the individual level; presenting it at a placement level would not allow adequate presentation of this stage of the results, as individuals have varying perspectives. They were nonetheless disaggregated by placement to capture the host-institution staff's perspective for each placement. Therefore, the total number of host-institution staff responses presented here is 111, corresponding to the 74 host-institution staff who provided information for the 33 placements.

6.2.1 Information transmission

Table 35 overviews the results for the *information transmission* process after assigning the numerical values. It shows that 65 per cent of host-institution staff responses were ranked with a process value of '0.67' or '1'. At the same time, 79 per cent of placements were ranked with these values by diaspora members.

Table 35. Results – Perceived information transmission

| | Perceived behaviours of IT | | | | Perceived results of IT | | | | IT process value | | | |
|-------|----------------------------|-------|-------------|-------|-------------------------|-------|-------------|-------|--------------------|-------|-------------|-------|
| | HI staff (Ind.) | | DM (Pl.) | | HI staff (Ind.) | | DM (Pl.) | | HI staff (Ind.) | | DM (Pl.) | |
| Value | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| 0 | 18 | 16.22 | 3 | 9.09 | 21 | 18.92 | 4 | 12.12 | 21 | 18.42 | 4 | 12.12 |
| 0.33 | 12 | 10.81 | - | | 10 | 9.01 | 3 | 9.09 | 16 | 16.67 | 3 | 9.09 |
| 0.67 | 32 | 28.83 | 15 | 45.45 | 14 | 12.61 | 7 | 21.21 | 37 | 32.46 | 13 | 39.39 |
| 1 | 49 | 44.14 | 15 | 45.45 | 66 | 59.46 | 19 | 57.58 | 37 | 32.46 | 13 | 39.39 |
| Total | 111 | 100 | 33 | 100 | 111 | 100 | 33 | 100 | 111 | 100 | 33 | 100 |

Source: Own elaboration.

Notes: DM= Diaspora member; HI= Host Institution; Ind.= Individual; IT= Information transmission; Pl.= Placement.

The rate at which *behaviours of information transmission* were articulated in a way that a value of '1' was assigned was similar between host-institution staff (44 per cent) and diaspora member placements (45 per cent). This meant that respondents reported that they, in the case of diaspora members, or the diaspora member in the case of host-institution staff, engaged in activities for knowledge transfer to staff and the respondent described how this took place by mentioning explicit or tacit knowledge transfer methods. For instance, Mustapha (Placement 20), who conducted VKTs in Sierra Leone, gave formal training to staff of a higher-education institution. He described the activities he engaged in as follows:

My main activity was giving training to the lecturers on how they can use the modern way of delivering lectures and, at the same time, delivering lectures to students, in that way the lecturers can see the practical things, you know, that I am doing and they, in turn, will do that, so I train both the lecturers and give lectures also to the students. [...] I collaborate with the lecturers there, especially on the teaching timetable preparation. And I also participated in the students' orientation ceremony, and I also do some collaborative work with staff in terms of examination timetable preparation.

As the quote illustrates, Mustapha engaged in staff training as an explicit knowledge transfer method; this was the main activity in which he engaged. While he also participated in several other activities, through which he had regular interaction with the institution's lecturers and took on tasks that are typical for teaching staff at the institution, the focus of his placement was on staff training.

For another 45 per cent of placements, diaspora members indicated their behaviours in a way that a value of 0.67 was assigned, meaning that they reported engaging in some activities for knowledge transfer to staff and described how this took place by mentioning explicit or tacit knowledge transfer methods. Yet the activities were one-off or *ad-hoc* and the main focus of their work was on other activities, so they dedicated only a limited time to knowledge transfer to staff. The share of host-institution staff who described behaviours in a way that this value was assigned was much lower, equalling 29 per cent. For instance, both staff members who worked with Jacob, a diaspora member from Ethiopia, reported having had discussions with him. While these meetings may constitute a tacit knowledge transfer method, according to the respondents, these meetings were *ad-hoc* and the focus of Jacob's work was on other activities.

A value of 0.33 was assigned for *behaviours of information transmission* if the respondent reported that the diaspora member engaged in a few activities for knowledge transfer to staff, yet from the response, it was not clear how this was done. None of the diaspora members articulated behaviours in a way that this value was assigned. In contrast, some host-institution staff respondents did indicate this low level of behaviour for information transmission. For instance, one respondent at a higher-education institution in Sierra Leone reported that the diaspora member's work focused on creating a database for the host institution. While the respondent reported that the diaspora member engaged in an activity for knowledge transfer, as he reported that he or she was training students who were later to be hired by the host institution, it was unclear how the diaspora member actually trained them.

Finally, 16 per cent of host-institution staff respondents explicitly reported that the diaspora member did not engage in any activities for knowledge transfer to staff and did not mention any knowledge transfer methods, nor did diaspora members from other three placements. Thus, it should be noted that responses of the 18 host-institution staff members corresponded to a total of 15 different placements.

With regards to the second dimension, *perceived results of information transmission*, about 60 per cent of host-institution staff reported that they had gained new information or insights and described what this information was. This was also the case for 58 per cent of diaspora member placements. This shows a higher share of respondents reporting *results of information transmission* with a value of '1' than *behaviours of information transmission*. Depending on the placement, staff gained new information on or insights into research methods and data analysis, report writing, proposal writing, soil sampling and analysis, teaching methods and HR procedures, among others.

For another 21 per cent of placements, diaspora members articulated the results in a way that a value of '0.67' was assigned, meaning that they reported that staff gained some new, even though limited, information or insights. This was the case for 13 per cent of host-institution staff responses. For instance, Hassan, a staff respondent (Colleague, Placement 32) in Somaliland described having gained limited information insights through monthly meetings and some joint work with the diaspora member, describing them as follows:

[I] thought it is not much and our cooperation was limited to that small section. The things I learned from the diaspora member include that he was a social person and when it comes to doing work, he says to be patient and showed tolerance. Those are the two things I learned from the diaspora member. I was in charge of the technical part using my knowledge but when it comes to the decision about printing the report, he was helpful.

For *behaviours of information transmission*, no diaspora members reported behaviours corresponding to a value of '0.33'. By contrast, for *results of information transmission* for three placements diaspora members provided answers corresponding to the value 0.33, that is diaspora members reported that staff gained some new information or insights yet without clearly stating what information staff gained. For another four placements, diaspora members indicated that staff did not gain any new information or insights. For host-institution staff, the comparison between the dimension of *behaviours of information transmission* and the dimension *results of information transmission* shows that a slightly lower share of host-institution staff gave a response corresponding to the value '0.33' for results than for behaviours. By contrast, the share of respondents for which a value of '0' was assigned was slightly higher for *results of information transmission* than for *behaviours of information*.

6.2.2 Knowledge creation

Knowledge creation was measured from the host-institution staff perspective only. Table 36 summarises the results. The process value shows that, for about 15 per cent of host-institution staff respondents, a value of '0.67' or '1' was assigned. Comparing this to the results from the previous section shows that this share is much lower than that with which these values were assigned for information transmission (15 per cent vs 65 per cent).

Table 36. Results – Perceived knowledge creation

| Perceived behaviours of KC | | | Perceived results of KC | | Knowledge creation process value | |
|----------------------------|-----|-------|-------------------------|-------|----------------------------------|-------|
| Value | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| 0 | 66 | 59.46 | 72 | 64.86 | 72 | 64.86 |
| 0.33 | 14 | 12.61 | 22 | 19.82 | 22 | 19.82 |
| 0.67 | 4 | 3.60 | 2 | 1.80 | 2 | 1.80 |
| 1 | 27 | 24.32 | 15 | 13.51 | 15 | 13.51 |
| Total | 111 | 100 | 111 | 100 | 111 | 100 |

Source: Own elaboration.

Notes: KC= Knowledge creation.

Again, two dimensions were distinguished for the process knowledge creation – *behaviours of knowledge creation* and *results of knowledge creation* (see Table 36). With regards to *behaviours of knowledge creation*, 24 per cent of host-institution staff respondents reported that they or other staff members apply the knowledge gained from working with the diaspora member in their work and described how they were doing so, corresponding to a value of '1'. For instance, a staff member who worked with a diaspora member in Ethiopia reported that he was using the suggestions which the diaspora member had given him when going to the field, such as during a training session which the respondent gave a few days before the interview. Similarly, a respondent in Sierra Leone, where a diaspora member had given training on thesis writing, reported that the staff continue to teach and advise students based on the training.

Only a small share (4) of the host-institution staff respondents indicated that staff were applying the knowledge gained from the diaspora member to some extent or had made attempts to do so but are not fully applying the new knowledge in their work, corresponding to a value of '0.67'. For instance, a staff member in Sierra Leone reported being able to apply some of

the information and insights gained through a workshop on quantitative analysis, yet experienced constraints as – according to him – the training had not included any practical exercises. These constraints will be discussed in Chapter 7 which analyses enablers and inhibitors for all three processes.

Thirteen per cent of host-institution staff respondents spoke of the *behaviours of knowledge creation* in a way that a value of ‘0.33’ was assigned, indicating that some knowledge was being applied without clear reports of how this was being done. The majority of host-institution staff respondents (59.46 per cent) reported that the knowledge gained from the diaspora member is not being applied or do not mention that knowledge is being applied. This also included cases where no information was gained.

The results for the dimension *perceived results of knowledge creation* show a similar trend. Sixty-five per cent of host-institution staff provided the results in such a way that a value of ‘0’ was assigned, meaning that no effect on the knowledge receivers’ ability to perform their tasks was reported. For 22 responses, the value ‘0.33’ was assigned since respondents mentioned some effect on the knowledge receivers’ ability to perform their tasks yet it was unclear how. Only two respondents spoke of knowledge creation in such a way that the value ‘0.67’ was assigned, meaning that a limited effect on the knowledge receivers’ ability to perform their tasks was reported. For instance, a staff member in Somaliland had gained technical as well as managerial knowledge from working with the diaspora member. The respondent was then transferred to another department in the same ministry. While he is still able to apply some of the managerial knowledge gained from the diaspora members, especially tolerance, he reported not being able to apply the technical knowledge anymore, showing a limited effect on his ability to perform his tasks.

The value of ‘1’ was assigned for 15 respondents, compared to 27 respondents for perceived behaviours of knowledge creation. These 15 respondents, corresponding to a total of eight placements, reported that new knowledge had increased their ability to perform their tasks. Overall, this shows that levels of knowledge creation were low.

6.2.3 Contributions to organisational capacity development

Table 37 overviews the results for the third process – contributions to organisational capacity development.

Table 37. Results – Perceived organisational capacity development

| | Perceived behaviours of COCD | | | | Perceived results of COCD | | | | COCD process value | | | |
|-------|------------------------------|-------|----------|-------|---------------------------|-------|----------|-------|--------------------|-------|----------|-------|
| | HI staff (Ind.) | | DM (Pl.) | | HI staff (Ind.) | | DM (Pl.) | | HI staff (Ind.) | | DM (Pl.) | |
| Value | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| 0 | 59 | 53.15 | 9 | 27.27 | 60 | 54.05 | 9 | 27.27 | 60 | 54.05 | 9 | 27.27 |
| 0.33 | 5 | 4.50 | 1 | 3.03 | 26 | 23.42 | 5 | 15.15 | 26 | 23.42 | 6 | 18.18 |
| 0.67 | 4 | 3.60 | 3 | 9.09 | 3 | 2.70 | 11 | 33.33 | 4 | 3.60 | 12 | 36.36 |
| 1 | 43 | 38.74 | 20 | 60.61 | 22 | 19.82 | 8 | 24.24 | 21 | 18.92 | 6 | 18.18 |
| Total | 111 | 100 | 33 | 100 | 111 | 100 | 33 | 100 | 111 | 100 | 33 | 100 |

Source: Own elaboration.

Notes: COCD= Contributions to organisational capacity development; DM= Diaspora member; HI= Host Institution; Ind.= Individual; Pl.= Placement.

As Table 37 shows, a process value of '0.67' or '1' was assigned for about 23 per cent of host-institution staff respondents and 56 per cent of diaspora-member placements. Concerning the first dimension of the process, *perceived behaviours of contributions to organisational capacity development*, over half of the host-institution staff respondents explicitly reported that the diaspora member did not engage in any activities to improve internal structures, processes, policies or resources or did not mention contributions by the diaspora member that would fall into this category. Only a small share of host-institution staff respondents mentioned *perceived behaviours of contributions to organisational capacity development* in such a way that a value of '0.33' or '0.67' was assigned. For instance, for the value of '0.33' a host-institution staff respondent mentioned an incubator, yet from the respondents' answers it was unclear how any of the diaspora members had contributed to it. With regards to the value '0.67', for instance, in Ethiopia, a host-institution staff respondent reported that the diaspora member helped with the design of an irrigation infrastructure project, yet this was a one-off activity and the focus was on other activities in which the diaspora member engaged. About 40 per cent of host-institution staff respondents reported that the diaspora member engaged in activities to improve internal structures, processes, policies or resources. This included host-institution staff reporting that the diaspora member prepared a guideline, supported monitoring and evaluation, helped to purchase equipment, including computers, improved internet connectivity, set up a website or developed a template to monitor staff attendance.

In contrast, in 20 of the 33 placements, diaspora members indicated having engaged in activities to improve internal structures, processes, policies or resources. For a total of nine placements, diaspora members indicated not having engaged in any of these activities. The value '0.33' was assigned for one placement and '0.67' for three placements.

For the second dimension, *perceived results of contributions to organisational capacity development*, 54 per cent of host-institution staff respondents spoke of contributions in a way that a value of '0' was assigned. This meant that the respondent either reported that diaspora members did not contribute to the improvement of internal structures, processes, policies or resources or did not mention any contributions. Therefore, the share of host-institution staff respondents for whom the value '0' was assigned was almost the same for the dimensions of *perceived behaviours* and *perceived results of contributions to organisational capacity development*. For 27 per cent of placements, the value of '0' was assigned for this dimension based on the responses of diaspora members.

For five placements, a value of 0.33 was assigned. This was the case for 23 per cent of host-institution staff respondents. For instance, a diaspora member who conducted an assignment in Sierra Leone worked on developing a new curriculum next to teaching students. Yet, the assignment could not be completed and the curriculum remained in the draft stage.

Only a small share – three host-institution staff respondents – gave a response for perceived results of *contributions to organisational capacity development* that corresponded to the value of '0.67'. In contrast, diaspora members responded in a way that this value was assigned for 11 of the 33 placements. This meant that the diaspora member reported having finished a draft of a new internal structure, policy procedure, process or policy or had made attempts to obtain resources, yet the implementation was not started or was limited.

The share of affirmative answers was lower for the second dimension, *perceived results of contributions to organisational capacity development*. The share of host-institution staff respondents who reported that a new internal structure, procedure, process, policy or resource was introduced or implemented by the diaspora members was 20 per cent (compared to 40 per cent for *perceived behaviours*), equalling a value of '1' for this dimension. For diaspora members, a value of '1' was assigned for 24 per cent of placements. For instance, at one higher-

education institution, the diaspora members supported the development of a staff handbook. As Samuel (Manager at the host institution; Placements 14–16, Sierra Leone) said:

Before the arrival [of the diaspora members], we had challenges that had to do with the staff handbook, for example, and it was very good [to have their expertise]. When they came, we had a meeting and their entry point was to ensure that we have a staff handbook developed for use within the college. [...] The staff handbook contains a summary of the dos and don'ts of staff in the institution and the responsibility of the institution to its employees. We involved [all of the diaspora members in the process]. It is being used.

According to the respondent, the presence of the diaspora members allowed the introduction of this new process. Furthermore, the manager reported that the introduction of these new procedures by the host institution led to an increase in staff attendance. This illustrates how diaspora members can contribute to introducing new procedures, the implementation of which then depends on the host institution.

6.2.4 Discussion

This section presented the results for perceived knowledge transfer and capacity development, measured using the operationalisation of IT, KC and COCD introduced in Chapter 4. The results show that there is evidence of *information transmission*, *knowledge creation* and *contributions to organisational capacity development* but to different extents. Information transmission is much more common than *contributions to organisational capacity development* and *knowledge creation*. These findings confirmed what Kuschminder et al. (2014) found with regards to the level of knowledge transfer. Yet, distinguishing between these three processes allow us to determine more concretely the levels of capacity development achieved, as discussed in detail in the next section.

6.3 Levels of capacity development

The results presented in the previous section were then grouped by placement, adding up to a total of 33 placements. As discussed in Chapter 4, a threshold for success was defined. For the processes COCD and IT, a placement was considered successful if at least one host-institution staff member's and the diaspora member's process value were higher than or equal to 0.67, as this means that the diaspora member and one or more host-institution staff members agreed that at least some IT or COCD took place. For the KC process, only the process host-institution staff value was taken. Therefore, a placement was considered successful in KC if at least one host-institution staff member's process value was higher than or equal to 0.67. Table 38 shows the results for each process.

Table 38. Success, by process

| Process success | | Country | | | Total |
|-----------------|-------|----------|--------------|------------|-------|
| | | Ethiopia | Sierra Leone | Somaliland | |
| IT success | TRUE | 9 | 9 | 7 | 25 |
| | FALSE | – | 3 | 5 | 8 |
| KC success | TRUE | 2 | 3 | 3 | 8 |
| | FALSE | 7 | 9 | 9 | 25 |
| COCD success | TRUE | 1 | 6 | 6 | 13 |
| | FALSE | 8 | 6 | 6 | 20 |
| Total | | 9 | 12 | 12 | 33 |

Source: Own elaboration.

Notes: COCD= Contributions to organisational capacity development; IT= Information transmission; KC= Knowledge creation.

The results of the analysis show that placements had varying levels of knowledge transfer and capacity development. As Table 38 shows, information transmission was successful for 25 of the 33 placements. Only eight placements were successful in knowledge creation and 13 in contributions to organisational capacity development. This shows a stark difference between information transmission and knowledge creation, which together form the two-staged process of knowledge transfer. Based on the above results, the placements were grouped according to their level of capacity development, distinguishing between placements with high, medium and low capacity development. As per the conceptual framework in Chapter 3, placements were categorised as follows:

1. *Placements with high capacity development* – that is, placements with success in information transmission and knowledge creation, which may be accompanied by success in contributions to organisational capacity development;
2. *Placements with medium capacity development* – that is, placements with success in information transmission, which may be accompanied by success in contributions to organisational capacity development; and
3. *Placements with low capacity development* – that is, placements without success in the three processes or with success in contributions to capacity development.

Table 39 overviews these three levels by country.

Table 39. Level of capacity development, by country

| Capacity development | Country | | | Total | |
|----------------------|----------|--------------|------------|-------|----|
| | Ethiopia | Sierra Leone | Somaliland | | |
| High | 2 | 3 | 3 | 8 | |
| Medium | 7 | 7 | 4 | 18 | |
| Low | – | 2 | 5 | 7 | |
| Total | | 9 | 12 | 12 | 33 |

Source: Own elaboration.

Eight placements had high levels of capacity development, as both the diaspora member and at least one host-institution staff member considered the placement successful in IT and at

least one host-institution staff member considered it successful in KC. This included two placements in Ethiopia, three in Sierra Leone and three in Somaliland.⁶² As per the conceptual framework, placements with *high capacity development* included those with success in IT and KC as well as placements with success in IT, KC and COCD.

Eighteen placements showed *medium capacity development*. These placements led to information transmission, yet were not successful in knowledge creation, therefore were only partially successful in capacity development. Seven of these placements also showed success in COCD. Seven placements resulted in *low capacity development*, including one with success in COCD. The other six did not show success in any of the three processes.

6.3.1 High capacity development

This section provides insights into the eight placements with high capacity development. Three of these placements were successful in IT and KC. This was the case for Mustapha's placement in Sierra Leone and Kassa's, Kebede's and Alemu's placement in Ethiopia.

Case 1: Kassa, Placement 8, Ethiopia (high capacity development, IT + KC)

In Ethiopia, Kassa gave a one-week training course on the use of statistical software and basic statistics to 26 senior researchers from six research centres, followed by one-week one-on-one training with three staff members during the second week of stay. Staff who attended the training on data analysis reported that they had gained skills in managing, organising and analysing data using a particular statistical software for quantitative analysis. While staff had previous experience with data analysis using a different software, the training helped them to manage and use the enhanced features of the new software. In addition, three of the four respondents who had benefitted from the training and were interviewed for this study reported that the new knowledge had increased their ability to perform their tasks. As Tadesse (Colleague, Placements 5 and 8, Ethiopia) said:

It was really important because nowadays everything is improving every few months or every year. So, we took the software – this was new for us. So now we are using this software for our statistical analysis. Now our team is using this software. [...] Yeah. Yeah, [I am also using the software]. Most of us are using the software. because it is new for us [...]. The software we were using before this training was very old. So, this is going to be very important.

Another colleague who had participated in Kassa's training described how he had been preparing journal articles using the statistical software he had learnt to use through the training Kassa gave. In addition, the colleague was advising junior researchers via email on issues related to the statistical software. In contrast, for the fourth colleague who participated in Kassa's training the experience did not lead to knowledge creation. While the colleague made attempts to apply the information he had gained from the training he was not able to apply the new knowledge in his work. Therefore, the training did not affect his ability to perform his tasks. This illustrates how the same placement may produce distinct outcomes for different colleagues, leading to knowledge creation for some and information transmission for others.

⁶² One placement in Sierra Leone showed success in KC and COCD. It was still considered as a placement with high capacity development (see Case 5 in the next section).

Case 2: Kebede and Alemu, Placement 5, Ethiopia (high capacity development, IT + KC)

During the other placement with *high capacity development* in Ethiopia, two diaspora members jointly gave formal training on research design and writing, again showing the use of formal training as an explicit knowledge transfer method. All three host-institution staff members who had participated in the training reported having gained knowledge in the areas of academic writing and continued to apply the knowledge in their work when writing research papers and reports. On the day when I interviewed the three colleagues, the institute staff had gathered for a writing retreat. One of the colleagues, Ali (Manager/Colleague, Placements 5 and 8, Ethiopia), highlighted that the training had improved the staff's writing and research skills, which they were putting into practice during the retreat. As he said:

It contributed a lot for the researchers. [...] we are here to produce papers together. [We can see the impact of the training] in terms of writing quality papers, scientific papers. In terms of proposal writing, quality proposal writing. In terms of quality data collection. In terms of field layout, research field layout. So, there is an improvement, because of the training.

This illustrates how the placement, by improving the staff's writing and research skills, was able to enhance capacities in an area which is of key importance to the host – a research institute. In contrast to Kassa's one, this placement was equally useful for all three colleagues who were interviewed. Furthermore, this placement, as well as Kassa's, shows the use of formal training as a method of explicit knowledge transfer. At higher-education institutions or research institutes in Ethiopia, it was particularly common that diaspora members would come specifically to give a training course of one or two weeks.

A distinctive characteristic of this placement is that Kebede and Alemu were the only diaspora members to have joint placements, conducting this placement as well as two others at two other host institutions in Ethiopia, which had *medium capacity development*. Several other diaspora members were at the host institution in parallel to one or several others, yet they engaged in separate placements. Conducting joint placements allowed Alemu and Kebede to complement each other in terms of their technical expertise. Ali described how Alemu focused on irrigation technology while Kebede's expertise lay in the area of soil technology, allowing each to share theoretical and practical insights from their respective field of expertise with the host-institution staff.

While Alemu, Kassa and Kebede travelled to Ethiopia for the formal training sessions only, diaspora members who conducted assignments at higher education institutions in Sierra Leone gave short seminars – for instance, once a month during the duration of their stay – and were also involved in other activities such as lecturing students, as was also the case for Mustapha.

Case 3: Mustapha, Placement 20, Sierra Leone (high capacity development, IT + KC)

Mustapha's placement was at a higher-education institution in Sierra Leone. Staff training was one of the activities in which Mustapha engaged, along with several other activities. Through these he had regular interaction with the institution's lecturers and took on tasks that are typical for teaching staff at the institution. Abdul (Manager, Placements 10, 17, 18, 20, Sierra Leone), the manager for Mustapha's placement, reported that staff gained new information on or insights into how to draw up a curriculum and apply it. In addition, Abdul reported that staff

were using the new curriculum to teach students and that this new knowledge gained has allowed teachers to perform their tasks more effectively. As he said:

But when Mustapha intervened, [...] he made sure that we developed the curriculum, we printed it. Now we have hard copies, because the environment where they are is difficult, it is in a remote area. So, we have to develop this material and give out to them. They make use of these things well. So now, they are developing their materials. They gave them to students and the in-service teachers; they are being guided seriously. So, there has been improvement. The students now know what they are doing. The lecturers also know now what they are doing. So, they are on track. So, we can even see that the output of the students is improving greatly. And the teachers are now teaching effectively and there is quality. There is quality. [...] This [used to be] a constraint. This [used to be] a very big challenge for the teachers but it has been solved through [Mustapha's placement].

Another colleague reported that some lecturers were sitting in on the classes which Mustapha gave to students. While, according to this respondent, Mustapha's main activity was teaching students, classroom observation also allowed colleagues to gain new insights into teaching methods.

The remaining placements with *high capacity development* were not only successful in knowledge transfer but, simultaneously, made contributions to organisational capacity development. In contrast to Mustapha's placement in Sierra Leone and Kassa's, Kebede's and Alemu's placements in Ethiopia, they show the use of tacit knowledge transfer methods. Thus, diaspora members engaged in activities that were not a knowledge transfer method in themselves. In contrast to formal training, which at least ensures information transmission, knowledge transfer may or may not take place during these other activities, which include carrying out research or assessments for the host institutions, drafting a new policy or development plan, curriculum reviews or improving the organisational structure or strategic plan of the host institution. These activities lead to knowledge transfer when diaspora members on return visits interact closely and regularly with local staff while working on the above-mentioned activities. This might include tacit knowledge transfer methods such as co-teaching, on-the-job training or informal teaching. These placements also illustrate how diaspora members may combine explicit and tacit knowledge transfer methods.

Case 4: Saidu, Placement 15, Sierra Leone (high capacity development, IT, KC & COCD)

Saidu used formal training to transfer knowledge to staff which was then complemented by tacit knowledge transfer for one colleague. As he stated, he was engaged as follows:

Some of my main tasks are just to provide my main roles, my responsibilities are to review study curricula on Public Administration and Management. And then I also provide findings and recommendations of these study curricula, and then I have to lecture – teach students and also train management staff, and also lecture some civil-servant students, who need to increase their skills or learn new skills to contribute to their respective public institutions. And I also organise, I also review certain documents like the staff handbook, which are very, you know, archaic colonial-era books, they are not reviewed, so I have to bring all those books up to a standard. So these are some of the responsibilities I had during the post and my past assignments.

A few colleagues reported having gained new information or insights from Saidu. Depending on the colleague, this included knowledge of human-resource management and administrative skills, such as monitoring the daily attendance register, developing sick reports and the appraisal report, as well as reporting and presentation skills and suggestions regarding aspects of the curriculum review that staff did not know before, e.g. the importance of including legal aspects in civil-servant training.

Two colleagues reported applying the new knowledge in their work and that this had increased their ability to perform their tasks. One of the colleagues was able to prepare the necessary HR documents for an audit due to the knowledge gained from working with Saidu. The other colleague was also applying what she learnt about HR planning in her job – ‘Before he taught me, I was not able to do much of those things he was telling me about. But now I am able to apply them in my career’ (Victoria, Colleague, Placement 15, Sierra Leone). Saidu also contributed to the development of a staff handbook, a task that he and several other diaspora members supported at this host institution (see Section 6.2.3.). The contribution of Saidu and his fellow diaspora members facilitated and supported this process. The placements of the other diaspora members lead to *medium capacity development*,⁶³ illustrating that, even where diaspora members make joint contributions to organisational capacity development, the extent to which they contribute to IT and KC differs.

Case 5: Alhaji, Placement 12, Sierra Leone (high capacity development, KC + COCD)

Like Saidu, Alhaji, whose placement was also in Sierra Leone at another higher-education institution, combined explicit and tacit knowledge transfer methods. He gave formal training but also interacted with the host-institution staff member who gained knowledge from him beyond that. Alhaji had already launched an entrepreneurship programme for students at one higher-education institution prior to CD4D, a project that he further reinforced during his current placement.

Furthermore, Alhaji initiated a national workshop on entrepreneurship that was not only attended by staff and students from the host institution but also by members of other higher education institutions in Sierra Leone. According to the lead contact, James (Manager/Colleague, Placements 11, 12, 13, 21, Sierra Leone)⁶⁴, some host-institution staff were able to gain knowledge from this. James himself, who has closely worked with the diaspora member for over 10 years, reported having gained knowledge on the wider concept of entrepreneurship and strategic entrepreneurship and learnt about start-ups through examples from the Netherlands. This enabled him to become a lecturer and mentor in the area of entrepreneurship:

I benefited a lot from strategic entrepreneurship and became a mentor for the entire campus and I am now the lecturer in entrepreneurship models right across the entire university. [...] I was able to know [the] wider concept of entrepreneurship and I was able to learn about start-ups [...]

Alhaji’s placement illustrates how those conducted as part of CD4D connect with the previous longer-term engagement of the diaspora member with the host institution and build on it. Alhaji’s placement is also particular in that in applying the operationalisation of IT, KC

⁶³ One of these placements was Joseph’s, which will be discussed as Case 5 in Chapter 7.

⁶⁴ James’ role was as manager and colleague for Alhaji’s placement (Placement 12) and manager for placements 11, 13 and 21).

and COCD introduced in Chapter 4, the placement was successful in KC and COCD, but not in IT. This was reported by at least one host-institution staff member, yet not by the diaspora member. Alhaji reported that he engaged in some activities to transfer knowledge to staff, which is why a value of 0.67 was assigned for perceived behaviours of IT but it was not clear whether staff gained any knowledge, as none was mentioned, resulting in a value of 0. Yet, since host-institution staff reported that IT and KC and that IT is necessary for any consequent KC, the placement was still perceived as having high capacity development. Nonetheless, this illustrates some of the challenges of measuring knowledge transfer as well as the advantages of including both the sender and the receiver perspective.

Aden, Hashim and Sahra conducted placements in Somaliland, all mostly taking place in the Human Resources (HR) departments of government ministries. At all three host institutions, one of the main contributions of the diaspora members was to introduce staff to HR procedures that are standard in most contexts – such as the Netherlands – but were not in place at the ministries in Somaliland. The diaspora member on a return visit furthermore played a crucial role in creating the necessary structure and procedures through contributions to organisational capacity development.

Case 6: Aden, Placement 32, Somaliland (high capacity development, IT, KC, COCD)

Aden's main task was supporting the host institution to make the HR department, which had only recently been established, fully functional. First, this included assessing the status quo and defining what was needed to make the department work. Aden then proceeded to lead in the establishment of job descriptions and employee files. He helped to make the department function by creating a filing system and a timetable while working with staff from the department. As Aden admitted:

We bought about 200 files, we ordered them, and we started doing the employee files from job description, ID card, passport photos, personal database.

For this, he worked closely with a staff member from the HR department, to whom he transferred knowledge via learning by example and targeted work assignments. Fadumo (Colleague, Placement 32, Somaliland) described what she had learnt as follows:

The [HR] department was not functional to begin with. When I came in I didn't know much about where to start and what to do next. So this is where I benefited from [the diaspora member on a return visit], like structuring what we needed to do. Like first and second and the third. And also have those files. I had it in mind, but I did not know how to put one first and then which one is second and which one third. [...] Because of him we have something in place right now. [...] Before we did not know how many staff [members] came in in the morning and how many staff [are] in the departments. But now we know because we have an attendance sheet and the leave request sheet is also functional. Because before we did not know if someone [...] request[ed] special leave to go somewhere and do something or if they are on maternity or sick leave. But now [we know] because we have a table, a form, that they fill in, the staff member will come to the department, fill out [the form] and so I record it and then I know.

As the quote below by Ali (Manager, Placement 32, Somaliland) illustrates, staff considered this an important first step in the improvement of the HR department:

[Aden] totally changed the department. [...] the ministry is new and the HR department is also new. [...] They are struggling to do many things. So [Aden] helped to do those things – to at least organise all staff of the ministry, even the regional staff – and make this filing system and establishing templates, work templates [...]

Case 7: Sahra, Placement 23, Somaliland (high capacity development (IT, KC, COCD)

As part of her placement at a governmental ministry in Somaliland, Sahra first supported the ministries' finance department and then the HR department. In the finance department, she contributed to modernising the filing system and trained staff on how to conduct internal audits. She designed a series of workshops on topics such as basic accounting, procurement, auditing and compliance and held two of them. She also supported the area of asset registration and supported staff in using Microsoft Excel for balance sheets. In the HR department, Sahra and the Head of the HR department decided to take on organisational restructuring as it complemented an assessment that they were doing at the same time for the World Bank. With this, they aimed to address current issues at the host institutions where the staff were not familiar with their job descriptions, did not delegate and were assigned to a position that was not in line with their qualifications. As part of her work, Sahra engaged in almost daily in-person discussions with staff members of the department and closely worked together with the HR team for the duration of the placement.

As a result of the work with Sahra, host-institution staff conducted the first staff appraisals. Additionally, the interviews showed that the HR department is now able to take responsibility for HR matters and staff there have started to assume their roles. As Omar (Manager, Placement 23, Somaliland) said:

[...] the new HR department [which] was actually developed [...] last year [...]. Now I see that the department actually is very tough now, they have even started to actually recruit and look at the background education of the new staff and see in which unit we can work with them – and make a connection between the educational background and the specific unit he can be working and supporting.

The newly acquired capacity of the institution's HR staff was also illustrated by one example where a department director wanted to undertake an HR-related matter without involving the HR department. The staff of the HR department intervened, clarifying their responsibility in this matter, something which the colleagues themselves attributed to the work with the diaspora member.

Case 8: Hashim, Placement 22, Somaliland (high capacity development, IT, KC, COCD)

In a similar way, Hashim and the Head of the HR Section at another governmental ministry in Somaliland worked closely together to draft an attendance sheet, as well as forms and procedures for sick leave and maternity leave and an HR policy for the institution. Hashim's placement took place at a ministry in Somaliland and showed success in *information transmission, knowledge creation and contributions to organisational capacity development*. While he worked with two host-institution staff members, who were also interviewed for this study, he worked more closely with one of them, Amina, the Head of the HR section.

Amina (Colleague, Placement 22, Somaliland) learnt from Hashim what elements an HR policy should contain and how to draft such a policy and to implement it as part of the daily workload and how to organise employee records, all of which contributed positively to her ability to perform her tasks as Head of the HR section. She also reported having learnt from Hashim to use a To-Do list to increase her own efficiency. Working with Hashim also helped her to gain a better understanding of the structure of the host institution. Amina described working with Hashim in the following way:

The template was developed by [Hashim] because we did not even have one before. As a staff member we did not even have any idea [how to develop the templates] – we needed those templates. But when he developed them, we amended them according to the context of the Ministry – so we added in our contribution in that sense.

As above quote illustrates, this method enabled the transfer of new knowledge while ensuring that the end results were context-appropriate.

With regards to *contributions to organisational capacity development*, Hashim supported the host institution in drafting an updated structure of the host institution – including Human Resources as a new department he had advocated for, drafting an HR policy, creating the necessary forms and updating the employee records.

These eight cases have all illustrated that both explicit and tacit knowledge transfer methods may lead to knowledge creation for placements with *high capacity development*. They also showed that, in some cases, both methods may be combined. The cases also illustrated how COCD constitutes a complementary process that may or may not take place during high capacity development placements. Where COCD is observed in addition to IT and KC, the COCD were often closely linked to the processes of IT and KC. A key difference between placements with high capacity development with and without COCD is that, during the former, the diaspora members not only introduced their colleagues to procedures or processes theoretically, but the placements allowed for them to put some of the procedures in place together with their colleagues, leading to procedural changes at the departmental or institutional level. As the examples illustrated, the placements allowed the transfer of explicit knowledge – such as procedures or data analysis techniques – as well as tacit knowledge – such as how to enact these procedures on a day-to-day basis or to analyse the data using quantitative methods.

6.3.2 Medium capacity development

Out of the 33 placements, a total of 18 were for *medium capacity development*. These placements led to information transmission, as at least one colleague and the diaspora member conducting the return visit agreed that staff had reported that the diaspora member engaged in activities for knowledge transfer and that at least one colleague had gained new information or insights. Yet, staff did not report knowledge creation according to the criteria established in the methodology to measure knowledge transfer and capacity development (see Chapter 4).

Like placements with *high capacity development*, during those with *medium capacity development* both explicit and tacit knowledge transfer methods were used. With regards to explicit knowledge transfer methods, during around a third of the placements with medium success diaspora members gave formal training to staff as part of their activities at the host institution. Depending on the training, staff gained new information on or insights into report writing, scientific paper writing and proposal writing, soil sampling and analysis, teaching and research methods and the use of ICT for teaching, sanitation and hygiene. John's is an example

of a placement with *medium capacity development* during which explicit knowledge transfer methods were used.

Case 9: John, Placement 13, Sierra Leone (medium capacity development, IT)

John gave weekly training sessions on quantitative analysis and research methods for lecturers during his placement at a higher-education institution in Sierra Leone, in addition to giving public lectures for up to 50 students. He described the process of *information transmission* as follows:

[...] my transfer of knowledge was directly with the lecturers, lecturing them and showing them what to do – for instance, in terms of [the statistical software], how to use [the statistical software], what to do about it and so on.

The placement showed success in *IT*. Of the four host-institution staff members who were interviewed for this placement (two managers and two colleagues), one colleague reported information transmission. According to him, knowledge transfer took place through a weekly workshop John gave for heads of departments and senior lecturers. From this workshop, the respondent gained some information on data analysis as the workshop helped to refresh the knowledge which the respondent already had in this area. Yet, the colleague was unable to apply this knowledge in his work, hence no knowledge creation was observed.

The other staff members did not report successful information transmission.⁶⁵ Yet they still confirmed parts of the experience of their colleague. The two managers both reported that John gave the training sessions as a form of knowledge transfer yet, even though they indicated that staff gained some new information or insights, it was not clear what information was transmitted. The second colleague, on the other hand, reported having gained new information or insights in the area of research methods, yet it was not clear how knowledge transfer had taken place. While from John's perspective, he also made *contributions to organisational capacity development*, this was not confirmed by host-institution staff.

With regards to tacit knowledge transfer methods during placements with *medium capacity development*, the diaspora members were either focusing on carrying out research or an assessment, teaching students and supporting the drafting of a new curriculum or the design of a new policy. Information transmission mostly took place through informal conversations or discussions between the diaspora members and staff. This was also the case for both Jacob's and Bekele's placements in Ethiopia.

Case 10: Jacob, Placement 1, Ethiopia (medium capacity development, IT)

Jacob's placement was at a ministry in Ethiopia. As part of his placement, Jacob engaged in a variety of tasks, including the preparation of training material for the 'Training of Trainers' as well as research papers and proposals. Staff working with Jacob gained new information on or insights into the area of marketing, business-plan development and the creation of market linkages through discussion meetings and informal interactions. All three respondents who had benefited from the placement reported information transmission. One mentioned having used Jacob's suggestions during field visits – that is, during training sessions which the respondent gave a few days before the interview. Yet, it was not clear whether this had any effect on the respondent's ability to perform his tasks.

⁶⁵ This was the case as a process value of 0.33 was assigned for these responses.

Case 11: Bekele, Placement 7, Ethiopia (medium capacity development, IT, COCD),

Bekele's placement, also in Ethiopia, took place at a higher-education institution. As part of his placement, he reviewed the existing course curriculum of the department he was assigned to and updated it to reflect current technology trends and the capacity of the host institution. As another COCD, Bekele supported the host institution in identifying the laboratory equipment necessary for students to receive practical skills training and also donated two robots to the host institution, which staff highlighted as being essential equipment that was not available previously for students. As part of his activities, Bekele also conducted a visit to a nearby industrial park to explore opportunities for collaboration between it and the department. While working on the curriculum, Bekele shared some of his knowledge through discussions with the colleague who he was working with for the curriculum review and who also accompanied him to the industry park. This colleague, Mohammed, reported that, through working with Bekele on the curriculum review, he gained new information on and insights into applying research and development (R&D) knowledge for problem solving.

Mohammed also learnt from Bekele what elements a curriculum needs to contain to fulfil international standards and how laboratories need to be equipped. The other respondent, a manager at the host institution, seconded Mohammed's perspective by reporting that, through the briefings with Bekele, staff had gained new information on and insights into areas such as robotics and automated systems, which are key subjects for the department. While the manager reported that the institution's staff were applying the information they had gained in their work by briefing fellow staff members and giving similar lectures for students, it was not clear how this affected their ability to perform their tasks. Mohammed also did not report that he was applying the information he obtained, which is why no knowledge creation is observed. In addition to information transmission, this illustrates how IT and COCD may take place simultaneously during placements with *medium capacity development*.

As these three placements have shown, those with *medium capacity development* served two main purposes. On the one hand, they provided staff at the host institutions with insights into new topics or specific aspects of a certain field within their area of work, such as the research methods or soil analysis mentioned above. Placements with *medium capacity development* also served to update the staff's knowledge in a certain area. As for the type of knowledge transferred, it was mostly of an explicit nature, even though both explicit and tacit knowledge transfer methods were used depending on the placement.

6.3.3 Low capacity development

Finally, seven placements were with *low capacity development*. As the framework presents the aggregated perceptions of diaspora members and host-institution staff about IT, KC and OCD, individual perceptions might differ. As the success of a placement here is determined through the aggregation of diaspora-member and host-institution staff perspectives, these placements are still considered *low capacity development*. Such differences in assessments occurred during four of the seven placements with low levels of capacity development.

On the one hand, for two placements, diaspora members on return visits reported having contributed to information transmission, yet the managers interviewed for these placements did not share this view. It has to be acknowledged that, on both occasions, diaspora members described their engagement in knowledge transfer in a way that made it clear that these activities took a secondary role during their placement. While one diaspora member described engaging in knowledge transfer while waiting for approval to proceed with the research being

conducted, the other member reported that, from their perspective, some knowledge transfer took place through discussion meetings, as was the case for Fatuma.

Case 12: Fatuma, Placement 29, Somaliland (low capacity development)

Fatuma's placement was at a ministry in Somaliland. It focused on supporting the host institution in the area of public-private partnerships and conducting research to collect more concrete data on livestock. She reported that some information transmission took place through discussion meetings with staff, as part of which the staff gained some insights into email communication and teamwork. As she said:

During my three months with the [host institution], we learned a few things from each other. [...] just sitting as a group. [We would] go outside the [host institution], go to a coffee place, sit down, have a coffee, and chat about the plan, 'Hey what approach can we take?' – and listen to each other. [...] Taking turns, creating teamwork. [...] This was one of the things that we learned – [the other was] communicating via email. [...]

In contrast, the manager who supervised Fatuma's placement did not report information transmission. No COCD were reported by either Fatuma or the manager. Therefore, the placement was considered to have low capacity development.

During another two placements, no knowledge transfer took place to the staff at the host institution according to the diaspora member on the return visit. Nonetheless, some of the host-institution staff members interviewed for both placements reported information transmission. Even though the diaspora members' engagement in activities for knowledge transfer was rather *ad hoc*, these managers reported that the staff gained insights into how to set up an institutional website as well as the features it should contain.

This illustrates how diaspora-member and host-institution staff perspectives differ during placements with low capacity development.

6.3.4 Discussion

This section has presented placements of three levels of capacity development. Drawing on the conceptual framework (see Chapter 3), placements with *high capacity development*, *medium capacity development* and *low capacity development* were differentiated. The results showed that there are differences in the extent to which each level of capacity development is observed, which emphasises the importance of distinguishing between them. Eighteen out of 33 placements – the majority – showed *medium capacity development*, while *high capacity development* was observed for eight placements and seven placements had *low capacity development*.

This section also provided insights into the knowledge transfer methods used. Both placements with *high capacity development* and those with *medium capacity development* show the use of either explicit or tacit knowledge transfer methods or a combination of both. Thus, it also shows that both explicit and tacit knowledge transfer can lead to *high capacity development*. Where explicit knowledge transfer methods were used, the diaspora members mainly transferred it through formal training. This explicit form of knowledge transfer is particularly common in academic settings (Kuschminder et al., 2014). Formal training here includes training sessions, seminars or workshops of varying duration that aim to develop new skills and/or theoretical knowledge and to teach participants how to use equipment or new

technologies. At universities in Ethiopia, it was particularly common that diaspora members would come specifically to give a training course of one or two weeks. In contrast, diaspora members at higher-education institutions in Sierra Leone gave short seminars – for instance, once a month – during the duration of their stay and were involved in other activities as well, such as lecturing students. By contrast, *high capacity development* placements in Somaliland used mainly tacit knowledge transfer methods, working closely with a small number of staff members. Thus, these findings contradict what Kuschminder (2014a) and Kuschminder et al. (2014) found related to the higher effectiveness of tacit knowledge transfer, compared to explicit knowledge transfer. The role of the knowledge transfer method for IT, KC and COCD will be further examined in Chapter 7.

At the same time, a key difference between the levels of capacity development is the extent to which information is transmitted and knowledge is applied. While placements with *low capacity development* show little or no information transmission, placements with *medium capacity development* show information transmission but no knowledge creation. Placements with *high capacity development* show both information transmission and knowledge creation. This has important implications for the type of knowledge being transferred. During placements with *medium capacity development*, host-institution staff – through information transmission – gain new insights or refresh their existing knowledge. The fact that no knowledge creation occurs demonstrates that they do not apply this knowledge or that they are, in fact, unable to do so. In contrast, during placements with *high capacity development*, host-institution staff gain new information, based on which they are able to create new knowledge by applying it in their work.

With this, the findings in this section also relate back to discussions about the categorisation of different types of knowledge and the distinction between information and knowledge (see Section 2.3.3). While different categorisations exist, the distinction between explicit and tacit knowledge, originally introduced by Polanyi (1966) is the most common. The analysis presented in this section illustrates the difficulties of clearly distinguishing between them, something which Polanyi himself already recognised when admitting that most knowledge has a tacit and an explicit component. Explicit knowledge implies that the knowledge receiver knows about something and tacit knowledge means that the knowledge receiver knows how to do it. Along these lines, it could be argued that explicit knowledge is observed during placements for *medium capacity development* where knowledge receivers gain new insights or refresh their existing knowledge, while tacit knowledge can only be observed during placements with *high capacity development*, as only knowledge creation manifests the subjective, cognitive and experiential learning that is characteristic for tacit knowledge.

Furthermore, relating this to the use of both explicit and tacit knowledge transfer methods during placements with high and medium capacity development shows that, in the contexts of these placements, explicit knowledge is not only being transferred through explicit but also through tacit knowledge transfer methods, further emphasising the interconnectedness between explicit and tacit knowledge.

This section has also illustrated how COCD may constitute a complementary process during both placements with medium and placements with high capacity development, showing that COCD is complementary to knowledge transfer, independent of the level of capacity development.

Finally, this section has illustrated the diversity that can be observed in placements with low, medium and high capacity development with regards to the extent to which managers and colleagues report or do not report IT, KC and COCD for the same placement. This is particularly the case for KC. This finding underscores the importance of including both knowledge sender and receiver perspectives, as perceptions of knowledge transfer and capacity

development are highly personal. Along these lines, the conceptual framework includes diaspora members and host-institution staff at the individual level. In addition to these methodological implications, it also emphasises the highly individual character of knowledge which always remains intrinsically linked to the individual (Fahey & Prusak, 1998).

6.4 Implications and conclusion

This chapter has provided insights into the extent to which knowledge transfer and capacity development occur as part of return visits. The first part of this chapter presented the results for the three processes IT, KC and COCD, using the operationalisation introduced earlier in this thesis (see Chapter 4). It showed that the three processes are observed with a different frequency as IT is much more common than KC and COCD. In line with the framework guiding this thesis, the chapter then discussed three levels of capacity development:

1. *High capacity development* – that is, placements with success in information transmission and knowledge creation that may be accompanied by success in contributions to organisational capacity development;
2. *Medium capacity development* – that is, placements with success in information transmission, which may be accompanied by success in contributions to organisational capacity development; and
3. *Low capacity development* – placements without success in the three processes or with success in contributions to capacity development.

In line with the results on IT, KC and COCD, on which the distinction between the three levels draws, this chapter has revealed that some form of capacity development occurs during the majority of placements, as 18 of the 33 placements showed *medium capacity development* and eight had *high capacity development*. In this sense, these findings confirmed what Kuschminder (2014a) and Kuschminder et al. (2014) found, related to the contributions which diaspora members can make to organisations in their country of origin within the context of a temporary return programme.

At the same time, the results illustrate that the capacity development achieved is not at the ideal level, which would be *high capacity development*. Knowledge creation was only observed for a limited number of placements. Of the 33 placements studied as part of this thesis, only eight led to *high capacity development*, compared to 18 with *medium capacity development*. This means that only a limited number of placements were successful in knowledge creation in addition to information transmission. Thereby, these findings confirmed what Kuschminder et al. (2014) identified related to the occurrence and effectiveness of knowledge transfer. They also confirmed that Szulanski (2000, p. 10) who, challenging common assumptions of knowledge transfer as a normally easy process, argued in favour of recognising ‘difficulty [...] as a characteristic feature of the transfer’. Following Szulanski, it should not be surprising that *high capacity development* is only observed for eight of the 33 placements. These findings are also in line with what King (2022) pointed out regarding the success of returnees, concluding that their development impact lay in-between success and failure. While King (2022, p. 326) highlighted the fact that ‘the criteria for “success” are not clear-cut’, this chapter has demonstrated how the distinction between the three processes and different levels of capacity development allows for a clearer differentiation between the contributions of returnees to knowledge transfer and capacity development, which is one aspect of returnees’ contribution to development.

The level of capacity development is important because, as outlined in Chapter 5, a lack of staff capacity constitutes a major challenge for host institutions. Through the CD4D project, diaspora members support host institutions in building capacities in specific areas. Placements with *high capacity development* address knowledge gaps at the host institutions and strengthen the individual capacity of host-institution staff. As illustrated in Section 6.3.1., this helps staff to do their work more efficiently and effectively. As the literature review in Chapter 2 showed, individual and organisational capacity are closely linked. Increased individual staff capacity ultimately increases the host institution's capacity. Host-institution staff who benefited from *high capacity development* are able to apply the knowledge that they gained from the diaspora member, which is necessary if they are to continue applying the knowledge for the benefit of the host institution in the long term. *High capacity development* also prepares the ground for host-institution staff to maintain contributions to organisational capacity development beyond the duration of placements. This is also important from a sustainability perspective as, where host-institution staff are able to apply the knowledge and main COCD, the contributions which diaspora members make through return visits may have a medium to long-term effect.

In contrast, placements with *medium capacity development* only partially address host institutions' capacity gaps, while those with *low capacity development* fail to address them. Since, for host-institution staff from placements with *medium capacity development*, the information and insights they gained did not affect their ability to perform their tasks, *medium capacity development* will have little medium or long-term implications for them and their institutions. Since host-institution staff are not applying the information and insights they gained, they will most likely be unable to maintain the contributions to organisational capacity development that require increased individual staff capacity.

The conceptualisation of capacity development as three processes of *information transmission*, *knowledge creation* and *contributions to capacity development* allows for a nuanced picture of the same. The finding that capacity development is not at the most effective level, with *medium capacity development* being the most common outcome of placements, shows the need to examine specifically what enables or inhibits *high capacity development*. The result that only few placements show *high capacity development* suggests that several factors inhibit *knowledge creation*. Nonetheless, for *high capacity development*, both *information transmission* and *knowledge creation* need to take place. In addition, placements may show *contributions to organisational capacity development*. For this reason, the next chapter examines which combination of factors between the diaspora member, host-institution staff and the overall context creates optimal conditions for knowledge transfer and capacity development.

The image features a minimalist, abstract design. On the left side, there is a vertical stack of overlapping geometric shapes: a dark grey semi-circle at the top, a light grey semi-circle below it, a solid black horizontal bar, and another light grey semi-circle at the bottom. A light grey circle is positioned to the right of the black bar. The background is a light grey gradient with a large, faint, semi-transparent circle centered behind the number 7. The number 7 is a bold, white, sans-serif digit, tilted slightly to the right.

7

7 ENABLERS AND INHIBITORS OF KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

7.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to understand what combination of factors between the diaspora member, the host-institution staff and the overall context creates optimal conditions for knowledge transfer and capacity development. As Chapter 6 illustrated, the majority of placements showed *medium capacity development*, while only a small share of placements led to *high capacity development*, raising the need to understand how this latter occurs. For *high capacity development*, both *information transmission* and *knowledge creation* need to take place. In addition, placements may show *contributions to organisational capacity development*. For this reason, this chapter examines the factors that influence these three processes. As per the conceptual framework introduced in Chapter 3 of this thesis, this chapter examines enablers and inhibitors at the individual level (diaspora members; host-institution staff), the group level (knowledge transfer methods and knowledge features; relationships and interaction) and the contextual level (return modality and project characteristics; host institutions; countries of return).

The analysis was developed using a mixed approach, consisting of first-stage deductive coding and second-stage inductive coding, covering factors at the individual, group and contextual level. This approach allowed me to examine to what extent the factors identified through the literature review are relevant in this case study as well as to identify any additional enablers and inhibitors that may be specific for this study. For this, both diaspora member and host-institution staff data were used, allowing for complementary and contrasting perspectives. The insights into the role of factors for the three processes (information transmission, knowledge creation, contributions to organisational capacity development) were achieved by comparing placements across levels of capacity development (high, medium, low), which allowed me to identify common and distinctive characteristics.

This chapter begins by examining the enablers and inhibitors of *information transmission*. The analysis shows that, on an individual level, the diaspora members' motivations for return visits, previous participation in a diaspora return programme and their expertise and the host-institution staff's motivation to learn from a diaspora member all affect *information transmission*. On the group level, the type of knowledge transfer method may enable or inhibit *information transmission*, as may the occurrence of interaction. The ease of relationship between diaspora members and host-institution staff plays a role in the occurrence of interaction. The contextual level influences several factors for *information transmission*. The Terms of Reference may influence the occurrence of interaction, as may the host institutions' learning intent. Monetary factors influence the diaspora members' motivations for return visits, showing the role of the stipend provided to diaspora members through the project.

The chapter then moves on to analyse the enablers and inhibitors of *knowledge creation*. At the individual level, it shows how the diaspora members' disseminative capacity influences KC. In addition, their familiarity with the country-of-origin context and the host institution, their age, their gender and the strategies they apply to prevent and counteract returnee stigma, do not directly play a role in KC but affect the ease of the relationship between diaspora members and host-institution staff, thereby indirectly impacting on KC. At the group level, the relevance of the information and insights to host-institution staff and the availability of practical exercises play a role in KC. In addition, the frequency of interaction enables or inhibits KC. The former is determined by a number of factors – the host-institution staff's motivation to learn from a diaspora member, the relevance of the diaspora member's activities to the staff's

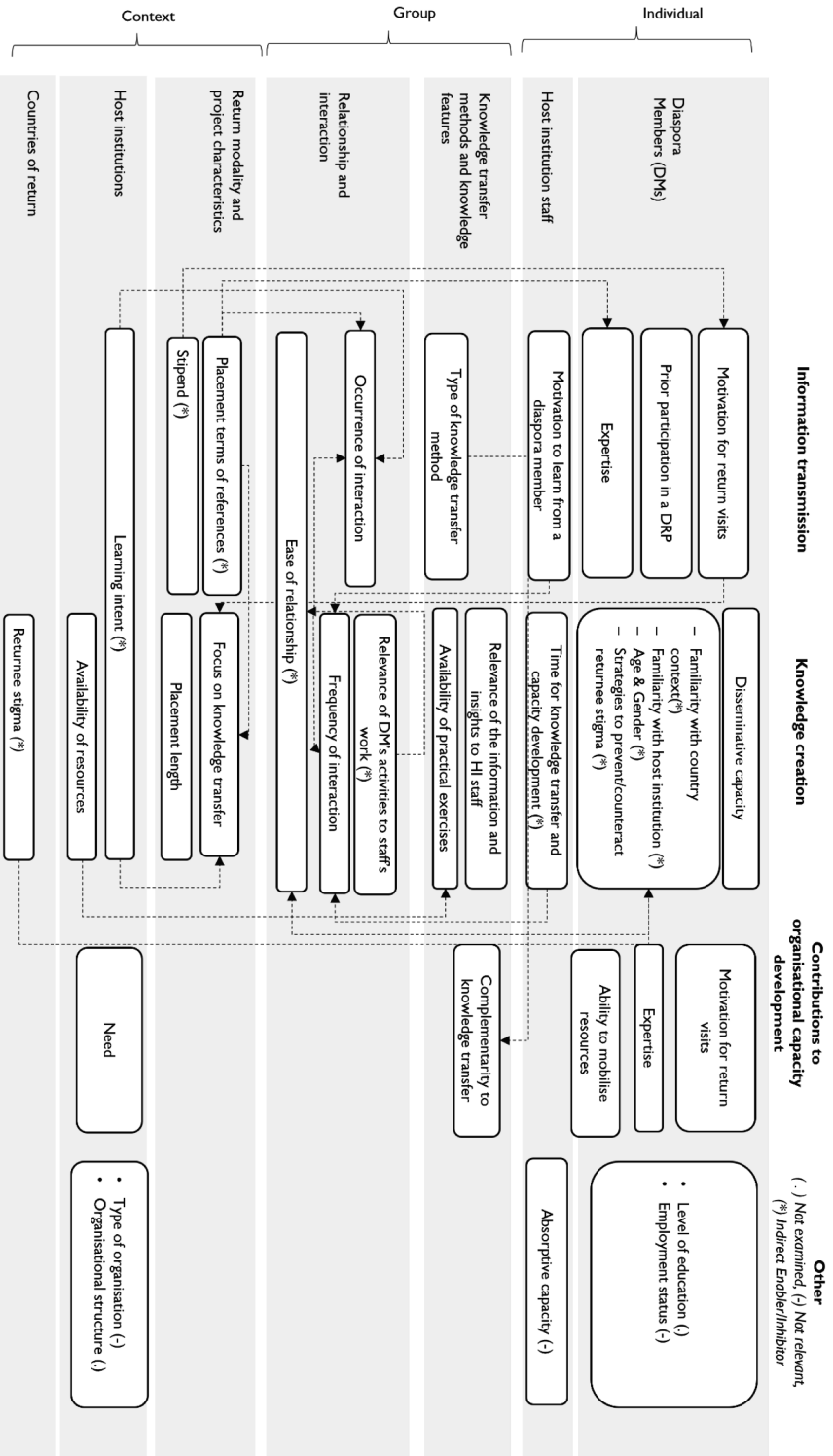
work, their time for knowledge transfer and capacity development and the ease of the relationship between the two sets of people.

At the contextual level, the focus on knowledge transfer, the placement length and the availability of resources play a role in KC, as does returnee stigma, as it determines the strategies which diaspora members employ to counteract or prevent returnee stigma and easing the relationship. The focus on knowledge transfer is determined by placement terms of reference, the host institutions' learning intent and the diaspora members' motivation for return visits.

Finally, the chapter examines the enablers and inhibitors of *contributions to organisational capacity development*. The diaspora members' motivation for return visits, their expertise and their ability to mobilise resources, the complementarity to knowledge transfer and the necessity of organisational capacity all determine COCD. The implications of these findings are discussed in the final section of this chapter, which also discusses a number of factors which have not been identified as relevant or could not be examined in detail. These include the diaspora members' level of education and employment status and the host-institution staff's absorptive capacity, the type of organisation and the organisational structure.⁶⁶ The conceptual framework is again visualised in Figure 21.

⁶⁶ A few parts of this chapter have been published in Mueller (2020, 2022).

Figure 21. Enablers and inhibitors of knowledge transfer and capacity development (repeated from Chapter 3)



Source: Own elaboration. Notes: DM= Diaspora member; DRP= Diaspora return programme; HI= Host institution.

7.2 Enablers and inhibitors of information transmission

This section examines the enablers and inhibitors of *information transmission*. These factors were identified by comparing placements with *low capacity development* to placements with *medium capacity development* since the former allowed me to identify factors that *inhibited information transmission* while the latter allowed me to identify factors that *enabled* it. Along these lines, this section draws on two cases that illustrate the enablers and inhibitors of *information transmission*.

Case 1: Fatuma, Placement 29, Somaliland (low capacity development)

The first case is Fatuma's placement which led to *low capacity development*. She is of Somali origin and she was already residing in Somaliland prior to the return visit; she was employed before she participated in CD4D.⁶⁷ Fatuma conducted a return visit to Somaliland which took place at a ministry. She conducted it in two assignments with a total length of five months. One manager, who supervised Fatuma's placement, was interviewed for the purpose of this study. He was male, 52 years old and held a Master's degree. He had some migration experience himself, having fled to Kenya where he had remained for one year.

Case 2: John, Placement 13, Sierra Leone (medium capacity development, IT)⁶⁸

The second case is John's placement, for which *medium capacity development* was observed. The placement showed success in IT. While, from John's perspective, he also made *contributions to organisational capacity development*, this was not confirmed by host-institution staff. A Sierra-Leonean male, John was living in the United Kingdom before participating in a return visit. Prior to the return visit for knowledge transfer, he had conducted other return visits and had been engaged in charity work in his country of origin. He conducted his placement, which had a duration of three months, at a higher-education institution in Sierra Leone. John's placement was one of several placements at the host institution.

For John's placement, two managers and two colleagues were interviewed. All four host-institution staff members were male.⁶⁹ The three staff members for whom this information was available held a Master's degree and were 31, 40 and 50 years old. They had been with the host institution for between four and 12 years. Two had migration experience, with one having lived in Ghana and Liberia for about two years for higher education and the other having lived in Guinea for about a year. The third had had three months' education in China but did not have any other migration experience. In what follows, I refer back to these two cases to illustrate the enablers and inhibitors of *information transmission*.

7.2.1 The individual level

At an individual level, the diaspora members' motivations for return visits, their previous participation in a diaspora return programme and their expertise as well as the host-institution staff's motivation to learn from a diaspora member all influence *information transmission*.

⁶⁷ The diaspora member had not completed the baseline questionnaire which is why no information on age, etc. was available.

⁶⁸ John's placement was discussed as Case 9 in Chapter 6.

⁶⁹ For one staff member, no information apart from their gender was collected.

Diaspora members' motivations for return visits

Diaspora return programmes, such as CD4D, build on the assumption that diaspora members are driven by altruistic motivations to contribute to their country of origin. Yet, it has long been understood that their motivations are diverse and not exclusively altruistic. Those driving diaspora members in this case study were presented in Chapter 5 (see 5.3.3.). Fifteen of the 35 diaspora members voiced purely altruistic motivations, while eight articulated purely non-altruistic ones. Ten diaspora members had mixed motivations – i.e. both altruistic and non-altruistic. The motivations of diaspora members to participate in VKTs are important, as existing evidence suggests that their desire to engage in knowledge transfer may enable or inhibit its success (Kuschminder, 2014a).

A lack of altruistic motivation inhibits *information transmission* (and contributions to organisational capacity development, see section 7.4.). Comparing the motivation to the levels of capacity development shows that all diaspora members whose placements produced *high capacity development* had altruistic or mixed motivations while, for placements with *low capacity development* they had non-altruistic or mixed motivations. As demonstrated in Chapter 5, altruistic motivations were driven by diaspora members' emotional attachment, resulting in a desire to contribute to their country of origin. Other drivers were perceiving contributing to their country of origin as a duty or obligation and the desire to expand on a previous engagement. Non-altruistic motivation included a search for a job, professional development and emotional satisfaction. Particularly for diaspora members who were already living in the country of origin prior to their participation in CD4D, the project constituted an opportunity for temporary employment. Along these lines, comparing where diaspora members resided and how they related to the country of origin through return visits, diaspora engagement or both shows that all placements where diaspora members had engaged in prior diaspora engagement, either in addition to return visits or independently, had at least *medium capacity development*. In addition, the comparison shows that none of the placements where diaspora members were residing fully or partially in the case study country prior to CD4D had *high capacity development*.

Altruistic motivations drive diaspora members to promote capacity development by seeking and creating opportunities for knowledge transfer with host-institution staff, overcoming challenges and adapting their approach, if necessary. The vast majority of host-institution staff across placements of *high, medium and low capacity development* perceived the diaspora members to be highly motivated to support them. Staff used words such as 'committed' or 'very serious' to describe the diaspora members and appreciated that these latter would come in regularly and be involved in the host institution overall.

Despite the majority of staff reporting the high motivation of the diaspora member, during two of the placements with *low capacity development*, there was very little or no contact between them, even though they were supposed to work together. Staff said that the diaspora member was either not coming in regularly or did not seem to want to work with staff when at the host institution, which was interpreted as a lack of motivation. As a result, the colleagues who were interviewed – three in total – did not gain any new information or insights. As one of the colleagues stated: 'I don't know why they are not working with other staff. But they come to the ministry and sit down those days and they do what they are doing and they go away'.

In line with their colleagues on the staff, the diaspora members who conducted these placements reported having made little to no contribution to information transmission. While one of the diaspora members admitted that no knowledge transfer took place as he or she preferred to focus on tasks that could be completed on their own, the other diaspora member reported having been part of a joint one-off workshop, but it was not clear what knowledge the

staff gained from this. Along these lines, Fatuma (Placement 29, Somaliland) showed non-altruistic motivations, saying:

I was already based in Hargeisa. Actually, I've been here for quite some time, even though I was going back and forth. [...] I've been permanently here working from one job to another, mainly for the [host institution].

As the quote illustrates, the modality of the return visit constituted a job opportunity for Fatuma. These non-altruistic motivations influenced the way she acted during her placement at the host institution.

A diaspora member's motivation to share knowledge with host-institution staff was also manifested in how they prepared for their placement, the initiative they took to facilitate knowledge transfer to staff or how they reacted to the host-institution context. In the case of Fatuma, her tasks focused on research activities and consultations, without having a particular capacity development element. Like other diaspora members whose placements showed *low capacity development*, she seemed to make little effort to engage in knowledge transfer or make *contributions to organisational capacity development*. Her non-altruistic motivations meant that she lacked the desire to transfer knowledge or make contributions to organisational capacity development. This lack can therefore be viewed as an inhibitor of information transmission (for contributions to organisational capacity development, see section 7.4.1.)

At the same time, a few diaspora members made an attempt to counteract the host institutions' lack of learning intent to ensure knowledge transfer by advocating a greater focus on learning. This was also the case for John (Placement 13, Sierra Leone), whose participation in the return visit was driven by altruistic motivations. When John arrived at the host institution, the management there expected him to teach students instead of working with the host-institution staff. As he recalled: 'There was a mismatch in terms of understanding. Some of the leadership at the host institution thought that I was supposed to directly teach students'. This illustrates how altruistic motivations enable *information transmission* by driving diaspora members to engage in activities for capacity development, even when the host institution has other priorities.

Prior participation in a short-term diaspora return programme

John's case also illustrates an additional point. For eight of the 33 placements examined here, diaspora members had previously participated in TRQN, all of which had at least *medium capacity development*. A key feature of prior participation in a short-term diaspora return programme seems to be that diaspora members acknowledge the importance of knowledge transfer and capacity development. Through his previous experience with TRQN, John saw greater long-term value in increasing the capacity of host-institution staff than in temporarily teaching students. He explained this to the institution's management and was able to convince them to allow him to provide formal staff training, in addition to giving public lectures for students:

Because of my previous experience – the previous assignment that I did – I advised them that it would be much better for me to, like, lecture the lecturers. So that whatever I lecture them on will trickle down to the student. Because there is a tendency for most of the students that I would be teaching or training to leave this school. [...] so the best thing is to teach the lecturers. They will [absorb] the knowledge and they spread it out to the student as time goes on. And it will be

within the teachers. And so, they will be teaching the students each year, instead of me teaching the students, and then if all the students leave there is no capacity building in that case. So, they accepted that. And most of the teachers attended.

This shows that John recognises knowledge transfer and capacity development as a more sustainable approach rather than temporarily taking over the tasks of host-institution staff; his altruistic motivations let him favour the latter. He drew on his experience within TRQN, which showed him the value-added of knowledge transfer and capacity development.

Diaspora members' expertise

In order to transmit information to host-institution staff, diaspora members need to be competent in the area of knowledge transfer. As diaspora members are selected based on their skills, those in this study are mostly highly educated with valued expertise in a certain field (see also Chapter 4). Staff in the host institutions generally perceived that diaspora members had the expertise necessary for the task or area of work to which they had been assigned. As Abu (Manager, Placements 12 and 13, Sierra Leone) who was involved in John's placement, as well as that of the other diaspora member at the same host institution, said:

They are experts in their various fields – apart from the review I looked into their CVs before they came. Upon their arrival, based on a discussion with them, the interaction with the lecturers, the sessions they have held – they left no room for doubt as far as their background is concerned.

While this was the case for placements across levels of capacity development, the diaspora member's expertise is still considered here as an enabler or inhibitor of information transmission as, without expertise to transfer, the diaspora members would not be able to transmit information.

Host-institution staff's motivation to learn from a diaspora member

Another individual-level factor is the staff's motivation to learn from the diaspora member, which enabled *information transmission*, particularly for tacit knowledge transfer, while a lack thereof or a resistance to change by staff was perceived by diaspora members to inhibit knowledge transfer as well as cooperation more generally. During five of the seven placements with *low capacity development*, diaspora members found that the staff lacked the motivation to learn, were resistant to change or did not see the benefit of the CD4D project for them or the institution due to the intangible nature of the project's aims. This was also the case for diaspora member Fatuma (Placement 29, Somaliland), who described how the staff's unwillingness to engage in any type of knowledge transfer seemed to be rooted in the fear of losing their job:

It's very hard for them to learn from somebody else. They are so used to staying at that level that learning something new and 'moving up' is not even in their plan. So it's very difficult to try to teach them something new. [...] They will hold on to whatever files and whatever data they have. [...] they become defensive. Because they think someone else is taking over their job.

Nonetheless, this apparent lack of motivation was also the case for a third of the placements with *medium capacity development* and for three of the eight placements with *high*

capacity development. Host-institution staff who worked with John had indicated that the lack of time to attend the training constituted a challenge. In contrast, John (Placement 13, Sierra Leone) perceived that the staff lacked the motivation to learn, as he says here:

[M]ost of them were open-minded. But they had their personal problems that made them not take it seriously. That was my problem. Because maybe [the difference is that] all the lectures I took all the lectures I have attended myself very seriously because I paid for them myself. [...] Maybe because it is free, they didn't, they didn't deem it as necessary. Or there are no exams attached to it. Or there is no form of motivation attached to reading, so that makes it something a little bit difficult to deal with.

While the lack of motivation of host-institution staff was identified across levels of knowledge transfer, what differentiates placements with at least *medium capacity development* from placements with *low capacity development* is that, during the former, diaspora members in the end found someone who was interested in learning from them. This was also the case for John, whose weekly training was attended by several lecturers.

7.2.2 The group level

At the group level, the knowledge transfer method used and the occurrence of interaction both influence *information transmission*.

Types of knowledge transfer method

Comparing placements with *high capacity development* to those with *medium and low knowledge capacity development* shows that all placements where diaspora members conducted formal training showed at least *medium capacity development*, even when training sessions were short and took place on an irregular basis. Formal training here covers a somewhat broad range of activities, including full-time workshops as well as one-hour seminars. This was also the case for John's placement in Sierra Leone, where he gave a weekly training for lecturers on quantitative research methods, as part of which he trained staff in the use of the statistical software.

Fatuma, on the other hand, did not give any formal training. Her main tasks were supporting the host institution in the area of public-private partnerships and conducting research to collect more concrete data on livestock. She reported that she used tacit knowledge transfer methods in the form of meetings over a cup of coffee, discussing topics such as teamwork and email communication⁷⁰ While these tacit knowledge transfer methods may lead to *information transmission*, no success in *information transmission* was observed for Fatuma as it was not confirmed by host-institution staff. This shows that formal training constitutes a time-efficient method to ensure *medium capacity development*, allowing host-institution staff to gain new insights into a topic related to their field of work.

It should also be noted that, as Chapter 5 showed, formal training is also a knowledge transfer method with which host-institution staff are generally familiar, making it easier for diaspora members to get them to participate. In contrast, close working with staff requires diaspora members showing a continuous presence at the host institution and creating

⁷⁰ See Case 12, Chapter 6.

opportunities for knowledge transfer, which requires a different amount of effort by the diaspora member.

Occurrence of interaction

Knowledge transfer and the way it takes place within CD4D, requires interaction between the diaspora member and the staff at the host institution. For *information transmission*, host-institution staff need to be willing and able to engage in some type of interaction with the diaspora member. As some of the placements that did not lead to *information transmission* show, the lack of a quality relationship or even a strained relationship between the diaspora member and host-institution staff may result in non-cooperation. These difficulties may discourage or prevent diaspora members or staff from interacting regularly or from dedicating time for knowledge transfer, factors that are important if this latter is to be successful.

In addition, whether an interaction between the diaspora members and host-institution staff occurs also depends on contextual-level factors – project characteristics and the host institutions. Through the project, the knowledge receiver may be identified prior to the diaspora members' placements, for instance explicitly in the Terms of Reference (ToR). The ToR may be designed in a way which enables diaspora members to work with host-institution staff, thereby encouraging knowledge transfer; alternatively, knowledge transfer might be a task within the ToR which the diaspora members have to report on. Host-institution managers may ensure that staff who work in the field to which the diaspora member is supposed to contribute are available to attend the formal training sessions or they should assign staff to closely work with the diaspora member. For instance, a diaspora member from a placement with *medium capacity development* stated that the training he gave was well organised in advance by the host institution. As he said: 'They were well-prepared, they arranged the space, room, where the training [was to] happen. And yeah, the students were already waiting for the training, so they were there on time'. For this placement, the host institution's management also made sure that at least some staff attended the training, as Hailu, a diaspora member (Placement 6, Ethiopia), said:

[...] also their efforts let's say to immobilise the students to attend the training and then also more or less to try to keep the continuity of the effect of this training itself by putting staff, for instance, because they would have just put me in with the students and then the students – so then that will only remain with the students and the student will graduate and then they may not be there in the institution and more or less now at least if few staff attended the training then anyhow arranging that platform by itself, is a strength by itself. It's the strength for me.

As placements with *low capacity development* show, where no host-institution staff are assigned to work with the diaspora members, the occurrence of interaction tends to be low, inhibiting *information transmission*.

7.2.3 Discussion

This section has examined the enablers and inhibitors of IT. It underscores the role of individual- and group-level factors for IT, which emphasises the importance of examining factors across these two levels. Contextual-level factors were not identified as relevant for IT, highlighting the importance of examining factors for each of the three processes separately.

With regards to individual-level factors, this section identified the importance of the diaspora members' motivation for return visits, their prior participation in a short-term diaspora return programme and their expertise, together with the host-institution staff's motivation to learn from a diaspora member. The latter's motivation to share knowledge with host-institution staff enables IT, while a lack thereof may inhibit it. These findings confirmed what Ghosh (1996) found related to returnees' willingness to use their skills upon return, as altruistic motivations drive diaspora members on VKTs to promote capacity development by seeking and creating opportunities for knowledge transfer with host-institution staff, overcoming challenges and adapting their approach, where necessary. In line with Kuschminder et al. (2014), who identified a lack of motivation to 'go the extra mile' when returning experts had other aspirations, non-altruistic motivations – including a search for a job, professional development and emotional satisfaction – in turn, imply a lower willingness to transfer knowledge, as priority lies with these non-altruistic motivations. These findings also confirmed what Brinkerhoff (2006b), Kuschminder (2014a) and Kuschminder et al. (2014) found related to the role of motivations for knowledge transfer and capacity development and are in line with the emphasis on the role of motivation for knowledge transfer in much of the business and knowledge management literature (see for instance: Argote et al., 2003; Brachos et al., 2007; Osterloh & Frey, 2000; Swift et al., 2010).

Prior participation in a short-term diaspora return programme enables IT as diaspora members acknowledge the importance of knowledge transfer and capacity development, allowing them to advocate for it even when the host institution context is not favourable for knowledge transfer. This is an aspect that has not been discussed in previous studies and shows the added value of the continued engagement of diaspora members.

Diaspora members' expertise is necessary for IT. This is rather intuitive as, without at least some expertise to transfer, the diaspora members would not be able to transmit information. The findings of this section showed that diaspora members generally were perceived to have the expertise necessary for the task or area of work to which they had been assigned. These findings confirmed what Ammassari (2004) and Kuschminder (2014a) found related to the skills of returnees. As diaspora members are selected based on their skills for the return visits, those in this study are mostly highly educated with valued expertise in a certain field. This ensures two aspects stressed by Ammassari (2004, p. 142): first, the acquisition of specific knowledge in the country of destination and, second, the 'potential useful[ness]' of this knowledge in the country of origin.

The host-institution staff's motivation to learn from a diaspora member enabled IT, particularly for tacit knowledge transfer, while a lack thereof or a resistance to change by staff were perceived by diaspora members to inhibit IT as well as cooperation more generally. This confirmed what Sun and Scott (2005) and Szulanski (2000) found related to the role of the knowledge receiver's openness to new ideas for successful knowledge transfer. A negative attitude towards change from a colleague was discussed by Kuschminder et al. (2014), who found that it was indeed a barrier even though it was not among the inhibitors the most frequently experienced according to their data. In line with Kuschminder et al. (2014), the staff's resistance to change is closely linked to mistrust and an unsupportive working culture. Nonetheless, the findings of this section provide further insights into the reasons for a lack of motivation. Besides a lack of motivation to learn and a resistance to change, the findings of this section also show that another aspect is that staff do not see the benefit of the CD4D project for themselves or the institution due to the intangible nature of the project's aims.

With regards to group-level factors, this section has shown the role of the knowledge transfer method and the occurrence of interaction. While Chapter 6 showed that both explicit and tacit knowledge transfer can lead to *high capacity development*, this section provided more

detailed insight into the role of the knowledge transfer method for IT. It demonstrated that the type of method used affects IT, showing that explicit knowledge transfer through formal training enables IT. Thereby, these findings contradicted what Kuschminder (2014a) and Kuschminder et al. (2014) found related to the higher effectiveness of tacit knowledge transfer, compared to explicit knowledge transfer.

In addition, some form of interaction between the diaspora member and the host-institution staff needs to occur for IT to take place. Kuschminder et al. (2014) briefly touched upon this aspect when discussing the composition of the team, as they highlighted a few cases where the returning experts were either the only employee of the organisation they were working at or were only working with other returning experts, therefore not able to transfer knowledge to local staff. The role of the host institution's learning intent for the occurrence of interaction and the focus on knowledge transfer confirms what Brachos et al. (2007), Narteh (2008), Szulanski (2000) and Tsang (2002) found related to the role that an organisation's motivation to learn may play.

7.3 Enablers and inhibitors of knowledge creation

Building on the previous section, which examined the enablers and inhibitors of *information transmission*, this section examines the factors enabling and inhibiting *knowledge creation*. Following the same approach as the previous section, it primarily compares placements with *medium capacity development* to those with *high capacity development*. Thus, this section makes use of three cases. As a case of *medium capacity development*, I again draw on John's placement in Sierra Leone. In addition, the following two cases of *high capacity development* will be used to illustrate the enablers and inhibitors of *knowledge creation*.

Case 3: Kassa, Placement 8, Ethiopia (high capacity development, IT + KC)⁷¹

The third case examined in this chapter is Kassa's placement in Ethiopia. A female born in Ethiopia, Kassa had obtained a PhD in Europe, where she had been living for about 15 years. She had previously engaged in return visits to see family and friends as well as work-related visits. She conducted her placement, which was successful in *information transmission* and *knowledge creation*, at a research institute in Ethiopia. Four host-institution staff members were interviewed for the purpose of this placement. The staff were male, had a Master's degree and were between 30 and 55 years old. None of them had any migration experience. Yet, three of the four reported having participated in short courses and training sessions in neighbouring countries such as Kenya.

Kassa gave formal training to the staff on the use of statistical software and basic statistics. A total of 26 staff members attended the training. Those who attended the training on data analysis reported that they had gained skills in managing, organising and analysing data using a particular statistical software for quantitative analysis, allowing staff to manage and use the enhanced features of this software that they had not used before. Three of the four respondents who had participated in the training and were interviewed for this study reported that the new knowledge had increased their ability to perform their tasks.

⁷¹ Kassa's placement was discussed as Case 1 in Chapter 6.

Case 4: Hashim, Placement 22, Somaliland (high capacity development, IT, KC & COCD)⁷²

As a fourth case, this chapter draws on Hashim's placement. He was 12 years old when he migrated to the Netherlands, where he has lived for 25 years. Before his return visit for knowledge transfer, Hashim was unemployed and looking for work in the Netherlands. He had previously engaged in charity work in his country of origin. Hashim's placement was at a ministry in Somaliland and showed success in *information transmission, knowledge creation and contributions to organisational capacity development*. While he worked with two host-institution staff members, who were also interviewed for this study, he worked more closely with one of them, a 35-year-old female who had a Bachelor's degree, was Head of the HR department and had been working at the host institution for about eight years at the time of the interview. The other staff member was 25, male and also had a Bachelor's degree.

The colleague with whom Hashim was working more closely learnt what elements an HR policy should contain and how to draft one, how to implement an HR policy as part of her daily workload and how to organise employee records, all of which contributed positively to her ability to perform her tasks as Head of Human Resources. She also reported having learnt from Hashim to use a To-Do list to increase her own efficiency, which she reported to be using in her work. Working with Hashim also helped her to gain a better understanding of the structure of the host institution. With regards to *contributions to organisational capacity development*, Hashim supported the host institution in drafting an updated structure – including HR as a new department he had advocated for – drafting an HR policy, establishing the necessary forms and updating the employee records. These cases are used in the following sections to illustrate the enablers and inhibitors of *knowledge creation*.

7.3.1 The individual level

This section examines the role of the diaspora members' disseminative capacity in KC.

Diaspora members' disseminative capacity

A characteristic of the diaspora member that is important for *knowledge creation* is his or her ability to transfer knowledge in a way that colleagues understand and are able to apply it; this is also referred to as disseminative capacity (see Chapter 2). This may start with choosing the most adequate knowledge transfer method and then goes on to show how the same is put into practice.

During Hashim's placement, knowledge transfer took place in the form of close daily interaction with host-institution staff in Somaliland with whom he was working to build and improve the institution's Human Resources Management. Hashim introduced a colleague to HR procedures that are standard in most contexts – such as the Netherlands – but were not in place at the ministries in Somaliland and supported staff in creating the necessary structure. Closely working together also ensured that the end results fitted the specific country's context. Despite the use of a tacit knowledge transfer method, this example from Somaliland also shows that elements of explicit knowledge were transferred as well. At all three ministries, the diaspora members generally drafted the templates (in English). Through these templates, staff members gained explicit knowledge of the tasks, procedures and documents common to HR staff in the Netherlands, including a timesheet, staff attendance sheet and leave sheets.

⁷² Hashim's placement was discussed as Case 8 in Chapter 6.

The diaspora members were then needed to explain the templates and necessary HR procedures to the staff, whose daily and close interaction with the diaspora members then enabled the transfer of tacit knowledge. The colleagues learnt the steps they needed to take as an HR employee, such as how to apply these sheets in practice and how to take responsibility for HR matters. At the same time, the staff reviewed the drafts and contributed input to adjust the more general templates to the local and institutional context. For instance, Amina (Colleague, Placement 22, Somaliland), the HR staff member working with Hashim, described working with him during his visit in the following way:

The template has been developed by [Hashim]. Because we did not even have one before. And as staff members, we did not even have any idea [how to develop the templates] – we needed those templates. But when he developed the templates, we amended them according to the context of the Ministry, so we added our contribution in that sense.

As the above quote illustrates, this method enabled the transfer of new knowledge while ensuring that the end results were context-appropriate. Using tacit knowledge transfer methods allowed the diaspora member to introduce the colleagues to standard HR procedures while, simultaneously, establishing some of these procedures, such as a filing system for employee documents, together with the colleagues.

Especially in cases where no pre-assessment is conducted, diaspora members may discover a lack of capacity when transferring knowledge. This was the case for Kassa's training (Placement 8, Ethiopia). She had prepared the training material in advance and ended up adjusting the content after the first day as colleagues were not at the level at which she had expected them to be. Kassa also acknowledged that a pre-assessment might have allowed her to tailor the content of the training to the staff's existing knowledge in advance. During another placement, diaspora members conducted a pre-assessment which they used as a basis for the training sessions. This was on the initiative of the diaspora members and was not the norm for placements. These latter generally took place according to the general-needs assessment of host institutions based on which terms of references had been formulated. In addition, a staff member helped Kassa understand how statistical programmes and data analysis are normally used at the host institution. Kassa described the process as follows:

I was not aware of the level [of knowledge of the attendees], that's something that just surprised me, the level was lower than I thought. Then I had to, I had to adapt my training to the context. So, from one day to the next, I was adjusting the lectures and the assignments. [...] Yeah, from the first day. I mean, of course, I mean [...] maybe, that's my fault, I should have [prepared] a test for the level. But I think it is a bit difficult to have this information. I don't know how... I think this is something we experience by confronting ourselves with the situation. But in the end, it was not a big issue. [...] I had the flexibility and enough teaching material to adapt things. And so for me, it was more important to teach maybe a bit less of the content but very good quality and have the bases already set instead of just being, standing there and just transferring in a way in which people would not have completely grasped the knowledge. [...]

As Kassa's example illustrates, implementing changes to how or what they are attempting to transfer requires diaspora members to be attentive to whether colleagues understand what they are teaching them as well as a willingness and ability to change the

approach. In contrast, John (Placement 13, Sierra Leone) was not as reactive as Kassa, even though he also experienced the host-institution staff's lack of capacity:

I had some constraints and I had several other problems along the way because some of the teachers that I was teaching are not, they were not statistically oriented. So understanding the subject, especially in terms of the quantitative method of doing the research, was very, very difficult for some of them. [...] So not all of them were able to follow the lecture as I had expected.

In addition, he felt that the teachers he was training were not particularly interested in the topic. As a result, he agreed that his placement had only limited success:

I am not 100 per cent satisfied. Because, to be honest, I [am not sure] how much they appreciate it [=the training]. And how much they will be able to see it as a very important tool.

Michael (Colleague, Placements 12 and 13, Sierra Leone), a host-institution staff member who attended John's training sessions, posited that – from his perspective – John was not showing in-depth expertise in the topic he was teaching; he attributed this to John's potential lack of preparedness. As he described:

[His lectures] could not exhaust, and he could not [fully] analyse these topics. I was looking at it. Perhaps, he [does not have] the necessary preparedness. That is what I have figured out. The necessary preparedness was missing.

These three cases, therefore, illustrate the importance of the diaspora member's disseminative capacity for *knowledge creation*.

7.3.2 The group level

The following section examines the role of the frequency of interaction, the relevance of information and insights and the availability of practical exercises and resources for KC.

Frequency of interaction

In addition to the diaspora member's disseminative capacity, another individual-level enabler and inhibitor of *knowledge creation* is the frequency of interaction between the diaspora member and the host-institution staff. During the placements that led to *knowledge creation*, diaspora members had regular interactions with a certain group of staff members. The size of these teams depended on the placement. Generally, closer interaction took place with a few host-institution staff members of maybe one or two colleagues, while formal training was provided for groups of around 20 or more people. For instance, during the placements which Hashim conducted in Somaliland, he worked with just a few staff. Kassa trained 26 host-institution staff members during the first week of her return visit, after which she trained just three on a one-on-one basis during the second week of her stay. Along these lines, placements that did not show *knowledge creation* also showed the role of the frequency of interaction in KC. For these placements, even though staff had contact with the diaspora member, the contact was on an irregular basis.

In addition to the host-institution staff's motivation to learn from a diaspora member, the time they have for knowledge transfer and capacity development, the relevance of the diaspora member's activities to the staff's work and the ease of the relationship between them all determine the frequency of interaction between them. For a discussion of the host-institution staff's motivation to learn, refer to Section 7.2.1.

Host-institution staff's time for knowledge transfer and capacity development

First, host-institution staff need to have the time to interact regularly with the diaspora member. This is the case independent of the knowledge transfer method, even though the regularity and type of interaction differ. During placements with *high capacity development*, there were staff members available to attend the formal training or closely work with the diaspora member for the duration of the return visit.

Comparing responses of staff within placements, furthermore, shows that knowledge creation was reported by the respondents who the most closely worked with the diaspora members, while staff who had less regular interactions did not report *knowledge creation*. For instance, while Hashim worked with two staff members at the host institution, the one with whom he worked the closest, including daily interactions and discussions, reported *knowledge creation* while the other staff member reported *information transmission*. In part, this may be explained by the relevance of the diaspora member's activities to the staff member's work, determining the occurrence and frequency of contact between them, as host-institution staff for whom the work of the diaspora member was the most relevant were those interacting the closest with him or her.

Yet, even when the activities of the diaspora members are relevant to the staff's work, time may be an issue. The placements with *medium capacity development* show that, during some placements, the staff did not have time to participate in training sessions or to work with the diaspora member regularly due to other obligations. For instance, Michael (Colleague, Placements 12 and 13), a staff member who participated in John's placement in Sierra Leone, described this issue as follows:

The number [of participants in the training] continued to fall and rise and rise and fall. [...] Some persons may be having sessions, lecturing sessions. [...] We had a very tight [schedule]... So, we didn't have enough time [...]

The lack of time to work with the diaspora member was identified for over half of the placements with *medium capacity development* by both diaspora members and host-institution staff. This shows that knowledge transfer in the form of *information transmission* may still take place even though the staff face time restrictions; however, *knowledge creation* is inhibited by their lack of available time to invest in knowledge transfer.

Relevance of the diaspora member's activities to the staff's work

Second, in addition to time, the relevance of the diaspora member's activities to the staff's work also determined the occurrence and frequency of contact between them. This was particularly the case in the absence of formal training sessions. Naturally, staff whose work was closely related to the tasks of the diaspora member had more contact with him or her than staff who worked in a different area or field.

Ease of the relationship

Third, the ease of the relationship between diaspora members and host-institution staff also impacts on the frequency of interaction between them. As Hashim said for his placement (Placement 22, Somaliland), as he developed a relationship with the staff at the host institution, their willingness to dedicate time to interaction increased:

It was a struggle in the beginning, [...]. But once you spend more time together, then you can see that they voluntarily want to spend a lot of time [working with you]. They all have work and all I am asking from them is extra time, you know.

For the majority of placements, diaspora members, as well as host-institution staff, reported a smooth and cordial relationship. Host-institution staff said that they found it easy to work with the diaspora member and felt comfortable sharing ideas with him or her. A factor that seemed to have facilitated the cooperation of staff is that the diaspora member was perceived as present and committed. Particularly for placements with *knowledge creation*, staff reported that the diaspora member was always available when needed, was involved in the organisation overall or was 'going beyond their mandate'.

Yet, the various knowledge transfer methods require different types of relationship and interaction with host-institution staff. For formal training, a more superficial, cordial relationship is sufficient and the relationship between diaspora members and colleagues here is also more formal. Where knowledge transfer takes place through diaspora members and host-institution staff working closely together, closer and more regular interactions are required. Without the framework of formal training, diaspora members first needed to build a relationship with host-institution staff before being able to engage in knowledge transfer. In some cases, diaspora members experienced mistrust from host-institution staff. Much of this seemed to stem from perceptions that the host-institution staff had about diaspora members. As will be discussed further in Chapter 8 of this thesis, diaspora members who conduct VKTs and capacity development experience different forms of returnee stigma, the most common being that they are perceived as imposing a threat to locals' jobs. While host-institution staff may be hesitant about voicing their feelings of mistrust or stigma, a few respondents confirmed that this latter generally exists; yet they reported not having experienced this as a challenge during the return visits. At the same time, as Chapter 8 will demonstrate, diaspora members show a high awareness of returnee stigma and employ strategies to prevent and counteract it. Stigma was experienced across all three levels of capacity development. Similarly, there were diaspora members across all three levels of capacity development who reported having used strategies to counteract or prevent returnee stigma.

John experienced stigma at the host institution. As a result, he used a counteractive strategy by directly *addressing* stereotypes, labels and misconceptions (see Chapter 8). By openly communicating with host-institution staff about his role, he tried to counteract their mistrust. Kassa (Diaspora member, Placement 8, Ethiopia) did not experience returnee stigma at the host institution, yet employed preventive strategies in the form of *signalling*:

I showed them [that] I was also learning from them and, at times, put that one [staff member] who knew a bit more about the [statistical software] I also put him in front to present what he knows and to also learn from him, just to show them that everybody can learn from each other, they know, they don't want knowledge with one more than another, so I hope they gave a little bit of an example about that.

Even though Hashim (Diaspora member, Placement 22, Somaliland) did not experience returnee stigma and did not seem to have employed specific counteractive or preventive strategies, he also described the importance of establishing trust with the host-institution staff: 'So actually the confidence, and that the person got to know you, was more important in the beginning than working on knowledge transmission'. In turn, the host-institution staff member (Amina, Colleague, Placement 22, Somaliland) who closely worked with Hashim, described how they supported and encouraged each other and illustrates the ease of the relationship between them:

As I said before, he would calm me down. And sometimes what used to happen is [that I calmed him down], because we worked so hard on the policy and then when we give it to the Director General he was, like, 'Oh, put it there'; 'Oh, send me an email'. And then he used to get upset about that. And then I kept saying to him 'Hey, it will be fine. It will be easier. You know, we just try [again] tomorrow. You keep telling me this. I am now telling you that'. So he was, that was calming him down, too.

As the use of preventative strategies showed, an additional aspect that determined the ease of the relationship with the host-institution staff was the extent to which the behaviour of the diaspora member was aligned with the culture of the country of origin. As Chapter 4 (Section 4.4) showed, aspects of national culture differ between the Netherlands and the countries to which the return visits take place. Hofstede's cultural dimensions for the Netherlands, Ethiopia and Sierra Leone show that the former ranks lower in power distance and masculinity than Ethiopia and Sierra Leone while ranking higher in individualism. The values for uncertainty avoidance across the three countries are quite similar (Hofstede Insights, 2021; see also Table 19). An aspect of what has been referred to as the 'diaspora advantage' is that diaspora members are expected to be familiar with their country of origin's national culture and country context. Indeed, diaspora members – across levels of capacity development – generally did perceive themselves to be familiar with the country context. As one diaspora member said, this familiarity facilitates the diaspora members' work at the host institutions: 'I think the culture that makes it easy is just my country, I speak the language, I know the people, I know what to say and what not to say and that makes it easy' (Bekele, Diaspora member, Placement 7, Ethiopia).

In line with the diaspora members, host-institution staff members rarely reported particular challenges regarding the formers' familiarity with the country's context or national culture. The diaspora members' awareness of returnee stigma and particularly of the employment of preventive strategies (see Chapter 8) also demonstrate their familiarity with their country of origin. As the counteractive strategies show, some diaspora members acquire further familiarity throughout their return visit.

During almost half of the placements, diaspora members experienced challenges such as differences in attitudes to work and to time management, such as the time at which someone would arrive for a meeting or when a task would be completed. The way in which diaspora members spoke about these differences showed that they constituted a challenge as they differed from that which they were used to in the Netherlands or Europe. Yet, these differences did not seem to influence the level of capacity development, since diaspora members were aware of them due to their familiarity with the country of origin; they still sometimes perceived them as a challenge in their work more generally.

While diaspora members were familiar with the country's context, they were generally unfamiliar with the host institution. In general, host-institution staff members rarely reported

any particular challenges regarding the diaspora members' familiarity with the organisational culture, generally describing them as familiar with the broader organisational environment or as knowing how to navigate their way through the host institution. A few diaspora members mentioned that, especially in the beginning, they found it challenging to understand host-institution structures and find the information that they needed. It depends on how the diaspora member goes about this. Several described having observed the workings of the host institution, which may require time. As Hashim explained it:

Three months is really short. Because the first months you're getting to know the organisation because you want to. [...] you first want to introduce yourself to those people and only by the second month do things, come to the forefront and by the third month, you have to get out of there. So time is really short. I think six months or more for an even bigger assignment [would be better].

In addition, the diaspora members' familiarity with the country context may mean that they are aware of the context in which the host institution operates. This may make it easier for them to find their way around the host institution even if the organisation is new to them. For instance, through her previous return visits, Kassa gained familiarity with the context in which research institutions operate. Ali (Manager/Colleague, Placements 5 and 8, Ethiopia) noted her familiarity with the research institutions in Ethiopia:

She has been doing her PhD around [this area]. This is a good opportunity for us, because she knows the area very well and she has even presented her PhD thesis for us, not only for the researchers, but we have invited other institutions [in this area].

Yet, it should be noted that not all return visits necessarily expose diaspora members to a working environment in their country of origin, as they mostly visited to see family and friends (see Chapter 5).

Gaining familiarity with the host institution also allows diaspora members to better understand what knowledge is needed and how they can best contribute. Kassa – who adjusted the content of the training she was giving to reflect the staff's capacity – highlighted that a staff member had helped her to understand the host-institution dynamics.

And I had the chance also to have one of the students who knew a bit more about the [software] actually and was also quite open-minded and was less, it was easier to communicate with him, [advise me]. So he also gave me quite a few insights into the way the training or the information at the university level is taught, so that I understood that people are more, maybe, simply repeating some written programmes. However, sometimes they do not have a deep understanding of what they are doing but they are doing some analysis. So that allowed me then to focus on making them understand why they are doing what they are doing. So that they can do better analysis. [...]

The extent to which the diaspora members need to be familiar with the host institution also depends on the knowledge transfer method. Tacit knowledge-transfer methods require higher levels of familiarity with the host institution. Knowing how the organisation operates, who to contact when and how – and how the knowledge they are transferring fits into the broader organisational context – allows them to navigate their way through the host institution

and create opportunities for knowledge transfer. For explicit knowledge transfer, through formal training, less familiarity with the host institution is needed, since the formal training sets the frame for interaction. A few host-institution staff members also mentioned that they facilitated an introduction or tour through the facilities in the beginning. For instance, at one higher-education institution in Sierra Leone, the project's focal point organised introductory training for the diaspora members on return visits. As part of this training, he introduced them to the organisation's work, its guiding rules and its specific regulations, such as the code of conduct for teaching. Such a formal introduction was an exception, with others showing the diaspora member around the facilities.

Furthermore, language plays a crucial role in the interaction between diaspora members and host-institution staff. The interviews showed that a mutual understanding is necessary if the interaction between host-institution staff and diaspora members is to take place; this, in turn, is necessary for knowledge transfer. Diaspora members rarely experienced language issues. This was the case for all placements, irrespective of their level of knowledge transfer. According to the diaspora members, they either communicated with staff in the local language or switched between the local language and English, in which case the latter was generally used more for formal conversations and events or for writing official documents. The local language was used more in informal settings as well as to provide explanations when communication in English seemed difficult. Host-institution staff confirmed the absence of language issues when communicating with the diaspora members.

While a few host-institution staff members reported that they experienced easy communication in English, an aspect that some diaspora members spoke of was that, from their perspective, communication in the local language allowed host-institution staff to feel more at ease and express themselves better. This illustrates the importance of language for the ease of the relationship between diaspora members and host-institution staff.

Age, gender and employment status do not seem to play a particular role in *high capacity development*. Yet, from what a few diaspora members reported, age and gender may influence how they are perceived by staff at the host institutions. As a few of them acknowledged, older diaspora members may benefit from seniority to gain the respect of colleagues, while the lack of seniority creates a disadvantage for younger diaspora members. As Hashim said, '[...] they saw me as an older man, not as a "little boy" who came there. That is easier. I think if [I was] 20 years younger, I would have many issues with that' (Diaspora member, Placement 22, Somaliland). While the low number of female diaspora members limits the extent to which this study has been able to examine the issue, the interviews suggest that diaspora members who are young and female may face additional challenges, such as being underestimated by male colleagues. As Desta, a female diaspora member (Placement 2, Ethiopia) recalls:

[T]he first day I went [to the host institution], the deputy minister, he saw me and he was like [...] Oh, this is you?! He asked his assistant something, 'Can you bring me her CV?' I was like: 'I am here, you can talk to me'. I did not say it, I was feeling very uncomfortable, I felt ... 'I am there, he can ask me about this, anything, I can help him'. Until he saw, 'Okay, you did this, wow, okay, okay'. Then he just kept quiet.

Furthermore, certain types of returnee stigma are particular for female diaspora members on return visits. As Chapter 8 will show, in Somaliland they experienced gender-specific stigmas.

Relevance of the information to host-institution staff

For *knowledge creation*, host-institution staff need to be able to apply the information and insights which the diaspora member transfers. Where knowledge transfer takes place through diaspora members and host-institution staff working closely together on a joint task, parts of this application may already happen during the placement while, for formal training, this process generally takes place afterwards. The interviews with colleagues showed that, for *knowledge creation*, the information and insights that the diaspora members transferred need to be relevant to the colleague who is the knowledge receiver. This is the case independent of the knowledge transfer method used. For five of the eight placements with *high capacity development*, host-institution staff reported having needed the knowledge which the diaspora member was able to transfer. As Ali (Manager/Colleague, Placements 5 and 8, Ethiopia) said:

The training by [Kassa] is also very, very important because it is gap-based training. Yeah. Our researchers collect data [but] the major problem was: The collected data has not been analysed or organised or arranged in a quality manner, so [Kassa] has contributed a lot in terms of solving the problem that I mentioned.

The same was the case for the colleague who worked with Hashim in Somaliland. In contrast, some of the instances where *low* or *medium capacity development* occurred show how the lack of relevance for the colleague's work inhibits knowledge transfer. For instance, a colleague who had gained new insights from the diaspora member into the steps involved when building a website for a university reported not being able to apply these insights as they were not related to his area of work.

*Availability of practical exercises and resources*⁷³

Knowledge transfer may require resources. Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland are among the least-developed countries in the world. As Chapter 5 showed, host institutions in all three countries experience a general lack of organisational resources. Depending on the type of institution, this concerned space, computers, internet connections, software or specific equipment. The analysis of diaspora-member and host-institution staff interviews showed that a lack of organisational resources may inhibit *knowledge creation* when these resources are required for knowledge transfer.

Practical exercises are an essential element of training sessions if one is to achieve *knowledge creation*. Certain resources such as software and specialised technical equipment may be necessary to conduct practical exercises as part of a training session. Yet, these resources are not always available at the host institutions and the CD4D project provides limited material support. Diaspora members reported a lack of equipment necessary for training for two placements with *medium capacity development*, while host-institution staff reported a lack of resources for training for six placements with *medium capacity development*. Depending on the placement, the lack of equipment was given as a reason either why no formal training had taken place or why no practical sessions could be conducted.

This also shows that formal training alone does not necessarily lead to *knowledge creation*. One aspect of formal training is offering sufficient room for practice. The placements

⁷³ The availability of resources is discussed here together with the availability of practical exercises as both are closely linked. Yet, it should be noted that resources should correspond to the contextual level, not the group level.

with *medium capacity development* where some training took place showed that to achieve *knowledge creation* as a result of formal training, an important aspect is that the sessions should include practical exercises. While what host-institution staff referred to as ‘theoretical training’ enabled them to gain new information and insights related to their area of expertise, they were unable to apply the new knowledge in their work due to the lack of practical exercises. Along these lines, for John’s placement, both he as well as two host-institution staff members involved in the placement agreed that the lack of practical exercises limited the effectiveness of the training sessions. As Michael (Colleague, Placements 12 and 13, Sierra Leone) said:

I had some challenges because there is some material like [the statistical software]. Of course, [the diaspora member] was supposed to [show] it on software. But [the diaspora expert] did not bring that software. So that does not make the [learning experience] quite as exhaustive as it was expected.

While the host-institution staff member expected John to provide the software, John had expected that the host institution would provide it. He reacted to the lack of statistical software by showing the practical exercises on Microsoft Excel, yet it was clear that neither party considered this to be a valid alternative. In contrast, the statistical software used during Kassa’s training was free, allowing her to use it during the training without the need to purchase it. The fact that she showed the host-institution staff how to analyse, organise and interpret data using statistical software seems to have been crucial for *knowledge creation*. While the choice of software depends on the needs of the host institution, these examples illustrate how the availability of resources needed for training may make a difference in *knowledge creation*.

Apart from the lack of resources in the form of equipment, during two placements with *medium capacity development* staff also reported that organising a workshop had been challenging due to the lack of financial resources. The two placements were at the same host institution in Ethiopia. Diaspora members and host-institution staff explained that staff expected to receive a daily subsistence allowance to attend formal training, as provided frequently for training by international organisations, implying costs beyond space and material that the host institution simply did not have the financial resources for, nor could they be covered within the project.

Even though mentioned less frequently, another way in which a lack of resources and infrastructure may inhibit *knowledge creation* is when host-institution staff do not have access to the resources necessary to apply the knowledge they gained from the training to their work. This was the case for two placements with *medium capacity development*, for which one host-institution staff member reported that the information and insights that had been gained could not be applied as, in one case, the necessary ICT infrastructure was not available in the host institution and, in the other, only limited equipment in the form of computers was available.

7.3.3 The contextual level

The following section discusses the role of knowledge transfer and placement length for KC.

Focus on knowledge transfer

While knowledge transfer is a core objective of the project, different actors are involved in defining how an assignment takes place within CD4D. Terms of Reference, developed by IOM and the host institution, are the basis for the activities of all diaspora members. Some host institutions have urgent capacity gaps which make them favour more-immediate interventions,

which means that their organisational learning intent or management support for knowledge transfer is low. For instance, higher-education institutions in Sierra Leone seemed to see a more direct benefit from letting the diaspora members lecture students, as they were experiencing a lack of teaching staff. As a result, the focus of some of these placements was not on knowledge transfer and other activities were prioritised. The interviews with diaspora members showed that six of the seven *low capacity development* placements lacked an explicit focus on knowledge transfer. The focus of these placements was on conducting an assessment or implementing new technology. For instance, the focus of Fatuma's placement (see Case 1 in the previous section) was on public-private partnerships and conducting research with the host institution. As some of the placements with *medium capacity development* show, these placements can still be successful in *information transmission*, as was also the case for John's placement in Sierra Leone where he gave public lectures for students in addition to training lecturers on quantitative research methods. As illustrated in Section 7.2.1. of this chapter, the host-institution management had expected John to primarily lecture to students. While he managed to convince the host institution of the importance of training staff, the focus of his placement was not on knowledge transfer.

For *knowledge creation*, more focus is required. For her placement, Kassa (Diaspora member, Placement 8, Ethiopia) found that the formal training was well organised by IOM and the host institution:

I thought the organisation, the connection between [the host institution] and IOM was quite well done and I knew what I was expected to do. For the training itself, I mean for my own expertise side [...] I found that everything went smoothly and the logistical aspect and the whole communication aspect.

This illustrates the importance of both the project as a whole – through IOM – and the host institution supporting knowledge transfer actively by creating a favourable environment for the latter.

Placement length

How long a diaspora member stays at a host institution is defined by the CD4D project. As discussed in the introduction of this thesis (see Chapter 1, Section 1.3), placement length – that is, the total time a diaspora member spent at one host institution – differed by country, with the average placement length ranging from 77 days in Ethiopia to 225 days in Sierra Leone and 188 days in Somaliland (see Figure 1, Section 1.3). The duration of placements was defined by IOM The Netherlands, taking into account the needs of the host institutions, the country context and the availability of participants.

Diaspora members and host-institution staff frequently reported that the time that the former spent at the host institution was too short. While both diaspora members' and host-institution staff's keenness for longer stays may not necessarily be rooted in their being necessary for *high capacity development*, the length of placements seemed to be relevant for *knowledge creation*, if mainly tacit knowledge transfer methods are used. Comparing *high capacity development* placements showed that short periods, for instance, placements of two weeks, can lead to *knowledge creation*, when formal training is used as an explicit knowledge transfer method. This was also the case for Kassa's placement in Ethiopia which had a duration of two weeks during which she gave formal training to staff. As illustrated in the previous section, the preparation by IOM and the host-institution management, in advance of her arrival, was key to making this possible.

Yet, the placements where *high capacity development* resulted from diaspora members closely working with host-institution staff were much longer, the shortest being around six months. On the one hand, diaspora members needed time to acquire the familiarity with the host institution which is necessary for *knowledge creation*. While the need to gain familiarity with the host institution and the time required were mentioned by diaspora members in placements across all levels of capacity development. Nonetheless, as Section 7.3.2. illustrated, familiarity with the host institution is particularly relevant where knowledge transfer takes place through tacit methods, as diaspora members were working on joint tasks with the staff while transferring knowledge. On the other hand, *knowledge creation* requires more time if *contributions to organisational capacity development* take place in parallel.

7.3.4 Discussion

This section has examined the enablers and inhibitors of *knowledge creation*. It underscored the importance of group- and contextual-level factors for this process, while also showing some relevance of the individual level.

For the individual level, the analysis illustrated that the diaspora members' disseminative capacity enables *knowledge creation*. The role of disseminative capacity for knowledge transfer has been largely overlooked within the field of return and development. These findings, nonetheless, confirm growing evidence in the field of business and knowledge management, which highlights the role of disseminative capacity (Aquino & de Castro, 2017; Argote & Ingram, 2000; Minbaeva & Michailova, 2004; Mu et al., 2010; Narteh, 2008; Tang et al., 2010). At the same time, the findings contrast with what Minbaeva & Michailova (2004) and Narteh (2008) found related to the importance of disseminative capacity, particularly for tacit knowledge transfer, showing its relevance for both explicit and tacit knowledge transfer.

Nonetheless, the diaspora members' disseminative capacity was the only individual-level factor identified for *knowledge creation*, underscoring the importance of the group and the contextual level. With regards to group-level factors, this section identified the frequency of interaction between the diaspora and host-institution staff, the relevance of the information and insights to host-institution staff and the availability of practical exercises,⁷⁴ as relevant for *knowledge creation*. The frequency of interaction between the diaspora member and the host-institution staff affects *knowledge creation*, as regular interaction between them enables *knowledge creation*. These findings confirmed what Riege (2005) found related to the interaction as an inhibitor of knowledge transfer. Research in the field of return and development has not specifically addressed this aspect. Besides introducing it, this section also provided further insights into which factors determine the frequency of interaction between diaspora members and host-institution staff – the latter's motivation to learn from the former, their time for knowledge transfer, the relevance of the diaspora member's activities to the staff's work and the ease of the relationship between them also determine the frequency of interaction. As acknowledged in previous studies (see, for example, Joia & Lemos, 2010; Klagge & Klein-Hitpaß, 2010; Narteh, 2008; Nonaka, 1994), developing a trusting relationship is a process that requires time. While the diaspora members' familiarity with the country-of-origin context and the host institution, their age and gender and the strategies they apply to prevent and counteract returnee stigma, do not directly play a role in *knowledge creation*, they

⁷⁴ The availability of practical exercises and resources were discussed jointly in Section 7.3.2. Yet, the availability of resources corresponds to knowledge transfer methods and knowledge features, hence the group level, while the availability of resources, as discussed here, is part of the host institutions' characteristics, therefore part of the contextual level.

do affect the ease of relationship between them and the host-institution staff, thereby indirectly affecting *knowledge creation*. These findings confirmed what Kuschminder et al. (2014) found related to the role of age and, in addition, highlighted the importance of considering age and gender simultaneously. In line with Brinkerhoff (2016) and Kuschminder et al. (2014), diaspora members rarely experienced language issues. This chapter also showed that diaspora members were generally familiar with the country context and that they gained familiarity with the host institution throughout their placement.

This chapter has also demonstrated that the information and insights that the diaspora members transferred need to be relevant to the colleague who is the knowledge receiver in order to enable *knowledge creation*, while a lack of relevance inhibits it. These findings confirmed what Ghosh (1996) stated about the usefulness of returnees' skills in the country-of-origin context as well as what Ammassari (2004) examined regarding the relevance of returnees' skills. Even though the CD4D project follows a demand-driven approach, the findings of this section still illustrate the importance of the relevance of the information to host-institution staff in this context, too.

This section has highlighted the importance of practical exercises for *knowledge creation* as another group-level factor. This is in line with Kuschminder et al. (2014), who had found that more knowledge transfer was reported when formal training was practical. By showing that practical exercise is relevant for *knowledge creation* – that is, the process of the knowledge receivers processing and utilising the transmitted information, this finding underscores the importance of practical exercises for knowledge transfer.

Regarding contextual-level factors for *knowledge creation*, this section has identified the availability of resources, the extent to which the placement focuses on knowledge transfer and the placement length. The availability of resources may affect the quality of formal training, where resources are required for practical exercises, as well as the extent to which host-institution staff are able to apply the information and insights in their work if certain equipment is required. These findings confirmed what Goh (2002), Kuschminder et al. (2014), Riege (2005) and Sun and Scott (2005) found with respect to the inhibiting role of a lack of resources. Yet, while Kuschminder et al. (2014) identified the lack of equipment needed to perform a task as the most common barrier to knowledge transfer, next to the lack of capacity of colleagues, the findings in this section underscore the importance of resources for knowledge creation next to other contextual and group-level factors.

In addition to the availability of resources, another contextual-level factor is the focus on knowledge transfer as part of a placement. This section has illustrated how a focus on knowledge transfer enables information transmission. In addition, it has shown how the focus on it is determined by a number of aspects – the placement terms of reference (ToR), the host institutions' learning intent and the diaspora members' motivation for return visits. The role of the ToR had previously been highlighted within the field of return and development by Kuschminder et al. (2014) and Kuschminder (2014a), as was the case for the diaspora members' motivation for return visits. The role of the host institution's learning intent for the focus on knowledge transfer confirms what Brachos et al. (2007), Narteh (2008), Szulanski (2000) and Tsang (2002) found related to the role that an organisation's motivation to learn may play. With these findings, this section expands on the existing research in the field of return and development by underscoring the importance of the focus on knowledge transfer during placements, emphasising that this is determined by the diaspora members (through their motivation for return visits, the return modality and project characteristics (placement terms of references) and the host institutions (learning intent).

Finally, this section discussed the role of the placement length for *knowledge creation*. Thus, the results go beyond previous reports (Kuschminder, 2014a), showing that placement

length is relevant depending on the knowledge transfer method. While explicit knowledge transfer methods can lead to *knowledge creation* within a short time frame, more time is required to achieve *knowledge creation* through tacit methods, showing that placement length inhibits *knowledge creation* for the case of tacit knowledge transfer.

7.4 Enablers and inhibitors of contributions to organisational capacity development

This section examines the factors enabling and inhibiting *contributions to organisational capacity development*. In line with previous sections, a comparative approach is used. Since *contributions to organisational capacity development* are examined as a complementary process and have been observed accompanying *information transmission* for placements with *medium capacity development*, as well as *information transmission* and *knowledge creation* for placements with *high capacity development*, this section focuses on comparing *high* and *medium capacity development placements* with *contributions to organisational capacity development* to placements across levels of capacity development without *contributions to organisational capacity development*.

For this, five cases are used. The following case is used for *medium capacity development* with contributions to organisational capacity development.

*Case 5: Joseph, Placement 14, Sierra Leone (medium capacity development, IT, COCD)*⁷⁵

Born in Sierra Leone, Joseph arrived in the Netherlands at the age of 20 where he subsequently gained his Master's degree. In the 18 years he had lived there, he was employed prior to this return visit to his country of origin, Joseph had already participated in CD4D's predecessor TRQN. As Chapter 5 illustrated, he had mixed motivations for the return visit, being driven by his emotional attachment to his country of origin, his previous engagement in the same and the emotional satisfaction of return visits. Joseph's placement showed success in *information transmission* and *contributions to organisational capacity development*. During his placement at a higher-education institution, knowledge transfer to the host-institution staff took place through tacit methods including on-the-job training and working closely together. As one of his tasks, Joseph drafted a Memorandum of Understanding for the institution, reviewed the organisation's rental policy and made written suggestions as to how the organisation could strengthen its legal structure and transform itself into a public sector academy; he also designed course modules on different topics, including, *inter alia*, asset management. Joseph also contributed to the development of a staff handbook – together with other diaspora members – which, at the time of the interviews, was being used by the host institution.

In addition, I also draw on the cases used in the previous sections: low capacity development without *contributions to organisational capacity development* (Fatuma, Case 1), *medium capacity development* without *contributions to organisational capacity development* (John, Case 2), *high capacity development* without *contributions to organisational capacity development* (Kassa, Case 3) and *high capacity development* with *contributions to organisational capacity development* (Hashim, Case 4). As in the previous sections, these cases are used to illustrate the enablers and inhibitors.

⁷⁵ Joseph's motivations for return visits were discussed as Case 4 in Chapter 5 as an example of mixed motivations.

7.4.1 The individual level

At an individual level, the diaspora members' motivations for return visits, expertise and ability to mobilise resources play a role in *contributions to organisational capacity development*.

Diaspora members' motivations for return visits

As for *information transmission*, a lack of altruistic motivations inhibits *contributions to organisational capacity development*. As Section 7.2.1. illustrated, comparing the motivations with the levels of capacity development shows that all diaspora members whose placements produced *high capacity development* had altruistic or mixed motivations while, for placements with *low capacity development*, diaspora members had non-altruistic or mixed motivations. These motivations matter not only for information transmission but also for *contributions to organisational capacity development* since altruistic motivations drive diaspora members to promote capacity development by identifying capacity gaps, seeking opportunities for *contributions to organisational capacity development* and overcoming challenges, where necessary. As Fatuma's case illustrated, diaspora members who seemed to lack motivation did not contribute to *information transmission* nor made *contributions to organisational capacity development*.

Diaspora members' expertise and ability to mobilise resources

For this study, *contributions to organisational capacity development* were conceptualised in a broad manner, encompassing contributions to the internal structure, policies, procedures and resources of the host institution where the return visit took place. For contributions to internal structures, policies and procedures, diaspora members need to know the same. As discussed in Section 7.2.1., staff generally perceived that diaspora members had the expertise necessary for the task or area of work to which they had been assigned.

In addition to contributions to internal structures, policies and procedures, *contributions to organisational capacity development* also included contributions to resources. In order to make contributions in this area, the diaspora members needed to be able to mobilise resources. The interviews with them showed that two had mobilised contacts in the Netherlands and the country of origin in order to acquire equipment.

7.4.2 The group level

At the group level, the complementarity to knowledge transfer plays a role in *contributions to organisational capacity development*.

Complementarity to knowledge transfer

Since *contributions to organisational capacity development* in this case study are complementary to the knowledge transfer processes of *information transmission* and *knowledge creation*, for the contributions to take place they need to be compatible and complementary to the knowledge transfer processes. *High capacity development* placements that showed success in *contributions to organisational capacity development* in addition to *information transmission* and *knowledge creation* demonstrate how the activities that diaspora members engaged in for *information transmission* and *knowledge creation* and for *contributions to organisational capacity development* complemented each other. Along these

lines, during Hashim's placement, he introduced his colleague to standard HR procedures and, together, establishing some of them, such as a filing system for employee documents.

Contributions to organisational capacity development may not only be complementary during placements with success in *knowledge creation* but also within those that only show success in *information transmission*. This was similar during Joseph's placement in Sierra Leone. While he was at the host institution, a staff handbook was developed during workshops and discussion sessions in which 10 senior host-institution staff members and Joseph, together with other diaspora members on return visits who were at the host institution at the same time, all participated. This process was complementary to the tacit knowledge transfer in which Joseph engaged. In contrast, *high capacity development* placements without *contributions to organisational capacity development* show how a focus on knowledge transfer may inhibit this latter. This was the case for Kassa's placement. The focus on knowledge transfer enabled success in *information transmission* and *knowledge creation*, yet did not leave room for *contributions to organisational capacity development*. As Ali (Manager/Colleague, Placements 5 and 8, Ethiopia) described it:

The CD4D project has intervened mainly in terms of capacitating the human component, in terms of training, short-term training mostly. So, from these short-term training sessions, we have gained so much knowledge, experiences, exposure, [etcetera]. So, this has a lot in terms of capacity [building], the researchers' ability. Particularly in terms of analysing, arranging and collecting quality data.

Yet Ali noted that the host institution lacked organisational capacities that he would have like to see addressed as part of the return visit:

The challenge is that, in order to conduct research and develop technologies, we need to have capacities, capacity in terms of human resources. In terms of physical capacity, for instance we need to have well-equipped laboratories, we need to have filled vehicles, we need to have data-collection equipment. So, in terms of these issues, we have a gap.

The compatibility of *contributions to organisational capacity development* with knowledge transfer processes also depends on the knowledge transfer method being used. During the 14 placements with *high or medium capacity development* without contributions to organisational capacity development, explicit knowledge transfer methods were mostly used, with tacit methods used only during two – and three placements using both explicit and tacit methods. Explicit knowledge transfer methods generally meant formal training. Depending on the length and frequency of training sessions, this leaves little to no room for contributions to capacity development. By contrast, seven of the placements with *contributions to organisational capacity development* showed tacit knowledge transfer methods; in addition, both explicit and tacit methods were used during two placements while explicit methods were observed for three placements. For instance, on Placement 22 in Somaliland, using tacit knowledge transfer methods allowed Hashim to transfer knowledge on HR procedures to his colleague, Amina, while, simultaneously drafting the HR policy. Amina (Colleague, Placement 22, Somaliland) described their work together as follows:

He used to come [in] everyday unless an emergency issue and also he used to inform me and he used to say I have an extra task today. As we continued the HR work for

sometime like the policy, he always used to sit in my office [...], he was like a staff member in the office. [...] we [used to] have continuous meetings.

This illustrates how the work of the diaspora member and host-institution staff on the structure and policy went along smoothly with tacit knowledge methods.

7.4.3 The contextual level

With regards to the contextual level, the host institutions' needs also determine *contributions to organisational capacity development*.

Host institutions' need for contributions to organisational capacity development

Finally, for *contributions to organisational capacity development* to take place, the host institution needs to have at least some need for the same. For the placements that showed success in such development, the host institutions showed clear gaps in organisational capacity. Again, *contributions to organisational capacity development* are defined in a broad manner here, encompassing contributions to internal structures, processes, policies or resources. During Hashim's Placement 22 in Somaliland, he focused on working with the Admin and Finance department, specifically its Human Resources section. Despite the importance of the department for the host institution's overall function, Hashim found it lacked basic capacities:

Admin [and] finance is the department which is [responsible] not solely for finance matters, but also personnel matters and transport. So, much depends on this department and the human resources department really appealed to me because there was limited expertise in all matters concerning personnel. There were no clear manuals about how to deal with people [that could be given] to the personnel. [...] So, there were many opportunities to strengthen the department.

Host-institution staff confirmed this need for contributions to their organisational capacity. As Amina (Colleague, Placement 22, Somaliland), the Head of the HR section, mentioned:

One of the things he supported us with is the HR policy [...] When I am saying HR policy, it is the main and crucial part that makes the HR function, which we didn't had before. The office did not have an HR policy but now it is the only strategy that we can [present]. We have shared it with our officials, we showed the Director General how it works.

This lack of organisational capacity allowed Hashim to make *contributions to organisational capacity development*. During the time he spent at the host institution, he helped to amend its structure and to draft the HR policy. In addition, he also helped to develop the necessary HR forms and update the employee records. Amina, Head of HR, also acknowledged Hashim's *contributions to organisational capacity development*:

He also developed with us the attendance sheet, forms for sick leave and also maternity leave, all those were not part of what we had at the ministry. So he was the one who developed it for us. [...] the HR policy has made all my work eas[ier] because whenever agencies came, they asked us whether we had it or not and it

[was impossible for me] to prepare it alone as our officers were replaced from time to time and you are required to record all the staff from the general director to the members, but now I completed all that. Even if 10 other general directors are replaced, I am still using my own policy, that is a particularly happy achievement for me.

This was similar for placements with medium capacity development that showed success in *information transmission* and *contributions to organisational capacity development*. This was also the case for Joseph's placement. A manager at the host institution considered that Joseph, together with the other diaspora members who were at the host institution at this time, played a crucial role in developing the staff handbook. This shows how, through the return visits, a lack of organisational capacity can be addressed, at least partially.

7.4.4 Discussion

This section has examined the enablers and inhibitors of *contributions to organisational capacity development*. It has illustrated the role of individual, group and contextual-level factors for this process. At an individual level, it has highlighted the role that the diaspora members' motivations play for return visits, their expertise and their ability to mobilise resources for *contributions to organisational capacity development*. As was identified for *information transmission*, the diaspora members' motivations for return visits play a role in *contributions to organisational capacity development*. These findings confirmed what Kuschminder (2014a) found related to the passion and motivation of TRQN participants in Afghanistan. They are also in line with the findings of Kuschminder et al.'s (2014) study on returning experts.

The section also showed that diaspora members should have the necessary expertise for *contributions to organisational capacity development* which, for the placements examined here, seemed to be guaranteed through the selection process of the project. As was the case for *information transmission*, these findings confirmed those of previous studies within the field of return and development (see: Ammassari, 2004; Kuschminder, 2014a).

Where diaspora members helped to obtain resources, they had networks in the Netherlands or another European country as well as the country of origin that allowed them to do so. This is in line with the literature on diaspora knowledge networks. Contrary to Kuschminder et al. (2014), who highlighted the role of membership in a professional network for high knowledge transfer, the findings of this section show the role of such membership or other networks for *contributions to organisational capacity development*, yet not for *information transmission* and *knowledge creation*.

For the group level, this section highlighted the importance of the complementarity of contributions to knowledge transfer. As contributions to organisational capacity development constitute a complementary process, they need to be complementary and compatible with the knowledge transfer processes. As this chapter illustrated, a focus on knowledge transfer may inhibit *contributions to organisational capacity development*. This finding emerges from examining the three processes of IT, KC and COCD, and therefore expands on previous studies in the field of return and development.

With regards to the context, the host institutions' need for *contributions to organisational capacity development* may enable those made by diaspora members. A similar conclusion was reached by Kuschminder (2014a), who highlighted the fact that the project, in this case, TRQN, was demand-driven, as a key factor for success. While it would be intuitive that a COCD would

require the openness of the host institution to them, this factor was not identified from the interviews. This aspect can be addressed by future research.

7.5 Implications and conclusion

This chapter has examined which combination of factors between the diaspora member, the host-institution staff and the overall context create optimal conditions for *high capacity development*. For *high capacity development*, both *information transmission* and *knowledge creation* need to occur. In addition, *contributions to organisational capacity development* may occur simultaneously. For this reason, this chapter examined the enablers and inhibitors for each of the three processes. Distinguishing between three processes – information transmission, knowledge creation and contributions to organisational capacity development – allowed to examine the enablers and inhibitors for all three. Thus, this chapter allows for a more nuanced understanding of these factors than previous studies have accomplished and provides new insights.

First, this chapter showed the different importance which the three levels of enablers and inhibitors (individual, group and contextual) have for the three processes (IT, KC, COCD). Information transmission is influenced by individual- and group-level factors. In contrast, knowledge creation mostly depends on group- and contextual-level factors, with only one individual factor having been identified. Contributions to capacity development are affected by individual-, group- and contextual-level factors.

Second, this chapter has shed further light on factors previously discussed in the literature. In line with these earlier studies, it confirmed the role of diaspora members' motivations and expertise, the occurrence of interaction, the relevance of the information and insights to host-institution staff, the availability of practical exercises and of resources, the diaspora members' ability to mobilise resources and the host institutions' need for contributions to organisational capacity development. Nonetheless, distinguishing among the three processes (IT, KC, COCD) allowed to further understand the extent to which these factors play a role for each process. Along these lines, this chapter has shown that the diaspora members' motivations for return visits and their expertise play a role for IT and COCD. The occurrence of interaction enables or inhibits *information transmission*, while the relevance of the information and insights to host-institution staff and the availability of practical exercises and resources enable or inhibit *knowledge creation*. Diaspora members' ability to mobilise resources and the host institutions' need for *contributions to organisational capacity development* affect contributions to this latter.

This chapter also allowed to generate further insights into a number of other factors. Regarding the host-institution staff's motivation to learn from a diaspora member, this chapter showed the role which the perception of CD4D plays for staff motivation, as their not seeing the benefit of the CD4D project for them or the institution due to the intangible nature of the project's aims was identified as a reason why they lacked motivation. It also provided further insights related to the type of knowledge transfer method applied, showing the effectiveness of both explicit and tacit knowledge transfer methods and the enabling role of formal training as an explicit knowledge transfer method for *information transmission*. This chapter also underscored the importance of the focus on knowledge transfer, which is influenced by placement terms of reference, the host institutions' learning intent and the diaspora members' motivation for return visits. Another contribution is the finding regarding placement length, showing its role specifically for tacit knowledge transfer.

Thirdly, this chapter goes beyond previous studies on return and development by showing the importance of a few factors that were not previously examined in this way. For information transmission, it has highlighted the role played by diaspora members' previous participation in a short-term diaspora return programme. With regards to knowledge creation, this chapter showed the importance of the diaspora members' disseminative capacity and the frequency of interaction. For contributions to organisational capacity development, it demonstrated the role of the complementarity of contributions to knowledge transfer.

The different degrees of importance which the three levels of enablers and inhibitors have for the three processes of knowledge transfer capacity development, the additional insight into factors previously identified by studies in the field of return and development and the identification of additional factors are all important since the three processes showed different levels of success, with only a few placements leading to *knowledge creation*. Determining which factors enable and which inhibit this process creates the grounds for interventions to increase the share of placements with *knowledge creation*. The factors identified were: the diaspora members' disseminative capacity, referring to their ability to transfer knowledge in a way that their colleagues can understand it and are able to apply it, on an individual level; the frequency of interaction between the diaspora member and host-institution staff, the relevance of the information and insights transmitted to host-institution staff and the availability of practical exercises at a group level, the availability of resources, the extent to which the placement focuses on knowledge transfer and the placement length on a contextual level. Organisations implementing short-term diaspora return programmes should therefore aim to build and strengthen diaspora members' disseminative capacity, for instance through, ideally mandatory, pre-departure training that prepares them to act as knowledge senders and teaches them the particular aspects enabling knowledge creation, such as the importance of practical exercises. Frequent interaction between diaspora members and host-institution staff may be promoted by implementing organisations through agreements with the host institutions that their staff will be available to work with the diaspora members and by ensuring the relevance of the diaspora member's activities to the staff's work. To address a lack of resources inhibiting knowledge application and to ensure the feasibility of practical exercises, implementing organisations should provide targeted support to organisational resources. The extent to which the placement focuses on knowledge transfer is determined by the placement's terms of reference, the host institutions' learning intent and the diaspora members' motivation for return visits. Implementing organisations should ensure that all placements focus on knowledge transfer. For this, it seems essential to include knowledge transfer as a task in the Terms of Reference of all assignments, to make it an explicit task for the diaspora member on which they have to deliver.

With regards to diaspora members' motivations for return visits, when selecting project participants, preference should be given to those with altruistic or mixed motivations, by focusing on diaspora members residing outside the case-study country in order to avoid individuals using the modality of return visits as a temporary job opportunity. Building on diaspora members' previous engagement with the country of origin not as part of a programme, either in addition to return visits or independently, could further strengthen the selection of diaspora members with predominantly altruistic motivations. On the other hand, since programmes aim to attract highly skilled individuals who are experts in a certain field and since it can generally be assumed that experts have a genuine interest in further professional development, promoting the professional development component of return visits for knowledge transfer and capacity development may help practitioners to attract qualified and motivated diaspora members. Adjusting their expectations for shorter placements where tacit

knowledge transfer methods are used and allowing for longer placement for tacit knowledge transfer to take place may be used to address the findings regarding placement length.

Fourthly, there were a few aspects that were not identified as relevant for *information transmission*, *knowledge creation* or *contributions to organisational development* or could not be examined specifically. On the one hand, the chapter identified little relevance to the host-institution staff's absorptive capacity for knowledge transfer. These findings contradict what Aquino & de Castro (2017), Goh (2002), Kuschminder et al. (2014), Narteh (2008) and Szulanski (1996) found related to the inhibiting role of the knowledge receiver's lack of absorptive capacity. For some placements, diaspora members reported the staff members' lack of capacity. For instance, John (Diaspora member, Placement 13, Sierra Leon), whose placement had *medium capacity development*, found that some of the teaching staff who were attending the training he gave on quantitative research methods had little experience in statistics:

[S]ome of the teachers that I was teaching were not statistically oriented. So understanding the subject, especially in terms of the quantitative method of doing the research was very, very difficult for some of them. [...] So not all of them were able to follow the lecture as I had expected.

While host institutions have major capacity gaps, these knowledge gaps are the very reason why they participate in the project and all placements are targeted to the needs of the host institutions. In addition, as illustrated by the discussion of disseminative capacity, some of the diaspora members during placements with *knowledge creation* adjusted the knowledge they transferred to the capacity of host-institution staff. For these reasons, even though the staff's lack of capacity was reported for some placements, it did not appear to be an inhibitor to *knowledge creation* as such but, rather, depended on how diaspora members dealt with encountering a lack of host-institution staff capacity. This, again, shows the role of diaspora members' disseminative capacity rather than the host-institution staff's capacity.

On the other hand, there may be further individual-level characteristics playing a role. The analysis showed little relevance of the employment status of diaspora members. Comparing placements across employment status and levels of capacity development showed that both previously employed as well as unemployed diaspora members are represented across all three levels of capacity development. The interviews also did not deliver any further insights that would indicate that employment status may play a role. On the other hand, the analysis showed that all placements conducted by diaspora members with a PhD led to either *high* or *medium capacity development*. Obtaining a PhD generally implies involvement in knowledge transfer, such as teaching students. In addition, these diaspora members continued to work at a university or research institution, which most probably implies an ongoing involvement in teaching and giving them an advantage in conducting this specific knowledge transfer. While this suggests that the level of education may play a role for *information transmission*, the data available for this study did not deliver sufficient insights to determine whether it did indeed play a role.

Furthermore, it is difficult to determine whether the organisational structure plays a role in *information transmission*, *knowledge creation* or *contributions to organisational capacity development*. For a number of placements with *low* or *medium capacity development*, diaspora members reported challenges such as the hierarchical structure and turnover or management changes. Yet, it is not clear whether this inhibited any of the three processes; it seems that these challenges interfered more with the work of the diaspora members in general.

To conclude, the findings of this chapter have given insights into the medium- and long-term sustainability of the results achieved during the return visits. Where host-institution staff do not have access to the resources necessary to apply the information and insights they gained from the return visit to their work, the results cannot be sustained as host-institution staff cannot apply the information in their work. Similarly, in cases where the information and insights gained were not relevant to the host-institution staff, the information will most likely not be used. In addition, especially in cases where only a small number of host-institution staff were trained, the usefulness of the knowledge they gained depends very much on them remaining in the host institution and in the same position as they were in when they worked with the diaspora member. Since staff turnover is frequent at many of the host institutions – and during a few interviews it already became clear that host-institution staff did change their position within the host institution – this constitutes a risk for the sustainability of the results. The following chapter provides an in-depth of analysis of an issue touched upon in this one – returnee stigma and returnees’ preventive and counteractive strategies.



8

8 STRATEGIES TO DEAL WITH RETURNEE STIGMAS

8.1 Introduction

The analysis presented in this chapter has been published in the article titled ‘Beyond ‘Just comes’ and ‘Know-it-all’: Exploring strategies to deal with returnee stigmas during diaspora return visits for knowledge transfer’ (see: Mueller & Kuschminder, 2022). In line with the monograph style format of the thesis, the theoretical introduction to return visits for knowledge transfer and returnee stigmas included in the article as well as the case study and methods section has been taken out and integrated into Chapters 2 and 3. The remaining article has been included as published.⁷⁶ This chapter emerged from an inductive approach to the data. Returnee stigma emerged as one component diaspora members need to overcome while on a return visit for knowledge transfer, meriting in-depth examination. This chapter seeks, first, to explore the forms of returnee stigma that are experienced by diaspora members engaging in short-term return visits for knowledge transfer in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland; second, it seeks to understand how diaspora members on such return visits create strategies to counteract and prevent these stigmas. The analysis presents three strategies, that we term *adapting*, *signalling* and *addressing*, which such returnees use to counteract and prevent negative stigmas. The strategies entail *adapting* to the country and its culture, *signalling* commonality, approachability and respect and *addressing* stereotypes, labels and misconceptions.

Despite the prevalence of these negative attitudes by the host population across different types of return migrant, the terminology has been less consistent. While studies on deportees have used the term ‘stigma’ to refer to those negative attitudes with a discrediting effect which forced returnees experienced (see Golash-Boza, 2014; Schuster and Majidi, 2015), other studies, which clearly discuss instances of stigmatisation with other return groups – such as Oeppen (2009) amongst the highly skilled or Kuschminder (2017) regarding student returnees – do not explicitly use the term stigma. We argue that, following Goffman's (1963: 3) theory of social stigmas, which defines a stigma as ‘an attribute that is deeply discrediting’, these negative attitudes are best referred to as stigmas. In this study, we specifically use the term ‘returnee stigma’, as being a ‘return migrant’ is the attribute that creates isolation and rejection from the group. We purposefully use the term returnee in an encompassing manner – including permanent returnees as well as diaspora members on return visits for knowledge transfer – to emphasise that the stigmas experienced by diaspora members on return visits are similar to those felt by other types of returnee.

The roots of returnee stigmas will first be discussed by drawing on the key stakeholder interviews to explain the different types present in the three countries. Second, we illustrate the way that respondents experienced these returnee stigmas before, thirdly, presenting a typology of respondents’ strategies for addressing them.

⁷⁶ The published article uses respondent numbers which have been replaced by pseudonyms here to ensure consistency throughout the thesis.

8.2 The roots of returnee stigmas

Returnee stigmas were present in each country and some were similar across all three. The first stigma that is prevalent in all three countries is that diaspora members might impose a threat to locals' jobs when working in the same office. Perceived inequalities in terms of professional development appear at the basis of these attitudes among the locals. One respondent in Sierra Leone, Stakeholder 5, stated:

If a diaspora [member] is coming to work in this office, for instance, probably the local staff will think that the diaspora [members] want to take over their jobs. That's something that happens a lot...Because if the diaspora [member] is working very well, probably the office might want to keep him and if they keep him definitely the local will lose their job or they would be below the diaspora [member] because the diaspora [member] has more experience, more knowledge in what he or she has acquired abroad.

This is similar to findings by Hammond (2015) where diaspora members in Somaliland were accorded higher social status than locals and perceived as having a competitive advantage in receiving high-ranking and well-paid positions. In some cases, it is true that diaspora members are preferred over locals for positions. One Somaliland stakeholder explained that having a European or North American passport is regarded as a comparative advantage for certain positions. Due to the lack of international recognition of Somaliland, international travel is easier for individuals with a foreign passport. This means that, for positions that require international travel, including many government positions, returnees or diaspora members with a foreign passport may be the preferred candidates. These perceived differences in treatment create resentment towards diaspora members among the local population who perceive that the former think that they are 'better than locals' (Stakeholder 1, Ethiopia) or 'know-it-all's' (Stakeholder 6, Sierra Leone). Apart from competition for jobs, this resentment may also be created through the special treatment of diaspora members, for example in the form of tax benefits in Ethiopia. In Sierra Leone and Somaliland, the fear of unfair competition seems to go beyond the work sphere, as the perception exists that diaspora members entice away locals' wives, who are attracted by the higher social status attributed to diaspora members.

The second returnee stigma that was mentioned in Ethiopia and Sierra Leone is that diaspora members lack any understanding of local issues as they have not lived through the difficult situations that locals had to endure, such as war and poverty. This is furthered by feelings of envy that diaspora members are the ones who had the opportunity to leave the country, which allowed them to obtain high levels of education which, upon return, gives them a comparative advantage. Such notions have been discussed for instance by Fransen and Kuschminder (2012), who identified the resentment of locals towards returnees who received support from the UNHCR for their housing projects. In Sierra Leone, the perceived lack of contextual knowledge and shared experiences, among other aspects, is commonly expressed through use of the term 'JCs' ('Just Comes'). As one stakeholder explained, the term is used to refer to diaspora members arriving for short visits at the end of the year, expressing locals' resentment and envy towards (presumably) wealthy and well-educated diaspora members who only return to their country of origin for leisure. Meanwhile, the locals – who have experienced and continue to experience challenging situations in Sierra Leone – resent these leisure visits that display unobtainable wealth for them.

Third, a country-specific stigma identified in Ethiopia is that diaspora members – and therefore returnees – have long been regarded as supporters of the opposition, a perspective

which was helped along by a continuous emphasis of the Ethiopian government on the political engagement of the diaspora. In Ethiopia, the representative of the Ethiopian Diaspora Agency said that the picture of the diaspora in Ethiopia is predominantly negative, because the government has not actively promoted a positive picture in the past, for example by publicising stories of successful diaspora investment, something which the new agency aims to change. The current prime minister, Abiy Ahmed, has put new emphasis on engaging the diaspora since he took up his position in April 2018 and has taken a more positive stance towards its members compared to previous governments (Krippahl, 2018). The geopolitics of diaspora engagement matter as they trickle down to the way that the highly skilled diaspora members on return visits are received by their colleagues which, in turn, may impact on diaspora members' contributions.

Despite the presence of three main types of stigma, the stakeholder interviews highlighted that there is also a recognition that diaspora members make positive contributions through skills transfer, remittances and investments. In Somaliland, Stakeholder 5 described diaspora contributions as 'one of the driving forces of the country'. It is evident that feelings towards diaspora members and returnees are mixed and both positive and negative sentiments are present in each of the focus countries. On the whole, the negative sentiments appear to be more prevalent than the positive ones and are more problematic for the knowledge-transfer process. If diaspora members on return visits for knowledge transfer are negatively stigmatised and not accepted, their potential to transfer knowledge and to contribute to capacity development may be limited. This relates to Levitt and Merry's (2009) concept of vernacularisation. Therefore, we focus in this paper on how these negative returnee stigmas are addressed by diaspora members on return visits for knowledge transfer. This section has identified three types of stigma. The next section discusses how these were reflected in the experiences of the diaspora members on return visits for knowledge transfer.

8.3 Respondents' experiences of stigmas

Whether or not a returnee experiences stigmas depends on several factors, including the context in which diaspora members and locals are in contact, where individuals return from (e.g. Europe or North America or within Africa) and whether the diaspora member's return is temporary or permanent. A returnee who becomes part of a workplace, even if only temporarily, is often viewed as more threatening than someone who returns for leisure visits. This is because good employment positions are highly competitive and, as demonstrated above, there is a fear that returnees will take locals' jobs. Therefore, it is expected that returnee stigmas are stronger in the context of temporary workplace assignments for knowledge transfer.

Diaspora members who participated in CD4D were acutely aware of a potentially negative attitude towards them in their country of origin – a knowledge gained through their transnational ties over the years or acquired in the early days of their visits. One perception is that diaspora members may be perceived as arrogant 'know-it-alls' or 'show-offs', as discussed in the previous section. For example, Abdullahi, a diaspora member from Somaliland⁷⁷, stated:

[...] know-it-all diaspora. That is the perception they have of diaspora [members] – nosy, know-it-all and not adjusted, not polite and a threat to them as well. So, because I have been here longer, I knew already that perception would exist and I

⁷⁷ No placement number as placement was not included in the analysis of 33 placements due to a lack of host-institution staff data.

could really sense and see what was happening.

Other diaspora members also voiced that they were aware that they might be perceived as a threat, as locals may fear that those on return visits for knowledge transfer have come to take away their jobs.

While several diaspora members related that they started their assignments with these negative perceptions in mind, the recollections of their actual experiences were more diverse. This also means that, in several cases, diaspora members who were expecting to be confronted with a negative attitude, did not experience any negativity from the host-institution staff during their assignment. Of the 35 diaspora members interviewed for this study, 11 experienced negative stigmas at the host institution, feeling that staff there perceived them as a potential threat to their jobs. The diaspora members reported that they sensed mistrust towards them at the start of their assignment, which they attributed to them being from the diaspora. One diaspora member in Somaliland commented on previous experiences with diaspora members who were awarded high-level positions – such as Director General or Minister – and who then contracted other diaspora members for consultancy jobs. Four diaspora members experienced negative attitudes outside, although not within, the host institution. Some diaspora members stated that locals labelled them as foreigners which, depending on the situation, either seems a way to assume and signal a lack of understanding of local issues or may imply an acknowledgement of assumed foreign expertise.

In addition, diaspora members on return visits for knowledge transfer in Somaliland experienced gender-specific stigmas. For some female diaspora members in Somaliland, being labelled as a foreigner extended beyond their experiences at the host institution and was present for them daily. Female diaspora members seem particularly to experience locals being able to tell immediately that they are from the diaspora – for instance by the way they walk and dress. This aspect has been discussed by Peutz (2010) and Tiilikainen (2011) as part of their research on deportees in Somaliland. They showed that returnees were labelled as *dhaqan celis* – ‘a person who is being returned to culture’ (Tiilikainen, 2011, p. 77). Furthermore, one female diaspora member who participated in the CD4D project said that ‘people judge you before you have done anything’. From her experience, locals would think that, because she grew up in Europe, she has low morals and is easier for men to get than local women. Her account of her experiences resembles what Schuster and Majidi (2015, p. 644) refer to as a ‘stigma of contamination’.

In line with the findings from the stakeholder interviews, not all diaspora members experienced stigmas in the host institutions where they conducted their assignments, either feeling that they were regarded as locals or, even though the staff regarded them as foreigners, that this was without the negative connotation. One diaspora member (Patrick, Diaspora member, Placements 18 and 19, Sierra Leone) mentioned having been referred to as the ‘Dutch friend’, another as a ‘brother from the diaspora’ (Joseph, Diaspora member, Placement 14, Sierra Leone). In some cases, the foreign reference was made in a positive way to signal acknowledgement of assumed foreign expertise, by referring to the diaspora member as the ‘Expert from the Netherlands’ (Hailu, Diaspora member, Placement 6, Ethiopia). At the same time, as one respondent highlighted, this may create expectations towards diaspora members with regards to connections and monetary contributions.

8.4 Diaspora members' strategies to prevent and counteract returnee stigmas

As discussed in the previous section, 11 diaspora members experienced negative stigmas. Yet, due to the high awareness of stigmatisation, a total of 21 diaspora members reported employing some type of strategy to prevent or counteract it. Through the ways in which diaspora members articulated their awareness of negative diasporic stereotypes, they also showed an attempt to distance themselves from them, for instance, by considering the negative image as a product of a lack of self-awareness of other diaspora members. At the same time, their awareness of potentially negative attitudes towards diaspora members has framed how they present themselves and how they interact with staff at the host institution.

Three types of strategy to prevent or counteract returnee stigmas were identified: *adapting* to the country and its culture, *signalling* commonality, approachability and respect and *addressing* stereotypes, labels and misconceptions. These strategies overlap and are not mutually exclusive. All are either employed as *preventive* or *counteractive* strategies or both. Thereby, counteractive strategies were used as a response to stigmas by diaspora members who experienced negative attitudes from staff during the visit at the host institution, while preventive strategies were used by diaspora members to avert stigmatisation.

8.4.1 Preventing returnee stigmatisation

Eight of the diaspora members interviewed for this study reported what can be characterised as a strategy of *adaptation*. Three of them used this strategy preventively; they did not report experiencing stigmatisation at the host institution, which could be attributed to their having employed this strategy. *Adapters* recounted that, when they are in the country of origin, they try to act in a way that they perceive is typical for the country. Even though the majority of respondents reported having transnational ties, this first strategy was adopted in an attempt to not appear different from locals. In practice, this included diaspora members trying to adapt as much as possible to local customs and behaviours, especially in the areas of punctuality and time management, as well as aspects such as dress codes and ways of communication. Acknowledging that cultural differences with regards to these aspects might exist and that they, themselves, might have adopted some the Dutch or European ways of doing things, this approach meant that they tried to display them less. For a few diaspora members, this strategy seemed to come naturally. As one respondent (Jacob, Diaspora member, Placement 1, Ethiopia) said: 'I adapt. When I am there, I am Ethiopian, when I am here, I am Dutch'.

Other respondents reported how employing this strategy was the result of a learning process, as they realised over time that they cannot change the way in which things work at the host institution or in the country at large. They saw the need to adapt to improve their interactions with staff. As the majority of respondents had some previous experience in the country of origin, such as prior temporary, longer-term return or short-term visits, they adopted this strategy preventively.

Six of the diaspora members who did not experience stigma at the host institution described how they mainly engaged in efforts to *signal commonality, approachability and respect*. Exclusively used as a preventive strategy, the essence of this approach seems to be an intent to avert being perceived as an 'other' by highlighting commonalities. For instance, as a common perception is that diaspora members are 'know-it-alls', one diaspora member reported trying to show staff that s/he had not only come to teach but was willing to learn from the local team as well. In a formal training session, the diaspora member running it opted to ask a participant in the session who had some prior knowledge in the topic of training to give a presentation. In so doing, the diaspora member tried to 'show [the host-institution staff] that

everybody can learn from each other' (Kassa, Diaspora member, Placement 8, Ethiopia). Alhaji (Diaspora member, Placement 12, Sierra Leone) stated that, in order to gain the trust of host-institution staff, one should focus on being 'consistent and respectful':

And the only way to prove to those people who are sceptical...is to be consistent and respectful. And respect them for being sceptical. Because that's also human nature. Because maybe, because of their experience with other diasporas [they are sceptical].

Furthermore, this strategy also entailed showing staff that the diaspora members are also (respectively) Ethiopian, Somali(lander) or Sierra Leonean – or that, even though they are diaspora members, they also have close ties to their country of origin. Although more common as a counteractive strategy, one diaspora member reported having addressed any potential misconceptions upfront. Through a meeting with staff at the start of the assignment, the diaspora member openly told staff about the limited timeframe of the assignment and its supportive nature. This appeared to have been successful as the diaspora member did not experience any negative attitudes and was able to contribute to knowledge transfer.

8.4.2 *Counteracting returnee stigmas*

Adaptation was discussed above as a preventive strategy. The interviews showed that it is also being used as a strategy to counteract returnee stigmas. Four of the diaspora members who reported having experienced stigmatisation at their host institution employed this strategy. In addition, one diaspora member who was experiencing negative stigmas more generally – although not at the host institution – also used this strategy. For diaspora members who had less return experience or had not been involved in the work environment in their country of origin, this learning process, which leads to adaptation, took place during CD4D. Sahra (Diaspora member, Placement 23, Somaliland)⁷⁸ described having learnt to understand the ways in which staff at the host institution said that they did not know how to go about a certain task. As the reaction of the staff member was very different to the behaviour which the diaspora member was used to in the Dutch work environment and the diaspora member had no previous work experience in the Somaliland context, it took him or her some time to recognise this difference. The diaspora member then adapted his/her way of communication accordingly, describing this learning process in the following way:

A person who does not want to say 'I do not know how to do that', so [...] they will say 'Yeah, yeah, I will do it, I will do it' and you come back a few hours later, you ask about it and he is telling you 'Oh this broke, or that broke' or, you know, some sort of excuse. At first, I used to get upset, like 'Why did you not just call me or let me know, like what is wrong with you?' But now, I will start asking questions like 'Oh, so how did it break?' 'What happened?', 'Oh, we do not really know how to do this', 'That is fine you should have just told me'. Done. 'I will explain it to you for the next time'. So now it is a whole different way of, you know, doing things instead of how I was [doing them at] first.

(Sahra, Diaspora member, Placement 23, Somaliland)

⁷⁸ Sahra's placement was discussed as Case 7 in Chapter 6.

Less subtle than the other approaches, a group of diaspora members preferred to use a strategy of directly *addressing* stereotypes, labels and misconceptions. This was employed as a counteractive strategy by seven diaspora members who experienced stigmatisation at the host institution, as well as by two diaspora members who experienced stigmas during more general interactions. To overcome the mistrust they experienced by the staff at the host institution, these diaspora members used open communication. One diaspora member, John (Placement 13, Sierra Leone), said:⁷⁹

I had to reassure them that I don't come to take their job. I am just here to help. To do capacity building and I am doing it absolutely out of free will. And that it is something that will benefit them. It is not for my own personal benefit.

This strategy entailed diaspora members on return visits for knowledge transfer providing information about the CD4D scheme and explaining the selection criteria for programme participants. As the CD4D programme has been designed as a needs-based project, implemented through temporary assignments, explaining the characteristics of the project made it clear for host-institution staff that diaspora members on return visits for knowledge transfer are merely a temporary support for the host institution and plan to return to the Netherlands after their assignment; therefore they are not competing for host-institution staffs' positions. This seems crucial as the main stigmatisation experienced by diaspora members is being perceived as a threat to locals' jobs. In a few cases, a lack of clarity about the project modalities also created a feeling among local staff that they had been deprived of the opportunity to apply, themselves, to become a CD4D participant. In this case, explaining that only diaspora members who are resident in the Netherlands can apply to participate in the programme helped to ensure the willingness of staff to work with the diaspora member, especially for locals who questioned why they had not been allowed to apply themselves.

8.5 Implications and conclusion

This article has explored how diaspora members who complete return visits for knowledge transfer and capacity development within a diaspora return programme deal with returnee stigmatisation. In this context, diaspora members are hailed for development purposes and it is generally assumed that they are familiar with the country of origin and can reintegrate easily. We provided a first exploratory analysis of forms of returnee stigma, how they are experienced in the specific context of return visits for knowledge transfer and the strategies that diaspora members use to prevent and counteract stigmatisation. Through interviews with diaspora members on return visits, as well as with stakeholders, we found that stigmatisation was underpinned by different assumptions such as diaspora members being a threat to locals' jobs and lacking any understanding of local issues, as well as country- and gender-specific stigmas. The stigma of diaspora members posing a threat to locals' jobs is the most prevalent and this fear is highly important in this context due to the unique type of temporary visit where diaspora members are placed directly in the work context and are expected to vernacularise and create knowledge transfer and change.

A key finding of this study is that diaspora members on return visits for knowledge transfer show a high awareness of returnee stigmas and employ different strategies to try to address them. Of 35 diaspora members, 21 voiced that they employed some type of strategy.

⁷⁹ John's placement was discussed as Case 9 in Chapter 6 and Case 2 in Chapter 7.

The strategies that were identified in this study are *adapting*, *signalling* and *addressing*; strategies which should be regarded as overlapping and not mutually exclusive. The strategies are either employed in a *preventive* or a *counteractive* move, or both. Nine diaspora members thus used the strategies in a counteractive manner as they experienced negative stigmas from the staff at the host institution. These diaspora members either *adapted* or *addressed*. The other group of returnees did not experience stigmatisation at the host institution yet, based on previous experiences, they used strategies to avoid it. These latter nine diaspora members mostly used *signalling* as a preventive strategy. In addition, three diaspora members used broader strategies as they experienced stigmas more generally, although not at the host institutions.

It should be noted that this paper focuses on returnees in very specific contexts. Return visits take place through a diaspora-return programme, meaning that the return is planned, restricted to a pre-defined time period and takes place voluntarily. In addition, diaspora members on return visits for knowledge transfer are supported financially as well as administratively for the duration of their stay. Furthermore, those on return visits for knowledge transfer are selected based on their skills, hence they are mostly highly educated with valued expertise in a certain field. It is also important to highlight that the three countries examined in this study are among the least developed in the world and have experienced high levels of skilled emigration. How diaspora members on return visits for knowledge transfer experience and respond to returnee stigmatisation is important as trust has been identified as an important enabler or inhibitor of knowledge transfer in previous studies (Boh & Xu, 2013; Joia & Lemos, 2010; Kuschminder et al., 2014; Levin & Cross, 2004; Narteh, 2008; Riege, 2005; Sun & Scott, 2005). Yet, it has to be acknowledged that returnee stigmatisation is not the only factor at play; the absence of returnee stigmas by no means guarantees knowledge-transfer success, as other factors may play a role as well (as discussed in the previous chapter), such as the organisational environment or characteristics of the knowledge receivers.

Nonetheless, our study expands on Miah's (2021) typology of return visits by discussing those for knowledge transfer as a distinct type of return visit and situating them within the broader field of diaspora return and the geopolitics of (under-)development. It demonstrates how returnee stigmatisation is experienced and addressed within the unique context of return visits for knowledge transfer, building on previous research on highly skilled return visits (Oeppen, 2013). The results show that, even though diaspora members on return visits for knowledge transfer engage in voluntary visits, they experience negative attitudes from locals as they are perceived as being a threat to locals' jobs. While this fear shows recognition of the skills of the diaspora members, the very fact that diaspora members on return visits for knowledge are mostly highly skilled individuals may contribute to this stigmatisation. In addition, the findings demonstrate that female diaspora members on return visits in Somaliland experience gendered stigmas, similar in part to what has been discussed in previous research as a 'stigma of contamination' (Schuster & Majidi, 2015). They illustrate that some diaspora members on return visits for knowledge transfer do experience stigmas similar to those which deportees experience, though compounded by their perceived privileged status on the part of the locals.

Regarding policy and programming, our findings demonstrate the importance of preparing diaspora members on knowledge transfer for these possible stigmas and the need to have a bi-directional movement of professionals for knowledge transfer from the Global South to the North. Diaspora members who were aware of the stigmas and acted to prevent them from the start of the assignment found that they had succeeded. If programme implementation includes the preparation and coaching of diaspora members on these stigmas, then the members can act to prevent them and increase the possibility of success in their assignment. The

occurrence of gender-specific stigmatisation furthermore calls for considering intersecting social identities in policy and programming. These strategies would enhance the professional (re)integration of these diaspora members and optimise their contribution to development in their countries of origin.



9

9 CONCLUSION

The effect return migration may have on development has been subject to optimistic and pessimistic interpretations over the last decades. Returning to the quote on the first page of this thesis, evidence on return migration's impact on development remains inconsistent and effects are context-dependent (King, 2022). This thesis has aimed to make a contribution to deepening our understanding of diaspora return visits for knowledge transfer and capacity development facilitated by short-term diaspora return programmes, which is a policy aspect of return migration and development that has not been theorised.

This final chapter summarises the main findings of this thesis, discusses main contributions this study makes to the literature on return and development and the study's limitations, provides directions for future research and presents implications for policymaking deriving from this study.

9.1 Summary of the thesis and main findings

The objective of this thesis is to increase our understanding of diaspora members' contributions to knowledge transfer and capacity development during return visits. The primary research question guiding this study has been:

How do diaspora members on return visits for knowledge transfer contribute to knowledge transfer and capacity development at host institutions in their countries of origin within the framework of a short-term diaspora return programme?

To answer this question, this study proposed a conceptual framework (see Chapter 3) of knowledge transfer and capacity development. As stated in the introduction, existing definitions and use of the concepts of knowledge transfer and capacity development in the context of short-term diaspora return programmes do not sufficiently capture the former as a process. This thesis has put forward a new conceptualisation, differentiating between the three processes of information transmission (IT), knowledge creation (KC) and contributions to organisational capacity development (COCD). IT is the process whereby knowledge senders – in this thesis the diaspora members – share new information and insights with the knowledge receivers, here the host-institution staff. KC is the process whereby the knowledge receivers process and utilise the transmitted information. These two processes together form the knowledge transfer process, with IT being the first stage and KC the second, with the second stage resulting in individual capacity development. The third process is COCD, which is defined as the process whereby the diaspora member makes contributions to the internal structure, policies, procedures and resources of the host institution in which the return visit takes place. Nonetheless, the emphasis here is on the first two processes – IT and KC, with COCD being considered as a complementary process. Distinguishing between these three processes allows to generate an in-depth understanding of how diaspora members contribute to knowledge transfer and capacity development.

Furthermore, this thesis has distinguished three levels of capacity development (high, medium and low). A placement was considered to have *high capacity development* as long as IT and KC occurred, which may have been accompanied by COCD. Placements with medium capacity development are those with success in IT – which may be accompanied by success in COCD – and *low capacity development* or placements without success in the three processes or only in COCD. Differentiating between these three levels of capacity development allows

me to examine the three processes jointly as they build on each other – in the case of IT and KC – or complement each other, in the case of COCD.

The conceptual framework also establishes a basis on which to examine the factors enabling or inhibiting these three processes. Based on a comprehensive review, the framework proposed in this thesis examines three levels: the individual level, comprising the diaspora members and host-institution staff; the group level, which is knowledge transfer methods and knowledge features as well as relationships and interactions; and the contextual level, consisting of return modality and project characteristics, the host institutions and the countries of return. The conceptualisation and examination of factors across all three processes is an approach not previously applied in the context of short-term diaspora return programmes.

Based on the conceptual framework, this thesis then examined perceived knowledge transfer and capacity development (see Chapter 6) which were measured using the methodology of value assignment for the three processes introduced in Chapter 4. The chapter presented the results for the three processes, IT, KC and COCD. The results show that there is evidence of all three processes, even though to different extents. Information transmission is much more common than COCD and KC. The chapter then proceeded to examine the three levels of capacity development, demonstrating that some form of capacity development occurs during the majority of placements. Of the 33 placements examined for this study, 18 showed *medium capacity development* and eight *high capacity development*. Thus, in addition to showing that diaspora members can make valuable contributions to the host institutions by contributing to at least medium capacity development, this chapter also demonstrated that the capacity development achieved is not at the ideal level, which would be *high capacity development*. Since only eight placements had this latter, only a limited number of placements were successful in knowledge creation in addition to information transmission.

For this reason, Chapter 7 then examined which combination of factors between the diaspora member, host-institution staff and the overall context create the optimal conditions for knowledge transfer and capacity development by examining enablers and inhibitors across the three processes of IT, KC and COCD. For IT, the chapter showed that, at an individual level, the diaspora members' motivations for return visits, previous participation in a diaspora return programme and expertise together with the host-institution staff's motivation to learn from a diaspora member all constitute enablers or inhibitors. At the group level, the type of knowledge transfer method and the occurrence of interaction may enable or inhibit IT. The ease of the relationship between diaspora members and host-institution staff plays a role in the occurrence of interaction. In addition, factors at the contextual level indirectly influence IT, as the project's Terms of Reference and the host institution's learning intent may influence the occurrence of interaction; the stipend provided to diaspora members through the project may also affect their motivations for return visits.

For KC, an individual-level factor that was identified, is the diaspora members' disseminative capacity. In addition, their familiarity with the country-of-origin context and the host institution, their age and gender and the strategies they apply to prevent and counteract returnee stigma, all affect the ease of the relationship between diaspora members and host-institution staff, thereby indirectly playing a role for KC. At the group level, the relevance of the information and insights to host-institution staff, the availability of practical exercises and the frequency of interaction enable or inhibit KC. This frequency depends on the host-institution staff's motivation to learn from a diaspora member, the relevance of the diaspora member's activities to the staff's work, their time for knowledge transfer and capacity development and the ease of the relationship between diaspora members and host-institution staff. At the contextual level, the focus on knowledge transfer, the placement length and the availability of resources play a role in KC, as does returnee stigma, as it determines the

strategies which diaspora members employ to counteract or prevent returnee stigma, playing a role in the ease of the relationship. The focus on knowledge transfer is determined by placement Terms of Reference, the host institutions' learning intent and the diaspora members' motivation for return visits.

For COCD, the diaspora members' motivation for return visits, their expertise and their ability to mobilise resources all play a role at the individual level while the complementarity to knowledge transfer and the necessity of organisational capacity were identified as group- and contextual-level factors, respectively. The chapter also showed a number of factors that have not been identified as relevant or could not be examined in detail, such as the diaspora members' level of education and their employment status, the host-institution staff's absorptive capacity, the type of organisation and the organisational structure.

Chapter 8 explored how diaspora members who complete VKTs within a diaspora return programme deal with stigma. Among the types of stigma were that diaspora members might impose a threat to locals' jobs, lack any understanding of local issues and be supporters of the opposition, together with gender-specific stigma for female returnees. The chapter revealed that diaspora members on VKTs showed a high awareness of potential stigma and employed three types of strategy – *adapting*, *signalling* and *addressing* – to prevent or counteract it.

9.2 Contributions to the literature

Returning to the introduction of this thesis, a key criticism of the return–development nexus has been the inconsistency of evidence around return migration's contribution to development and the lack of evidence on the beyond-the-context dependency of contributions. By studying diaspora return visits for knowledge transfer and capacity development, this thesis focused on a popular policy tool that has received little research attention and theorisation. It therefore aimed to create more insight into VKTs, thereby contributing to the literature on return and development in three main ways.

First, this thesis proposed a framework for knowledge transfer and capacity development, addressing a gap in the existing literature. The framework conceptualises knowledge transfer as a staged process, distinguishes three processes – *information transmission* (IT), *knowledge creation* (KC) and *contributions to organisational capacity development* (COCD) across three levels (individual, group and contextual), conceptualisations which had not been previously applied in this way within the field of return and development. Distinguishing between these processes and levels allowed me to generate new evidence on the contributions of diaspora members to knowledge transfer and capacity development that expand on existing studies. This thesis therefore makes a contribution to the field of return migration and development as – through the conceptual framework proposed – it addresses the lack of 'clear-cut criteria for success' (King, 2022, p. 326) of returnees for one specific area of contributions to development – knowledge transfer and development.

On the one hand, this included showing that *information transmission* is the most common while *knowledge creation* is the least. On the other hand, in line with previous studies (Kuschminder, 2014a; Kuschminder et al., 2014), this thesis has shown that diaspora members can make valuable contributions at host institutions in their countries of origin, increasing both individual and organisational capacities. Nonetheless, this study has shown that capacity development is not at the most effective level, with *medium capacity development* being the most common outcome of placements, thereby confirming what Kuschminder et al. (2014) identified regarding the level of knowledge transfer. The findings also provide further evidence

on what King (2022) found related to the success of returnees; he concluded that the development impact of returnees lies in-between success and failure.

Second, by discussing VKT as a distinct type of return visit, the thesis expands on Miah's (2022) typology of a return visit. The recognition of this type as a separate category is important for the literature on return and development, as it allows the theorisation of a form of return visit that is frequently used by practitioners as a tool to promote return for development.

Third, this thesis adds empirical evidence on these return visits to the literature on return and development. This thesis expands on Ghosh (1996, p. 103) who highlighted role of the relative productivity and usefulness of returnees' skills compared to prior learning in the country of origin and the returnees' willingness and opportunity to transfer them. It also builds on a number of studies in the field of return and development that have started to examine the factors that influence knowledge transfer and capacity development (e.g. Ammassari, 2004; Kuschminder, 2014a; Kuschminder et al., 2014; Van Houte & Davids, 2014; Wang, 2014). They highlight aspects such as a trusting relationship between diaspora members and their local colleagues (Ammassari, 2004; Kuschminder, 2014; Van Houte & Davids, 2014; Wang, 2014), the passion and motivation of participants (Kuschminder, 2014a), knowledge-receiver absorptive capacity (Kuschminder et al., 2014) and the knowledge transfer method (Kuschminder, 2014a; Kuschminder et al., 2014).

By examining factors across the three processes (IT, KC, COCD) and three levels (individual, group, contextual) – an approach not previously applied in the field of return and development – this study has furthered understandings of the factors enabling and inhibiting knowledge transfer and capacity development and yielded new insights. It has shown the varying degrees of importance which the three levels of enablers and inhibitors have for the three processes, underscored the importance of factors previously discussed in the literature – confirming their importance for knowledge transfer and capacity development and determining their role for each of the three processes – and identified additional factors not previously included, such as diaspora members' prior participation in a short-term diaspora return programme, their disseminative capacity, the frequency of interaction between diaspora members and host-institution staff and role of the complementarity of contributions to organisational capacity development to knowledge transfer.

9.3 Limitations

This thesis is subject to a number of limitations. A total of 278 interviews with diaspora members, host-institution staff and stakeholders were conducted. While this may be considered a fairly large sample size for qualitative research, the analysis of knowledge transfer and capacity development centres on 33 placements; interviews for whom diaspora-member and host-institution staff data could not be matched had to be excluded, which reduced the sample size for this analysis to 29 diaspora members and 74 host-institution staff. Nonetheless, this allowed for an in-depth analysis of these placements.

In addition, since – for the analysis in Chapters 6 and 7 – responses were aggregated by placement to match knowledge-receiver and -sender data, differences within placements in how the various host-institution staff assessed a placement are not immediately visible from the aggregated results, yet these were taken into account for the discussion of the findings of perceived knowledge transfer and capacity development in Chapter 6 as well as the enablers and inhibitors in Chapter 7. The quantification of qualitative data is also a subjective process, which is why the methodology to measure IT, KC and COCD was developed based on the literature review, all steps were described in detail and a rubric of the operationalisation was

presented. Another limitation of this study lies in the method chosen. While qualitative methods allowed in-depth insights, no causal claims can be established. The role of each factor for IT, KC and COCD was derived using an in-depth qualitative, comparative approach across placements with different levels of capacity development, which allowed detailed insights into the role of each factor.

Another limitation of this study is the focus of the third process on *contributions* to organisational capacity development (COCD), not *actual* organisational capacity development (OCD). This decision was made as actual OCD requires changes at the organisational level beyond the sphere of control of the diaspora member and the frame of return visits. This means that this approach does not account for whether actual OCD occurred in the end.

Furthermore, knowledge transfer was analysed in a unidirectional manner in this thesis, as a transfer from the diaspora member on to colleagues at the host institution is the direction of transfer defined by the diaspora return programme, even though, in practice, knowledge transfer should be regarded as a multidirectional process, including in this case. The decision to focus on the knowledge transfer by diaspora members to host-institution staff was made in order to allow to generate in-depth insights into this process.

Finally, the analysis in this thesis focuses on the short-term perspective. While it allowed to determine knowledge creation as a result of information transmission, the application of knowledge should be regarded as a continuous, longer-term process. As interviews were conducted shortly after placements occurred, this thesis does not allow to establish whether and how host-institution staff continues to apply the information and insights gained over a longer-term time frame and whether, for instance, they train other staff based on what they learnt from the diaspora members.

9.4 Directions for future research

Based on the findings summarised in the previous section, a number of theoretical and methodological implications arise and several suggestions for future research on VKTs are provided.

As this study has shown that return visits for knowledge transfer and capacity development are a conceptually distinct type of return visit, future research could further explore this concept as well as its suitability within present and future typologies.

This thesis proposed a methodology to measure knowledge transfer and capacity development in the case of a diaspora return programme. Future research could use this methodology to assess the knowledge transfer and capacity development of other diaspora return programmes and could also develop the framework further. An improvement that further research could make to the framework is the way in which organisational capacity development (OCD) has been examined. The framework focuses on the contributions of the diaspora member to OCD, yet future research could go further by examining the extent to which these contributions are adopted and maintained by the host institution.

This study used a qualitative approach which provided in-depth insights into the motivations of diaspora members and their experiences and strategies regarding stigma as well as their perceptions of knowledge transfer and capacity development success and their enablers and inhibitors. The experiences with data collection as part of the CD4D evaluation showed that quantitative data collection was challenging and did not yield sufficient data in terms of quality and sample size, particularly in the case of host-institution staff. While the implementation of questionnaires with diaspora members was less challenging, the response rate was low. As participants also had to complete reports for IOM after each assignment,

completing the questionnaire and forms became an administrative burden and led to low response rates. Some of the data collected through them, such as those from the participant pre-assignment and post-assignment questionnaires, were used, nonetheless, to complement the data from the interviews. Future research on diaspora return programmes could draw on these experiences by pursuing a qualitative approach, which could be complemented by data collected through a post-assignment questionnaire administered to project participants. At the same time, future research could use the conceptual framework and the findings from Chapter 5 as a basis for a quantitative study of the enablers and inhibitors of successful knowledge transfer, which would allow the testing of causal claims. However, the challenges with regards to quantitative data collection in this context should still be taken into consideration.

In addition, if data are collected as part of an evaluation, streamlining the data collection approach with the reporting requirements of the implementing organisation is recommended. Based on the experiences gained during the evaluation of the first phase of CD4D, we adapted the approach for the evaluation of the second phase. Instead of the three participant questionnaires, we designed just one post-assignment questionnaire. The completion of this questionnaire – undertaken once the IOM post-assignment report is finalised – is mandatory and participants have to send to the IOM project manager a screenshot of the last page that confirms its completion. We collaborated with IOM to avoid any overlap between their form and our questionnaire. Furthermore, the interview guides with host-institution staff could also include more closed-ended questions as this would allow the obtention of more quantitative data while maintaining the interaction and depth of qualitative interviewing.

Another methodological implication arises from how the data for this study have been collected. While collecting data as part of the evaluation of CD4D allowed unique insights into a diaspora return project, it also came with some limitations. The evaluation was subject to a predefined end date. The last evaluation visit was initially planned to coincide with the end of the project. Since the first phase of the CD4D project received a six-month extension, which the evaluation time frame did not, a small number of extensions were still ongoing at the time of the last evaluation visit. For future research, it is recommended that the last point of data collection takes place after all placements have finished.

In addition, future research should focus on the sustainability of the contributions. This thesis has shown that diaspora members can make valuable contributions to knowledge transfer and capacity development as part of a diaspora return programme. For interventions to have a long-lasting effect, practices must be sustained by host institutions and their staff, an aspect that future research could focus on by conducting a follow-up study with beneficiary institutions.

The analysis conducted in Chapter 8 showed that diaspora members used strategies to counteract and prevent (potential) returnee stigma. As this constituted a first exploratory analysis, future research could further examine this phenomenon by drawing on our findings. In practice, this could be done, for instance, by presenting the strategies identified in Chapter 8 to focus groups of diaspora members. This would allow examination of the extent to which their experiences were similar and whether they also used these or other strategies. This study also showed that gender-specific stigma exists and that the combination of age and gender plays a role for the ease of relationships between diaspora members and host-institution staff. While projects such as CD4D emphasised the ‘diaspora’ component of participants’ identities, the occurrence of gender-specific stigma shows the importance of considering intersecting social identities. While gender and age-specific challenges became clear throughout the analysis, other intersecting factors such as class or sexual identity should also be taken into account. Further research should be conducted to explore the role of gender, since this study could only provide limited insights due to the small number of female participants.

9.5 Implications for policymaking

Besides their theoretical implications, the results of this study are relevant for policy and programming. Based on the main findings of this thesis, this section presents several implications for policymaking.

- *The added value of diaspora return programmes and their applicability to other return contexts*

This thesis has demonstrated that diaspora members can make valuable contributions to knowledge transfer and capacity development through a diaspora return programme. Thus, the specific environment of temporary return that the CD4D project creates makes these positive contributions possible. At the same time, the findings of this thesis also show that, even within this specific environment, *high capacity development* is not guaranteed. While these findings highlight the importance of programme design for the success of contributions, the importance of the structural environment created through CD4D also suggests that achieving successful diaspora knowledge transfer and capacity development will be even more difficult outside this particular context – for example, capacity development taking place not as part of a diaspora return programme or, even more so, in contexts where a return was not planned and took place involuntarily.

- *Monitoring and evaluation*

This thesis showed the importance of distinguishing between the different outcomes that a diaspora return programme aims to achieve. The framework was divided into three processes (organisational capacity development, information transmission and knowledge creation). Practitioners responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of diaspora return programmes should aim to assess the success of the programmes together with these different processes, since varying levels of success were identified for each of the three. While information transmission was high, knowledge creation was low. The framework is valuable for policy and programming since international organisations continue to implement diaspora return programmes. The framework developed as part of this thesis could be used as a tool to evaluate current and future programmes, such as the IOM's Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) or the German Development Cooperation (GIZ)'s Diaspora Experts or Return Experts projects.

- *The effectiveness of diaspora return programmes*

This thesis also showed that efforts to increase the effectiveness of diaspora return programmes should focus on increasing the share of placements that lead to knowledge creation. The analysis of enablers and inhibitors in Chapter 7 provided insights into how this could be achieved. The chapter showed the importance of individual, group and contextual factors for knowledge creation.

At the individual level, the diaspora members' disseminative capacity – their ability to transfer knowledge in a way that their colleagues understand it and are able to apply it – is important for knowledge creation. Pre-departure training could help to prepare the diaspora members to act as knowledge senders during the placements. This should include topics such as coaching and mentoring and should be mandatory for all first-time participants. In addition,

these training sessions could provide a platform on which past participants share their experiences with first-time participants, who could thus learn from them. The design could be oriented on existing training such as the orientation training/Training of Facilitators (ToF) workshops provided by MIDA FINNSOM at the start of assignments or the existing approaches by GIZ, who provides pre-assignment training on KT-Methods, briefing on country context and clarification of the responsibilities of the diaspora experts. These recommendations were communicated to IOM as part of the final report of the CD4D evaluation (see Mueller & Kuschminder, 2019). For the second phase of CD4D, IOM has taken up the recommendation regarding pre-departure training and has begun to implement mandatory training for all participants.

Apart from preparing diaspora members to act as knowledge senders, this thesis provided additional reasons why such training is an important component of diaspora return programmes. While the diaspora members' familiarity with the country-of-origin context and the host institution, their age and gender and the strategies which they employ to prevent and counteract returnee stigma, do not directly play a role in *knowledge creation*, they do affect the ease of relationships between diaspora members and host-institution staff, thereby indirectly affecting *knowledge creation*. Chapter 8 showed that, contrary to common assumptions, diaspora members who conduct return visits for knowledge transfer and capacity development face different forms of returnee stigma, the most prevalent of which is that diaspora members are perceived to impose a threat to local jobs. Such stigma may negatively affect the relationship between diaspora members and host-institution staff. For this reason, pre-departure training should help diaspora members to prepare for possible stigma and increase the likelihood of success in their assignment. To promote a quality relationship between diaspora members and host-institution staff, implementing organisations should also ensure that the latter are informed about the diaspora return programme before the arrival of the diaspora member. This should include not only higher-level management but also the staff members as it is particularly important that these latter should learn from the diaspora member.

A group-level enabler and inhibitor of *knowledge creation* is the frequency of interaction between the diaspora member and host-institution staff, as regular interaction between them enables *knowledge creation*. Thus, the host-institution staff's motivation to learn from a diaspora member, the time the staff have for knowledge transfer and capacity development, the relevance of the diaspora member's activities to the staff's work and the ease of the relationship between them all determine the frequency of interaction. For this reason, project implementation needs to ensure that a staff member is available to work with the diaspora member as part of the latter's placement. If possible, implementing organisations should agree with host institutions to allow host-institution staff to dedicate time to work with the diaspora member for the duration of the return visit. In addition, implementing organisations should ensure the relevance of the diaspora member's activities to their staff's work as this may not only contribute to an increased frequency of interaction between diaspora members and host-institution staff but is also important from a sustainability perspective.

In addition, the availability of resources may not only affect the quality of formal training but also the extent to which host-institution staff are able to apply the information and insights in their work if certain equipment is required. Thus, the availability of resources during formal training and for the colleagues to apply the knowledge is largely determined by their general availability at the host institution. For this reason, another recommendation arising from Chapter 7 is that implementing organisations should provide targeted support for organisational resources, the provision of which should be based on an assessment of its necessity for successful knowledge transfer and the potential future use of any equipment provided. For instance, for placements where a particular piece of software is necessary, this could be

provided to enable staff to be trained on it and to keep applying what they learn once the training is complete.

In addition to the availability of resources, another contextual-level factor is the focus on knowledge transfer as part of a placement which is determined by Terms of Reference, the host institutions' learning intent and the diaspora members' motivation for return visits. Implementing organisations should ensure that all placements focus on knowledge transfer. For this, it is essential to include knowledge transfer as a task in the Terms of Reference of all assignments to make it an explicit role for the diaspora member on which they have to deliver.

Finally, Chapter 7 of this thesis showed the role of the placement length for *knowledge creation*, showing that this is relevant depending on the knowledge transfer method. While explicit knowledge transfer methods can lead to *knowledge creation* within a short time frame, more time is required to achieve *knowledge creation* through tacit methods. This has important practical implications. On the one hand, implementing organisations may need to adjust their expectations of the outcomes of placements based on their length, knowing that, drawing on the findings of this study, shorter placements may lead to medium outcomes if tacit methods are used. On the one hand, taking the relationship between knowledge transfer methods and placement length into account, implementing organisations should consider allowing for longer placements if tacit knowledge transfer methods seem the most suitable.

- *Recruitment and support of diaspora members*

From this thesis, further implications for the recruitment and support of diaspora members arise. Chapter 7 showed that diaspora members' motivation to share knowledge with host-institution staff enables *information transmission*, while a lack thereof may inhibit it. The chapter also shows that all placements where diaspora members had engaged in prior diaspora engagement, either in addition to return visits or independently, had at least *medium capacity development*. In addition, the comparison shows that none of the placements where diaspora members were residing fully or partially in the assignment country prior to CD4D had *high capacity development*. Preference should be given to diaspora members with altruistic or mixed motivations, by focusing on those residing outside the case study country in order to avoid individuals using the modality of return visits as a temporary job opportunity. Building on diaspora members' previous engagement with the country of origin outside of a programme, either in addition to return visits or independently, could further strengthen the selection of those with predominantly altruistic motivations. On the other hand, since programmes aim to attract highly skilled individuals who are experts in a certain field and since it can generally be assumed that experts have a genuine interest in further professional development, promoting this latter component of return visits for knowledge transfer and capacity development may help practitioners to attract qualified and motivated diaspora members.

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APPENDIX

I Diaspora member interview guide

**Connecting Diaspora for Development****Participant Interview Guide**

| Interview Identification | |
|---|--|
| Questionnaire ID number | |
| CD4D assignment country | |
| Locale of assignment (name of city/village) | |
| Name of organisation | |
| Interviewer | |
| Date conducted | |
| Place where interview took place | |
| Date entered into database | |

Preamble

Thank you very much for participating in this interview. I would like to remind you again that participation in this interview is on a voluntary basis. Our research team is therefore very happy that you have agreed to participate in this interview as you are making an important contribution to this research. As mentioned before, this interview is part of the evaluation our research team from Maastricht University is conducting of the Connecting Diaspora for Development (CD4D) – Project, operated by IOM. Please note that all interviews will be recorded and all data will be anonymised so that nobody will know that the information you provided came from you. Before we start, do you have any questions? Do you agree to participate in the interview under the above-mentioned conditions?

Note to interviewer: Turn on the recorder and say the date and location and the number of the interview into the recorder.

Motivation/Pre-assignment experiences

1. What was your main motivation to participate in a CD4D-Placement?
2. Did you previously participate in a similar project?
 - a. If yes, which one?
3. As you know, one of the key goals of CD4D is to transfer knowledge. Did you have experience with this before starting the assignment?
 - a. Had you previously worked in a supervisory, managerial, training or mentoring role?
 - b. How experienced were you in mentoring/coaching, giving workshops or training, working in teams and encouraging teamwork, networking/encouraging networking?
4. What engagement did you have in the country before the start of the CD4D assignment?
 - a. Probe for: Communication with family/friends, vacation trips back, work etc.

Assignment Information

1. Now, can you tell me a bit about your assignment in general?

| <i>Check if the following information is being provided</i> | |
|---|--|
| Country | |
| Sector | |
| Institution | |
| Department | |
| Number of assignments | |
| Duration of Assignment 1 | |
| Duration of Assignment 2 | |
| Duration of Assignment 3 | |

2. Can you tell me about your role and main tasks during the assignment?
 - a. How many people did you work with on a regular basis?
 - b. Who were these people? What were their roles?
 - c. Were you in contact with the host institution before the start of the assignment?

Host Institution and Institution's Work Culture

1. In your opinion, what are some of the strengths of the organisation where your assignment took place?
2. What were the challenges facing the organisation?
3. Can you describe how you perceived the institution's work culture?

The objective of this set of questions is to understand the institution's familiarity with and use of knowledge transfer activities.

- a. From your experience, is it common within your host institution (HI) to exchange ideas with colleagues? If so, how?
- b. Do you think staff consider the sharing of ideas and knowledge between staff members as important for their institution/for their work?
- c. Was it common to share new ideas or ways of doing things/did the staff try and test new ideas or ways of doing things?
- d. From what you saw, do the staff at the institution engage in knowledge transfer activities regularly (e.g. mentoring/coaching, teamwork, trainings or workshops, networking)?

Knowledge Transfer

1. How do you feel generally about the interaction with your colleagues at the host institution during the assignment?
 - a. How would you describe the relationship with the staff at the HI? Can you give some examples? Did you have any challenges in working with the colleagues?
 - b. Did you perceive the staff you worked with as open-minded/open to new ideas?
 - c. Did you feel that your colleagues trusted you? How did you create and build trust? Can you give some examples?
 - d. Are you still in contact with some of the colleagues?
2. How did you perceive your colleague's motivation to engage in KT activities?
3. In your opinion, what knowledge did you transfer to your colleagues at the host institution?
 - a. How did you transfer this knowledge?
 - b. Did you engage in mentoring/coaching? (*Topic/Frequency/Number of mentees*)
 - c. Did you give trainings or workshops? (*Topic/Frequencies/Number of attendees*)
 - d. Did you encourage teamwork? If yes, in what ways?
 - e. Did you encourage colleagues to join a sector-specific event? Did you encourage the organisation of a sector-specific event at the HI? Did you establish contact between colleagues at the HI and contacts from your professional network?
4. How was the experience with the colleagues for you?
 - a. In which language did you communicate? Did you use the same terminology (sector/work-specific language)? Did you experience any challenges with regards to communication?
 - b. Did you notice any cultural differences?
 - c. Did you have the impression that the staff and you shared the same values?
 - d. *In case no challenges have been mentioned, probe:* Did you experience any challenges in transferring the knowledge to your colleagues?
5. How satisfied do you feel regarding the knowledge you transferred?
6. Did you perceive any barriers to sharing ideas within the institution?
 - a. Enough time?
 - b. Dedicated space?
 - c. Technology/resources?

- d. Institutional environment?

Change

1. In your opinion, what is/are the most significant change(s) that you contributed to during your assignment?
 - a. How did you contribute to these changes?
 - b. Why do you think these are the most significant changes?
 - c. Are there any other changes?
 - d. Did you experience any barriers/difficulties in implementing any changes?

Participant's Personal Development

1. What can you take away/did you learn from the assignment?
 - a. What was the most important insight you gained during the assignment?
 - b. How experienced were you with transferring knowledge before the assignment and how do you feel about it now?
 - c. How far do you think that you can bring experience that you have gained during the assignment into your current job/prospective jobs?
2. How far did the CD4D assignment fulfil your expectations regarding your personal development?
 - a. Why? Why not?
3. Do you identify as a member of the Afghan/Ethiopian/... diaspora?
 - a. During your assignment, how would you say that the staff at the host institution perceived you? (as a diaspora member, as an Afghan/Ethiopian/..., ...)?
 - b. During your assignment, did you feel that staff treated you differently (positive or negatively)?
4. Has the assignment enabled you to connect with other diaspora members?
 - a. Were other diaspora members present at the institution? Have you met/been in contact with other CD4D participants?
5. Do you feel more connected to the Netherlands or to the assignment country?
 - a. Was this different before your assignment? Has this changed with your assignment?

CD4D Programme Feedback

1. What kind of assistance did you receive from IOM with regards to your assignment?
 - a. What kind of assistance did you receive from IOM before the start of your assignment? (visa support, etc.; knowledge transfer training)
 - b. What kind of assistance did you receive from IOM during your assignment?
 - c. What kind of assistance did you receive from IOM after the end of your assignment (de-briefing)?

2. Overall, how satisfied are you with the arrangements and coordination of your assignment and the assistance that you have received?
 - a. How satisfied are you with the communication with IOM staff?
 - b. How satisfied are you regarding the time it took to fill the placement?
 - c. How satisfied are you regarding the preparation for the assignment provided by IOM?
 - d. How satisfied are you with the support provided by IOM during the placement (visa, etc.)?
 - e. Anything else?
3. Did you experience any challenges with regards to the practical matters of your assignment?
4. Do you have any suggestions for improvement?
5. Based on your experience with CD4D, would you consider doing another placement if an opportunity arose in the future?
 - a. Why? Why not?

Future

1. Are you planning to participate in another CD4D assignment?
2. Are you planning to return to the assignment country?

Concluding Questions

1. Is there anything else you would like to share?
2. Is there anything else that you think is important to know about your professional experiences?
3. Do you have any questions?
4. Thank you so much for your time today.

2 Pre-assignment questionnaire



**Connecting Diaspora for Development
Participant Post Assignment Survey**

Dear CD4D-participant:

Thank you very much for participating in this survey. This questionnaire is part of the evaluation our research team from Maastricht University is conducting of the Connecting Diaspora for Development (CD4D) – Project, operated by IOM. You have been selected for this survey as you will be participating in a CD4D assignment. For this research, we need your participation in a survey at three different points in time: 1) now- prior to starting your assignment, 2) after the completing of your assignment has ended and 3) one year from the completion of your assignment.

We would like to remind you again that participation in this survey is on a voluntary basis. Our research team is therefore very happy that you agreed to participate in this research as you are making an important contribution to this evaluation.

Please note that we anonymise all answers you give in the survey so your name will never be used. Therefore please enter the participant number and the assignment number we send you in the email in the corresponding fields on the next page. It is very important that you type the code in as stated in this email as it allows us to match these surveys with the surveys you will fill out in the future.

The survey consists of seven sections of different length. It will take you about 45 min. to complete the entire survey. A small orange bar in the part above the question will indicate your progress.

In case you have any questions after completing the survey, please contact charlotte.mueller@maastrichtuniversity.nl

Kind regards,

Maastricht University Research Team

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Please enter the codes you received in the email here. | |
| Participant number | identification |
| Assignment number | identification |
| Section 1: Basic Information | |

| | |
|--|--|
| 1.1. In which country will your assignment take place? | |
| 1.2. At which location will your assignment take place? | |
| 1.3. At which institution will your assignment take place? | |
| 1.4 Participant identification number | |
| 1.5 Assignment identification number | |

| Section 2: Demographic Information | |
|--|--|
| 2.1. How old are you? | |
| 2.2. In which country were you born? | |
| 2.3. In which country(ies) do you hold citizenship? | |
| 2.4 Which country do you currently live in? | |
| 2.5. What is your sex? | <input type="checkbox"/> 0 Male <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Female |
| 2.6. What is the highest level of education that you have completed? | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Technical or vocational <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Bachelor <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Master <input type="checkbox"/> 4 PhD |
| 2.7. Which field of study is your highest degree in? | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Engineering <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Mathematics or natural sciences <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Medicine or health sciences <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Humanities, language or cultural studies <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Law <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Business administration or economics <input type="checkbox"/> 7 Social or political sciences <input type="checkbox"/> 8 Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> 9 Other (please fill in the field of study of your highest degree) |
| 2.8. In which country did you receive your highest level of education? | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 The Netherlands (or other European country) <input type="checkbox"/> 2 {Insert assignment country} <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Other (please specify) |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>2.9. Are you currently employed in the Netherlands (or other European country)?</p> <p><i>(If answer=2, skip to 2.14)</i> <i>(If answer=3/4/5, skip to 2.18)</i></p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Yes, in my area of expertise</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Yes, outside of my area of expertise</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3 No, unemployed and currently looking for work</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4 No, unemployed and not currently looking for work</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 5 No, currently enrolled in an educational/study program</p> |
| <p>2.10. How many years have you been in paid employment in your field of expertise in the Netherlands (or other European country)?</p> | |
| <p>2.11. What type of entity do you work for?</p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Private company</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Academic institution</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3 Government institution</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4 Not-for-profit organisation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 5 International non-governmental organisation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 6 Self-employed</p> |
| <p>2.12. In order to participate in CD4D, what action have you taken in regards to your current job?</p> | <p>(please check all that apply)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Resigning</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Taking a leave of absence</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3 Taking a sabbatical</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4 Using vacation time</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 5 Other (please specify)</p> |
| <p>2.13. How would you rank your workplace seniority in the position you held prior to your CD4D assignment?</p> <p><i>(Skip to 3.1)</i></p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Very junior</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Junior</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3 Mid-level</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4 Lower-management</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 5 Upper-management</p> |
| <p>2.14. Have you ever previously worked in your area of expertise in the Netherlands (or other European country)?</p> <p><i>(If 0, skip to 2.16)</i></p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> 0 No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Yes</p> |
| <p>2.15 How many years did you work in your area of expertise in the Netherlands (or other European country?)</p> | |
| <p>2.16. In order to participate in CD4D, what action have you taken in regards to your current job?</p> | <p>(please check all that apply)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Resigning</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Taking a leave of absence</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3 Taking a sabbatical</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4 Using vacation time or sick leave</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Other (please specify) |
| 2.17. How would you rank your workplace seniority in the position you held prior to your CD4D assignment? <i>(Skip to 3.1)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Very junior <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Junior <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Mid-level <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Lower-management <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Upper-management |
| 2.18. Have you ever previously worked in your area of expertise in the Netherlands (or other European country)? | <input type="checkbox"/> 0 No <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Yes |
| 2.19. Do you receive social benefits in the Netherlands (or other European country)? | <input type="checkbox"/> 0 No <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Yes |

| Section 3: CD4D Assignment Information | |
|---|---|
| 3.1. In which field will your CD4D assignment be in? | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Education <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Food security <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Health <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Healthcare/ ICT <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Rural and urban development <input type="checkbox"/> 7 Security/ Rule of law |
| 3.2. Have you worked within this industry? | <input type="checkbox"/> 0 No <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Yes <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Not applicable due to no previous employment |
| 3.3. Prior to the CD4D project, have you ever had interactions or communication with the institution you will work for during your assignment? | <input type="checkbox"/> 0 No <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Yes |
| 3.4. Prior to the CD4D project, have you ever participated in a temporary return programme? <i>(If 0, skip to 3.8)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> 0 No <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Yes |
| 3.5. In which temporary return programme did you previously participate in? (If you participated in more than one, please indicate the most recent experience) | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals (TRQN) <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN) <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Connecting Diaspora for Development (CD4D) |

| | |
|---|---|
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Other (please specify) |
| 3.6. Please indicate the dates that you participated in the previous program. | (mm/yyyy) – (mm/yyyy) |
| 3.7. In your previous assignment, did you work in the same institution you will work in during your CD4D assignment? | <input type="checkbox"/> 0 No <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Yes |
| 3.8. What is your main motivation for participating in a CD4D assignment? | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Received a job opportunity <input type="checkbox"/> 2 To be closer to family and friends <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Nostalgia for <i>{insert assignment country}</i> culture and traditions <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Wanted to share my skills and contribute to the development of <i>{insert assignment country}</i> <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Exploring opportunities for longer-term return <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Other (please specify) |
| 3.9. How often do you read about or discuss your field of expertise outside of work hours? | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Very infrequently <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Infrequently <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Frequently <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Very frequently |
| 3.10. How motivated are you to make positive changes in your country of assignment? | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Very unmotivated <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Unmotivated <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Motivated <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Very motivated |
| 3.11. How did you find your CD4D placement? | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Through professional contacts <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Through personal contacts <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Through the IOM website <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Through an information session <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Through the host institution I will be working for <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Through past participants in temporary return programmes <input type="checkbox"/> 7 Through another migration-focused organisation (besides IOM) <input type="checkbox"/> 8 Other (please specify) |
| 3.12. Where do you plan to live after completion of your CD4D assignment? | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 The Netherlands (or other European country) <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <i>{Insert country of assignment}</i> <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Other (please specify) |

| | |
|---|---|
| | |
| 3.13. Where do you plan to retire? | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 The Netherlands (or other European country) <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <i>{Insert country of assignment}</i> <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Other (please specify) |

| Section 4: Engagement | |
|--|---|
| 4.1. How many years within your lifetime have you spent in the Netherlands (or other European country)? | |
| 4.2. How many years within your lifetime have you spent in <i>{Insert assignment country}</i> ? | |
| 4.3. How many times within the past five years have you returned to <i>{Insert assignment country}</i> to visit? <i>(If answer=0, skip to 4.5)</i> | |
| 4.4. What is the primary purpose of your visits to <i>{Insert assignment country}</i> ? | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Visit family and friends <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Business activities <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Charitable/ voluntary work <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Temporary return programme (TRQN, MIDA, TOKTEN, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Other (please specify) |
| 4.5. Are you currently active in any business ventures or activities in <i>{Insert assignment country}</i> ? | <input type="checkbox"/> 0 No <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Yes |
| 4.6. Do you currently have family or friends living in <i>{Insert assignment country}</i> ? | <input type="checkbox"/> 0 No <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Yes |
| 4.7. (If yes) How often do you communicate with the friend or family member in <i>{Insert assignment country}</i> whom you are closest to? | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Never <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Several times a year <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Every three months <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Every month <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Every week <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Daily |
| 4.8. How often are you in contact with professionals | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Never <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Several times a year <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Every three months |

| | |
|---|---|
| within your field in <i>{Insert assignment country}</i> ? | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Every month <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Every week <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Daily |
|---|---|

| Section 5: Knowledge Transfer Behaviours | | | | | |
|--|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 5.1. Have you ever had a paid job prior to your CD4D assignment? <i>(If answer=0, skip to 5.3)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> 0 No <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Yes | | | | |
| 5.2. At your most recent job, how often did you: | | | | | |
| | Never (1) | Seldom (2) | Some-times (3) | Often (4) | Very often (5) |
| 5.2.1. Contribute to writing or updating manuals or documentation? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.2.2. Give formal trainings to co-workers? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.2.3. Write memos or guidance notes? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.2.4. Translate foreign language materials? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.2.5. Provide mentoring or coaching to co-workers? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.2.6. Clarify roles and responsibilities with staff? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.2.7. Assist colleagues in problem solving? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.2.8. Encourage teamwork among co-workers? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.2.9. Challenge the status quo in the workplace (such as | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| suggesting new ways of working)? | | | | | |
| 5.2.10. Connect colleagues with people in your network that they can learn from? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.2.11. Organise or contribute to a workshop? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.2.12. Other (please specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.3. Please indicate if you expect to experience the following during your CD4D assignment? | | | | | |
| | No (0) | | Yes (1) | | |
| 5.3.1. Lack of experience and capacity of colleague | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.3.2. Lack of equipment required to perform a task (i.e. computer) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.3.3. Mistrust from a colleague | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.3.4. Negative attitude from a colleague | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.3.5. Unsupportive working culture | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.3.6. Language barriers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.3.7. Cultural barriers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.3.8. Frequent staff turnover | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.3.9. Workplace bureaucracy | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.3.10. Corruption | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.3.11. Nepotism (jobs and positions being given to individuals based on their connections instead of their qualifications) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.3.12. Ethnic factions or rivalries | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.3.13. Strict or demanding management | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.3.14. Insecure working environment | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.3.15. Other (please specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.4. How important do you think the following behaviours are in the workplace? | | | | | |

| | Very un- important (1) | Un- important (2) | Neutral (3) | Important (4) | Very Important (5) |
|---|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 5.4.1. Being organized | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.4.2. Arriving at the specified time for meetings or other events | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.4.3. Holding regular office hours | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.4.4. Delivering assigned work by the deadline | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.4.5. Having a clear idea of the goals and objectives of the work you carry out | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.4.6. Helping with tasks that are not within your required work duties that benefit the institution | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.4.7. Working together with others to achieve common goals | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Section 6: New ideas, skills and processes

6.1 What sector-specific skills do you plan to transfer to colleagues during your assignment (such as a new surgical technique, a new management practice, etc.)? Please indicate three skills.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

6.2 Are you a member of any professional organisations?

- 0 No
 1 Yes

| Section 7: Concluding Questions | |
|---|--|
| 7.1. Is there anything else you would like to share? | |
| 7.2. Is there anything else that you think is important to know about your professional experiences? | |
| 7.3. Do you have any questions? | |

This is the end of this survey. Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire. We are looking forward to your participation in the following surveys.

In case you have any questions after completing the survey, please contact charlotte.mueller@maastrichtuniversity.nl

Kind regards,

Maastricht University Research Team

3 Post-assignment questionnaire



**Connecting Diaspora for Development
Participant Post Assignment Survey**

Dear CD4D-Participant:

Thank you very much for participating in this survey. This questionnaire is part of the evaluation our research team from Maastricht University is conducting of the Connecting Diaspora for Development (CD4D) – Project, operated by IOM. You have been selected for this survey as you have finished your CD4D-Assignment. For this research, we need your participation in a survey at three different points in time. Now you are completing the second survey and we will contact you one more time, one year from now, to complete the final survey.

We would like to remind you again that participation in this survey is on a voluntary basis. Our research team is therefore very happy that you agreed to participate in this research as you are making an important contribution to this evaluation.

As for the previous survey, please note that we anonymise all answers you give in the survey so your name will never be used. Therefore please enter the participant number and the assignment number we send you in the email in the corresponding fields on the next page. It is very important that you type the code in as stated in this email as it allows us to match this survey with the surveys you will fill out in the future.

The survey consists of five sections of different length. It will take you about 45 min. to complete the entire survey. A small orange bar in the part above the question will indicate your progress.

In case you have any questions after completing the survey, please contact charlotte.mueller@maastrichtuniversity.nl

Kind regards,

Maastricht University Research Team

| | |
|---|--|
| Please enter the codes you received in the email here. | |
| Participant Identification Number | |
| Assignment Identification Number | |
| Section 1 | |
| 1.1. In which country did your assignment take place? | |

| | |
|---|--|
| 1.2. At which location did your assignment take place? | |
| 1.3. At which institution did your assignment take place? | |

| Section 2 | |
|--|--|
| 2.1. After having completed your assignment, how motivated are you to make positive changes in your country of assignment? | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Very unmotivated <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Unmotivated <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Motivated <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Very motivated |
| 2.2. Where are you currently living? | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 The Netherlands (or other European country) <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <i>{Insert country of assignment}</i> <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Other (please specify) |
| 2.3. Where do you plan to retire? | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 The Netherlands (or other European country) <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <i>{Insert country of assignment}</i> <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Other (please specify) |

| Section 3 | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 3.1. During your CD4D assignment, how often did you: | | | | | |
| | Never (1) | Seldom (2) | Sometimes (3) | Often (4) | Very often (5) |
| 3.1.1. Contribute to writing or updating manuals or documentation? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.1.2. Give formal trainings to co-workers? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.1.3. Write memos or guidance notes? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.1.4. Translate foreign language materials? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.1.5. Provide mentoring or coaching to co-workers? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.1.6. Clarify roles and responsibilities with staff? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.1.7. Assist colleagues in problem solving? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.1.8. Encourage teamwork among co-workers? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.1.9. Challenge the status quo in the workplace (such as | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| suggesting new ways of working)? | | | | | |
| 3.1.10. Connect colleagues with people in your network that they can learn from? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.1.11. Organise or contribute to a workshop? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.1.12. Other (please specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.2. How often did you experience the following during your CD4D assignment? | | | | | |
| | Never (1) | Seldom (2) | Some-times (3) | Often (4) | Very often (5) |
| 3.2.1. Lack of experience and ability of colleague | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.2.2. Lack of equipment required to perform a task (i.e. computer) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.2.3. Mistrust from a colleague | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.2.4. Negative attitude from a colleague | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.2.5. Unsupportive working culture | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.2.6. Language barriers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.2.7. Cultural barriers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.2.8. Frequent staff turnover | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.2.9. Complex workplace rules and regulations | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.2.10. Corruption | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.2.11. Nepotism (jobs and positions being given to individuals based on their connections instead of their qualifications) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.2.12. Ethnic factions or rivalries | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.2.13. Strict or demanding management | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.2.14. Insecure working environment | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.2.15. Other (please specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| In questions 3.4.-3.8., please fill in up to five activities (you must complete a minimum of three activities) that you performed during your assignment that you think made a positive impact on your host institution and answer the given questions for each activity. | | | | | |

| | |
|---|--|
| 3.4. Activity Performed: | |
| 3.4.1. Short-term outcome(s)/ effect(s) of the activity | |
| 3.4.2. Long-term outcome(s)/ effect(s) of the activity | |
| 3.4.3. Effectiveness (please rate how effective you think the activity was from 1 to 5, with 5 being highly successful. Please explain your scoring) | |
| 3.4.4. Challenges or problems faced in conducting the activity | |
| 3.4.5. Follow-up strategy (describe any plans or activities you put in place to ensure the continuation of the activity) | |
| 3.5. Activity Performed: | |
| 3.5.1. Short-term outcome(s)/ effect(s) of the activity | |
| 3.5.2. Long-term outcome(s)/ effect(s) of the activity | |
| 3.5.3. Effectiveness (please rate how effective you think the activity was from 1 to 5, with 5 being highly successful. Please explain your scoring) | |
| 3.5.4. Challenges or problems faced in conducting the activity | |
| 3.5.5. Follow-up strategy (describe any plans or activities you put in place to ensure the continuation of the activity) | |
| 3.6. Activity Performed: | |
| 3.6.1. Short-term outcome(s)/ effect(s) of the activity | |

| | |
|---|--|
| 3.6.2. Long-term outcome(s)/ effect(s) of the activity | |
| 3.6.3. Effectiveness (please rate how effective you think the activity was from 1 to 5, with 5 being highly successful. Please explain your scoring) | |
| 3.6.4. Challenges or problems faced in conducting the activity | |
| 3.6.5 Follow-up strategy (describe any plans or activities you put in place to ensure the continuation of the activity) | |
| 3.7. Activity Performed: | |
| 3.7.1. Short-term outcome(s)/ effect(s) of the activity | |
| 3.7.2. Long-term outcome(s)/ effect(s) of the activity | |
| 3.7.3. Effectiveness (please rate how effective you think the activity was from 1 to 5, with 5 being highly successful. Please explain your scoring) | |
| 3.7.4. Challenges or problems faced in conducting the activity | |
| 3.7.5 Follow-up strategy (describe any plans or activities you put in place to ensure the continuation of the activity) | |
| 3.8. Activity Performed: | |
| 3.8.1. Short-term outcome(s)/ effect(s) of the activity | |
| 3.8.2. Long-term outcome(s)/ effect(s) of the activity | |
| 3.8.3. Effectiveness (please rate how effective you think the activity was from 1 to 5, with 5 being highly | |

| | |
|---|--|
| successful. Please explain your scoring) | |
| 3.8.4. Challenges or problems faced in conducting the activity | |
| 3.8.5. Follow-up strategy (describe any plans or activities you put in place to ensure the continuation of the activity) | |
| | |
| 3.9. In regards to your assignment as a whole, please describe your satisfaction with the assistance you received from IOM and the host institution. | |
| 3.10. Please discuss any suggestions or recommendations you have regarding your assignment or the CD4D programme as a whole. | |

| Section 4 | |
|---|--|
| 4.1. What sector-specific skills did you transfer to colleagues during your assignment (such as a new surgical technique, a new management practice, etc.)? (Please write in examples) | 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. |
| 4.2. Since the start of the CD4D assignment, has your professional network decreased, increased, or stayed the same? (a professional network refers to people that are relevant for your work) | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Decreased <input type="checkbox"/> 2 No change <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Increased |
| 4.3. How often did you engage in teamwork or collaboration during the CD4D assignment? | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Never <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Once during the assignment <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Twice monthly <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Daily |
| | |

| 4.4. How much does the institution where you completed your CD4D assignment support the following activities? | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Very un-supportive (1) | Un-supportive (2) | Neutral (3) | Supportive (4) | Very supportive (5) |
| 4.4.1. Participating in formal trainings on sector-specific skills or topics | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.4.2. Participating in mentoring or coaching | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.4.3. Sharing new ideas or ways of doing things | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.4.4. Trying and testing new ideas or ways of doing things | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.4.5. Working together in a team | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.4.6. Networking | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.4.7. Learning new skills and techniques | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| Section 5 | |
|--|--|
| 5.1. Is there anything else you would like to share? | |
| 5.2. Is there anything else that you think is important to know about your professional experiences? | |
| 5.3. Do you have any questions? | |

This is the end of this survey. Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire.

In case you have any questions after completing the survey, please contact Ms. Charlotte Mueller (charlotte.mueller@maastrichtuniversity.nl).

Kind regards,

Maastricht University Research Team

4 Host-institution staff interview guides

4.1 Baseline interview guide



**Connecting Diaspora for Development
Institutions Interview Guide
- Baseline -**

| | |
|--|---|
| Interview Identification | |
| Questionnaire ID number | |
| CD4D assignment country | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Afghanistan <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Ethiopia <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Ghana <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Sierra Leone <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Somalia/Somaliland |
| Locale of assignment (name of city/village) | |
| Name of organisation | |
| Interviewer | |
| Date conducted | |
| Date entered into database | |

Preamble

Thank you very much for participating in this interview. We would like to remind you again that participation in this interview is on a voluntary basis. We are therefore very happy that you agreed to participate in this interview as you are making an important contribution to this evaluation. As mentioned before, this interview is part of the impact evaluation our research team from Maastricht University is conducting of the Connecting Diaspora for Development (CD4D) – Project, operated by IOM. For this research, we need to interview you at three different points in time: now, in one year from now and again two years from now. This is

essential as we want to understand if changes occur in your organization through the CD4D programme and to provide you with the opportunity to share with us how you think the programme is going. Therefore, we kindly ask your participation for all three interviews. In this first interview we want to know more about your institution, and your expectations for the CD4D-Program. Please note that all interviews will be recorded and that we anonymize all interviews so your name will never be used. Before we start, do you have any questions? Do you agree to participate in the interview? Is it ok for you if I turn the voice recorder on now?

Note to interviewer: Turn on the recorder and say the date, location, the type of interview (colleague, participant, supervisor) and the assignment number into the recorder.

| | |
|---|---|
| <i>Questions to be filled out by the interviewer before/after the interview</i> | |
| Type of organization | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Governmental Institution <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Non – governmental Institution <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Private company <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Academic institution <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Other (Please specify) |
| Sector organization is working in | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Education <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Food security <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Healthcare <input type="checkbox"/> 5 ICT <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Innovation <input type="checkbox"/> 7 Migration <input type="checkbox"/> 8 Public governance <input type="checkbox"/> 9 Rural and urban development <input type="checkbox"/> 10 Security/ Rule of law |
| Gender of interviewee | <input type="checkbox"/> 0 Male <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Female |

Introduction/Warm up

Can you tell me a bit about your organization?

What do you think are some of the strengths of this organization?

What are some of the organization’s biggest achievements/ successes?

What are the current challenges facing your organization?

Probe: Lack of capacity/skills? Turnover? Lack of equipment?

| |
|---|
| <i>Check if the following information is being provided</i> |
|---|

| | |
|---|--|
| Number of employees | |
| Does the organization have a specific mission statement? | |
| How long has the organization been in operation? (not relevant for government ministries) | |

Can you tell me about your role in the organization?

Please describe for me your current role.

| | |
|---|--|
| <i>Check if the following information is being provided</i> | |
| Current role or job title | |
| Department (Subdepartment/Team/Unit) | |
| Job level | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Director <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Manager <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Officer <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Entry level/assistant <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Other (Please specify) |
| How long have you been working in this organization? | ____ (Fill in number of years (with this institution) in {insert assignment country}) |
| Nationality | |
| In which country did you grow up? | |
| Have you lived abroad? Where? For how long? Why? | |

CD4D – Participation

I would like to know a bit about how your institution came to participate in the CD4D-Project:

- How did you hear about the CD4D Program? From whom did you find out?
- What is your institution's main motivation in hosting a CD4D assignment?
- Has your organization participated in a similar project prior to CD4D?
- *Probe: Which? Experiences?*
- What are your expectations of the CD4D Programme as a whole?
- *Probe: In general? From IOM? What sector-specific skills do you think are most important for employees to learn throughout the course of the CD4D assignments (such as a new surgical technique, a new management practice, etc.)?*

- What do you expect the participant's main role/tasks to be? What are your expectations for the participant?
- *Probe: What do you want the participant to achieve for your organization? How do you expect the participant to contribute to your organization?*

Institution's Work Culture

Note: To test, try to ask this section after the foreigners and returnees question in some interviews.

I would like to get a better understanding of your organization's work and how it is to work at your organization.

- *The objective of this set of questions is to understand the interviewees and institution's familiarity with and use of knowledge transfer activities.*
- Is it common within your institution to exchange ideas with colleagues? Do you think sharing ideas and knowledge between staff members is important for your institution/for your work?
- *Ask about knowledge transfer activities, covering the following areas and using the probe:*
- *(Teamwork:)* Is teamwork common within your organisation?
- *(Mentoring/coaching:)* Does the organization have a formal mentoring program?
- *(Trainings/Workshops:)* Does your institution offer any trainings or workshops? What were those trainings about? *(Find out if formal trainings on sector-specific skills or topics)* Does the organizations support staff that are interested in attending external trainings or workshops to do so? If yes how? (i.e.: give them the time to take the course as part of their paid hours, pay the registration fees, etc.)
- *Also ask for:*
- Sharing new ideas or ways of doing things
- Trying and testing new ideas or ways of doing things
- Networking
- *Probe with:*
- *Can you give me an example, do you remember a specific situation?*
- *How important do you think they are for the work of your organization?*
- *How does your organization value/support...?*
- *How is... promoted?*
- Are there any other activities which are being performed within your institution to exchange ideas with other colleagues?
- Does your organization have any specific policies for knowledge transfer or management?

- *If yes, probe: Knowledge management strategy? Is there staff allocated to coordinate knowledge transfer activities?*
- *The objective of this set of questions is to find out if barriers to knowledge transfer exist.*
- *Do you perceive any barriers to sharing ideas within the institution? (Time/ space/ resources/ institutional culture.*
- *Probe: Please describe the resources available to participate in knowledge transfer activities/to share ideas (dedicated space, time, technology, etc.)*

Foreigners and returnees in the institution

I would like to ask you some questions about foreigners and returnees working at your institution.

| | |
|---|---|
| Foreigners | |
| <i>Check if the following information is being provided</i> | |
| Are there foreigners working in your institution? | <input type="checkbox"/> 0 No <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Yes |
| If yes, how many? | __ <i>(Fill in the number of foreign employees)</i> |
| From which countries are they? | _____ <i>(Fill in their countries of origin)</i> |
| What were your experiences working with them? | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Returnees | |
| (Afghan/Ethiopian/Ghanaian/Somali/Sierra Leonean nationals who have lived abroad and returned) | |
| <i>Check if the following information is being provided</i> | |
| Are there returnees working in your institution? | <input type="checkbox"/> 0 No <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Yes |
| Did returnees work in your institution in the past (since you work here)? | <input type="checkbox"/> 0 No <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Yes |
| If yes, how many (approx..)? | __ <i>(Fill in the number of foreign employees)</i> |
| Do you know in which countries they lived? | _____ <i>(Fill in the countries)</i> |
| How long have they been working in the organization? | |
| What types of roles do they have? | |
| What type of education do they have? | |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>How do people in the organization experience working with returnees? <i>Probe: Have people in your organization experienced any challenges working with them?</i></p> | |
|--|--|

Socio-demographic questions

How old are you?

What is the highest level of education you have obtained?

- 1 Secondary or lower
- 2 Technical or vocational
- 3 Bachelor
- 4 Master
- 5 PhD

Concluding Questions

That is the end of my questions.

Is there anything else you would like to share?

Is there anything else that you think is important to know about your professional experiences?

Do you have any questions?

Thank you so much for your time today.

4.2 Year I interview guide



Connecting Diaspora for Development

Institutions Interview Guide

- 1 year -

| Interview Identification | |
|--|---|
| Questionnaire ID number | |
| CD4D assignment country | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Afghanistan <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Ethiopia <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Ghana <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Sierra Leone <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Somaliland |
| Locale of assignment (name of city/village) | |
| Name of organisation | |
| Interviewer | |
| Date conducted | |
| Date entered into database | |

Preamble

Thank you very much for participating in this interview. We would like to remind you again that participation in this interview is on a voluntary basis. We are therefore very happy that you agreed to participate in this interview as you are making an important contribution to this evaluation. As the interview last year, this interview is part of the evaluation our research team from Maastricht University is conducting of the Connecting Diaspora for Development (CD4D) – Project, operated by IOM. As explained last time, we already interviewed you once, we would like to interview you now and then a third time in one year from now. As before, I would like to record our conversation if this is okay for you. We anonymize all interviews so

your name will never be used. Do you agree to be recorded? Before we I switch on the recording, do you have any questions? Do you agree to participate in the interview? Is it ok for you if I turn the voice recorder on now?

Note to interviewer: Turn on the recorder and say the date, location, the type of interview (colleague, participant, supervisor) and the assignment number into the recorder.

Knowledge Transfer

1. How many assignments were completed at your institution?
 - a. In which departments were the assignments completed?
2. What were the participant(s)' main role and tasks? What types of activities did the CD4D Participant(s) conduct at your institution?
 - a. How many people did the CD4D-Participant work with on a regular basis?
 - b. Who were these people? What are their roles?
 - c. Were you in contact with the CD4D-Participant(s) before the start of the assignment?
 - d. Did you directly work with (one of) the CD4D-Participant(s), e.g. as supervisor?
3. What sector-specific skills did the CD4D-Participant transfer to staff at your institution (e.g. new surgical technique, a new management practice, etc.)?
 - a. How did the CD4D-Participant transfer these skills/knowledge? (*Try to get examples on all of these*)
 - b. How did the CD4D-Participant(s) engage in mentoring/coaching? (Topic/Frequency/Number of mentees)
 - c. How did the CD4D-Participant(s) give any trainings? (Topic/Frequency/Number of attendees)
 - d. How did the CD4D-Participant(s) encourage teamwork? If yes, in what ways?
 - e. How did the CD4D-Participant(s) encourage staff to join a sector-specific event? Did the CD4D-Participant(s) encourage the organisation of a sector-specific event at your institution? Did the CD4D-Participant(s) establish contact between staff at your institution and his/her/their professional network?
4. What do you think are the three greatest changes in your organisation over the past year?
 - a. How have the CD4D-Participants contributed to these changes? What do you think are the three biggest impacts participant X had on your organisation?
5. Where there any changes in the access that staff in your institution has to mentoring/coaching, training or workshops or sector-specific events since last year?

Interaction

1. How did you generally experience the interaction between the CD4D-Participant(s) and staff at your institution?
 - a. How would you generally describe the relationship between the CD4D-Participant(s) and the staff? Can you give some examples? Did you hear of any challenges that staff had when working with the CD4D-Participant? Did this vary with different participants?
 - b. Did your staff trust the CD4D-Participant(s)? Did this vary with different participants?

- c. How did you experience the communication between the CD4D-Participant(s) and staff? (working language, sector-specific language/terminology)
 - d. Did you notice any cultural differences?
 - e. Are you still in contact with the CD4D-Participant?/Do you know if staff members are still in contact with the CD4D-Participant?
2. How did you perceive the participants' motivation to transfer knowledge and to contribute to change at your institution?
 3. How did you perceive the participant's expertise with regards to sector-specific skills needed at your institution?
 4. With regards to the activities that the CD4D-Participant(s) was/were conducting, did you perceive any practical challenges?
 - a. Enough time?
 - b. Space?
 - c. Technology/barriers?

CD4D Programme Feedback

1. How satisfied are you regarding the knowledge transferred and activities conducted?
2. In how far did these activities and achievements match your expectations (expressed in ToR)?
3. In how far has/have the activities conducted by CD4D-Participants met the institutional needs?
4. In how far does the CD4D-Programme as a whole up until now fulfil your expectations?
 - d. Why? Why not?
 - e. With regards to the time it took to fill the placement?
 - f. With regards to the number of participants so far?
5. What are your expectations for the coming year with regards to the CD4D-Programme?

Foreigners and returnees in the institution

1. To wrap up, I would like to ask you some questions about the number of people working in your organisation, foreigners and returnees working at your institution.

| | |
|--|---|
| 2. Foreigners <i>Check if the following information is being provided</i> | |
| Are there foreigners working in your institution? | <input type="checkbox"/> 0 No <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Yes |
| If yes, how many? | __ (Fill in the number of foreign employees) |
| From which countries are they? | _____ (Fill in their countries of origin) |
| What were your experiences working with them? | |

| |
|--------------|
| 3. Returnees |
|--------------|

| | |
|---|---|
| (Afghan/Ethiopian/Ghanaian/Somali(lander)/Sierra Leonean nationals who have lived abroad and returned) <i>Check if the following information is being provided</i> | |
| Are there returnees working in your institution? | <input type="checkbox"/> 0 No <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Yes |
| Did returnees work in your institution in the past (since you work here)? | <input type="checkbox"/> 0 No <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Yes |
| If yes, how many (approx.)? | __ (Fill in the number of foreign employees) |
| Do you know in which countries they lived? | _____ (Fill in the countries) |
| How long have they been working in the organisation? | |
| What types of roles do they have? | |
| What type of education do they have? | |
| How do people in the organisation experience working with returnees? <i>Probe: Have people in your organisation experienced any challenges working with them?</i> | |

4. If yes to a) or b), could you put me in contact with them?

Concluding Questions

1. This is the end of my questions.
2. Is there anything else you would like to share?
3. Is there anything else that you think is important to know about your professional experiences?
4. Do you have any questions?
5. Thank you so much for your time today.

4.3 Year 2 manager interview guide

**Connecting Diaspora for Development****Institutions Interview Guide****Managers**

- 2 year -

| Interview Identification | |
|--|---|
| Questionnaire ID number | |
| CD4D assignment country | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Afghanistan <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Ethiopia <input type="checkbox"/> (3) Ghana <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Sierra Leone <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Somaliland |
| Locale of assignment (name of city/village) | |
| Name of organisation | |
| Interviewer | |
| Date conducted | |
| Date entered into database | |

Preamble

Thank you very much for participating in this interview. We would like to remind you again that participation in this interview is on a voluntary basis. We are therefore very happy that you agreed to participate in this interview as you are making an important contribution to this evaluation. As the interviews during the previous years, this interview is part of the evaluation our research team from Maastricht University is conducting of the Connecting Diaspora for

Development (CD4D) – Project, operated by IOM. As before, I would like to record our conversation if this is okay for you. We anonymise all interviews so your name will never be used. Do you agree to be recorded? Before we I switch on the recording, do you have any questions? Do you agree to participate in the interview? Is it ok for you if I turn the voice recorder on now?

Note to interviewer: Turn on the recorder and say the date, location and interview number into the recorder.

To be filled out by the interviewer before/after the interview

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Gender of interviewee | <input type="checkbox"/> 0 Male <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Female |
|-----------------------|--|

Introductory question

1. To start more in general, I would like to know what have been the organisation’s biggest changes over the last two years?
2. What are the current challenges facing your organisation?

CD4D, knowledge transfer and change

Note: For all questions – work out differences between (1) participants, and (2) assignments

Your organisation has received “X” CD4D diaspora experts who conducted “X” assignments.

1. From your perspective, was the programme beneficial for your organisation?
 - a. Why? Why not?
2. What were the successes of the programme?
3. What skills or knowledge did the CD4D diaspora experts transfer to staff at your organisation?
4. How did the CD4D diaspora expert(s) transfer these skills/knowledge?
 - a. Ask for: mentoring/coaching; trainings; workshops; encourage teamwork; encourage the organisation of a sector-specific event at your institution; establish contact between staff at your institution and his/her/their professional network; any other methods
 - b. Probe for: Topic/Frequency/Number of attendees/Examples
5. Have there been any changes in your organisation that the CD4D diaspora experts contributed to?
 - a. How have the CD4D diaspora experts contributed to these changes?
 - b. *Probe for positive and negative changes*
6. What do you think are the three biggest impacts the CD4D diaspora expert(s) had on your organisation?
 - a. Was this the same for all expert(s) or did you notice differences?

- b. How did the experts work differently? (Were all CD4D diaspora experts who visited your organisation equally beneficial for your organisation?) Was one assignment more important than the others?
7. (Did the CD4D diaspora experts have the required expertise?)
 - a. *Probe: At other organisations, staff reported that the diaspora expert did not have the required expertise. Did you experience any of this at your organisation?*
 - b. Did the CD4D diaspora experts understand how your organisation works?
8. Did you notice differences between the expert(s)?
 - a. Was one more beneficial than others? Why?
9. Did activities conducted and changes implemented by the CD4D diaspora expert(s) at your organisation meet your expectations?
 - a. Why? Why not?
 - b. Did these meet what was outlined initially in the Theory of Change?
10. Are the changes still in place? Do you plan for them to continue in the future? How do you plan to do so?

Interaction diaspora expert - staff

1. What was reported to you about the interaction between CD4D diaspora expert(s) and staff from your institution?
2. How would you generally describe the relationship between the CD4D diaspora expert(s) and the staff? Can you give some examples?
3. What did you hear about what was going well?
4. Did you hear of any challenges that staff had when working with the CD4D-Participant? Did this vary with different participants?
5. Do you think staff at your organisation trusted the CD4D diaspora experts?
 - a. *Probe: At other organisations, we have seen that staff did not trust the CD4D diaspora experts and was hesitant to work with them/provide them the information needed. This was because the diaspora expert(s) were perceived as a threat and staff thought that they would take away their jobs. Or they generally do not trust diaspora members. Did you experience any of this at your organisation?*

(If there was more than one CD4D diaspora expert at the host institution):

6. Did all CD4D diaspora experts work with the same staff members?
7. Was there coordination between the assignments that were conducted by different CD4D diaspora experts at your organisation?
8. Do you think it was beneficial for your organisation to have multiple CD4D diaspora experts? Why?
9. Did you experience any challenges from having multiple CD4D diaspora experts?

CD4D-Programme as a whole

1. How satisfied are you with the CD4D-Programme as a whole?

2. From your perspective, was the participation as a host institution in the CD4D programme beneficial for your organisation?
 - a. *Probe (if yes):* Could you highlight some of the aspects that went well with regards to the implementation of the CD4D programme?
3. Did your organisation experience any challenges with regards to the implementation of the CD4D programme?
4. With regards to the activities that the CD4D diaspora expert(s) was/were conducting, did you perceive any practical challenges?
 - a. *Probe for: Enough time / Space / Equipment / Technology/ Other*
5. Do you have any suggestions for improvement of the CD4D-Programme?
6. Based on your experience with CD4D, would you consider participating as an institution again if an opportunity arose in the future?
 - a. Why? Why not?

Sociodemographic questions

1. What is your nationality?
2. In which country did you grow up?
3. Have you lived abroad?
Probe: Where? For how long? Why?
4. How old are you?
5. What is the highest level of education you have obtained?
 - 1 Secondary or lower
 - 2 Technical or vocational
 - 3 Bachelor
 - 4 Master
 - 5 PhD
6. How many years have you been in your current position at this organisation?

Concluding Questions

1. This is the end of my questions.
2. Is there anything else you would like to share?
3. Is there anything else that you think is important to know about your professional experiences?
4. Do you have any questions?
5. Thank you so much for your time today.

4.4 Year 2 colleague interview guide



Connecting Diaspora for Development

Institutions Interview Guide

Colleagues

- 2 year -

| Interview Identification | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Questionnaire ID number | |
| CD4D assignment country | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Afghanistan <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Ethiopia <input type="checkbox"/> (3 Ghana) <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Sierra Leone <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Somaliland |
| Name of organisation | |
| Interviewer | |
| Date conducted | |
| Date entered into database | |

A

Preamble

Thank you very much for participating in this interview. We would like to remind you again that participation in this interview is on a voluntary basis. We are therefore very happy that you agreed to participate in this interview as you are making an important contribution to this evaluation. As the interviews during the previous years, this interview is part of the evaluation our research team from Maastricht University is conducting of the Connecting Diaspora for Development (CD4D) – Project, operated by IOM. As before, I would like to record our conversation if this is okay for you. We anonymise all interviews so your name will never be used. Do you agree to be recorded? Before we I switch on the recording, do you have any

questions? Do you agree to participate in the interview? Is it ok for you if I turn the voice recorder on now?

Note to interviewer: Turn on the recorder and say the date, location and interview number into the recorder.

To be filled out by the interviewer before/after the interview

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Gender of interviewee | <input type="checkbox"/> 0 Male <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Female |
|-----------------------|--|

Introductory questions

1. To start, could you tell me a bit about your current role here in this organisation? (*Find out current role or job title and department*)
2. Your organisation has received “X” CD4D diaspora experts who conducted “X” assignments. Could you tell me a bit about the role of the CD4D diaspora expert(s) here at your organisation?
3. Who of the CD4D diaspora expert(s) did you work with?
4. How did you work together with (Mr./Ms. X)?

Knowledge transfer

(For all following questions find out if experience were different depending on the diaspora expert)

1. Did you learn something from working with (Mr./Ms. X)?
 - a. What did you learn from working with (Mr./Ms. X)? What skills and knowledge did you gain? *Probe for: Examples; Sector-specific knowledge and skills and non-sector specific knowledge and skills*
 - b. Why did you learn this?
 - c. How did you learn this?
 - i. Did the diaspora expert(s) give a training/lecture/seminar that you attended?
 - What was the training about?/What was the topic of the training?
 - How often did the training sessions take place? How long was the training?
 - Who attended the training? How many people attended the training?
 - ii. Did you have group meetings with the diaspora expert(s)? Did you have one-on-one meetings with the diaspora experts?
 - iii. Did the CD4D-diaspora expert(s) encourage teamwork?
 - How?
 - Could you give some examples?
 - iv. Did the diaspora expert mentor or coach you (give you tips or guidance)?
 - Could you give some examples?
 - v. Did you go to the diaspora expert(s) for advice?
 - Could you give some examples?

- vi. Did you learn something from the diaspora expert via any other way?
2. Do you currently apply what you learnt from the CD4D diaspora expert in your work? How does this impact your work today? (*Ask for examples*)
 - a. Why? Why not?

Interaction staff – diaspora expert

2. How did you experience working with (Mr./Ms. X)? (*Probe for examples*)
 - a. How close do you feel your working relationship was with the diaspora expert?
 - b. How comfortable did you feel in sharing ideas with the diaspora expert?
 - c. How did you perceive the participant's expertise with regards to sector specific and non-sector specific skills needed at your institution?
 - d. Overall, how satisfied are you with how working with the CD4D diaspora expert(s) went? Did this meet your expectations? Why? Why not?
3. Would you say that working with the diaspora expert was beneficial for you?
 - a. Why?/Why not? What made it (not) beneficial for you?
 - b. Is there anything that the diaspora expert could have done that would have made the experience (even) more beneficial for you?
 - c. At other organisations, we have seen that the diaspora experts were fluent in the local language(s). Communication was therefore very smooth and easy. Was this also the case for you when you were working with the CD4D diaspora expert(s)? *Probe for examples*
4. Did you experience any challenges in working with the diaspora expert?
 - a. At other organisations, we have seen that staff did not trust the CD4D diaspora experts and was hesitant to work with them/provide them the information needed. This was because the diaspora expert(s) were perceived as a threat and staff thought that they would take away their jobs. Or they generally do not trust diaspora members. Did you experience any of this at your organisation?
 - b. At other organisations, staff reported that the diaspora expert did not respect local culture/way of life or local knowledge and expertise. Did you experience any of this at your organisation?
5. With regards to the activities that the CD4D diaspora expert(s) was/were conducting, did you perceive any practical challenges?
 - a. *Probe for: Enough time / Space / Equipment / Technology/ Other*
6. Are you currently still in contact with the CD4D diaspora experts?
 - a. What do you discuss?
 - b. Are you still working on a joint project?
 - c. Has he/she come back to visit?
7. Based on your experience working with the CD4D diaspora expert(s), do you have any suggestions for improvement of the CD4D-Programme?
8. Based on your experience working the CD4D diaspora expert(s), would you again want to work with a diaspora expert if an opportunity arose in the future?

Sociodemographic questions

1. What is your nationality?
2. In which country did you grow up?
3. Have you lived abroad?
 - a. *Probe: Where? For how long? Why?*
4. How old are you?
5. What is the highest level of education you have obtained?
 - 1 Secondary or lower
 - 2 Technical or vocational
 - 3 Bachelor
 - 4 Master
 - 5 PhD
6. How many years have you been in your current position at this organisation?

Concluding Questions

This is the end of my questions. Thank you so much for your time today.

1. Is there anything else you would like to share?
2. Is there anything else that you think is important to know about your professional experiences?
3. Do you have any questions?

5 Stakeholder interview guide

Organisation: _____

Person interviewed: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

A. Organisation's work related to knowledge transfer and capacity building

1. Could you briefly tell me about the main areas of work of your organisation and your main role and tasks?
2. Has your organisation worked with diaspora members directly or indirectly? Can you tell me about your organisation's work related to diaspora knowledge transfer and capacity building?
 - a. Probe: Programmes and projects? Project description that you would be able to share with me? (Find out details of programme e.g. types of diaspora engagement, country where diaspora members are, skills etc.)
 - b. Ask for programmes: Previously/currently/planned in the future
 - i. What were your experiences?
 - ii. What is going/went well?
 - iii. What are/were challenges?
 - iv. Impact of the programmes? Are programmes being monitored and evaluated? Are there any reports and documentations?

B. Diaspora knowledge transfer in Ethiopia/Sierra Leone/Somalia

1. Apart from your programmes, do you know of any other formal or informal initiatives in Ethiopia/Sierra Leone/Somalia/Somaliland? (Previously/currently/planned in the future)
2. From your perspective, is diaspora knowledge transfer important for Ethiopia/Sierra Leone/Somalia/Somaliland? Why?
3. From your perspective, does the country benefit from diaspora knowledge transfer? (How? Who? Under which conditions?)
4. Does it have an impact on the country's development?
5. Are there any challenges with diaspora knowledge transfer? (e.g. Knowledge not appropriate for country contexts)

C. Structural factors enabling/inhibiting diaspora knowledge transfer

1. How do you think the political situation impacts diaspora engagement?
 - a. What are elements of specific policies etc. that impact this?
 - b. How does the government position itself towards return migrants/diaspora? Does the government actively encourage/discourage diaspora engagement? In what ways/How?
2. How do you think the economic situation impacts diaspora engagement?
3. How do locals perceive return migrants/diaspora? How is this represented in society? (e.g. portrayed in local discourse/local media)
 - a. Probe: What is the overall sentiment? Does society actively encourage/discourage diaspora engagement? Are people generally open to knowledge by diasporas? Is there any mistrust towards diaspora and returnees or foreigners?

D. Concluding Questions

From your perspective, are there any other organisations or individuals I should talk to? Can you put me in touch?

This is the end of my questions.

1. Is there anything else you would like to share?
2. Do you have any questions?
3. Thank you so much for your time today.

IMPACT PARAGRAPH

This thesis has explored how diaspora members who conduct return visits contribute to knowledge transfer and capacity development in their country of origin within the context of a diaspora return programme. It examined the extent to which three processes of knowledge transfer and capacity development – information transmission, knowledge creation and contributions to organisational capacity development – occur, the enablers and inhibitors of these three processes at the individual, group and contextual level and diaspora members' experiences of returnee stigma and strategies they use to prevent and counteract them. The data used in this thesis were collected as part of the evaluation that UNU-MERIT/Maastricht University conducted for IOM The Netherlands for their project 'Connecting Diaspora for Development' (CD4D).

The thesis has shown that diaspora members can make valuable contributions to knowledge transfer and capacity development as part of a diaspora return programme. Yet, their contributions often do not take place at the most effective level. This study has also shed light on the enablers and inhibitors of knowledge transfer and capacity development and diaspora members' experiences of stigma. Individual-, group- and contextual-level factors enable and inhibit knowledge transfer and capacity development. Diaspora members prepared for potential returnee stigma – the most important being that staff perceived them as a threat to their jobs – and used strategies to counteract or prevent it.

In terms of scientific impact, this thesis makes three main contributions to the literature on return migration and development. First, it proposes a framework for knowledge transfer and capacity development in this context. The conceptual framework proposed in this thesis distinguishes three processes – *information transmission (IT)*, *knowledge creation (KC)* and *contributions to organisational capacity development (COCD)* – across three levels (individual, group and contextual). Distinguishing between these processes and levels reveals insights into diaspora members' contributions to knowledge transfer and capacity development that go beyond that accomplished by previous studies (Kuschminder, 2014a; Kuschminder et al., 2014).

Second, this thesis recognises VKTs as a distinct type of return visit. Recognising this type of return visit as a separate category is important for the literature on return and development, as it has long been a popular tool among practitioners to promote return for development yet has not been theorised by academia.

Third, this thesis provides additional empirical evidence on these VKT to the literature on return and development by providing a more nuanced understanding and new insights into factors that influence knowledge transfer and capacity development. It shows the varying degrees of importance which the three levels of enablers and inhibitors (individual, group, contextual) have for the three processes (IT, KC, COCD), sheds further light on factors previously discussed in the literature – confirming their importance for knowledge transfer and capacity development and determining their role for each of the three processes – and identifying factors not previously included. These latter vary between factors such as diaspora members' previous participation in a short-term diaspora return programme, diaspora members' disseminative capacity, the frequency of interaction between diaspora members and host-institution staff and the role of the complementarity of contributions to organisational capacity development to knowledge transfer.

In addition to its academic value, the research presented in this thesis also has clear social and policy relevance. Increasing the capacity of public organisations in developing countries is an important aspect of development; the importance of knowledge for development is also reflected in the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (United Nations General Assembly, 2015). In addition, the potential of migrants to make positive contributions

to sustainable development has also been acknowledged in the SDGs and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration or GCM (United Nations General Assembly, 2015, 2019). As part of Objective 19, the GCM highlights the need for research on non-financial development contributions by diasporas, such as knowledge transfer; this thesis contributes to increased research in this field.

The findings from this research are relevant to academics within the field of return and development. They are also relevant to policymakers – such as government agencies considering or currently funding diaspora return programmes – and practitioners, such as organisations implementing or thinking of implementing diaspora return programmes. Findings from this research have already been disseminated to these different audiences. The work that forms part of this thesis has been presented at different academic conferences. One of the articles drawn from it has been published in an international peer-reviewed journal.⁸⁰ In addition, two book chapters⁸¹ have been contributed to edited volumes. As data for this thesis were collected as part of an evaluation commissioned by the International Organization for Migration, the results have also been disseminated to policymakers and practitioners. Throughout the evaluation, the findings were shared with IOM The Netherlands and the Dutch Ministry for Foreign Affairs through project reports⁸² – all of which were made available online – and bilateral discussions. The findings were also presented and discussed at bi-annual meetings of the CD4D task force, which included several practitioners in the field of diaspora knowledge transfer and capacity development. In addition, the results have also been made accessible to a broader audience through blog articles.⁸³ Based on the main findings of this thesis, several policy implications can be derived (see Chapter 9.5).

⁸⁰ See Mueller and Kuschminder (2022).

⁸¹ See Mueller (2020, 2022).

⁸² See Mueller and Kuschminder (2018, 2019) and Mueller et al. (2017).

⁸³ See Kuschminder et al. (2021); Mueller (2018, 2019).

SUMMARY

The objective of this thesis is to deepen the understanding of diaspora members' contributions to knowledge transfer and capacity development in their country of origin within the context of a short-term diaspora return programme. A popular policy tool, different forms of short-term diaspora return programmes have been used by host- and origin-country governments and international organisations to incentivise and manage diaspora return visits for knowledge transfer and capacity development (VKTs). Thereby, these programmes aim to channel the potential attributed to diaspora members or migrants from developing countries in order to increase local expertise and contribute to capacity development in their countries of origin.

Despite their popularity, these return visits have not been sufficiently researched and theorised. Using data from VKTs conducted as part of the 'Connecting Diaspora for Development' (CD4D) project in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Somaliland, this thesis contributes to the literature on return migration and development by proposing a framework for knowledge transfer and capacity development in this context, theorising return visits for knowledge transfer as a distinct type of return visit and adding empirical evidence on them.

This study proposed a conceptual framework (see Chapter 3) of knowledge transfer and capacity development, differentiating between the three processes of information transmission (IT), knowledge creation (KC) and contributions to organisational capacity development (COCD). IT is the process whereby knowledge senders – in this thesis the diaspora members – share new information and insights with the knowledge receivers, here the host-institution staff. KC is the process whereby the knowledge receivers process and utilise the transmitted information. These two processes together form the knowledge transfer process, with IT being the first stage and KC the second, with the second stage resulting in individual capacity development. The third process is COCD, which is defined as the process whereby the diaspora member makes contributions to the internal structure, policies, procedures and resources of the host institution in which the return visit takes place. Nonetheless, the emphasis here is on the first two processes – IT and KC – with COCD being considered as a complementary process. Distinguishing between these three processes allows the generation of an in-depth understanding of how diaspora members contribute to knowledge transfer and capacity development.

Furthermore, this thesis has distinguished three levels of capacity development (high, medium and low). A placement was considered to have *high capacity development* as long as IT and KC occurred, which may have been accompanied by COCD. Placements with medium capacity development are those with success in IT – which may be accompanied by success in COCD – and *low capacity development* or placements without success in the three processes or only in COCD. Differentiating between these three levels of capacity development allows me to examine the three processes jointly as they build on each other – in the case of IT and KC – or complement each other, in the case of COCD.

The conceptual framework also establishes a basis on which to examine the factors enabling or inhibiting these three processes. Based on a comprehensive review, the framework proposed in this thesis examines three levels: the individual level, comprising the diaspora members and host-institution staff; the group level, which is knowledge transfer methods and knowledge features as well as relationships and interactions; and the contextual level, consisting of return modality and project characteristics, the host institutions and the countries of return. The conceptualisation and examination of factors across all three processes is an approach not previously applied in the context of short-term diaspora return programmes.

Based on the conceptual framework, this thesis then examined perceived knowledge transfer and capacity development (see Chapter 6) which were measured using the methodology of value assignment for the three processes introduced in Chapter 4. The chapter

presented the results for the three processes, IT, KC and COCD. The results show that there is evidence of all three processes, even though to different extents. Information transmission is much more common than COCD and KC. The chapter then proceeded to examine the three levels of capacity development, demonstrating that some form of capacity development occurs during the majority of placements. Of the 33 placements examined for this study, 18 showed *medium capacity development* and eight *high capacity development*. Thus, in addition to showing that diaspora members can make valuable contributions to the host institutions by contributing to at least medium capacity development, this chapter also demonstrated that the capacity development achieved is not at the ideal level, which would be *high capacity development*. Since only eight placements had this latter, only a limited number of placements were successful in knowledge creation in addition to information transmission.

For this reason, Chapter 7 then examined which combination of factors between the diaspora member, host-institution staff and the overall context create the optimal conditions for knowledge transfer and capacity development by examining enablers and inhibitors across the three processes of IT, KC and COCD. For IT, the chapter showed that, at an individual level, the diaspora members' motivations for return visits, previous participation in a diaspora return programme and expertise together with the host-institution staff's motivation to learn from a diaspora member all constitute enablers or inhibitors. At the group level, the type of knowledge transfer method and the occurrence of interaction may enable or inhibit IT. The ease of the relationship between diaspora members and host-institution staff plays a role in the occurrence of interaction. In addition, factors at the contextual level indirectly influence IT, as the project's Terms of Reference and the host institution's learning intent may influence the occurrence of interaction; the stipend provided to diaspora members through the project may also affect their motivations for return visits.

For KC, an individual-level factor that was identified, is the diaspora members' disseminative capacity. In addition, their familiarity with the country-of-origin context and the host institution, their age and gender and the strategies they apply to prevent and counteract returnee stigma, all affect the ease of the relationship between diaspora members and host-institution staff, thereby indirectly playing a role for KC. At the group level, the relevance of the information and insights to host-institution staff, the availability of practical exercises and the frequency of interaction enable or inhibit KC. This frequency depends on the host-institution staff's motivation to learn from a diaspora member, the relevance of the diaspora member's activities to the staff's work, their time for knowledge transfer and capacity development and the ease of the relationship between diaspora members and host-institution staff. At the contextual level, the focus on knowledge transfer, the placement length and the availability of resources play a role in KC, as does returnee stigma, as it determines the strategies which diaspora members employ to counteract or prevent returnee stigma, playing a role in the ease of the relationship. The focus on knowledge transfer is determined by placement Terms of Reference, the host institutions' learning intent and the diaspora members' motivation for return visits.

For COCD, the diaspora members' motivation for return visits, their expertise and their ability to mobilise resources all play a role at the individual level while the complementarity to knowledge transfer and the necessity of organisational capacity were identified as group- and contextual-level factors, respectively. The chapter also showed a number of factors that have not been identified as relevant or could not be examined in detail, such as the diaspora members' level of education and their employment status, the host-institution staff's absorptive capacity, the type of organisation and the organisational structure.

Chapter 8 explored how diaspora members who complete VKTs within a diaspora return programme deal with stigma. Among the types of stigma were that diaspora members might

impose a threat to locals' jobs, lack any understanding of local issues and be supporters of the opposition, together with gender-specific stigma for female returnees. The chapter revealed that diaspora members on VKTs showed a high awareness of potential stigma and employed three types of strategy – *adapting*, *signalling* and *addressing* – to prevent or counteract it.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Charlotte Johanna Müller (17 February 1992, Munich, Germany) is a migration and development professional, with expertise in the areas of return migration and diasporas. Since September 2021, she has been working as Migration and Private Sector Analyst as part of the Recovery Solutions and Human Mobility Team at the Crisis Bureau of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in New York where she has been leading the work on private sector engagement in migration within the IOM-UNDP Joint Programme on 'Making Migration Work for Sustainable Development' (Phase III). While a PhD Fellow at UNU-MERIT/Maastricht University, Charlotte worked and carried out research in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Germany, Ghana, the Netherlands, Mexico, Sierra Leone and Somalia and contributed to projects for GIZ, IOM and Transparency International. She worked in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration on the external evaluation of the 'Connecting Diaspora for Development' project for which she led research design, data collection, analysis and reporting for the first phase (2016–2019) and parts of the second phase (2020–2021). She also served as Assistant Coordinator for the United Nations University Migration Network. During her time living in Maastricht, Charlotte volunteered as a board member of Pecha Kucha Maastricht and head of the Dutch language project at Refugee Project Maastricht. She holds an MSc (*cum laude*) in Public Policy and Human Development with a specialisation in migration studies from UNU-MERIT/Maastricht University and a BA in International Cultural and Business Studies from the University of Passau.

2023

Charlotte Mueller

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