

**Presentation by: Ashook Ramsaran, President of GOPIO International
Conference on Conference on "Education in Central America: Engaging Diasporas,
Governments and the Private Sector in Education for Development"
El Salvador on June 27, 2012**

Topic:

The Indian Diaspora, GOPIO's Role in Connecting and Strengthening it, and to Highlight Experiences and Lessons Learned from Diaspora-Government-Private Sector Partnerships for the Development of Human Capital.

Thank you, Mr Sanbrailo, for your kind introduction.

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

I am appreciate the kind consideration of the Organization of American States (OAS), the government of El Salvador and the Pan-American Development Foundation (PADF) for giving me this opportunity to talk about the Indian Diaspora & GOPIO's role in connecting, nurturing and strengthening it for the benefit of both India and the Indian Diaspora.

Firstly, GOPIO is the abbreviation for the Global Organization of People of Indian Origin, a global organization monitoring and addressing issues of interest and concern among people of Indian origin (PIOs) and non-resident Indians (NRIs) living outside of India.

I intend to discuss how GOPIO works, its best practices and the resulting benefits; and to highlight experiences and lessons learned from Diaspora-Government-Private Sector partnerships for the development of Human Capital. I would like to make this presentation as an informative discussion centered around the following topics:

1. The Indian Diaspora – what it is and how it adapts and evolves
2. GOPIO, the global Indian Diaspora organization
3. GOPIO's Role in Connecting and Strengthening the Indian Diaspora
4. GOPIO and the Government of India: A hand-in-hand relationship
5. Government of India's Initiatives & Programs for its Diaspora
6. Benefits to the Government of India
7. Benefits and rewards for the Indian Diaspora
8. Lessons of the Indian Diaspora for others

Given the limited time to make this presentation with so much that can be disseminated, I am hopeful that I can impart as much as is feasible including some useful information on the following topics. Note: It is not easy to make “a short presentation” on a diaspora that is centuries old but I intend to present you with useful information that can help in your understanding of the Indian Diaspora and you can benefit from its depth and vibrancy.

My discussion will center on the following sub-topics:

- Lessons learned from Diaspora-Government-Private Sector partnerships for the development of Human Capital.
- GOPIO’s impressive achievements
- How GOPIO works, best practices, lessons learned and major achievements
- Impact of working in partnership with government and the private sector
- To promote development, trade and investment in India
- Partnership between diaspora and government for skilled labor force

We in GOPIO are pleased that there is a lot of positive awareness of the large, expanding and vibrant Indian Diaspora and of GOPIO for its significant role in shaping the Indian Diaspora which is being viewed as model for other countries.

In basic terms, new diaspora is an export phenomenon – of people migrating to other more industrialized countries - and the return on investment should be carefully, carefully and strategically nurtured and used for the development of the respective countries of origin. The respective diasporas have intrinsic value for practically all the countries and nations which send their sons and daughters to forge better lives in other more developed countries.

Let’s note that migration is a continuing phenomenon and the respective diaspora grows in numbers. Let’s also note that although the levels of remittances may increase, remittances come to families and, for the most part, these are quickly consumed. On the other hand, investments by the diaspora population tend become part of sustainable development in social projects, entrepreneurships, agriculture, technology, investments in infra-structure, education, health, job creation – to grow and develop internally.

The Indian Diaspora:

Some basic facts about the Indian Diaspora:

- India has **third biggest diaspora** in the world next only to China and Mexico.
- For centuries, people from India have been migrating to other countries in search of better opportunities for themselves and their families and to secure better livelihoods.
- There are approximately **27 million people** spread across every major region in the world, from recent immigrants to those who are 6 generations and more.
- Older generations of the diaspora can be found in Malaysia and countries formerly under British, Dutch and French colonial rule, a scattering of labor as needed after Emancipation in 1834. South Africa, the Caribbean, Mauritius and Fiji.
- They work in different fields as laborers, doctors, scientists, lawyers, professionals, investments, entrepreneurs, etc.
- 42% of recent Indian migrants are living in Gulf, 21% in South Asian countries & 12% in USA; others in Europe, Canada, Australia, N/Z.
- Fastest growth areas in USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.
- Skill and occupation profile of migrants vary according to country of birth or domicile or temporary assignment.
- Whereas the waves of immigrants prior to the 1960's were mostly unskilled labor, that changed with the changing of immigration rules in various European, North American and Oceanic countries. Thus began the migration of the skilled categories, the professionals and the entrepreneurs.
- In the industrialized countries, there are high skilled professionals
- While --In the Gulf Countries, there are unskilled/semi-skilled labor
- **Remittance Flow** to India has steadily increased annually to **US \$55 Billion in 2011** - which is highest in the world
- **Remittance** flow is inverted – 42% of migrants which are unskilled labor contribute 15%; 12% are the skilled and professionals who account for 85% - in high technology, investments, businesses and entrepreneurships.

In summary, there are over 27 million people of Indian origin living outside of India who form a collective with a unique bond to India based on heritage and culture that seem to transcend generations irrespective of country of birth or domicile. PIOs are known for improving their lives and their respective countries.

GOPIO, the global Indian Diaspora organization

GOPIO, the Global Organization of People of Indian Origin, is a global organization with chapters in countries with significant populations of people of Indian origin. GOPIO appeals to new immigrants as well as those born outside of India from forebears who left India generations ago.

GOPIO was founded at the First Global Convention of People of Indian Origin in New York in 1989. The initial thrust of GOPIO was fighting human rights violation of people of Indian origin. Although this has been improved in the last decade, human rights violations continue to be a major issue for PIOs living outside India, since PIOs are always a minority in all countries of domicile or residence (except Mauritius with 65% of PIOs). GOPIO has also set its objectives towards pooling of PIO resources, both financial and professional, for the benefit of PIOs, the countries they come from and India.

With such a global reach with its vast network of PIOs, GOPIO monitors and addresses issues of interest and concern among people of Indian origin and non-resident Indians living outside of India. GOPIO seeks redress from governments, the United Nations and other international agencies when human rights and other violations are perpetrated on PIOs.

GOPIO's chapters handle community matters such as social issues of health, education, assimilation and adaption of PIOs. On the regional and international level, GOPIO holds seminars, symposia and conferences focusing on specific issues that confront PIOs.

GOPIO's efforts do not conflict with national loyalties which are primary; ethnic and cultural adherence is secondary.

In addition to its many chapters globally, GOPIO has 9 councils which are dedicated to addressing specific PIO issues on a global scale as well as with local conferences on: Academic; cultural; business; health; women; youth; media; human rights, and science & technology.

GOPIO also recognizes those who have made significant contributions in community service while preserving and promoting Indian culture. That, we believe, is a responsibility too. Note: GOPIO does not advocate depriving local diaspora communities of support, collaboration and interaction.

We believe that the lessons and successes of the Indian Diaspora can be a model for others.

GOPIO's Role in Connecting and Strengthening the Indian Diaspora

Shared interests and common bonds of culture and heritage make it possible for GOPIO to connect PIOs of different generations living in different countries, sometimes speaking different languages, and include them under a single umbrella organization that makes them feel as belonging to a family from a large tree with big branches and deep roots.

For example: GOPIO's chairman Inder Singh was born in India and now resides in USA; I am the newly elected president, born in Guyana of 3rd generation Indian parents, now residing in the USA. The immediate past president is in the UK. GOPIO has regional vice presidents in Oceania and the Pacific, North America, The Caribbean, Europe, Africa, Middle East, South Asia, South East Asia

GOPIO reaches out to all PIOs whether newly arrived immigrants or several generations out of India. Example: There are 14 countries in the Caribbean region with PIOs whose ancestors arrived from India from 1838 – 1917, totaling approximately 1 million and speaking 4 languages: English, French, Dutch and Spanish (British Honduras now known as Belize). Through contacts and visits, GOPIO is able to reach remote groups of PIOs who have been stranded and on their own for generations – and we identify them, recognize them, embrace them, and help them understand their heritage and cultural background, sometimes long forgotten.

Working in close collaboration with the Government of India, GOPIO assisted the High Level Commission that visited most PIO countries and issued its 374-page report that was and still is the basis for many of the initiatives taken to reach out to the global Indian Diaspora.

GOPIO's firm advocacy for human rights resulted in strong action in Fiji twice, in Trinidad & Tobago, in the USA, in parts of Africa and in recently in Australia where PIO students were needlessly attacked just because they were PIOs.

GOPIO connects PIOs on business, academic and other matters of common interests that help bring PIOs closer to each other and to India – while giving a sense of kinship, strength and courage to continue to be more productive and to continue to achieve at higher levels.

GOPIO tackles specific issues of major significance. Examples are: Diabetes awareness & programs – awareness seminars, clinics, education, health clinics, education worldwide – at all levels.

GOPIO and the Government of India: A hand-in-hand relationship

In 2002, GOPIO appealed to the Government of India to set up a separate department in the Ministry of External Affairs to handle the increasing numbers of NRIs and PIOs at that time. The Government of India recognized the value of the Indian Diaspora and went one step further by establishing a full ministry: The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA).

The following year, MOIA began the annual gathering of PIOs (called Pravasi Bharatiya Divas – PBD) to meet and discuss matters of common interest and seek ways to embrace the PIOs everywhere, to make them feel welcome and part of the huge PIO family. This annual PBD has become a sort of ritual and evolved into regional PBDs to address issues pertaining to a specific region.

GOPIO works closely and collaboratively with MOIA and other Government of India ministries to raise issues of concern and seek resolutions of problems facing PIOs and NRIs – wherever and whenever it feels that the Government of India can resolve issues or give support to make the lives of PIOs better.

GOPIO was one of the US based Indian organizations that pushed for the US-India nuclear treaty.

GOPIO took the initiative on Indian passport surrender policies that forced the Government of India to retract a policy that penalized PIOs. GOPIO took the initiative for the Kolkata Memorial that the Government of India constructed in remembrance of indentured laborers who left India from 1834 – 1920. GOPIO has taken the initiative on a Gadar Centennial Commemoration for those who started the struggle for India's independence 100 years ago in San Francisco. And there are so many more such GOPIO initiatives.

GOPIO functions as the outreach arm of MOIA to obtain feedback from NRIs and PIOs on the quality and effectiveness of services as well as those matters that need improvement or corrective actions. GOPIO has representation in MOIA on matters pertaining to migration and re-migration, as well as publications and surveys that important for planning and policies.

GOPIO partners with MOIA and other Government of India ministries for the benefit and well being of the Indian Diaspora.

While being supportive, GOPIO can also be expected to voice criticism when there are issues that confront NRIs and PIOs with need for action for resolution.

To maintain connectivity on the Indian Diaspora, GOPIO regularly invites government of India and other Indian diaspora countries to visit different countries to meet with groups of NRIs and PIOs and to remain connected culturally, economically and on academic fronts.

Government of India's Initiatives & Programs for its Diaspora

There are a series of initiatives and programs that the Government of India has undertaken and continues to do to embrace the Indian Diaspora, strengthen the bonds among themselves and with India, and address issues that affect PIOs and NRIs. MOIA is the nodal ministry for all emigration-related issues in India with objectives to regulate and manage the emigration of workers from India; protection and welfare of Indian emigrants; formulating policies for orderly, organized, humane and legal migration.

I acknowledge the invaluable assistance of Shri Parvez Dewan, Secretary of MOIA, who was very helpful to me with information on the initiatives and programs of the Government of India, in particular the efforts of MOIA, with respect to the Indian Diaspora.

MOIA's vision: Proactively engage with Overseas Indians to meaningfully connect with India; to establish a robust and vibrant institutional framework on three value propositions: Provide mainstream attention to Overseas Indians; enable economic, social and cultural engagement; facilitate better welfare and protection of Overseas Indians.

A target mission is to tap the investible Diaspora community in terms of knowledge, skill, human and financial resources in diversified economic, social and cultural areas.

Organizational Structure of MOIA:

Headed by a Cabinet Minister

Secretary supported by two Joint Secretaries, Protector General of Emigrants, Economic Advisor and seven DS/Directors.

Divisions: Diaspora Services; Financial Services; Emigration Services

Field Offices: Nine Protectors of Emigrants

Institutional Framework of MOIA:

Prime Minister's Global Advisory Council of Overseas Indians

An apex consultative group comprising eminent Overseas Indians.

To draw upon the experience, knowledge and wisdom of best Indian minds

Indian Council of Overseas Employment: A not-for-profit society to serve as a think tank on emigration related matters and drive empirical research.

A strategic think tank on matters relating to Overseas Employment markets for Indians.

Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre: A not-for-profit trust in partnership with the CII to serve as a single window for investment facilitation and knowledge network.

MOIA Institutional Framework:

India Development Foundation of Overseas Indians: A not-for-profit trust to serve as a single window agency to lead Diaspora philanthropy into India's social development such as education, healthcare etc

To build a list of credible institutions, projects and programs for public-private partnerships

Global India Network of Knowledge: A robust electronic platform to facilitate transfer of knowledge with the objective of leveraging the expertise, skills and experience of Indian diaspora

Overseas Indian Center: Field formations to serve matters relating to Overseas Indians

India's Overseas Employment Policy:

To facilitate choice-based, well-informed, legal, safe and organized migration

To raise Indian Overseas Workers in value and wage chain

To diversify the emigration base

To make the emigration process simple and transparent through e-governance project

To identify the emerging need of skills and train Indian overseas workers to fill the shortages

To enter into Human Resource Mobility Partnership as with Denmark

Regulatory Framework:

The Emigration Act, 1983 and Rules

The existing law governs the emigrants under the Emigration Check Required (ECR) category going to 17 ECR countries for low skilled jobs

Protector General of Emigrant (PGE) is the regulator

Recruiting Agents (RA) have to register

Protector of Emigrants (POEs) grant emigration clearance

Attestation of documents by Indian Missions

Programmes and Initiatives: Emigration Services

Indian Community Welfare Fund (all Indian Missions abroad)

To provide welfare services to Overseas Indians in distress like boarding/lodging , emergency medical care, legal assistance, air lifting mortal remains

Nation-wide awareness campaign on legal and safe migration

Overseas Workers Resource Centre (OWRC) and Migrant Resource Centers at Kochi, Hyderabad and Panchkula

Bilateral Social Security Agreements concluded with Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Hungary, Denmark, Czech Republic, Norway, and South Korea. Under discussion with USA, UK

Programs and Initiatives: Emigration Services

Bilateral Human Resource Mobility Partnership Agreements (signed with Denmark, in the final stag with Netherlands and France, under negotiation with Australia, Germany, Italy, Mauritius and EU

Bilateral MOUs on Labour Welfare and Protection MOU with GCC countries excluding Kingdom of Saudi Arabia & Malaysia for protection of emigrants. Joint Working groups constituted under the labour MOUs for regular dialogue on labour issues

To enlist commitment of host governments to ensure better protection and welfare of Indian emigrants

To ensure terms of employment in conformity with the laws of both countries

Programs and Initiatives: Emigration Services

E-migrate project

Aims to transform emigration into a simple transparent, orderly and humane process

To provide an comprehensive electronic platform linking all stakeholders with real time access to relevant information

Pension & Life insurance fund (PLIF)s

To provide low cost insurance cover to workers with ECR Passports emigrating overseas on a temporary employment

Workers to voluntarily accumulate savings for their return and resettlement

Provision of a co-contribution benefit of Rs 1000 per year for 5 years by the Govt. of India

Addition co-contribution of Rs 1000 per year for 5 years for women workers

Schemes for Diaspora: Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD)

To connect India to its vast overseas diaspora and bring knowledge, expertise and skills on a common platform, PBD Convention - the flagship event of MOIA is organized from 7th-9th January every year since 2003

PBD is inaugurated by the Prime Minister on 8th January and the valedictory address is delivered by the President on 9th January every year. The President also confers the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award on nearly 15 distinguished PIOs/NRIs

Out of 10 editions of PBD held so far, 6 have been held in Delhi, one edition each in Mumbai (2005), Hyderabad (2006), Chennai (2009) and Jaipur (2012) respectively

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD)

The 9th edition of the PBD was held in New Delhi in January, 2011 in partnership with the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region. Sir Anand Satyanand, Governor General of New Zealand was the Chief Guest

PBD – 2012 was held at Jaipur, from 7-9 January, 2012 with Rajasthan as the Partner State & CII as the Institutional Partner. Ms. Kamla Persad-Bissessar, PM of Trinidad & Tobago was the Chief Guest. Record participation of 2014 delegates attended the 10 PBD
3 pre-convention seminars on solar energy, water and health care were organized

Mini PBD Conventions in different part of the World

Mini PBD Conventions are also organized by MOIA outside India to have interaction & discussion with Indian Diaspora to ensure their connectivity with their ancestral motherland as well to know their expectations & concerns

5 Mini PBDs have been held at following places so far:

1. New York, USA on 24th September, 2007
2. Singapore on 10-11 October, 2008
3. Hague, Netherlands on 19 September, 2009
4. Durban, South Africa on 1st and 2nd October, 2010
5. Toronto, Canada on 8th to 10th June, 2011
6. 6th Mini PBD is being held in Dubai in September, 2012

PIO (Persons of Indian Origin) Card Scheme

The PIO Card Scheme was started in 2002

A PIO card holder:

- shall not require a separate visa to visit India;
- is exempted from the requirement of registration if his stay does not exceed 180 days on any single occasion;
- have parity with NRIs in all facilities available to them in economic, financial and educational fields except in the matter relating to agricultural and plantation properties
- PIO Fee - Rs.15,000/- or equivalent in local currency for adults.
- For children up to 18 years PIO Fee - Rs.7,500/-

Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) Card Scheme

The Scheme was introduced in 2006 by amending the Citizenship Act

A registered OCI is granted multiple entry, multi-purpose, life long visa for visiting India and is exempted from registration with FRRO for any length of stay in India

OCI Fee- is \$ 275 or equivalent in local currency. In case of PIO card holders, it is \$ 25 or equivalent in local currency

So far 10,70,000 PIOs have been registered as OCIs as on 31.03.2012

This Ministry has issued notifications which give the OCIs the right to practice their professions like Doctors, Architects, Chartered Accounts etc. in India, subject to the provisions contained in the relevant Acts. The concerned Ministries have initiated action to amend the relevant acts separately

Merger of OCI and PIO Card

Cabinet has now approved a proposal to merge the PIO Card and OCI Card Scheme and a Bill in this regard has been tabled in the Parliament

The merged Scheme will be called Overseas Indian Card Scheme

It will enable acquisition of OCI registration by minors, both parents of whom are Indian citizens or one parent is an Indian citizen

It will also grant OCI to the foreign spouse of OCI card holder

It can be granted to PIOs up to 4 generation levels, i.e. PIOs whose parents, grand parents or great grand parents had been of Indian Origin

Know India Programme (KIP)

! This is a 3 week orientation programme for diaspora youth between the age of 18-26 years

Every year 2/3 batches consisting of about 30 participants each attend the programme

Is conducted to promote awareness on different facets of India and the progress made by India in industry, economy, infrastructure, higher education, art & culture etc

Besides visits to places of historical/cultural importance and attachment with a State Govt for one week, the participants meet various constitutional authorities, i.e. CEC, C & AG etc GOI provides local hospitality and 90% of the airfares to participants

MOIA has organized 19th KIP so far in which nearly 600 overseas Indian youth have participated. 19th Know India Programme was held from 21.12.11 to 10.01.12 in which Rajasthan was the Partner State

20th KIP proposed to be held from 25.04.12 to 15.05.12 with Goa as Partner State

Study India Programme (SIP)

A new Study India Programme is proposed to be launched in July 2012. Presently E-Publishing

- Tender through CPPP on 19.03.2012 and last date is 10.04.2012
- It will be held twice a year for a period of 4 weeks involving 40 diaspora youth in the age-group of 18-26 years
- It will enable overseas Indian youth to undergo short term course in an Indian University in the nature of Summer School to familiarize them with the art & culture, socio-political,
- economic development etc. of India

Study India Programme (SIP) – cont'd

- The focus of the programme is on academic orientation and research
- Cost of boarding, lodging, local transportation & course fee during the programme to be borne by GOI
- 50% of the cost of air-ticket by economy class would be borne by GOI
- Gratis Visas by Indian Mission will be granted to the participants

Overseas Indian Youth Club (OIYC)

MOIA has also launched a new scheme named Overseas Indian Youth Club through our Missions abroad

Purpose is to keep the overseas Indian youth in touch with the developments in India & create a sense of belongingness towards the Country of origin

Meetings of the Youth Clubs to be held 3-4 times in a year in the Indian Embassy or the premises of Cultural Centres operated by Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR)

Youth Clubs will hold debates & seminars, classes on art & culture, yoga etc. for Overseas Indian Youths

The infrastructure of Indian Cultural Centres of ICCR in respective countries could also be used for holding the meetings of OIYC in those countries

6 Missions like HCI, Colombo, CGI, Melbourne, HCI, Port of Spain, CGI, Durban, HCI, Kuala Lumpur and HCI, Singapore given Rs.1 lakh each for starting the Club

Voting Rights for NRIs

The Representation of People's Act was amended in 2010 to give voting rights to NRIs, i.e. Indian passport holders residing abroad

Relevant Rules have come into force w.e.f 10.2.2011 to give effect to this provision

As per Rules, an applicant may send self-attested documents to Electoral Registration Officers directly without the involvement of Indian Missions. The documents are:

- application with photographs
- copy of valid passport
- copy of valid visa
- copies of proof of work/education & address in the Foreign Country as applicable; and
- affidavit

In case of any objection/doubt concerning a specific case, the Indian Mission/Post may be contacted for physical verification of the concerned Indian national

Scheme for Legal/Financial Assistance to Indian

- Women Deserted / Divorced by their NRI Husbands
- Scheme launched in February 2007 to provide financial assistance for obtaining legal aid/counselling to needy Indian women in distress/deserted by their overseas Indian spouses or are facing divorce proceedings in a foreign country subject to the following conditions:
 - The woman is an Indian passport holder
 - The marriage of the woman has been solemnized in India
 - The woman is deserted within five years of the marriage
 - Divorce proceedings are initiated within five years of the marriage by her overseas Indian spouse
 - An ex-parte divorce has been obtained by the overseas Indian spouse within 10 years of marriage and a case for maintenance and alimony is to be filed

Scheme for Legal/Financial Assistance to Indian

Women Deserted / Divorced by their NRI Husbands

The scheme would not be available to a woman facing criminal charges or having a criminal case decided against her

The assistance will be limited to US \$1500 per case and will be released to the Indian Women's Organizations/ Indian Community Associations/NGOs concerned to enable it to take steps to assist the woman in documentation and preparatory work for filing the case

Proposed revision in the scheme

1. The marriage has been solemnized in India or overseas with an Indian or a foreign national
2. The woman is deserted in India or overseas within 15 years of marriage
3. Divorce proceedings are initiated within 15 years of the marriage by her overseas Indian / foreigner husband
4. Present limit of assistance is being enhanced from US\$ 1500 to US\$ 3000 for developed countries and to US\$ 2000 for developing countries

Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children (SPDC)

Scheme launched by MOIA in 2006-07 to make higher education in India

accessible to the children of overseas Indians and promote India as a centre for higher studies

Under the scheme, 100 scholarships up to US \$5000/- per course per annum are offered to PIO and NRI students (50 each) for undergraduate courses in Engineering, Science, Law, Management, etc

The scheme is open to NRIs/PIOs from 40 countries with substantial Indian Diaspora population

The candidates are selected according to merit and are placed in Universities/ Institutions against the quota fixed for NRI/PIO students

Under this scheme, over 468 PIO/NRI students have benefited since inception & 100 students have been selected in the current batch

Tracing the Roots

Scheme launched by MOIA in October 2008

PIOs desirous of tracing their roots in India may fill up the prescribed application form enclosing relevant information/documents available with them and deposit it with the concerned Indian Mission located in that country along with a fee of Rs.30,000/-

Based on the details furnished by the applicant, MOIA will entrust the job of tracing the roots to an agency empanelled with it who in turn may take the help of the concerned State Govt./District Admn. etc. to successfully complete the job

The traced details of roots in India, i.e. name of close surviving relative(s); place of origin of their forefathers (paternal and maternal side); and a possible family tree, are made available to the applicant

In case the attempt is not successful, the Indian Mission is authorized to refund Rs 20,000/- to the applicant!

Repatriation of Indians

About 5.5. million Indian expatriates have gone to West Asia/Gulf/North African regions on contractual employment

In view of the disturbed conditions in Libya, GOI took a decision to evacuate Indian nationals out of Libya followed by a similar decision in the case of Yemen

GOI organized special flights and ships to evacuate about 17,000 Indians from Libya and over 800 Indians from Yemen. In this exercise nearby countries, i.e. Egypt and Tunisia, were also used as transit routes

MOIA, in coordination with the Ministry of External Affairs; Civil Aviation; Railways; Airport Authorities; Immigration Authorities; State Governments; and other Departments, made appropriate arrangements for receiving the evacuees at the airport, providing local transportation, making arrangements for their local stay and onward journey to their native States

Expenditure on their air travel was borne by MEA and other expenditure on local stay, food and onward journey was borne by MOIA & State Governments

Issue of Relief, Repatriation & Rehabilitation of Indian nationals effected by such an eventuality is under active consideration of GOI and directions in this regard shall be issued shortly to the concerned Authorities / State Governments for necessary action

Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre

13 April 2012, Nairobi *Expanding the economic engagement of the Indian diaspora with India*

Single-point contact for the overseas Indian irrespective of where he or she reside

OIFC Clientele: Non-Resident Indians / Person of Indian Origin

Small mid-sized entrepreneurs

Professionals

It is clear that the Government of India has put in place a series of well organized plans and systems to cater to the Indian Diaspora, to embrace it, nurture it, to keep it connected, strong and vibrant, to facilitate its continuing connection among itself and to India – and to play a vital role in its sustenance, promotion and preservation as a growing entity as a matter of government policy.

- MOIA; MEA; Ministry of Culture
- ICCR; OIFC; ICOE/ICM
- PBD; PBSA
- Regular visits by GOI to all regions
- Trade shows, cultural & academic exchanges,
- Chairs at various universities: U/Penn, U/Illinois, Wits S/A, etc
- MOUs with other countries for protection of Indian migrant workers, etc.
- Private sector investments into other countries: Steel, technology, energy, green technology, agriculture, software, etc.

Benefits to the Government of India

The benefits to India are both economic and social – and are significant to make a marked difference since 2003.

- There are over 27 million ambassadors worldwide
- Tapping into to the goodwill and resources of the diaspora
- Economic benefits include: Vast amount of remittances annually; huge investments in India, increased tourism, education, improved consumer economy, improved infrastructure, management skills, etc.
- Promotion and preservation of Indian culture worldwide
- Immeasurable good will among the Indian diaspora towards India with a strengthening of the historical and cultural bond between India and the Indian Diaspora
- Educating the world about India which makes it easier for new Indian immigrants in new and older host countries to make living easier and more readily acceptable of Indians
- Highlight to the Indian Diaspora the needs of India from social to economic issues that brings more interest and support from the Indian Diaspora.
- A surging economy on the basis of foreign investments, Indian Diaspora businesses in India, increased travel in and outside of India, interest of non-Indians in economic, education, entertainment, public health sector, energy, agriculture and food production, culture and art.
- Bi-lateral agreements on trade, cultural, academic, science and technology, social security, judicial matters, protection of migrants and labor rules, etc
- A matter of pride for both India and the Indian Diaspora

Benefits and rewards for the Indian Diaspora

The Indian Diaspora has come alive in the past 20 years since GOPIO brought about awareness and inclusivity and the Government started taking an active role in the Indian Diaspora.

Some of the benefits to Indian Diaspora include:

- Increased awareness and sense of pride
- Appeal factor: Emotional connection
- Personal rewards of recognition by India and own peers overseas
- Build up of organizations, associations, media, etc in other countries
- Can easily appeal for support in cases of abuse, distress and emergency.
- Feeling of togetherness, camaraderie and shared cultural values
- Outreach to all – including the older 6+ generations from previous migration
- Increasing population of new migrants from India from all sectors
- Newer migration among those from older generations, a re-migration
- Increased travel to and from India
- A sense of ease being under a larger umbrella of over 27 million and a motherland that has an interest
- More peaceful co-existence in multi-ethnic societies
- Prominent positions in other countries: Professional, political, economic, academic, social.
- Ease of assimilation and adaptation to new societies
- Contributing to own society and to India's development
- Higher levels of achievement for children in the Indian Diaspora
- Less feeling of isolation no matter how far away, how small and how long ago.

Lessons of the Indian Diaspora for others

Benefits to host and adopted countries:

- Indians are hard working, mostly peaceful and thrifty
- Indians improve their lives and the countries where they reside
- Indians contribute to society at all levels: economic, academic, cultural, entrepreneurial, social, philanthropic, political
- How to appeal to the diaspora and expats, to embrace them and to attract the vast human and financial capital that can be used for investments and development of country of origin.
- Making a focused effort to outreach in the diaspora and expats
- Development of emotional appeal, nurturing a diaspora, making it feel wanted and important, recognizing its assets and facilitating ease of access, tax benefits and removal of red tape.

At issue: The preservation of culture and the intrinsic value of the diaspora among the next generation living overseas – a concern in the 21st century. Consideration: Steps to be taken to retain its strength by keeping it emotionally and culturally connected.

The main lesson is to recognize the diaspora and its needs to belong and contribute in a significant way/.

I urge you to recognize your diaspora, embrace and welcome as India does. Make them feel welcome, feel at home and appreciated. They have so much to offer – in so many ways.

Your diaspora are readily available assets – emotional capital, economic and human capital, financial capital, skills and expertise, etc.

Tap into your diaspora – an intrinsic value, an emotional and readily available capital.

Thank you.

Ps: I will be available to answer any questions. Hope this has been beneficial and hope to stay connected

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Notes:

The Conference:

“Education in Central America: Engaging Diasporas, Governments and the Private Sector in Education for Development”, held in San Salvador, El Salvador, on June 27th

The conference, which is organized by the OAS Office of Assistant Secretary General Albert Ramdin, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador and the Pan-American Development Foundation, seeks to promote partnerships between Central American diasporas, the private sector, and governments with a view to supporting educational institutions and local NGO’s in Central America to ensure that post-secondary students are equipped with the skills necessary for the prevailing labor market. We would like to highlight best practices of successful diaspora organizations from other regions, which in coordination with other stakeholders, have had a positive impact on the development of their country of origin (be it through development projects, trade or investment).

Central American countries have important diaspora groups, especially in the US but their impact has not expanded much beyond remittances. We would like to showcase best practices and lessons learned from the successful diaspora organizations, such as GOPIO. We believe it is important for government, private sector and diaspora organizations from Central America to learn about how other diaspora organizations work and the impact of successful organizations.

The conference was attended by representatives from Ministries of Labor, Ministries of Education, private sector, NGOs and diaspora organizations from Central America.



Pictured above (l-r):

John Sanbrailo, Executive Dir of Pan American Development Foundation; Hon Atala Perez, Dir of Education & Culture, Secretariat of Foreign Relations, Mexico; Ashook Ramsaran, president of GOPIO International; Marielo Franco, Social Entrepreneur of BancoAgricola, El Salvador; Consul General of Columbia, Hatem D. Quiceno.