

Voices of the Diaspora

a new vision



BUILD

BUILDING UNDERSTANDING
THROUGH INTERNATIONAL
LINKS FOR DEVELOPMENT

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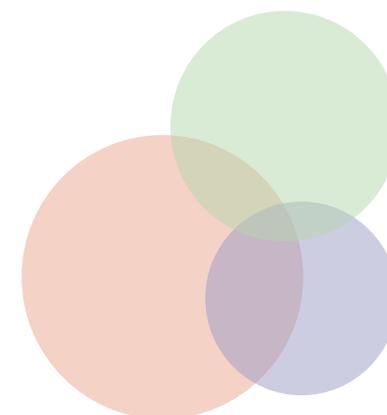
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Executive Summary

Over 30 years some 700,000 British people have worked quietly and voluntarily with partners in the Global South to change the world for the better. BUILD's work shows how Community Partnerships have developed over more than 30 years; and shows impact on peace, prosperity and justice at home and abroad.

In an inter-dependent world, we face immense challenges in migration, climate change and inequality in economic development. Far from seeing these as questions for all to address together, many people criticize overseas aid; oppose those of other origins or faiths; and are politically alienated. These conditions breed xenophobia, racism, radicalization, unrest and even conflict.

In contrast to this picture, the UK's long history of North-South community-led partnerships is founded on mutuality and reciprocity. Their proven, demonstrable benefits show a contribution to peace, prosperity and justice both at home and abroad. Nowhere is this better demonstrated than in the UK's diaspora communities.

The 2.8 million people of the diaspora communities in the UK contribute nearly as much in remittances as the entire population contributes through the aid budget. These people also contribute greatly to the UK; they are more likely than most to pay taxes and less likely to claim benefits; and, although only 4.4% of the population, they account for 9.7% of employees in strategically important sectors. If every member of the diaspora stopped working, the NHS and other parts of UK plc would collapse.

Yet the contributions of this vibrant part of our society are under threat. The austerity that has gripped the United Kingdom and many parts of the developed world has affected many diaspora communities disproportionately. Diaspora and migrants are often unfairly stigmatised by poorly informed characterization in debates on migration, terrorism and welfare.

This report is founded on three years' work with diaspora across the UK and gives evidence of the threats; but also gives evidence of the commitment of diaspora communities to achieve more; and to resolve the issues that they face. They are committed to working on better understanding and greater engagement between communities, such as developing

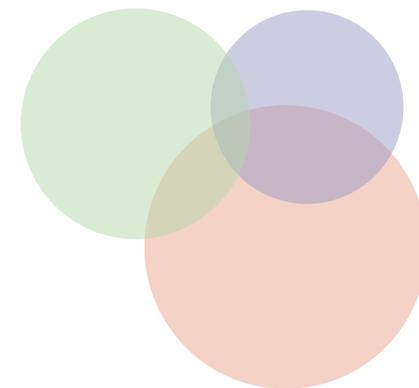
- Partnerships with countries of heritage to promote mutual peace, prosperity and justice.
- Ways of using their combined voices to advocate their cases.
- Ways to promote their contributions to society at home and abroad.

As a result of this project, Diaspora organisations are advocating a manifesto for a new approach. In order to fulfil their true potential they need better engagement with decision makers and those in power, including political leaders, business leaders, academics and the media. A new approach is needed to promote better social cohesion in the UK; and to celebrate the role of all parts of UK society, including migrants and the diaspora. Government leadership is necessary, appropriate and right. Media engagement is imperative. Private sector collaboration is vital.

The diaspora recognizes that solutions lie first with themselves; and commits to working to bring about change; and (recognizing that they cannot achieve change alone) calls on

- UK political parties to involve diaspora actively in developing all aspects of their 2015 manifestos.
- Governments in the UK and abroad (through their high commissions & representative bodies) to work with diaspora to increase development impact.
- INGOs to work with diaspora to increase impact in countries of heritage.
- The media to recognize diaspora as an integral part of British Society.
- Companies to take positive action to consider diaspora in their business planning.

The diaspora calls on HMG to vest in the Cabinet Office or other appropriate body the responsibility for reflecting the interests and contribution of the diaspora in all areas of government.



How this work has evolved

Community Partnerships – the origins of the work

Community based partnerships have flourished in the UK for more than 30 years, striving for peace, prosperity and justice at home and abroad.

The greatest growth of these inspiring manifestations of the Big Society has occurred since 2000. BUILD has experience of some 700,000 British people being active in town, school, health care, youth, faith, cultural and diaspora partnerships with developing countries. BUILD was founded in 2002 to promote growth in numbers and quality of partnerships through:

- Researching and promoting best practise. BUILD commissioned a Toolkit of Good Practice, launched at the Commonwealth Secretariat by Archbishop Desmond Tutu in 2007.
- Demonstrating impact through published research. Much evidence was summarised in BUILD's report "Small Investment Big Returns", presented to the Secretary of State for International Development in March 2014.
- Being a voice for the thousands of diverse partnerships in the UK, largely through All Party Parliamentary Groups, particularly the Connecting Communities APPG, but also APPGs concerned with diasporas' countries of heritage.

UK governments have recognised and supported Community Partnerships but have tended not to recognize their whole impact. The last government focused on awareness of and attitudes to development. The current government focuses on more direct impact on poverty, such as in Health Partnerships. In fact, partnerships impact both – and more – at home and abroad.

BUILD's purpose is to work with others to increase the reach and impact of global community partnerships. This inspired a project to build on the strength of diaspora connections with their countries of heritage to increase peace, prosperity and justice at home and abroad. The three year project (Building on UK Diaspora International Partnerships) was funded by the John Paul Getty Junior Trust.

The original proposal to the Trust was "to repair communities and integrate ethnic minority groups by encouraging diaspora (ethnic minority) groups in UK with strong established relationships to their home communities to use those relationships to engage with the wider UK community e.g. schools, hospitals, local authorities, faith organisations to form partnerships with counterparts in the communities from which they originate. ... This project aims to bring together Ethnic Minority Organizations in the UK and provide them with opportunities to introduce their home communities in the South to the wider community in UK through the development of partnership links."

The project explored how and to what effect the diaspora engages in international development through

- Desk research.
- English regional consultations in the Midlands, North, South East and South West.
- National consultations in Scotland and Wales.
- Other BUILD work with Kenyan, Nigerian, Sri Lankan, Sudanese and South Sudanese diaspora.
- A national conference in Birmingham to reach consensus.
- Consultation on draft findings at the Commonwealth People's Forum in Sri Lanka.

Opportunities and challenges that emerged

During the project, diaspora communities recognised the value of the project "bringing together Ethnic Minority Organizations in the UK and provide them with opportunities to introduce their home communities in the South to the wider community in UK through the development of partnership links".

They recognised the opportunities for increased impact:

- There is potential for increased impact on development in their countries of heritage – if government and INGOs work more effectively with the diaspora.
- There is potential to enhance the positive contributions that diaspora communities are making already to UK communities.

The project engaged people who are members of the diaspora and/or are working with them, while they undertake their jobs in the NHS, in social services and in many other areas of British life. These people are the champions, working at the front line; yet they are also among the main victims of the austerity and back lash against migrants. We were fortunate to engage with such people. Their diversity and energy provided a rich mosaic of intellectual and practical thinking on the subject.

But they also raised challenges to potential impact

- Adverse forces included increasing xenophobia, marginalization and austerity.
- Disproportionate impact from these forces could not be mitigated unless diaspora and migrant communities were properly represented in policy formation and implementation.

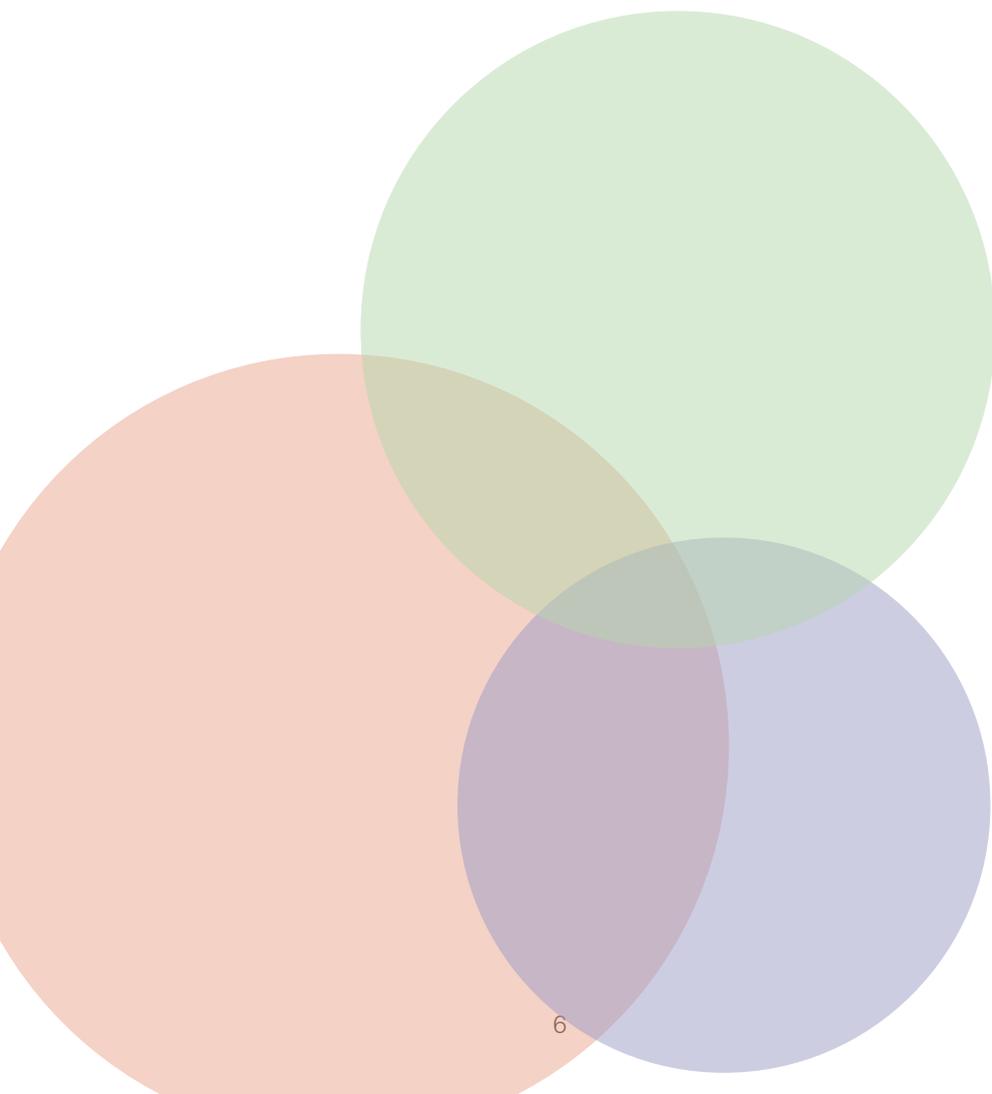
These views have been reflected in this report. This led to the broadening of the project purpose to embrace the opportunities and challenges that had been identified.

In addition, the scope of the project work was reduced in one respect. In spite of much effort, the project was unable to engage a sufficiently wide spectrum of the diaspora in Northern Ireland. Therefore, while national statistics refer to the UK, the views of the diaspora are drawn from across Great Britain.

The following sections are the main findings of the work.

Appendices summarize findings of the consultations and the conference.

The whole report has been shared with participants.



The diaspora– who are they and what is their value?

Time and again in BUILD’s work with diaspora groups across Britain, the people that were consulted pointed out the contrast between the reality of diaspora contributions at home and abroad and the negative images portrayed by some politicians and in some media.

Different things to different people

The term “diaspora” means different things to different people; with particular differences of meaning in countries of heritage compared with the UK.

In the UK the term is generally used to describe people who have roots and heritage in other countries and cultures; they are not necessarily migrants; their families may have been living in the UK for generations; they may well describe themselves as British; but they may also retain identification with their families’ countries of heritage. This is the population with which we are concerned. However, in many of those countries of heritage, “diaspora” is used to describe migrant workers who leave their homes for a period of months or years, with every intention to return. Our work does not address the considerable issues that face such migrant workers. In some countries of heritage, diaspora becomes a negative word associated with those who have left the country and are interfering with country politics. We tried as much as possible to also steer clear of any political agendas of different diaspora groups.

Recognizing these distinctions is particularly important when engaging with the governments and peoples of the diasporas’ countries of heritage.

A strong contributor to UK plc and to global development

There are 2.8 million people living in the UK who have different countries of heritage.

- 79% of them have Commonwealth countries as their countries of heritage, and there is further significant concentration within those numbers.
- Seven countries of heritage have populations of over 100,000 in the UK; these are India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Kenya, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe and Somalia.
- 50% of the total diaspora is between 24 and 49 years of age. (ONS, 2013).
- Of long-term migrants in UK, 52% intend to stay for just 1-2 years (ONS, 2011 Census Data).

What is life like in the diaspora? Indicators include

- The unemployment rate of Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) population is at least double that for the White British population. (Institute of Race Relations)
- 79.8% of immigrant students are in disadvantaged schools. (*OECD, Education at a Glance, 2013*)
- African mothers have a maternal mortality rate in the UK nearly six times that of White women. (*Migration Observatory Briefing, 2011*)
- Whereas only 11% of the UK population over 10-years-old is from BME groups; 33% of Stop and Searches by police is of people from a BME group and 28% of the prison population is from a BME group. (*Ministry of Justice, Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System, 2010*)

On the face of it, these statistics show a population that has a tough time. Yet this is a valuable part of the UK population, making great contributions to society both at home and abroad.

- The diaspora is 4.4% of the UK population. Yet, 9.7% of employees in strategically important sectors are non-EU migrants and 52% of these are graduates. (Labour Force Survey, 2010)
- Migrants' and refugees' net contribution is £3 billion to the UK Economy. (Home Office, 2011).
- They are less likely to claim benefits and more likely to pay taxes than the population at large.
- Remittances from the UK are high. In 2012 \$13 billion was remitted to developing countries; including India \$4.25 billion, Nigeria \$3.8 billion, Pakistan \$1.5 billion, Bangladesh \$850 million, Kenya \$490 million, Sri Lanka \$400 million, and Somalia \$100 million.

The \$13 billion remittances in 2012 was 0.53% of GDP – sent by 4.4% of the population; similar to the 0.56% of GDP that government spent on aid in 2011 on behalf of 100% of the population.

Also, there are non-financial contributions to development made by the diaspora working in partnership with their communities of heritage, including

- Sponsorship of schools, teachers, hospitals, sanitation, and other social services.
- Knowledge and skills transfer.
- Business involvement and development.
- Political engagement.

Neither remittances nor other contributions to the countries of heritage are coordinated. People consulted recognize that better communication of good practise between them and with others is needed; although it is a matter of debate whether or not coordination would always enhance impact at community level.

This report does not argue that any aspect of the current situation is perfect. But it is clear that

- Contributions made to society by the diaspora stand in stark contrast to perception of those contributions.
- Appropriate coordination and sharing of good practices could increase impact.

Austerity

The austerity that has gripped the United Kingdom and many other developed countries in the last five years has affected diaspora communities as well as other vulnerable communities. Though there has been much discussion and debate about the effect of the austerity measures, the disproportionate effects on diaspora and migrant communities has had little attention.

Throughout the project, diaspora communities reflected on their disproportionate exposure to the coalition government's policies.

- Reductions in real income as even modest inflation levels exceeded income value.
- Cuts applied to a whole range of benefits having an adverse effect on living standards.
- Reductions in funding for community initiatives at national and local levels jeopardize them.

Nevertheless, the diaspora communities have maintained their commitments to working with those less well off than themselves and supporting them in their efforts to achieve their developmental aspirations of peace, prosperity and justice.

Migration

The social and political climate in the UK has added another dimension which leads to diaspora and migrant communities being unfairly stigmatised. Diaspora communities involved in the project saw that commercial and state institutions do much to challenge racial stereotypes both in law and in their practises; but the public climate is dominated by xenophobic tendencies.

- The migration debate is being led by UKIP, with other parties appearing reluctant to confront xenophobia. Occasional references to the value of migrants do little to confront prejudice.
- Some media continue to use race and faith to stereotype unfairly in their coverage of migration, terrorism and welfare reform.

The diaspora's strong contribution to society is restricted by their being undervalued.

The voices of the diaspora

Consultations were held with a wide range of diaspora groups in Edinburgh, Sheffield, Wolverhampton, Cardiff, Bristol and London. Summary records from the consultations and a record of participants are in Appendix 2.

The BUILD proposition of building on diaspora links to communities of heritage was seen as important; but diaspora groups voiced additional agenda including:

- Remoteness from government and tokenistic consultation by them.
- Remoteness from the Department for International Development.
- Remoteness from representatives (and institutions) of countries of heritage (especially for those that live outside London)
- Low recognition of contribution to development through remittances and leverage opportunities.
- Low recognition of contributions to UK society, particularly in Social Services and the NHS.
- Disproportionate problems faced by the diaspora from the recession and financial cuts.
- Worsening attitudes to migrants and asylum seekers, including rising Islamophobia and racism.
- Low engagement across diaspora groups; and tensions within and between diaspora groups.

These issues were reflected in the consensus findings of the regional and national consultations.

The consensus findings were

1 *The diaspora make major contributions to British Society.*

- They are more likely to pay taxes and less likely to be on benefits than the average.
- They make huge contributions to NHS, home care and other public services.
- They contribute positively their diverse cultures and ideas to British society.
- They have links to other countries (for trade, economics, culture, understanding...).

2 *There is a worsening social and economic climate for the diaspora...*

- Increased racism and scapegoating of diaspora and migrant communities.
- Attacks in the media and from some politicians.
- Recession and austerity hitting diaspora communities disproportionately hard.
- Contributions to international and domestic development are unrecognised.

3 *... but there are also positive forces at work.*

- Strong network organisations based on regional/national countries of origin.
- Strong commitment to remittances, which have a significant positive impact on home countries.
- Existing links with other countries; and there is recognition that we can build on these.
- There are positive stories of diaspora, refugee and asylum seekers to communicate.

4 *The main challenges to the diaspora are...*

- Lack of awareness of diaspora contributions to British society.
- Negative representations of diaspora communities and ethnic minorities; increasing racism.
- Little recognition of development contribution and poor cooperation with government and INGOs.
- Much work within communities; but not enough cross-diaspora cooperation and solidarity.

These findings were consolidated for a national conference, where they were endorsed.

The diaspora speaks

In September 2013, a national conference was held in Birmingham to consider the concerns expressed at regional meetings and worked on a way forward. The conference report is at Appendix 3.

The conference endorsed the findings from the consultations and sought ways to take individual and collective action to achieve a more positive environment for the diaspora throughout the country.

Commitments to action

The conference discussed five themes, with commitments to positive action being aired.

1 How to influence policy makers and the public to understand the particular contribution that diaspora communities make to British society?

- In schools and communities, we should teach about the diaspora to change attitudes, and...
 - Create a quality award for schools for equal relations.
 - Educate children on their heritage. Teach the history of their countries of origin.
 - Include people aged 18-35 who are said not to engage in development.
- This needs a coordinated and consistent communications programme, including
 - Create a brand that represents the diaspora.
 - Collect positive stories for the media. Train diaspora representatives to promote them.
 - Influential people to champion the vital role that immigrants play in the UK.
 - Creative approaches (e.g. What would happen if one day every migrant stopped working? What would be the impact on the NHS and other sectors? They could collapse!)
- It is critical to reach out to the next generation of leaders; current leaders don't feel comfortable so there is a need to reach out and encourage them to engage.
- Develop a critical and visible mass of support.

2 How can we challenge negative perceptions of immigrants and diaspora communities and tackle increasing racism?

- Positive engagement with those conveying negative images, taking a lead in developing our identity.
- Education: by teaching children about diversity, cultural differences and BME history.
- An integration programme – to and from the diaspora. Cross-cultural education for new arrivals.
- Promote stories of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers and their exceptional journeys.
- With policy makers, lobby against racism; using organisations that already exist.
- We will need funding and resources to take this forward.

3 How can we increase cross-diaspora cooperation, understand diversity within and between our communities, and learn from each other?

- Encourage a shared agenda in the hope to influence change.
 - We must respect the differences of different diaspora.
 - Involve existing BME networks across the UK.
- More effective communication with policy makers and with each other.
 - Develop policies and action plans.
 - Lobby policy makers to influence change.
 - Promote an active voice.
- Develop a coordinated legal voice to challenge racism where necessary.
- Gain access to facilities for cultural performance.

4 How can we work alongside aid and development policy makers in the UK to influence the agenda in our countries of heritage?

- Improve the outreach.
 - Get policy makers and practitioners out into the communities.
 - It's a two way thing; diaspora leaders must know about UK structures to understand them.
- Build the capacity of diaspora groups to enable them to communicate, influence. etc.
- The diaspora to work with the APPGs identified with their countries of heritage.

- Bring more people to the table. Those who do engage are the ‘old boys’/policy makers network.
- Diaspora groups should work alongside INGOs working in countries of heritage.
- Define the role that BUILD can play in this.

5 How can we address the current inequality and discrimination faced by immigrants and diaspora communities and individuals in the UK?

- Lobbying for better adherence to employment rules – monitor advancement.
- Provide a channel to challenge discrimination.
- Promote integration services through our networks and other channels (e.g. local government).
- Propose to the media programme ideas that show positive images of the migrant community.
- Work together with civil service to better understand and reflect diversity.

Calls for others to act

Throughout the project there was agreement on

- The strength of the diaspora. From 4.4% of the UK population
 - Remittances’ contribution to international development is 0.53% of GDP.
 - 9.7% of employees in strategically important sectors are non-EU migrants.
 - Net contribution to the UK Economy is £3 billion.
- The weaknesses of the diaspora. Diaspora communities
 - Receive little recognition of their positive contribution to society.
 - Are disproportionately affected by austerity-driven cuts in social budgets.
 - Are rarely seen holistically but in ways that are
- Fragmented by race, faith, class, etc.
- Compartmentalised within different government departments.
- The opportunities for the diaspora to strengthen their own position include developing
 - Partnerships with countries of heritage to promote mutual peace, prosperity and justice.
 - Ways of using their combined voices to advocate their cases.
 - Ways to promote their contributions to society at home and abroad.

- The threats to the diaspora where action was required from others including
 - Increased xenophobia, arising from attitudes to migration, terrorism and benefits debates.
 - Misconceptions: e.g. “scrounger” imagery for good tax-payers and low benefit claimants.
 - Poor or tokenistic consultation by those in power.

Participants were united in their commitment to support “self-help” initiatives to build on the opportunities that they identified. However, in order to fulfil their true potential they also saw the need for better engagement by those in power, including political leaders, business leaders and the media. These leaders should recognize that diaspora communities

- Play a vital role in supporting development in their countries of heritage.
- Contribute much to society in the UK.

Current anti-immigrant rhetoric cannot be viewed in isolation without

- Recognizing that there is a general decline in relationships in UK society.
- Appreciating the underlying concerns of the diaspora, especially related to the recession.
- Recognizing the impact of cuts in funding for community based organisations and services.
- Understanding the impact of negative perceptions of diaspora put forward by the media.
- Recognizing the lack of opportunities for engagement between communities.

A new approach is needed to promote better social cohesion in the UK; and to celebrate the role of all parts of UK society, including migrants and the diaspora.

Diaspora organisations advocate a manifesto for a new approach.

In developing the manifesto that follows we are mindful of

- In light of the fact that multiple government departments and other agencies are involved; and the fact that diaspora organisations are too poorly resourced to engage with all counterparts; there is need for a single point of government contact.
- The commitment of diaspora organisations to engage on a coordinated basis needs to be made real; on the understanding that such structure as emerges needs to be open to all diaspora organisations.
- The manifesto will develop in light of engagement with other stakeholders (diaspora networks, governments, NGOs, media, etc.).

A manifesto from the diaspora

We, being UK diaspora organisations of people from countries across the world, submit that the 2.8 million diaspora in the UK are a force for good that

- Contributes net benefit to the UK economy and society
- Contributes as much to international development as the aid budget.

We see sustained partnerships between communities in the UK and the Global South as the Big Society at its best. They contribute to peace, prosperity and justice. On both sides of the partnership they

- Increase social cohesion and integration; and reduce conflict and xenophobia.
- Make significant contributions to development; and reduce poverty.
- Raise awareness and understanding of global interdependency; and support for government aid.
- Have high impact at low cost.

We are:

- Mindful that mistrust and distrust within society has increased, and there is a need to regain trust.
- Unsure that current efforts by the political parties and policy stakeholders to address this will yield results.
- Optimistic that these issues can be addressed collectively for the future.
- Convinced that all stakeholders are genuinely interested in finding solutions.
- Inspired by confidence that the diaspora have the enthusiasm, experience, knowledge and resources to contribute towards addressing key challenges.

Our vision for the future is that:

- There will be greater cohesion within diaspora giving them a stronger and more coordinated voice.
- There will be greater social cohesion in the UK with diaspora seen as an asset rather than a problem.
- Governments and companies will reflect diaspora in the design of their policy and decision making.
- The media report stories that represent diaspora as integral, positive contributors to society.
- Government, NGOs and the companies will build on diaspora contributions at

home and abroad.

- There will be an inspired generation of diaspora that feels included.

Diaspora representatives commit themselves to

- Recognizing that solutions lie first with themselves; and to working to bring about change.
- Increasing real engagement with communities through community leaders, groups and schools.
- Establishing a channel for efficient communication with government, NGOs and companies.
- Engaging with and supporting all levels of government, NGOs and companies.

We call on

- UK political parties to involve diaspora actively in developing all aspects of their 2015 manifestos.
- Governments in the UK and abroad (through their Embassies, High Commissions and other institutions) to work with diaspora to increase development impact.
- INGOs to work with diaspora to increase impact in countries of heritage.
- The media to recognize diaspora as an integral part of British Society.
- Companies to take positive action to consider diaspora in their business planning

We call on HMG to vest in the Cabinet Office or other appropriate body the responsibility for reflecting the interests and contribution of the diaspora in all areas of government.

- Facilitating all aspects of Diaspora contributions to society at home and abroad through improving financial systems, capacity building and learning
- Ensuring the monitoring of all aspects of diaspora contributions to society at home and abroad.
- Ensuring that these contributions are reflected in the development and implementation of the policies of all government departments.
- Ensuring better communication of Diaspora contributions to society at home and abroad are reflected in general discourse and narratives

Appendix 1 **BUILD and the project****BUILD's Vision**

- BUILD has a vision of a world of peace, prosperity and justice.

BUILD's Values

- Equality: we strive to treat all people equally and with mutual respect.
- Empowerment: we seek to enable all partners to benefit each other.
- Sustainability: we encourage behaviour that leads to a sustainable society.

BUILD's Mission*Our purpose*

- We work with others to increase the reach and impact of global community partnerships.

Our beliefs

- No-one should go through life without being touched by a global community partnership.
- Community partnerships increase peace, prosperity and justice through
 - o Mutual understanding and respect
 - o Community cohesion
 - o Personal confidence, dignity and empowerment
 - o Professional development in a global context
 - o Sustainable community development

Our identity

- We are an independent UK membership charity.
- Our members are government, commercial and non-governmental organisations.
- We are accountable to institutions and individuals who support us, and to our members.

Our culture

We seek to be Driven, Innovative, Considered, Results focused, and Helpful.

Our work

- We advocate at individual, public & political levels, on behalf of community partnerships
- We promote and support good practice in community partnerships
- We demonstrate the impact of community partnerships in both Northern and Southern societies
- We bring these global partnerships into the mainstream of life

The boundaries of BUILD's work

- BUILD represents its members and collaborates with them for funds or voice.
- BUILD is careful not to compete directly with its members for funds or voice.
- BUILD supports organisations involved in community partnerships but is not directly operational.

The project

This three year BUILD project (Building on UK Diaspora International Partnerships) has been funded by the John Paul Getty Junior Trust.

The original proposal to the Trust was “The proposal is designed to ‘repair communities and integrate ethnic minority groups’ by encouraging diaspora (ethnic minority) groups in UK with strong established relationships to their home communities to use those relationships to engage with the wider UK community e.g. schools, hospitals, local authorities, faith organisations to form partnerships with counterparts in the communities from which they originate.” This project aims to bring together Ethnic Minority Organizations in UK and provide them with opportunities to introduce their home communities in the South to the wider community in UK through the development of partnership links.

This proposal was central to BUILD's work in that it sought to increase the number and quality of international community partnerships which aimed to increase peace, prosperity and justice on both sides of a linking partnership.

During the conduct of the planned regional consultations it became clear that BUILD should expand the scope of the project, which it has managed to do without further funding. The expansion of scope reflected

- We have uncovered not only the anticipated positive contributions that diaspora communities are making for their countries of heritage, but also their positive impact on UK communities.
- Communities we consulted recognised the enhanced impact that partnerships could have but said that adverse forces included greater xenophobia, marginalization and disproportionate austerity.

We have listened to these views and reflect them in this report.

The project work consisted of exploring how diaspora organisations and groups currently engage in international development and what contributions they make in their countries of heritage.

- Desk research.
- Regional consultations in England in London (South East), Midlands (Wolverhampton), North (Sheffield), South West (Bristol).
- National consultations in Scotland (Edinburgh) and Wales (Cardiff).
- Other consultations in Nottingham, and with Nigerian, Sri Lankan and South Sudanese diaspora.
- A national conference in Birmingham in September 2013 developing consensus.
- Consideration of draft findings at the Commonwealth People's Forum in Sri Lanka.

During the project, we have engaged with people who are members of diaspora communities and/or are working with them in supporting projects in their countries of heritage, whilst also undertaking work in the UK, in the NHS, social services and many other areas of British life. They are the champions working at the front line, yet they are also the ones who are the main victims of the recession and the back lash against migrants.

We were fortunate to engage with such people. The diversity of those who participated in the project provided a rich mosaic of intellectual and practical thinking on the subject and provided a space and a platform for people and organisations to network and share ideas for collaboration.

This main report is the findings of the whole project. Further appendices show the main findings of the consultations and conference. The report has been shared with participants.

Appendix 2 **Consultations**

England

Organizations involved included

<i>African Caribbean Community Initiative</i>	<i>inter-pares</i>
<i>African Voices Forum</i>	<i>Kenyan High Commission</i>
<i>African Women</i>	<i>KomboSillah Association (Gambia)</i>
<i>Asian Arts Agency</i>	<i>Languages Sheffield</i>
<i>The Black South West Network</i>	<i>The Muslim Forum</i>
<i>Black Training and Enterprise Group</i>	<i>Northern Refugee Centre</i>
<i>Bristol City Council Legacy Commission</i>	<i>The Pierian Centre</i>
<i>Bristol University</i>	<i>The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust</i>
<i>The British Council</i>	<i>Sheffield BME Network</i>
<i>BUILD</i>	<i>Sheffield City Council</i>
<i>Children of Sudan</i>	<i>Sheffield Refugee Forum</i>
<i>City Chameleon</i>	<i>Sickle Cell Care</i>
<i>Connections for Development</i>	<i>Somali Community & Cultural School</i>
<i>The Cordoba Foundation</i>	<i>Southern E Media Education & Arts</i>
<i>Development Education Centre South Yorkshire</i>	<i>THET (Tropical Health and Education Trust)</i>
<i>Diverse Ethics</i>	<i>UK One World Linking Association (UKOWLA)</i>
<i>Enterprise Xtra</i>	<i>VSO</i>
<i>First Born Creatives</i>	<i>WHO's African Partnerships for Patient Safety</i>
<i>Greater Somali Community Network</i>	<i>Wolverhampton City Council</i>
<i>Hanover & Wolverhampton Link Organization</i>	<i>Wolverhampton International Links Association</i>
<i>Imogene Training</i>	

and interested individuals.

Views from the consultations

There are strong links to communities of heritage.

- Very strong links to Kenya, Sierra Leone, The Gambia, the Windward Islands, Jamaica and the wider Caribbean, Pakistan, Somalia, the Philippines and the Sudan.
- These include school links and health care links and working with youth groups in Bristol.
- There is much support for “families back home and the people I grew up with”.
- Some links arose out of natural disasters but are used to build social cohesion in Somerset.
- There is support for diaspora members in the UK.
- Community theatre does outreach programmes bringing BME “stories” to communities.

There are barriers to achieving the most out of these links.

- There are too many negative messages about Africa; we never read or hear positive messages or stories.
- We must package the mutual benefits of links and provide better information on good practice.
- Funding is an issue.
- The diaspora does not have a single identity. We have multiple identities.
- There are splits within diaspora groups, because of cultural, political and faith differences
- Engaging youth is hard because of generational differences, succession issues and cultural conflicts.

There are practical opportunities for integrating communities of heritage in the UK.

- Working with primary school children is most effective.
- Commercial links to import produce from communities of heritage.
- Make links relevant through sport and music; engage other community groups;
- Links to hospitals in UK so that staff understand how to treat eg. people from Bangladesh.
- Transfer skills that you have acquired here to use in your communities of heritage.
- Make sure links are two way.
- Identify issues that the people at both ends are facing.
- Sell the mutual benefits of linking and identify opportunities to engage in development.

Conclusions

- 1 There should be more partnerships for mutual benefit involving more people.
- 2 The business case for partnerships should be made more strongly to justify funding through supporting diaspora organisations with business and other skills.
- 3 Challenges of perception must be confronted with political parties and media, with
 - a Umbrella bodies like BUILD representing isolated voices.
 - b Coordinated communications strategies, messaging and websites.
 - c Seeking firm political acceptance of the benefits and commitment to linking.
- 4 True collaborative working with umbrella bodies (e.g. BUILD) so that we are not working in isolation.

Scotland

Organizations involved included

The African Centre – Scotland

BUILD

Community InfoSource

Connections for Development

Edinburgh Napier University

The Ghana Welfare Association

The Loveness J Z Charity

Malawi Tomorrow

NIDOS

SASHITA-Tanzania

The Scotland Malawi Partnership

The University of Edinburgh

The Women's Federation for World Peace

The Woodford Foundation

and independent consultants and journalists

Views from the consultations

The Scottish Diaspora has a unique and strong role to play in linking but there are significant challenges.

- Definition of diaspora – who are we? Who are the leaders?
- Divisions within the diaspora – countries maintain their own separate identities and there are divisions within country groups. And there are divisions between generations in the diaspora.
- Poor communication between diaspora groups

- The diaspora doesn't feel a sense of belonging to the wider civil society development networks. "We know better than they do because we come from the countries in which they are working!"
- There is a language barrier particularly if you come from e.g. Francophone Africa
- The Scottish Government is seen as being involved only with Malawi. The voice of the diaspora is not heard at Governmental level.
- Some members of the diaspora are transient (e.g. students) with limited time to get involved

However there were also opportunities for self-help

- It would be helpful to form a steering group with a clear equal partnership agenda
- There must be action after the talking
- Events, meetings must be publicised well in advance
- Stories from the diaspora, and refugees and asylum seekers must be communicated to schools
- There is an opportunity to link across the "commonwealth" of the diaspora.
- We must engage more with Government
- We should widen the diaspora involvement
- Develop a strategy for linking up the Scottish Diaspora Networks – not just the "usual suspects"
- Consider sectoral diaspora networks e.g. health, education
- Develop a consortium of networks.

Conclusions

- 1 There is a desire for more and better work through partnerships – for more MUTUAL benefit.
- 2 Evidence of strong networks in the Scottish nation – both for development and within diaspora.
- 3 There are challenges – the big threads running through the meeting were
 - a. Perceptions – of diaspora and of the south – by the public and by government.
 - b. Fragmentation – by age, by race, by national focus, etc.
 - c. Representativeness – availability to meet, perceptions of Malawi dominance, etc.
- 4 There is a strong will for a group to take this forward

- 5 The energy is here – the challenge is to harness the energy – a good way forward is to focus on the interests that people have in common.

Wales

Organizations involved included

The Baobab Foundation

Somali Advice and Information Centre

BUILD

WCVA

Cardiff City Council

Wales International Development Hub

Chwarae Teg

Wales Africa Community Links

Gift of Grace Education Project

The World Churches Council

Love Zimbabwe

Views from the consultations

Research into diaspora organisations' engagement with Wales for Africa shows that

- The development work of diasporas is increasingly on the agenda of INGOs who support a range of diaspora activities, such as improving mechanisms for sending remittances, organizing diaspora volunteering and targeting funding and capacity building of diaspora organisations; partly driven by the volume of remittances – over \$40 billion to Africa in 2010.
- Engaging with diaspora complements the Wales for Africa approach.
- Engaging diaspora in development work is likely to benefit both Wales and Africa because diaspora work tends to bring benefits to their own members (who are more likely to be among those living in relative poverty) as well as people in their countries of origin.
- There are common goals and values shared by diaspora organisations and Wales for Africa... in particular commitment to working in partnership, sustainability and participation.

There are challenges

- There is not enough knowledge and understanding of the diaspora in government or the public. "We need to feel accepted."
- More effort is needed to foster inclusion/integration; because of cuts to service provision.

- Differences to England; the Welsh Government talks of “inclusion”; Westminster of “integration”.
- There is a lot to be done on integration and cohesion between sectors/groups.
- Legal frameworks and the perceptions of them (e.g. Sharia) can deepen divides.
- Cross-sectoral and cross-diaspora work is hard; people don’t have time and resources for it.

There are ways in which diaspora organisations can create opportunities for improvement

- BUILD’s work and diaspora networks are needed to bring together diverse organisations.
- We can identify role models who can work with schools to increase mutual understanding.
- We should be positive; work together and forget our baggage. Ethiopians and Eritreans are good examples in Cardiff; built around their own social networks (e.g. churches).

Conclusions

- Partnerships should be seen to contribute to peace, prosperity and justice at home and abroad.
- Government and agencies can help diaspora organisations to contribute by
 - o Using language that is inclusive both for development and community volunteers.
 - o Meaningful diaspora engagement early in policy development; not tokenistic involvement.
- Diaspora organisations can help their impact and effectiveness by
 - o Increasing their profile through use of media, websites and social media.
 - o Improving the communication and cooperation between diaspora organisations.
- We should emphasize “lack of education” to politicians as at the root of much misunderstanding.

Appendix 3 National conference

The record of the National Conference on 7 September, 2013 in Birmingham

Participants included people from

<i>AFFORD</i>	<i>Kombo Sillah Association (Gambia)</i>
<i>Black South West Network</i>	<i>Oxfam</i>
<i>BUILD</i>	<i>Partner Ghana</i>
<i>Children of Sudan</i>	<i>Results</i>
<i>Comic Relief</i>	<i>Sheffield BME Network</i>
<i>The Commonwealth Foundation</i>	<i>The Somaliland Diaspora group</i>
<i>Connections for Development</i>	<i>Wolverhampton International Links Association</i>
<i>The Cordoba Foundation</i>	

and interested individuals

Expectations that participants brought to the conference included

- To be consulted early in policy development, not tagged on the end.
- To create better collaboration.
- To have recognition of the positive impact of the diaspora in the UK.
- To have recognised the legacy of a colonial heritage.
- To have better media and INGO images. They are often negative. Africa is portrayed in a bad light.
- To use the same language as is used for white people. Speak about Africans – not black people.
- To recognize that education is most important.
- To focus on a new generation of talented, up and coming young people, now at a cross roads.
- To understand the attitude of government. It may be rooted in fear of change.

Project Review

Amjad-Mohamed Saleem (Cordoba Foundation and BUILD trustee)

Amjad reviewed the project findings to date. He emphasised diaspora contributions to British Society.

- They are more likely to pay taxes and less likely to be on benefits than the average.
- They make huge contributions to NHS, home care and other public services
- They contribute diverse cultures and ideas to British society
- They have links to other countries (for trade, economics, culture, understanding...)

The project identifies a worsening climate for the diaspora...

- Increased racism and scapegoating of diaspora and migrant communities.
- Attacks in the media and from politicians.
- Recession and austerity hitting diaspora communities disproportionately hard.
- Contributions to international and domestic development are unrecognised.

... but there are also positive findings

- Strong network organisations based on regional/national countries of origin
- Strong commitment to remittances, which have a significant positive impact on home countries
- Existing links with other countries; and recognition that we can build on these
- Positive stories of diaspora, refugee and asylum seekers to communicate!

The main challenges identified by the project are...

- Lack of awareness of diaspora contributions to British society.
- Negative representations of diaspora communities and ethnic minorities.
- Increasing racism.
- Little recognition of development contribution and poor cooperation with government and INGOs.
- Much work within communities; but not enough cross-diaspora cooperation and solidarity.

The questions the conference should address and report to the APPG, are how to

- Influence policy makers / public to understand the diaspora contribution to British society?
- Challenge negative perceptions of immigrants and diaspora; and tackle increasing racism?
- Work with development policy makers in the UK to influence the agenda in countries of heritage?

- Address the inequality and discrimination faced by immigrants and diaspora in the UK?
- Increase cross-diaspora cooperation; and understand diversity within and between communities?

Comments from participants included

- Endorsement of the regional findings.
- Communications
 - o We want access to stories that are positive.
 - o Social media can be used. The Facebook page “I love immigrants” has many positive stories.
 - o Big Assist is a good source for information.
- The project outcomes
 - o We would like a toolkit, with feedback, so that we know that there is positive action.
 - o Promote solutions. We need to give the politicians a bit to do – not a list of what’s wrong.
 - o To influence an APPG is not commonplace. We should be appropriate in what we report.
 - o Practical assistance
- Small local NGOs don’t even know how to contact INGOs like Oxfam or Islamic Relief.
 - o We send money home but there is misuse of official and NGO funds. Help us challenge this.
 - o We need to tap into different resources like Comic Relief’s Common Ground Initiative.

Identity

Angela Baugh (Sheffield BME Network)

Angela gave a keynote address that one participant described as “a fantastic reality of life”. She founded this on project findings that, while xenophobic views often lump all diaspora and migrants together, the reality is that there is great diversity of identities in all sectors of a population. She asked, “What is my identity?” and by exploring the environmental, social and personal changes that come over time she concluded that the wise recognize that identity is different for different generations and different people.

Comments from the conference stimulated by her address included

- Agreement that there was diversity of identity, which needs recognition by others.
- Investment in development doesn't have to be financial; it can be in many forms.
- A lot can be learnt from the South, where children are raised by a village not a single mother.
- Lots of things happening from the past need to be straightened out. When I came to the UK I came as a Commonwealth citizen; but the Queen is the only one who loves the Commonwealth.
- Nobody likes fighting, but we are so selfish and greedy, that is what is ruining us. We say there is no money, but who needs money. I help my family from my meagre pension, and it is my struggling that I use to help them.

Shared vision

Jane Esuantsiwa Goldsmith (Anona Development Consultancy)

Jane spoke of the need for a joint vision. What would be different if diversity was valued and diaspora communities were enabled to play their full and unique role in UK society? She saw the need to have a dialogue with colleagues, with village communities and with the policy makers. She posed the question, "What would we be able to do in ten years' time that we can't do now if that were the case?"

Responses from the conference included

- Agreement that there is a need for shared vision.
- There will be active collaboration between diaspora and INGOs, not tokenism; there will be budget allocation by them.
- There will be an inspired generation that feels included. We will know because they will have more work, opportunities and control over their lives.
- There will be real input in policy and decision making; all will be included.
- Black people will be properly represented in power. There are as many mediocre people at the top as elsewhere!
- Diversity will be valued, and there will be more variety, more resilience. Variety creates resilience.
- There will be education understanding and compassion.
- There will be some eradication of prejudice – but it will take more than 10 years.
- Diaspora will be seen as key players in UK life: in the arts, social and economic areas.
- We will see all sorts of phobias, discrimination and hatred disappear in the

future.

- We will be able to feel happy and normal and not be judged. We will feel emotionally settled; there will not be a disproportionate number of diaspora in mental health organisations.
- We will empower women's rights within the communities, and eradicate FGM and rape.
- All our languages were recognised and valued, and taught in schools.
- The idea of aid will be used only for emergency situations and trade will be equal and bilateral.

Exploring key issues

The questions the conference needed to address and report to the APPG had been highlighted earlier. Conference responses to them were focused on priority areas for action and offered both ideas for self-help and demands of others.

1 How to influence policy makers and the public to understand the particular contribution that diaspora communities make to British society?

- In schools and communities, we should teach about the diaspora to change attitudes, and...
 - o Create a quality award for schools for equal relations (The Commonwealth Foundation will fund projects that expand cultural development through music, art.)
 - o Educate children on their heritage. Teach the history of their countries of origin.
 - o Include people aged 18-35 who are said not to engage in development, due to perceptions around media, and the perceptions and influence of their parents.
- This needs a coordinated and consistent communications programme, including
 - o Create a brand similar to Fairtrade that represents the diaspora. For some events use such a brand (e.g. around the Commonwealth Games).
 - o Collect positive stories for the media. Train diaspora representatives to promote them.
 - o Influential people to champion the cause of how important the role of the immigrant is.
 - o Creative approaches (e.g. What would happen if one day every migrant stopped working? What would be the impact on the NHS and other sectors? They could collapse.)

- It is critical to reach out to the next generation of leaders; current leaders don't feel comfortable so there is a need to reach out and encourage them to engage.
- Develop a critical and visible mass of support.

2 How can we challenge negative perceptions of immigrants and diaspora communities and tackle increasing racism?

- Positive engagement with those conveying negative images, taking a lead in developing our identity.
- Education: by teaching children about diversity, cultural differences and BME history
- An integration programme – to and from the diaspora. Cross-cultural education for new arrivals.
- Promote stories of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers and their exceptional journeys.
- With policy makers, lobby against racism; using organisations that already exist.
- We will need funding and resources to take this forward.

3 How can we increase cross-diaspora cooperation, understand diversity within and between our communities, and learn from each other?

- Encourage a shared agenda in the hope to influence change.
 - We must respect the differences of different diaspora.
 - Involve existing BME networks across the UK.
- More effective communication with policy makers and with each other.
 - Develop policies and action plans.
 - Lobby policy makers to influence change.
 - Promote an active voice.
- Develop a coordinated legal voice to challenge racism where necessary.
- Gain access to facilities for cultural performance.

4 How can we work alongside aid and development policy makers in the UK to influence the agenda in our countries of heritage?

- Improve the outreach.
 - Get policy makers and practitioners out into the communities.

- It's a two way thing; diaspora leaders must know about UK structures to understand them.
- Build the capacity of diaspora groups to enable them to communicate, influence. etc.
- The diaspora to work with the APPGs identified with their countries of heritage.
- Bring more people to the table. Those who do engage are the 'old boys'/policy makers network.
- Diaspora groups should work alongside INGOs in countries of heritage.
- Define the role that BUILD can play in this.

5 How can we address the current inequality and discrimination faced by immigrants and diaspora communities and individuals in the UK?

- Lobbying for better adherence to employment rules – monitor advancement
- Provide a channel to challenge discrimination
- Promote integration services through our networks and other channels (e.g. local government)
- Propose to the media programme ideas that show positive images of the migrant community
- Work together with civil service to better understand and reflect diversity.

A panel of Stella Opoku Owusu (AFFORD), Gemma Juma (Comic Relief), Ogunleye Adewale (Commonwealth Foundation) and Kalyani Ghandi-Rhodes (Oxfam) described how their organisations engaged with diaspora.

- Afford is working on programme to enable diaspora to influence policy makers in Africa. In diaspora development they focus on dual role of diaspora – in the UK and in countries of heritage.
- Work with the diaspora is a new specialist area for Oxfam.
- The Commonwealth Foundation has a mandate to strengthen civil society. There is a multitude of diaspora groups and the Foundation wishes to amplify these groups for the greater good.
- Comic Relief heads up the Common Ground Initiative. Disperses this money in grants to registered charities but recognizes that much work goes on outside the registered charities. Skills and technology transfer is equally important. They have been funding stories for use with the press.

Questions of clarification on these points were answered by the panel and all expressed willingness to engage with participants and others.

Final remarks Dr Nick Maurice (BUILD)

Nick said that the whole day had focused on “development” and reflected that the French origins of the word (de-enveloppe) were rooted in opening the constraining envelope of poverty, and allowing the contents of the “envelope” to reach their maximum potential. Similarly, “diaspora” means scattering seeds and allowing them to flourish on fertile ground. This is what we are about; ensuring that the land is fertile and receptive to the seeds and allowing them to grow.

He undertook to convey to participants a record of the conference and to consult all who had been involved in the project in the New Year on the final report, which would include a resolution to take work forward. The immediate next steps were to consult with civil society at the Commonwealth People’s Forum in Sri Lanka in November on the draft findings; and then to develop the reports.

He gave thanks to all those who had contributed to the project in so many ways and welcomed

- The endorsement of the regional findings.
- The identification of practical steps on the key issues.



BUILD

BUILDING UNDERSTANDING
THROUGH INTERNATIONAL
LINKS FOR DEVELOPMENT

BUILD was founded in 2002 at an international agency meeting at Cumberland Lodge, Windsor in response to the growing interest in the development of community-based partnerships between communities in UK and in the Global South (Africa, Asia, Caribbean, Latin America) and the impact they have on personal, professional and community development at both ends of the partnership.

BUILD's members are committed to the development of these sustained partnerships recognising the mutuality of benefit to those involved in the partnership. It is not a one way stream of aid.

MEMBERS 2002-2013

Africa Foundation Stone	Links Japan
All-Party Parliamentary Group "Connecting Communities"	Local Government Association
Arup	Network of Ugandan Researchers & Research Users
BBC World Class 2012	Partnership for World Mission
Black South West Network	Plan UK
British Council	Royal African Society
Cambridge Education Foundation	Royal Commonwealth Society
Chartered Institute of Environmental Health	The Grubb Institute - Ubuntu4Schools
Children of Sudan	The Sabre Charitable Trust
Commonwealth Foundation	The Schumacher Institute for Sustainable Systems
Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council	Scotland Malawi Partnership
Department for Education and Skills	The Scouts Association
Department for International Development	Think Global
East London Mental Health	THET
Fairtrade Foundation	Transform Drug Policy Foundation
Feed the Minds	Tzedek
Help the Hospices	UK National Commission for UNESCO
HEC Global Learning Centre	UK One World Linking Association
International Centre of Excellence for Community Schools	VSO
International National Trusts Organisation	Wales Council for Voluntary Action
LifeLine Network International	World Child Cancer
Link Community Development	